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The Swiss Observer

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HOME NEWS

FEDERAL.

AN ITALIAN PROTEST.

The Italian Government has lodged a protest with the Swiss Minister at Rome in connection with the "Bassanesi" affair. The facts are shortly the following: An aeroplane, in charge of a man named Bassanesi, dropped one day last week a large number of political pamphlets directed against Fascism over the town of Milan. On its return journey the machine crashed in the neighbourhood of the St. Gotthard, resulting in slight injuries to the aviator. It has subsequently been established that the machine originally started from Paris on its anti-fascist mission but made a brief halt in a field at Lodrino in the canton Ticino from which place the actual "raid" into Italy was effected. The aviator Bassanesi is at present under provisional arrest in Switzerland pending the formulation of a definite charge.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

An attempt to cross the Greifensee in an orthodox way had a tragic result for Mrs. Berta Cantoni from Zurich. She made use of an inflated motor-tyre, which, through some defect, exploded when she was about half-way across the lake. The woman who was 36 years of age and unable to swim sank, without help being able to reach her in time. The body has not yet been found.

The Statistical Department of the town of Zurich announced that the natural growth of the population in June this year was finished up with an increase of 99 as compared with 94 last year. The immigration was slightly smaller—3,302, whereas the emigration was a little greater 3,108 so that the difference of 194 represents not quite half of last year's figures. A total increase therefore of 293 has brought the population to 242,394.

BERNE.

A Children's Republic has established itself at Dürrenast. On Saturday, July 5th, 1,400 holiday-making children of both sexes ranging from 9 to 16 years of age and coming from all districts in Germany settled down on the shores of the lake of Thun in a well-organised community. They are spending four weeks' holiday in the lovely air of the Bernese Oberland to fit them again for school and everyday life.

One-hundred-and-fifty tents have been pitched, divided into nine villages, each village electing its own mayor and delegates to parliament. Each of the 15 or more tents which form the village, again has its head-man who also is elected from amongst the inhabitants.

The total, which forms the Republic again has its own Authorities. For important questions Parliament is not sufficient, they have to be decided by a Plenary meeting.

The children are not entirely left to themselves, as there are 200 "Helpers," young grown-ups who have been specially trained to guide and advise, but not to hinder perceptibly their decisions. The Republic is self-supporting, a large hut has been erected in which the community assembles in two shifts for meals, which are prepared in the adjoining kitchen and to which the Council of Thun has kindly agreed to lay on the gas.

BASLE.

The Executive Council of Basle has empowered the police department to issue a hawkers' licence as well as a permit to use the highways to the Migros Ltd. This is an organisation in opposition to the Co-operative Society, having motor-vans which are to all intents and purposes travelling showrooms and shops. They perambulate the streets, stopping outside the houses and so enable the housewife to do her shopping without as much as leaving her doorstep.

At the age of 77 years the senior partner of the private bank of Lüscher and Co., Mr. Lüscher

Burekhardt, died on July 8th. He was said to be an expert on Swiss Exchange matters and his book about it is considered a standard work.

BIEL.

In a wood between Sonvillier and St. Imier the body of a woman hawkker who apparently hanged herself was found. The woman had her lodgings with a married couple named Messerli in St. Imier. When the police made enquiries a witness came forward who saw Messerli wheeling a cart towards the woods on which was a form that looked like a body. Messerli was arrested. Since then three more witnesses have come forward confirming the statement of the first witness. The autopsy of the body suggests murder.

NEUCHÂTEL.

The Canton of Neuchâtel is issuing a new four-and-a-half per cent. loan to the amount of 30,000,000 francs to provide for the redemption of the six per cent loan of 1920, which falls due on 31st of January 1931, and of the five per cent. loan of 1918, which is being called for redemption on 31st December next—that is, eight years before its final due date. The new loan will have a currency of 18 years, the Canton having the option to redeem it after 12 years. The issue price is 99 per cent., including Federal stamp duty.

VAUD.

The police Department of the Canton of Vaud has been augmented in its personnel by one dog—"Wigger." The attachment of Wigger is an official act duly recorded in the police archives of Lausanne. It is also a recognition of a dog whose exploits are already equalling in fame those of "Barry," the famous St. Bernhard who did such marvellous rescue work in the high Alps a few decades ago.

"Wiggers" police work had a quite unofficial origin. A farmer lost his purse, "Wigger," after sniffing some of the owners clothes, dug it up from beneath a six inch plough furrow after a three hours' search. The dog's fame spread still further when he located a woman who had disappeared for three days from her home in the Jura mountains. Her family and the local police had searched in vain. Then "Wigger" was called in. The dog picked up almost instantly the seventy-two hour old scent which had been still further obliterated by snow that had fallen in the meantime. Followed by the police he led a gruelling trail into the heart of the mountains, where, deep in a heavy snow drift, the woman was found, unconscious but still alive.

TICINO.

Professor Giovanni Ferri, doyen of the Ticino professors, has died at Lugano at the age of 93. The deceased took his degree as a doctor of mathematics at the University of Pavia. For 61 years he was Professor of mathematics at the "Licée de Lugano" and was also a member of the "Commission fédérale de météorologie." His military rank was that of a lieutenant-colonel.

OBERWALLIS.

On Monday evening some observers on the Gornergrat could see a group of people on the Gorner glacier, who looked as if they had lost their way. A column was formed from the Hotel Rifflalp under the leadership of Guide Birren. When the column reached the group it was established that actually they were Italian fugitives who had amongst them a woman and a twelve-year-old boy. They were able to pass unnoticed the Italian frontier guards. When they found that the column was formed for their relief they were deeply grateful. On Tuesday morning the whole party arrived back at Rifflalp. On being questioned for the inducement of this risky enterprise they answered that they wanted to go to friends in France to look for work.

THE NEW BUILDING FOR THE LONDON Y.W.C.A.

To the Editor of the *Swiss Observer*.

Sir,—In your issue of October 13th, 1928, you have been kind enough to publish two letters exchanged between Mrs. Baldwin, wife of the then British Prime Minister, and myself, regarding the erection of the new Y.W.C.A. Building, in Tottenham Court Road, which is to be the home of the Central Club for Girls and Women under the direction of the "Y.W.C.A. Blue Triangle Forward Movement." Mrs. Baldwin wrote that, in view of the large number of Swiss girls who are using the Club, a contribution from Switzerland would be highly appreciated, and it was suggested that such contribution should take the form of a Swiss room in the New Building.

On publication of this correspondence in your paper, I have been encouraged by members of the Swiss Colony to recommend the enterprise of the Y.W.C.A. Committee to the charitable attention of my countrymen in England and Switzerland. Before making a general appeal to the Colony, I have thought it advisable to bring the problem, in a personal and informal way, to the notice of a small number of Swiss concerns, institutions and private citizens here and in Switzerland and I am happy to-day to inform you that this measure, which was really meant to be only a preliminary one, has had the unexpectedly gratifying result of covering the full amount of the sum to be collected.

I was thus in the position to dispense with a general appeal to the Swiss community in England.

I have now presented Mrs. Baldwin for the said purpose with a cheque for £1,000 (one thousand pounds) for the installation of a Swiss room. This room will be one of the rest rooms of the Central Club and its installation will receive such care and attention, as to make it one of the important halls of the new building.

In acknowledgement of this donation, the Committee of the Central Club has kindly consented to put permanently a certain number of bedrooms at the disposal of Swiss girls wishing to use the Club, at standard prices and in accordance with the general rules of the Club. This arrangement is all the more welcome as there are always no small difficulties in finding accommodation for Swiss girls passing through London.

Yours sincerely,
C. R. PARAVICINI.

LIST OF DONORS.

Madame Paravicini, Member of the International Committee Y.W.C.A.
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Arranged by the Swiss Clubs and Societies
ON
Friday, August 1st, 1930
From 3 to 9 p.m.
on the Grounds of the Swiss Rifle Association at

HENDON

ADDRESS by the Swiss Minister
FOLK-LORE SONGS by members of the Swiss Choral Society
RIFLE SHOOTING at the 100 yds. Automatic Targets for valuable prizes
MILITARY BRASS BAND of 18 performers
LARGE DANCING FLOOR to hold about 400 dancers

Many other attractions such as Coconut Shies, Ball Board, "Dandy," Treasure Hunt, Stop-watch Competition, etc.

Refreshments at popular prices

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