

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

**Herausgeber:** Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

**Band:** - (1934)

**Heft:** 671

  

**Rubrik:** Notes and gleanings

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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 MEMBERS OF THE LONDON COLONY.

Telephone: CLERKENWELL 9595.

Published every Friday at 23, LEONARD STREET, LONDON, E.C.2.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

VOL. 13—No. 671

LONDON, SEPTEMBER 1, 1934.

PRICE 3d.

## PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UNITED KINGDOM AND COLONIES	3 Months (13 issues, post free)	3/6
	6 Months (26 issues, post free)	6/6
SWITZERLAND	3 Months (13 issues, post free)	Fr. 7.50
	6 Months (26 issues, post free)	Fr. 14.—

(Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postaschek-Konto Basle V 5718.)



## HOME NEWS

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

### FEDERAL.

#### CORPS COMMANDANT COL. BIBERSTEIN DEAD.

Col. Biberstein, the commandant of the third Army Corps, died on Monday morning at Berne from pneumonia, at the age of 69.

The "Tribune de Genève" says:—

Le défunt suivit les écoles de Soleure, puis fit des études de philosophie à l'Université de Zurich. Il suivit l'école militaire du Polytechnicum, puis entra au service d'instruction de l'armée. En 1890, il fut nommé instructeur de l'II<sup>me</sup> classe dans la V<sup>me</sup> division. De 1893 à 1894, il fit un stage militaire en Allemagne. De 1905 à 1909, il enseigna aux écoles centrales et fut chef de service auprès de l'instructeur en chef de l'infanterie. De 1913 à 1916, il dirigea les écoles centrales.

Le colonel Biberstein, en qualité de commandant de troupes, fut d'abord mis à la tête de troupes soleuroises, puis de troupes grisonnes et tessinoises. Il fut commandant de l'ancienne brigade d'infanterie 16, puis de la brigade d'infanterie 15, qu'il commanda pendant la durée du service actif.

En 1914, on confia au colonel Biberstein le poste important de commandant du détachement du Tessin-sud. En 1917, il fut nommé commandant des forces d'occupation du Gothard, avec le grade de divisionnaire. Il changea cette charge contre le commandement de la II<sup>me</sup> division, puis contre celui de la IV<sup>me</sup> division. Il fut promu colonel commandant de corps d'armée en 1925 et devint chef de la III<sup>me</sup> division. Il publia plusieurs ouvrages militaires et avait acquis comme écrivain militaire l'estime générale par son objectivité et son sentiment des réalités.

#### SWISS HOTEL INDUSTRY.

At the recent meeting of the central committee of the Swiss Hotel Association it was stated that this year's summer season was as unsatisfactory as the previous one. Travel restrictions and the exchange position continue to discourage an expansion of the tourist traffic; excessive taxation and high mortgage interest added to the protectionist price-policy of the authorities have, it is maintained, further accentuated the existing crisis.

On the other hand official statistics compiled by the Federal Office record a small though steady improvement in the number of hotel-guests since 1932, which was the worst year. At the end of July last 52.7% of the available beds were occupied against 44.8% in 1933 and 44.1% in 1932; the figure for 1929 was 80.2%.

#### A TRAGEDY NEAR THE JUNGFRAU.

A Lucerne student, the son of Mr. Bühler-Schweizer, met with a fatal accident when crossing from the Mittaghorn to the Grosshorn (3765 m.); he was accompanied by two local guides, Robert Bischoff and Rudolf Brunner, who also lost their lives. Young Bühler was an only son whilst the two guides are mourned by large families.

#### OUR DIPLOMATS.

The usual annual conference of Swiss Diplomats abroad which takes place in Berne to-day has attracted a "full house;" there are present the Swiss Ministers from Paris, London, Rome, Brussels, The Hague, Stockholm, Vienna, Bucarest, Madrid and Buenos-Aires.

#### TOUR DE SUISSE.

The second "Tour de Suisse," an international cross-country cycle race started from Zurich last Saturday at 8 a.m.; it consists of

seven daily stages (Zurich — Davos — Lugano — Lucerne — Lausanne — Berne — Basle — Zurich) and finishes this evening at the starting place. Altogether sixty competitors, all of them aces in this sport, have entered the field representing Switzerland, Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Holland and Austria. The total sum of the official prize money amounts to Frs.25,500; furthermore a large number of special prizes are offered by business firms, clubs and individuals. Apart from a daily "refresher" for each competitor ranging from Frs.30 to Frs.500 according to place final-result prizes of Frs.2000 down to Frs.100 are awarded.

The event has been organised on a large scale and has evoked tremendous popular interest. No less than forty-five cars will follow the competitors in order to render all possible assistance, such as massaging facilities and a travelling hospital. Forty press reporters representing about a hundred newspapers will record the performance of each competitor.

So far the Swiss contingent has made a very good showing and is likely to be amongst the first three.

#### THE CONQUERING MOTOR-CAR.

Zermatt, one of the highest resorts, will soon cease to be the town without motor cars. At present it is linked with the rest of the world only by a mountain railway and a footpath up the gorge, which is 18 miles long.

In the cobbled streets of the town antiquated open carriages and a few horse-drawn hotel omnibuses are all the transport available, but now a motor road is being pushed up the deep gorge, climbing perilously high on the steep sides. About two miles of it have been completed, and another four miles will bring it to St. Niklaus. A narrow cart road runs from St. Niklaus to Zermatt, and that should greatly facilitate the task of the engineers.

#### LOCAL.

##### BERNE.

The communes in the district of Saignelegier have now agreed to the projected new water works and they are contributing Frs.800,000 to the estimated cost of 3½ million francs. The construction will be spread over three winters and is expected to employ about 500 unemployed drawn mainly from the watch industry.

##### SCHWYZ.

The cantonal accounts for the year 1933 show a deficit of nearly eight million francs.

##### GRISONS.

The "Bank für Graubünden," a small banking firm with a capital of 4.2 million francs, has closed its doors; it is hoped to resume business after a thorough reorganisation. Already in December 1933, temporary difficulties were bridged over with the help of the cantonal authorities and the National Bank, when eight million francs new money was secured by the undertaking.

##### FOOTBALL.

We are sorry to hear that Etoile Chaux-de-Fonds, by withdrawing their team from the Second League Championship and the Swiss Cup, have taken the first step towards liquidation. For some time negotiations took place with F.C. Chaux-de-Fonds with a view to a fusion of the two clubs; due to opposition by many old members this led to no result.

Etoile were founded in 1898 and entered the F.A. in 1902, reaching the top class in 1909. In 1912 and 1919 they won the regional championship and in the latter year became Swiss Champions. During the last few years, misfortune befell the club, losing in successive seasons their place in the National and in the First League. Another victim of the world crisis. A great pity!

M.G.

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By Kyburg.

### Holidays:

When the Editor of the Swiss Observer rings up and informs me that he intends calling on me, "it's ages since I had the pleasure of seeing you, old chap" I know that the probability of I having to do the "Notes and Gleanings" for a couple of weeks or so, is great and I am seldom wrong. You would think, wouldn't you?, that Editors of popular papers, receiving all day long bits of news from all over the world, seeing all the various periodicals with the beautiful holiday-pictures, High Mountains and Bathing Belles, lovely sylvan scenery and "Mr. So and so and friend taking tea on the terrace at Dinard" and, in addition to that, listening, on their daily business rambles, to endless stories of other people who have been away on holiday already, you would think, wouldn't you? that Editors loathed the very idea of a holiday. But such is the force of habit, such is the desire for a change that even Editors will cave in and come to think it a quite natural thing for them to go away for a holiday. Of course, it's perhaps their wives who want a change from domestic duties and from everyday life more than their husbands do and, as Editors on the whole are very good husbands, because they learn such a lot of the grievous results which attend the doings of bad husbands, they naturally do the right thing and arrange for that holiday duly to take place.

I am sure all our Readers will wish our friend ST., and his good lady a very successful and charming holiday. Editing is no light job and very nerve racking, and our Editor in particular needs the refreshing stimulus of a real holiday, not because he has gone stale, but in order to prevent his wonderful versatility from becoming stagnant. Where would the Swiss Observer be then? So, here's to wishing our Editor all the very best and many of them and plenty of them!

I wonder what he will think, though when he reads this drivel, always supposing the thing is printed! Kyburg has gone right off and I wonder whether he does it on purpose so that I shall not ask him again?

Well, I can assure you all that I am doing my best. The week's gleanings have been duly submitted to me, but they are a very poor lot.

There is an article in the "Financial News" 23rd August, entitled

### Swiss Control of Industry:

The Swiss Federal Board has recently issued a decree prohibiting the erection of industrial plant unless the consent of the Government has been obtained. The decree, which is retroactive, has been enforced without Parliamentary consent.

For the present, it applies only to the shoe manufacturing trade and is clearly directed against a company, mainly financed by foreign capital, which established a business in Switzerland a few years ago. In its decree, the Swiss Government refers to a law concerning economic proceedings against foreign countries, and it now appears that a branch of a foreign company established in Switzerland will be regarded as a foreign concern, despite the territorial principle which has hitherto been relied on.

This procedure will certainly not encourage foreign capitalists to invest money in Switzerland. Indeed, it has already caused anxiety among the existing foreign establishments, since foreign owners of Swiss industrial plants must apparently be prepared for similar action against them without notice.

### Danger of Retaliation.

In the present case the retroactive nature of the decree and the elimination of Parliamentary or any public discussion has increased anxiety. The effects of the economic blizzard on Switzerland are appreciated by all, and a desire to limit individual liberty for the good of the general community is understandable. But Switzerland should realise that she is in a somewhat vulnerable position and should avoid steps which may disturb international relations and lead to retaliatory measures.

According to a statement by Federal Councillor Meyer, foreign capitalists have invested

about 3,000,000,000 Swiss francs in Switzerland, whereas Swiss investments abroad total 8,000,000,000 Swiss francs.

and, to my mind, a more interesting one, because it deals with the Works I know so well, in the "Journal of Commerce," Liverpool, 23rd August, under the heading

#### Swiss Engineers' Centenary:

"This year marks the centenary of the foundation of the firm of Sulzer Brothers. The firm has risen from small beginnings. Two young and enterprising brothers started it, guided by the wisdom and experience of parents who had brought them up under the simplest conditions. Accustomed from an early age to hard work, self-restraint and a sense of duty, they believed firmly in the reward of perseverance and the power of personality."

With this introduction, the history of the firm from its beginnings is described in the current issue of the "Sulzer Technical Review."

The iron foundry with which the firm originated developed rapidly, and "the foundry" remained the popular term for the works at Winterthur for many decades. Then followed the installation of steam heating plants and the manufacture of steam boilers.

A new era commenced in the 'fifties when the brothers Sulzer took up the design and construction of steam engines, and from then onwards specialised more and more in this direction. The steam engine brought to the name "Sulzer" world significance. Since 1920 the principal designing and manufacturing activity of the firm has been in the development of the diesel engine.

The system of licensing plays an important part in Messrs. Sulzer's history. A network of co-ordinated interests with the licensees extends throughout the world, whereby contact is also retained with protectionist countries. The payments resulting from such licences constitute a welcome contribution to the funds necessary for research work of the parent company and the evolution of designs, which need to be based on large-scale experiments to meet the demand for units constantly increasing in size.

The imparting to foreign licensees of the results of this development and research represents an export of high quality intellectual work for which Switzerland alone would be far too inadequate a field.

The annual turnover of the firm belonging to the Sulzer concern in the years 1927 to 1930 is stated to have reached a total of 120 million Swiss francs when working with a full complement of 9,000 to 10,000 workmen and staff. This sum is exclusive of internal invoices between the various members of the concern.

My comment to the above is simply the very heartfelt wish that this big enterprise may continue to overcome the present-day difficulties and win through to the better times which assuredly must come again, sooner or later, perhaps!

Thinking of engineering works, I would recommend those of my readers who are interested in the problem of Peace v. WAR, to read "The Merchants of Death" which deals with the Armament Industries and their methods. The lecture of this book is extremely interesting just now when nearly all European States, including Switzerland, are increasing their armaments again, in order to be ready to defend their rights, etc.

The problem of whether RUSSIA should join the League of Nations or not, seems to have given rise to hectic discussions in Switzerland. The "Daily Telegraph" August 21st, has the following:

#### Soviet and the League:

The Problem of Soviet Russia's relations with the League of Nations is being widely discussed here in view of the coming meeting of the Assembly, and reports are once more current that the U.S.S.R., with the support of France, has applied for membership.

I understand that no such application has been received in Geneva. But the matter has been discussed recently at the country house of M. Avenol, the Secretary-General of the League.

These meetings have been given no publicity by the secretariat. But it is known that M. Avenol is encountering certain difficulties, and that the suggested entry of Russia into the League is arousing unexpected opposition in many quarters, chiefly from the smaller Powers.

#### Protest Campaign Threat.

These last-named contend that there is no guarantee the Soviets will carry out the essential point of Article I. of the Covenant that joining States will subscribe their "sincere intentions to fulfil international obligations."

Switzerland intends to vote against the admission of the Soviet, and plans are in

preparation for a national movement to demand that Switzerland leaves the League if Russia enters it.

Extreme elements in Switzerland are also prepared to state in public that the presence of the League on Swiss territory in such circumstances would be unwelcome.

With regard to Art. 1 quoted in the above, does it occur to some of the protesters against Russia's entry into the League that if that Article 1st were to be properly applied, without fear or favour, nearly all the members of the League of Nations would be required to resign? Or, do the exigencies of any situation absolve Nations and individuals from keeping their word? Or, is the term "intention" elastic and meant to be so? In short, if that article had any serious meaning at all, why was it not drafted in such a manner as to leave no loop-holes. Why bring in "intentions" into an Instrument of this kind, if it is meant to be a serious one?

I suppose arming to the teeth, so as to be able to "attack as the best means of defence," thereby preventing warfare being carried into one's own country, constitutes a "sincere intention to fulfil international obligations?"

The more I study the antics of the human family, the more I like bees and ants, probably simply because I have not studied the latter so closely.

In short, it is a sorry world we are living in just now, in spite of the glorious weather we have been having for nearly two years. It looks very much as if our poor humanity had to sink very much lower into the morass before peoples of all nations begin to realise a few elementary truths. What puzzles me sorely at times is the spectacle of the Christian Churches blessing this or that instrument of war and destruction, or the colours of this or that regiment. I knew, of course, the old belief that this was done to dedicate them to the defence of Right, but I think we all ought to know by now that Right is not necessarily the Right we mean. Therefore, I think, as a first step, the Christian Churches might begin by having the courage to disassociate themselves from armaments and soldiers etc., in any shape and form. A lot of people would then begin to realise that to carry arms, unless you are a policeman, is a shameful thing and against the ethics of a civilised community.

And so, were landed again on our favourite platform and it's time we stopped. Our readers do not wish to hear all this again, they feel that they are doomed anyhow if and when the next war breaks out and meanwhile they wish to live as happily as they can. It's nice to be alive, even if one knows they are coming for one at dawn, what?

#### 5. EIDGENOESSISCHER KUNSTTURNERTAG IN BASEL.

18./19. August 1934.

Als am letzten Samstag, den 18. August, Petrus das schönste Sommerwetter schickte, atmeten die Turner und Turnfreunde erleichtert auf. Obwohl ja auch in der neuen grossen Mustermesshalle 6, die für den Schlechtwetterfall zur Verfügung gestellt worden war, nicht schlecht zu arbeiten gewesen wäre, war es natürlich in jeder Beziehung nur zum Vorteil, auf dem grünen Feld des Rankhofes bei strahlendem Sonnenschein arbeiten zu können. Von allen Teilen der Schweiz kamen an die 400 Turner und zahlreiche Festbesucher zum Teil mit Extrazügen nach der rheinischen Feststadt Basel zum 5. Eidgenössischen Kunstturnertag.

Bereits am Samstag Nachmittag begann der Wettkampf der 4. Abteilung. Im allgemeinen vermochten die Leistungen vom Samstag nicht voll zu befriedigen.

Von 5—6½ Uhr fand auf dem leider etwas abgelegenen Sandgrubenturnplatz der Wettkampf der Veteranen statt. Die z.T. noch befriedigenden Leistungen der Senioren zeigten eindrucklich die Erhaltung körperlicher Leistungsfähigkeit bis ins vorgeschrittene Mannesalter. Die beiden ältesten Kämpfer, *Jean Seitz, Bern*, und *Zäsar Rochat, Herliberg*, mit ihren 57 resp. 56 Lenzen gaben dem Veteranenwettkampf ein besonderes Gepräge. Im ersten Rang stand mit 58.90 Punkten (Maximum 60) *Wyss Eugen, Zürich, Aussersihl*, dem *Gautschi Traugott, Grenchen* mit 58.80 folgte. Dann kamen *Furrer Jakob, Grafstall-Zürich*, mit 58.55 und *Holestein Robert, Zürich-Aussersihl* mit 58.40 Punkten.

Die Preisverteilung der Senioren fand am selben Abend auf dem Festplatz (Festwirtschaft, 10 Uhr) statt. Eine nette Wappenscheibe wurde als einheitlichen Preis überreicht. Eine gemütliche Unterhaltung hielt ein frohes Turnerpublikum bis zum späten Abend beisammen.

Am Sonntag lachte erneut ein herrlich blauer Festhimmel über dem übersichtlichen Arbeitsplatz, als um 6 Uhr der Kampf der 3. Abteilung begann. Wieder traf man dieselben Mängel wie am Samstag bei den einzelnen Übungen an. Doch war eine allgemeine Stei-

gerung der Leistungen zu konstatieren. Um 9.15 trat die 2. Abteilung zur Arbeit an. Die gebotenen Leistungen zeigten eine erneute Besserung. Es wird zugleich schwerer, aus der Fülle der gezeigten Darbietungen einzelne herauszugreifen. Zu den besonders bemerkenswerten Leistungen gehörte z.B. ein wundervoller Ueberschlag beim Pferdsprung von *Emmenegger, Olten*. *Hagen Sepp, Zürich-Aussersihl*, zeigte eine rassige Barrenübung und der *Lucerner Petermann* eine flotte Freübung. Besonders erwähnt sei die famose Reckübung des *Pariser Schweizers Maa Ungemuth*, der ebenso eine glänzende Barrenübung ausführte. Ferner war der Federbrettsprung von *Thommen, Liestal*, und die Bravourleistung des *Kleinbaslers Hunkeler* am Reck beachtenswert.

Um 12.15 war das Bankett der Organisatoren, Kampfrichter und Ehrengästen im Mustermessrestaurant, während sich die "gewöhnlichen Sterblichen" in der Festwirtschaft verpflegten oder, wie z.B. wir, auf der Tribüne oben auf dem Rasen ein schmackhaftes Picknick einnahmen.

Um 1.30 begann die Arbeit der ersten und besten Abteilung. Leider konnte der *Olympiadekämpfer Edi Steinemann* wegen einer Schulterverletzung nicht konkurrieren. Ebenso war der *Weltmeister Georg Miez* wegen seiner kürzlichen Verheiratung nicht anwesend. Beinahe unmöglich ist es, die Leistungen, die am Sonntag Nachmittag geboten wurden, zu schildern. Den 10,000 Zuschauern wurden in allen Übungsarten Prachtleistungen gezeigt. Das Hauptinteresse galt natürlich unserem *Basler Weltmeister Eugen Mack*. Atemlose Stille, wenn er seine Übungen ausführte. Nach dem flotten Hochsprung und der sauberen obligatorischen Reckübung brachte er leider beim Pferdsprung nicht eine "Weltmeisterleistung" zu stande. Doch zeigte er uns dafür eine fabelhafte Leistung am Pferd. Welche Sicherheit und Eleganz, dabei so selbstverständlich und einfach — das ist ihn, der 26 jährige Weltmeister! Und seine Arbeit an den Ringen war geradezu wunderbar. Weiss man doch, welch tückisches Gerät die Ringe sind. Auch der Stabsprung brachte ihm nicht einen Zehner. Dafür verriet die obligatorische Pferd-Barrenübung und die Reckübung in jeder Hinsicht den grossen Köhner. Zum Abschluss führte er unter lautloser Stille seine herrliche Barrenübung vor und Sieg stand sicher. Anfänglich hatten die Kampfrichter etwas zu hoch taxiert, und so bekam Mack eigentlich mit seinen Glanzleistungen nur wenig mehr, trotz seiner Ueberlegenheit punkto Schwierigkeit, Menge, und Vielseitigkeit.

Sehr schwer ist es jetzt, neben den Glanzleistungen des Weltmeisters die Übungen einiger anderer zu erwähnen, die es mit ihren ebenfalls ausgezeichneten Leistungen verdienen würden. *Bader Sigbert, Balsthal*, und *Bachmann Albert, Dietlikon*, zeigten sehr schöne Barrenarbeit ebenso der 20 jährige *Reusch Michael, Bern*, eine Kommende Grösse. Am Reck ragten *Bader, Balsthal* und der unverwundliche Routinier *Grieder Hans, Arbon*. Bei den Freübungen sind die beiden *Basler Wagner Jakob, Bürger*, und *Nägelin Hans, Klein-Basel* zu nennen. Hauptsächlich ersterer, führte seine Übung mit bekannter Sicherheit und Vielseitigkeit aus. Den Wettkämpfern war die Wahl gelassen zwischen Ringen und Freübung. In den Ringen war es *Wezel Melchior, Locarno*, der mit einer schönen Darbietung glänzte. Beim Pferdsprung sah man einige sehr schöne Hechte und Ueberschläge, aber es war sehr schwer, an 10 Orten zur gleichen Zeit 10 verschiedene Übungen zu überwachen, zudem auch noch in jeder Riege eine oder mehrere "Kanonen" kämpften.

Punkt 4.30 war das Arbeitsprogramm erledigt und um 4.45 erfolgte der Aufmarsch der Turner zur Rangverkündigung. Es ist immer ein schönes Bild, ein solcher Aufmarsch. Und auch diesmal war manches Auge nass, als zu den Klängen der Marschmusik die einheitlich weissen Mannen hinter der flatternden Fahne der veranstaltenden Sektion *Klein-Basel* und den Ehrendamen auf den abgeräumten grünen Rasen zum schnell errichteten Podium heranmarschierten. Die Turner stellten sich dann zwischen der Tribüne und dem Kranzpodium auf, um die kurze Ansprache des Präsidenten des eidgen. Kunstturnerverbandes, *Schelling*, zu vernehmen. Darauf folgte die Kranzverteilung: unter brausendem Beifall wurde unser aller Liebling *Eugen Mack* zum *Sieger* aufgerufen, und während die Musik einen Tusch blies, nahm er nach alter Sitte kniend seinen Lorbeer in Empfang. Die vorzügliche Arbeit der Wettkämpfer ergab unerwartet zahlreiche Kranzresultate. 130 Mann konnten kranzgeschmückt heimkehren. Jeder durfte sich vom reichen Gabentempel ein schönes Andenken mitnehmen. Wie üblich nach einem richtigen Schweizer Fest gab es nachher noch Hochbetrieb in der Festwirtschaft bei Bier und Klöpfen, um das wohl-gelungene Fest noch gebührend zu beenden.

Allerseits herrscht die Meinung, dass der 5. Eidgen. Kunstturnertag ein voller Erfolg war, und dass die Leistungen die Erwartungen noch übertroffen haben.