

News in brief

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SWISS INDUSTRIES.

The well-known engineering firm of Sulzer Bros. Winterthur is at present constructing an electric locomotive of 4400 horsepowers for the Rumanian Government. This huge engine is intended for the international trains from Bukarest to Brasov, & will have a drawing power of 600 tons. The character of the country through which this line threads its way compares with that of the Gotthard railway. So it is not surprising that there is much similarity between this Rumanian locomotive and the "Mammoth" type of the Swiss Federal Railways, namely in the separation of the two short-coupled halves of the engine, each half running on four driving axles and three running axles. The engine, measured over the buffers, is 29 meters long and has a weight of 220 tons. Over the flat country from Bucharest to Carpathia, a speed of 100 Kilometers per hour is expected.

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NEWS IN BRIEF.

During the 18th century the canton of Glarus had approximately 12,000 sheep. Today the number of sheep has fallen to 614. The peasant confederation of Glarus has now decided to raise sheep breeding to a higher standard. With the introduction of pedigree stock they hope to improve quality and breed of the present stock.

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Out of 100,000 unemployed in Switzerland during last February 30% were foreigners. Every 11th inhabitant is of foreign extraction. Every 12th Swiss lives in foreign countries, because they are unable to procure their daily bread in their own country. These Swiss emigrants are good, hard-working people who do not want to be a responsibility to their borough, country or state. Nevertheless it means that they have to make room for the "Ausländer."

In a thickly populated country like Switzerland, this state of affairs is more or less a calamity, especially so when its Government has to call on its resources to assist emigration.

Centuries ago, emigration, to a great extent, only temporarily, was due to a restless nature, more than to any other cause. The Wanderlust and fighting spirit caused many to go abroad, perhaps to find a fortune or to fight other countries' battles. But in late years, thousands of Swiss have been obliged to leave their native homeland and to find a home elsewhere.

It is a statement we can justly be proud of, that wherever they settle they always enjoy a good name as to their abilities, and especially their character. A Swiss need never be ashamed to name his country.

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URI : 9,7 tons of powder were used in a granite quarry at Gurtellen in one blast. At 4 p.m. the train services on the Gotthard line and the road traffic were suspended. Shortly afterwards the huge side of rock **seemed to** turn itself into a huge ball, which after crumbling up, thundered down the countryside. The whole blasting performance happened exactly as planned. Only one stone rolled over the road, without doing any damage. Approximately 50,000 cubic meters of granite has been blasted off, sufficient to give employment for quite a number of workers for many years to come.

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BASLE : Frobenius Ltd., the well-known Swiss Film producers, have acquired the workshops of Brawn, Boveri & Co. Ltd. at Muenchhausen and have transformed this establishment into a Film Studio. What used to be a beehive of industries has now been turned into a veritable Hollywood.

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ZURICH : Besides a permanent staff of 500 street cleaners, an army of 1200 extras, besides 60 to 70 auto-trucks and 160 horses, were required last winter to keep the city streets clear of snow. The costs amounted to 40-45000 frs. per day.

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Thanks to favourable grain regulations, Switzerland has produced 40% of the whole country's need in grain. This is very remarkable, more so because before the world war, the inland harvest produced only sufficient grain for two months. Although the last harvest did not come up to expectations, more than 10,000 trucks of grain were delivered to the Federal authorities. The quality was also excellent .

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The desire to introduce Swiss dialects into the cantonal parliaments seems to gain in popularity. During the session of the cantonal parliament in Zurich the Minister for Finance pleased his attentive audience with his broad "Züridütsch." Naturally others followed his lead. The city council of Winterthur has now adopted this popular procedure. Some Appenzeller Statesmen have of old, always adhered to the good old dialect. Dr. Hofstetter, a member of the Federal Parliament of many years standing was well known as a master speaker, although he always remained true to his quaint Appenzeller dialect. It is certain that in this manner much more effect can be given to speeches and addresses.

At a meeting of the Executive of our Mother society, the Neue Helvetische Gesellschaft, it was decided to introduce some sort of grammar into the Swiss dialect which would enable it to be used in writing. This new system which has its fixed rules may be utilised in any of the innumerable dialects of our country. A book of instructions has been compiled and can be obtained through our society. During the winter months courses of instructions are given to further the subject.

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GRAUBÜNDEN: The "Rätoromanic" has now been recognised as the fourth national language by the unanimous vote of the Federal Parliament.

Mr. Vonmoos, a representative of the canton of Graubünden extended the heartiest thanks of the Rätoromanic community. He explained that although their mother tongue had been jealously guarded for hundreds of years, its existence was very much endangered at the present time.

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THE NEW PRESIDENT OF SWITZERLAND:

APPENZELL : The Federal Parliament elected Dr. J. Baumann as their Federal President for the year 1938. With 153 votes in his favour, he has gained his seat with a majority of 91.

Since the foundation of the Federal state of Switzerland, this is the first time that a representative of the canton of Appenzell has been elected to this exalted office, the highest in the land. No wonder that the news was greeted in his electorate with the firing of guns and the joyous ringing of church-bells.

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