News at random

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The Swiss Observer

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NEWS AT RANDOM

A recent decree promulgated by the Federal Council will practically eliminate unemployment. All citizens between the ages of 19 and 60 registered as unemployed will be placed under army orders and incorporated in labour companies; they will have to undertake such military work as constructing ramparts, road building, etc. This will enable the army command to grant dispensations more freely to those who have held vital positions in the fields of industry and agriculture.

* * *

The Swiss trade delegation under the leadership of Prof. Paul Keller has returned to Switzerland for the Xmas holidays; it is expected to resume the trade talks in London early in the new year. It is unofficially stated that certain concessions have been secured: watches up to a third of the former figure can be imported again and embroidery articles are also admitted under certain conditions. On the other hand Switzerland is to buy increased quantities of English coal.

* * *

A special army school to train ski instructors is at present operating in the region of the Kleine Scheidegg and Jungfraujoch. When qualified, these instructors will later on conduct ski courses lasting several weeks for the benefit of the field army.

* * *

In Geneva the financing of the presumed deficit of five million francs in the 1940 accounts is meeting with considerable difficulties. A small saving is effected by suspending the amortisation scheme of the existing debts but the socialists led by Nicole are utterly against any increase in taxation.

* * *

A bomb-proof hospital is to be constructed at Basle at a cost of Frs.700,000; it will be in the form of a subterranean annex to the existing municipal hospital.

* * *

The work and staff of the International Red Cross organisation in Geneva is increasing week by week. Some three thousand enquiries relating to prisoners of war are being dealt with daily and the information re-transmitted to the local services in London, Paris and Berlin. The fate of civilians and others interned in neutral countries is the subject of another branch of its humanitarian activities.

* * *

A new Catholic church to replace an old one was consecrated in Amriswil by Dr. F. von Streng, the Bishop of Basle and Lugano. The cost of the new building amounts to about Frs.700,000; it has seats for about 800 people and contains a church hall in the basement for 400 persons.

* * *

In order to cover the anticipated deficit for the coming season of the Basle Stadttheater, Frs.200,000 is being allotted from the municipal treasury.

* * *

The appeal of National Councillor Otto Pfändler, against the decision of the St. Gall Board of Education preventing him from exercising two public functions has been dismissed. He will have to concentrate on his scholastic duties and former National Councillor Eggenberger, one of his unsuccessful opponents, will return to the National Council.

* * *

Judgment has now been published in the action for damages which the "Neue Basler Zeitung" brought against another publication (Beobachter) for having stated that the N.B.Z. exercised the functions of a German propaganda sheet whilst sailing under the Swiss flag. The Basle courts rejected the claim of the N.B.Z. which will also have to bear the costs of the action.

* * *

Rodolfo Pedroni, the head of the tobacco factory bearing his name, died in Chiasso at the age of 70, after a short illness; his "Brissagos" earned him a world-wide reputation.

* * *

A new 10cts. stamp will be issued as soon as the existing stock is exhausted; the previous design (Castle

CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les membres sont avisés que

L'ASSEMBLEE MENSUELLE

aura lieu Mardi le 2 Janvier à 5.30 h. précises au Restaurant PAGANI 42, Great Portland Street, W.1.

ORDRE DU JOUR:

Procès-verbal.	Démissions.
Admissions.	Divers.

Le souper est facultatif et les participants sont priés de bien vouloir s'inscrire au plus tôt auprès de Monsieur P. F. Boehringer, 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2. (Téléphone: Clerkenwell 2321/2).

Le Comité

Chillon with Dents du Midi) is retained, but the colour is dark brown instead of violet and the plate has been re-engraved.

* * *

The news about the changes in the management of the Swiss Bank Corporation appearing in another column is of great interest to our Colony in more than one direction. That Mr. Nussbaumer has been appointed to a more important post will not surprise his many business friends; he has been at the London office for eight years and though his work hardly allowed him to take part in the social activities of the Colony, he has concentrated his hours of leisure to the cause of the Swiss Benevolent Society. His co-operation and advice will be badly missed, especially in these trying times. Mr. de Wolff, the new Manager, is of course, no stranger; years ago he was very active in the City Swiss Club where he served on the Committee, and we know his large circle of friends are anxious to offer him their personal congratulations as soon as he can manage " to look in."

* * *

We often wonder how our London contemporaries manage to obtain choice morsels of news from our Colony. Thus the Evening Standard (December 21st) informs its readers that the Colony made a presentation to our Minister and " that subscribers were asked to give a minimum of a shilling; *the richest were limited to half-a-crown.*"

A PROPOS THE MINISTER'S DEPARTURE.

My dear Compatriots,

I am taking leave of you, on the termination of my mission, to return to our old country, and I do so with a variety of feelings. But none is stronger than my gratitude for your loyalty and goodwill, which have been so great a help to me in my work during these last twenty years.

My wife and I were deeply touched by the splendid and cordial welcome given us on December 15th at Monico's, on that last occasion when you invited us once more to spend an evening in your midst. We shall not forget the sincere and serene spirit in which you bade us farewell; in it we saw the very proof of your friendly feelings and kind thoughts, which are to accompany us on our way home.

From those who so admirably arranged the reunion we had accounts of messages received by them from many members of the Colony, both present in the room or who had been prevented from joining us, members old and young, prominent and humble, from far and near. They all moved us deeply by their generosity and, even more, by the thoughts which prompted their senders to sign the donors' list for the Colony's valuable and well-chosen present.

For their kindness, friendship and loyalty the Swiss of Great Britain will always have a place in our hearts.

God bless you all!
Long live Switzerland!
C. R. PARAVICINI.

On December 18th, the Personnel of the Legation gave the Minister and Madame Paravicini a Farewell Dinner at The Dorchester Hotel.

On December 20th, Their Majesties The King and Queen graciously invited the Swiss Minister and Madame Paravicini to luncheon at Buckingham Palace, to give them an opportunity of taking leave on the termination of Monsieur Paravicini's mission as Representative of the Swiss Confederation to Great Britain. Their Royal Highnesses The Princess Elizabeth and The Princess Margaret Rose, who had arrived that morning from Scotland, were also present. There were no other guests.

On December 21st, His Excellency The Belgian Ambassador, acting Doyen of the Diplomatic Corps, gave a reception to all the Heads of Foreign Embassies and Legations accredited to the Court of St. James's, to take leave of the Swiss Minister and Madame Paravicini on their departure from London. Baron de Cartier de Marchienne made the farewell speech and, in the name of all his colleagues, presented Monsieur and Madame Paravicini with a radio-gramophone as a souvenir. The beautiful instrument bears a silver plate with the following inscription:

" *Hommage d'affectueuse estime et de sincère amitié offert par le Corps Diplomatique accrédité près la Cour de Saint-James' à Leurs Excellences Monsieur Paravicini, Ministre de Suisse et Madame Paravicini.*
Londres 1920 à 1940."

The Swiss Minister replied expressing his thanks.

It has been omitted to mention that the following telegram, sent from Switzerland on December 15th to 21, Bryanston Square, was delayed and received only on the 16th December:

" Chairman, Swiss Banquet,
21, Bryanston Square,
London, W.1.

' Please accept and transmit to all our compatriots our sincerest thoughts of friendship and regrets at not being with you. Goodbye and au revoir.'

Livia Paravicini.
Jacqueline de Schulthess."

On Wednesday, December 27th, at 5.30 p.m., the Presentation Committee of the Farewell Dinner, M. Louis Chapuis, Colonel Anton Bon and M. Henry Bingguely, paid the Minister a formal visit at the Legation and, in the name of the Colony, handed him a cheque, destined for the acquisition of the souvenir in the form of a motor-car.

M. Paravicini once more expressed thanks in his own name and also in the name of his family, and begged of his visitors to bring this expression of gratitude to the knowledge of the generous donors.

Drink delicious "Ovaltine" at every meal—for Health!