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The Swiss Observer

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SEE FORTHCOMING EVENTS



HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

SAVOY FREE ZONE HISTORY.

The decision of the Hague Court upholding the Swiss contention about the Savoy Free Zones closes a question which has its roots in the remote past. When in the sixteenth century Geneva won freedom from the Dukes of Savoy she cut herself off from the country districts of which she is the natural economic centre. Religious feeling ran high, and the Savoyard gentlemen declared that they could and would eat the impertinent city with a teaspoon. But the Duke's sieges failed, and his common sense soon re-established freedom of trade between Geneva and its hinterland. France, under the Bourbons, was equally liberal. But with the fall of Napoleon the old difficulty revived; it was solved by the treaties of 1815-1816, which re-established the free zones in Gex and Upper Savoy. The French annexation of Savoy in 1860 respected these agreements, but the Third Republic was less conciliatory than the Bourbons and the Bonapartes. The inhabitants of the French free zones no longer liked an arrangement which let in Genevese imports free but did not save their exports from the Swiss Customs barrier. An agreed article was therefore inserted in the Treaty of Versailles declaring that the conventions of 1815-1816 were no longer "consistent with present conditions." There were to be negotiations, but they led nowhere. In 1923 M. Poincaré took characteristic action, and French Custom-houses were built along the political frontier. This high-handed step rather than the actual merits of the old dispute further roused Swiss feeling. But not until 1928 was the sensible course followed of referring the matter to the Hague. A final decision has at last been given. The free zones are to be restored, and some reduction of the Swiss Customs barrier is recommended. This is all to the good. Arbitration has been successful, and a small but ancient cause of friction has been removed.

SWITZERLAND IS HONOURING PROFESSOR LOGOZ.

Professor Logoz, who so ably defended the rights of Switzerland, before the Permanent Court of International Justice at the Hague, in the case of the Free Zones dispute, has received the thanks of the Swiss Government. The Geneva Government has also expressed to Prof. Logoz their appreciation. The University of Fribourg, has given a Banquet in honour of M. Logoz, and the students gave him a great ovation.

DEATH OF A FEDERAL JUDGE.

Federal Judge Dr. Karl Brodtbeck has died at the age of 66, at Lausanne; he was a member of the Federal Tribunal since 1924. The funeral took place at Basle in the presence of Federal Councillor Meyer and all the judges of the Supreme Court.

FROM SWISS DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES.

Various changes in the Swiss diplomatic corps are expected in the near future. Minister von Salis at Bucarest will ask the Federal Council to relieve him from his post by the end of this month. The resignation of Monsieur Rüfenacht, Minister at Berlin is expected to take place in August; as his successor the name of Minister Dinichert, head of the Federal Political Department, is freely mentioned. As successor to Minister von Salis, M. Egger, at present Minister in Buenos Aires has been mentioned, the latter has just celebrated his 25th Jubilee of his entry into the diplomatic corps.

DIPLOMATIC RECEPTION AT THE FEDERAL PALAIS.

M. Motta and M. Schulthess, President and Vice-President respectively of the Confederation, have received in special audience, the new Siamese

Ambassador, Prince Amoradat Kridakara, on the occasion of his presenting his credentials.

KING ALBERT'S SOLITARY MOUNTAINEERING.

Soon the King of the Belgians, who has been surprising Londoners during his visit by going out alone for walks through the West End, will be off for his annual mountaineering holiday in Switzerland. Rucksack on back and carrying a small bag, he turns up, often afoot, at some small hotel in the Bernese Oberland. Meiringen usually is his base, from which he sets out with his favourite guide, young Victor Anderegg. Victor's mother looks after the King's correspondence and private effects while they are away for a few days.

The King's rations on these solitary climbs are very simple. He takes in his rucksack a flask of coffee, a bottle of lemonade, and some rolls and chocolate when he starts out in the morning. While avoiding intercourse with the moneyed type of tourist, he is always ready for a chat with a peasant, and has many a time been known to join a group, shirt-sleeved like himself, outside a humble wayside café and talk with them for an hour or two on a warm summer's evening.

King Albert must be easily the most accomplished mountaineer of the world's rulers, past or present. He has climbed most of the highest and most difficult peaks in Europe.

LAKE DWELLINGS IN SWITZERLAND.

The low level of the Swiss lakes, owing to the abnormal drought of the past winter, has made it possible to make further investigations on the site of a number of lake dwellings. This was particularly the case of the Corcelette site, which lies at a short distance from Grandson, on the lake of Neuchâtel.

On the site are two distinct types of lake dwellings, one belonging to the Stone Age, the other, the largest, to the Bronze Age. They cover an area of about 800 square yards and were apparently destroyed by fire as shown by the carbonized piles and by the fact that several metal implements were melted and welded by fire. It is possible that the site was inhabited from the year 1200 to about 800 B.C. Among a number of valuable finds were several bronze swords, axes, knives, hairpins, and a few curved blades which may have been razors. Some pieces of deer antlers, stone axes, and various flint implements were also collected, in addition to a well-preserved oak canoe which is now in the Lausanne Museum.

Many moulds of baked earth were also found, which presumably served to cast metals. One of them still has the fingerprints of a prehistoric craftsman. Small pieces of pottery were found by hundreds, some being of rough red earthenware, others being more skilfully worked, the black material being adorned with white lines. The soil is still covered with small lime stones pierced by a hole. These were probably used in making necklaces or armlets.

LOCAL.

ZÜRICH.

An inexplicable theft took place at the headquarters of the Crédit Suisse, Paradeplatz. A lady client had just withdrawn an amount of 75,000 francs, which was paid out by the cashier in 75 one thousand bank notes; she put the money into a wallet next to her, and had signed the receipt for the amount, when she suddenly noticed that same had disappeared. The police were at once advised, but so far no clues have been found. The empty wallet was detected later in the day at the building of the "Zürcher Post" St. Peterstrasse.

BERNE.

A motor car driven by M. Schärz, biscuit manufacturer in Därligen, skidded near the Leissigbad-tunnel, and fell into the lake (Thoune). Fortunately M. Schärz could extract himself by breaking a window, but in doing so, received serious cuts. He was taken to the Hospital at Interlaken.

Professor Dr. Burekhardt, Ordinarius for International law at the University of Berne, has

been made a doctor *honoris causa* of the University of Geneva. Prof. Burekhardt has written many books on International law, and is known to be a great authority.

* * *

M. H. Born, a notary, whose offices are at the Spitalgasse, had rather an unpleasant surprise, when three men, suddenly entered his offices, one of them brandishing a revolver. Not liking the looks of his *clients* he rushed into the next room calling for help. In the meantime the three visitors took fright and disappeared; there is no doubt that a robbery was intended.

For once the Bernese police did not live up to their reputation; the three men were arrested the following day, two of them are Swiss, who live in Berne, and the 3rd is a foreigner. A fourth accomplice was later in the day arrested in Geneva, they admitted that they intended to rob the safe.

LUCERNE.

M. Robert Grütter-Galliker, a merchant of Lucerne has died from the consequences of a fall from a balcony which was under repair.

BASLE-COUNTY.

State Councillor G. Schneider has died in Liestal at the age of 64. M. Schneider had represented his canton in Parliament since 1914, and for many years he occupied the post of President of the Cantonal Bank. He held the military rank of a lieutenant-colonel.

AARGAU.

The bookkeeper Moser of the Maschinenfabrik A. G. in Brugg, has been arrested for embezzling an amount of 20,000F.

ST. GALLEN.

The death is reported from St. Gall of Dr. med. Otto Boesch, a well-known medical practitioner.

VAUD.

The garage of Jules Roth, at Yverdon, has been completely wrecked, owing to an explosion which took place. An apprentice, E. Henrioud was killed and much damage was caused to houses in the neighbourhood.

TICINO.

The Grand Council has presented M. Emil Ludwig, the famous German biographer with the freedom of a citizen of Ascona. M. Ludwig has made his home at Ascona for many years.

FOOTBALL.

On June 12th the Finals for the Swiss Championship proceeded:

Grasshoppers	.....0	Zürich	.....1
Urania	.....1	Lausanne Sports	.....1

Grasshoppers are thus eliminated by Zürich's somewhat unexpected victory and the latter, with two wins to their credit should carry off the championship. They have yet to play Lausanne Sports who must win to tie. Poor Grasshoppers! Also in Switzerland it is not easy for one team to win both challenge cup and championship.

The last outstanding league matches were settled:

Bern	.....1	Lugano	.....3
Winterthur	.....3	Luzern	.....2

Winterthur thereby remain in the First League and Black Stars join Chiasso and Wohlen in their fall from grace.

M.G.

