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To All Our Readers
A
Prosperous New Year



HOME NEWS

(Compiled by courtesy of the following contemporaries: National Zeitung, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, St. Galler Tagblatt, Vaterland and Tribune de Genève).

FEDERAL.

MINISTER TRAVERSINI AT BUENOS-AIRES.

The newly appointed Swiss Minister to the Argentine Republic, Monsieur Traversini, has presented his credentials to President Justo.

SWISS ARMY CHANGES.

Owing to the retirement of three Brigade commanders in the 6th division, namely Colonels Irmingier (16th Brig.); Heitz (17th Brig.); Buser (18th Brig.) the following promotions to Brigade commanders have taken place: Colonel Guhl, formerly chief of Staff of the 3rd Army-Corps, Colonel Raduner, late commander of the 32nd Infantry regiment; Colonel Hold formerly on the staff of the 3rd Army-Corps.

In the 3rd Division, Colonel R. Hartmann relinquishes the command of the 9th Mountain Infantry Brigade, his successor will be Colonel Scherz, at present Chief of Staff of the 3rd Division, the latter post will be filled by Lieutenant-Colonel H. Bühler (Frutigen). Colonel Siegrist, commander of the 3rd Artillery-Brigade will be succeeded by Colonel Ernst Dübli. The new commander of the 5th Artillery Brigade will be Colonel von Schmid, in succession to Colonel Huber, who will be appointed Chief of Staff of the 3rd Army-Corps. Colonel Helbling, one of the commanders of the Gothard Fortress will be succeeded by Colonel Meier in Liestal.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN SWITZERLAND.

The number of unemployed at the end of November amounts to 68,286 or nearly double the number than at the same period in the previous year.

SWISS DUTIES ON WIRELESS SETS.

Switzerland will soon cease to be one of the few countries into which wireless sets may be imported without restriction and duty free. The Federal Council decided to place wireless sets on the list of articles coming under the imports control system.

MOTOR VEHICLES IN SWITZERLAND.

The following figures of imports and registration of motor vehicles in Switzerland are of interest. During the third quarter of 1932 the imports of motor cars, commercial vehicles, and tractors was 2,452, which was only slightly below the total for the corresponding quarter of 1931, with 2,530. On the other hand, imports of motor cycles decreased considerably from 424 during the third quarter of last year to 187 during the quarter of last year to 187 during the quarter under review. This development is attributable to the import restriction system in force since February last, the quota of imported machines since that month representing only about 40 per cent. of last year's figures. Great Britain has been affected most by this measure, but an advance from 23 to 77 in the number of motor cars imported from that country during the third quarters of 1931 and 1932 respectively has contributed to a certain extent to make good the reduction in Swiss imports of motor cycles of United Kingdom manufacture.

THE RAILWAY ACCIDENT AT LUCERNE.

The railway catastrophe which occurred at Lucerne on the 13th inst., and in which 9 persons were killed, has been the subject of a question asked in the Swiss Parliament. The representative of the railway workers pointed out to the Minister in charge of the department of the post office and railways that both the locomotives were operated by one single man, and that at present this system is in use on 40 to 45 per cent. of the electric trains. The department in question was urged to enquire once more carefully into the question of one man operation, and the objections which the staff have raised to this dangerous measure of rationalisation.

A ROMAN MOSAIC IN SWITZERLAND.

Some workmen engaged in digging under a house at Nyon, on the Lake of Geneva, uncovered a Roman mosaic pavement, probably of the second century A.D., measuring 30ft. in length and 12ft. in width.

The pavement has a wide ornamental border in Black and white tiles designed in Greek style with scrolls and Swastika. Within the border is a representation of a whale, a shark turning on its back in the act of catching a fish, several lobsters, numerous shells, and also a creature looking like a plesiosaurus. In the centre there are two Cupids with rosy wings and multicoloured eyes which appear to follow the onlooker as he moves.

The work is well preserved, and the colours are still brilliant. No other mosaic of a similar size and beauty has so far been found in Switzerland. It is to be removed to the local museum, unless the National Museum in Zurich decides to purchase it.

COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES IN SWITZERLAND.

The National Council discussed for two days the Geneva riots of November 9th. A resolution was moved urging the Government to prepare at once a new penal law for the prevention of revolutionary propaganda and "The protection of Swiss democratic institutions against violence."

In the course of the discussion M. Minger, Federal Councillor for the Military Department, stated that foreign agents were co-operating with Swiss Communists and taking part in Communist meetings in Switzerland. He added that a Lausanne Communist was known to have handed over to the central Communist bureau in Berlin documents concerning France, and that two Geneva Socialist leaders who were involved in the recent disturbances were on friendly terms with Soviet delegates to international conferences at Geneva.

The Council rejected by a big majority a Socialist proposal that the members of the Geneva Cantonal Government and the military officers concerned in the firing on the crowd should be legally arraigned.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The community of Neftenbach has received an amount of 20,000f. from a donor, who wishes to be unknown. The interest on the capital is to be used for aiding the poor of the community.

* * *

The town Council of Zurich has honoured, the historian Prof. Dr. H. Schneider, by presenting him with an amount of 2,000f. for his books on "Geschichte des Schweizerischen Bundesstaates."

* * *

The late M. A. Bachofen-Roth in Zurich has left a legacy amounting to 75,000f. to be distributed amongst various charitable institutions.

FRIBOURG.

M. Perrier, formerly a member of the cantonal government, who some time ago entered the Benedict cloister at Pierre-qui-Vive, has taken the name of Brother Nicholas, in honour of the Protector of the Canton and City of Fribourg, and in memory of a great political peace-maker, whose cause the new monk has done much to forward — Nicholas von de Flüe.

BERNE.

M. Jacob Kunz, Professor of Theology at the University of Berne, has died.

SCHAFFHAUSEN.

M. Albert Biedermann, a former "Bürgerpräsident," has died at the age of 78.

GRISONS.

In a ski-jumping contest over the Olympia Leap at St. Moritz, Cesare Chiogna, a Swiss

Olympic ski-jumper, won the Morven Cup with a total of 327.80 points. Chiogna, whose longest jump was 70 metres, also won a cup presented by Mrs. Alex Keiller. Second to Chiogna was Marcel Reymond, of Ste. Croix, with 324.10 points, and S. Guttormsen, of Norway, was third with 316.60 points. Guy Nixon, the former Cambridge captain, jumped 50 metres.

THOUGHTS AND WISHES.

The year 1932, with its tribulations, disappointments and often bitter experiences, is about to pass into oblivion, and few will be the tears shed over its passing away. It has left the world little better if not worse off than at its commencement, and a tired world is still longing and waiting for that betterment, which has been so often promised and yet seems so slow to arrive.

There are people who have almost given up hope, and have predicted that the seven lean years will be doubled if not trebled. Although there is little cause to be optimistic, whilst there is so much unrest, misunderstanding and illfeeling amongst the various countries; yet it would be a sad outlook indeed if not one glimmer of hope was left in our hearts, that things must ultimately take a turn for the better. Does it not largely depend on each member of the community to hasten along, the turning of the tide? We all, each of us, some in a smaller, some in a larger degree can help to make our earthly abode a fitter and better place; by trying to foster that spirit of goodwill towards mankind. Let us start at home, or amongst our countrymen here and in our homeland, let us make an effort to understand each other more, to forgive and forget some of the things which have vexed or annoyed us in the past, to live more up to the maxim that "to err is human, but to forgive devine." —

It behoves the Editor of the *Swiss Observer* to pass a parting glance at the outgoing year, it would be superfluous to state, that the universal crisis had no effect on our venture, the truth is, that we have suffered like everyone else, and if we have not broadcasted our distress, we have done it, in order not to add to the worries of those who have given us their support in such a generous way, we believe in trying to fight our own battle, without squealing and appealing, whenever a dark cloud appears on the horizon. One of the biggest disappointments for the Editor was the small almost insignificant response to the appeal for new subscribers in our special 12th Anniversary number. Our faithful and untiring collaborator *Kyburg* has taken up his pen to appeal to our compatriots throughout the British Isles, he has done it in a way, which will endear him for ever to all those, who have our little paper at heart, unfortunately the success of his labour has been so small, that we have not yet found the heart to acquaint him of the great disillusionment we have experienced.

It may be that we missed *le moment psychologique*, and that our prospective new subscribers were awaiting a more convenient moment to give us their support, which is so badly needed. It would be indeed a splendid New Year's resolution to become a reader, and therefore supporter of the *Swiss Observer*. If each one of our present subscribers would make it a duty to induce *one* friend of theirs to become a regular subscriber, *all our troubles and anxieties would be at an end*, and we could then go to work with a joyful heart, to improve and enlarge the *Swiss Observer*.

This seems to us not an impossible task, and we make an earnest appeal to our patrons to try

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY Ltd.

The members and friends of the Society are reminded that our

Fancy Dress Ball

will take place on

Saturday, JANUARY 7th, 1933

at the

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from 7 to 1 a.m.

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and persuade at least *one* of their friends to give us this help.—

Yet in spite of some disappointments, the Editor is glad to say, that he has received throughout the year, numerous messages of appreciation and encouragement, especially from readers from the provinces, to whom the Swiss Observer is almost the only link between them and their country.

The Editor wishes to thank his collaborators, Kyburg, etc., and M.G., for their great and never-failing help, without which it would have been almost impossible to carry on. He wishes to thank the Swiss Minister and the Swiss Consuls at Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow for their appreciated and valuable co-operation. The Publisher for his never-failing help and advice. Thanks are due to all those who have, from time to time sent articles or communications; including those, who, on many occasions have informed him, that they were *going* to write, and who *never* wrote, and he sincerely hopes, that amongst their New Year's resolutions will be the one, to honour a long standing promise.

May he be forgiven, if he strikes on the eve of a New Year, a personal note. He wishes to thank most humbly another of his collaborators, who has served him well, who has shared with an unflinching spirit, his anxieties, who has sat with him side by side listening to never-ending speeches at various functions; who has cut out all, or most of the *so-b stuff* from his articles, thus deserving the thanks from all those, who would have to read it. Who has kindled in him the flame of enthusiasm for a work, which is not always as easy as it looks, he means

His wife.

ST.

JEAN BAER. † 1869-1932.

Qui ne se souvient de celui dont le nom est écrit ci-dessus et dont nous avons appris avec douleur le départ, il y a huit jours pour la patrie céleste? Il était l'incarnation d'un vrai citoyen suisse, bon Vaudois du cru, tout en étant descendant d'un banneret bâlois, sauf erreur, unissant en sa personne la bonhomie, la compréhension, la rondeur, la finesse et la pénétration. Et puis quel cœur et quelle foi aussi, quelle confiance vivante en Dieu dont il nous donna à tous des preuves palpables dans telles années difficiles par lesquelles il passa.

Venu bien jeune encore à Londres, la maison Nestlé devait tout naturellement lui servir de champ d'activité professionnelle, de par les liens de famille qui le rattachaient aux principaux chefs de la maison d'alors. Il la servit fidèlement durant près d'un tiers de siècle, et en fut un directeur longtemps. Mais là ne s'arrêtèrent pas ses efforts. Son temps libre il fut amené à le consacrer de plus en plus à notre Colonie, où il en vint à occuper une place de premier plan tant au City Swiss Club, que comme président-fondateur du groupe londonien de la Nouvelle Société Helvétique et comme président du Consistoire de l'Eglise Suisse à partir de 1916. Et c'est en cette double qualité qu'il a laissé parmi nous un souvenir ineffaçable. Nous le voyons encore, président, avec quelle conscience, ces grandes assemblées de concitoyens que les angoisses de la guerre avaient amenés à se serrer les uns contre les autres comme jamais auparavant. Nous nous rappelons aussi la régularité exemplaire avec laquelle il occupait sa place devenue traditionnelle, dans le banc du Consistoire, auquel il appartenait durant 27 ans. Et puis nous l'entendons encore disant quelque vaudoiserie savoureuse à l'une des "Fêtes Suisses." Combien il savait charmer un auditoire, mais mieux encore, combien il savait faire sentir à quiconque s'adressait à lui, qu'il y avait un cœur aimant dans sa poitrine!

Sa perte pour nous tous est profonde, car même de Genève, où il s'était retiré il y a cinq ans, il suivait encore de très près tout ce qui se passait dans ce Londres où il avait vécu si longtemps.

Nous tenons à exprimer à Madame Baer et à ses enfants notre très vive et très sincère sympathie dans leur grand deuil et les assurons que l'affection de tous leurs amis de Londres continuera à les entourer.

PERSONAL.

We deeply regret to inform our readers, that Mrs. W. Eichenberger, wife of Mr. W. Eichenberger, Deputy-Manager of the Swiss Bank Corporation, died on Friday, December 23rd, after a serious illness. The funeral took place on Saturday, December 24th at Hornchurch. (Essex.)

JEAN BAER.

Jean Baer ist gestorben. — Liebe Freunde in London, Mitglieder der Eglise Suisse und der Neuen Helvetischen Gesellschaft ganz besonders — habt Ihr nicht alle bei dieser Todesnachricht das Gefühl gehabt, einen persönlichen Verlust zu erleiden für den uns niemand Ersatz bieten kann? Jean Baer's Name bedeutet in der Londoner Schweizerkolonie eine Epoche, vielleicht die schönste, sicher die fruchtbarste an klugen Initiativen, gutem Willen und patriotischen Taten zum Segen aller Landsleute.

Mit Jean Baer als Geschäftsmann verbindet sich in unserer Erinnerung die gute Zeit von Nestlé's, wo diese grosse Firma immer unter den freigebigsten war, wenn es galt Werke der Wohltätigkeit und der Kultur zu unterstützen.

Jean Baer als Präsident der Eglise Suisse wird eine berufener Feder schildern. Mir will nur scheinen, es müsse zum grossen Teil auch sein Verdienst sein, dass die innern Spannungen, welche schliesslich zur Gründung auch einer deutschschweizerischen Kirche führten, in aller Ruhe und mit christlicher Liebe gelöst wurden und ihre Krönung fanden in der schwerelichen Zusammenarbeit der beiden Teile einer einzigen Gemeinde.

Als Sekretär der Gruppe London der Neuen Helvetischen Gesellschaft hatte ich 4½ Jahre lang täglich Gelegenheit mit Jean Baer als meinem verehrten Präsidenten zu verkehren. Wie oft und gerne haben wir seit seiner Rückkehr über gemeinsame schöne Erlebnisse und den lieben Freundeskreis von drüben gesprochen, wenn wir, nach den Sitzungen der Auslandschweizer Kommission in Bern beisammen sassen, bevor uns die Züge in entgegengesetzten Richtungen auseinander führten. Jean Baer war eine glückliche Verkörperung des welschen Miteidgenossen wie er uns am liebsten ist. Er war gern fröhlich mit den Fröhlichen, rasch und fein reagierend auf Gedanken und Gefühle anderer, immer von herzlicher Freundlichkeit, und verbindlich in allem was er sagte. Ich kann mich nicht erinnern, ob Jean Baer je Feinde hatte; selbst die Neider hat er durch sein warmerziges Wesen bezwungen. Wenn in den Versammlungen Argumente vorgebracht wurden, die seiner Ansicht zuwidergingen, wie verstand er da zu belehren und zu versöhnen, indem er die Diskussion durch seine überlegene und taktvolle Leitung auf höhere Gesichtspunkte lenkte, wo über alles Trennende hinweg die Gemeinsamkeit des guten Willens uns immer wieder zusammenführte. Er war ein Sonntagskind unter den Menschen, die die Freunde, die sich regelmässig im Bay Tree trafen, M. Roehrich & M. Dimier gesegneten Angedenkens, und einige andere, die glücklicherweise noch unter uns weilen.

Gerade die Art wie er in London die N.H.G. geschaffen und geführt hat zeigt Jean Baer von der glücklichsten Seite. Er hat dem Werk den Stempel seines Wesens aufgedrückt; ja nicht allein der Gruppe London, sondern der ganzen grossen Auslandschweizer Organisation, die mit ihren 200 Gruppen heute die Welt umspannt. Wir möchten keineswegs die Verdienste anderer in den Schatten stellen, die zum Teil sogar schon vor ihm

und in stattlicher Zahl mit ihm, in der Heimat wie in den Kolonien am schönen Werk mitgearbeitet haben. Aber, wie es in Kreisen der N.H.G. in der Schweiz oft betont worden ist, Dauer konnte das Werk nur bekommen, nachdem die ganze "Vierte Schweiz" einfach hingeissen wurde von dem praktischen Beispiel, das die Londoner Kolonie unter Baer gab. Das patriotische Streben, die Freude an der Pflege der Freundschaft, das Erbe der Gründer der N.H.G. in der Heimat, hätte allein nicht genügt immer und immer wieder neue Kolonien zu erobern. Die praktische Seite hats getan, und daran hat Baer das grösste Verdienst. Er verstand es, wie seinerzeit in London so auch daheim, dem Auslandschweizerwerk immer neue praktische Aufgaben zu finden, die Kulturwerte eines idealen Programms in praktische Leistungen umzusetzen. Wo die N.H.G. hinkam hat sie niemand etwas weggenommen, aber allen hat sie Dienste erwiesen. Das haben in jenen bewegten Jahren alle die 14 Gesellschaften der Londoner Kolonie und die 5 verbündeten Gruppen in der Provinz, sowie alle Mitglieder, die das Bedürfnis hatten etwas für die Heimat zu tun, nicht nur begriffen, sondern durch herzliche Zusammenarbeit anerkannt.

Wie in London so wirkte Baer auch in der Heimat, solange er in der Lage war, sein Bestes zu geben. Wie er einst durch ein ermutigendes Wort an seinen Jugendfreund E. Monod die Gründung des "Schweizer Echo" veranlasste, wie er 19 von den ersten Gruppen der N.H.G. durch seine Korrespondenz ins Leben rief, wie er seinen Kollegen im "Conseil du Groupe" und seinen jüngern Mitarbeitern ein Führer und väterlicher Freund war, wissen und begreifen alle, welche den Menschen Baer kannten. Sein Einfluss war weit grösser als die Londoner Kolonie almen konnte. Jener Londoner Besuch der Delegierten des Zentralvorstandes der N.H.G., im Herbst 1918 (M. Baudat, Zentralpräsident, Dr. Schoop, Zentralsekretär, Prof. de Reynold, Präsident der Auslandschweizer Kommission) hat sich in der Folge als ausserordentlich fruchtbar erwiesen. Die Korrespondenz zwischen Baer und de Reynold, Pier und M. Agnet in Buenos Aires, und einige andere Teile seiner Korrespondenz, verdienen aus den Archiven der Londoner Gruppe hervorgeholt und publiziert zu werden. Sie bilden für die N.H.G. eine Sammlung von Dokumenten von historischem Wert von ganz besonderem Reiz.

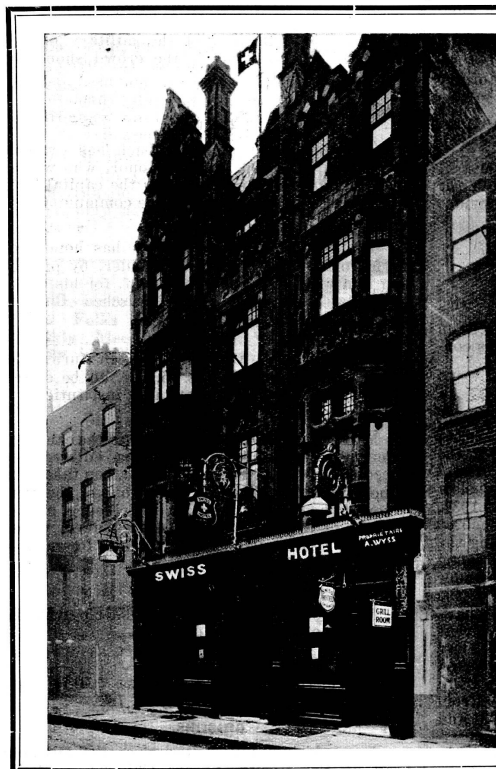
An der Delegiertenversammlung in Solothurn, 1919, konnte ich mich persönlich davon überzeugen wie absolut ausschlaggebend Baer's Einfluss war bei den Gründern des Auslandschweizerwerkes.

Es war uns daher sehr schmerzlich, seinen Rücktritt entgegen nehmen zu müssen, und der Dankesbrief, den ihm Präsident Koch im Namen der Auslandschweizer Kommission schrieb, war dem Sterbenden eine letzte grosse Freude.

Er hat in den letzten Wochen schwer leiden müssen; das Ende aber kam sanft und fand ihn bereit; er hat zu sterben verstanden, wie er gelebt hat. Indem wir seine Familie unserer herzlichen Teilnahme versichern, wollen, wir alle mit seinem Andenken das Bild eines lieben, edlen, und im schönsten Sinne glücklichen Menschen festhalten.

Zürich, am Weihnachtstage 1932.

Dr. A. Lütt.



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