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HOME NEWS

The newly elected Swiss Parliament will assemble on December 3rd; three days later the elections of the Federal Council and the Chancellor will take place.

Among the 198 members of the new National Council 42 are newcomers; 23 old members failed to secure re-election and 19 had definitely retired.

The retirement of Federal Councillor Chuard—our Home Secretary—has given rise in the Swiss Press to speculations as to a general change in the heads of the different departments. In the first instance it is expected that the vacancy on the Federal Council will be filled by another Vaudois, Count Porchet, who is a prominent Agrarian leader in his canton; he is credited with having expressed the wish to superintend a ministry where his past experience and present activity stand him in good stead. Other rumours pretend that the political department may be handed over to Federal Council Haab, now at the head of the post and railway department, which latter may possibly be put under Federal Council Musy, the present "Chancellor of the Exchequer." Federal Council Motta would then turn over to the Treasury.

The Federal Council has increased the annual subsidy to the Basle Fair from Frs. 30,000 to Frs. 45,000 and that to the Comptoir in Lausanne from Frs. 15,000 to Frs. 22,000.

In the elections for the Grosse Rat of the canton Schaffhausen the Communists have ousted the Socialists altogether; the latter now do not hold a single seat. In Schaffhausen itself the Communists secured 10 seats against 19 of the other parties; one of their nominees who obtained the necessary votes was disqualified as he had lost his civil rights. In the great industrial centre of Neuhausen five Communists were returned again, the other parties also retaining their former four seats; the president of the local municipal council is a Communist.

The female suffrage movement in Switzerland is to be energetically brought to the front. An initiative committee has been formed at Berne which will in due course petition parliament to legislate the necessary alterations in our Constitution.

In order to preserve and renovate the Schloss Spiez, which owes its existence to Rudolf von Habsburg and at the time of the battle of Murten was tenanted by Adrian von Bubenberg, an appeal for the necessary funds is being launched; Frs. 25,000 have already been subscribed privately and a lottery is under contemplation.

EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

Der Verkehr während der Safa.—Nach einer Zusammenstellung der Bahnhofinspektion Bern sind während der fünf Wochen Safa im Hauptbahnhof der Bundesstadt rund 900,000 Reisende eingetroffen, also fast ein Viertel der Gesamtbevölkerung der Schweiz. Neben den fahrplanmässigen Zügen mussten 1343 Extrazüge geführt werden und zwar an Werktagen deren 25 bis 40, an Sonntagen bedeutend mehr. Den Rekord stellte der 9. September auf, wo zu den Ausstellungsbesuchern noch die Teilnehmer an der Bauerntagung und am schweizerischen Abstinenztag kamen. Zur Beförderung jener gewaltigen Menschenmenge mussten 112 Extrazüge eingestellt werden und es liefen an jenem denkwürdigen Sonntag im Bahnhof Bern nicht weniger als 3250 Personen- und Güterwagen ein und aus. An den Handgepäckschaltern wurden in den fünf Ausstellungswochen rund 90,600 Gepäckseheine ausgestellt, über 1600 Fahrräder wurden in Verwahrung genommen. Die Ausstellung brachte aber auch einen ganz ansehnlichen Güterverkehr. An Ausstellungsgut wurden nach Bern befördert 367 Gepäcksendungen, 358 Eilgutsendungen im Gewicht von 41 Tonnen, 889 Frachtgutsendungen im Gewicht von 221 Tonnen und 58 Wagenladungen mit 550 Tonnen.

—Sursee'r Anzeiger.

L'internement des buveurs.—Depuis la mise en application de la loi sur le relèvement et l'internement des buveurs, 93 décisions d'internement et de relèvement ont été prises par la Chambre des tutelles. Une partie a fait bénéficier les individus qui en étaient l'objet de sursis d'une durée de 6 mois à une année.

Pour les récidivistes, le sursis ne fixe pas de limites: à la première infraction, on les soustrait à l'action néfaste de l'alcool.

Les ivrognes hommes et femmes sont internés à Devens sur Saint-Aubin, Bellechasse et Etagnières pour les hommes, à Béthesla pour les femmes.

Les registres "d'immatriculation" sont tenus par MM. Joseph Dupont, secrétaire, pour le commissariat de police, et Ernest Corboz, pour le Département.

Les 93 buveurs internés se répartissent ainsi: 44 Genevois, 15 Vaudois, 11 Bernois, 5 Fribourgeois, 5 Neuchâtelois, 4 Valaisans, 2 Zurichois, 2 Français, et pour les cantons des Grisons, de Lucerne, Argovie, Soleure, Zoug, un interné chacun.

—Pa Suisse, Genève.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

The Swiss Elections and the English Press.

The references in the English Press with regard to our elections, though correct as to actual results, were naturally influenced by the political views which the particular paper represents. We will commence with *The Times*, which on October 31st gave the following report:—

"The results of the election of the National Council not only show that Socialist progress was checked by the united efforts of the Bourgeois parties, but also that there has been a swing to the right, as proved by the gain of four seats by Roman Catholic Conservatives in Eastern Switzerland.

The Socialists, who boasted of obtaining a majority, have secured 50 seats, a gain of one, at the expense of the Communists, who now have two members instead of three. While the left wing representatives were defeated in the contests for the Council of States, their representation in the National Council remains as it was, that is, 52 deputies.

The Radical Party has secured 58 seats, a loss of one, the centre parties 32, and the Roman Catholic Conservatives 46. The election aroused great interest in Switzerland, and the number of voters was the largest recorded for the past nine years at a parliamentary election, a sign that the menaces of the Socialist Party, which had inscribed a capital levy on its programme, had some effect on the apathy of the Bourgeois electors."

To state that Socialist progress has been checked and that there has been a swing to the right is misleading. It is true that the left (Socialists and Communists) have failed to increase their representatives—the previous elections in 1925 they gained six seats—but a comparison of the actual votes cast gives an entirely different picture. The Socialist votes show an increase of over 26,000 whilst the gain of the Catholic Conservatives is barely 13,000, but the latter, thanks to the peculiarities of our voting system, have actually secured four additional seats. Equally remarkable is the fact that the Radicals have a similar increase of over 13,000 votes to their credit but their strength in the new council is only 58 against 59 in the old.

The following is from the *Manchester Guardian* (Oct. 30th):—

"Although the result of the general elections to the Swiss Parliament have not yet been officially published, it is already clear that the Socialists will be disappointed in their hope of becoming strong enough to take part in the Government. They have won only one or at most two seats, which means that the Radical party remains the strongest group in Parliament. A continuation of the Government Coalition between Radicals and Catholics, with the support of the Peasants and Liberals, is now beyond doubt. The Catholics and Socialists are the only political parties that will have more representatives than in the previous Parliament, and the Catholic gains are larger than those of the Socialists. The Radicals, Liberals, Peasants and Communists have all lost. One may estimate that the new Second Chamber will be composed of 58 Radicals, 50 Socialists, 46 Catholics, 31 Peasants, 6 Liberals, 2 Communists, and 5 members of various small groups.

During the electoral campaign the Catholics won much success with their propaganda for the

British industrial peace movement, which they indicated as a movement for the introduction of democratic ideas into economic life. The Swiss Socialist party belongs to the extreme Left wing of the International Socialist movement, and has much greater sympathies for Moscow than the other Socialist parties in Europe. They are still hostile to the League of Nations. All this has made impossible the rapprochement between them and the Radical party, which at Basle and Geneva successfully combined with all other bourgeois parties for expelling the only two Socialist members of the Senate."

If we have anything to add it would be an expression of doubt and surprise "that the Swiss Socialist Party has much greater sympathies for Moscow than the other Socialist parties in Europe."

The *Morning Post* (Oct. 30th) under the heading "Big drop in Communist vote" has the following report:—

"The results of the General Election for State Council and National Council of Switzerland indicate no important changes in the composition of these Chambers. Polling took place on Saturday and yesterday, and the continuous rain affected the poll.

The outstanding feature of the State Council elections is the loss of only two seats hitherto held by the Socialists. The Radicals retained twenty, the Radical-Democrats gained one, making a new total of twenty-one, and the Catholic Conservatives succeeded in holding eighteen. The Liberal Democrat and the Social Political group each retained a single seat.

In place of two of the Peasants Party the new Council has three members of the Peasants Artisans and Bourgeois Party. The general tendency appears to be a move in the direction of the moderate parties. The definite allocation of seats in the National Council under the new system of proportional representation is as yet unknown, but the number of votes cast for the respective party lists suggests no drastic changes. The Socialists polled heavily in the larger towns, but they have little hold upon the country districts.

The Communists presented numerous lists of candidates, but for the most part met with no success. At Zurich, for example, the Communist poll dropped from the 133,222 in 1925 to 112,661 at this election. The Geneva canton scraped together only 1,740 out of a total of 222,363 cast, despite desperate efforts to gain working class support."

Actually there is a slight increase of 111 in the Communist vote (14,948); the latter, however, does not represent 2% of the total votes cast (about 801,600) which would show that their strength and influence is very much over-rated.

Somewhat at sea both as regards figures and anticipations is the article which appeared on the eve of the elections in the *Daily Herald* (Oct. 29th):—

"To-day's elections to the Swiss National Council, one of the bodies forming the Federal Assembly, see the climax of the Socialist Party's cumulative bid for power.

Since the last General Election, in 1925, several by-elections have shown the marked progress achieved by Socialist efforts. Up to that time, from 1902, the volume of Socialist votes cast had risen from 64,000 to 195,000, and the number of deputies returned from seven to 32, including three Communists.

Hopes are entertained, with good reason, of gaining still more seats to-day (Sunday), so enabling the Socialists to beat the Radicals, the strongest party hitherto, who polled 225,000 votes in 1925.

The elections are conducted on the proportional representation system, and hence may yield an eleventh-hour surprise.

In 19 Swiss cantons, 90 lists have been presented, including 727 candidates of all parties for 198 seats.

The Socialist Party has 19 lists with 150 candidates, while the Communists have eight lists with 59 candidates.

The Socialist programme embodies a campaign for the 48-hour week, the limitation of trusts and cartels, the improvement of housing, a fight against the abuse of alcohol and against tuberculosis, the realisation of social insurance, opposition to military expenditure and excesses, the revision of the system of prevention of accidents, a stand for the liberty of public meetings, and the right of asylum for foreign political refugees, and an attack on big business domination,