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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

## **The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.**

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

The rolling of drums and couriers who rode from one remote mountain village to another called out every able-bodied Swiss to the defence of our country in reply to the war mobilisation order decreed by the Federal Council in the early hours of last Saturday. The order was expected and the response was instantaneous and complete. At the same time the control of foreigners has been intensified and the issue of visas by Swiss consulates abroad has been suspended.

Not affected by the mobilisation order are those dispensed from active service and the Swiss residing abroad under army leave.

A net surplus of 7.5 million francs is recorded by the Federal Railways for the twelve months to end of last year. This is the first time since 1930 that the accounts close with a balance on the right side. Revenue both from passenger and goods traffic have been favourably influenced by war conditions and compared with the previous period shows an increase of 11.8%. A saving of 5.6 million francs in working expenses has been secured and the total of 224 million is the lowest figure during the last 22 years. The surplus is to be applied to amortisation.

A considerable number of heavy bombs — seventeen have so far been traced — were dropped early on Friday morning last week on the railway line between Delémont and Courrendlin. The actual track was not touched but large craters were formed in the farmland on both sides of the railway line. The overhead wiring was slightly damaged and the bombardment took place a few minutes before the first train was due to pass.

Peaceful demonstrations of protest in front of the German Consulate and of sympathy in front of the Dutch Consulate were made last week-end by hundreds of students of the Zurich university.

In order to safeguard production in the canton St. Gall agricultural workers are prohibited from

leaving or changing their existing employment without the consent of the cantonal labour exchange. Another decree published by the cantonal authorities compels landowners to plant a fixed portion of their ground, if suitable, with potatoes.

Defalcations totalling about Frs.100,000 have been discovered in the accounts of the electricity supply department of Bulle.

A gift of over 131,000 francs has been received from America by the commune of Greifensee (Zurich). It is said to emanate from an old will of a Miss Regula Walder who emigrated with her parents to California in 1850.

The director of the Zoological Gardens in Geneva — a German — has now been returned to his flock as the tentative charge under which he has been arrested was found to be untenable.

An official search at the apartments of the German students at the Geneva university has resulted in disquieting discoveries; in the meantime the special lectures arranged for their benefit have been discontinued. These lectures or course of lectures are based on a long standing reciprocal agreement with certain German universities which enables law students of both nations to spend some terms abroad without the loss of "semestres." There are about 180 German students in Geneva of whom thirty are known to be organised under their own Führer. According to later reports three have been arrested and are awaiting trial by the military authorities for espionage.

The burdens or pleasures of a paterfamilias are to be specially catered for in Lugano where a new society or club is in course of formation exclusively for fathers of large families.

A farcical exhibition of Kantöngeist recently occupied the time of the Federal Tribunal. A burgher of a Berne commune residing permanently in Geneva had occasion to consult the local clinic on account of a troublesome foot; for necessitous people the treatment is gratis. The Geneva medical board asserted that as his was a Bernese foot the Bundesstadt was the only place where relief could be obtained but generously offered to pay the railway fare to Berne. In due course the foot was received and restored to its normal functions and the canton Berne rendered the usual doctor's bill to Geneva for the expenses incurred in the treatment. As payment of the charges was declined an inter-cantonal dispute ensued and after