

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: 491

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. 491

LONDON, MARCH 21, 1931.

PRICE 3d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UNITED KINGDOM AND COLONIES	3 Months (13 issues, post free) -	3s 6d
	6 Months (26 issues, post free) -	6s 12d
SWITZERLAND	3 Months (13 issues, post free) -	Fr. 1.50
	6 Months (26 issues, post free) -	Fr. 2.80

(Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postcheck-Konto Basle V 5718).



HOME NEWS

FEDERAL.

PARIS VISIT OF M. MOTTA.

The Federal Council has delegated M. Motta, Chief of the Federal Political Dept. to take part in the deliberations of the "Commission d'études pour l'Union Européenne" which will take place in Paris on the 24th of this month.

CHINESE OFFICERS IN THE SWISS ARMY.

The Chinese Government has sent a military mission, consisting of five officers to Switzerland in order to study the constitution of our conscript army.

NEW GOVERNMENT APPOINTMENT.

M. Paul Renggli, of Bienne, has been appointed Chief of the Federal Office for Industry and Trade in succession to M. Pfister. The new head of this Department is a lawyer by profession and holds the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the army, being commander of the 14th regiment.

SWISS ALUMINIUM COMPANY.

Net profit of Société Suisse pour l'Industrie Aluminium in Neuhausen, Switzerland, for 1930, Frs.8,070,000 (against Frs.11,750,000) Div 15 p.c. (same) on share capital of Frs.60,000,000, special reserve of Frs.9,990,000 drawn upon to extent of Frs.1,800,000.

FRANCO-SWISS COMMERCIAL CONVENTION.

M. Briand and M. Durant, the Swiss Minister to France, signed last week, in Paris, the ratification of the Franco-Swiss Commercial Convention, drawn up at Berne on July 8, 1929.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

Dr. Klöti (socialist) has been elected Maire (Stadtpräsident) of Zurich by a majority of 16179 votes.

The elections for the town council have resulted in a victory for the socialist party, the new council consists now of 63 socialists (formerly 59); 6 communists (formerly 5) 35 Liberals (formerly 41), 11 christian socialists (formerly 10), 9 democrats (formerly 10), 1 Evangelical Popular Party (formerly 0). The socialists have thus gained together with the communists a majority of 69 against 56. N.Z.Z.

On Wednesday last an operation was performed on the Italian General Consul Bianchi, who was shot at by a compatriot last January and severely wounded. The operation has been successful and the condition of the patient is satisfactory. N.Z.Z.

The police at Zurich have been lucky in laying hands on two notorious criminals. Both are Italians and brothers. They were caught on entering the municipal labour office with the intent to commit a felony. It is now established without a doubt that the brothers Baitieri were the authors of the Burglary at the Italian consulate a few days ago. N.Z.Z.

BERNE.

M. Otto Würger, Sub Manager of the Cantonal Bank in Berne, has been appointed Manager of this institution. N.Z.

BASLE.

Professor Dr. Alfred Labhardt, Surgeon-in-chief of the women's Hospital in Basle has celebrated his 25th jubilee in the service of the state. The Cantonal Government has, on this occasion, made a suitable present to Professor Labhardt. N.Z.

AARGAU.

The Steel and Iron Works, Oehler and Co., in Aarau, have celebrated their 50th Anniversary of existence. On this occasion the firm has made a donation of 50,000f to the pension Fund of the staff. Another amount of 10,000f, has been given for distribution amongst the various charitable institutions of the town and a further sum of 42,000f has been expended on bonuses for the staff. N.Z.Z.

GRAUBUENDEN.

The Cantonal Bank in Chur has given 50,000f for creating a fund in aid of small farming land-owners N.Z.Z.

VALAIS.

A large avalanche has fallen in the Val d'Heremence, doing great damage to the work-yard of the Dixence water-power plant and imprisoning nine workers in a tunnel. All were rescued except one, whose body has not been recovered. N.Z.

MARTIGNY.

After moving down a forest on the mountain side an avalanche swept down on a summer resort near Martigny, razing a number of chalets to the ground. No loss of life is reported, as the chalets are inhabited only during summer. N.Z.

APPENZELL A.Rh.

Landammann Altherr in Speicher will succeed Dr. Hofstetter as member of the National Council. N.Z.

ENGELBERG.

Dr. P. Bonaventura Egger, fifty-fifth Abbot of the ancient Benedictine monastery at Engelberg, has died after a short illness. The deceased was only 52 years of age, and Abbot only since the beginning of 1930, after having been Rector of the Convent College for many years.

SWISS COTTON TARIFF.

Sir Kingsley Wood asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he could give any information as to the recent increase in the duty on all cotton goods imported into Switzerland.

Mr. Graham said the recent Swiss decree provided for the increase from March 10th, of the duties on cotton issues weighing 6 kilogrammes or more per 100 square metres on unbleached, bleached, dyed, or printed, as well as certain other goods.

These increases will not affect the concessional rate for the cloth for the use of the Swiss embroidery industry, with which, he understood, the bulk of our trade in unbleached goods consisted.

He was given to understand that substantial quantities of our bleached, dyed, and printed goods would also be unaffected by being lighter than six kilogrammes per 100 square metres.

ICE HOCKEY.

ENGLAND BEAT SWITZERLAND.

England beat Switzerland at Brighton on Saturday night by three goals to two, and on Tuesday by two goals to one at Golders Green. On the two evenings play Switzerland were a little unfortunate not to draw, for their combination was better than that of England, but with Gardner in goal and Sexton in the defence, playing magnificently for England, our compatriots had to admit defeat. Magwood, Grace and Brown, made a very good first line in the English attack, all being at their best, and the most prominent of the Swiss attack were Breiter and Penchi, each of whom was very fast. Andreossi was outstanding in defence and Mathez, in goal, made many clever saves.

The Swiss team consisted of:— M. Mathez, goal; O. Schmidt and M. Andreossi, defence; D. A. Penchi, R. Breiter and E. Meer-kamper, attack; C. Zuber, M. Lamm and H. Klang, reserves.

We wish to draw the attention of our readers to an Ice Hockey Match to be played between Arosa, Switzerland, and Grosvenor House, Canadians, at the Park Lane Ice Club, Upper Grosvenor Street, Park Lane, London, W.1., on March 25th, at 9 p.m.

AN APPRECIATION.

We have received from one of our Liverpool readers the following letter:

Liverpool, March 11th, 1931.

To the Editor of the Swiss Observer,
Dear Sir,

I look forward each week for my Swiss Observer that it gives me great pleasure to send you my subscription 12/- for another year, also find enclosed £1 0 0, with sincere congratulations on the occasion of its tenth Anniversary with very best wishes for a long and prosperous future.

Yours with many thanks,
sig.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

In *The Times* Literary Supplement of 29th January, I also find a review of a book describing the memories of

A Great Guide.

Christian Klucker. *Erinnerungen eines Bergführers*. Herausgegeben und mit Lebensbild versehen von Ernst Jenny. (Erlenbach-Zürich. Eugen Rentsch Verlag.)

This book has many claims on the attention. It must attract every mountaineer and every student of the history of mountaineering. But the author was not only a great guide. He was, within the limits of his opportunity, a great man. The book has a certain value as a curiosity. For, except in the asides provoked by the agony of the moment, we seldom hear the authentic opinion of the guide. But, as the reader proceeds, he soon loses the sense of surprise. What Klucker has to say demands attention, not because he speaks where others are inarticulate, but because, with an undoubted right of audience, he speaks with authority and with moderation.

Klucker was born in 1853, out of due time to achieve the full measure of fame which might otherwise have been his due. Much still remained to be done, and, as will be seen, he took full advantage of what Fortune gave and of what he could wrest from her. But he was unfortunate not only in time but in circumstance. Born in what was then the lonely glen of Fex, he had to find his chance of employment in the first place among the visitors to Sils (and later Maloja)—comparatively few in themselves and including in their company very few likely to be devoted to serious climbing. Pontresina was not far off. But the guides of Pontresina were, towards competitors from outside their own commune, jealous and exclusive, and, towards tourists, domineering and exacting. When, as a boy, Klucker was apprenticed to a wheelwright at Samaden, he made a solitary ascent of Piz Tschierwa; but years elapsed, apparently, before he climbed seriously in the Pontresina district. Guides in the past began their careers usually as chamois hunters, called in when some foreigner visited their native valley and required local help, or as *knecht* or tied guide at some inn, or as porter when a father or uncle or friend saw a chance of effecting an introduction. Klucker had no family connexion with the sport. He knew his native valley and the not very distinguished slopes which hem it in, because at the age of six he began to herd his father's cattle; and on occasion he accompanied his father on a chamois-shooting expedition, though he detested the taking of wild life. He was intended to follow the trade to which he was apprenticed, and he was for many years hampered by extreme poverty and the burden of his family—though he was himself disappointed in love in early life and remained unmarried. In those days there was no oversight over guides by the Swiss Government, the Cantonal authorities or the Swiss Alpine Club. So Klucker set up for himself. He was working in the summer of 1874 for the Alpenrose Inn at Sils Maria, and so obtained employment on occasion sometimes as guide, sometimes as porter. He notes that from 1874 to 1908 he worked as guide without any patent, and that his first patent as guide bears date March 28, 1908—by which time he had attained a European reputation and occupied in his own commune, his country and in the Alpine societies of many lands a position to which there is no exact parallel in the story of mountaineering.

Between these two dates he had had a hard struggle, and he achieved his triumph at a mature age. First Herr Paulcke, then Herr Theodor Curtius, must have the credit for discerning his worth. Then came the brilliant and desperate campaigns with Norman Neruda (1889, 1890, 1891); and then the long and painful companionship with Anton v. Rydzewski, during which Klucker fulfilled his Bregaglia chain. How much he paid for these successes those who read this book must estimate for themselves. In the intervals of this long and unpleasant association came the