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The Swiss Observer

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FEDERAL.

ARMY-CORPS COMMANDER EDUARD WILDBOLZ.

As reported in our last issue, the death occurred in Berne of the late Army-Corps Commander Eduard Wildbolz, at the age of 74.

Colonel Wildbolz, a Bernese, started his military career in 1878 as a cavalry officer; in 1881 he entered the Federal Instruction Corps where he was attached to the cavalry. In order to gain experience, he was sent to Germany, where he served one year with a German cavalry regiment, on his return he entered the General Staff where for some years he was under the tuition of Colonel Pfyffer von Altishofen. In the year 1896 he was gazetted to colonel and in the same year he was appointed chief instructor of cavalry; throughout his military career he kept a warm corner for this special branch of our army, which he, together with Colonel Wille (later General Wille) reorganised from top to bottom, and the high level which the cavalry attained in Switzerland is greatly due to Colonel Wildbolz.

During his appointment he held various commands, such as chief of staff of the 2nd Army-Corps, commander of a cavalry brigade and head of the 6th infantry brigade. The promotion to a division commander took place in 1908 when he took over the 2nd division, two years later he exchanged his command with that of the 3rd division, and it is the latter one which he lead to the frontier when the great war broke out. Throughout the frontier occupation he held this responsible command where he enhanced his reputation not only as an efficient leader, but also as a commander who had the welfare of all soldiers under his command at heart. He was liked by his officers and men almost like a father.

In 1917 ensued the promotion to commander of an Army-Corps, in which position he rendered invaluable services to his country, especially after the return of the troops from the frontier and on the occasion of the general strike, during which he showed a firm hand, but he was ever ready to foster a spirit of reconciliation, his unfaltering love for his country, his faith in the good of his fellow countrymen was based on a deep religious conviction, which enabled him, even after his retirement from the active list, to serve his country well. He was not only a great soldier but also a great man, and Switzerland has lost in him one of its famous sons.

NEW PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL.

Dr. Ruggiero Dollfus has been elected President of the National Council for the year 1933. Dr. Dollfus was born in 1876 at Milan, he studied law and national economy at the University of Basle. For 20 years he was manager of the Bank Vonwiller in Milan. In the army he reached the rank of a brigade commander. He entered Parliament in 1922 as the representative of the catholic-conservative party of the canton of Ticino, although Dr. Dollfus is a protestant. The new speaker of the Federal Chamber has travelled extensively and is no stranger to the London Colony to which he has paid frequent visits; his patriotic appeal which appeared in the Swiss Observer two years ago, on the occasion of the 1st of August, is still remembered.

VICE-PRESIDENCY OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL.

Dr. Johannes Huber is the new Vice-President of the National Council, he was born in 1879 in Töss, and studied law at the Universities of Zurich, Leipzig, Berlin and Berne. In 1903 he started practice as an advocate in Rorschach, in 1913 he settled down in the town of St. Gall. Dr. Huber was for many years a member of the Grand Council over which he presided in 1919. He entered Parliament in 1919 and is a member of the socialist party.

NEW PRESIDENT OF THE STATES COUNCIL.

The new President for 1933 of the States Council, M. Andreas Laely was born in 1864 at Davos. From 1909-1917 he was a member of the cantonal government. He is also well-known as a Journalist having been in turn editor of the "Davoser Zeitung," "Davoser Blätter" and "Freien Rüttler." M. Laely has been for many years a member of the Grand Council over which he presided in 1920. He entered Parliament in 1913.

VICE-PRESIDENCY OF THE STATES COUNCIL.

M. Antonio Riva, who has been elected Vice-President of the States Council was born in 1870 in Lugano. He studied law at the Universities of Zurich, München and Freiburg. M. Riva has been since 1900 a member of the Grand Council, he is a lieutenant-colonel in the army. On his entry into Parliament in 1917 he joined the catholic-conservative party.

SWISS NATIONAL BANK.

The Federal Council has elected M. Robert Stehli-Zweifel, Silk Merchant at Zurich, as a member of the Board of the National Bank, in succession to Dr. O. von Waldkirch, late Chairman of the Federal Bank, who has resigned from his post.

BASLE COMMUNISTS AND THE B.I.S.

The Communist Party of the Canton and the City of Basle has decided to organize a referendum with the object of vetoing the taxation agreement between the Bank for International Settlements and the Cantonal authorities which exempts the officials of the bank from the income and inheritance tax on their private fortunes in return for an annual payment of 50,000 Swiss francs (£2,000 at par). The Hague Agreement only gives freedom of taxation to the bank itself and the salaries of its officials.

The Communist Party contends that the sum of 50,000 francs is ridiculously low, since the salary of the president of the bank is 250,000 francs and other officials receive salaries of 100,000 francs and upwards.

LOCAL.

BERNE.

The well-known writer Jakob Bührer has become a member of the socialist party, in whose service he was for some time as a propaganda writer.

* * *

M. G. Muller, socialist has been re-elected as town President of Biel, the elections for the town Council have brought no change in the distribution of seats.

* * *

M. Samuel Häusermann, has celebrated his 40th service jubilee as an inspector at the Federal Customs office. M. Häusermann, who hails from the canton of Aargau has been for the last few years the substitute of the Customs Director.

LUCERNE.

Nine persons were killed and eight seriously injured in a head-on collision between electric trains in the Gütsch Tunnel, near Lucerne, about three o'clock on the 13 inst.

The two trains were an express from Zurich and a slow train on the St. Gotthard line from Lucerne to Bellinzona.

The express was travelling at about fifty miles an hour, and the other train at about thirty miles. The resulting smash completely wrecked both locomotives, telescoped several carriages, and plunged the tunnel into utter darkness.

Failure of the lights in the tunnel made the work of rescue extremely difficult. In the early stages it had to be carried out with flares and lanterns as the only source of light, and it was the moans and cries of the injured that chiefly guided the steps of the rescuers.

After three hours' strenuous work among the wreckage, six bodies were found, and eleven injured were removed to hospital. Three of the injured died in hospital a few hours later. Both engine drivers and one of the train conductors were killed outright. The remaining dead were passengers — four men and two women.

Search Continues.

Oxy-acetylene lamps and mechanical saws are being used to force a way into the wreckage, as it is feared that there may be more bodies yet to be discovered.

The telescoped trains completely blocked the railway lines, and it is expected that breakdown gangs will have to work throughout the night if traffic is to be resumed soon. As all the trains from Lucerne to Berne, Bale, Zurich, and St. Gotthard pass from the Lucerne railway station

through the Gütsch tunnel, railway communications in all directions are temporarily held up.

BASLE.

Lieutenant Gustav Tappolet fell with his horse in the Langen Erlen and was killed instantly. Lieutenant Tappolet was a son of Professor Tappolet.

* * *

Prof. Dr. Henri Veillon, Professor of Physics at the University of Basle since 1896 has died after a long illness.

FRIBOURG.

A widespread epidemic of diphtheria is rampant at Fribourg, various schools have had to be closed.

GENEVA.

The "Conseil d'Etat," has elected M. Paul Lachenal as its President and M. Albert Picot as its Vice-President for the year 1933.

ARGAU.

Three persons were severely injured in a motor accident which happened at the lower Hauenstein. M. Wilhelm Rudin, his mother and his bride Miss Emma Imber, all from Basle were motoring at the Hauenstein, when at one of the curves, the car left the road and fell down a ravine, all three were taken to the hospital at Olten.

* * *

Dr. Emil Isler, for nearly 50 years member of Parliament has laid down his mandate for reasons of health. Dr. Isler entered the National Council in 1884 and since 1890 was a member of the States Council.

LAUSANNE.

Doctor Maurice Jeanneret-Minkine, a medical practitioner and noted communist at Lausanne has been sentenced to three months imprisonment, for having insulted the Swiss flag and the army.

* * *

Sentences of from 26-90 days' imprisonment were imposed by the Military Tribunal on four soldiers who were found guilty of serious infringements of duty in connection with the Geneva shooting affair last month. One of the soldiers has also been dismissed from the army.

TICINO.

The death is reported from Bellinzona of M. Germano Bruni, at the age of 82. M. Bruni was a member of Parliament from 1893-96. (National Council), in 1895 he was appointed public prosecutor of the canton of Ticino, which office he gave up in 1890 on the occasion of his appointment as a member of the cantonal government. From 1911-1922 he was the presiding judge of the criminal court. The deceased was one of the leaders of the radical party in his home canton.

CAMBRIDGE FAVOURITES FOR THE SKI RACES.

Snow to the depth of over two feet has already fallen at St. Moritz, where the Oxford and Cambridge ski teams shortly hold the annual International Ski Race Meeting.

Some members of the ski clubs are already here, but the captains do not actually pick their teams until they have put the probables and possibles through their paces on the spot.

Last year, for patriotic reasons, the races were run in Canada, but conditions there were found less pleasant than at St. Moritz. The long sea voyage at this time of the year can be anything but enjoyable; above all, the skiers missed the radiant sunshine and blue skies of the Swiss Alps. Nor was the snow itself of so perfect a quality.

The races and ski-jumping competition always take place at Christmas; the date this year is from December 23 to 25th.

The Cambridge team are strong favourites. The light Blues are fortunate in having two skiers of exceptional merit to race for them. These are the captain of the team, C. S. F. Taylor, and last year's captain, R. J. Bushnell.

FOOTBALL.

December 11th, 1932.

CHALLENGE NATIONAL.

Grasshoppers	.....2	Blue Stras	.....0
Zurich	.....2	Young Fellows	.....1
Concordia	.....0	Urania	.....3
Carouge	.....2	Young Boys	.....3
Aarau	.....1	Basel	.....2
Lausanne-Sports	.....5	Chaux-de-Fonds	.....5
Biel	.....3	Servette	.....0
Lugano	.....5	Nordstern	.....3

CHALLENGE FIRST LEAGUE.

Luzern	1	Grenchen	4
Locarno	2	Bözingen	1
Bern	2	St. Gallen	3
Oerlikon	2	Etoile Ch.deF.	1
Olten	4	Bellinzona	1
Solothurn	1	Old Boys	5
Brühl	2	Montreux	4
Cantonal	3	Seebach	8
Racing	2	Winterthur	3

In the Challenge National, Group 1 once again had much the better of the argument, scoring 5 wins (and 1 draw) against the 2 wins for Group 2 by Young Boys and Zurich.

The second day in the First League Challenge gave Group 2 or East the opportunity to make up for their previous shortcomings and they recorded 5 wins (and 1 draw) against Group 1 or West's 3 wins. Of course, Grenchen was one of them; Olten's victory over Bellinzona perhaps less expected, but Montreux's defeat of Brühl in St. Gallen most decidedly in the nature of a surprise. Almost as remarkable, but to me rather more acceptable, was the win of St. Gall in Bern. Old Boys too "pulled their socks up" and the path goes to Seebach for their astounding score of 8:2 against Racing in Lausanne.

SWISS CUP, ROUND THREE.

Bellinzona	3	Basel	2
(after extra time)			

played on 8th December.

And so there is a First League Club left after all! The draw for the fourth round, to be played on 5th February 1932 is:

Grasshoppers	v	Zurich
Young Boys	v	Carouge
Lausanne-Sports	v	Lugano
Bellinzona	v	Urania

and the first 3 home clubs plus Lugano should become the semi-finalists.

INTERNATIONALS.

England	4	Austria	3
7th December at Stamford Bridge.			

Belgium	1	Austria	6
11th December in Brussels.			

I think these matches deserve being mentioned also in the S.O. in spite of the gallons of ink that have flown in this connection both here and on the Continent. It was my good fortune to witness that wonderful treat on the Chelsea ground and I am really sorry for all football enthusiasts who, for one reason or another, had to miss this match. Sceptic, would have been a mild term as applied to your reporter, right up to 2.15 p.m. on Wednesday. Too loud was the concert of brass trumpets blowing from the Continent; yet those who were the theme, the melody, the rhythm of all the noise kept commendably silent and modestly in the background, leaving it to their Eleven to show what they knew and what standard football in Vienna has reached. I humbly apologise for all I have said and thought. The Austrians put up a wonderful fight. In ball control, combination, "Flachspiel" and general tactics, they proved themselves at least equal to England's Eleven. Just a little more punch forward and there would be your ideal team. Perhaps the goalkeeper would be more sound still, could he forget to play "for the gallery" What of the charging? Chance is a fine thing! There were quite as many Englishmen bundled off the ball as Austrians and the explanation for this transposition of preconceived ideas lies in the superbly accurate and prompt and speedy passing of the Viennese players. Once the man has parted with the ball, there is no more any sense in charging. The other bogey: Austria will never be able to stand up to the speed of English International football. Wrong again, all wrong. The Austrians forced the game for all they were worth in the second half and kept it up with perfect ease right to the last whistle. It was a revelation, the game of the year and the finest exhibition of football it has ever been my privilege to see, put up by two marvellous sides.

So let us admit that Austria have passed out from their apprenticeship and are worthy foes for the best. But does this mean that Continental football, generally speaking, has reached such a high level? There I once more become sceptical. The superiority of the Austrians is too well known, again exemplified in Brussels where Belgium had to bow the knee to the tune of 6:1. Yet what Austria has achieved all the others should be capable to accomplish and we all hope to see good old Switzerland, in the not too distant future, to have an opportunity to gladden our hearts by an equally good performance against the Masters, proud Albion.

M.G.

WINTER CLIMBING IN THE BERNSE OBERLAND.

An authority on mountain climbing has written that the fundamental reason for the popularity of the Swiss Alps over the mountains of, say, Norway or the Caucasus, is that the Alps are just the right height for the two-day man. They are serious enough to make one realize that one is climbing, yet not so exhausting as to take away the pleasure of viewing the scenery. Our climbs of the Gemmi, Hockenhorn, and the Blümlisalp-horn bore this statement out to the full.

The ideal number for rope work is four, but we were five when we left the camp at Kandersteg to essay, if we could get a guide, the Blümlisalp-horn, or, failing that, we meant to climb the Wilde Frau, a secondary peak of the Blümlisalp group. Equipment consisted of soups, sardines, chocolate and the wherewithal for the brewing of the strong tea favoured by climbers. In addition we had ropes, ice axes, and crampons, very useful for glacier work. A downpour of rain lasting for 2½ hours, aided by a passage through a thick, wet mist when proceeding up the path to the Oeschinen See, wet us to the skin.

Just before we reached the Oeschinen See, a beautiful lake at a height of about 6,000 feet, we were startled by a sudden hollow roaring over to our right. Its origin was on the upper slopes of the snow-clad Doldenhorn, 10,000 feet high. We were privileged, for the roaring was from an avalanche. It appeared to us, at first, to be a fine spray of mud, coursing through the deep channel down which the glacier water was wont to flow, then it burst into a wonderful spray of rock and debris over a 500-foot precipice. Ten minutes the avalanche lasted, while the air seemed to rock and quiver with the terrible noise. Then it slackened to a mere trickle, muddy earth sluicing down, vaguely hinting that where much had come more might follow.

At the Oeschinen See we had lunch, looking across at the lake which has its equivalent in England at Stickle Tarn in the Langdales; though the Oeschinen See is on a much more elaborate scale. Where Pavey Ark behind Stickle Tarn, rises a few hundred feet in a solid wall of rock, the rock wall behind Oeschinen See rises a matter of 6,000 feet, to end in the snow capped peak of the Blümlisalp-horn. While resting, two grey friars passed, rucsacs on backs, coming down from the pass leading to the Blümlisalp hut. They made a fine picture, with their long trailing gowns and close cropped heads.

In contrast to our start from the Kandersteg valley we left the Oeschinen See in brilliant sunshine, and set our faces towards the distant heights. Wilde Frau... Wild Woman! She rears her head out of the snow like an Amazon. Behind her is the Blümlisalp-horn, sublime in the knowledge of his greater height and more difficult passage. We climbed on and our reward came when, above the 6,000 feet level, we were amazed at the number of lovely butterflies that surrounded us. The flowers, too, were in themselves well worth the toil. Gentians of a gorgeous purple blue; Rockfoil, peeping shyly from the base of grim boulders where one least expected to see delicate floral beauty; Rock primulas, and even the sweet glacier buttercups.

At 7,500 feet, however, the nature of the climbing changed. We crossed snow fields and narrow, shaly ridges spiced with a hint of danger



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to the unwary foot. The climbing became steeper, and the last lap to the Blümlisalp-hut was on a slope of 1 in 1½. Lungs were taxed, and the thudding of the temple pulses told the tale of a hard climb. At 6:40 p.m. we reached the hut, and were heartily glad to take off our rucsacs and think of dinner. The hut is set on a wonderful ridge, the culmination of two valleys.

Dinner consisted of a pint of soup, a quarter of a pound of dry bread, four sardines and a bar of chocolate. Rather a mixed menu, but in the mountains when one must carry all the food in the rucsac food values are carefully counted, and excess luxuries are left behind.

The night at the hut was a fantasy. There were powerful unshaven men, devouring spaghetti and dry bread, and heavily shod women in trousers. The air was filled with the Swiss language of the Bernese Oberland. The lighter side was provided by two men who looked after the hut. One was a giant of a man, heavily bearded, and appearing to have the strength of an ox. He washed the dishes, brewed tea, and made soup. His partner, a comparative wimp of a man, had the unenviable task of bringing in water across a dangerous snow slope, a slip on which would have meant a swift glissade, then a drop on to rocks a couple of hundred feet below. At nine o'clock we were ushered off to the room upstairs, where the unmarried folk slept.

We were awakened five hours later with the feeling that the day of judgment had dawned. A terrific storm was raging, and the thunder was deafening, each bellowing roll being thrown from peak to peak in echoing crashes that almost made the senses reel, while the lightning flashes that lit up the room with the brilliance one associates with magnesium flares made the snow-capped peaks and the glaciers stand out in ghostly grandeur. The storm gods were out in real earnest!

How long it lasted I cannot say. The thundering roll on the wood roof of the hut that followed lulled us to sleep, and when 5.0 a.m. came, and we went down to breakfast and prepare for our climb, all was over. The four guides had each a party, so that we had to start out alone, with the Wild Woman as our objective. The guides came out to watch us start, shaking their heads, and obviously thinking we were mad. Twenty minutes later, when only a thousand feet from the top of the Wild Woman, the predictions of the guides were borne out, and we were brought to a reluctant halt by the climber's deadliest foe — mist.

For a few minutes we stood in a state of indecision, watching the mist as it swirled around us, and mocked by the moaning of the wind as it played in and out of the crannies. Each moment the mist thickened, and with its thickening the danger of the return over the snowfield to the comparative safety of the hut increased, so that we were finally forced to return, not caring to attempt the crossing of the crevasse-pitted glacier that lay between us and the Wild Woman's summit, lay though it looked. One consolation we had; the day was so bad that not one of the parties climbed a peak, and we had gone farther than most.

Our two-day trip on the Blümlisalp was finished with a thirty-mile walk down the Bundstock valley to Kiental and Frutigen home. Walking down the mist-covered Bundstock, we were thrilled to hear someone on the mountain, unseen because of the thick mist, yodelling. Plaintive, yet beautifully sweet it sounded, and in thorough keeping with the sad atmosphere that pervaded the mountains.

A.C.

HUGGENBERGER BOOKS.

It may be a little late to come forward with the offer of Christmas presents, but during the holidays we shall all have a little more time to read and digest the books which we have put aside for future reading.

Our minds therefore will be more ready to revert to the books worth reading and among these undoubtedly are those of Alfred Huggenberger. Such a present may be late for Christmas, but it will never be too late for many hours of the purest enjoyment that we can wish for.

Mr. Huggenberger has agreed to provide each book sold in the Swiss Colony in London with a dedication on the fly-leaf. This will give the book a much higher value for the possessor. As no stocks of these books are kept in London, the Treasurer of the N.S.H. will be pleased to receive orders and forward them to the Author in Switzerland for direct delivery. Lists of the books can be obtained on application.

A. Fred. Suter,
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