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# The Swiss Observer

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

The British Minister in Berne, Sir Patrick Scrivener, has addressed a letter of thanks to the Swiss Foreign Minister, Monsieur M. Petitpierre, for the generous help which the Swiss people have given to the victims of the recent Flood disasters in Great Britain.

Monsieur A. Bentinck, the Dutch Minister in Berne has addressed a letter to the Swiss Government in which he expressed the warmest thanks of the Queen of Holland and her government for the great help the Swiss population has given to his country on the occasion of the Flood disasters.

The Federal Council has offered the traditional dinner to the heads of the accredited diplomatic missions in Berne. Amongst the guests were the members of the Federal Council *in corpore*, the Presidents of the Federal Supreme Court, the States and National Councils, the Mayor of the town of Berne and the President of the Municipal Council of Berne.

The Italian Minister in Berne, Monsieur Egidio Reale, held a reception at the Italian Legation, in honour of the Papal Nuncio, Mgr. Filippo Bernardini, accredited since 1935 to Berne, who is shortly vacating his post.

Amongst those present were: Federal-Councillor Petitpierre, former Federal-Councillors Minger, Pilet-Golaz and von Steiger, Federal Chancellor Oser, Schmucki, President of the States Council, Minister Zehnder, the Bishop of Basle and Lugano, Mgr. von Streng, and a great number of diplomats headed by the French ambassador, M. Jean Chauvel.

Federal Judge Walter Leuenberger has tendered his resignation to take effect next month. Dr. Leuenberger was from 1921-1936 a member of the Supreme Court of the Canton of Berne, and in 1936 was elected a member of the Federal Supreme Court in Lausanne.

The Swiss Government has announced its willingness to consider requests from foreign Governments that wish to raise their Berne legations to the rank of embassies.

By long-established tradition, Switzerland is represented abroad by ministers, and for this reason other countries have sent ministers plenipotentiary to Berne. The sole exception is France, who for three centuries has had an ambassador in Switzerland.

Several countries have expressed a wish to raise the status of their diplomatic missions in Berne, and the Swiss Government has decided that for reasons of international courtesy it can no longer ignore a practice that has become general. It is added that, as the transformation of Swiss legations abroad into embassies depends upon Parliament, the Federal Government could not at once apply the principle of reciprocity in the matter, but subject to the decision of Parliament, would be favourable to taking similar action later.

### Cantonal

Walter Kälin (aged 37) of Einsiedeln has been elected "Kantonsoberförster" in succession to the late National Councillor, Kaspar Knobel (Schwyz). The new "Oberförster" is the son of the former "Landammann" Karl Kälin of Einsiedeln. [A.T.S.]

Professor Dr. H. Hediger, Director of the Zoological Gardens in Basle, has accepted the post of Director of the Zoological Gardens in Zurich. [A.T.S.]

The theological faculty of the University of Zurich has bestowed the title of doctor of theology on Hans, Jakob Rinderknecht, the founder and head of the "Reformierten Heimstätte Boldern." [A.T.S.]

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