

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: - (1931)

Heft: 515

Rubrik: Prepaid subscription rates

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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

EDITED WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MEMBERS OF THE LONDON COLONY.

Telephone: CLERKENWELL 9595

Published every Friday at 23, LEONARD STREET, LONDON, E.C.2.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

VOL. 11—No. 515

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 5, 1931.

PRICE 3d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UNITED KINGDOM AND COLONIES	3 Months (13 issues, post free)	3/6
	6 " " " "	6/6
	12 " " " "	12/-
SWITZERLAND	6 Months (26 issues, post free)	Fr. 7.50
	12 " " " "	14.-

(Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postcheck-Konto Basle V 5719.)



HOME NEWS

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

FEDERAL.

INCREASED IMPORT DUTIES.

In deference to repeated representations by the interested manufacturers the Federal Council has sanctioned an increase in the customs duties for elastic fabrics and speedometers, in the latter case the duty has been trebled.

SWISS NATIONAL BANK.

The latest return of the Swiss National Bank exhibits further record figures. The gold reserve amounts to 1189.2 million francs whilst the note circulation has dropped to 1209.8 million francs, thus giving the latter a gold cover of 98.28%.

SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS.

In reply to representations from ecclesiastical quarters the railway department shows that no supplementary or extra trains to promote or encourage excursion or party traffic will be run on Good Fridays, Palm Sundays and the Sundays of Easter and Whitsun.

BANKING CONSORTIUM FORMED.

A consortium of the leading Swiss banks has been formed at Geneva with the object of preventing a repetition of the sharp fall in quotations which occurred in the Swiss market last week.

The Swiss market has been considerably upset for some time owing to the heavy withdrawals of funds from the local banks. Hence this movement by the various credit institutions in the country to preserve a united front. The Swiss franc continues firm thanks to the gold cover of over 100 per cent. of the note circulation.

AUTUMN MANOEUVRES IN SWITZERLAND

On the occasion of the Autumn manoeuvres of the 4th and 5th Division the following countries are going to send military missions: Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, United States, Spain, Poland and Argentina. The "Défilé" of the 4th Division will take place on September the 10th.

OUR HOTEL INDUSTRY.

According to official statistics just published for the year 1929 our country possesses 28,247 hotels and similar minor establishments that cater for tourists and those whose despise living in their own "castle." This figure comprises 7,772 hotels and boarding houses, 17,746 restaurants and inns, and 2,729 apartment houses. The total staff employed is given as 120,121 of which 84,075 belong to the fair sex.

AN ANNIVERSARY.

September 2nd is the 125th anniversary of the mountain slide of Goldau, the greatest catastrophe that ever visited our country though its magnitude is overshadowed by more gigantic phenomena of recent times in other parts of the world. On that fatal afternoon five whole villages were buried completely the falling rock and boulder forming a new surface from 20 to 30 metres above the old level; few of the inhabitants escaped with their lives, 477 perishing with their homesteads. Only two of the villages have so far been rebuilt: Goldau and Lowerz.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The rapid development of civil aviation have made it desirable to enlarge and supplement the existing buildings for the reception and storage of aeroplanes. As the cantonal authorities are disinclined to grant the necessary credit a private development company is in course of formation and it is anticipated that the municipalities

of Zurich and Winterthur will co-operate financially.

BERNE.

The hundredth Anniversary of the Foundation of the Liberal Party in the canton of Berne was celebrated at Burgdorf on Sunday last. The attendance at this important gathering amounted to well over 6,000 members. M. Häberlin, President of the Swiss Confederation made a speech in which he pointed out the merits which the liberals have to their credit in the history of the Confederation. National Councillor Schupbach, Central President of the Swiss Liberals also addressed the assembly.

* * *

A concession is being sought from the Federal railway department for the construction of a suspension railway from Grindelwald to the Schreckfeld (Faulhorn group). It is expected that the winter-season in Grindelwald will derive considerable benefit as access to the skying fields in the higher regions will be facilitated.

LUCERNE.

The Bank Sautier A.G. in Lucerne which suspended payments a few months ago, offers its investors a settlement of 40 per cent. In order to diminish the losses, Dr. A. Sautier has placed his whole private fortune at the disposal of the creditors. The liabilities amount to 7,201,000 against 3,224,000 assets.

* * *

The "Schweizerischer Konservativer Parteitag" was held at Lucerne on Sunday last. M. Musy, Federal Councillor, in his oration warned the country of the results of mischievous bolshevistic propaganda.

GLARUS.

Lieut. Col. Peter Tschudi-Freuler died in Schwanden at the age of 78. Until a few years ago he carried on large dye-works established by his ancestors as far back as 1829; he was also identified with the spinning industry and a member of the board of the Credit Suisse and other large financial and industrial undertakings.

BASLE.

The death is reported from Riehen of M. Wullschleger at the age of 70. The deceased was for many years President of the Socialist party and was the first socialist in the canton of Basle who entered the Grand Council, National and State Council. From 1902-1920 M. Wullschleger was a member of the cantonal government, during which time he rendered valuable services both to his native canton and party.

* * *

The epidemic of typhoid fever at Basle is assuming a more serious aspect. During the past 8 days 13 fresh cases have been notified bringing the total to 49. So far only one case has proved fatal.

* * *

A large barn stocked with hay and fodder on the "Bruckgut" near Münchenstein was destroyed by fire last week, it was in this building where in 1891 on the fateful Sunday afternoon 70 dead were laid out for identification when the adjoining railway bridge collapsed with its heavy train load of excursionists.

SOLOTHURN.

The cantonal Government has asked for a credit of 100,000f. to assist the unemployed in the watch industry.

GENEVA.

A new daily paper under the title "Journal des Nations" is being published in Geneva, it deals chiefly with the activities of the League of Nations and other international institutions connected therewith.

ARGAU.

Considered as the most up-to-date institution for deaf and dumb people, the "Landenhof" has been formally opened last week. The cost of the building and installation amounted to frs. 420,000, of which frs. 200,000 have still to be found. About 40 pupils are being instructed at a time.

ST. GALL.

Ten passengers suffered minor injuries at the junction of Lustmühle where two electric local trains collided. The accident is said to be due through the driver of the St. Gall train omitting to wait the passing of the train from Teufen.

A demonstration in favour of the old age pension scheme took place last Sunday at St. Gallen by over one thousand members of the liberal party. M. Schulthess, Federal Councillor addressed the conference, giving a concise outline of the new law, which will shortly come before the electors. He made an eloquent appeal to the delegates for supporting this important undertaking.

THURGAU.

During the last hunting season the canton cleared frs. 245,000 for allowing its territory to be shot over by 538 huntsmen.

GRISONS.

A proposal to open the roads of the village of Sent to motor lorries was originally sanctioned by the electors with a majority of two; however, on the ground of irregularity, a second poll was taken when the proposal was rejected by a majority of 12.

TWO ALPINE SEASONS.

CONTINUED.

After all we never reached the true summit of our objective, the Lochberg, but contented ourselves with one nearly as high and equally meritorious; excusing ourselves, too, with every reason which prudence and nobility could devise not for troubling ourselves further; then we hurried down a broken glen and a flowery valley to Realp and caught a train for Brig. Remarkable indeed was the sight (my first) of the Rhone glacier, the icefall descending to within a short distance of the railway, massed with greeny-blue pinnacles which fall and threaten to fall every moment. From its snout issues the infant Rhone, which follows us down to Brig, at first tumbling and dashing down a rocky bed, growing larger as other streams join it, gliding now through pastures edged by scythed slopes of hay, later hiding in a deep-wooded gorge, and finally sweeping round the corner to Brig with a speed that makes it almost a fearsome thing. From here running down it will find a temporary resting place in the Lac Lemman. But soon it pours its green column through the sluice gates of Geneva, and rides on among the hills of France, majestic at Lyons, swift and irrepresible at Avignon, as it hurries towards its end; until at last near Marseilles it flings wide its arms to the Mediterranean, as a traveller finishing a long journey.

Once more the weather cleared for the grandest of our accomplishments, the crossing of the Löttschen-lücke to Falleralp. A magnificent sunrise lit the Zermatt peaks, the Dom and Täschhorn sailing like a marble castle in a green sea. Before us the Jungfrau and her attendants took the morning, and we moved like intoxicated pygmies up the moraine of the grandest of all glaciers. At 7.10 we halted in the sun for a meal. From here for six hours we were burned by a glaring sun on white snow, soft and yielding. A scare from crevasses proved no more than a scare, but for hours plugging through deep snow with a heavy sack can be purgatory. Actually it was joy, for the scene framed by the snow wall of the Aletschhorn and the rim of Lauterbrunnen peaks is incomparable. At 12.0 we reached the brow of the col, and looked down at the great red wall which ends with the Bietschhorn, now plastered with new snow, and the floor of one of the fairest of Alpine valleys. Down snow we plunged again, off the glacier on to a moraine and the greenest path imaginable, with the water of the Lonza in our ears. Falleralp, perhaps of all Alpine resorts the best, greeted us with welcome, a bath and our luggage. In our pine-timbered bedroom we dreamed of sun-fled hours. From our window we could see the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn with its nightcap of snow, and the stream which danced down from its eiderdown, the Wetterflücke. We feasted off bilberries and cream, and enjoyed uproariously large helpings of each course of the table d'hôte; such are some of the "indefeasible good things of life."

Our last expedition was painted in gloomier colours. Under a leaden sky we started for the Petersgrat at 4.10, and at 5.10 it was snowing. With all the inconsequence of human beings we sat down to discuss prospects, and decided that it was too early to return to bed, but that we could not climb the Tschingelhorn, but merely cross the Petersgrat; a weak resolution it seemed at the time, but the reverse later on. We breakfasted out of the falling flakes under a stone, and pressed upwards in growing mist to the end