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The Swiss Observer

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THE FIRST OF AUGUST.

We have no intention to add our own panegyric to the multitude of laudations which appear on this day in the columns of our contemporaries at home. We could hardly do better than emulate the example of that bashful patriot who when designated some years ago to deliver the official oration at a National Festival in Bellinzona was so carried away by emotion when mounting the rostrum that he could only shout "Vive la Suisse." While this is a day of thanksgiving and jubilation, it is for us Swiss in this great metropolis also a day for serious reflection and meditation. The world crisis is working havoc in our little colony, alike amongst institutions and individuals. We cannot expect a helping hand from our home country. We must work out our own salvation. Our watchword proclaimed on that historic field in 1291 and which, alas, has become a cheap slogan, must be re-invested with its solemn meaning and should be uppermost in our thoughts and actions in these strenuous times:

Einer für Alle Alle für Einen.



(Compiled by courtesy of the following contemporaries: National Zeitung, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, St. Galler Tagblatt, Vaterland and Tribune de Genève).

FEDERAL.

THE FEDERAL PRESIDENT TO BROADCAST.

The official address at the First of August celebration in Winterthur will be delivered by Dr. H. Häberlin, the Federal President, who is breaking his return journey from the Engadine for this purpose. The address will be broadcast from the Swiss Radio stations at about 9 p.m.

SWISS NATIONAL BANK.

The latest return of the Swiss National Bank exhibits a gold reserve of over one milliard francs—a record—and a bank note cover in gold of 95%.

EXPORT OF BANK NOTES.

It is stated that the Swiss National Bank has discontinued issuing notes of a higher nominal value than Frs. 100 so as to prevent or discourage cash payments for abroad.

SWISS LOCOMOTIVES FOR ASIA.

Successful trials have just been completed with an electric Diesel Locomotive manufactured by Sulzer Brothers to the order of the Siamese government; the engine develops 450 H.P., and weighs about 60 tons.

DEATH OF A GREAT SCIENTIST.

Dr. August Forel died last Monday in Yverdon at the age of 83. His versatility in many branches of science earned him an international reputation; as an entomologist he has probably not found his equal. He discovered, described and classified no less than 3,500 species of ants. His literary output was phenomenal there being something like 500 volumes to his credit. Born in Morges, he studied Medicine in Zurich, Lausanne and Vienna and for a number of years practised in the latter capital as a nerve specialist. In 1879 he was appointed professor of Psychiatry at the University of Zurich and at the same time director of the mental institution at the Burghölzli. After twenty years' intensive instruction he retired to his home "Fournilière" in the canton Vaud, where he continued his research work in the cause of humanity.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS.

The King and Queen of the Belgians have arrived at their villa at the Haslihorn on the Lake of Lucerne for a three weeks' stay.

King Feisul, of Irak, is undergoing a medical treatment in Berne which will presumably last about three weeks.

THE ROVER SCOUTS AT KANDERSTEG.

The first international meet of Rover Scouts from 22 different countries (about 3,000) is being held at Kandersteg from July 27th to August 8th. The Federal Council will entertain the principal delegates to a luncheon at which Federal Councillor Motta will be present.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The divisional military tribunal sentenced a foreign legionary to three months imprisonment for omitting to join the repetition-courses in the years 1928 to 1930. It was stated that the malefactor enlisted in the year 1926 in the French Foreign Legion for the price of a meal when he was "down and out." After absolving the contracted five years service he returned to Switzerland and presented himself without delay to the local military authorities.

BERNE.

The Swiss Exhibition for Sport and Hygiene ("Hyspa") was officially opened last Friday, July 24th, by Federal Councillor Meyer in the presence of a large and representative gathering. A salvo of 22 guns accompanied the inauguration.

* * *

Max Schafroth-Lüdy died in Burgdorf at the age of 61 after a prolonged illness. He took a leading part in the development of his native town and was at one time the head of an important artificial wool factory bearing his name.

* * *

Dr. Walter Merz, a well-known and popular free-lance journalist, died suddenly last Saturday at the age of 69.

LUCERNE.

Large audiences are being attracted by a miracle play "Das Spiel vom verlorenen Sohn" (The Prodigal Son) first performed in Lucerne on Sunday the 19th inst. It was originally arranged as a miracle play by Hans Salat, who lived from 1498 to 1561. The text has been re-written by the Swiss poet, Hermann Ferdinand Schell, while a modern musical setting has been provided by Jean Baptiste Hilber, of Lucerne.

The plays are performed on the steps of the Cathedral of Lucerne. All the players are members of the Brotherhood of the Coronation, which has been revived in its old form. Performances are given three days a week—Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday—twice daily.

Each year in the future one of the ancient miracle plays will be revived. Although text and music will be brought up to date, the manner of performance will follow as closely as possible the ancient method.

SCHWYZ.

Fruit-growers are finding great difficulties in securing cherry pickers; offers of Frs. 7.- to Frs. 9.- per day with free station are meeting with no response.

GENEVA.

The private banking firm of Messrs. H. Boveyron & Co., founded in 1881, have suspended payments; the failure is attributed to the crisis created by the insolvency of the Banque de Genève.

AARAU.

While on a five day excursion up and down the Rhine the Pontoon Club of Aarau met with a very serious accident. When continuing their journey last Saturday morning from Buchs, one of the three boats was unable to clear the new bridge over the Rhine and the strong current dashed it against the first bridge pillar. All the 22 occupants were thrown into the river; two of them could not gain the bank and disappeared in the water. The names of the victims are Hermann Hediger, aged 28, from Rapperswil and Emil Hänsler, aged 63, from Aarau, they were both good swimmers.

* * *

Director Huldreich Meier, of the Sursee-Triengen railway was the victim of a singular accident. He was being driven home from Olten late one evening when the driver in order to avoid an oncoming car was forced over the road border. Mr. Meier, in order to ascertain the cause of the hindrance, looked out of the window; at the same moment the car pulled up again with the result

that his head was knocked against a telephone pole. He died soon afterwards from a fractured skull. Mr. Meier who was 50 years old leaves a widow and three children.

ST. GALL.

A novel and somewhat radical departure from established practice has just been sanctioned in the canton of St. Gall. It is maintained that medical research and science has conclusively demonstrated that the alcohol admixture in human blood can be ascertained by unfailing methods. In dealing with traffic accidents blood tests may therefore become a determining factor. In cases where a defendant may refuse to submit to such a blood test, the examining magistrate may enforce this ordeal if the accident has resulted in fatal consequences.

THURGAU.

The commune of Egnach has been left Frs. 67,000 by the late Mr. Konrad Michel for public and philanthropic purposes.

* * *

National Councillor Karl Eigenmann died in Müllheim at the age of 82 after a short illness. He was a great veterinary authority and rendered eminent services to cattle breeders throughout Switzerland for which he received the doctor h.e. from the University of Zurich; he has been a member of the National Council uninterruptedly since 1899.

GRISON.

About ninety university students are working as farm labourers in different parts of the canton. This is in accordance with an arrangement whereby during the long summer vacation students at our universities and other high schools offer their labour to needy farmers in the lower alpine regions. These volunteers, who are said to be stirred by great enthusiasm, receive free board and lodging.

VALAIS.

A rare situation has been created by a petition presented by 20 Councillors demanding an extraordinary sitting of the Grand Conseil for the purpose of removing the parliamentary immunity of certain members. This will enable the widow of Col. Schmidt to institute proceedings with regard to certain attacks on her late husband.

COMBATING UNEMPLOYMENT IN SWITZERLAND.

Unemployment, as has been repeatedly pointed out in this paper, is an international scourge, affecting certain countries particularly severely. It constitutes one of the manifestations of the crisis prevalent throughout the world today and is a result of the growing disproportion, which has developed latterly, between production and consumption. It is difficult to obtain an accurate idea of the full significance of this phenomenon, for in certain countries official statistics are lacking and in others they cannot be relied upon. In one of our last numbers, we published a series of figures relative to this subject. Since then a slight decrease of unemployment has been noted in various countries, without, however, offering the hope of a durable improvement in the situation; this recent decrease is largely due to certain factors which are closely connected with the season of the year, the influence of which is, therefore comparatively limited and localized, not exceeding a few months.

The Swiss labour market is however less seriously affected than those abroad, but conditions are by no means reassuring. Although unemployment exists, it is not of the gravity noted elsewhere, especially if the country's situation is compared with that of several years ago, during the first post-war crisis. In 1922, Switzerland counted not less than 67,000 unemployed, entirely assisted by the State. Including the partially unemployed, the total number exceeded 100,000.

The situation of the labour market, examined in the light of a comparison between the number of demands for employment and that of offers of employment registered at the official labour offices, has a less serious aspect to-day. Unemployment, which, in certain countries, has assumed the proportions of a national disaster, has affected Switzerland to a far lesser degree. This is due, partly, to the special character of the country's production, composed of both industrial and agricultural