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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

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### FEDERAL.

#### SWISS NATIONAL BANK.

The Swiss National Bank general meeting took place last week.

In his opening speech, Dr. A. Sarasin, the retiring president of the Banking Council of the National Bank, made it quite clear that Switzerland will remain on gold in spite of the great problems which the bank has had to face for the past four years.

For Switzerland, which is dependent on foreign trade, stable rates of exchanges are indispensable.

So long as countries and groups of countries isolate themselves, a recovery in international trade cannot be expected. Trade can only revive if Customs and trade restrictions are reduced and if currencies are again balanced and based on gold.

Speaking of the countries which are members of the gold bloc, Professor Bachmann (president of the Board of Directors) said that even if the gold bloc in its original form was primarily intended as an institution for the sake of the currencies concerned, to-day the gold bloc countries were to some extent dependent on each other by fate. The question of a devaluation of the Swiss franc, Professor Bachmann stated, would not be considered.

The annual accounts were approved, the net profit which remains after allocation to reserves is Swiss Frs.4,750,000. It is divided as follows:—Frs.1,250,000 are used for the payment of a dividend of 5 per cent., Frs.250,000 for a super-dividend of 1 per cent., and Frs.3,250,000 are transferred to the Federal Exchequer. The total dividend of 6 per cent. is the same as in previous years.

#### NATIONAL BANK'S GOLD.

The Swiss National Bank return for the first week in March shows that gold holdings decreased by (in Swiss francs) 12,000,000 to 1,782,400,000. Gold exchanges increased 7,600,000 to 14,100,000.

Other sight liabilities increased by 8,900,000 to 564,000,000. On 7th March notes in circulation and other sight liabilities were covered by gold holdings and gold exchanges to the extent of 96.03 per cent.

#### SWISS RAILWAY LOAN OVERSUBSCRIBED.

The 3½ per cent. Swiss Federal Railway Loan of 100,000,000 frs. has been heavily oversubscribed.

The new loan, is of a three and a half per cent. type, issued at 94½ per cent., and is redeemable in 25 years.

#### GENEVA'S REFUSAL.

The Socialist majority of the Canton of Geneva has informed the Federal Government that they refuse to organise the defensive measures against bombardment from the air that the Federal Government has called upon all the Swiss Cantons to organise in accordance with a decision of the Federal Parliament last September.

The Geneva Canton had been asked to form before April 30th a special corps of about 500 persons to train the population in the methods of defence, which would consist chiefly in practice in the use of gas-masks.

In their letter to the Federal Government the Cantonal Government of Geneva say that such measures would be out of place in the seat of the League of Nations and of so many other international organisations whose aim is to secure the peace of the world. It is also their opinion that Geneva is not in great danger of an air raid, as France will never make one, and that the efficacy of the methods proposed is doubtful.

The Socialist organ, the "Travail," in an article on the defence proposals, says that two gas-masks are proposed, one of which costs sixty francs (about £4) but is effective as a protection for only a few hours, and its efficacy is not guaranteed. The other is said to remain effective longer, but it costs 600 francs. Both masks, says the "Travail," come from Germany.

#### THE "CHALANDA MARS."

The new year of the ancient Romans, which began on March 1st, was fêted as the "Calendæ Martis," and this Latin name is still retained in the Romantsch Fête of the Upper and Lower Engadin, Bergell and Poschiavo, called the "Chalanda Mars."

Early in the morning the village youths gather with heavy cow-bells hung round their necks, with large whips and other noisy instruments to fête the departure of the winter demons, who are frightened and chased away by the din, and at the same time to welcome the arrival of the gods of Spring and of the sun. The processions are sometimes repeated for three days, especially if large quantities of snow seem to indicate the reluctance of the winter gods to depart. The boys are given cakes, nuts and chestnuts by the villagers, and they may feast a whole week on these gifts, which, in Lavin, are deposited in the house of a friendly woman patron, who then invites the youths to her place.

During the din a magic verse is sung, beginning with the words: "Chalanda Mars, Chalanda Avrigl" — implying that now the cattle should be let out of the stables, so that grass may grow and the snow may disappear.

#### KINGS IN EXILE.

Switzerland has been in the past the refuge of many sovereigns in exile, but if the ex-King of Siam settles there, as is reported to be his intention, he will be the only representative of his class living in our country. The last was the late Emperor Charles of Austria, who lived after his abdication at Prangins, in the canton of Vaud, about fifteen miles from Geneva, in a villa close to the lake. It was from Prangins that he set out on his ill-fated expedition into Austria.

#### LOCAL.

##### ZÜRICH.

An employee of the "Crédit Suisse" in Zurich, who was under notice, shot at his chief, Anton Freitag, wounding him seriously. He afterwards committed suicide by shooting himself. Although details about the happening are not yet available it is surmised that Schweizer was trying to kill his superior, whom he thought was responsible for his dismissal.

A serious motor-car accident happened last week at the Bahnhofstrasse in Zurich when two people were killed. M. W. Schenkel, a merchant in Zurich, was driving at a speed of 79-80 km. along the Bahnhofstrasse; in trying to avoid a stationary car he accelerated, and the car, over which he completely lost control went on to the pavement killing Otto Kofmehl (31 years old), son of a well-known Jeweller in Zurich and Miss E. Liechti a sixteen year old typist. A passenger in the car was seriously injured, and had to be taken to the hospital. The reckless driver was arrested.

The death is reported from Zurich of M. Gottlieb Jaeger, General Manager of the "Rhenus," A.G. für Schiffahrt and Spedition in Basle. M. Jaeger was one of the leading personalities connected with the "Rheinschiffahrt."

##### BERNE.

Dr. Ernest Feisst, has been appointed Vice-Director of the agricultural Branch of the Federal Department for political economy, in succession to Dr. König who has relinquished his post.

Dr. Feisst was born in 1897 at Riehen (Basle), he studied political economy at the Federal Technical University at Zurich. For several years, he was secretary of the Peasant party of the canton of Aargau, and editor of the "Freie Presse" and the "Aargauer Hausfreund," he was also a member of the Grand Council.

Dr. Friedr. Volmar, Professor at the University of Berne, and a director of the "Berner Alpenbahn" has celebrated his 60th birthday anniversary. From 1920-1926 Dr. Volmar was a member of the cantonal government. In 1919 he

was appointed Professor of Law at the University in Berne.

##### BASLE.

The death has occurred at Basle of the late States Councillor, Dr. Paul Scherrer at the age of 73. The deceased studied law at various Universities at home and abroad and established himself as an advocate in 1884 at Basle. He took a great interest in the political life of the canton of Basle and in 1884, Dr. Scherrer entered the Grand Council over which he presided in 1893 and again in 1896. In the year 1896 he entered Parliament (States Council), he resigned his seat in 1919 after having represented the canton of Basle for 23 years. In 1907 he presided over the States Council. During the frontier occupation 1914-1918, Dr. Scherrer was in command of a brigade. After the war he retired from political life, but he retained the Chairmanship of the Cantonal Bank of Basle; he was also a member of the board of the National Bank, a member of the Chamber of Commerce, and a director of a number of industrial concerns. Dr. Scherrer has rendered great services to the canton of Basle and to his country.

##### FRIBOURG.

Dr. Sigismund Glückmann, Professor at the University of Fribourg has died at the age of 65.

##### AARGAU.

The death is reported of M. Karl, Anton Dimmler, proprietor of the "Kartonnagefabrik" Dimmler at Zofingen at the age of 78. The deceased was a great supporter of Sports and also an ardent philanthropist.

##### ST. GALLEN.

From St. Gall comes the news of the death of M. Arnold German-Stäheli, senior partner of the embroidery firm Stäheli, Vonwiller and Cie, at the age of 82.

##### SCHAFFHAUSEN.

M. Paul Schmid-Ammann has been elected a member of Parliament (National Council) he was born in 1890 and hails from the canton of Zurich. In 1932 he entered the Grand Council of the canton of Schaffhausen, he was editor and founder of the paper "Nation," he belongs to the Peasant Party.

##### GRISONS.

Mme. Johanna Garbald-Gredig, the well-known novelist has died at Castasegna at the age of 95. She was born at Zuzo in 1840, the best-known amongst her many books is the one about the valley of Bergell.

##### VALAIS.

The paper "Courier de Sion" was ordered to pay a sum of 5,000frs. to States Councillor Pitteloud for defamation of character, they also will have to bear the costs of the action.

#### FOOTBALL.

10th March, 1935.

#### NATIONAL LEAGUE.

Carouge	.....2	Basel	.....2
Lausanne	.....0	Servette	.....0
Grasshoppers	.....1	Bern	.....3
Young Boys	.....4	Lugano	.....0
Concordia	.....0	Locarno	.....3
Chaux-de-Fonds v. Nordstern	postponed.		

Basel's lapse in not making full points in Geneva is rather inexplicable; their chances in the championship are as good as gone and so they are probably more concerned with the cup. The same could be said of Grasshoppers and of Bern, but the latter appear to me to be setting about it in the right way, and that is to win or at least to try and win every time, be it in the cup or in the championship. Lugano have not yet digested their cup defeat in Basel and Young Boys did themselves a good turn by their decisive win. Concordia losing in Locarno gives the Y.B. a lead of three points, for one game played more, and that should prove enough to save them from the relegation bogey. Lausanne and Servette drew their needlematch, an exact replica of the Arsenal v. Sunderland duel. The top positions are now:

	P.	W.	D.	L.	Goals	Pts.
Lausanne	19	12	6	1	55	21
Servette	18	12	5	1	42	19
Lugano	19	10	5	4	42	25
Bern	19	9	5	5	53	28

and the only question is, will Servette succeed in winning the championship for the third time run-

ning (another parallel with Arsenal), or will Lausanne foil their ambition? By the way, Young Boys are the only club in Switzerland who have ever brought off the treble, in 1909, 10 and 11. And now they are struggling to avoid relegation, just the same as Huddersfield who hold a similar record here. Yet Young Boys have won the championship "only" on 6 occasions as against Grasshoppers and Servette's 8. That is why these are the Swiss "big three." F. C. Winterthur was champion 3 times, F. C. Zurich and F. C. Aarau twice and no other club pulled it off more than once. Have you noticed that the last three clubs mentioned are out of the top class, Winterthur having sunk as low as League II? The two St. Gall clubs, F. C. St. Gallen, champions in 1904, F. C. Brühl in 1915, are both in League I, and so is F. C. Montriond (1913), now called F. C. Montroux, also F. C. Cantonal (1916), whilst F. C. Etoile Chaux-de-Fonds (1919) has ceased to exist. Lausanne (1932) and the Anglo-American F. C. (Zurich) 1899 are the only other clubs who ever held the title, and the competition started in 1898. Sad to relate, no Bâle Club has ever succeeded!

M.G.

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## LES SUISSES A L'ETRANGER ET LA MERE-PATRIE.

**Conférence de Mlle. A. Bridot donnée au "Foyer Suisse" le 15 Février, 1935.**

(Continuation).

Nous voudrions que les Suisses à l'étranger soient, pour ainsi dire, réintégrés dans notre communauté nationale. La façon la plus simple de le faire, direz-vous peut-être, serait de leur octroyer le droit de vote. Mais sans compter que ce serait prolonger dans nos colonies — avec des conséquences beaucoup plus graves que chez nous — les luttes et les disputes de partis dont vous êtes heureusement exempts — ce qui fait la valeur de votre jugement dans nos affaires nationales, — on ne voit pas encore comment, en pratique, un tel vote pourrait être institué. Nous ne prétendons pas que la question soit définitivement liquidée. Nous songeons même à l'étudier à fond à l'occasion d'une Journée des Suisses à l'étranger. Cependant, entre la situation actuelle et l'octroi du droit de vote, il y a d'autres solutions encore qui permettraient une représentation plus efficace, chez nous, des intérêts des Suisses à l'étranger. On pourrait par exemple grouper de nouveau, comme nous l'avons déjà fait il y a quelques années, les parlementaires décidés à prendre fermement en main, en toute occasion, la défense de vos droits. On pourrait imaginer aussi une sorte de commission extraparlamentaire composée de Suisses à l'étranger et de Suisses rentrés au pays, commission qui serait consultée pour toutes les questions qui vous touchent de près ou de loin. Bref, le problème mérite une étude sérieuse, maintenant surtout qu'on parle de refondre notre charte nationale. En attendant, le meilleur moyen pour vous, Suisses à l'étranger, de vous faire entendre, c'est la presse. Combien de fois, interrogée par des journalistes sur nos colonies, ne les ai-je pas entendus me dire qu'ils voudraient voir nos concitoyens de l'étranger donner plus souvent de leurs nouvelles et prendre une part plus active à nos débats sur les grandes questions nationales tout au moins. Notre ancien Ministre à Londres, M. Carlin, le disait déjà : "Exclus par leur absence d'une collaboration directe au gouvernement de leur pays, les Suisses à l'étranger doivent tenir d'autant plus à se rapprocher les uns des autres pour pouvoir faire entendre une voix d'ensemble dans toutes les graves questions concernant la patrie." C'est pour obéir à ce désir, qui n'a jamais cessé d'être le nôtre, que nous vous avons demandé, il y a quelques jours, d'exprimer votre avis sur le projet de loi qui doit nous donner une armée plus apte à protéger le pays.

## SWITZERLAND POINTS THE WAY.

**Confederacy Shows a Quarrelsome World How Peoples of Diverse Languages and Interests May Yet Live Amicably With One Another and With Their Neighbours.**

By MEINRAD SCHNEUFLIN.

(Continuation from Issue No. 697)

After the French Revolution, when Switzerland was itself seized by uproar, the country was open to foreign armies and, in 1799, became the battleground of the French, the Austrian, and the Russian powers. The Swiss realized that their country was situated at the crossroads of Europe, and the foreign powers realized how important it was for every one of them that the Swiss mountain passes should not be in the hands of an enemy. Therefore, on Nov. 20th, 1815, at the Congress of Vienna, at the express wish of the Swiss, the powers signed the "Acte portant reconnaissance et garantie de la neutralité perpétuelle de la Suisse et de l'inviolabilité de son territoire."

This document states that Swiss neutrality is in the interest of Europe. Switzerland has kept up an army to defend and protect it; this was particularly the case during the Franco-German War of 1870-71 and the World War of 1914-18. The peace treaties closing the World War contain a clause stating that the powers recognize the guarantees in favour of Switzerland as established by the Act of November 20th, 1815, guarantees forming international duties for the maintenance of peace.

When Switzerland joined the League of Nations the question came up whether its neutrality as recognised by the treaty of 1815 was compatible with its membership in the League. In the so-called London Declaration of February 13th, 1920, the League acknowledged that it was, and so Swiss military neutrality is approved. On the other hand, Switzerland would have to take part in economic measures taken against an aggressor of the League.

In the realm of the absolute there is no war and no opportunity for neutrality. It is in the

Sous le titre "La voix de ceux qui ne peuvent pas voter" (Stimmen von nicht Stimmberechtigten), le "Bund" a publié les nombreuses déclarations que nous avions reçues. Leur ton fut impressionnant : Voici une voix d'Italie : "Vous qui avez le privilège de déposer un bulletin de vote dans l'urne et qui pouvez de ce fait décider de la sauvegarde de notre patrie, nous vous en conjurons, oubliez vos griefs et vos rancunes, ne vous laissez pas aveugler par des questions d'ordre matériel, mais faites le geste qui donnera à notre pays plus de sécurité, et de ce fait lui garantira la paix ; faites le geste que nous voudrions faire nous, si nous pouvions voter. L'étranger a les regards sur vous. La considération dont jouit la Suisse à l'extérieur dépendra de votre attitude, et cette considération a aussi sa répercussion sur nous."

Je ne sais si vous pouvez vous rendre compte de l'effet produit par ces accents.

Nous ménaçons d'autres occasions encore aux Suisses à l'étranger de se faire entendre. Nous voulons parler des Journées des Suisses à l'étranger, véritables landsgemeinde, où nous invitons les Suisses de l'extérieur à exprimer leurs doléances et leurs vœux et où nous invitons les représentants des autorités fédérales à leur répondre. Cette année-ci, ces assises auront lieu à Bâle, en juillet. Un grand problème sera placé au centre de la discussion : "La politique économique de la Suisse et les Suisses à l'étranger."

Ainsi peu à peu nous amenons le public à compter davantage avec les Suisses à l'étranger. On ne parle aujourd'hui que de "Volksgemeinschaft." Nous voulons que la "Schweizer Volksgemeinschaft" comprenne les Suisses du dedans et ceux du dehors. J'ai l'air de vous dire là une vérité à la Palisse, et cependant, il y a vingt ans, avant la fondation de la Nouvelle Société Helvétique, personne n'y songeait. On savait qu'il y avait des Suisses vivant à l'étranger, mais on ne s'en occupait pas ; la Suisse à l'étranger comme telle n'existait pas. C'est la Nouvelle Société Helvétique qui l'a révélée à elle-même et au pays.

Nous avons dit tout à l'heure que notre tâche consistait, en troisième lieu, à écarter les obstacles qui risquaient de nuire au contact entre la Suisse à l'étranger et la mère-patrie. L'un d'entre eux — et non le moindre — c'est la mauvaise humeur créée par la loi relative à la taxe militaire. Le Secrétariat des Suisses à l'étranger n'a cessé de s'en faire l'interprète.

Comme on l'a dit maintes fois, à quoi cela sert-il de dépenser des gros efforts pour resserrer des liens que, par ailleurs, une législation maladroite tend à distendre et à rompre. Maintenant que, comme vous l'avez appris, nous avons rémisi enfin à émouvoir l'opinion publique, nous avons le sentiment de tenir le taureau par les cornes. La lutte est en bonne voie.

experiences of human history, where many minds and many wills seem to have sway, and where the clashes occur, that neutrality comes in. Is it justified? In many cases where two are quarrelling it is certainly wiser for the third to keep out of it and to mind his own business. If, however, a nation is tempted to commit some wrong toward another, or if high human ideals are at stake, neutrality may appear to be indifference or even selfishness. It is praiseworthy when a great power holds a protecting wing over another that is in danger; but what shall a little country do when it is, like Switzerland, blocked up on all sides by great powers without an outlet even to the sea?

To Switzerland, permanent neutrality is a necessity for its very existence as an independent state. And it wants to be and to remain an independent state. Its existence is based on the realization that, like every human being, the people of a certain geographical region have certain individual rights. The Swiss claim for themselves the right of self-government in the community and in the state, and they are willing that everybody else should have it too if they wish it.

Self-government, whereby man is governed by divine Principle, is an ideal worth striving for, and self-government of a whole country is in line with the same ideal. Switzerland has a number of diversities tending to individuality; for instance, in different sections of the country different languages — German, French, Italian and Romansh — are current. Its territory consists of 25 different states, every one of which is bringing out its individuality in local home government.

The Swiss do not share the political views of their neighbours; but they heartily acknowledge that every country has the right to follow its own ideas, and they believe that people can be good friends without having their houses arranged in the same way.

Here the question of armament is to be mentioned. In keeping up an army, Switzerland has no intention of attacking other countries. It is ready, however, to defend itself against any ag-

Les divisions créées dans les colonies par certains mouvements politiques intempestifs, qui ont mis l'existence de leurs institutions en danger, ont fini par faire comprendre chez nous que pour rester fidèle à la patrie, nos Suisses ont déjà suffisamment à lutter contre les obstacles extérieurs sans que, du pays lui-même, leur vienne le coup de grâce. Nous savons bien que ce n'est pas surtout le fait d'avoir à ouvrir son portefeuille pour soutenir les finances de la Confédération qui heurte le Suisse à l'étranger, car de quelle générosité sans bornes n'a-t-il pas fait preuve toutes les fois qu'une calamité publique s'abattait sur notre pays, mais c'est tout ce qu'il y a de blessant, dans la façon dont cette contribution est exigée, qui l'exaspère.

D'autres circonstances encore viennent troubler la confiance réciproque qui devrait exister entre les Suisses à l'étranger et la patrie. Chacun sait que la situation des travailleurs suisses est devenue en maints pays très difficile. Tandis qu'il y a quelques années encore l'employé, l'ouvrier suisse était très recherché, qu'on les faisait venir en masse, les bouleversements économiques et politiques ont changé tout cela. On accuse facilement nos autorités de ne pas être toujours aussi sévères avec les étrangers qu'on ne l'est au dehors pour les Suisses. Or, il ne faut pas oublier que nous avons des lois et des traités à observer et que ce sont d'autre part les employeurs qui engagent le personnel et non pas l'Etat. L'employeur sera toujours libre de préférer un étranger ayant le droit d'établissement à un Suisse à l'étranger. Si nous estimons ce fait regrettable, la seule chose qui puisse le modifier serait d'agir sur les employeurs, c'est à dire sur l'opinion publique; c'est elle qui est la plus puissante pour résoudre actuellement le délicat problème du chômage des Suisses à l'étranger. Mais avant de risquer de créer chez nous un mouvement xénophobe tel qu'il existe ailleurs dont les Suisses à l'étranger seraient les premiers à pâtir, nous voulons, en essayant une fois de plus de donner l'exemple d'une application loyale non seulement de la lettre mais de l'esprit de nos traités, inciter les pays qui nous entourent à agir vis-à-vis des nôtres comme nous agissons nous vis-à-vis des leurs.

C'est aussi une erreur souvent commise par les Suisses du dehors que de croire que le pouvoir exécutif peut tout. On demande tout au Conseil fédéral on oublie qu'il reste toujours lié par la Constitution, par les lois et les traités. Il ne peut rien changer dans les dispositions prises à l'égard des étrangers sans l'assentiment des Chambres et du peuple suisse.

N'oublions pas non plus les grandes difficultés dans lesquelles se débat notre pays. Notre industrie, qui vit surtout de ses exportations, les