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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

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## HOME NEWS

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### FEDERAL.

#### NEW SWISS MINISTER AT WARSAW.

The Federal Council has appointed M. Maxime de Stoutz, at present "chef de la division étrangères du Dept. Politique fédérale" in Berne, to the post of Swiss Minister at Warsaw, in succession to M. de Segesser, who recently died. M. de Stoutz, who is a citizen of Geneva, is 55 years old. He entered into the diplomatic service of the Confederation in 1907. He occupied various posts at the Legations in London, Tokio and Paris, and in 1925 he was promoted to the post of Swiss Minister in Madrid, where he spent several years.

On the appointment of M. Duinichert to the Legation in Berlin (1932) he succeeded him as "chef de la division étrangères du Dept. Politique fédérale" in Berne.

The vacancy caused through the departure of M. de Stoutz, will be filled by M. Pierre Bonna, Councillor of Legation, from Geneva, who is at present at the Foreign Office in Berne.

#### SWISS FILM CHAMBER.

The co-operation of State with private enterprise was suggested at a conference at the Federal Palace, Berne, called by the Home Office, to discuss the present day situation of the Swiss cinema.

The conference was attended by representatives of various sections of the Federal Administration, county police chiefs and education directors, representatives of learned societies, the Press, and from the film world there was a representative body of producers, financiers, renters and cinema directors.

Federal Councillor Etter suggested that the moment had arrived when the various groups interested in the film should be banded together. That State and private individuals and firms should co-operate he considered necessary as much from the point of view of economy as that of national and artistic advancement.

The assembly approved of the formation of a *Chambre Fédérale du Cinema* and the Home Office nominated a commission. At the same time a sub-commission was appointed to examine the economical and financial aspect of the question. A second sub-commission will be appointed to examine the artistic and scientific aspect.

#### NEWS FOR MOTORISTS.

The Swiss Federal Council have decided that motorists from Great Britain and Northern Ireland will no longer need international triptyques in Switzerland. Their own national driving licences will in future be sufficient.

The Swiss Federal Council decided recently, not to require international triptychs from motorists coming from Great Britain and Northern Ireland, so that motorists from these countries can travel in Switzerland with their national licences and log-book.

#### DEFENCE AGAINST SPECULATORS.

The Board of the Bank of International Settlements discussed the exchange differences in various countries, and agreed that at the first sign of attack against the currency of any country connected with the bank a common measure of defence should be adopted.

It was in this way that the recent attacks on the French and Swiss francs and on the Dutch guilder were defeated.

Particular measures were discussed against speculators in international currencies, who operated without cover or insufficient cover, and it was decided to adopt common measures of defence against such speculation.

### MELTING SNOW FLOODS IN SWITZERLAND.

Rapidly melting snow on the mountains continues to swell Swiss rivers, resulting in extensive flooding.

The waters of Lake Lucerne, which takes some of the flood water overflowed the banks and flooded cellars.

At Stansstaad water penetrated into the restaurant at the railway station.

The River Rhone is still in flood and continues to inundate its surrounding plain.

### SWISS CURRENCY.

Although the privilege of the Swiss National Bank to issue bank notes does not expire until June, 1937, an extra-ordinary general meeting was held in order to apply to the Swiss Federal Council for the extension of this privilege until 1947.

Professor Bachmann, President of the Board of Directors, stated that Switzerland had no intention whatever of leaving the gold standard.

### ALPINE PASSES OPENED.

The Julier, Saint-Gothard, Simplon, and Grimsel passes are now open to motor traffic, thanks to the efforts of the Swiss Automobile Club, the Touring Club, and local authorities at whose expense workmen have cut through the frozen snow which still covers the top part of these passes. In some places the roads pass between walls of snow 9ft. to 12ft. high.

### LEAGUE'S OLD HOME FOR SALE.

The building in which for the last 15 years Europe's post-war history has been made, while housing the Secretariat of the League of Nations, is for sale.

Before the end of the year it is hoped to move the 600 members of the League staff, together with several thousand books and many tons of files and records, to the new million pound palace in the suburbs of Geneva. Then the former Hotel National will be empty.

### SWISS GOVERNMENT AND THE CONTROL OF PRICES.

The Swiss Government is supposing to submit to parliament a law giving power to control the prices of goods, and in particular the difference in price between imported goods and similar goods produced within the country. The law is also intended to put a stop to the trade in import licences, which is adding very considerably to the cost of living in Switzerland.

### SWISS BANK FAILURE.

As reported in our last number, Miney and Co., the private banking firm, of Geneva, has declared inability to pay its creditors.

The first judicial enquiry into the affairs of the bank has revealed that a great part of bonds deposited have disappeared. Two members of the staff, suspected of having stolen these bonds, have been arrested, and are now facing a charge of embezzlement.

### TELEPHONE SERVICE TO JAPAN.

Telephone service between Japan and Switzerland came into operation on the 1st of this month. The charge for a three minutes call is 103.—fr. by night and day.

### LOCAL.

#### BASLE.

The "official day" of the Federal Singing Competition took place on Sunday last. A large procession, headed by the various guilds of the town with their banners, and followed by a great number of choral societies went through the principal streets of the town. Amongst the official guests were: M. Minger, President of the Swiss Confederation, representing the government, the Presidents of the Federal Chambers, representatives from various cantonal governments and the army and the government of the canton of Basle in *corpore*. Speeches were made by Dr. Ott, President of the organisation Committee, Dr. Hauser, head of the cantonal government, and M. Minger, President of the Swiss Confederation.

#### ZURICH.

Lively scenes were witnessed during a sitting of the Grand Council in Zurich. M. Oldani, a Socialist member made a strong and rather tactless and heated attack on the "Nationale Front;" Dr. Tobler, interrupted the speaker with the remark: "Sale cochon!" Real pandemonium then started, and when the Socialist E. Walter declared, that in case of war two thousand Frontist officers would go over to Hitler with "flying banners;" the frontist member Dr.

Tobler jumped at the last speaker and a real fight began.

They were separated with great difficulty, and after a short debate it was decided to exclude both Dr. Tobler and M. Walter from the sitting.

From Zurich comes the news of the death of Dr. Ernst Walder, at the age of 84. The deceased was for 36 years a teacher at the "Kantonschule" in Zurich.

### BERNE.

At the meeting of the Berne Grand Council M. Grimm drew the attention to the increase of Nazi propaganda in Switzerland.

The activities of Nazi agents have recently caused the Federal Government to take special precautions. Among these is the formation of a new police division which is charged solely with tracking down and watching foreign political agents.

M. Grimm alleged that since 1933, in addition to seven German clubs or societies then existing at Berne, ten new societies of Nazi character had been founded. These societies, he said, brought pressure to bear on German subjects living in Switzerland, forcing them to contribute subscriptions under pain of being placed on a list of marked men which is forwarded to the Nazi authorities in Germany.

The Federal Council has appointed Dr. H. Morf, advocate in Winterthur, to be the new "Direktor des Eidgenössischen Amtes für geistiges Eigentum" in succession to M. Walter Kraft who is retiring from his post at the end of this month.

The death is reported from Berne, of Dr. Christian Moser, late Professor of Mathematics at the University of Berne, at the age of 71. Professor Moser also held the post of Director of Federal Insurance Office. The deceased was an international authority on Insurance.

### GENEVA.

M. E. Jaques-Dalcroze, the author and composer of numerous children's songs, and "Chansons populaires," and a great number of other musical works has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary.

M. Eduard Favre, author of a number of works about the history of Geneva in the 15th and 16th century has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary. M. Favre is a *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Leipzig.

### SCHWYZ.

The works of the firm Werner Horst, cane furniture manufacturers in Steinen, were completely destroyed by fire.

The damage caused will exceed 100,000fr.

### ST. GALLEN.

A large fire which broke out at the railway station at St. Gall on Sunday last, completely destroyed one of the goods-depôt, fortunately the building contained only a small number of merchandise.

The late M. Schönenberger in Dietfurt has left 77,700 frs. for charitable purposes. M. Stärkle-Eberle who recently died has left 20,000 frs. to charitable concerns in the district of Gossau.

### VAUD.

M. Charles Gilliard has been appointed Professor of History at the University of Lausanne in succession to Professor Edouard Rossier, who recently retired from his post.

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