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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

The Swiss National Assembly will open its autumn session on October 3rd.

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The Swiss Federal Council has decided to apportion frs. 100,000, out of the credit of 1½ million francs which is to be devoted for the support of intellectuals suffering through the acute unemployment crisis, to the *Schweizerischer Schriftstellerverein*. The said amount is to serve as part of the fund which is being raised for the support and advancement of necessitous Swiss writers.

\* \* \*

The Swiss Federal Council has decided that a new building shall be erected for the Lucerne branch of the Swiss National Bank.

The Council, after hearing experts, rejected the proposition that the Lucerne G.P.O. should be rebuilt and adapted for the purpose of housing the National Bank branch.

\* \* \*

The Federal Council has appointed Prof. Dr. Zemp (Zurich) and the Director of the Geneva Museum, M. Bovy, as Swiss delegates to the Congress on Art History in Paris.

\* \* \*

The Swiss Federal Council has decided to agree in principle to the abandonment of security demands for the Swiss credit to Austria, amounting to 25 million francs, provided the National Assembly would give its consent to that course, and further provided that other States would follow suit.

\* \* \*

For the first seven months of the current year the receipts of the Swiss Postal Service amounted to frs. 60,240,665, an increase of frs. 7,286,325 compared with the same period of the preceding year. The expenditure amounts to frs. 76,894,680, an increase of frs. 6,095,619 over last year's seven months working. The amount required for pay of the personnel was frs. 59,528,180. The expenses exceed revenue by frs. 16,654,015. By the end of July the personnel numbered 16,740, a decrease of 435 since July 1920.

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The appointed commission of experts has decided, with a pronounced majority, to recommend to the Federal Economic Department and to the Swiss Federal Council not to effect any changes in the present system governing the import restrictions.

The commission is of opinion that the adoption of valuta expedients would not favourably affect the present position.

In view of the serious economic situation the commission favours the extension of import restrictions beyond

December 31st, 1921, a recommendation which the National Assembly will either adopt or reject during the October session.

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The system introduced in 1912 by the Swiss Postal Authorities, enabling depositors of savings at the Cantonal Banks to make their deposits through the Post-scheckkonto at any local Post Office, has found universal favour, so that the authorities contemplate still further expansion of facilities for the benefit of the thrifty.

The regulation that parcels containing precious stones or articles of jewellery, including watches, intended for Great Britain or for transit through Great Britain, must bear declaration of full value of the contents, has been cancelled. According to the new regulations a parcel, the declared value of which must not exceed frs. 2,500 or £100, may contain gold watches to the value of frs. 20,000. The British Postal Authorities refuse, however, to recognise responsibility for such goods beyond the value limit of £100, unless the goods are packed in wooden cases the outside measurements of which are less than six feet in length and girth combined.

\* \* \*

Switzerland during the past weeks has been the venue for a number of important International Congresses, apart from the League of Nations Assembly, which has met for its second session on Monday, August 29th, under the chairmanship of Viscount Ishii (Japan).

As President of the present second session, Jonkheer van Karnabeek (Holland) was elected.

\* \* \*

At *Lausanne* the 16th *International Anti-Alcoholical Congress* was opened on Monday, August 22nd, in the Cathedral of Lausanne with the election to the Presidency of the Permanent Committee of Dr. Robert Hercod (Lausanne), while Grand Councillor Daulte (Lausanne) will replace Dr. Hercod as Secretary-General of the Committee.

Present were over 3,500 people, who remained standing while the Swiss National Hymn "Trittst im Morgenrot daher" was played on the organ as a prelude.

Edward Dincidie (Washington), the President of the Permanent Committee for the International Congresses, then greeted the assembly in French, explaining the aims of these congresses, which culminate in an exchange of views and methods pursued in the various countries for combating alcoholism.

After the rendering of a song by a mixed choir, the President of the Swiss Confederation, M. Schulthess, made an eloquent speech, which was followed by addresses from Dr. Hercod (Lausanne), director of the Swiss secretariat of the *Anti-Alcohol Movement*. Dr. Hercod welcomed the delegates, representing 26 different countries, in the English, French, German, Italian and Swedish languages, and the official representatives of the various countries suitably responded.

A further organ recital and song by the choir terminated the opening proceedings of the morning.

Work by the members of the Congress was started at 2 p.m. in the Church of Ouchy and was concluded on Saturday, August 27th.

Representatives of twelve countries proceeded after the Congress to found in Lausanne the "*World's Union of Academic Students against Alcoholism*," electing as their president Dr. Weeks (London), as secretary M. van der Veen (Amsterdam), as treasurer Mr. Harry Warner (Chicago). Sweden and Switzerland appointed assistant members to the Committee.

\* \* \*

In *Basle* the 10th Congress of the "International Co-operative Alliance" also commenced on Monday, Aug. 22nd.

The President of the Swiss Confederation, M. Schult-hess, paid his respects to the members of the Congress on Wednesday, August 24th, addressing the meeting with a speech during the delivery of which he was repeatedly interrupted by rapturous applause. The President's speech was instantly translated to the assembly into English and French by Dr. A. Vellemen (Geneva), the official interpreter to the League of Nations, who acted as interpreter to this Congress.

Some forty States had sent delegates to the Congress, which came to a conclusion on Thursday, August 25th, after the newly elected Committee of the "*International Co-operative Alliance*," consisting of 44 members, had been formed. This Committee, in which 24 States are represented, among them Great Britain with 7 delegates, Germany with 4, France with 4, etc., etc., at once proceeded to hold a constituent meeting, appointing ten members for the Executive Committee and electing as president thereof M. Goedhart (Holland), and as vice-presidents Mr. A. Whitehead (England) and M. Poisson (France).

The closing act of the Congress was held in the halls of the *Basle Samples Fair* buildings, hundreds of would-be participants having to be turned away for lack of accommodation.

The speakers at this final assembly were: E. Boisson (France), J. C. Warbusse, President of the American Co-operative Union, Lorenz (Germany) and Dr. K. Renner (Austria), all of whom paid their tribute to the Swiss Co-operative Union for their splendid efforts and progress, encouraging the Swiss to continue still more intensively their valuable work, so as to retain the leadership in this universal movement for the benefit of mankind.

Performances by the various *Basle Musical Societies* provided welcome and highly appreciated diversion.

On Friday morning a special train conveyed the delegates to Lucerne for a trip on the lake and luncheon in that town, after which they returned to *Basle*, from whence the delegates started on their return journeys to all corners of the world.

\* \* \*

The "Pacific and Pedagogic Associations" and the "Societies for Social Reform" assembled for conference at the *Maison Communale de Plainpalais*, Geneva, on September 1st.

On the agenda were problems due for discussion concerning the democratic development of the League of Nations and social-pedagogic measures for securely anchoring the ideals which should guide the League of Nations in the mentality of the various peoples.

\* \* \*

The body of distinguished members of the English medical profession, who at the invitation of the administrations of Swiss health resorts and the Federal and private

Railways have been touring Switzerland, have also paid a visit to the division for medicine attached to the Zurich University.

Sir Henry Lunn has invited the Swiss medical professionals to meet their English colleagues at a banquet in Berne. The British Legation and the Swiss Federal Council as well as the Federal and other Railways will be represented on the occasion.

\* \* \*

Dr. René Sand, secretary to the Brussels University Institute and professor of the Brussels University, has accepted the office of Secretary-General to the League of Red Cross Societies, and has taken up his domicile in Geneva.

\* \* \*

A meeting of representatives of Swiss Traffic Concerns and the Swiss Hotel Proprietors' Association was held in Zurich last week under the auspices of the "Swiss Tourist Information office."

Minister Junod, Director of the "S.T.I.O.," presided at the meeting and pointed out that the concessions granted by the Swiss Government in regard to further visa facilities were still insufficient.

Fully bearing in mind the present social and economic crisis, the "S.T.I.O." does not demand entire suppression of the Police Department for Foreigners, but the cessation of passport visas for such countries as America, Belgium, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Holland, Scandinavia and Spain—countries from which no social or economic dangers can arise for Switzerland.

A resolution adopted unanimously by the meeting demands abolition of visa compulsion for travellers from the above-named States, increased facilities and more expeditious formalities at the Swiss frontier stations.

\* \* \*

The Exhibition of the *Comptoir Suisse*, Lausanne, will be opened by the middle of this month.

Over 800 applications for space, pertaining to the Alimentary and Agricultural Groups alone, have been received.

The exhibition promises to become a great success.

\* \* \*

The Queen of the Belgians has had a diploma, bearing her portrait as Red Cross Sister, despatched to all the Swiss families who during the war had given refuge to Belgian children. The diploma also bears an inscription in the name of Belgian Mothers thanking the Swiss families for the generous hospitality extended to Belgian children.

\* \* \*

The employees of the *Tavannes Watch Co.* have refused to accept a reduction in wages of from 20 to 25 per cent. which was proposed by the directors to enable them to keep open the factory. Notices of dismissal to all the hands have taken effect on September 3rd.

\* \* \*

The elections for the *Bürgerrat* of Solothurn show the following result: Democrats 10 (11), People's Party 6 (6), Social Democrats 1 (6).

\* \* \*

The Municipal Council of Schaffhausen has accepted the projects of Messrs. Schäfer and Risch, architects in Chur, for converting the Cloister estate and the old arsenal into buildings for a museum and public library. The estimated cost reaches close on two million francs.

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563 emigrants have left their native country in the month of June last; 353 for America, 39 for Canada, and

91 for Brazil. The majority amongst them are agriculturists.

\* \* \*

The Swiss census of the Horse, Cattle and Poultry stocks on April 21st, 1921, reveals the following figures, showing an appreciable all-round increase:—

- Horses, 133,847 (1919, 124,000).
- Cattle, 1,424,856 (1920, 1,310,560).
- Pigs, 638,761 (1920, 546,122).
- Sheep, 244,435 (1920, 240,533).
- Goats, 329,192 (1920, 324,532).
- Hens, 3,241,012 (1918, 35.8% less).
- Geese and Ducks, 47,641 (1918, 18,558).

\* \* \*

The Swiss exhibition cattle consisting of 26 heads, which was shipped to Buenos Aires in March last for the purpose of participation in the International Dairy Exhibition at Buenos Aires, which could not be landed in consequence of a then raging cattle disease, has been in quarantine at the port of Santos until recently. The Government of Brazil has now decided to purchase the entire consignment, which in the meantime has been augmented by 11 calves.

\* \* \*

*Sport in Switzerland.*—The American champion rifle shot, Stokes, met our world's champion, Stäheli, and the Swiss champion, Widmer, in friendly battle at St. Gall, beating them both.

Stokes obtained standing 80 points, kneeling 85, and lying 92, total 257 points.

Stäheli: 77, 85, 86, total 248 points.

Widmer: 68, 75, 90, total 233 points.

\* \* \*

*Athletics.*—The Swiss Athletic Championships were decided at Geneva on Sunday, August 28th. Results:—

Featherweight: von Gunten, Club Hygiénique, Plainpalais.

Lightweight: F. Bichsel, Neuchâtel.

Middleweight: E. Herren, Kampfspielverein, Berne.

Middle Heavyweight: Fritz Hüneberger, Basle.

Heavyweight: Felix Goretta, Club Hygiénique, Plainpalais.

\* \* \*

The Athletic Meeting between Germany and Switzerland, held in Basle on Sunday, September 4th, for which Germany had sent some of her best exponents to compete against our native athletes, was, unfortunately, completely spoilt from the weather point of view, making conditions extremely trying for the competitors as well as for the immense number of spectators.

Germany secured 10 first, 10 second, 4 third and 2 fourth positions; Switzerland 4 firsts, 4 seconds, 8 thirds and 9 fourths.

The "pièce de resistance" was the 1,500 metres Relay Race, for which Martin, Kindler, Imbach and Schuler represented Switzerland; Köpke, Dünker, Fritz and Schmid Germany.

The Swiss team secured a splendid "short head" victory in 3 mins. 52.6 secs.

\* \* \*

*Football.*—One of Germany's strongest football teams, the "Viktoria," Berlin, who have in years gone by played with success in home matches against such well-known English teams as "Woolwich Arsenal," "Bolton Wanderers" and "Middlesbrough," etc., recently played a number of friendly matches in Switzerland with the following result:

Young Boys, Berne, v. Viktoria, Berlin, 2 : 1.

Servette, Geneva, v. Viktoria, Berlin, 3 : 3.

Viktoria, Berlin, v. Etoile La Chaux de Fonds, 1 : 0.

Viktoria, Berlin, v. Nordstern, Basle, 1 : 0.

\* \* \*

*Aviation.*—Over 15,000 spectators put in an appearance to witness the exploits of our Swiss military and civil aviators at Berne on Sunday, August 28th.

The meeting was arranged in honour of our pioneer aerial pilot Oscar Bider, who, unfortunately, met death far too early in the execution of his duties.

26 Aeroplanes started, the daring displays and evolutions rousing the gathering to tremendous enthusiasm.

Happily, the day passed without the slightest mishap, which speaks volumes for the progress of Swiss aviation. It is to be hoped that the coffers of the organising committee were well filled in view of the fact that the receipts shall be devoted to the erection of a monument on the Grosse Schanze in Berne to commemorate Switzerland's foremost airman: Oscar Bider.

\* \* \*

*The toll of the mountains.*—Ascending the "Ruinette," 3,879 metres, two brothers (Vaudois), residing in Paris, fell while trying to master a notoriously dangerous "chimney." The rescue required the assistance of eight guides, one of the brothers, who had a leg broken by the fall, landing on a ledge which was almost inaccessible.

Happily, there is no danger of the two alpinists losing their lives through the accident.

Fritz Riegg, from Ennenda, a well-known chamois hunter, succumbed to his injuries sustained through a fall on the "Bächistock" (Glarus).

The distinguished alpine guide, Giovanni Paravicini (43), from Silvaplana, had a mortal fall while ascending the "Piz Vacone," due to his footing giving way before he could fasten his rope. Paravicini was guiding Colonel Zuber and daughter from St. Gall and decided, although his patron demurred at first, to climb the Vacone after having descended from the "Cima de Largo." The daughter of Colonel Zuber did not accompany them on the second ascent. Without uttering a sound, the guide dropped into space, meeting with instant death when landing on the rocks 300 metres below. A caravan of 15 guides succeeded after great difficulties in recovering the body.

The funeral of Paravicini, who was a man highly esteemed, was the occasion of an impressive ceremony, attended by delegates from the whole Upper Engadine, the "Bernina" Section of the "S.A.C.," amongst them Federal Councillor Häberlin, and the guide's last patron, Colonel Zuber.

The son of Prince Ghika, Charles Ghika (16), who was studying in Geneva, fell on the "Crête de Thyon," meeting with instant death.

\* \* \*

*OBITUARY.*—Colonel Frey-von Ziegler died after a short illness at the age of 58 in Schaffhausen.

Ex-National Councillor Gugelmann, head of the firm of Gugelmann & Co., Langenthal, died at the age of nearly 70 years at Rheinfelden, where he was staying for a cure. The deceased was member of the National Council from 1902 until 1917, taking a prominent part in the creation of the Swiss factory laws. He held the rank of a Colonel in the Swiss Army and was on the boards of various important industrial concerns.

Richard Wiesner, the prominent organist, composer and musical director, who celebrated his seventieth birthday in May of this year, being honoured from all sides, had a sudden seizure at the end of the service in the St. Laurence Church at St. Gall and expired at the organ.