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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

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## HOME NEWS

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### FEDERAL.

#### DEATH OF COLONEL SONDEREGGER. †

The death is reported from Berne of Colonel Emil Sonderegger, late Chief of Staff of the Swiss Army.

Colonel Sonderegger was born in 1868 at Herisau (Appenzell A/Rh.), where he received his schooling. Later he entered his father's Embroidery firm, but he did not feel very happy in his business career, and so decided to change same to a military one.

He took his commission in 1889 as lieutenant of artillery, and in 1896 he was promoted to captain and at the same time transferred to the Divisional Staff, where he remained for 3 years. In 1901 he was gazetted as Major, and took over the command of the battalion 94. From 1905-1906 he was on the Staff of the 3rd Army-Corps, and later on Chief of Staff of the 7th Division. At the end of 1906 he was promoted Lieutenant-Colonel, in which capacity he took over the command of the 28th Infantry regiment. Four years later he advanced to Colonel, and he was appointed at the same time Chief of Staff of the 3rd Army Corps. In 1912 he received the command of the 17th Infantry Brigade, which command he changed two years later with the one of the 3rd Mountain Brigade. In 1918 Colonel Sonderegger advanced to the command of the 4th Division which post he occupied until August 1920, when he succeeded Colonel von Sprecher as Chief of the General Staff.

In 1923 he resigned from his post, owing to differences between him and the Chief of the Federal Military Dept., the late Federal Councillor Scheurer.

Colonel Sonderegger made a name for himself in the efficient way he handled the situation during the General Strike in 1918 in Zurich.

In later years he took a great interest in the "Fronten" Movement in Switzerland, where his activities were, however, viewed with mixed feelings. His efforts in the political arena were not very successful but his name will always be linked up as one of the most efficient officers of the Swiss Army. —

The funeral took place last Tuesday at the Nydekkirche in Berne. The following eminent personalities were noticed in the Funeral procession: Federal-Councillor Baumann, late Federal Councillor Häberlin, Colonel Roost, Chief of the General Staff, Army-Corps Commanders Guisan and Wille, Division Commanders Bridel, de Diesbach and Miescher, as well as a great number of officers of all ranks. The Funeral oration was held by Colonel Bircher, President of the Swiss Officers Association.

### TIR FEDERAL FRIBOURG.

A preliminary opening of the Tir Federal took place on Saturday and Sunday last, when representatives of the Swiss Press were officially received. At the same time the Première of the "Festspiel," "Mon Pays" took place before an audience of 4,500, and was enthusiastically received. The scenario is written by Paul Bondalaz, Romont, and the music by Abbé I. Bovet, in Fribourg.

On Sunday morning trial shooting began; over 45,000 marksmen are expected to take part in the shooting competition which is to last for three weeks.

### SWISS CUSTOMS RECEIPTS.

The customs receipts for the 2nd quarter of 1934 amount to 72.6 million francs, or nearly 4 million francs more than in the 2nd quarter of 1933. (68.7 mill.).

## NEW SWISS STAMPS.

Switzerland has now been provided with a series of striking postage stamps of a pictorial nature in place of the unassuming types so long in use. The designs, which are well chosen, represent the Staubbach Falls, Mt. Pilatus, Chillon Castle, Rhône Glacier, the Gothard Railway, Via Mala Gorge, and Rhine Falls.

### EXPULSION OF NAZI POLICE SPY.

The Federal Council has ordered the expulsion from the country of Albert Samter, who, together with his wife, is stated to have been a member of General Göring's secret State police.

It is alleged that Albert Samter acted as an agent provocateur, instigating breaches of the German currency restrictions and betraying his dupes to the German Customs authorities. When arrested he was making contacts in German refugee quarters in Zürich, and it is thought that he was also making plans to give information on anti-Nazi activities to the German authorities.

### SUNBATHING VETO.

The Swiss Alpine Club is determined to put a stop to sun bathing and nudism, which, owing to the intense heat wave, have become increasingly popular at climbers' shelter huts in the mountains.

"Such practices may be tolerated at lakes and plages," says the warning, "but they are intensely obnoxious to real mountaineers and to the peasant population. Unless these exhibitions stop immediately, the latter will take the law into their own hands."

Orders have been given to caretakers of mountain huts to expel any tourist insufficiently clad.

### RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION.

On August 15th next, the 52-mile line from Berne to Lucerne is to be opened to electric traction. The conversion has been proceeding since 1932. On the same day the electric service over the Biel-Soncobel line, is to be extended from Soncobel to La Chaux-de-Fonds, a distance of 18 miles.

### SWISS STUDENTS PROTEST.

The National Union of Swiss Students Association has addressed to the head of the German Students Association a letter of protest against the alleged violent death of Dr. F. Beck, the director of the Foreign and Academic Exchange in Munich.

It is believed that Dr. Beck was brutally murdered by students in Munich at the time of the executions of Nazi S.A. chiefs to pay off old scores.

### ASSISTING POOR BRIDES.

In Switzerland it is the custom for engaged girls, whatever their social standing, to possess a complete trousseau, without which they have a poor chance of getting married. A society has been formed to enable poor girls to acquire this necessary asset. Each applicant is required to submit a medical certificate showing that she is in good health and fit to marry, the society's aim being not only to help poor girls to marry, but to encourage earlier and healthier marriages for the benefit of the country as a whole. The society relies chiefly upon wealthy brides for its funds, these being asked to deny themselves of unnecessary display and contribute the amount saved to the fund to help their poorer sisters.

### EXPORT OF ARMS.

The Swiss Government have notified the Secretary-General of the League of Nations that when they announced their decision to prohibit all exports of arms and war materials to Bolivia and Paraguay, they were unaware that a contract for 25 semi-automatic rifles was in course of fulfilment. Permission to export the arms by September 30 at the latest, has been granted; but with this exception the prohibition is being maintained without reservations or conditions.

### LOCAL.

#### ZURICH.

Alfred Ilg, son of a former Abyssinian Minister, who practised as an advocate at Zurich, has surrendered to the police. His defalcations exceed 300,000 francs; it is reported that he suffered heavy losses through speculation, and that he used money which was entrusted to him by some of his clients.

## BERNE.

M. Emil Dietrich, late Town President of Burgdorf, has died at the age of 74, he has rendered great services to his native town during his term of office.

\* \* \*

Street accidents in Berne have attained disquieting dimensions. In the month of June alone 100 accidents were registered, with one dead and 59 persons injured, causing material damage of about 30,000 francs.

\* \* \*

The firm Gebr. Schnyder and Co., soap manufacturers at Biel, have celebrated the 100th anniversary of their Foundation. The management of the firm has remained during all this time in the same family.

## LUCERNE.

Burglars entered the premises of the Jewellery Firm Otto Lüscher at the Krongasse, and made away with jewellery amounting to 17,000 francs.

## URI.

Heavy storms over Wassen and the Meiental caused considerable damage.

## BASLE.

At the age of 61, Colonel Carl Frey died at Binningen; he was born in 1873 in Basle, the son of the late Federal Councillor Emil Frey. The deceased was for 9 years a member of the Grand Council and had a distinguished military career. In 1912 he commanded the battalion 53, and 5 years later was promoted to Lieutenant-Colonel, when he was entrusted with the command of the 23rd regiment. On his retirement from the Army he received the grade of Colonel z. D.

## FRIBOURG.

Dr. Andreas Gigon, Professor of Theology at the University of Fribourg, has been appointed rector of the University for 1934/35.

## GENEVA.

Three young men who went for a climbing expedition on the Salève, fell down near a spot called "Les Carrières," one of them, Elvio Formara was killed, the other two received serious injuries.

\* \* \*

The States Council has appointed Dr. Fernand Chodat, professor in ordinary, for botany at the University of Geneva. Dr. Ernest Delaquis has been honoured with the title of Professor *honoris causa* of the Geneva University.

## ARGAU.

From Sins comes the news of the death of M. Lucas Villiger, for many years a member of the Grand Council and "Sektionschef" at Sins.

## ST. GALLEN.

Late States Councillor J. Geel has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary at St. Gall. M. Geel was, at one time, one of the leaders of the Liberal Party. He was a member of the Grand Council for 30 years, (1891-21). In 1896 he entered Parliament (States Council) over which he presided in 1914/15. For over 25 years he was President of the Cantonal Tribunal, and on several occasions he refused a post as Federal Judge. He held his seat in Parliament for 35 years.

## GRISON.

Three mountaineers undertook, last Sunday, the ascent of the Fergenkegel; suddenly, the guide, Jacques Gees, aged 30, slipped and fell into a crevasse, his body was not recovered until Monday.

\* \* \*

A collision between two tram-cars occurred last Thursday at the "Place Chauderon," eleven passengers, and one of the conductors were more or less seriously injured.

\* \* \*

Owing to the fact that the States Council has refused to buy the Castle of Oron, a Committee has been formed in order to safeguard the conservation of this historical building.

## TICINO.

A fire destroyed the Hotel "Belvedere" at Aragnio near Lugano. A part of the furniture was saved; the fire brigade was greatly hampered owing to the scarcity of water.

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The Cantonal Government has declared the 1st of August (National Day) to be a Public Holiday.