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The Swiss Observer

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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

FIRST OF AUGUST CELEBRATIONS IN SWITZERLAND.

The Swiss National Day was celebrated throughout Switzerland on Saturday last.

M. Meyer, President of the Swiss Confederation addressed a large audience on the "Alten Tonhalleplatz" in Zurich. In Berne, M. Seematter, President of the cantonal government was the spokesman.

The Minster in Basle was filled to its capacity, the congregation was addressed by various speakers, amongst them, National Councillor, Dr. Conradt.

FIRST OF AUGUST CELEBRATIONS IN ROME AND VIENNA.

Minister Paul Ruegger received the Swiss Colony at the Legation in Rome on the occasion of the 1st of August celebration.

The Swiss Colony in Vienna assembled at the hotel "Zum Auge Gottes" to celebrate our National Day. Dr. Jäger, Swiss Minister made a patriotic speech.

NEW CHIEF OF SWISS GENERAL STAFF.

Colonel of Division Jakob Labhart has been nominated Chief of the General Staff in succession to the late Colonel H. Roost.

Colonel Labhart was born in 1881 in Steckborn, and was by profession an engineer, he entered in 1906 into the Federal Instruction Corps. From 1916-1921 he occupied a leading position in the firm Bally at Schönenwerd, and later he held the post as Vice-Director of the Federal Labour Office. (Eidg. Arbeitsamt). In the year 1924 Colonel Labhart re-entered into the Military Administration where he was appointed head of the section for military transports in the General Staff. At the end of 1929 he was promoted to the rank of Colonel, taking over the command of the 4th artillery brigade, three years later he was put at the head of the 13th Infantry Brigade which command he held for some time.

On December 3rd, 1934, he was nominated chief of arms (Waffenchef) of the cavalry and shortly afterwards he obtained the rank of Colonel of division.

OUR STATESMEN ON HOLIDAY.

M. Meyer, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Federal Councillors Pilet and Obrecht have started their annual vacation.

RETURN OF FEDERAL COUNCILLOR MINGER.

Federal Councillor R. Minger, who was on sick leave has taken up his duties again, his health has been completely restored.

MISSING SWISS MOUNTAINERS FOUND.

The three Swiss mountaineers which were missing on the Monte Rosa have returned safely. They were held up for three days owing to a snow storm.

SWISS DEFENCE LOAN.

Parliament having sanctioned the raising of an internal loan amounting to Frs. 235,000,000 to be used entirely for armament purposes, the Swiss Federal Council has just made public the conditions of the first tranche of Frs. 80,000,000, to be issued at par from 21st September to 15th October, 1936. Interest will amount to 3 per cent., and the bonds will run for 12 years. The loan is exempted from stamp duties. After the third year of the running of the loan one-tenth of the nominal amount will be repaid and the remaining nine-tenths at the end of every subsequent year.

It was anticipated that the Swiss Federal Council would issue Baby Bonds, in order to give small investors a chance of subscribing to the loan, but the smallest bond to be issued amounts to Frs. 100. There are also bonds of Frs. 500, Frs. 1,000 and Frs. 5,000. The issue of Baby Bonds, it is stated in this connection, would have offered the people a chance to demonstrate their patriotism.

So far, Swiss national loans have been taken up through the banks, but for the first time in the history of national loans post offices will now receive subscriptions, apart from banks. The rate of interest of 3 per cent. corresponds to that usually paid on saving accounts. Cantonal loans were offered at far more attractive terms in the recent past, the interest amounting to 4½ per cent. and the price of issue varying between 96.5 per cent. and 99 per cent. odd. The terms of the present loan intimate that subscribers are expected to make a sacrifice. It is felt, nevertheless, that the loan will be a success.

EUROPE'S FASTEST LIFT.

What is claimed to be the highest and fastest lift in Europe has just been completed on the mountaintop of the Burgenstock, above Lucerne.

The lift is 528 feet high, and that distance is covered in 62 seconds.

CYCLISTS ON THE FOOTPATHS.

In Basle, in several streets the footpaths are wide and so a separate path, 8ft. to 10ft. wide, has been marked out on them for cyclists. Little used footpaths in country lanes have been turned over completely to cyclists.

FORTY YEARS JUNGFRAU RAILWAY.

On July 29th the "Jungfrau" Railway has celebrated its 40th anniversary. The work began in 1896, seven years later (1903) the Eigergwand station was opened, in 1907 the Eismeer station was inaugurated and in 1912 the last tunnel to the "Jungfraujoch" was pierced. In 1924 the "Berghaus Jungfraujoch" was opened.

FIFTH FEDERAL YODLING FESTIVAL.

The 5th Federal Yodling Festival will be held at Sologhurn on August 8th and 9th.

RECORD HIGH DIVE.

Armand Girard, the Swiss diver, beat the world's high dive record by plunging 40 metres (about 131 feet) from the cliffs of Chaillexon into the Doubs, which at that point forms the Franco-Swiss frontier.

SWISS NATIONAL BANK'S GOLD RESERVE.

During the week ended July 31st the gold reserve of the Swiss National Bank rose by 9,500,000 francs and reached a total of 1,440,600,000 francs. During the same time the bank note circulation increased by 46,300,000 francs and totalled 1,292,200,000 francs. On July 31st the gold reserve represented 88.66 per cent. of all the engagements of the bank.

SWISS BAN LIFTED.

The Swiss Federal Government has decided to withdraw the ban from entering Swiss territory placed on the eight Italian journalists who staged a demonstration against the Emperor of Abyssinia when he addressed the League Council in July.

The Government has taken this action as it has already been decided that the League would have no objections to the journalists attending meetings.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

King Boris and the Queen Jeanne of Bulgaria have made a short stay in Zurich. They have also visited the Bernese Oberland and the canton of Grisons.

BERNE.

The numbers of the principal winning tickets of the Seva Lottery are: No. 132,215 (250,000frs.); No. 144,448 (100,000frs.) and No. 118,717 (50,000frs.).

* * *

M. Friedrich Hug, President of the "Kaufmännischen Direktoriums" in St. Gall has been elected a member of the "Bankrat" of the National Bank, in succession to the late M. Mäder, National Councillor.

* * *

The death took place at Affoltern of M. A. Widmer, at the age of 81. The deceased was for many years teacher of gymnastics at the "Progymnasium" in Berne. He was a well-known personality in Swiss Gymnastic circles.

LUCERNE.

The death occurred recently at Lucerne of M. G. Jenny-Jenny, who was from 1908-1919 Swiss Consul at Kiew.

M. Jenny who hailed from the canton of Glarus spent the greater part of his life in Russia where he rendered great services to the Swiss residents.

URI.

A motor-car travelling on the Axenstrasse between Tellspalte and Sisikon left the road on trying to overtake another car and fell down over 60 metres.

The driver of the car, Mr. E. Strässler, from Rorbas, (Kt. Zurich) received serious injuries, his son was slightly hurt, whilst Mrs. Strässler, aged 50, was killed outright.

SCHWYZ.

The inauguration of the new Federal archive in Schwyz took place on the 1st of August, in the presence of Federal Councillor Etter, authorities from the cantons Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden, and a large number of spectators from all parts of Switzerland.

The "Bundesbrief" was carried amidst much solemnity to its new abode; after this very impressive ceremony a "Festspiel" was performed, portraying various historical events of the "Urkantone."

Federal Councillor Etter made the official speech in which he stressed the absolute necessity that unity should prevail throughout the country in a time which is grave and full of dangers.

BASLE.

Pastor D. G. Benz, since 1897 preacher at the St. Matthäus Church in Basle has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary.

* * *

M. Wilhelm von Gonten-Wehr, Manager of the "Ersten Aktienbrennerei" Basel, has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary.

TICINO.

Mme. Margaretha Merlini has celebrated her 101st birthday anniversary at Locarno.

VAUD.

M. Jean Piaget, at present Professor at the University of Geneva, has been appointed Professor of psychology at the University of Lausanne.

OLYMPIC GAMES.

The 11th Olympiad of modern times was opened in the grand manner, with brass bands playing, flags flying, crowds cheering, with masses of German lads and maidens of pronounced Nordic appearance, dressed in white, forming a background to the least excited of all present, the competing athletes. Black frock-coated officials, complete with top hats provided an effective contrast to the innumerable gorgeous uniforms which, in turn, made Herr Hitler's quiet and simple uniform all the more outstanding.

It was great pity that the impressively staged opening ceremony in the Olympic Stadium did, for the B.B.C. commentator, in part not run according to "his" plan. Dr. Lewald's speech, as President of the Olympic Organising Committee, which "he" expected, for some mysterious reason, to last for about one minute (!) happened to be of considerable longer duration. Instead of giving at least a minority of listeners a chance of hearing this really fine oration, the B.B.C. commentator, bored stiff (so he said) by this unexpected avalanche of obviously unintelligible words, took the lead from Wilkie Bard: "The music does not matter, let's get on with the patter." Now Wilkie Bard's patter can be most amusing; the patter we were treated to from Berlin was, unfortunately, nothing but irritating. The speech began with: "Mein Führer!" would you believe it, the B.B.C. comment, in a whisper, was: "This is Herr Hitler speaking." Well, well! There may be many incomprehensible things occurring in Nazi Germany, but it is hardly likely that Herr Hitler would start a speech by addressing himself. A clear illustration of the dangers in commentating on an event in a foreign country without at least a working knowledge of the language. When finally Herr Hitler did rise for his speech, it consisted of one short sentence, delivered in his well known crisp and commanding voice, declaring open the Olympic Games in Berlin.