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HOME NEWS

Federal Councillor Chuard, the Swiss "Home Secretary," celebrated, on July 31st, the 70th anniversary of his birth in the best of health; he was elected to his high office in 1919.

It is reported, though not officially, that the Federal Council has purchased two automobiles, to be used for diplomatic calls and other outings; one of the cars is said to be a Fiat and the other a Hispano-Suiza, both of foreign manufacture.

The electors of the canton Zug have rejected by a small majority a proposal to permit dancing on Saturdays and Sundays and to vary the existing hours of the closing of restaurants.

The electors of the canton Geneva rejected last Sunday a much debated proposal—a pet scheme of the Socialists—which demanded the publication of the assessment register in income tax matters. A counter-proposal by the Radicals—to allow the personal inspection of these registers—met with the same fate. Only about 25 per cent. of the voters went to the polls.

A public subscription instituted for the purpose of raising funds for the construction of a new municipal hospital in Solothurn has already produced Frs. 204,000, some of the individual donations reaching Frs. 50,000.

In connection with the centenary of the birth of Henry Dunant, which will be celebrated on May 8th next, the International Red Cross Committee is compiling a special jubilee edition of his famous work "Un Souvenir de Solferino." A limited number only will be printed and those interested are asked to make application by October 1st.

In order to provide financial aid for the many homesteads which in different districts have suffered through the recent heavy thunderstorms, a house-to-house collection is being organised throughout the canton of Berne; the Regierungsrat has contributed Frs. 30,000 for this purpose.

Through the explosion of a bomb placed in a telephone box of the tramway station on the Barfüsserplatz, in the centre of the town of Basle, a ticket clerk, Karl Mariani, father of four children, was fatally wounded. A large number of other persons suffered injuries, though not of a serious nature. The crime is thought to have some connection with the world-wide movement for the pardon of the two Italo-American Communists under sentence of death; the Basle Communist Party, however, disclaims any previous knowledge or connivance.

Violent thunderstorms, accompanied by torrential rain, were experienced in the western part of Switzerland towards the end of last week. Lausanne had its cellars flooded, in Villeneuve chimneys and the roofs of buildings were carried away, and in St. Maurice (Valais) the St. Barthélemy torrent overflowed its banks, destroying part of both the main road and the Simplon railway line, the traffic on which remained interrupted for a few days. In the canton Grisons slight earthquakes were recorded without, however, causing any damage.

The evacuation of the district concerned is recommended by a government expert, who has investigated the mysterious movement of the Motto Arbino, a mountain situated in the valley d'Arbedo, not far from Bellinzona. The danger seems to consist in the possible collapse of the summit and the formation of new crevices.

A temporary interruption of the telegraph and telephone services was caused by a fire which followed a short circuit in the central telegraph office at Basle.

For conspicuous services rendered in the domain of commercial education and economic advancement, the University of Neuchâtel has be-

stowed the honorary degree of Doctor on Mr. Albert Junod, chief of the Swiss Tourist Office, and Mr. Leopold Dubois, president of the Board of the Swiss Bank Corporation.

A strong plea to encourage the consumption of home-grown fruit is put forward in a memorandum presented by the association of Swiss fruit and wine growers to the educational authorities of all the cantons. It is pointed out that whilst the disposal—and especially the export—of Swiss fruit meets with great difficulties, foreign fruit is being imported into Switzerland in increasing quantities, the popularity of bananas alone having cost the country last year nine million francs. It is suggested that suitable propaganda amongst school children would materially assist the home industry.

A party of Swiss tourists was arrested near Gandria, on Swiss territory, about 200 metres on this side of the frontier, by Italian Fascist guards. After being detained for a night in the charge room of a police station near Como they were released the following evening thanks to diplomatic representations from Berne.

Several philanthropic institutions of the canton of Fribourg have benefited to the extent of Frs. 42,000 by a legacy left by the late Mr. Frederic Broillet, an architect who died in Fribourg last April.

Through the recent death of his wife a legacy of about half a million francs, bequeathed by the Rev. Dr. C. Scheller-Kunz, who died over four years ago, has become payable. The amount will benefit several philanthropic and church institutions of the canton of Zurich, especially in those villages along the lake of Zurich which were the scene of the late pastor's professional activities.

Dr. Arthur Hoffmann, a former Federal Councillor, died in St. Gall, on July 24th at the age of 70. He took a keen interest, on the Liberal side, in the political life of his canton, which latter he represented uninterruptedly in the Federal States Council from 1886 to 1911, in which latter year he was elected a member of the Federal Council. At the outbreak of the war he was President of the Confederation. A few years later, in June, 1917, as head of the Political Department, he was a party to an unsuccessful peace effort, the only result being his resignation as a Federal Councillor (presumably due to foreign pressure) and attacks from certain quarters accusing him of pro-German sympathies. The latter innuendo found some support in the fact that in 1912 it fell to his lot, as then head of the military department, to officially receive and entertain the German Emperor when the latter attended the Swiss army manoeuvres in that year. His position was also aggravated by the incidence of his parentage, though his father, who had acquired Swiss nationality, had also been prominent in St. Gall politics and was for 18 years a member of the Federal States Council.

The doyen of Swiss schoolmasters, Professor Giovanni Nizzola, died in Lugano at the age of 95. For no less than 72 years he taught different subjects at the municipal schools in Lugano, besides editing a weekly educational magazine.

Dr. A. Schucan, from Zuoz, died in Zurich on July 18th at the age of 83. He was the creator and first director of the Rhaetian railway system, which has been instrumental in developing many otherwise little-known places into fashionable winter sport centres.

Aviation Lieut. Adrien Guex, aged 26, from Lausanne, lost his bearings when crossing the St. Gothard in a dense fog, and crashed down near the fortifications, his head being completely shattered by the impact.

Engineer Edwin Hinnen, from Zurich, died from exhaustion while making with a companion the descent from the Matterhorn in a heavy snow storm. Their cries for help were heard during the whole of the night by other alpinists who had taken refuge in the Solvay hut but were unable to render assistance. When at last the storm somewhat abated, in the morning, and a search was possible, Mr. Hinnen had just expired.

Motoring accident: have been numerous these last few weeks. Near Vevey a large car was

caught by a local train at the level-crossing of Les Gonettes; of the eight occupants two ladies and their children escaped unhurt; the driver, Pierre Mora, and August Vez, a railway official, were killed on the spot, whilst Mr. A. Ammeter, a butcher in Territet, suffered serious injuries from which a few days later he succumbed.—During a heavy thunderstorm Walter Schmid, aged 31, from Langnau, lost his life in a collision with a motor car on the road near Zumikon (Zurich).—Of the six passengers in a car which ran into a tree between Huttwil and Maibach (Berne) and was demolished, the 70-year-old farmer, Theodor Schär, from Wiggisberg, was dead when extricated from the wreckage.

A fatal accident marred the International Aviation meeting last Sunday at Dübendorf. Competing in an obstacle landing race Lieut. Abraham Boner, born at Malans (Grisons) in 1905, lost control of his machine which nose-dived into the ground behind the aerodrome, the unfortunate aviator being killed instantaneously.

EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

Au Bois-Noir.—De nombreux curieux sont venus dimanche visiter la forêt du Bois-Noir et les nouveaux apports de boue et de blocs du trop fameux St-Barthélemy. Le long défilé des automobiles passant entre deux rangées de blocs, sur l'emplacement de la route cantonale enterrée, constituait un spectacle original.

La coulée du torrent a recouvert la route sur une longueur de cent vingt mètres. L'ancien pont et ses deux barrières ont complètement disparu. Les nombreuses équipes qui, depuis jeudi, se sont succédé sur la route ont commencé par enlever les blocs; elles ont ensuite disposé, sur le limon et la boue, de nombreuses fascines et des branches sur lesquelles elles ont placé des planches sur une largeur suffisante pour que les automobiles, les chars puissent passer.

Les voitures franchissent de la sorte le passage critique sur une chaussée artificielle mouvante, et plastique, qui, sous la pression de la charge, s'enfoncé pour se relever ensuite, ce qui ne va pas sans secousses et sans de rudes mises à contribution des ressorts; mais la circulation est possible. C'est déjà un important point d'acquit.

On sait que le nouveau pont de la voie ferrée placé après les coulées des 20 et 21, 25 et 26 septembre 1926 est formé de deux énormes poutres métalliques jetées sur le torrent et supportant les rails; sous la poussée de la coulée du 11, le tablier s'est légèrement arqué, la concavité vers l'amont. Le bloc de béton formant pile, posé dans le lit du torrent, a résisté.

Les voyageurs passant en train transbordent. Derrière une barrière, ils suivent une longue passerelle en bois construite à leur intention pour aller, hors de la zone bouleversée, reprendre le train qui les attend pour les emmener plus loin. On espère arriver à rétablir la circulation ferroviaire le mercredi 17 au soir ou le 18 au matin.

Il semble que la nouvelle coulée ait emporté surtout du limon et de la boue. Elle a élargi son passage en mordant, à droite et à gauche, sur la forêt du Bois-Noir. La digue qui protège le canal d'amenée à l'usine électrique lausannoise du Bois-Noir a tenu bon et le canal n'a pas souffert.

Le St-Barthélemy coule de nouveau dans son lit inférieur. Du côté d'Evionnaz, une partie seulement s'est frayé un passage dans le lit obstrué. Son niveau s'est élevé d'une hauteur de deux mètres en moyenne sur une largeur de cinq cents mètres et plus; on peut, par ces chiffres, se rendre compte de l'importance du nouvel apport du torrent sur son cône de déjection. Où le St-Barthélemy a-t-il pris et enlevé une pareille masse? C'est ce qu'il serait intéressant de savoir et de rechercher. Proviennent-elles de l'entassement d'anciens éboulements ou de ravinages? On ne sait.

Journal de Genève.

Aus der Diplomatie.—Am Montag ist die Referendumsfrist für Bundesbeschluss betreffend Umwandlung des schweizerischen Generalkonsulates in Prag in eine Gesandtschaft unbenutzt abgelaufen. Der Beschluss sieht vor, dass die neue Gesandtschaft einem bereits in einem andern Lande akkreditierten schweizerischen Vertreter zu übertragen ist. Es ist in Aussicht genommen, den gegenwärtigen schweizerischen Gesandten in Warschau, Minister von Segesser, auch bei der tschechoslowakischen Regierung zu beglaubigen. Ferner ist vorgesehen, die Leitung der Geschäfte in Prag während der Abwesenheit des Gesandten durch einen Geschäftsträger besorgen zu lassen. Als solcher