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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

The Federal Council gave a dinner at the Hotel Bellevue, Berne, in honour of the Director of the International Labour Bureau at Geneva, M. Albert Thomas.

The dinner was followed by an informal discussion of a number of pending questions, connected with the League of Nations, the International Labour Bureau, and the coming Genoa Conference.

\* \* \*

The first meeting of the Swiss Marconi Company was held in Berne on February 23rd. The share capital is 1,800,000 frs., of which the bulk is subscribed by the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of London, while the Swiss Government and the Swiss Bank Corporation of Basle and London have also secured shares.

As members of the Governing Board there were elected: Dr. jur. Trüssel, Berne, chairman; States Councillor Dr. Usteri, Zurich, vice-chairman; Dr. Furrer, Berne, Director-General of the Federal Posts and Telegraphs; Mr. Schmidlin, Basle, Managing Director of the Swiss Bank Corporation; Mr. Henri William Allen, Joint General Manager of Marconi's; Mr. Herbert Arthur White, also of the Marconi Co.; and M. Chapuisat, Geneva, editor-in-chief of the "Journal de Genève."

Dr. Fritz Rothen, Berne, formerly of the Swiss Telegraph Agency, has been appointed director of the new company.

The erection of the wireless station near Berne is approaching completion, and it is anticipated that the regular service will be opened on April 1st.

\* \* \*

During 1921 there were 102 chronometers submitted for testing purposes by Swiss watch manufacturers to the Federal Observatory.

The first prize was accorded to the Genevese firm Vacheron & Constantin, and the second prize to Messrs. Patek-Philippe, also of Geneva.

\* \* \*

The Swiss Aero Club, Geneva, have received 17 entries for this year's Gordon-Bennett Cup race, representing the following countries: Belgium 3 balloons, England 3, France 3, Italy 3, Spain 2, and Switzerland 3. For last year's contest, which started at Brussels, 16 competitors entered.

\* \* \*

A most ruthless murder has been committed at the

Meteorological Observatory on the Säntis, 2,500 metres above sea level, where, separated far from inhabited regions, the Observatory attendant H. Haas and his wife carried on their daily duties.

Only a single telephone wire connected the two people with the rest of the world, used for conveying the records of the various meteorological instruments to the receiving station down at Wasserauen. It appears that in the last report which the attendant sent down from the summit on Tuesday, February 21st, mention was made that a skier had been about the Säntis for some days, taking shelter occasionally during the day and spending the night in the Observatory, and that his presence was becoming increasingly disagreeable, but it was hoped that they would succeed in ridding themselves of the objectionable guest.

This was the last message which reached Wasserauen, but an interruption of the telephonic communication often occurs during the tempestuous winter months, owing to snow falls interfering with the wire, lasting at times for days, until the damage can be repaired, the absence of further messages gave rise to no apprehensions.

On Saturday morning, February 25th, the carrier Rusch, who ascends the Säntis every week-end to bring provisions up to the attendants, made the gruesome discovery that Mrs. Haas was lying dead on the floor in the office of the station, having been shot through the breast, while her husband was found at the foot of the recording instrument in the open at the top of the summit, which is reached by a subterranean passage from the Observatory building, lying face downward in the snow, having been shot through the back.

Finding that the telephone installation in the Observatory had been rendered useless, presumably by the perpetrator of the crime, the carrier hurried down to Wasserauen to report and summon medical and police authorities and a transport column for bringing the bodies from the Säntis.

A thorough inspection by the police revealed the fact that robbery was the object of the abominable murder, the living quarters having been ransacked and personal belongings and money taken away. A bootmaker named Kreuzpointner, a naturalised subject, is the suspected culprit. He lived at St. Gall, and police investigation has proved that he has just recently, through a third person, pawned some jewellery which is recognised as having belonged to Mrs. Haas.

The murder has caused consternation all round, as the two victims were in the prime of life, devoted to their singularly trying occupation, and greatly respected by all alpinists who came into contact with them in their voluntarily chosen isolation.

Particular sympathy is felt for their two children, who are thus cruelly robbed of both parents.

They are in the care of friends in Appenzell, and were looking forward to the coming summer months, when during their school vacations they could go up to their parents and enjoy their company for awhile.