

Home news

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The Swiss Observer

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JEUNE FEDERAL 1930.

Chers Compatriotes,

Une fois de plus notre peuple s'apprête à célébrer le Jeune Fédéral. Au milieu de la vie moderne intense et rapide, où l'homme oublie trop souvent de retourner au fond des choses, le Jeune est comme un arrêt bienfaisant qui nous force à nous examiner à nouveau et à nous placer en face de notre Créateur.

Jour d'actions de grâces, d'humiliation et de prière, qui de nous n'en a pas besoin, au sein de notre colonie londonienne?

Actions de grâces! Savons-nous, jour après jour, remercier notre Père Céleste pour toutes les bénédictions qu'il nous accorde? Sans doute l'année courante a été pénible pour beaucoup; la crise économique n'a pas épargné notre colonie. Plusieurs ont connu la maladie, le deuil, d'autres épreuves encore; mais malgré tout, n'avez-vous pas de nombreuses raisons d'être reconnaissants? Le Jeune est là pour nous le rappeler.

Jour d'humiliation! Que cela est nécessaire. Trop souvent, nous avons oublié qu'il y avait une volonté au-dessus de la nôtre; nous refusons de nous soumettre aux ordres de notre conscience, pour vivre selon notre bon plaisir. Les uns ne cherchent qu'à satisfaire leurs intérêts personnels, quels que soient les moyens employés; d'autres, fatigués par la tâche journalière souvent accablante, cherchent leur réconfort dans des distractions qui ne peuvent que les tirer plus bas. Si nous faisons tous un retour en arrière, nous sentons de nombreuses raisons de nous humilier; si nous n'avons pas su le faire plus tôt, venons, avec nos compatriotes, nous humilier devant Dieu le 21 septembre.

Et le Jeune est également un jour de prière. Prier! Connaissez-vous encore le sens de ce mot? Savez-vous la puissance merveilleuse qui nous est donnée par ces entretiens avec Dieu? La vie est difficile parfois; beaucoup, qui se sont avancés jusqu'à maintenant sur un sentier fleuri, voient la route s'obscurcir tout à coup; ils se demandent avec anxiété de quoi le lendemain sera fait. C'est à tous ceux-là que Christ dit: "Venez à moi, vous tous qui êtes fatigués et chargés, et je vous soulagerai." Qui que nous soyons, nous avons besoin d'être fortifiés; sachons, dans la prière et la communion avec notre Père Céleste, recevoir le secours qui nous est nécessaire.

Si nous savons mettre à part le jour du Jeune, nous serons fidèles à l'esprit de nos pères, et cette journée sera un signal lumineux sur notre route. Puisse-t-il en être ainsi pour tous les membres de notre Colonie, ainsi que pour tout notre peuple suisse.

Le Consistoire de l'Eglise Suisse.



HOME NEWS

FEDERAL.

OUR NEW MILITARY BUDGET.

It is stated that on account of new outfits for the troops and heavy expenses with reference to "gas protection" the expenses of our military department are likely to reach 100 million francs in 1931; the amount shown in the accounts for 1929 was 89.4 million francs.

SWISS FEDERAL LOAN SUCCESS.

The newly-offered Swiss Federal 4 per cent. Loan has been very successful. Of the total of 100,000,000 Frs. (approximately £4,000,000) open for public subscription, 65,000,000 Frs. (approximately £2,600,000) was taken up by conversions. Cash applications amounted to more than 300,000,000 Frs. and the allotments will therefore be made at the rate of about 10 per cent.

SWISS BANK RATE DOWN TO ONE-AND-A-HALF PER CENT.

Owing to the enormous influx of capital from France, Great Britain, and other countries into Switzerland, the official discount rate there has been brought down to 1½ per cent. This is the lowest in Europe.

SWISS BANKERS CONGRESS.

M. Quesnay, Director of the Bank of International Settlements, and Mr. Gates McGarragh, the President, attended a congress of Swiss bankers held in Lucerne last week. M. Bachmann, President of the National Bank, explained the working of the Bank for International Settlements,

DANK- BUSS- UND BETTAG.

Liebe Landsleute!

Wir feiern wiederum den Eidgenössischen Dank-Buss-und Bettag. Mitten im Trubel und der Schnellebigkeit unserer Zeit ist der Bettag ein wohlthuernder Ruhepunkt. Die hastig Lebenden, die so wenig Zeit haben den Dingen auf den Grund zu gehen, nötigt er, sich zu prüfen und vor Gottes Angesicht zu treten. Und wer hätte in unserer Londoner Colonie nicht einen solchen Tag des Dankes, der Demut und des Gebetes nötig?

Wir wollen danken, weil unser himmlischer Vater uns Tag für Tag so viele Segnungen schenkt. Zwar ist dieses Jahr für viele ein Jahr der Sorge gewesen. Die wirtschaftliche Krisis ist auch an uns nicht spurlos vorbeigegangen. Manche unter uns sind von Krankheit, Trauer und anderen Prüfungen heimgesucht worden. Aber haben wir nicht dennoch manchen Grund dankbar zu sein?

Ein Tag der *Busse!* Wie tut Busse not! Allzu oft haben wir es vergessen, dass Gottes Wille über dem unsrigen steht. Wir weigern uns, dem uns mahnenden Gewissen zu gehorchen, weil wir so zu leben wünschen wie es uns gerade passt. Die Einen suchen nur das Ihre ohne Rücksicht auf andere zu nehmen. Von der niederdrückenden Tagesarbeit zermürbt, suchen andere ihre Erholung in Zerstreutungen, die anstatt sie zu fördern herunterziehen.

So finden wir, wenn wir uns aufrichtig prüfen genügend Grund, um uns vor GOTT zu beugen. Das wollen wir auch mit unseren Landsleuten am 21. September tun.

Aber dieser Tag ist nicht zuletzt ein Tag des Gebetes. Kennen wir eigentlich den Sinn dieses Wortes? Wissen wir, welche wunderbare Kraft uns durch diese Zwiesprache mit Gott geschenkt wird? Das Leben ist oft so beschwerlich und manche, die bis jetzt auf lichtem, mit Blumen bestreuten Pfad wandelten, sehen plötzlich wie sich ihr Weg verdunkelt. Sorgenvoll fragen sie, was ihnen der morgende Tag bringen mag. Zu ihnen allen spricht CHRISTUS: "Kommet her zu Mir alle, die ihr mühselig und beladen seid. Ich will euch erquickeln!" Wir alle, wer wir nun auch immer seien, bedürfen solcher Stärkung. Im Gebet und Verkehr mit unserem himmlischen Vater sind wir sicher diese muentbehrliche Hilfe zu erfahren.

Im Geist unserer Altvordenen werden wir handeln, wenn wir diesen Tag festlich in Gottes Haus begehen. Dann wird er uns ein leuchtendes Zeichen auf unserer Wanderung sein. Möchte das wahr sein für unsere Colonie und für unser gesamtes liebes Schweizervolk!

Die Kirchenpflege der Schweizerkirche.

ments, and M. Quesnay, who contributed further details, drew attention to the importance of this new institution.

CREDIT SUISSE ABSORBS RHAETISCHE BANK.

The Credit Suisse, Zurich, is acquiring the Rhaetische Bank, Davos, as from July 31, 1930, against payment of 2,100,000 Frs. The Rhaetische Bank's share capital is 1,500,000 Frs. It has branches in Chur, St. Moritz and Arosa. At the shareholders meeting of the bank, it was explained that the Credit Suisse intended to open branches in the Kanton Graubünden, and the competition would have been harmful to the Rhaetische Bank.

INCREASED NUMBER OF FACTORIES.

An instructive report compiled by the four Federal factory inspectors and dealing with the last two years has just been published. In spite of admittedly adverse conditions the number of factories in Switzerland has slightly increased from 8,253 in 1928 to 8,319 in 1929 and the number of workmen employed therein from 392,367 to 409,083. With the exception of textiles, especially embroidery, all industries are recording a fair progress, though in the chemical industry the hands employed have fallen from 18,331 to 12,972. Outstanding progress is shown by the industries engaged in wood-working, the manufacture of paper, leather, india-rubber, instruments, machinery and printing; the factories in these branches record an increase of 140 with a total of 170,000 hands which latter is 16,000 more than in 1928. The cantons of Zurich with 1,451, Berne with 1,309, St. Gall with 865 and Aargau with 584 are at the head of the statistic enumerating the different factories.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

At the by-election for a vacant seat in the State Council (Ständerat) for the Canton of Zurich, Dr. Klöti, Town President (Socialist) has received 53,470 votes, whilst the two other candidates, Messrs. Monsson and Reichling (Conservative and Liberal) have united together 52,251 votes. Dr. Klöti has therefore been declared elected and will take his seat on occasion of the next session.

A terrible tramway accident occurred in Zurich at 3 o'clock on Wednesday afternoon, Sept. 10th, when 3 unattended trailer cars left the tram depot in Fluntern and raced down the steep hill towards the town. Near the Gloriesteg they came up with a single car going the same way, and running into it from behind, took it along with them in their wild flight. The brakes of the single car were applied but proved ineffective and at the curve near the Physic-building all four cars jumped the lines and were smashed against the wall of that building, killing two women passengers who were in the single car. Their bodies were terribly mutilated and quite beyond recognition.

The doctors from the nearby Cantonal Hospital rendered first aid to the other injured, of whom 3 were seriously and 9 slightly hurt. The driver and conductor of the single car stuck to their posts, trying to stop the furiously racing trams. Another tramway employee, who saw the empty cars nearly catching up with the single one, heroically jumped on the first of the three trailers and tried to apply the brakes, but without success.

Immediately after the accident an inquiry as to the cause was set up and it was found that a switch which should have been set to lock the line on which the empty trailers stood, was left open. How these got into motion, however, cannot be explained, except that the lines in the depot being very slightly slanting and the 3 trailers coupled together, through some slight knock got into motion and the total weight being 15 tons aided the movement and so started the race downwards. The time from the trailers leaving the depot to the impact with the single car was a matter of 40 seconds.

Shortly after the news became known, the assistant superintendent of the depot, who should have inspected the switches, tried to commit suicide by touching a high voltage wire; he was, however, prevented from doing so by one of the inspectors of the trams who was present. He received severe burns which, however, will not endanger his life.

On the 12th November last year at the same place a similar accident took place under almost the same conditions only on that occasion no lives were lost.

GENEVA.

Prof. Guglielmo Ferrero has been nominated Professor of history at the Geneva University. Professor Ferrero's work as a historian is known throughout the world. He was a pupil of Cesare Lombroso, the famous anthropologist, whose daughter he married. In 1906 he gave a course of lectures at Paris on the Emperor Augustus and became the friend of many persons prominent in French literary and political circles. Later, at the invitation of President Roosevelt, he visited the United States, his book "Between two Worlds," being the result of that visit. Geneva University will certainly be honoured to count him among its professors.

The airship "Graf Zeppelin" landed last Sunday at the aerodrome at Cointrin. Amongst the 10-12,000 spectators were numerous delegates to the League of Nations Conference, which is sitting at present at Geneva. An official reception was accorded to the commander of the airship, Dr. Eckener, and speeches were delivered by Federal Councillor Motta, Maurice Duval and Colonel Messmer to which Dr. Eckener replied.

AARGAU.

The death occurred in Aargau at the age of 83 of Rudolf Hunziker, who was a well-known personality in school circles. For over 50 years he was a teacher and he acted during 30 years as an expert at the yearly examination for military recruits. He was one of the founders of the "Aargauischen Schulblätter" and his efforts for the betterment of the teaching profession will be thankfully remembered, not only in his own canton, but all over Switzerland.

VALAIS.

The 75th anniversary of the foundation of the Seiler Hotel was celebrated last week at Zermatt, and a bust of Alexander Seiler was unveiled in the hall of the Hotel Monte Rosa. The statue stands opposite the old stone oven against which Edward Whymper was leaning on July 15, 1865, while he told Alexander Seiler the dramatic story of his first ascent of the Matterhorn and of the catastrophe in which were involved the Rev. Charles Hudson, Lord Francis Douglas (whose body was never recovered), Robert Hadow, and the guide Michel Croz. Alexander Seiler was the pioneer of the development of Zermatt as an Alpine resort.

VAUD.

At the police court in Vevey the proprietor of the station restaurant in Caux, Otto Kurzen, was ordered to pay a fine of 300 Frs. and costs for the manslaughter of his friend M. Arthur Bock from Montreux. On Sept. 25th, 1929, the two went to hunt for chamoix at the foot of the Dent de Jaman, when Kurzen killed his friend by shooting him. His defence was that, from a distance the brown clothes Bock wore and the form of his hat led him to mistake Bock for a chamoix and caused him to fire.

RAPPERSWIL.

Last week a serious traffic interruption was caused on the railway between Rapperswil and Rütli. A large boulder was laid on the rails. The oncoming train, however, smashed the stone and, with the exception of the cowcatcher and some of the brake mechanism on the engine, no damage was done to the train. The same day a broken barrier was laid across the lines. A 22-year-old saddler who confessed to the deed has been arrested; he did it, he said, because he wanted to see the derailing of a train.

JUNGFRAUJOCH.

The 64-year-old John Stuben, a farmer from Gossliwil Solothurn, wanted to make a tour from the Jungfrauoch Hotel to the Eggishorn. He had hardly started when he had a heart attack, causing immediate death.

ANDERMATT.

Since the 2nd of September the English tourist W. C. Newton from Sheffield, who stayed at a hotel in Andermatt, has been missing. A wild hay maker saw him in the morning at the "Gigin" in the Felsental, between Andermatt and Hospental towards the St. Anna Glacier when he asked him the way to the Guspital and the Gurschen-Alp. About noon he met another hay maker near the avalanche protection walls near the Guspital. That was the last seen of him. A very heavy fog soon afterwards filled the whole of the Guspital and it is presumed that he met with an accident either going towards the valley or on his way back. The whole of the neighbourhood, including the St. Anna Glacier, has been thoroughly searched but without result.

WENGEN.

A few days ago the American mountaineer Miss O'Brian from Boston, together with Guide Adolf Rubis and his youngest brother, climbed the Finsteraarhorn by the 3,000-ft. high east wall. After 13 hours of uninterrupted climbing starting from the north east base, they reached the top at 6 o'clock at night. The two guides Fritz Annmatter and Gustav Hasler were the first to perform this feat in 1904, and it has not been repeated since 1906.

TICINO.

It is a not infrequent habit of the Italian papers, especially the "Squilla Italia," to magnify inn disputes and personal quarrels amongst Italians, or with Italians who are temporarily on Swiss soil, into political affairs and broadcast them as anti-Fascist acts. The following is rather worthy of note. The other day 2 Italian Fascists, V. Fratus and M. Signorelli, attacked the proprietor of the Ristorante Alpino in the village of Rivera in the Tessin. They began smashing up the furniture in the place and two policemen who were called in were received with threats. The two ruffians declared that they were Fascists and would do what they liked and nobody had anything to say. In the end they attacked the policemen, so that these had to use force and eventually the two barbarians were arrested and handcuffed. They have now to stand their trial for assaulting the proprietor Albertoni and also for assaulting the police.

SWISS FOREIGN LOANS.

During the first seven months of 1930 twelve foreign loans, totalling 233,700,000 francs, have been floated in Switzerland. Since the war Switzerland has been exporting capital to every country in Europe affected by the war except England. The loans floated thus far this year are—To Germany, four loans totalling 129,250,000 francs; to Belgium four loans, totalling 25,000,000 francs; to Chili two loans of about 25,000,000 francs; to Austria one loan of 20,000,000 francs; and to Italy a loan of 15,000,000. Since the war Switzerland has exported capital to the amount of 1,300,000,000 francs (approximately £52,000,000).

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HIGHEST RAILWAY IN EUROPE.

Preparations have now been started for the building of the highest railway in Europe to connect St. Moritz with the Piz Bernina. When completed, the railway, which will be alternately friction and cog-wheel on a one-metre gauge, will attain an altitude of 4,018 metres (13,390 feet), exceeding the record of the Jungfrau railway by 1,870 feet. The next highest point reached by rail or trolley on the Continent is the Mer de Glace at Chamonix, 3,161 metres, while the Gornergrat at Zermatt is slightly less, 3,093 metres.

The Piz Bernina line, which will cost around 12,000,000 Swiss francs, will be only 9,340 metres in length. It is planned to keep it open all the year round, so as to accommodate Alpinists in summer and devotees of skiing and snow sports in winter. Its point of departure will be at Morteratsch, on the present Bernina line, some twelve kilometres from St. Moritz. The exit from the tunnel, at which an hotel will be constructed as was done at Jungfrauoch, will be almost at the tip of the Piz Bernina.

With the completion of the new electrification programme which the Swiss Federal Railways are planning from 1931 to 1936, Switzerland will lead the world by a wide margin in electrified railways. To-day Switzerland has electrified 1,666 kilometres as compared with 1,625 for Italy, 1,557 for Germany, 580 for Austria, 488 for France, and 119 for Norway. The new programme, which calls for the transformation of 476 additional kilometres of line, will cost 81,000,000 francs and will give Switzerland a total of 2,142 kilometres of electrified railways out of 3,703 kilometres of normal gauge lines, or 57.8 per cent. Counting lines of all gauges Switzerland now has 4,894 kilometres, or 88.1 per cent. electrified.

One of Switzerland's oldest and best-known mountain railways, the exploitation of which was abandoned during the war, the Brienz-Rothorn railway, will also be reopened again shortly. Together with the Rigi and Pilatus railways, it brings to tourists one of the most beautiful views in the Bernese Oberland.

SWISS CURRENCY.

The value of the Swiss franc in the future will be identical with that of the gold franc as a result of a new series of laws before the Federal Chamber for the complete suppression of bimetalism. Bank-notes are now payable at the National Bank at any time in gold coin, bullion, or specie. The bulky five-franc silver pieces will be reduced in diameter from 37 to 31 millimetres and will no longer be accepted in unlimited amount as legal tender. Private individuals under the new law are obliged to accept payment only up to 100 francs in silver, ten francs in nickel, and two francs in copper coins. Only the gold coins of 10, 20, and 100 franc denominations are legal tender up to any amount. Private individuals may have their gold struck at the Mint at the rate of 3,444 4/9 francs per kilogram of fine gold.

FOREIGN RESIDENTS IN SWITZERLAND.

More than one-tenth of the entire population of Switzerland is made up of foreigners domiciled in the country, according to the federal census; 400,000 persons who do not bear Swiss nationality are permanently established in the Confederation for reasons of health or business or as political refugees. According to the census there are 150,000 Germans, 135,000 Italians, 60,000 French, and 60,000 from other countries. To these figures may be added about 15,000 people who live just over the frontiers and enter Switzerland daily to work.

The Swiss universities, especially those of Geneva, Lausanne, Zurich, Basle, Berne, Neuchâtel, and Fribourg, also have a high percentage of foreign students. Last year there were enrolled 384 Germans, 262 Poles, 173 Dutch, 143 French, 130 Hungarians, 148 Americans, 104 Rumanians, 96 Italians, 90 Letts, 77 Jugo-Slavs, 76 Bulgarians, 104 Asiatics, and 68 Africans. Of the registered students for the 1929-30 term 27.5 per cent. were foreigners.

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