

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: - (1933)

Heft: 586

Rubrik: Prepaid subscription rates

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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. P. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

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

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

Telephone : CLERKENWELL 9595

Telegrams : FREPRINCO, LONDON.

VOL. 13—No. 586

LONDON, JANUARY 14, 1933.

PRICE 3d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UNITED KINGDOM AND COLONIES	{ 3 Months (13 issues, post free) : 36 6 " " 66 12 " " 12- SWITZERLAND	{ 6 Months (26 issues, post free) : Frs. 7.50 12 " " 14- (Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postscheck-Konto Basle V 5718).
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HOME NEWS

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

FEDERAL.

SWISS PRESIDENT INTERVIEWED.

M. Schultess, President of the Swiss Confederation has granted an interview to the Editor in chief of the United Press. He passed in review the difficult economic situation of Switzerland, due to tariff barriers, exchange restrictions and quotas. He emphatically stated that Switzerland is firmly resolved to adhere to the Gold Standard, and that no efforts will be spared to maintain the Swiss currency at its present level.

SWISS MINISTER VISITS FRENCH PREMIER.

The Swiss Minister in Paris, M. Dunant, was received by M. Paul Boncour in audience, the subject of their conversation was in connection with the Zone Dispute.

DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION.

The annual reception and dinner offered to the diplomatic corps, by the Swiss Government, will take place on the 21st inst. in Berne.

RAILWAY DISASTER IN THE GUETSCH TUNNEL.

Two separate enquiry courts were appointed to study the cause of the deplorable accident, which caused the death of many lives. They have now published their findings; and both bodies, who made their enquiries independently, have come to the same conclusions, namely, that the accident happened through the driver Willi of the Zurich Express not having observed the signal which closed the line. As the driver Willi was killed, no explanation could be given, why the train was not stopped.

CREDITABLE SOLIDARITY OF SWISS RAILWAY MEN.

The Swiss Railway Men through their Union have collected the respectable amount of 235,104.35 francs for the unemployed. Already in the year of 1931 an amount of 220,000f. was collected and distributed for the same purpose. This is a splendid testimony of solidarity, which does great honour to the donors.

INCREASED DUTY ON TEA AND COFFEE.

The Federal Council has intimated an increase in the duty on tea and coffee. This measure will have to be passed by the Federal Chambers, which have been informed by the Government. It is estimated that the increased duties will bring in a revenue of about 6,866,000f. to the Federal Exchequer.

GENEVA RIOTS ENQUIRY.

The special judge, who was appointed by the Swiss government to enquire into the November riots, which took place at Geneva, has concluded his work. His report has been sent to the Federal Authorities.

SWITZERLAND'S STOCK OF GOLD.

Switzerland's stock of gold, according to the latest statistics, has increased fivefold in the last 18 months and is only slightly less than that of the Bank of England (which is about £120,000,000).

To meet any danger of the mass withdrawal of capital, Switzerland has eight deposits of more than £50,000,000.

It is impossible to compute the vast wealth stored for safety in the vaults of Swiss banks by foreign investors, but it is known that private individuals alone have deposited millions in bar gold.

AMALGAMATION OF TWO CANTONS.

The initiative to re-unite the cantons of Basle and Basle county, has made some progress, over 12,000 signatures have so far been collected.

PROF. PICCARD'S LATEST.

Professor Piccard, the Swiss scientist famous for his ascent into the stratosphere, is to lecture

on his theories to the Blackhawk tribe of Red Indians.

This was revealed just before the professor sailed for the United States. It is said that the Indians have displayed great interest in the professor's work.

The "fee" for the lecture will be the gift of a ceremonial Indian costume and headdress and the conferring of a honorary chieftainship in the tribe.

NEW SWISS ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVE.

A 1,000 h.p. electric locomotive of revolutionary design is nearing completion in Switzerland. While arranged to work the single-phase 15,000 volt supply of the Swiss Federal Railways, the provision of a mercury-arc rectifier eliminates the motor commutators, and also the starting resistances, tap and reversing switches from the main circuit. The locomotive is of the 1-C-1 type, with two large motors driving 5 ft. 3 in. diameter wheels through triangular rods. The overall length of the locomotive is 38ft., and the maximum speed 50 m.p.h., while the braking is on the regenerative system.

TWO ANNIVERSARIES.

Few will remember the two catastrophes which occurred on the 7th and 11th of January 70 years ago, which plunged the mountain village Bedretto, near Airolo, and the town of Locarno, into deep mourning. Early in the year 1863, exceedingly heavy snow falls were witnessed, and the mountain passes were closed to any postal traffic for a longer period than usual. When, in the spring the snow started to melt, the danger of avalanches throughout the Bedretto Valley became imminent, and on January the 7th, shortly after noon, a mighty avalanche surprised the small village. In a few minutes, all the houses, with the exception of two, were buried beneath a tremendous mass of snow. 31 of the inhabitants lost their lives, and the survivors everything they possessed.

Four days later, during a service in the Antonius church at Locarno, the roof collapsed, owing to the great weight of snow, which had accumulated, and 46 members of the congregation perished, and many were seriously injured. A collection throughout Switzerland for the victims of these two tragedies greatly helped to mitigate the distress.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

Burglars entered the premises of a butcher at the Unterstrass. The safe was broken open and an amount of 1,370f. was stolen, as well as two bank deposit books. About a "Zentner" of sausages was also missing.

M. Ernst Baltis, partner in the firm Ernst Baltis, was shot at and seriously injured, by one of the workmen who was under notice.

BERNE.

M. Cuendet, one of the best known military pilots in Switzerland, was killed when flying on a Devotion Acroplane. The plane crashed and was burnt out. M. Cuendet took his brevet in 1911 at the Blériot Flying School in Paris. The Swiss Flying Corps has lost thus one of their finest pilots.

The late Professor Jacob Kunz of the University at Berne, has left nearly 200,000f. for various charitable institutions. The "Inselspital" in Berne alone, receives 100,000f.

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The bear pit in Berne has received six new inmates. The "Mrs. Vreneli and Julia" have both presented their respective husbands with three children each; both mothers and children are doing well. The "bear" family now numbers 18.

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Lieutenant Gerber, the wellknown glider flyer, took off from the Wengernalp and landed safely at Unterseen, near Interlaken.

LUCERNE.

Four young boys were skating on the Mauensee, when the ice suddenly gave way, and the boys were thrown into the water, three of them were saved, whilst the fourth, Werner Heimann (17) from Sursee was drowned.

* * *

M. Jean Häfelin-Vorberg, Manager of the Cantonal Bank in Lucerne has celebrated his 25th Jubilee as head of this institution.

BASLE.

M. Wohler, a former grand councillor and member of the communist party has been dismissed from the communist party on account of disagreements with the policy of the party.

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From Basle comes the news of the death of M. W. Moor-Voss, who was for many years Manager of the Cantonal Bank, he enjoyed a great reputation in financial circles of the town of Basle.

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The well-known author Anna Fierz, who died last August, left an amount of 30,000f. to be given to various institutions.

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From Basle comes the news of the death of M. Benoit A. Dreyfus-Brettauer, senior partner in the renowned banking house of Dreyfus Söhne, M. Dreyfus was a well-known personality in Swiss banking and financial circles.

* * *

Dr. B. Wyss from Balm (Solothurn), has been appointed rector of the "Humanistischen Gymnasiums" at Basle, in succession to Dr. Fritz Schäublin. Dr. Wyss, who was born in 1905 studied at the Universities of Zurich, Berlin and Basle.

FRIBOURG.

The military tribunal of the 2nd division has sentenced 5 soldiers who took part in the riots which occurred on the 8th of October last. Imprisonments varying from three months to 17 days were inflicted.

* * *

The well-known and reputed Chocolate Works Villars in Fribourg, have given an amount of 20,000f. for charitable purposes in the canton of Fribourg.

GENEVA.

The population of the canton of Geneva numbers 178,374. (62,442 Genevese, 74,043 Swiss from other cantons and 41,889 foreigners). The town of Geneva has a population of 129,344.

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National Councillor Nicole, who was arrested for having taken a leading part in the Geneva riots, has been temporarily liberated from prison, for reasons of health.

* * *

M. Henri Sadoux, late Editor of the "L'Indépendance Helvétique" died at Geneva at the age of 60.

AARAU.

The Accounts of the Federal Gymnastic Festival which took place last year at Aarau, close with a profit amounting to 100,000f. The Federal Gymnastic Society will receive 25,000f., 10,000f. will go to the "Bürgerturnverein Aarau," and 65,000 f. have been earmarked for the erection of a Sports Pavillion and ground at Aarau.

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The saw mill Baltenschwiler at Rheinsulz, near Laufenburg, was totally destroyed by fire, the damage caused is estimated to exceed 100,000f.

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The death is reported from Brugg, of Dr. Leopold Froelich at the age of 72. The deceased was a great authority on mental diseases, and from 1902-1922 was head of the Königsfelden Asylum.

* * *

M. Ernst Dähler, Manager of the Commercial Bank in Olten, has been killed accidentally. M. Dähler who is a major in the army, was busy cleaning a service revolver, when suddenly a shot rang out and he dropped down mortally wounded, he was at once taken to hospital, where he died the following day.

APPENZELL A. Rh.

The late Mlle. Mathilde Alder in Herisau, has left an amount of 120,500f. for charitable institutions, the community of Herisau receives 100,000f.

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ST. GALLEN.

Mlle. Frieda Hilti, residing at Schloss Wardenberg has given an amount of 121,000f. towards the installation of the hospital at Grabs.

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M. Hermann Tobler, founder of the "Landes-Zeitungshaus" Hof Oberkirch, has died at the Krankenhaus Uznach; he was for many years a member of the Grand Council.