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The Swiss Observer

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A Merry Christmas to all our Readers

CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS.

This week we have entered upon the festival of Xmas — the happiest and most precious time of the year.

All over the globe there will arise glad tidings of praise. Let us then, dear readers, lay aside for a few hours, at least, the burden of our work and forget our troubles and worries. Let us be re-united once again in that happy state of companionship and mutual good-will! Let us turn away from our daily toil and routine, with its restless struggles of life, to welcome the peace of Christmas.

Although the world is still in a turmoil, and the cares and sorrows lay heavily on many shoulders, the spirit of Christmas is the same to-day as yesterday and will be for ever. May this blessed time of goodwill towards mankind remain a daily companion of unflinching help, and an inspirer of all that is good and kind.

Generations come and go, ideas and customs may change, but the spirit of Christmas will remain for ever a vital force. Its message will never grow old nor can it be exhausted.

No matter how fast and feverish the pace of life, Christmas will give us a decided reminder of all that is real in this world and worth while living for. It will remind us more than ever, that we are all God's children, united in one big family, here on this earth, for but a little time, requiring the warmth of human kindness and friendship. Let the Christmas spirit, which is the spirit of active usefulness, perseverance, cheerful discharge of duty, kindness and forbearance come nearer and closer to our hearts. —

Happy Christmas that can win us back to the delusion of our childhood days, that can transport our thoughts, hundreds of miles away, back to our dear ones, back to the land of our birth.

God grants, that the coming year will be for all of us a year of striving to lessen the hardships under which a tired world is labouring; may it once again bring back peace amongst all nations. May the silver lining for which we so often have gazed heavenwards, appear and shed its light over the darkness in which we have tumbled during the last few months.

Far away in the cities, villages and hamlets of our homeland, the bells will ring in the glorious Christmas Day, their sounds will spread the glad message of goodwill amongst the children of this universe, they will pierce the Alps and ride on the ocean waves and will bring to everyone of us the greetings of that dear land of ours. Let us then, dear readers, spread this inspired message, compiled with our sincerest wishes for the land, which has accorded us a generous hospitality, and to many of us a second home.

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HOME NEWS

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

FEDERAL.

SWISS PRESIDENT FOR 1938.

FEDERAL COUNCILLOR DR. J. BAUMANN.

The two Chambers of the Swiss Parliament held their annual joint meeting, known as the Federal Assembly, for electing the President of the Confederation for the ensuing year.

Federal Councillor Dr. Johannes Baumann, Chief of the Federal Department of Justice and Police since 1934, was elected President. Federal Councillor Ph. Etter, Chief of the Federal Department of the Interior, was elected Vice-President.

Dr. Baumann was born in Herisau (Appenzel) 64 years ago. He received his schooling in Berne and later on studied law at the Universities in Leipzig, Berne, Zurich and Basle.

On obtaining the degree of *doctor juris utriusque* he returned to his native town Herisau, where he received a judgeship (Verhörriechter), which post he relinquished six years later in order to enter the cantonal government of which he remained a member for 26 years. Dr. Baumann was four times elected "Landammann" (head of the cantonal government.)

In 1911 he entered Parliament (States Council) where he soon made a name for himself as the leader of the Liberal fraction. In 1934 he was elected a member of the Federal Government in succession to Dr. Häberlin, who had resigned. In the army he reached the rank of colonel of Infantry.

NEW VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION — DR. PHILIPP ETTER.

The newly elected Vice-President of the Swiss Confederation, Dr. Philipp Etter, was born in Menzingen (Zug) and is 46 years old.

He started his political career in 1918 as a member of the "Kantonsrat," four years later he entered the cantonal government, in 1930 he was elected a member of Parliament (States Council).

Dr. Etter was elected a member of the Federal Government in 1934.

NEW FEDERAL JUDGE.

The Federal Assembly has elected Dr. Adolf Ziegler as a member of the Supreme Court in succession to Dr. C. Jaeger, who has recently resigned.

Dr. Ziegler was born in 1890 in Lichtensteig; he attended the "Kantonsschule" in Frauenfeld and later on studied law at the Universities of Berne, Leipzig and Heidelberg. After the conclusion of his studies he was for some time practising as an advocate in St. Gall. In 1920 he was elected secretary to the Federal Court in Lausanne, and later on, Clerk of the Supreme Court, a post which he has held for the last twelve years. Dr. Ziegler is the author of a great many works dealing with matters of law.

A SWISS BANK'S MORATORIUM.

A six-months' moratorium on certain liabilities has been granted to the Schweizerische Spar und Kreditbank (Banque Suisse d'Epargne et de Crédit) by the Swiss Federal Council.

The bank was founded a year ago, with a share capital of Frs.13,400,000 (£620,000) to continue the business of the re-organised Banque Co-operative Suisse. It has now been found by the directors that the re-organisation was incomplete.

The moratorium will be in force as from 17th December.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les membres sont avisés que

L'ASSEMBLÉE MENSUELLE

aura lieu Mardi 4 Janvier au Restaurant PAGANI-42, Great Portland Street, W.1. et sera précédée d'un souper à 7h. 15 précises (prix 5/-).

ORDRE DU JOUR.

Procès-verbal.	Démotions.
Admissions.	Divers.

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. (Téléphone: Clerkenwell 9595).

Le Comité.

Banking creditors at sight are not affected; the service of interest must be maintained under the moratorium and bills of exchange met on presentation. The bank's business is being continued.

MARCEL BENOIST PRIZE 1936.

The Marcel Benoist Foundation has bestowed the "Marcel Benoist Prize" for 1936 on Doctor A. Banotti from Bedigliora (Ticino), late Professor of Medicine at the University in Berne.

LOCAL.

VAUD.

The death has occurred in Lausanne of Dr. Oscar Däppen, since 1923, a Clerk of the Federal Tribunal, at the age of 43.

* * *

M. Fernando Pedrini, from Biasca, has been elected President of the Federal Insurance Tribunal in Lausanne.

GRISONS.

The death is reported of M. Thomas Dorta, President of the community of Samaden, and a member of the Grand Council, at the age of 64.

ZUG.

M. Josef Knüsel (Risch) a member of the cantonal government for the last 40 years, has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary. M. Knüsel was three times "Landammann."

"OLD FOLKS" CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON.

This unique function in the London Swiss Colony took place at the "Foyer Suisse," Upper Bedford Place, W.C., on Saturday last.

Every year the Committee of Management of the Foyer Suisse sends out invitations to Swiss who have attained their 65th year, this is the only qualification; there is no difference made whether they are blessed with worldly goods or whether they are poor. Although the above mentioned qualification does not yet entitle me to partake of this Luncheon "by right," I have nevertheless been lucky to attend this enjoyable gathering for the last five or six years as a guest. —

It so often happens, that members of the Colony, who, owing to their getting on in years, or to misfortune are unable to take anymore an active part in the Colony, they, like a well-known English soldier's song says: "Fade away."

And yet, how many, have deeply felt, that they have been forgotten by their compatriots, and in their loneliness, which unfortunately is one of the less agreeable sides of old age, they have at times felt bitter that nobody seems to care anymore for them.

It is therefore all the more to the credit of the Management of the Foyer Suisse, that they at least show them that they are not forgotten, and I congratulate them on this "beau geste," which is so much appreciated.

This year's attendance was bigger than ever. I have been told that over 60 of our compatriots were present, some of those who I met during the last few years, have grown older, and got a little "whiter," and alas, some of my old friends, are no more amongst us, they have gone to their eternal rest, where they have found the peace which we so sadly need in these times.

Yes, some have grown old and perhaps a little tired, and yet, when they looked at the lovely Xmas tree and when they listened to those old, and yet ever young Xmas melodies, which perhaps they had sung, many, many years ago, as children in our beloved country, they once again, if only for a few moments, felt young, their eyes brightened up and many a tear was secretly wiped away; yes old in age but ever young in attachment to our country. Life has treated some none too kindly, and many a dream has been shattered, but whatever pranks destiny has played on them,