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# The Swiss Observer

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

A public loan of 550 million francs is to be issued shortly. No details have so far been given to the press by the Federal Council but it is understood that the proceeds — apart from financing current expense — will be used to consolidate the floating debt.

\* \* \*

A phenomenal drop in customs revenues is recorded for the first two months of this year, the total being just over 16 million francs compared with eight million in the two months of the preceding year.

\* \* \*

A society for the establishment and encouragement of commercial relations with Soviet Russia has been constituted at Berne on February 22nd.

\* \* \*

There are at present a fair number of constitutional proposals awaiting the final draft to be submitted to the decision of the electorate. This is nothing revolutionary as our Constitution has constantly endeavoured to adapt itself to the changing conditions, in fact since the last total revision in 1874 no less than 61 articles have been either modified or newly inserted.

\* \* \*

A Delegation composed of M. Paul Keller, of the Département Economique, M. Rezzonico and M. Hohl, Counsellors in the Département Politique, M. Gauthier, representing the Banque Nationale Suisse, and M. Frey of the Vorort, has been in London for some time. They have come to negotiate a new War Trade Agreement.

### Cantonal

The clerk of the mortgage registry in Ruswil (Lucerne), Emil Wicky, who for the last twenty years has been in charge of this office has disappeared; defalcations exceeding Frs.150,000 have so far been discovered.

\* \* \*

The ordinary accounts for 1943 of the canton Zurich close with a surplus of over five million francs and include about 11 million francs amortizations.

Dr. Adolf Lühinger (socialist) has been elected president of the town of Zurich (Bürgermeister) in succession of Federal Councillor Ernst Nobs.

\* \* \*

The Federal Old Age and Dependants Insurance has been the subject of several petitions by cantonal councils, notably Berne and Aargau, urging the Federal Council to accelerate the promulgation of the scheme. At a large manifestation in Zurich, at which Federal Councillor Nobs spoke, the necessity was stressed of retiring those becoming entitled to old age pensions as soon as possible so as to relieve the labour market for post-war requirements.

\* \* \*

A digression as romantic as it is grave has become known to a wider circle at Zurich. In May last the territorial tribunal at Berne sentenced a thirty year old foreigner to fifteen years hard labour for espionage; he had previously been detained for ten months in the homely prison at Pfäffikon (Zurich). He appealed against the sentence and was promptly lodged again at his former abode. The local jailer had a daughter — not so young — who seems to have taken an interest in the uncertain fate of her father's prisoner, the latter naturally taking full advantage of this welcome diversion. On New Year's eve the daughter took leave from her parents on the pretext of spending the festive season with friends at Zurich. Later on in the evening she hired a taxi, drove to Pfäffikon, asked the driver to wait somewhere round the corner, went to her home to fetch the prison keys and safely transferred her Romeo to the discreet interior of the four-wheeler. In the meantime her father, the guardian of the law, who was not informed of the ultimate destination of the loving birds, remained true to the time-honoured tradition by celebrating sylvester at his "Stammlokal."

## CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les Membres sont avisés que

### L'ASSEMBLÉE GÉNÉRALE ANNUELLE

aura lieu le Mardi 25 avril à 6 heures précises au Brown's Hotel, Dover Street, Londres, W.1.

#### ORDRE DU JOUR:

Procès Verbal.	Rapport du Président.
Admission.	Rapport du Trésorier.
Démission.	Election du Comité pour l'exercice 1944/45.

Les participants sont priés de s'inscrire au plus tard le 21 Avril auprès du Secrétaire Honoraire, M. P. A. Moehr, c/o Acme, Imperial House, Kingsway, W.C.2.