Prepaid subscription rates

Objekttyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): **- (1939)**

Heft 931

PDF erstellt am: **19.03.2024**

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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

EDITED WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF THE LONDON COLONY.

Telephone: Clerkenwell 2321/2. Published every Friday at 23, LEONARD ST., E.C.2. Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

VOL. 21—No. 931. LONDON, 23rd SEPTEMBER, 1939. PRICE 3d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Normal conditions are gradually operating in most of the international train services running through Swiss territory. The Simplon Orient Express rolls again with its luxurious sleeping cars from Paris via Milan to Istanbul and five fast trains in each direction are circulating between Frankfort o/M and Basle.

* * *

As the staffs of the fire brigades throughout Switzerland have been heavily thinned out in consequence of the mobilisation the local authorities are compelled to fill the vacancies so created by volunteers.

* * *

Friendliness and fellowship characterize the relations of the military guards on both sides of the frontier; cervelats and "Stumpen" seem to be working miracles.

* * *

The imposition of a special tax deducted at the source from interest and dividends is one of the revenues contemplated by the Federal Council in order to clear the present extra-ordinary military expenses.

* * *

It is stated on good authority that long train loads of coal carrying 25 to 30 thousand tons daily are passing through the St. Gotthard from Germany to Italy.

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German interests in Great Britain are being taken care of during the present hostilities by the Swiss Legation in London; the special division is in charge of Mr. Preiswerk of Basle.

* * *

Switzerland may join the Oslo group of nations the deliberations of which so far have been attended by a semi-official observer; the group consists of Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Luxembourg, and is considered the nucleus of a neutral peace bloc.

* * *

Dr. Karl Burckhardt (Basle), the League Commissioner in Danzig, who was reputed to enjoy the patronage of the Nazis received the order of the boot; he was given two hours to pack his trunks and had the privilege of a Gestapo escort as far as the frontier.

* * *

An unidentified German plane flew over Swiss territory near Schaffhausen last Tuesday week and after being fired at by the frontier guards disappeared across the Rhine.

* * *

In order to counteract profiteering the cantonal authorities are empowered to close any shops or stores which contravene the Federal decree of September 1st regulating the cost of living.

* * *

Basle and its immediate neighbourhood has now the appearance of an armed camp. Blockhouses and machine-gun nests have been installed and even the approach to the bridges in the interior of the town is obstructed by barbed wire barricades. According to an unconfirmed report reaching us on going to press some districts in this vulnerable frontier junction are being evacuated.

* * *

All the eight sons of M. Numa Martin of Corcelles (Neuchâtel) are on active service in the Swiss army. Of fourteen children in the family Straumann of Giebenach (Baselland) ten sons have joined their regiments.

* * *

Federal Judge Robert Guex in Lausanne is the president of a special commission charged by the Federal Council to supervise the news service; in addition a censorship is also exercised by the army council.

* * *

Oberstdivisionär Wilhelm Schmid died in Berne at the age of 82; during the last war he commanded the fourth division. His last will discloses a donation to the "Inselspital" in Berne of one million francs.

* * *

An amount of Frs. 700,000 has been earmarked by the Basle municipality for the construction of air raid shelters.

* * *

An order issued by the military authorities forbids the printing of fresh newspapers and the establishment of further news agencies.

* * *

Two tourists from Berne, Werner Meyer and Hans Schär, met with a fatal accident when climbing the Grosshorn near Lauterbrunnen.

* * *

The postal communications between our country and France and Great Britain have suffered considerable delays. The delivery of letters from and to Paris