

# Home news

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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

The Federal Council proposed to the Federal Assembly to extend the Arrêté Fédéral of February 18th, 1921, on the limitation of imports, to March 31st, 1923. To this Message two sets of statistics are added showing the extent of unemployment in the principal industries of Switzerland during the second half of 1920 and in 1921.

\* \* \*

Demonstrations of the Social Democrats against the economic policy of the Federal Council are announced from different parts of the country. In Winterthur a big one took place on October 1st. National Councillor Dr. Arthur Schmid protested against the Referendum having been annulled when the modified custom tariff was introduced. The Labour Leader, Conrad Wyss, and National Councillor Rob. Grimm spoke also. A resolution was carried which protested that the protective measures adopted by the Federal Council would never have been ratified by the people had they been submitted to them.

\* \* \*

The growing opposition to the re-organisation project of the Federal Railways, especially on the part of St. Gall and Basle, and more particularly to the reduction of the administrative arrondissements from five to three, has induced the Federal Railways Department to issue a supplementary Message in which all the arguments for this reform are exhaustively dealt with. The Commission of the National Council, which has to study this item, started its sittings on September 26th at Lugano and decided to recommend the proposed solution.

\* \* \*

The Grand Council of Lucerne voted against the Income Tax Initiative which asked for an extension of the subsistence minimum. It will be brought before the people without a recommendation from the Grand Council.

\* \* \*

A serious disagreement arose in the Constitutional Council of Tessin on Friday, September 30th. Because of the rejection of their proposal to adjourn the Council to October 21st, the Radical-Liberal party made a statement to the effect that they had decided to keep away from the further deliberations. The members of the other parties continued to discuss Articles 38 to 57 of the constitutional project. The proceedings were then adjourned till October 10th.

The fruit harvest in Thurgau promises to be wonderful. It is reckoned that the Thurgau can export this year 2,000 waggons of fruit, which would be equal to 20 million kilograms. Owing to the valuta troubles there is no possibility of exporting into Germany, as has been done in former years. Some fruit, however, has of late been exported to the Scandinavian countries. The initiative in this kind of export to such far-off countries is attributed to the Arenenberger School, where the sons of the Thurgau farmers are educated to a modern and comprehensive understanding of their profession.

\* \* \*

Minister Le Trocquer welcomed on Saturday the 28th of September the Swiss delegates who had been invited to visit the port of Bordeaux-Bassens. The delegation consisted of Mr. Ultramare, Municipal Councillor, of Geneva; President Mazuy; Vice-President Antonio, and Chief Secretary Marcel Guadin, of the French Chamber of Commerce in Switzerland; delegates of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce of Geneva, Lausanne, and Berne; State Councillor J. Sigg, President of the Association "De la Suisse à la Mer"; Monsieur Riverdin, Secretary; the members of the Committee of the Rhine and Rhone Association, and some prominent Swiss journalists. The Minister also received the Bordeaux-Odessa Committee which, amongst other claims, expressed the wish that an early decision should be taken with a view to achieve the line Bordeaux-Lyons-Genève.

\* \* \*

The International Conference of the Anti-Prohibitionists which met at Lausanne decided to form a committee in which every country should be represented by two delegates. This Committee is entrusted with the preliminary preparations for a great International Congress which will shortly be convened to meet in London.

\* \* \*

The Delegates of the Swiss Benevolent Society met for the Annual Assembly at Zurich on September 19th. The main feature of the deliberations was the question of the care of the aged and infirm. The funds of the Society amount at present to 165,000 frs., and the money bequests left to the Society to 510,000 frs. The Central Committee, at the head of which is Dr. R. von Schulthess-Schindler, was unanimously re-elected. The Director, Dr. Stadlin, of Berne, who reported on the question of the care of the aged and infirm, was very much in favour of a provisional scheme being introduced until the Old Age Assurance Act became law. He reckons that it would take ten million francs annually to make it possible for everybody in need over sixty-five years of age to be paid an average pension of 500 francs yearly.

\* \* \*

The Swiss Cities' Day celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary at St. Gall on the 24th and 25th of September. Monsieur le président Chappuis, of St. Imier, was again elected President. Other members of the new Committee

are: Mr. Lindt, Berne; Mr. Freymond, Lausanne; Mr. Vulpius, Geneva; Dr. Dietschi, Olten; Colonel Kern, Zurich; and Dr. Brenner, President of the Basle Government.

\* \* \*

The Assembly particularly discussed unemployment. Dr. Keel, of St. Gall, dealt with the situation in Eastern Switzerland; the new financial director of La Chaux-de-Fonds, Mr. Vaucher, with that in Western Switzerland. A resolution was carried which recommended that instead of money relief, work should be provided for the unemployed, such as the construction of electric power stations, railway bridges, etc. As a means to fight unemployment the Assembly also recommended export premiums for the suffering industries.

\* \* \*

The first Protestant Mass Meeting (Protestantischer Volkstag) took place on September 25th at Zurich. It consisted of a meeting at the Lindenhof and two evening services, one in the Gross Münster, the other in St. Peter's Church. The speakers at the Mass Meeting were Church Councillor Tappolet, who addressed the audience on behalf of the Church Council of the Canton of Zurich, Regierungsrat Maurer, Pfarrer Baumann, and Professor Bächtold, Basle. At the Mass Meeting, as well as at the evening services, the orators spoke about a revival of the church and of the Protestant spirit. Several thousand people attended the meetings.

\* \* \*

The second Congress for Women's Interests, organised by eleven Swiss women's societies, was inaugurated on October 2nd in Berne by a service in the Cathedral conducted by the first woman vicar in Switzerland, Miss Pfister, of Zurich. The deliberations were subsequently opened in the Casino by Miss Bertha Trüssel and Federal Councillor Chuard, who welcomed the delegates on behalf of the Swiss Government. Dr. Merz read out a report on the developments of the Swiss women's movement written by Dr. Graf, who was prevented from being present by illness. The deliberations will last until October 6th.

\* \* \*

The Annual Assembly of the Swiss Esperanto Society took place on September 26th at Olten. Dr. Edmund Privat of Geneva was elected as the new president. The Assembly voted a resolution of thanks to the Geneva Educational Department for having made Esperanto compulsory in certain Geneva schools, and also to the Municipal Council of La Chaux-de-Fonds for having introduced the teaching of Esperanto facultively.

\* \* \*

The Annual Assembly of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique took place at Chexbres on September 25th and 26th. Professor Dr. Bohnenblust was elected as the new Central President instead of Mr. Leopold Gautier. Professor G. de Reynold (Berne), Professor Fueter (Zurich), Professor Anastasi (Lugano), Rector Barth (Basle) and others spoke on educational problems of national and international importance.

\* \* \*

The Swiss Week will take place from the 15th to the 19th of October.

\* \* \*

The next Swiss Samples Fair will be coupled with an International Raw Materials Exhibition.

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The Comptoir Suisse at Lausanne continues to be well frequented. On Saturday, September 24th, there were more than 40,000 visitors recorded.

The Swiss holiday course for Political Science started on September 25th at Zurich. Those who attended it were welcomed by the President of the Zurich Government, Dr. Mousson. Dr. Briener, the head of the Cantonal Children's Office, spoke on the aims of this organisation, and Director Peter, head of the Waterworks, spoke on the communal works of Zurich.

\* \* \*

Professor Dr. E. E. Schollenberger celebrated his seventieth birthday on September 26th in the best of health. Professor Schollenberger is an authority on constitutional law and has published many valuable handbooks on it. He resigned his post as professor of constitutional law at Zurich University in 1917, but many are the students who still remember his suggestive manner of lecturing.

\* \* \*

An Adolf Stäbli exhibition has been organised in Brugg with a view to commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the death of the famous painter.

\* \* \*

Henri Friedrich Amiel, the author of the famous "Journal Intime," was born in Geneva a century ago on September 27th. The Genevese papers took this opportunity to render due homage to this extraordinary personality. The genuine celebration will, however, not take place until October 20th, when the Institut National Genevois, in connection with the University, will organise a commemorative meeting, at which Professors Delacroix (Paris), Werner (Geneva), Reymond (Neuchâtel) will speak on the importance of the philosopher.

\* \* \*

The new Director of the Zurich Municipal Theatre, Mr. Paul Trete, of Essen, was introduced to the staff on September 30th.

\* \* \*

The first Director of the Teachers' Choral Society, Zurich, Dr. Friedrich Hegar, celebrated his eightieth birthday on October 11th.

\* \* \*

The Dante celebration took place on September 28th in the Stadt Casino of Basle. It was organised by the Association Pro Ticino and the Quodlibet, Basle. Francesco Chiesa gave the commemorative address in Italian and was seconded by Professor Rintelen, who, on account of his studies of Giotto, is very well acquainted with the time of Dante.

\* \* \*

The "Movie" censor of Zurich saw 871 films in 1921, 37 of which were absolutely forbidden.

\* \* \*

Rumours are circulating in Switzerland that the murderers of Erzberger are hidden in a locality on the lake of Zurich. Three plain-clothes detectives from Berlin are said to have travelled to Switzerland to help the Swiss police to arrest the murderers.

\* \* \*

The new Kröntenhütte in the Erstfelderthal was opened on September 25th. The cost of erection amounted to 45,000 francs.

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*Rowing.*—The Amsterdam rowers welcomed the victorious Zurich crew, "Grasshopper," which won a European Championship recently, and also the crew of the "Seeklub," which had travelled in twelve days from Basle to Amsterdam. This latter had been especially fortunate

Because during the whole trip they had not a single drop of rain. The average day's speed was 75 kilometres done in seven hours.

\* \* \*

OBITUARY.—Ex-Federal Councillor Ludwig Förrer died at Berne on September 28th. He was born in 1845 at Islikon, in the Canton of Thurgovie, and was the son of parents of modest means. He studied at Zurich University. Between 1870 and 1873 he acted as Attorney-General of the Canton of Zurich, after which he practised as a barrister until he became Director of the International Office of Railway Goods Traffic in 1902. All his life long he was intensely interested in politics. From 1870 until 1900 he was a member of the Zurich Cantonal Council (for some years co-operating with the then Staatsschreiber Gottfried Keller), from 1881 until 1900 a member of the Swiss National Council, and from 1903 until 1917 a member of the Swiss Government. Twice, in 1906 and 1912, he was President of the Confederation. In 1917 he resigned his strenuous post on the Swiss Federal Council owing to his great age, and subsequently he again filled the post of Director of the International Office of Railway Goods Traffic. He enjoyed a high reputation on account of his eminent knowledge in railway affairs. As head of the Railway Department of the Swiss Government for many years he was responsible for the much talked of Gotthard Convention which Switzerland passed with Germany and Italy in 1913.

## NOTES & GLEANINGS.

Education and juvenile instruction in Switzerland has always been closely watched by English educational authorities. "The Teachers' Times" (Sept. 23rd) describes in detail the system in vogue at a State Primary School and selects for this purpose the 'Ecole Pestalozzi' at Yverdon. The article is highly complimentary and terminates with the following conclusions:—

"In Neuchâtel, for example, there seems to be a keen spirit abroad for education, for students' guides are available at the general enquiry office and displayed along with tourist and other guide books. All fees are particularly low, and the normal college is free. Foreign students are encouraged and special courses arranged for their benefit. Secondary schools for boys and girls are linked up with the university; in fact, one is conducted in the university building itself. There is a fine conservatoire of music and an excellent school of commerce, while we must not forget the professional school for hotel-keepers. This establishment trains pupils of both sexes in the art of cooking, serving, and organising of catering. The restaurant attached is open to the public, who can thus test from day to day the efficiency of the instruction. A boarding-house is also connected, so that the students obtain practical knowledge in all branches of hotelkeeping. No wonder the Swiss excel in the art.

It seems rather sad that stern necessity, owing to the strategic position of Switzerland, requires that military training should be so much in evidence, but perhaps with a happier era, should the League of Nations' ideal mature, this compulsory training begun at eight years of age will be rendered unnecessary and transformed into physical training for the arts of peace rather than the menace of war. Struggle has perhaps been the keynote of Swiss character, but the result is a very wise, strong, capable little country which justifies its existence if only to give weary holiday seekers a glimpse into its Elysian fields.

'L'union fait la force' has been proved up to the hilt by this brave little confederation of twenty-two cantons, whose peoples are drawn from three distinct stocks, and yet who can all agree on those points which make for the welding together of a stable community."

Writing on "Museums Abroad—Their Value in Education," contributors in "The Morning Post" (Sept. 28th and 29th) eulogize and enlarge on the utility of the Schweiz. Permanente Schulausstellung in Berne, the permanent scholastic exhibitions in Lausanne, Fribourg and Locarno, and the Pestalozzianum in Zurich.

\* \* \*

The same paper publishes on October 1st a very fascinating article about "Treasures of Switzerland" by S. E. Winbolt. Studies in the Berne Historical Museum and the Swiss National Museum in Zurich have left a deep impression on Mr. Winbolt, but what captivated his mind more than anything else is the Brugg Museum and the camp and amphitheatre at Vindonissa (Windisch); he is filled with admiration for the way the exhibits are set out generally and pays a special tribute to the curator at Brugg, "who is head of the Brugg Untergymnasium and fills his purely honorary post most ably. With no assistant beyond the elderly concierge, he is spending his spare time in cataloguing the many thousands of objects under his charge. In his October holiday he excavates, setting his boys to work for a fee of 40 centimes per hour. Much remains to be done; the soil teems with specimens asking to be brought back to the light of day."

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"The Times" (Sept. 29th) publishes a descriptive appreciation of the collection of pictures and sculptures in the Zürcher Kunsthau, to which not only Swiss and foreign museums, but also private collectors—even from England—have lent treasures of Swiss Art of the period from the beginning of the 15th century to the time of Hans Holbein and his school.

\* \* \*

"The Electrification of the Swiss Federal Railways" is the title of a report appearing in "The Engineer" (Sept. 30th), giving an account of the reasons advocating the adoption of the single-phase system and the generation of current for railways at a frequency different from the standard for industrial power, etc.—recommendations quite contrary to expert opinions in Great Britain.

\* \* \*

An article in the "Birmingham Post" (Sept. 28th) does justice to the awkward and delicate position in which our Government finds itself as the unwilling host of ex-Emperor Karl, whom we obviously cannot put across the frontier, as none of our neighbours, not even Austria, would consent to

### SWISS CHORAL SOCIETY.

Conductor MR. L. PESTOU.

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