

# Home news

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# The Swiss Observer

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## Communicated by the Swiss Legation.

According to the Federal Council's decisions of November 9th, 1928, and September 23rd, 1938, all officers, non-commissioned officers, lance corporals (Gefreite, Appointés, Appuntati) and privates incorporated in the army, and belonging to the "Auszug, Landwehr und Landsturm"; (Elite, Landwehr und Landsturm) (Attiva, Landwehr e Landsturm) have to join their units in case of a general mobilisation.

They will all receive an "ordre de marche" and the necessary instructions from the Legation.

All those who are not affected by the above decisions are not required to join, and will, if necessary, receive special orders.

On receipt of the "ordre de marche," those who have facilities or opportunities to travel, should leave immediately, for the others special arrangements will be made by the Legation.

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## HOME NEWS

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### FEDERAL.

#### CONTROL OF SWISS METAL EXPORTS.

The Swiss Federal Government has decided that the present unsettled international situation makes it necessary to submit the export of all metals and scrap metals to control by special licences. The object of the measure, which is only provisional, is to assure Switzerland the necessary quantity of metal for her industries and to prevent speculation on metal exports.

#### ANGLO-SWISS TRADE.

A Swiss delegation consisting of MM. Keller, Homberger and Koch has arrived in London to participate in the Anglo-Swiss trade talks.

A delegation first arrived in this country in November last year to negotiate an Anglo-Swiss trade agreement, but the negotiations have been suspended for some time. The present commercial treaty was made so far back as 1855.

#### BLACK-OUT OF ALL SWITZERLAND.

The first black-out throughout Switzerland, for which exercises and rehearsals had been going on in the various cantons and towns all this year, were held last Tuesday night.

Pedestrians who had to go out that night were supplied by the air raid precaution authorities with luminous badges. These badges, visible for 10 yards, are similar to those issued to troops in the Maginot line and to the population of the towns of Northern France. Special pocket flash-lamps, with bulbs coloured dark blue, were also sold.

#### LEGACIES.

The late Dr. Emil Koch in Lucerne has left an amount of 20,000 frs. to the cantonal hospital. M. E. A. Bohnenblust-Cappellet from Aarburg, has bequeathed 20,000 frs. to the community of Aarburg for charitable purposes.

#### SWISS CITIZENS ARE LEAVING CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

Swiss nationals living in Czecho-Slovakia have been advised by the Swiss Legation to leave the country.

#### NEUHAUSEN AM RHEINFALL.

The Federal Council has sanctioned the change of name, from "Neuhausen" to "Neuhausen am Rheinfall."

#### SWISS NEWSPAPER DEMANDS LARGE AIR FORCE.

"Die Tat," the organ of National-Councillor Duttweiler, demands the purchase of one thousand aeroplanes of the fighter type only in order to safeguard the country against possible attack.

The Swiss air defence relies at present on 150 planes only, which is regarded as insufficient to keep an enemy at bay. The immediate erection of a Swiss aircraft factory is urged, and furthermore, it is demanded that at least 300 planes should be acquired abroad without delay, with an order for seven hundred more to be delivered later.

#### PROFESSOR DUMAS †.

The Federal Insurance Office has suffered a great loss through the death at the age of 58 of Professor Samuel Dumas. The deceased was from 1914-1925 Professor at the University of Lausanne; in 1925 he was appointed Director of the Federal Insurance Office, which post he held until he died. Professor Dumas rendered eminent services to our country and his death is deeply felt by all those who came in contact with him.

#### FEDERAL-COUNCILLOR MINGER AND SWISS ARMY.

On the occasion of a patriotic meeting, arranged by the cantonal Peasant Party in Burgdorf, which was attended by over 15,000 members, Federal-Councillor Minger, head of the Federal Military Dept., said in his address: "We can have full confidence in our army, knowing that there is no reliance on outside help, we have created an army which can face any eventualities." M. Minger made an appeal to all Parties to work together in harmony for the welfare of the country.

#### SWISS-GERMAN FRONTIER TALKS.

The Swiss Government is negotiating with Germany to straighten out frontier idiosyncracies. The rectifications in question are near the western end of Lake Constance.

Owing to the meanderings of the Rhine at this point, close to the famous Rhine Falls, the irregular shape of the frontier has long been an inconvenience to farmers wishing to sell their

produce in their own country. The roads frequently cross and recross foreign territory.

Bissingen is in a small circle of German land surrounded by Swiss territory, while the Swiss town of Stein and its countryside are entirely encircled by Germany.

#### SWISS DEFENCES.

In the Haute Savoie the units of the anti-aircraft defences have occupied the observation posts assigned to them on the mountains. On the Swiss border all along the Rhine and Jura mountains, and at the eastern end of the Lake of Geneva, bridges, roads, and railway lines are guarded by Swiss soldiers of the frontier defence force, while the fortifications are completely manned and equipped with all their artillery. So far the Federal Government has taken no further measures.

#### SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS ADMINISTRATION.

For several years interested observers of the affairs of the Swiss Federal Railways have argued as to which of three bodies really is responsible for the management of that undertaking, the Government railway department, the board of administration (Verwaltungsrat), or the general management, but until the Swiss Government takes steps to clarify the position the answer to the problem is likely to remain obscure. Actually, the Swiss Federal Railways have, since 1898, been regarded more or less as State lines, for from that year the Government assumed responsibility for covering any deficits which might be shown in the railway balance-sheets. Hence, the Swiss Government, through its railway department, is the ultimate authority when important decisions have to be made. The board of administration comprises fifteen members, the majority of these being industrialists, traders and economists, whilst the general management comprises the chairman and two general managers of the Swiss Federal Railways, those three officers being responsible for all questions concerning railway operation, new works and staff matters. Both the board of administration and general management are appointed by the Government, which also appoints the three divisional managers at Lucerne, Lausanne and Zurich. In point of fact, the general management invariably makes decisions, and these are almost invariably approved by the board of administration, which acts more as a consultative than a deliberative body, and never takes the initiative. Such being the case, the feeling is growing that the board of administration should be eliminated, leaving the general management in full control of the undertaking and with responsibility only to the railway department of the Government.

R.G.

### LOCAL.

#### ZURICH.

Dr. Martin Rickli, Professor at the Federal Technical University in Zurich, has celebrated his 70th birthday.

The death is reported from Zurich, of Dr. Hermann Häberlin, late National Councillor, at the age of 76.

The deceased enjoyed the reputation of being one of the most successful medical practitioners in the town of Zurich.

Dr. Häberlin was a member of the Municipal Council, as well as of the "Kantonsrat" for a great number of years; he also held a seat in Parliament (National Council).

#### BASLE.

From Basle comes the news of the death of Dr. Christian Rothenberger-Klein, one of the leaders of the Basle Liberals at the beginning of this century. He was for many years a member of the Grand Council over which he presided in 1910. He was a member of the National-Council from 1908-1919.

After a long illness Dr. Ernst Thalman, late States-Councillor, has died in Basle at the age of 57.

The canton of Basle loses thus one of its leading politicians.

Dr. Thalman entered the Grand Council in 1911, and from 1928-1935 represented the canton Basle in Parliament (States Council).

### SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

## GOLDEN JUBILEE FESTIVITIES

### MEMBERS' EVENING

on

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14th, 1938

at

Pagani's Restaurant,

Great Portland Street, W. 1.

(TOWN DRESS) 6.30 for 7 p.m.

## JUBILEE BANQUET and BALL

on

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15th, 1938

at the

Trocadero, Piccadilly Circus, W. 1.

(EVENING DRESS) 6.30 for 7 p.m.

TICKETS for both functions at 18/-; for Members' Evening only 5/- and for Banquet only 14/6 can be obtained at Swiss House, 34-35, Fitzroy Square, W. 1. (Tel. Museum 6663). City Office, 24, Queen Victoria Street, E.C. 4 (Tel. City 3310), and Swiss Observer, 23, Leonard Street, E.C. 2 (Tel. Clerkenwell 2321/2).

The death has occurred in Basle of Dr. Fritz Uhlmann, who was a well-known medical practitioner and Professor of Medicine at the University of Berne. The deceased who reached the age of 57 played an important rôle in Swiss Freemasonry.

#### ST. GALL.

The "Domkapitel" of the "Bistum" St. Gall has elected Dr. Josef Meili, Bishop of St. Gall in succession to the late Dr. Scheiwiler. The new Bishop is 47 years old and hails from Mosnang, he studied theology at the University of Fribourg.

#### AARGAU.

Father Dominique Bucher, who was for many years Professor at the College in Sarnen, has been nominated Abbé of the Convent in Muri-Gries. The new Abbé was born in 1871 at Alpnach.

A serious accident happened between Arisdorf and Hersberg, when a motor-car overturned, both the driver and passenger were instantaneously killed. The victims are M. A. Studer, architect, and M. Kunath, poultry farmer, both from Aarau.

### LE CONFLIT GERMANO-TCHÉCO-SLOVAQUE ET LES SENTIMENTS QU'IL A FAIT NAÎTRE EN SUISSE.

Dans ce journal, tant qu'a duré le tragique débat qui aboutit au sacrifice de la Tchécoslovaquie sur l'autel précaire de la paix, nous nous sommes défendu de prendre parti. Par où je n'entends pas dire que nous n'ayons manifesté fort clairement notre avis. On sait de quel côté nous sommes et n'avons cessé de nous tenir. Mais il nous eût paru singulièrement déplacé d'animer au combat la France et la Grande-Bretagne, alors que nous n'allions point payer de nos personnes; tout de même que nous eussions jugé indigne de notre nom de Suisse une attitude de défaitisme à l'égard de Prague ou, ce qui est pis encore, des conseils virulents de céder, de tout céder, d'aller au suicide pour qu'une paix dont nous avons le bénéfice nous fût conservée.

Il suffisait d'un modeste effort d'imagination pour se mettre à la place des hommes appelés à prendre leurs responsabilités que ce fût à Paris, à Londres ou à Prague. Et ce petit travail de l'esprit — et du cœur aussi — conduisait irrésistiblement nos méditations à l'impasse. Il n'est pas besoin d'insister. A peine convient-il de redire que nul, chez nous, n'est resté insensible au drame immense et foudroyant dont nous fûmes les témoins.

Or, si nous avons ressenti si vivement l'angoisse et l'infortune des autres c'est pour des raisons très différentes.

Les uns, inquiets seulement à la perspective d'une guerre européenne se sont fait inconsciemment les jouets d'une propagande mensongère. Comme l'écrivait très justement hier ici même Paul Du Bochet: "... on aurait dit vraiment que ce n'est pas la mobilisation allemande qui menace la paix, mais la résistance solitaire" d'un petit pays. On avait oublié que, si graves et si persistantes que fussent en effet les fautes de ce pays, elles eussent été parfaitement réparables par des moyens pacifiques. On ne voyait plus que ce pelé, ce galeux qui risquait par son obstination d'entraîner le monde aux abîmes et qui avait l'inadmissible prétention de compter sur les promesses solennelles des Etats qui l'avaient créé.

D'autres prêchaient la croisade. Ils ne pouvaient souffrir l'idée qu'une fois de plus le droit cédaît à la force. Ils se figuraient les troupes des démocraties comme une armée du Bien, soudaine levée pour s'en aller occire l'Infidèle. Mais ils ne proposaient pas de s'enrôler.

Au sein de cette incohérence, malgré ces différences d'attitude en apparence inconciliables, on croit pouvoir discerner un trait commun, peut-être même un trait essentiel: le sentiment de notre faiblesse. Chez les uns ce sentiment s'est exprimé par un accès de colère contre ceux qui seraient une cause de trouble; chez les seconds il s'est manifesté par une ardente sympathie pour un petit peuple dont la destinée est aux mains des puissants.

Un complexe de sentiments analogues s'est fait voir en Suisse lors de l'annexion de l'Autriche par le Reich. Plus pressant par le fait que l'Autriche était notre voisine et que sa disparition augmentait l'étendue de nos confins allemands, mais analogue parce que l'Autriche elle aussi était un petit pays abandonné. Mais, à tout bien considérer, le malheur qui frappe la Tchécoslovaquie nous paraît, du point de vue suisse, beaucoup plus grave, beaucoup plus lourd de conséquences que l'Anschluss. Parce qu'il signifie une défaite des démocraties. Et je ne parle pas ici de la démocratie tchécoslovaque,

mais de celle de la France, de celle de la Grande-Bretagne, obligées, sous peine d'un désastre, de s'incliner une fois de plus devant l'ouragan germanique.

Il est possible, il est probable que l'attitude présente de Londres et de Paris prélude à un changement de front de la politique européenne, à une renonciation aux alliances lointaines, à un regroupement vers l'occident. C'est l'affaire de demain et il est temps de songer à l'avenir. Mais nous ne pouvons nous appuyer que sur des faits acquis et le seul qui doive compter pour nous c'est, qu'en dépit de l'accalmie — si l'on ose nommer ainsi ce soulagement plein de honte et de menace —, la paix n'est pas assurée.

Nous ne savons pas encore si le peuple tchécoslovaque courbera la tête et se soumettra sans coup férir. Nous ne le savons pas, mais nous ne le croyons pas non plus. Et même s'il en était ainsi, quelles seront les incidences de la politique des Etats voisins sur le cours des événements? ... Rien n'est fait. Le péril est, dans le cas le plus favorable, simplement éloigné mais non point écarté définitivement.

Dans ces circonstances il nous faudra encore beaucoup de résistance morale. On tente, à la faveur des événements, d'énerver le peuple suisse, de le décourager, de lui représenter comme dérisoires les efforts qu'il fait pour sa défense nationale. Ces manœuvres criminelles ne sont pas nouvelles. Nous les voyons régulièrement se produire aux heures du danger. Mais nous ne sommes pas seuls à les subir. Elles ont eu, hélas, raison de l'énergie des citoyens dans plus d'un pays. Jusqu'ici elles sont restées sans effet sur le nôtre. Il serait fun d'y céder, fût-ce d'un pouce. Mais si l'armement matériel est un devoir auquel nous ne saurions nous soustraire, l'armement moral est tout aussi nécessaire. C'est dans l'union, c'est dans le sentiment de notre rôle au cœur de l'Europe, dans la fierté de notre destinée que nous trouverons la force d'âme dont un jour peut-être il s'agira de faire preuve.

Gaston Bridel.

(Tribune de Genève).

### SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY JUBILEE.

Monsieur C. R. Paravicini, the Swiss Minister, has written the following letter to the President of the Swiss Mercantile Society:

Londres, le 26 septembre 1938.

Monsieur le Président,

Bien que la fête officielle en l'honneur du Cinquantenaire de la "Swiss Mercantile Society" n'aura lieu qu'au mois d'octobre, je ne voudrais pas manquer de vous exprimer dès maintenant mes félicitations les plus cordiales en vous priant de les transmettre à ces Messieurs du Comité et à tous les Membres de votre Société.

C'est aujourd'hui, il y a cinquante ans, que la "Swiss Mercantile Society" a officiellement pris naissance et je ne voudrais pas laisser passer ce jour mémorable sans vous envoyer un message vous apportant mes bons vœux.

Veillez croire, Monsieur le Président, à l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.

C. R. Paravicini.

Monsieur Steinmann,  
Président,

Swiss Mercantile Society,  
34, Fitzroy Square,  
W.1.

WENN.....

Wenn grosse Stürme um Dich schlagen  
Wenn Leid und Kummer an Dir nagen —  
Und Du dich fühlst so ganz allein  
Flücht in des Waldes stillen Hain.

Erbitt, in Not den besten Leiter  
Den lieben Hergott als Begleiter,  
Ihm darfst Du ruhig alles sagen  
Deine Angst und Kummer klagen.

Vertrauen seinem guten Rat  
Befolge ihn mit Wort und Tat,  
Die Waldandacht wird Sorgen lindern  
In neuer Hoffnung wirst Du Frieden finden.  
H. E.

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