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According to statistics published by the Federal Labour Office, the unemployed have cost Switzer-land 406 million francs to end September last; of this amount 225 millions have been contributed by the Confederation, 164 millions by the cantons and communes, and 17 millions by factory owners. * * *

The preliminary figures with reference to the working of the Swiss Federal Railways during 1922 disclose a considerably improved position. The probable surplus will be 844 million francs (21 millions in 1921), which is chiefly due to a reduction in the working expenses of 24 million francs. * * *

The expert commission, presided over by Federal Councillor Musy, to study the revision of the law relating to the military tax, is making a few recom-mendations which, it is anticipated, will increase the revenue from this source by about $4\frac{1}{2}$ million france annually. The personal tax of Frs. 6.— is to be increased to Frs. 15.—, and the age limit is to be raised from 42 to 48. The taxation of possible inheritances is to be maintained.

Dr. Locher, formerly general director of the Swiss National Exhibition, has been appointed director at Zurich of the Swiss Federal Railways, in place of Director Mezger, who is retiring.

The Swiss League of Nations Union has pre-sented to the Federal Council a petition, drawing attention to the great economic sacrifices imposed upon other countries by the present serious friction between France and Germany, which is fraught with great dangers to international peace.

At the request of the Federal authorities, a small delegation of the National Council has gone to France in order to study the possibility of find-ing employment for Swiss agricultural workers.

To destroy the fear of higher coal prices, the French authorities have stated that instructions have been given that no obstacles should be placed in the way of a continuance of the coal deliveries from the Ruhr.

* * *

Emigration during last year shows a decrease, 5,787 Swiss having left their home for overseas countries, against 7,129 in 1921.

Free postage, which has been the privilege of Government and other official bodies in Switzerland, will probably be abolished, the cantons receiving as compensation a yearly subsidy of one million francs from the Confederation.

* * *

The electorate of the canton of Geneva is giving its verdict to-day and to-morrow on a proposed increase in the cost of dog licences, pensions to retired states councillors who have been in office for nine or more years, and an increase in the property tax property tax.

Of the 37,413 voters in the canton of Geneva one-half are Swiss who belong to other cantons, chiefly Vaud and Berne. ***

Taxation of foreign residents, to the tune of the equivalent of the military tax paid by Swiss, is the object of an initiative presented to the Regierungsrat of Zurich, which will submit this proposed law to the people with a recommendation for its relation for its rejection.

A referendum having been demanded on the new fiscal decree promulgated by the canton of Lucerne, which imposes a higher though graduated income tax, the voting will take place next Sunday.

The town of Bienne is in the fortunate position of anticipating in the budget for 1923 a surplus of Frs. 73,384.

Several farmsteads have, these last few days, been destroyed by fire: the Spittel in Madiswil

(Langental), rendering six families homeless; a farmhouse in Oberzeihen (Laufenburg); and another in Asuel (Porrentruy), the latter belonging to Xaver Choulat; a fourth in Wölflingswil (Frick), the property of Jakob Belser. The vicarage in Dittingen (Laufental) was completely burned out on the 19th inst. 19th inst.

* * *

The falling of an avalanche was the cause of a grave accident to a party of fifteen tourists, members of the Geneva section of the Swiss Alpine Club, who were undertaking last Sunday the customary winter ski excursion. Near the Porte du Soleil (Champéry) they were overtaken by an ava-lanche; three of those who were buried were able to artificate themeologic, but Hunzi Car Carttera to extricate themselves, but Henri Gex-Crotter, a well-known and much respected guide of Morgins, remained entombed in the specied guide of Molgills, remained entombed in the snow. Help soon ar-rived, and the two search parties brought back his remains, which were discovered 1.2 metres under the snow, about 15 metres distant from the spot where the accident happened.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

The Winter Season

The Winter Season. To be compelled to read, while at the same time prevented from responding to the call of, the many enchanting and enticing reports from the winter resorts appearing now in the English press is as attrocious a mental punishment as can be imagined. We will not inflict upon our readers the same penalty, but only illustrate the gravity of the latter by giving one or two extracts, culled at random. This is what Eustace E. White says in Ladies' Field Fashions (January):---

St. Moritz, Pontresina and Mürren represent the the which claims most of the space in the English papers. The train service to the English had to be doubled, thus providing accommodation for some 40,000 visitors. St. Moritz is, of course, an easy first, but the neighbouring Pontresina, whose specially to the heighbourne for the series of the series

Alan Bott in the Evening News (Jan. 11th):— "I shall call them rectors' daughters, not because some of them really are rectors' daughters, but because most of them belong to the rectors' daughters genus-fresh face, easy carriage, frank manner. courageous, merry, self-possessed, moderately intelligent, satisfying to the ultimate heel-edge in outdoor clothes, but rather awkward about the pink shoulders, the hanging sleeve-lets, and the hairdressing schemes incident to dinner-daughters hurry into the Bernese Oberland—to Wengen, Ad the fag-end of each December the rectors' daughters hurry into the Bernese Oberland—to Wengen, Adelboden, Grindelwald, Mürren (St. Moritz, Davos, and Pontresina are more for the cosmopolites to whom even sport must be a function).

With them they bring waterproof breeches and flaring jerseys and iron-tipped boots and wild woollies and laughter and the Tunbridge Wells drawl. There come with them also menfolk of similarly standard pattern. The young and the youngish wear sweaters rimmed in the colours of this college or that public school, ties made in regimental or Air Force patterns. Their hair is uniformly neat and crisp a l'An-glaise; their faces are firm and fresh, as only young Englishmen's faces can be fresh and firm. The no longer young are mostly old-stagers whose features have been overscrawled by the pencil of strenuous success. They are the doers of flawless 'rockers' in the figure-skating competitions, the leaders of parties who, on skis, and with luncheons in ruck-sacks, climb and descend mile upon mile of snowdeep mountainside.

mountainside. There are other old 'uns whose status is merely that of fathers persuaded to start winter-sporting at nearly fity. These arrive intending to skate a little and walk a little and rest a lot. But the air, the Veuve Cliquot 1911. Extra Dry, air, incites them into wanting to tumble around on skis and hurtle into snowbanks on luges. Like the very young on holiday from the prep. schools, they make their difficult way to the top of the ski beginners' 'nursery slopes'; but since the very young have plastic and resiltent bodies, the old 'uns fall much more often. . . And the usually sedate old 'uns mind not at all the

An interesting article in the *Bystander* (Jan. 17) deals with "The Origin and Development of Winter Sports"; the same journal also contains a number of photographs of well-known society people enjoying sports.

enjoying sports. The international ski-jumping championship at Klosters, for which there were forty competitors, was won by the Austrian Risch, whose three jumps aggregated 132 metres, the Swiss flying officer Baertsch being a good second with only one metre less; the latter, however, made the longest indi-vidual jump (47 metres).

Mussolini as a Tramp. When nearly every fallen statesman becomes conscious of the desirability of enlightening his partisans by conferring upon them the benefit of his memoirs, it is quite in keeping with modern precedents that the Italian Prime Minister should have written an autobiography for publication. *The Scotsman* (Jan. 16th) publishes the first instal-ment of a free translation, which has been supplied by a correspondent, and we reproduce that part which describes Signor Mussolini's stay in Switzer-land, as this is possibly meant to be the "official" version: version:-

Which describes signor autosoftitis stay in Switzer-land, as this is possibly meant to be the "official" version:—
"I telegraphed," reads the autobiography, "to my mother to send me the money necessary for the journey, and she sent me by telegraph 45 lire. On the verning of July 9th, 1902, I arrived at Chiasso. As J waited for the train to carry me into the centre of Switzerland I bought a 'Secolo' newspaper. What was my surprise and grief to find in it a notice of the arrestment of my father. He, with other Socialists, had smashed to pieces the election urns at Predappio and Orte to prevent the Clericals gaining a victory. This news placed me inta dilemma. Should I go back or go on ? I decided to continue my journey, and the next day (July 10th), in the afternoon, I arrived at Yverdon with 2 lire and 10 centessime (Ls. 9d.) in my pocket. But I did not care. I wished to see, to study, to work, to knock about topsy-turvy in the world. . . . Night fell, and Mussolini was tramping on aimlessly and he was hungry. The road was dark, but at last a dim light appeared. As he approached it he saw a family at supper in the courtyard of a house. He hesitated for a moment, then he boldly entered and asked: 'Have you any bread ?' There was dead silence. 'Give me a piece.'Still no answer. Then a man slowly picked up a bit from the table and offered it to him. Mussolini took it and said 'Thank you,' but still ther was no answer, so he turned on his heel and went out into the night. His first impulse was to throw the bread away, and Te raised his arm to do so, but slowly it was lowered till there himself as a bricklayer's labourer, and carried hods of lime and bricks up the scafolding of a house in course of erection. His wages were two and a half france a day. But this was not seeing the world, so, we are told, one fine morning he threw the seak, which he wore on his shoulder to save his hand. He was a fine-looking man, and Mussolini teat a function to acome on on the tramp. That night Mussolini met a Russia