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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

AT OUR LEGATION.

The members of our Colony will learn with regret that popular Dr. Rezzonico, Counsellor at our Legation, will leave us shortly to take up a diplomatic appointment at Berne.

M. Alexandre Girardet, at present a vice-director of "Adolf Saurer" in Arbon, has been appointed Secretary of Legation and "Charge d'Affaires économiques" and will in due course join the London Legation as Commercial Attaché. M. Girardet was born in 1889 in Pully (Vaud) and has already been attached to the Political Department from 1917 to 1929 in whose service he spent some considerable time in Warsaw and Washington.

DIRECTOR BLAU RETIRES.

Director Hans Blau, in charge of the Federal Excise Administration is retiring at the end of this year. He has occupied the present post since 1918 and started his career in the Post Office; he is now 69.

A GRAVE AVIATION ACCIDENT.

"On their way to the International Aviation meeting at Lugano, six officers of the Swiss Air Force lost their lives when their machines crashed into the mountain side of the Drusberg and Heuberg in the canton Schwyz. Of the five war-planes which left Dübendorf last Saturday, in beautiful weather, only one reached Lugano, the burned remains of the other four being recovered on Sunday morning after prolonged searching. It is said that the five machines which were flying at an altitude of about 2,500 metres got into a heavy cloud bank when reaching the Muotatal.

The following are the names of the five victims: Lieut. O. E. Stäuble, age 24, from Basle; Lieut. C. A. Ponetti, age 29, from Zurich; Lieut. S. W. Mummenthaler, age 32, living at Heerbrugg (St. Gall); Hans Schlegel, age 27, from Dübendorf; Lieut. F. Delgrande, from Dübendorf and Lieut. G. Romegalli, age 29, from Winterthur.

Two other officers suffered serious though not fatal injuries and are lying in the hospital of Einsiedeln; they are Capt. D. Bacilieri from Locarno and Lieut. H. Sommerhalder from Olten.

PENSION SCHEME OF THE FEDERAL RAILWAYS.

The special commission of the States Council to report on the reorganisation of the Pension Scheme of the Federal Railways has been unable to make any recommendations on account of the non-attendance of its members.

DENMARK RETALIATES ON SWITZERLAND.

Switzerland has recently made a great effort to increase production of milk. The result of this was naturally a falling-off in the imports of milk products, particularly butter.

Denmark, which was one of the largest suppliers of butter to Switzerland, has decided to retaliate by forbidding the import of Swiss watches into Denmark.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The late Director Oskar Wagner, of Winterthur, has left 50,000 Francs to charitable institutions.

* * *

After nearly five years' fighting in the courts a member of a local trade union has won his claim against his union; the latter took exception of his joining a political party opposed to the tenets of socialism and blacklisted him, i.e., prevented him from obtaining employment in his

particular trade. In a judgment reasoned in about fifty pages the Union is mulcted into the payment of Frs. 1,600 unemployment benefit and Frs. 6,000 damages apart from the considerable costs.

LUCERNE.

Music-lovers had a rare opportunity to hear the renowned Signor Arturo Toscanini conduct his first open-air concert, in the historic garden of the Villa Tribschen, on Thursday and Saturday afternoons 25th and 27th August.

The Villa is famous in music history, for it was there that Richard Wagner composed three of his operas — "Meistersinger," "Siegfried," and "Götterdämmerung," between 1866-72. Curiously enough, Wagner received the King of Bavaria and Nietzsche on the day when the "Siegfried Idyll" was first performed.

The Concert opened brightly with Rossini's Overture to the Opera "La Scala di Seta." Following this came Mozart's G-minor Symphony; the Prelude to the Third Act of "Meistersinger" and also the "Siegfried Idyll." After a short interval, Beethoven's Second Symphony was performed.

This Concert is of outstanding interest because in addition to the fact that the best soloists in Switzerland were taking part, they were using really valuable old Italian instruments. Among the violins were: 4 Stradivarius, 1 Guarnerius, 1 Amati, 2 Guadagnini, 3 Gagliano, and 5 Ruggieri instruments.

The combination of a skilled conductor in the highest sense of the word who had a well-trained orchestra at his finger-tips, and the delightful open-air surroundings of the Villa Tribschen on a brilliantly sunny afternoon — offered an exceptionally beautiful treat to all those who were lucky enough to secure admission. All the tickets were sold out before the performances which formed part of the local musical festival.

BASEL.

The socialist party has collected 15,300 signatures in their efforts to induce the town council to prohibit foreign fascist organisations in the canton.

SCHAFFHAUSEN.

Regierungsrat Dr. Otto Schärer died at the age of 62 after a lengthy illness. Studying for law, he was appointed District-Attorney in Zürich. In 1914 he returned to Schaffhausen where he became interested in municipal administration. At the end of 1928 Dr. Schärer was elected to the Regierungsrat.

LAUSANNE.

Germany has appointed an honorary consul for the cantons of Vaud and Neuchâtel, with residence in Lausanne.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

Storm clouds over Europe: While I am writing these lines, the paper boys are selling their "thrillers" and exhibiting placards with more than usually lurid lines, such as "Hitler on the French Frontier," "German Ambassador at the Foreign Office," "Czech Minister seeing Halifax," etc., all tending to stir up that feeling of anxiety which is so good for our souls and our business!

It seems a good time to think of holidays. To make preparations enabling one to leave everything connected with the daily business routine behind for a while, to get away from the daily newspapers, the fantastical headlines, the one-sided articles, which slowly but surely instil the poison of war psychology into man's heart until he is not in the least surprised when one fine morning he wakes up and reads that war has actually started over night.

Millions and millions would be able to tell each other "I told you so" and gather what consolation they could from the fact that their reading of events to come had been correct.

I dare say, it has nearly always been something like this. Even the niggers in darkest Africa are able, through their drums, to exhibit a tendency in scattering information among their brethren and so prepare them, psychologically for the "inevitable." Inevitable my hat!

It is the ordinary man, you and I, who prepare for war, because we have not got the guts to prepare for peace. War is always the result of taking the line of least resistance, however paradoxical this may seem. Think it out and tell me if I am wrong!

Enough. I do not believe that war will come, in any case not for a long time yet and meanwhile I am going to have a week's rest somewhere in a very remote and to most people quite unknown spot on the wildest part of the coast of Norfolk and there I shall look over the sea if it's fine, do a spot of fishing, but mostly dream away the idle hours and think what a wonderful, lovely world this might be, but for man, the Lord of the Creation! sez you!! Nay, not even Golf during that blessed week. Nothing but idle, lazy hours, light food, light beer and, I hope, deep dreamless sleep.

Storm Clouds of another character gave rise to the following article in the "Evening Times" of Glasgow, on August 20th, entitled:

A Storm in the Alps:

"You will be foolish," said the proprietor of the gästhaus, "to travel to-day — and over the Splügen Pass . . .!" He shrugged and pointed to the window. "It will be like that for 12 hours more."

For 12 hours already the rain had descended over, surely, the whole of Switzerland. Nothing was to be seen but rain — rain in sweeping, drenching curtains; rain roaring down the roads, cataracting from the chalet eaves, bursting from the unseen mountains in vertical rivers.

"We have to be in Italy this afternoon," we explained.

The proprietor shrugged again. "To find the sun?" he inquired sardonically.

"Yes," we said, "just that."

And we set off.

At the best of times the Splügen Pass is a sombre journey, a route of hair-raising serpentine, twisting from the awful gorge of Viamala up, up, and up through desolate peaks and plateaux until nearly 8,000 feet above the sea it reaches that place where Switzerland and Italy meet in the snow and ice.

To-day it was a lugubrious prospect, given even two souls intent upon sunshine and a willing, stout-hearted little car which thought nothing of London to Land's End in the day.

Like End of World.

We entered the Viamala. Rock walls hemmed the road in, rose perpendicularly a thousand feet on either side. The rock walls were curtained with falling water. In the gorge itself the river, swollen with the onslaught from the sky, hurled itself valleywards with a thunder like the end of the world.

No other car passed. Only a great grey camion, laden with Alpine troops, came sloshing through the road which was a river in itself, sounding a horn like a bugle. It looked an unhappy load, and it at least was going down.

There was never so much rain in the world at once. Even the gloom of the Viamala seemed like a shelter when we had left it for the open pass, where the air smelled of ice and rock and the sparse pines streamed water from their finger ends and there was nothing to be seen but blue-grey cloud and two hundred yards of climbing, gushing, pot-holed road.

A finger-post announced "1500 metres," which was something, even if something meant over 3,000 feet yet to climb. There was a faint hope that we might get through the clouds into sunshine, but it vanished at 2,000 metres, where a torrent of water deluged over the road and two people from the window of a sodden chalet looked in gloomy amazement at obvious foolhardiness.

The village beyond seemed to crouch round its cobbled street and bridge, water cascading from its wooden eaves. Most amazing thing was to calculate that scarcely a house must hold its occupants, for a full hundred and fifty people sheltering as best they might under gigantic umbrellas, lined the