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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

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### FEDERAL.

#### SWISS BUDGET SURPLUS.

The closed accounts of the Swiss Confederation for 1931 have proved more favourable than expected. On a total expenditure of £17,040,000 (at parity rate of exchange) there is a surplus of £88,000 instead of the anticipated budgetary deficit of £308,000.

#### NEW LEAGUE OF NATIONS ENVOY.

Colonel Friedrich Iselin has been appointed successor to Colonel J. de Reynier, who was killed a few weeks ago, on a mission to Iraq.

#### LOSSES IN THE SWISS CONSULAR SERVICE.

General Consul Ludwig Schneider has died at Athens. M. Schneider, a noted engineer, had for many years represented our country in his capacity as General Consul at Athens, and had rendered great services to his native land.

Prof. Dr. Gustav Hegi died in Bendlikon near Zurich at the age of 56. Dr. G. Hegi was Professor at the University at Munich, and for over 25 years General Consul in that town; he was a very popular personality in the Swiss Colony.

#### THE WEGMANN WORKS CLOSE DOWN.

The well-known Textile machinery works, Wegmann & Co., in Emmetbaden, have gone into voluntary liquidation, the works will close down, and about 300 workhands will be idle.

#### SWISS CHURCHES AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

The Swiss Study Conference on Unemployment, which is one of several national conferences working in preparation for the International Study Conference, which has taken place in Basle from April 25th to 30th, under the auspices of the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work, has published the results of its deliberations. Copies to the number of 3,500, both in German and French, have been sent out to parishes, and have influenced action in various districts of Switzerland. Churches have made special collections for the unemployed in a number of places. A large parish house is just being built in Zurich, which it is estimated will cost 2,000,000 Swiss francs, to provide work. Furthermore, some Church associations, as, for instance, the Home Missions' agencies and parish associations, as well as youth organisations, have provided heated rooms, where the unemployed can meet for rest and conversation. The society "Pro Juventute" has made a large collection for the children of the unemployed, a part of which goes to such children in Germany.

#### SWITZERLAND'S PETROL IMPORTS.

For 1931 the petrol imports of Switzerland were as follows, according to countries of origin:—

	Metric Tons.
U.S.A. . . . .	66,455
Persia . . . . .	45,394
Roumania . . . . .	16,150
Dutch East Indies and Straits . . . . .	16,103
Peru . . . . .	11,360
Venezuela . . . . .	10,444
Russia . . . . .	10,252
Mexico . . . . .	4,157
Various . . . . .	1,578
Total . . . . .	181,893

### LOCAL.

#### ZURICH.

Dr. Klöti, Maire of Zurich has celebrated his 25th Jubilee as a member of the town Council.

\* \* \*

Once again Zurich was the centre of a serious communistic outbreak.

On the occasion of the innovation of the new "Italiener Haus," a clubhouse for the use of the Italian colony at Zurich, and at which a bomb was thrown a week ago, a crowd of about 100 communists assembled outside the building and they were addressed by various speakers protesting against the Fascist Regime in Italy. In order to prevent any troubles, about 50 policemen were sent by a lorry to the spot and a cordon was established around the building. One of the speakers then incited the demonstrators to rush the building, and in order to break through the police cordon, the police were attacked with stones and sticks. One policeman and two detectives were badly injured, 15 arrests were effected. The police force was then increased and managed to restore order.

\* \* \*

The death is reported from Winterthur, of Dr. G. Keller, a former State Councillor and Chairman of the Board of the Swiss Federal Railways. From 1911-1922, Dr. Keller was a member of the cantonal government.

\* \* \*

A workman of the S.F.R. who returned from night service on Sunday morning, saw on a seat, near the Bäcker-Anlagen, Ecke, Feld- and Hohlstrasse a body of a man, whose throat was cut. He at once informed the police of his terrible discovery. As no weapon was found near the body, it is feared that the man, who was later identified as a certain Jos. Fellmann, born in 1878 at Uffikon (Ct. Lucerne), was murdered. The police has opened an inquiry.

BERNE.

Colonel Fritz Gertsch has celebrated his 70th birthday, as well as his 50th Jubilee as an officer in the Swiss Army.

LUCERNE.

The fire which broke out at a dwelling house and barn at Escholzmatt, causing the death of two people (as reported in our last issue), has now claimed a further victim. The 24 years old daughter Aebersold has died at the hospital in Langnau on account of injuries received from jumping out of the window.

UNTERWALDEN.

The "Landsgemeinden" von Obwalden and Unterwalden elected M. C. Stockmann and Dr. Gabriel von Stans as Landamann, respectively.

OBWALDEN.

The cantonal accounts for 1931 close with a deficit of 212,394f.

BASLE.

Dr. Paul Scherrer, a former State Councillor, has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary. Dr. Scherrer is President of the Board of the Cantonal Bank, and a prominent member of the Chamber of Commerce. In 1887, at the age of 25, he entered the Grand Council, and in 1896, he was elected as member of Parliament, he sat in the State Council for 23 years (1919). During the Frontier occupation 1914-18, he commanded a brigade. Dr. P. Scherrer is one of the most eminent citizen of Basle, and we unite in wishing him

Ad multos annos.

\* \* \*

A successful career has been cut short, by the death of Dr. Hans Schmid, who died as the result of a motoring accident. Dr. Schmid was a specialist of great reputation, having to his credit many books on medical subjects, which made his name well-known far beyond the frontiers of his native canton.

AARGAU.

For the first time in the history of the canton Aargau, the Socialist party has decided to put up a candidate for a post in the cantonal government in succession to M. Schibler. For the election, which will take place on May 8th, Dr. Siegrist, teacher in Aargau, will be the socialist nominee.

\* \* \*

On Sunday last, M. Louis Theodor Pfister, an honorary citizen of Baden, celebrated his 80th birthday. M. Pfister was elected in 1891, — when the Electricity Works at Baden were founded, — President of this concern; he was also intimately connected with the world-wide known institution of Brown-Boveri, at Baden, and thanks to his

initiative, this town has become a noted industrial centre.

APPENZEL A. Rh.

From Herisau comes the news of the death of M. Ernst Gähler, a prominent business man, who was held in great esteem throughout the canton of Appenzel.

M. Gähler was born in Herisau in 1864, and after having acquired a thorough knowledge of his trade at home and abroad, entered the business of his father, Oberrichter Major Joh. Gähler, the well-known Appretur firm at Wilen, which enjoyed a great reputation. The crisis, affected this special branch of our industry during the last few years very heavily, and the, at one time, prosperous firm was severely hit by adverse general market conditions.

The deceased was a most just and considerate employer, and enjoyed great confidence amongst his numerous workmen. Apart from his business activities, M. Gähler took a great interest in the public life of his native canton. In 1900, he was elected a member of the communal council, to which he belonged for six years. Three years later he was elected a member of the "Kantonsrat" and the Criminal Court, two appointments which he filled with distinction. His just and considered judgment earned him the reputation of one of the most outstanding judges who ever sat on the bench. He was also an active member of the Santis section of the Swiss Alpine Club, and for many years sat on various commissions entrusted with the welfare of the people of the canton of Appenzel. A most lovable man has been called away from his devoted family and his many friends, and his name and work will be remembered for many years with gratitude.

Mr. Gähler, was the father of Mrs. Conrad, whose husband was the former popular President of the Swiss Choral Society in London. We extend to Mr. and Mrs. Conrad our sincere sympathy in their great bereavement.

\* \* \*

National Councillor Eugster-Züst, who only a fortnight ago, retired from the cantonal government, for reasons of health, has died at Speicher at the age of 71.

\* \* \*

From Teufen comes the news of the death of M. Ulrich Tobler, who was a partner of the St. Galler Zwirnereifirma Staub and Tobler. M. Tobler was also a wellknown philanthropist.

ST. GALLEN.

Dr. Anton Brügger, a former National Councillor and well-known medical practitioner, has died in Mels at the age of 55 years. Dr. Brügger was a member of Parliament for 7 years (1924-1931) and has only retired from politics last year for reasons of health.

THURGAU.

Once again the playing with firearms has caused the death of a young life. Two apprentices, who had obtained a Browning revolver, amused themselves by playing various pranks with this dangerous weapon, when suddenly a shot rang out and the 19 years old boy Hangg fell dead, a shot having pierced his heart. The incautious marksman has been arrested.

GRISONS.

Dr. Anton Meuli has entered Parliament as successor to the late Dr. Hartmann. Dr. Meuli is a liberal, and was born at Samaden in 1878. He previously belonged to the National Council (1928-31). He is a director of a number of industrial concerns.

VALAIS.

About this time of the year a curious custom will be observed in the Alps of the Canton of Valais. When the snows are melting and the herds of cows are seeking higher pastures, the farmers arrange butting duels between young cows and the old leaders of the herds. The victor becomes the new chieftainess, and it is a remarkable fact that seldom is her leadership disputed by her sisters. The duels last about ten minutes or even longer.