

Sundry news from Switzerland

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3. "An eventful week at the parliament building", was the title of the weekly review broadcast by Mr. von Greyerz for the week when the war broke out in 1939. It depicts how in time of danger the complicated Swiss democracy turns into a community capable of acting very promptly by conferring far-reaching powers on the federal council and placing a general at the head of the army. The conferring of such powers on the Federal Council for the preservation of the country's security, its independence and its neutrality and for the safeguard of Switzerland's credit as well as for the protection of her economical interests, was unanimously voted by the Federal Assembly.

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SUNDRY NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

Viviculture in the canton Zurich is showing a steady decrease due solely to the shortage of labour for replanting and restocking obsolete vineyards. The cultivated area is now about 701 ha. against 848 in 1938, the chief centres still being Andelfingen, Bulach and Meilen.

An unexplained explosion in the cellulose factory Attisholz set the clothing of seven attendants alight, necessitating their removal to hospital. Two of them have since died; they are: Dr. Alex von Schulthess, a scientific chemist, and Alf. Frauchiger, an assistant.

Carl Steiger, a St. Gall painter by profession, died in Zurich at the age of 89. He is better known for his life-long interest in aviation. Some 55 years ago he constructed - and personally experimented with - the first glider at Schaffelstein and has been one of the pioneers of modern aviation.

The "biter bit" best describes the sequel of a casual arrest by the Bernese police who questioned a workman trying to sell a valuable brooch. His explanations appearing unsatisfactory, a search of his lodgings was ordered which led to the discovery of a hoard of rings, brooches and other jewellery; he finally admitted that they were the contents of a parcel that he unlawfully appropriated at the local railway station. Further enquiries showed that the jewellery was contained in a trunk that had been stolen from the car of a Geneva jeweller when passing through Lausanne. The original thieves had arranged to forward the loot to accomplices in Zurich with the help of female associates and one of them had actually been relieved of her precious bundle in the train at Berne.

While on a casual tour of inspection Dr. Paul Guggisberg, the 65-year-old director of the Lötschberg railway, tripped near Wengi and was hurled to his death; he had been for 19 years a member of the Regierungsrat in Berne.

In Baselland practically the whole of the potato fields have been destroyed by the colorado beetle. One local paper reports that after a tract of land had been obliterated of its cultivation the beetles could be seen in thousands crawling across country lanes for new fields of operation.

The body of States Council. Emil Rudin, the director of the Basle co-operative societies, has been recovered from the Birs; he was 60 years old, had been missing for over a fortnight and is believed to have met with an accident while fishing.

Robert LaRoche, senior of the Basle firm of bankers bearing his name, died at the age of 69; for many years he was president of the Swiss Bankers' Association.

In spite of the universal wave of juvenile criminality honesty still does survive. Two youngsters in Basle trying to accumulate some funds for their holidays started a house-to-house collection of waste paper and old journals. Amongst paperasse handed to them by one old lady was a crumpled card-board box; on the return in the evening of the daughter she spoke of her good deed and learnt to her dismay that in the box were hidden the latter's savings in notes to the value of about 6,000 francs. The police were informed and the carton was promptly returned intact though it had already passed into the dump of a wastepaper dealer.

ond fangt mer denn no anne jasse,
so chast denn guet en Zog verpasse,
das ist jo denn einerlei,
denn goht mer met em letzte Hei.
De letzte Zog nimt denn die Nochezögler mett
das ist worom mer em de Name Lompesammler gett.

A.M.

Home Spun Yarns.

Gemütsathlet. -Ein junger Mann fällt in den Zürichsee und schreit energisch: "Hülf, hülf, i chaa nüd schwümme!" Ein Passant ruft ihm in aller Seelenruhe zu: "I jo au nüd, aber wegem sebe mach i doch kei so'ne Sauläarme!"

Sport und Kunst. -"Dies, meine Herrschaften," sagte der Führer zu einer Reisegesellschaft, "ist der grösste Wasserfall der Alpen. Ich bitte die Damen, einen Augenblick ihre Unterhaltung zu unterbrechen, damit man das donnernde Getöse der stürzenden Wasser hören kann!"

Im Eifer. -Wahlkandidat (in seiner Agitationsrede):
"Wollt ihr eine neue Strasse - wählt mich! Wollt ihr eine neue Schule - wählt mich! Wollt ihr ein rassenreines Rindvieh - wählt mich!"

SUNDRY NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

Believed to be the last veteran of the 1870/71 mobilisation, Konrad Baumgartner, a farmer, died in Oberriet (St. Gall) at the age of 96.

The large German sanatorium at Davos, the Konsul Burchard Haus, sometimes described locally as the Brown House, has been leased by the Federal Council for two years to an international Jewish organisation; it will be devoted exclusively to the care of Jewish refugees from the ages of 16 to 25 who suffer from tuberculosis. This decision has given rise to some critical comments in the local press.

To check the commercial exploitation of our alpine flora, controls are organised occasionally. At one of these inspections at Innerthal (Wägital) no less than 500 Edelweiss and 250 Mannertreu have been confiscated and the pluckers fined.

At the Chiasso frontier two motorists vainly tried to pass the Italian customs officials and after a short scuffle one of them, Georg Müller from Zurich, was taken to the post and subjected to a corporal examination; Swiss gold coins to the value of about a million lire were duly taken care of.

Replying to a question whether our present financial position and the shortage of labour did not call for a reduction in the duration of the "Rekrutenschulen" to two months, the Federal Council stated that the present four months was the absolute minimum and that training in the new war weapons might even make an extension desirable.

Four jet-propelled Vampire fighter planes with de Havilland Goblin turbines have been purchased by our army command. They arrived at the Cointrin airport, flying the distance from Hatfield to Geneva in 71 minutes.

By colliding with an overhead wire a military plane of the "Taifun" type caught fire and crashed near the village of Trubschachen. The two pilots, Corp. Robert Knecht - a mechanic from Zurich, and Corp. Ernst Hablützel - an engineering student from Zurich, were killed; they were on an exercise flight from Emmen to Payerne and were both in the early twenties.

During a night exercise Lt. Theodor Bader, a 29-year-old cand. phil. from Solothurn, lost his life while trying to cross the Aare at Brugg. With two others he had been ordered to swim across in full uniform; he was known to have been a good swimmer and it is believed that the previous strenuous drill had brought about heart failure.