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Appenzell Auser Rhoden has accepted an increase in salary of 7% for Cantonal employees. A sum of Frs. Sw. 20,000,000 has been voted in order to assist the weavers of this Canton. The money will be furnished partly by the Canton, and interested Boroughs, and partly by the Bonus resulting from the Devaluation of 1936 (Reserve funds kept in the Banque Nationale.)

The Director of the Bernese "Liedertafel" Dr. Fritz Brun has retired. Dr. Brun, who was Director of this Organisation for over 30 years will leave the Swiss Capital for the Ticino where he will devote himself to composing.

M. Henri Martin has been nominated Chargé d'Affaires in Lisbon, whence M. Charles Redard has been transferred to Sofia where he will take over the direction of the Legation. M. Alfred Claparede has been recalled from Sofia by the Political Department in Berne.

It has been decided that a special tax be imposed on persons leaving Switzerland to live abroad, as this causes a reduction in the monetary income of the canton and especially in the redemption of debts. The tax is to vary from 5 to 12% according to the incomes of the persons concerned. Two-thirds of the contribution will go to the state and one-third to the canton charged with imposing the levy.

On the 4th January, 1941, Gonzague de Reynolds' "Cité sur la Montagne" was presented in Geneva. The profits were credited to the national funds-account. General Guisan and the Conseiller d'Etat of Geneva, as well as the Executive Councillor were present and after the production General Guisan and the Councillor expressed their thanks to the organisers and producer.

Canton Basle-Town has agreed to build 500 Shelters against Air attacks.

The Aluminium Company Ltd., who formerly had its establishment in Schaffhouse and now has moved to Lausanne has given a sum of Frs. 300,000 to the Hospital of Schaffhouse.

In Geneva a draft bill was discussed on the 8th January, regarding modifications to apply to discussions and debates in the Genevan Council. According to this bill speeches may not take more than 15 minutes.

A new Ski-Club has been opened in Pontresina; it has already 500 members. At the opening of the Club, M. Kobelt, Federal Councillor, made a speech.

On the 14th January a train crashed into an empty railway carriage just outside the Station of Schwyz. The passenger service was uninterrupted and just after midnight the line was free. The driver of the train was injured.

The Council of Basle has deliberated on a new Land-Policy. Speculations in land are to be prohi-

bited and the ground is to be so divided that a maximum area of arable land is obtained.

The freezing-up of the smaller lakes in Switzerland has now extended to the larger ones, among others, the Lake of Neuchâtel is frozen at Marin.

At this year's Xmas auction held in aid of Soldiers, more than 275,000 parcels were sold and also many historical cards.

On the Klausen, between Unterscheid and the mountain pass two men were caught in a avalanche. One was able to free himself and call for help. After a short while rescuers were able to dig out the second man, who was still breathing faintly. He died later, however, owing to wounds. The man was the 22 year old plumber, Jakob Bohrer.

The Regierungsrat of Canton Schwyz has decided to place the potatoes at the disposal of poor farmers and to help those whose land lies more than 800m. over sea-level.

### GLEANINGS FROM THE ENGLISH PAPERS.

Very little reliable news from Switzerland finds its way into the English press. Aircraft flying over our country is a regular item; both belligerents seem to share in the trespass and our A.A. batteries spend plenty of ammunition in futile firing. Basle has suffered some damage from a stray bomb.

Though what is called the "National" movement has been liquidated in Switzerland the sponsors continue to propagate their views from abroad. The "Daily Herald," January 13th, reproduces the following Reuter message:

A storm of indignation has blown up in Switzerland, following publication of an article by the Swiss author, Jakob Schaffner, in the German weekly "Das Reich."

In it the author recommends the abandonment by Switzerland of her neutrality and her attachment to the German Reich.

Schaffner lives in Germany, while retaining his Swiss nationality.

M. Feldmann, a member of the National Council, writing in the "Neue Berner Zeitung," condemns Schaffner's "arrogance" in openly discussing in a foreign publication questions of Swiss policy.

The Swiss "National Zeitung" says it has never known so incomprehensible an interpretation of Swiss neutrality as that Schaffner outlines.

Another Swiss resident in Germany who is in the limelight is the subject of a narrative in "Cavalcade," January 11th; it makes good reading if taken with a grain of salt. Here it is:

Spunky little Switzerland is sparring up to the Nazi bully in defence of one of its native-born sons.

He is Arnold Wunschli, inventor, who is being kept a prisoner by the Nazi Gestapo at his home in Spandau, near Berlin.

The Swiss Chargé d'Affaires has asked the Wilhelmstrasse for an explanation why Wunschli is not allowed to leave Germany, in spite of the fact that there is no official charge against him.

During his twenty years' residence in Budapest, Wunschli acquired a Hungarian passport. He is related by marriage to one of the best-known families in Budapest, but the Hungarian Government has refused to ask for his release on the ground that they do not wish to complicate the present delicate situation in the interests of a naturalised foreigner.

Wunschli's family therefore approached the Swiss Consul in Budapest, who at once got in touch with Berne and set the ball rolling.

Berlin news scouts, smelling a good story, have besieged Nazi officials in vain for an explanation.

*Cavalcade* is able to give the following facts.

The Swiss-Hungarian inventor went to Berlin early in 1940 to offer the Nazis a steel garment of his own design which he claimed to be absolutely bullet-proof.

Hitler took a special interest in the invention and asked Gestapo chief Himmler to be present at the tests and send in a report. The tests were carried out in the Munich Gestapo headquarters court-yard, and as a result of Himmler's report Wunschli was given an order for six bullet-proof garments to be made to measure. They were for Hitler, Goering, Hess, Himmler, and the Führer's two A.D.C.s' Schaub and Brueckner. All but Hitler were fitted personally. The Führer's garment was worked out on a modelled dummy.

Wunschli was paid 25,000 reichsmarks apiece for the garments. He was provided with all the raw material and workshop facilities. It took him about six months to complete the order.

When the job was finished he applied for a visa to leave Germany. First, he was asked to stay for a time to execute further orders. When he pressed to go on a short visit to his family in Budapest he was told that his work was regarded as being of urgent State importance.

All his letters to Budapest were stopped, and he was not allowed to receive any incoming mail. Two Gestapo agents are permanently on duty outside his Spandau home.

That is all that can be ascertained about the affair for the present. Nazi officials refuse to make any comment on the case, but it is reported that the Swiss Chargé d'Affaires has got a sensational dossier ready for his Government in case the Wilhelmstrasse refuses to release Wunschli.

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As if started by an incendiary the "Bären" in Grindelwald was burned out on January 15th. The hotel was being used temporarily as a military hospital; all the patients were rescued in time. The

"Evening News," January 18th, mourns over the loss as follows:

British winter sports enthusiasts will have heard with a pang of regret that the famous Bear Hotel, at Grindelwald, has been destroyed by fire.

Many, with their skis stored in Alpine hotel ski-rooms, must be wondering when, if ever, they will use them again. For the Bear — oldest and most famous of winter sports hotels — to be destroyed by a mere civilian fire in these days seems a little ironical.

It was not until the '80's of the last century that winter sports became popular, and Grindelwald took the lead with a hotel specially designed to cater for winter sportsmen as well as summer tourists.

Grindelwald's ice was famous among British curlers and skaters. Enterprising photographers snapped them — the men in knickerbockers circling round oranges with the full dignity of the severely "English" style.

These photographs of their mothers and fathers hung on the walls of the passages, and now, I suppose, destroyed, amused many young British ski-enthusiasts.

Although the Bear was vast and old-fashioned, it enshrined many memories.

### THE "BLITZ."

Quite a number of individuals and institutions in our Colony have suffered badly from enemy action; to all and everyone we wish to extend our sincere sympathy. If our losses are irreparable or our activities interrupted it is but a contribution we are called upon to make in an unfortunately variable measure towards the creation of a better world. Worst hit as far as we know are the members of the Union Helvetia whose clubhouse near Shaftesbury Avenue is practically destroyed with the exception of the frontage; a deplorable feature is the number of fatal casualties that followed in the wake of the misfortune.

The following reports may be of interest to our readers:—

#### Swiss Mercantile Society:

On Monday night, September 16th, at about 10 p.m., a high explosive bomb was dropped from a German bomber, making a direct hit on No. 36, Fitzroy Square (which is almost completely demolished) and damaging a considerable part of Swiss House (No. 34 and 35) particularly the back and interior.

The force of the explosion spent itself in the back of No. 36 bringing down tons of masonry, brickwork, etc., falling on to the back basement rooms of No. 34 and 35, covering the entire back area, completely demolishing the Gents Cloak Room, filling with debris the board room of the Swiss Benevolent Society, smashing through the skylight there, damaging the flue of the boiler and breaking away part of the caretaker's kitchen on the ground floor. The 2 rooms in the area and the caretaker's kitchen are beyond repair.