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HOME NEWS

FEDERAL.

DEATH OF FEDERAL COUNCILLOR KARL SCHEURER.

M. Karl Scheurer, who was to have been President of the Confederation for 1930, died at the age of 57. His death will cause a second vacancy in the Cabinet, as Federal Councillor Haab, the present President will retire from political life at the end of the year.

M. Scheurer, like other members of the Federal Council, was originally a lawyer by profession. In performing his military service he attained the rank of Colonel of Artillery. He was in charge of the Military Department, and during his term of office carried out many important reforms in the organisation of the Army, including the introduction of machine-gun companies in the infantry.

M. Scheurer was a native of the canton of Berne, and had all the Bernese characteristics of devotion to duty. He had already in 1923 occupied the position of President of the Confederation.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

A tramcar and trailer of the Fluntern route, coming down Gloriatrasse at a tremendous rate, jumped the rails at the turning opposite the Physikgebäude and ran into a wall. The front car was reduced to splinters, but the trailer was scarcely damaged. The conductor in the first car had the presence of mind to shepherd his 10 passengers to the rear, as soon as he realized that an accident was inevitable, and all of them escaped with bruises and cuts. Dead leaves blown by wind and rain on the rails prevented the brakes from getting a grip and thus caused the accident.

BERN.

A serious accident at the construction of the power station at Oberhasli has cost three lives. Workmen were engaged in covering-in concrete at the Grimel-dam prior to the annual stoppage of work during winter, when part of the scaffolding collapsed. Some of the men were crushed, others were flung into the deep. Apart from the three killed, three were seriously and five slightly injured.

Burglars have visited the Fischermättli railway station at Bern and rifled the safe. Their booty amounts to over 2,000 Frs. An attempt on the adjoining mustard factory was unsuccessful.

Miss Marie Schumann, aged 88, eldest daughter of the famous composer, died recently at her home at Interlaken, Switzerland.

LUZERN.

The cantonal budget for 1930 foresees a reduction of 1/10th unit of the State Tax. The total reduction of this tax since 1924, the year in which the present Act came into force, amounts to one-fifth. The poor tax is to be increased by 1/20th, which increase will be used to succour communities with the heaviest poor charges.

GLARUS.

This canton makes enormous efforts to maintain its industries. Collective measures have become necessary, as some of the industries seem to have passed high water mark and show signs of stagnation and even retrogression. Intensive endeavours to attract tourists and to introduce new industries are the means by which matters are to be improved. The finance commission of the canton—and neighbouring cantons admire the exemplary way in which Glarus finances are safeguarded—stresses the need for care and wisdom in expenditure. Their report further states that the chief industry, textiles, which employs about 3/4 of the available labour, suffers from a chronic crisis, and a decline can scarcely be prevented. Domestic production of cheap cotton and other goods in the near and far

East, competition by artificial silk, the reduction of clothing worn owing to present fashions, high cost of living and labour, and stiff foreign tariffs are quoted as causes of the crisis. Exports, in spite of big quantities, are not on a remunerative basis, and any further increase of the cost of living, with consequent additional cost of labour, would inflict inestimable harm. Therefore: be careful and economize is more than ever to be the guiding maxim.

AARGAU.

The cork-works at Dürrenäsch have been lost by fire. The brigades of the neighbouring villages rendered good help, but all were hampered by dense volumes of smoke.

The home of farmer Hottinger at Zuzgen was totally destroyed by fire. Arson is suspected, and the inhabitants of the village are greatly perturbed, as this is the third fire within three weeks.

BALE.

The "National-Zeitung" is proudly recalling to its readers that Editor Richard Amstein can now look back on 25 years service, and gratefully acknowledge its indebtedness to a considerate and highly appreciated collaborator. Amstein excels in forecasting and judging the trend of political events.

For the second time since the start of its post-war activities, the association for the reunion of both Bales meets in general meeting. The committees appointed at the 1927 meeting have practically completed their preparatory work, and a draft constitution for the united canton Bale will be submitted. Dr. Max Vischer will be in charge of this item on the agenda.

A motor car caught fire between Augst and Rheinfelden. The chauffeur, careless of his own safety, remained on his seat surrounded by flames, until he managed to stop the car with the foot-brake. The car ran on for 100 meters before coming to a standstill, and yet the chauffeur miraculously escaped injury.

APPENZEL.

Fire broke out in the grocery store belonging to widow Dobler-Mausser at Meistersrüti. The flames were nourished by considerable stocks of petrol and fat. The fire brigades from Meistersrüti, Appenzel, Rütli and Gais had a hard task before they could save neighbouring houses, particularly as water was scarce and had to be carried a distance of 200 m. The first arrivals found a broken window, so that a criminal origin of the fire is suspected.

GRAUBÜNDEN.

The proposal of a railway line from St. Moritz to Maloja has obtained the required financial backing; estimates and plans are being prepared.

Book early for Engadine & Oberland Express.

People who are thinking of going to Switzerland this winter had better be quick about booking their seats in the Engadine and Oberland expresses. The first trains run from December 17, and are already fully booked up until December 23, while the lists for the duplicates are already half full.

One whole coach of the Engadine express is taken up by the joint parties of two well-known men, one of whom is Sir Henri Deterding. The Engadine express serves the St. Moritz area, while the Oberland takes one to the neighbourhood of Wengen, Mürren, and Grindelwald.

Usually the family parties go out before Christmas—as soon as the schools break up—while the more expert skiers delay their departure until the first week in January.

NOTA BENE!

On December 14th, another Special Issue of the Swiss Observer will be broadcast so as to reach the whole Swiss Colony in Great Britain. This will be a unique opportunity for advertisers to secure the Christmas trade. Please communicate in good time if you wish to secure space, which can be booked at the ordinary rates for serial advertisements.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

Winter Sports:

The sun may be shining beautifully again by the time my Readers will be enjoying the *Swiss Observer's* next issue and we may, by then, have forgotten the frightfully depressing Friday, 15th November, when the City and most of the Country were shrouded in evil smelling fog and life was anything but pleasant for those who had to venture out and brave the elements. And on that day it fell to my lot to go through the week's Press-Cuttings and a most tantalising experience it proved to be. For, I never met such a wealth of beautifully illustrated articles appearing in one single week in the British Press and all about Swiss Winter Sports. I think all the famous Swiss Resorts were represented. You might, perhaps, envy me, thinking that going through all these cuttings, looking at all these beautiful pictures, ought to have brought some vicarious sunshine into my office too! I repeat, however, that my feelings were more akin to those experienced by the late, unfortunate Mr. Tantalus and that I thought it very cruel of Fate to tease me with such unattainable vistas. I have decided to write and reproduce as little as possible about Winter-Sports this Season, but I cannot refrain from putting before you the following from *Piccadilly* 9th Nov., so that you too may feel that tugging at the heart-strings, that longing and fierce yearning to be off and away to a better climate:

TRAVEL SONG.

Sing a song of Winter Sports,
Of sunshine and snow;
This is the jolly day
We start our holiday;
Off we go.
Victoria's
A glorious
Spot to start from;
You know where the place is;
Bring the bags and cases
To the platform we depart from.
The Southern Railway
—That sterling never-fail way—
Runs us swiftly, smoothly down to Dover;
Its comfortable boat
—We'll scarce know we're afloat—
Will see the Channel-crossing quickly over.
Right from Calais quay
In a fast train marked Paree,
The Railway Nord will hurry us along;
The Golden Arrow
O'er its speed narrow
Flies true and straight like the arrow in the
song;
The Railway Est
Takes up the task with zest
And whirls us on our way with flying wheel.
Our coach at night will be
A well-appointed wagon-lit;
As cosy in bed at home we'll feel.
By smiling vale and lake
Our onward way we'll take;
Swiss Federal now our destiny is tending;
From the level lowlands
To the sunny snow-lands
The mountain train its upward way is wend-
ing;
" Round and round again,"
Says this puffing, sturdy train,
" The mountain may be steep,
But I'll try with might and main.
I shan't stop
'Till I get to the top;
That's my way," says the mountain train.
" Oh, I'm not particular,"
Says the Funicular,
" If I go perpendicular,
It's all the same to me."
So the mountain train goes snorting,
Our skates and skis escorting.
To take us Winter Sporting
Oh happy, happy we!
Then sing a song of Winter Sports.

Votes for Women:

I said a few things about the "Votes for Women" campaign in Switzerland in last week's issue. Meanwhile the question has naturally aroused deep interest in many quarters in England and Mr. John Striving in the *Sunday News*, 10th inst., thinks that the Swiss men's apathy or even antipathy on this question is a proof that "Democracy does not lose its head!" Writes he:
Yet Switzerland, whose laws are framed