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The Swiss Observer

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FEDERAL.

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS.

The two Chambers have voted a sum of 500,000f. for the International Red Cross Institution. The Swiss Trustees of the Fund are Minister Dinichert and Dir. Ryffel from the Federal Treasury.

ST.T.

WOMEN PREACHERS IN SWITZERLAND.

It is reported that, by a big majority, the Basle Calvinist Council has decided to admit women pastors in hospitals and asylums, to baptise, perform marriages, administer holy communion, and preach. The decision follows an agitation by the women. A number of women theological students had obtained diplomas, but were not allowed to occupy pulpits in the Calvinist churches.

Geneva has one woman pastor. The Canton of Grisons, owing to the scarcity of pastors, has licensed women clergy on the condition they remain unmarried. The women, however, demand that the law be altered to enable three married women pastors to take posts.

OLD-AGE INSURANCE IN SWITZERLAND.

Both Swiss Chambers last week passed by a large majority the federal law for old-age and dependents' insurance. The proposal came before the Assembly in 1929, and will be compulsory and applicable to all between the ages of 19 and 65.

SWISS ELECTRICAL EXPORTS.

The exports of electrical machinery and apparatus from Switzerland during the three months ended with March last attained a value of £805,840, as compared with £920,320 in the corresponding quarter of 1930.

SWISS-ITALIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

The Swiss-Italian Chamber of Commerce has transferred its offices from Genoa to Milan.

MANIFESTATIONS IN BRUSSELS IN HONOUR OF PROF. PICCARD.

A brilliant manifestation took place at the Palais des Académies in Brussels on the 18th inst. in honour of Professor Piccard and his companion Dr. Kipfer. Amongst the participants of the demonstration were the King and the Queen of the Belgians, members of the Government, the four rectors of the Belgian Universities and a score of scientists of world wide repute. Prof. Piccard and Dr. Kipfer received a hearty ovation.

ABOLITION OF DEATH PENALTY.

The Swiss Parliament has adopted the section of the Federal Penal Code abolishing the death penalty.

NEW SWISS HOLIDAY TRAIN.

A new *de luxe* holiday train operating between Montreux and Interlaken has been put into service on the Swiss Federal Railways for the summer season. The train is named the Golden Mountain Pullman express, and is specially equipped for the use of visitors to these holiday resorts.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The death is reported from Zurich of Ingenieur H. Hall at the age of 67. The deceased was formerly director of Locomotive Works Winterthur and Oerlikon.

ST.T.

M. Fritz Streiff-Mettler, head of the well-known textile works has died at Aathal-Seegraben at the age of 68.

N.Z.Z.

GENEVE.

Professor Duparc of the University of Geneva has been nominated foreign member of the Geological Society in London.

J.G.

LONDON, JUNE 27, 1931.

AARAU.

A serious fire destroyed a larger part of the "Schweiz. Gummiwarenfabrik J. Lohnstroff," in Aarau. The damage caused is estimated at over 150,000f.

ST.T.

NEUCHATEL.

The Annual "Fête des vendanges de Neuchâtel" has been fixed to take place on October 3rd and 4th.

J.S.

VALAIS.

An explosion has occurred at the Lonza Chemical Works at Viège, Canton Valais, causing an emission of poison gas, which endangered the lives of the workers. Herr G. Zurbriggen, a chemist, forced his way into the room and stopped the leakage. The workers, about 20 in number, were saved, but the chemist was severely gassed as the result of his gallant action, and died later.

LAUSANNE.

M. Häberlin, President of the Confederation and Federal Councillor Schulthess will pay an official visit to the "Comptoir" on September 17th.

ST.T.

GRAUBUENDEN.

A cold water spring, acting like a geyser and erupting regularly every fifteen minutes, made its appearance not long ago in Switzerland. No other is known in the whole Alpine region.

This one started into action in the course of digging operations in the Engadine valley near Tarasp-Schuls, a fashionable spa well known to visitors, with an ancient castle perched on the top of a hill in a stage-like setting.

The cause of this natural fountain seems to be an accumulating store of carbon dioxide, which finds an outlet at regular intervals when the natural reservoir in which it collects is full.

LUCERNE.

A morality play called "The Prodigal Son" will be given on the steps of Lucerne Cathedral on Saturdays, Sundays and Thursdays throughout July and August by a sacred play society called Geistliche Spiele, which has been formed in the city.

TICINO.

Measurements made by the Swiss Geological Survey show that Motta Arbino, the "moving mountain" near Bellinzona, in the Ticino, has moved about four yards northwards during the past 12 months, and that its movement shows signs of increasing.

LILY ZAEHNER'S RECITAL.

A very accomplished and gifted singer in Miss Lily Zaechner (Mezzo-Soprano) gave an interesting and most enjoyable recital of songs by Beethoven, Robert Franz, Schubert, Brahms, Liszt and Hugo Wolf before a very large audience at the Wigmore Hall on Tuesday evening June 23rd.

An unusual feature of the well-chosen programme was the inclusion of a song in Swiss dialect "Schweizerlied" by Schubert. Its gaiety was well received.

Miss Lily Zaechner's sure command of a very pleasant voice ringing perfectly true in her middle notes and dignified in the low tones, her generally clear and eloquent diction, at the service of a well-marked sense of interpretation, showed abundantly her qualities and wide attainments as a singer and musician.

If at times her 'piano' and her 'forte' appeared perhaps just a trifle over-emphasised, it made one feel that the singer would have been heard to yet better advantage on a larger concert platform.

It was, indeed, a remarkable and high-class recital, which earned Miss Lily Zaechner a rich and well-deserved applause. And let us add—*to our pride*—yet another name on the list of distinguished Swiss artists we have been privileged to hear in London.

Mr. George Reeves played the piano accompaniment with sympathy.

Among those present was Miss Jacqueline Paravicini. The City Swiss Club was represented by its Hon. Secretary.

J.Z.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

While the very interesting article about "Ulrich Zwingli" was running in my column, other collaborators of the Swiss Observer were not slow in taking their chances.

Zwingli may be all right for some readers, they thought, but, knowing our Swiss as we do, we fancy they want something in a lighter vein and they hardly turn to the Swiss Observer to be educated in History or to read about ancient times of religious strife.

While I have observed, not without pleasure, believe me, that the third page of our weekly Swiss paper has gradually become the most eagerly sought after, because on that page were and are to be found the tit-bits, the little sensations, the personal touches, so dear to most of us. "Ck" has surpassed himself and, probably under the influence of the weather and the rising temperature, has even gone into poetry of sort.

Then, in our last week's issue, we had that story about that tall dog, or was it a tall story? The "Gilette" dog, I mean. I should imagine that dog to be quite bald, because the razor blades he devours naturally would cut off his hair at the root! Some dog, anyhow. Further news is most anxiously awaited and I, for one, shall look out to read about sensational happenings shortly in the home of that doggie. Someone is bound to feel cut-up about it by and by.

Then that car, in which the thieves left the sausages! My dear Watson, it's as clear as daylight that the thieves were of English nationality. No foreigner would have left the sausages!

We also are regaled with a "funny cut" of some ancient vintage and then we have a very interesting article on Professor Piccard's wonderful flight and the preparations preceding it.

All that on page 3 of last week's issue. All that for the equivalent of three farthings as it were. What a paper, what collaborators, what ho!

Naturally, I am put on my mettle. I cannot afford, lest I might lose my job for good, to let others absorb all the interest of our readers. I have to make good again and I have decided, in a weak moment, to work much harder in future and to see to my readers, those who really know THE best stuff is found in the Swiss Paper, to be able to hold up their head again and point out the wonderful articles of Kyburg.

No, my dear "Ck" you won't have it all your own way, be you ever so comfy in your corner! I almost thought just now, thinking of "Ck" and that Gilette doggie at the same time "go back and keep in your corner." But, of course, we are very polite to each other, you know that icy politeness underlying professional jealousy and we don't call each other names, at least not in each other's hearing. Nor do we print libels or slanders, because we cannot afford any such costly amusements.

On our merits we stand or fall, hence our mostly recumbent position, a la Phil Scott! But we can always get up again and boast about what we should have done, had circumstances beyond our control, not prevented us. Etc., etc.

Well now, what shall we write about this week? I wished I knew. The Press Gleanings afford no clue, being few and uninteresting. Switzerland is one of those happy countries which do not figure largely in the sensational happenings of the day.

Of course, I could write about holidays. But then, that makes me feel very sad and gloomy and makes others feel discontented with their lot.

Or again, I might try and chronicle some of the happenings in the Swiss Colony. Or the future ones, like the Swiss Fête in June! Time was, a quarter of a century ago, when that "Swiss Tea" took place at the old Portman Rooms, when, in the interval, there was a buffet which boasted Claret Cup and when we could smoke. Since, one year, I read on an invitation that smoking was not done anymore, the Swiss Tea saw me no more. Mind you, not that I am a heavy smoker. But I don't hold with the namby pamby and will not be dictated too. I dislike smoking in a theatre, but for the Swiss Tea, which is not so much a Concert, as an occasion when Swiss meets Swiss and when local Talent has a chance of showing off a bit, I hold that any restrictions of so childish a nature are un-Swiss. Amen!

Perhaps it is the thundery weather which makes me somewhat garrulous. I am certainly