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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

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## A Merry Christmas to all our Readers

### CHRISTMAS THOUGHTS.

This week we shall enter upon the festival of Xmas — the happiest and most precious time of the year.

All over the globe there will arise glad tidings of praise. Let us then, dear readers, lay aside for a few hours, at least, the burden of our work and forget our troubles and worries. Let us be reunited once again in that happy state of companionship and mutual good-will! Let us turn away from our daily toil and routine, with its restless struggles of life, to welcome the peace of Christmas.

Although the world is still in a turmoil, and the cares and sorrows lay heavily on many shoulders, the spirit of Christmas is the same to-day as yesterday and will be for ever. May this blessed time of good-will towards mankind remain a daily companion of unfeeling help, and an inspirer of all that is good and kind.

Generations come and go, ideas and customs may change, but the spirit of Christmas will remain for ever a vital force. Its message will never grow old nor can it be exhausted.

No matter how fast and feverish the pace of life, Christmas will give us a decided reminder of all that is real in this world and worth while living for. It will remind us more than ever, that we are all God's children, united in one big family, here on this earth, for but a little time, requiring the warmth of human kindness and friendship. Let the Christmas spirit, which is the spirit of active usefulness, perseverance, cheerful discharge of duty, kindness and forbearance come nearer and closer to our hearts.

Happy Christmas that can win us back to the delusion of our childhood days, that can transport our thoughts, hundreds of miles away, back to our dear ones, back to the land of our birth.

God grant, that the coming year will be for all of us a year of striving to lessen the hardships under which a tired world is labouring; may it once again bring back peace amongst all nations. May the silver lining for which we so often have gazed heavenwards, appear and shed its light over the darkness in which we have tumbled during the last few months.

Far away in the cities, villages and hamlets of our homeland, the bells will ring in the glorious Christmas Day, their sounds will spread the glad message of good-will amongst the children of this universe, they will pierce the Alps and ride on the ocean waves and will bring to everyone of us the greetings of that dear land of ours. Let us then, dear readers, spread this inspired message, compiled with our sincerest wishes for the land, which has accorded us a generous hospitality, and to many of us a second home.

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### HOME NEWS

(Compiled by courtesy of the following contemporaries: National Zeitung, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, St. Galler Tagblatt, Vaterland and Tribune de Genève).

### FEDERAL.

#### CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES FOR M. MOTTA.

Telegrams, congratulating M. Motta, President of the Swiss Confederation on his 25th Jubilee as a member of the Government, as well as having been elected President for the 5th time, are still arriving at the Federal Palais.

Apart from telegrams sent by Mussolini and Count Ciano, messages have been received from:

Dr. Schuschnigg, the Austrian Chancellor, the Greek Prime Minister, the King of Italy, the Council of the League of Nations, the German Foreign Minister, etc., etc.

Throughout the canton of Ticino the bells were ringing, and in Bellinzona 22 cannon-shots were fired, all the houses were decorated.

#### NEW VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION.

Dr. Johannes Baumann, has been elected Vice-President of the Swiss Confederation for the year 1937.

Dr. Baumann was born in 1874 at Herisau. He studied law at the Universities in Basle, Berne, Leipzig and Zurich, after which he was appointed to a cantonal judgeship. In 1900 he was elected a member of the government of the canton Appenzel A-Rh., a post which he held for 26 years, he was no less than 12 years "Landamann."

The new Vice-President entered Parliament (States Council) in 1911 of which he was a member until 1934, when he was elected Federal Councillor.

#### NEW PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL TRIBUNAL.

Dr. Joseph Stöbel has been elected President of the Supreme Court for the year 1937-38. He was born in 1887 at Muri (Aargau), and studied law at the Universities Freiburg i Br., Leipzig, Zurich and Berne. He practised as an advocate from 1912-1921; he entered the Grand Council of the canton of Aargau in 1913 of which he was a member until 1921; Dr. Stöbel sat in Parliament from 1919-1921 (National Council), in 1921 he was elected a Federal Judge.

#### NEW VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL TRIBUNAL.

The newly elected Vice-President of the Supreme Court, Dr. Robert Fazy, was born in 1872 at Geneva, where he studied law at the University. He was from 1897-1921 a member of the Tribunal in Geneva and later on a lecturer at the University of that town (Faculty of Law).

Dr. Fazy is a member of the Federal Tribunal for the last 15 years and enjoys the reputation also of a great linguist.

#### KING GEORGE VI.

The telegram of congratulations which the Federal Council has sent to King George VI on the occasion of his accession to the throne has been answered by the King as follows:

"Die Königin und ich danken Ihnen, Herr Bundespräsident, aufs herzlichste für die freundschaftlichen Gefühle, denen Sie anlässlich meiner Thronbesteigung in Namen des schweizerischen Bundesrates Ausdruck gegeben haben."

#### NEW FEDERAL JUDGES.

The two Chambers of the Federal Parliament have elected six new Federal Judges; amongst the newly appointed members of the Supreme Court is

Dr. Ernst,

who is 56 years old, he has been a member of the Superior Court of the canton of Aargau for the last 11 years. —

Four years younger is

Dr. Hasler,

who hails from Winterthur, he entered the Superior Court of the Canton of Zurich in 1929.

Dr. Couchepin,

is 41 years old, and succeeds his father, the latter having recently resigned; he practised as an advocate in Martigny, Dr. Couchepin was for some time Secretary of the International Court in Paris, and Secretary at the Political Dept. in Berne. —

Professor W. Schönenberger,

who was born at St. Gall forty years ago, has been, previous to his new appointment, clerk of the cantonal Tribunal at St. Gall, and until recently Professor of law at the University of Fribourg. —

Dr. Carlo Pometta,

from Lugano practised as an advocate first at Lugano and later on in Geneva. For some time he was secretary of the Supreme Court. —

W. Leuenberger,

was born in Melchnau (Ct. Berne), and has sat on the Bench for the last 20 years. (Superior Court of the canton of Berne). Since 1930 he has presided over the Commercial Tribunal.

#### EMANUEL FRIEDLI 90 YEARS OLD.

The well-known writer, Pastor D. h.c. Emanuel Friedli in Saanen, the author of "Bärdütsch, ein Spiegel bernischen Volkstum," has celebrated his 90th birthday anniversary.

#### SWISS MILITARY APPOINTMENTS.

Colonel of Division Jakob Labhart, chief of the General Staff, has been promoted to the rank of Army-Corps Commander.

Colonel Labhart was born in 1881 in Steckborn, and was by profession an engineer, he entered in 1906 into the Federal Instruction Corps. From 1916-1921 he occupied a leading position in the firm Bally at Schönenwerd, and later he held the post as Vice-Director of the Federal Labour Office. (Eidg. Arbeitsamt). In the year 1924 Colonel Labhart re-entered into the Military Administration where he was appointed head of the section for military transports in the General Staff. At the end of 1929 he was promoted to the rank of Colonel, taking over the command of the 4th artillery brigade, three years later he was put at the head of the 13th Infantry Brigade which command he held for some time.

On December 3d, 1934, he was nominated chief of arms (Waffenchef) of the cavalry and shortly afterwards he obtained the rank of Colonel of division. Last August, Colonel Labhart was appointed Chief of the General Staff.

Colonel H. Bandi, Chief of the Swiss Aviation Corps has been promoted to Colonel of Division.

Colonel Bandi was born in 1882 in Oberwil near Büren, he entered the Federal Instruction Corps in 1908 (Artillery). On reaching the rank of captain, he was appointed to the command of the 20th Field Battery, and soon after was transferred to the General Staff, in which capacity he acted as a member of the Hauenstein fortress staff. In 1924 he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, taking over the command of the 2nd Heavy Artillery Regiment. Six years later, on reaching the rank of Colonel he commanded for two years the 4th Artillery Brigade. In 1930 he acted as chief of staff of the 3rd manœuvre Division. During the war he was sent to the Italian-Austrian front and in 1920 he spent some time with the German "Reichswehr." Colonel Bandi will occupy himself chiefly with the reorganisation of the Swiss Flying Corps.

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