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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

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## HOME NEWS

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

### FEDERAL.

#### AN ANNIVERSARY.

On the 19th of this month, 30 years ago, the Simplon tunnel was opened. This event was celebrated with great festivities in which the King of Italy and the President of the Swiss Confederation, then M. L. Forrer took part. The Swiss President, accompanied by Federal Councillor Müller travelled to Milan and Genoa where they were received with much enthusiasm.

#### SWISS FORESTS.

In spite of the development of cultivation, of the towns and of the means of communications, forestland still covers, in Switzerland a very important area, amounting to 24% of the territory, while agriculture occupies 54%, thus leaving 22% unproductive. Swiss forests furnish annually 3,000,000 cubic meters of wood, an amount equal to 3 cubic meters per hectare (about 2½ acres). Although there is a surplus in woodland production, Switzerland is, nevertheless, an importer of a big series of special qualities of wood.

#### ALPINE ACCIDENT.

Dr. Gloor, a well-known Swiss alpinist, was climbing the Pointe de Mossetaz above Champéry on Sunday with a party of the Lausanne section of the Swiss Alpine Club when he had heart seizure at an altitude of 4,800ft. and fell down a precipice. His body was recovered. Dr. Gloor was 68 years of age.

#### ITALIAN BOOK BANNED IN SWITZERLAND.

The Swiss Federal authorities have forbidden the introduction into the country of an Italian booklet, "Swiss Italy," which consists of propaganda for extending Italian rule over neighbouring territory, including Malta.

The book claims that "Italy has the right to make the Maltese, the Corsicans, the people of Nice, the Italian Swiss and the Dalmatians aware that they are Italians."

### LOCAL.

#### ZURICH.

M. E. Hafner-Tobler, for many years a member of the Grand Council and "Kantonsrat" of the canton of Zurich has celebrated his 90th birthday anniversary.

\* \* \*

Evangeline Booth, General of the Salvation Army has arrived in Zurich where she was received by the President of the town of Zurich and high officials of the Salvation Army in Switzerland.

#### VALAIS.

M. Theodor Arnold, who has edited the "Walliser Boten" for the last 17 years has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary.

#### TICINO.

A petrol tank exploded at the Railway station in Lugano, starting a fire which, however, was soon under control.

#### BASLE.

Dr. Emil Haefeli, head of the firm Emil Haefeli and Cie. A.G., in Muttenz, has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary.

Dr. Haefeli, was born the son of a farmer, and is in the truest sense of the word a self-made man. After having been for several years in the service of firms like v. Roll'schen Eisenwerke and Brown, Boverie and Cie., he founded in 1904 his own concern, which is to-day one of the largest firm's in the Electricity line.

In 1922 the technical University in Darmstadt, bestowed the degree of *Doctor honoris causa* on M. Haefeli. He was for over 10 years a member of the Chamber of Commerce in Basle, and sat for 6 years in the Grand Council.

#### VAUD.

From Lausanne comes the news of the death of Professor Ernst Lugin at the age of 88. The deceased was from 1887-1908 teacher of the French language and literature at the "Höheren Töchterschule" in Basle.

#### NEUCHÂTEL.

Three lives were lost when a canoe capsized on the lake of Neuchâtel. The victims who were drowned are: Mlle. Du Pasquier, a pastor's daughter, J. P. Rothlisberger, the son of a Neuchâtel jeweller, and P. Chappuis, the son of a doctor. Miss Sonya Brownell, a 17 years old London girl is the only survivor of the boating tragedy, she was picked up by a steamer.

#### ST. GALL.

The accounts for 1935 of the town of St. Gall close with a deficit of 123,104 frs. instead of a loss of 303,250 frs. as was anticipated.

#### AARGAU.

A large fire completely destroyed the good's shed of the firm of Frikart A.G., Iron Merchants, in Zofingen. It is estimated that the damage caused will exceed 1½ million francs.

#### ST. GALLEN.

The death has occurred at St. Gall of Dr. J. Schöbi, States Councillor at the age of 63.

The deceased was only a fortnight ago elected to the Presidency of the "Grand Council" of the canton of St. Gall.

Dr. Schöbi was born in Berneck, and was the youngest of 17 children; he studied law at the Universities of Fribourg and Munich; after which he established himself as an advocate in Appenzell. Later on he took over the editorship of the "Rheinthalers Volkszeitung." In 1926 he was elected to the post of "Bezirksamann of the Oberheintal." Since 1912, Dr. Schöbi was a member of the Grand Council; he entered Parliament in 1935 as successor to States Councillor Messmer.

### ACADEMY CINEMA.

#### Die Ewige Maske.

I am afraid that I am prejudiced against pseudo-medical films and "Die Ewige Maske" has not caused me to change my opinion. I am sorry because it is a Swiss film, produced by Progress Film, Bern and I had been hoping to give it much praise. It is a pity because the natural resources of Switzerland are such as to lend themselves to film treatment. Instead of which, we are given a film described as a striking study in psycho-analysis which has nothing to do with psycho-analysis. According to the prospectus the film deals with a conflict between the old and the new schools of medical opinion and was made in association with a famous psychiatrist and has been made with the help of a medical supervisor. For the sake of the latter's reputation, I can only hope that his advice was overruled by the producer. From the point of view of technique, the film is perfect, the photography is excellent, the transmission what we have learnt to expect from Tobis-Klangfilm and the acting is superb. Peter Petersen as Professor Tschërko, Tom Kraa as Dr. Wendt and Mathias Wieman as Dr. Dumartin are all excellent. There is one episode which has outstanding merit, original in its conception and delicate in the execution of what otherwise might have been a disaster. I shall have more to say about this episode. Let me now take you over to the film and try to explain what I have meant by the above remarks.

The film opens in a modern hospital, the sort of hospital which fills one with envy and which one sees so seldom in reality.

Professor Tschërko is a medical director of this hospital, Dr. Dumartin is one of his assis-

tants and is a bacteriologist and Dr. Wendt is his colleague. An epidemic of meningitis is raging in the town and the doctors are apparently helpless. The only treatment appears to be to operate and the death rate is 90 per cent. This is hardly surprising, if they did operate for meningitis, but we will be charitable. It is hardly necessary to say that we are not told the kind of meningitis with which they are dealing. Dr. Dumartin goes to his Chief and informs him that he has discovered a serum against meningitis which is 100 per cent. efficacious and asks his permission to try it on one of the patients Mr. Negar. Tschërko refuses, saying that he will have no experiments in his hospital and suggests that Dumartin had better try the serum on himself. Dumartin replies that there is no time and repeats his request. Tschërko refuses with vehemence.

It will perhaps be superfluous to remark that firstly the serum treatment of meningitis cannot be called new, even with the greatest stretch of cinematographic imagination, and secondly, that according to the unanimous opinion of everybody the patient was dying and hence the treatment could hardly be called a dangerous or unjustifiable experiment.

Will you take the responsibility? cries Tschërko. No, then I will continue to operate. And this, in spite of the 90 per cent. mortality. Dumartin returns to his laboratory where we are shown a charming little scene in which his charming little assistant Thekla Ahrens expresses her confidence and faith in the skill of Dumartin. Dumartin then proceeds to open a glass box in which he has been growing the microbes causing all the trouble and makes a preparation which he proceeds to examine. He carefully sterilises the platinum loop he has been using but leaves the lid off the box, so that any air borne germ floating about can get into it. This is hardly good technique for one so skilled.

Finally he decides that Tschërko or no Tschërko, he will try his serum so confident is he in its value.

He interviews Mrs. Negar and obtains her consent, but apparently omits the elementary precaution of explaining to her that he is using the serum as a last resort and cannot tell what the result will be.

He then proceeds to inject the serum intravenously. Luckily we are spared the actual operation as he uses a needle more suitable for the veins of an elephant than those of a human being. Perchance I am being captious, but so it appeared to me on the screen.

The patient improves, but after a short time has a sudden collapse and passes out. The fat is now in the fire. Dumartin is upset by his failure, the professor is furious at such an act of disobedience on the part of one of his assistants, and Mrs. Negar upbraids the unfortunate Dumartin and calls him a murderer. The press gets hold of the story and there is a first class row although nobody seems to worry about the 90 per cent. in which the result is precisely the same.

Dumartin goes back to his laboratory, pours the rest of the serum into the sink and disappears.

Tschërko now gets really worried. Apparently he decides that the serum is not so useless as he had thought. On what evidence, we are not told. He solemnly announces to his colleagues that the cause of death has nothing to do with the serum, but is due to an embolism.

I am afraid this is really a bad break, as it is universally recognised that embolism, i.e. a clot in the heart, is one of the dangers of intravenous injection, though, may I hasten to add, extremely rare. He clamours for Dumartin, who has disappeared taking with him the formula of the serum, but Dumartin cannot be found.

We are now shown Dumartin frequenting a low cabaret and wandering about the streets at night where he hears voices accusing him of numerous crimes. He gets to a canal, sees his reflection in the water, throws the formula to his reflection and jumps in after it.

He is fished out by the police and taken in an ambulance to his own hospital where he is found to be suffering from complete loss of memory. The good professor immediately diagnoses his case as one of schizophrenia which is a form of incurable insanity and when Dr. Wendt mildly (Continued on Page 1996.)

## CITY SWISS CLUB.

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à laquelle les dames sont cordialement invitées

MARDI 16 JUIN à 7 HEURES 30

au BRENT BRIDGE HOTEL, HENDON.

Dîner (6/6) — Dance jusqu'à minuit.

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Pour faciliter les arrangements, les participants sont priés de bien vouloir s'inscrire au plus tôt auprès de Monsieur P. F. Boehringer, 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2. (Telephone: Clerkenwell 9595)

Le Comité.