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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. P. BOEHRINGER.

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HOME NEWS



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FEDERAL.

GUNMEN HUNT IN SWITZERLAND.

At last the efforts of a considerable Police Force have been successful, in tracing the two bandits who raided the Wever Bank in Basle early this year, and killed the two cashiers Messrs. Benter and Kaufmann. Basle detectives succeeded in tracking the two men to a lodging house at the Sperrstrasse (Kleinbasel). When they burst open the door the bandits emptied the magazines of their revolvers at them, killing one instantaneously (Corporal Vollenweider) and wounding the other seriously (Policeman Nafzger), the latter has since died. An exciting chase followed, but the fugitives, riding stolen bicycles escaped. Near Laufen, they were met by two detectives, Maritz and Gohl, they fired point blank at them killing Maritz outright and wounding Gohl seriously.

Reinforcements of police were then rushed from the cantons of Basle, Soleure and Berne, and a cordon of 400 police was flung round the district in which the men were hiding. —

A terrible tragedy, resulting in the death of an innocent man, took place during the police operations. A young bank-clerk, M. Scheidegger, son of Director Scheidegger from Laufen, riding a motor-cycle with a pillion passenger, noticed a car without lights by the roadside. Thinking an accident had happened he drew up, and his passenger dismounted and walked towards the car. Detectives in the car, which was a unit of the patrol system, opened fire, thinking that the two young men, who corresponded to the description issued, were the bandits. M. Scheidegger died later on at the Hospital at Basle, to which he was taken by an ambulance.

While the armed police were converging on what was believed to be the bandits refuge, private detectives learned that the men had previously been seen in the company of two shop girls in Basle.

The next stage in the drama was a telephone call from the refugees to one of the girls, they asked her to bring provisions to the Margarethen Park. The girl (Miss D. Schupp) immediately telephoned to police headquarters who asked her to carry out the instructions. She went to the spot, delivered provisions, and returned to inform the police that the bandits were in a certain locality.

With this information the police surrounded the area — a sort of wooded parkland. The move must have been detected by the bandits, for soon afterwards two shots were heard by the police.

Fearing a trap the officer in command decided to wait until daylight before closing in. At dawn police entered the wood and discovered the two men dead. One was lying on a seat and the other huddled on the ground. Both had been shot through the brain, and there are indications that each took his own life.

The two criminals, Waldemar Velte, age 28, and Kurt Sandweg, age 25, are Germans and come from good families from the Wuppertal.

It is said that while living in Germany they bore good reputations as hard working mechanics.

The three policemen, who were killed (Vollenweider, Maritz and Nafzger) were buried together on Tuesday last. Detective Gohl, who was hit by a bullet is getting on satisfactorily.

The General Management of the "Kredit Anstalt" has sent a cheque amounting to 10,000 frs. to be distributed amongst the relations of the victims, the "Schweiz. Bankverein" has sent an equal amount.

SWISS TEXTILE EXPORTS ADVANCE.

Textile exports from Switzerland during November, 1933, totalled 15,000,000 frs., which is 40 per cent. higher than the total for the corresponding month of 1932, viz., 10,700,000 frs. The difference of 4,300,000 frs. is made up of 2,400,000 frs. (cotton fabrics), 1,100,000 frs. (silk fabrics), and 800,000 frs. (rayon).

ANNIVERSARY MESSAGE OF THE SWISS MINISTER.

Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, has sent to the "Financial News" the following message, on the occasion of their fiftieth anniversary:

"The fiftieth anniversary of so important a journal as *The Financial News* is an event, the significance of which is by no means confined to the world of the Press itself. Congratulations will reach you to-day from innumerable quarters, national and international, and, for obvious reasons a diplomatic Mission in Great Britain must be among the first to offer you, in appreciation of the daily information and guidance provided by your paper, their cordial good wishes."

SWISS BANKING REFORM.

The new Swiss Federal Bill for the improvement of the Swiss banking system will be brought before the Federal Parliament at the spring session. Its adoption is a foregone conclusion.

The Committee of experts entrusted by the Federal Department of Finances with the examination and criticism of the Bill has signified entire approval of its provisions.

The Bill stipulates that all banks, savings banks and financial institutions and companies appealing for public capital shall be subject to the provisions of the law. No new banking institution may be established in Switzerland unless and until its statutes, organisation and capital arrangements shall have been investigated by a special committee of control.

All existing banks must publish a detailed balance-sheet each year. Banks with a capital of over Swiss Frs. 1,000,000 must publish a half-yearly balance-sheet, and concerns with a capital of over Swiss Frs. 100,000,000 must send in once a month a full and detailed statement of accounts to the Swiss Federal Bank.

No foreign investment exceeding Frs. 10,000,000 may be made by any Swiss bank without the consent in writing of the Swiss Federal Bank — this with a view of putting a brake on the export of Swiss capital.

Special items in the Bill deal with a guarantee which every bank must provide for deposits, in order to keep the funds of every Swiss bank as liquid as possible. All short-term commitments must strictly correspond to readily realisable assets.

A SWISS FASCIST PARTY.

A Swiss Fascist Party has been formed in Italy, in spite of the warnings of the Swiss Minister in Rome. A group has been created in Milan and the formation of similar groups is contemplated in Rome and Florence.

After considering the report of the creation of a Swiss Fascist Party in Italy, the Swiss Federal Council decided that it cannot legally prevent or prohibit the formation of Fascist groups abroad and can only disapprove of such a movement.

DIPLOMATIC APPOINTMENT.

The Spanish Government has appointed Monsieur Lopez Oliván, Spanish Minister in Berne.

LANGUAGE CENSUS IN SWITZERLAND.

There are 850,000 French-speaking, 240,000 Italian-speaking, 4,300 Romanch-speaking, and 2,850,000 German-speaking inhabitants in Switzerland.

SWISS EMIGRATION.

During the year 1933 altogether 1,167 Swiss citizen have emigrated. (1932: 1301).

SWISS BANK'S DIVIDENDS.

The following dividends have been declared: Bank in Menziken, 5½ per cent. (1932: 5½%); Schweizerische Hypothekbank Solothurn, 5½ per cent. (1932: 5½%); St. Gallische Hypothekbank, St. Gallen, 4½ per cent. (1932: 4½%);

CITY SWISS CLUB.

PLEASE RESERVE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10th, 1934.

for the

DINNER AND DANCE

at the

MAY FAIR HOTEL, Berkeley Square, W.1.

Ersparniskasse des Amtsbezirks Interlaken, 5 per cent. (1932: 5%); Banque populaire d'épargne, Lausanne 5½ per cent.; Hypothekbank Lenzburg, 5½ per cent. (1932: 5½%); Allg. Aargauische Ersparniskasse, 5 per cent. (1932: 5%); Spar und Leihkasse Hutwil, 7 per cent. 1932: 7%.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

M. Hofmeister-Locher, a former Manager of the "Crédit Suisse" in Zurich has celebrated his 75th birthday anniversary.

* * *

The black panther, which escaped from the Zurich Zoological Garden last October, has come to a rather inglorious end. A peasant met the animal in a little hamlet, near Uznach (Ct. Zurich) and killed it with a hatchet. Not being aware that he had killed the famous panther, of which all the papers had written, he skinned the animal, and made sausage meat of it; and as this happening took place shortly before Xmas, the panther no doubt ousted the turkey. The peasant will receive the reward which was offered for the capture of the wild animal.

BERNE.

The University of Berne is celebrating shortly the 100th anniversary of its foundation. The Rector has received an anonymous donation of 10,000 frs. which amount will be used for research work.

* * *

M. Henri Sandoz, of Tavannes, born in 1878 at Le Locle, has sent in his resignation, as a member of Parliament (Nat. Council), his successor will be M. Billieux, State Prosecutor in Porrentruy.

LUCERNE.

Lieutenant-colonel Peter Burki has been appointed "Platzkommandant" of the town of Lucerne, in succession to Colonel Endemann, who has resigned.

NEUCHÂTEL.

The death is reported from Neuchâtel of Doctor Emile Paris, at the age of 81; previous to a practice which he opened in Geneva, he was assistant to the famous Professor Kocher. In 1882 he returned to his native canton; he was a member of the Grand Council and for many years President of the community of Peseux.

FRIBOURG.

The accounts of the town of Fribourg for 1933 show a deficit of 35,918 frs.

GLARUS.

Mr. and Mrs. Fridolin Brander-Hauser, from Glarus, have celebrated on the 19th of this month their diamond wedding anniversary. Their age is 83 and 80 respectively.

A CORRECTION.

Last issue mentioned erroneously a reception given on January 12th at the Legation to the Colony. The small party given at 21, Bryanston Square on that date was an entirely informal affair, between office hours and dinner, arranged specially and at short notice for the students of the S.M.S. School and the Staffs of the Swiss Bank Corporation and the Swiss Federal Railways Agency.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY LTD.

Annual Banquet and Ball

on

Saturday, February 3rd 1934

at the

MIDLAND GRAND HOTEL,
ST. PANCRAS, - - N.W.1.

RECEPTION DINNER DANCING
at 7 p.m. at 7.30 p.m. 9.30 p.m. to 1 a.m.

TICKETS at 12/6 can be obtained at Swiss House, 54-55, Fitzroy Square, W.1. (Tel. Museum 6693), and City Office, 24, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.4. (Tel. City 7719) and Swiss Observer, 23 Leonard Street, E.C.2.