

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1922)
Heft: 67

Rubrik: Subscription rates

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Download PDF: 13.08.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

The Swiss Observer

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

Published weekly at
21, GARLICK HILL, E.C. 4.

Telephone: CITY 4603.

No. 67

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 16, 1922.

PRICE 3D.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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HOME NEWS

The Federal Council has decided to participate in the deliberations of the special Commission dealing with financial aid to Austria and has delegated Dr. Julius Frey, the Bank Director of Zurich, to attend on its behalf the meetings of this Commission of the League of Nations.

It is stated that should the League of Nations not find a rapid solution of the Austrian problem, Switzerland, Italy, and Czecho-Slovakia have expressed willingness to grant Austria credit.

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It is proposed to increase the number of members on the Council of the Swiss Federal Railways from 11 to 15. According to the budget for 1923 the deficit on the Swiss Federal Railways is estimated to be 29 million francs as against 72 million francs for the preceding year.

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The Federal Council has appointed National Councillor Tanner (Liestal) Director of the Federal Liquor Control.

* * *

Switzerland has requested France to safeguard her interests in Asia Minor.

* * *

Switzerland is represented on the different commissions of the League of Nations as follows:—

Questions of Jurisdiction and Constitution: Mr. G. Motta; Technical Organisation: Mr. P. Usteri or Mr. G. Ador; Budget and Finance: Mr. P. Usteri or Mr. L. Forrer; Political Questions: Mr. G. Motta and Mr. P. Usteri.

* * *

Dr. Maillart, Vice-President of the Swiss Medical Association, has been appointed Chairman of the Mixed Commission of Arbitration for Pensions in Alsace-Lorraine. To this commission is entrusted the power of decision when divergencies of view arise between the respective French and German authorities regarding grants of pension to discharged or wounded soldiers having served in either of the two countries or to invalided, or indigent civilians of the restored provinces.

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At a congress of Swiss Army Chaplains held at Horgen on September 7th, a request was sent to the military authorities to retain the chaplains as spiritual guides throughout the various periods of military service.

At a meeting at Interlaken of delegates representing the abstainers among the railway employees, a petition was sent to the Swiss Federal Railways to reduce freight charges on non-alcoholic beverages.

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The University students of the Canton of Ticino are agitating to obtain recognition in Switzerland of medical degrees conferred by Italian Universities.

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While motoring on the road to Leukerbad, Dr. Raymond Zenn-Ruffinen, accompanied by Dr. Sulpice Zenn-Ruffinen and a lady from Albinen, met with a severe accident. His car skidded and crashed down a steep incline of 300 metres and was completely destroyed. The occupants have sustained serious injuries, Dr. Raymond Zenn-Ruffinen's condition causing special anxiety.

* * *

The Circuit of the Alps.—The week of international competitive aviation, which has been arranged at Zurich from the 3—10 September, culminated in a flying circuit of the Alps.

This admirably organized air-race attracted 25 competitors, and was a specially interesting test of endurance and pluck, as the route was mapped out over the summits of the Alps, and the climatic rigours were not lessened by successive fogs and icy winds. The starting point was Dübendorf, and the route of the first section lay over Hochdorf-Wohlusen left of Napf to Thun. The second section, from Thun to Bellinzona, was by way of Interlaken-Schreckhörner (4,080 metres), over Finsteraarhorn (4,275 metres) and Griespass-Maggiatal. The third section, from Bellinzona back to Dübendorf, ran over Biasca and the Scheerhorn (3,600 metres), Schächen and Muottatal-Einsiedeln.

Nineteen of the competitors completed the course, the race being brilliantly won by Lieut. Bärtsch, whose flying time for the 224 miles was 122m. 44s.

2nd—Lieut. Comte (Swiss), 154m. 16s.

3rd—Lieut. Schaefer (Swiss), 152m. 42s.

4th—Lieut. Ackermann (Swiss), 146m. 44s.

5th—Lieut. Mittelholzer (Swiss), 145m. 25s.

6th—Lieut. Viguiet (French), 136m. 4s.

The festivities of the week were overclouded by the fatal accident to Capt. Echard, while flying the third section of the race. A wing of his machine loosened, and it crashed down from a height of over 3,000 metres, resulting in his instantaneous death. This gallant French officer was 35; his war record was distinguished, the organization of French aviation being largely his work. Widespread sympathy has been aroused by the tragedy, and his Swiss fellow-aviators have decided to honour his memory by naming a cup the "Challenge militaire Capitaine Echard." The superstitious will no doubt note the fact that Capt. Echard started thirteenth on his last race.