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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

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## HOME NEWS

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### FEDERAL.

#### SWISS GOVERNMENT SUBVENTION FOR "LANDESAUSTELLUNG" 1939.

The Federal Council has voted a credit amounting to 2,400,000 frs. for the "Landesausstellung" which will take place in Zurich in 1939.

#### BIBLES IN 300 LANGUAGES IN SWISS EXHIBITION.

Bibles in 300 languages are being shown in a special exhibition in the National Central Library at Zurich.

Some are handwritten, and others go back to the earliest days of printing. Side by side with the famous Guttenburg Bible is one scarcely 2½ ins. high, whose text can be read only with a magnifying glass.

#### SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAY IMPROVEMENTS.

The financial results for the last five months of the Swiss Federal Railways are pleasing. The surplus at the end of last month, reached 41.4 million francs, or nearly double than at the same period twelve months ago; it is, however, not enough to meet amortisation and interests on loans which require the sum of about 62 million francs.

#### LEU AND CO.'S BANK.

Leu and Co.'s Bank is the last of Switzerland's "Big Seven" to announce its trading result for 1936. The profit and loss account shows a debit of Frs.1,000,000 (£47,619). The previous year's loss having been carried forward, there is a total loss of Frs.8,500,000 (£404,761).

Under the capital reconstruction plan sanctioned by the Supreme Court this loss will disappear. Share capital is to be reduced from Frs.40,000,000 (£1,900,000) to Frs.6,000,000 (£286,000) and thereafter increased to Frs.7,000,000 (£333,000), the new shares being subscribed by the directors of the bank.

There is also to be a Preference share capital of Frs.18,500,000 (£900,000) to be distributed to each creditor whose claims on the bank exceed Frs.1,000 in settlement of 15 per cent. of the claim, while for a further 20 per cent. of individual claims each creditor will be able to participate in the profits of the bank and the proceeds of frozen assets abroad.

The meeting will be held on 30th June.

### LEGACIES.

The late Mme. Fanny Wirz-Hauser, in Winterthur, has left an amount of 26,000 frs. to the town of Winterthur, to be used for charitable purposes. Mme. Nussbaumer-Schell, Zug, who recently died bequeathed an amount of 10,000 frs. for the poor. Cantonal-Judge Joseph Camenzind has left the town of Gersau a sum of 8,000 frs. M. Adolf Graf, who recently died left a legacy of 60,000 frs. each to the communities of Wolfhalden and Teufen. M. Graf spent over 50 years in Madrid, he returned to Switzerland two years ago.

### LOCAL.

#### ZURICH.

At the age of 70 died in Winterthur, Dr. Heinrich Rüegg. The deceased was from 1891-1898 editor of the "Zürcher Post" and until 1915 editor of the "Landboten." Dr. Rüegg was for eleven years President of the Board of the "Zürcher Kantonalbank," he was a member of the "Kantonsrat" for 40 years.

#### BERNE.

In Muri, near Berne, died at the age of 90, M. Theodor Volmar, a former drawing master at the "Gewerbeschule" in Berne. The deceased

was a member of the Federal Art Commission since 1910.

#### SOLOTHURN.

M. Paul Seid, for many years Manager of the "Solothurner Handelsbank," has died in Solothurn at the age of 58.

#### APPENZELL A-RH.

At the age of 74, died at Trogen, M. Arnold Schiess, a member of the Cantonal government from 1919-1929.

#### BASLE.

The University of Basle has refused an invitation to attend the 200th anniversary celebrations of the foundation of the University of Goettingen.

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Dr. Max Meier, rector of the Realgymnasiums, and a member of the grand council of the canton of Basle, has celebrated his 50th birthday anniversary.

#### ARGAU.

M. Theodor Pfister-Wild, the founder of the Municipal Electricity Power station in Baden, has died at the age of 85. The deceased, who was an honorary citizen of the town of Baden, has, for many years, rendered great services to the town.

#### VALAIS.

Avalanches of mud and rocks sweeping down on the village of Lourtier, in the Val de Bagnes, have made more than 500 people homeless. Sixty-three buildings have been carried away or are seriously damaged.

Rocks as big as houses obstruct the usual bed of the river traversing Lourtier and will have to be blown up before the torrent can be diverted to its normal course.

Twenty years ago Lourtier was wiped out by fire, and some years after its reconstruction floods destroyed a greater part of the village.

#### GENEVA.

The watch manufacturing firm, Golay Fils & Stahl, in Geneva, have celebrated the 100th anniversary of their foundation. On this occasion the firm made substantial money presents to their staff.

### "BERNE IN FLOWERS."

The "Berne in Flowers" Festival which has been inaugurated in the capital of Switzerland is a charming attempt to revive an attractive old custom. For four months in the year from June to September, the houses are being decorated with a wealth of flowers. In window boxes and frames, the blossoms which Switzerland produces so lavishly have turned the streets into a garden city. The Swiss are expert in this form of decoration, and on the extended scale now employed the floral displays should prove a great attraction to visitors, and increase the tourist traffic.

At the opening of the festival Mr. Ernest Reinhard, councillor of the Municipality of Berne, and president of the Association for "Berne in Flowers," welcomed Mr. J. Baumann, Federal Minister of Justice, Mr. R. Minger, Minister for War, and the representatives of the Canton Government and the municipal authorities of the city. A large number of members of the international and Swiss Press attended the inauguration ceremony.

#### Attractions of the City.

This season of "Berne in Flowers," Mr. Reinhard said, was a sign of the optimism of the people and the desire of everybody to overcome the crisis from which they had been suffering. The intention had been not only to revive the ancient custom of decorating the windows with flowers, but to provide work and to show Berne in its best aspect for four months each year. It was hoped that it would prove a great incentive to large numbers of visitors to come to this city, famous for its beautiful landmarks, such as the imposing Minster built high on a granite platform, and the famous clock tower in the centre of the town.

One of Berne's chief objects of interest is the famous bear pit, which has for centuries harboured the heraldic animals of the city. There are many parks and playing grounds in the city; the sporting spirit is keen, and games and sport

are greatly encouraged, and maintain a high standard. Extensive bathing establishments are to be found on the banks of the Aare, while on the fringe of the town is the beautifully situated "Alpar" flying-ground. No finer centre presents itself as a starting point for the splendour of the Bernese Oberland.

The famous boys' choir rendered Bernese folk songs, and then a procession of decorated cars toured the city to view the houses and gardens.

Later, the official opening took place of the newly formed Zoological Gardens, or Animal Reserve as the organizers prefer to call it. The greater portion of the exhibits are open freely to the public, and while the animals and birds are kept in separate enclosures, it is the intention of the authorities that visitors should come into close contact with them. In the speeches which preceded the formal opening it was pointed out that Mr. William Gabus, some few years back, gave the initial donation for the founding of the fund to provide this park, and the rest of the money was voted by the city of Berne in 1935.

In the evening a banquet followed at the Casino, during which music was rendered by bands from various parts of Switzerland which had assembled in Berne for the first federal gathering in the capital. The programme also included a choir of yodellers and the presentation of classical dances by a group of Bernese girls. This was followed by a ball at the Hotel Bellevue, at the invitation of Director Hermann Schmid.

#### Children's Festival.

To illustrate the floral wealth of Switzerland the city of Berne held a floral pageant in which over 2,500 pretty vivacious schoolgirls, between 10 and 12 years of age, had transformed themselves into brilliantly coloured flowers. Headed by two bear cubs, born at Caster in the famous bear pit, and marshalled in 16 sections, each headed by decorated lorries, they marched gaily to the strains of the smartly uniformed bands of over 750 boys. The flora of Switzerland was depicted, ranging from the edelweiss of the Alps to the modest but beautiful flowers of the lowlands.

The graceful Alpine soldanella and the snowdrops of the lowlands as heralds of spring headed the procession. Primroses and other flowers danced to the music of the lively greenhued grasshopper. The alpine flora section, which included the edelweiss, the red rhododendron hirsutum (Alpenrose), the yellow arnica and the beautiful Oxford blue gentiana, was particularly appreciated by the record crowd of about 100,000 spectators. Charming in its simplicity and yet most striking was the lily of the valley group.

Summertime was represented by two excellently arranged sections, one of them reserved for the brilliantly coloured sunflowers, bluebells, geraniums and other flowers of the peasant gardens, the other devoted to the queen of flowers, the delicately coloured rose. A wealth of autumn colours followed — vivid red poppies, bright blue corn-flowers, gaily coloured asters and crysanthemums all in such masses that the eye was dazzled by the gorgeous colours and hues.

The procession ended with a mass assembly — a riot of beauty and colour, in the grounds of the Schwellenmatteli, followed by a well deserved tea for all the happy but hungry "flower-children." The pageant was a great success.

Nothing like it has ever been attempted in Berne before, and the organizers, the officials and teachers of the municipal schools, deserve unstinted praise for their work, all the more remarkable when one considers that the whole pageant was prepared in two months, and that all costumes, flowers, decorations, &c., were designed and carried out in the schools by the teachers and scholars themselves. The hope has been expressed that Berne will make this "Children's Festival" an annual event.

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## When at HAMPTON COURT have Lunch or Tea at the MYRTLE COTTAGE

Facing Royal Palace, backing on to Bushy Park between Lion Gate and The Green.

P. GODENZLI, PROPRIETOR.