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Ninth AVS revision: result of the vote and implementation of the amendments

For the first time since the introduction of old-age and survivors' insurance in 1948 the Swiss people were invited to express an opinion, on 26th February 1978, on a modification of the AVS Act, namely, the ninth revision. An impressive majority of nearly two-thirds of the voters (65.6%, that is to say, 1 191 871 for and 626 022 against) approved measures aimed at strengthening our great social institution. It will thus be possible to guarantee the purchasing power of old-age, survivors' and invalidity pensions and to increase assistance to the elderly. By a decision of the Federal Council 1st January 1979 is the date fixed for the entry into force of the Federal Act on the ninth AVS revision and of the various regulations concerning the AVS/AI, certain provisions of which will have to be modified.

Unlike previous revisions, the entry into force of this amending Act will not bring with it any general increase in the amount of the pensions. The Federal Council can only order such an adjustment if the Swiss index of consumer prices, calculated on the former basis, reaches 175.5 points. At the end of February 1978 that index stood at 169.3 points.

The improved benefits which will be provided from the beginning of 1979 relate to aids for invalids drawing the old-age pension (artificial limbs, wheelchairs etc.), subsidies aimed at encouraging public assistance to the elderly, and the extension to the blind and the severely disabled of the right to helplessness allowances.

The measures intended to strengthen AVS finances will also be

applied from 1st January 1979. The extension to gainfully employed old-age pensioners of the obligation to contribute does not concern Swiss working permanently abroad. On the other hand, the increase of 0.5% in the contribution rate in the case of incomes exceeding 24 000 francs per year and the increase in the minimum contribution will also affect Swiss abroad, as will the measures concerning the married couple's pension (raising of the age-limit for the wife from 60 to 62 years) and the supplementary pension (raising of the age-limit for the wife from 45 to 55 years).

Rights acquired in the course of the year, however, will not be affected by the coming into force of the revision.

More detailed information will be issued during the coming autumn.

Head Office of the Caisse suisse de compensation

Finally, with regard to voluntary AVS insurance, the Caisse suisse de compensation in Geneva has overcome the bottle-neck caused by the increased volume of work and is again in a position to deal with the day-to-day business of the Swiss abroad within normal time-limits.

The new 1000-franc note

On 4th April the Swiss National Bank started to issue the new 1000-franc note. It is devoted to Auguste Forel and continues the series begun by the 100-franc note, with its portrait of Francesco Borromini, and the 500-franc note, whose subject is Albrecht von Haller. So we now have depicted three important Swiss personalities whose work in the intellectual, scientific and artistic spheres has been acclaimed at home and abroad.

Auguste Forel was born at «La Gracieuse», near Morges, in 1848. Even as a child he was fascinated by the insect world, being particularly interested in observing ants.

However, he chose medicine as his career, studying in Zurich, Vienna and Munich. At the age of 31 he was appointed Director of the Burghölzli Psychiatric Hospital in Zurich and Professor of Psychiatry at Zurich University.

In 1898 Forel relinquished these offices and returned to Vaud, his canton of origin. He now devoted himself mainly to social problems and to his studies of ants. He died at his house, «La Fourmilière» («The Ant-hill»), in Yverne in 1931.

Forel did important work in psychiatry, neurology, sexology and entomology. He was an ardent pacifist, campaigned for



We wish to draw your attention to the exceptional importance of the Federal ballot being held on 24th September 1978. It will concern one matter only, namely, the

Creation of the Canton of Jura

There will be further Federal ballots on 3rd December 1978.

social reforms and waged a determined fight against alcoholism.

The principal motif on the front of the new note is Forel's portrait, executed in gravure printing and coloured violet. On its left a cross-section of the brain and a nerve cell recall Forel's psychiatric and neurological work. These motifs are in violet, blue and olive and they, too, are produced by the gravure printing process. The polychrome ground in offset depicts brain cells. The predominant colour on the front is violet.

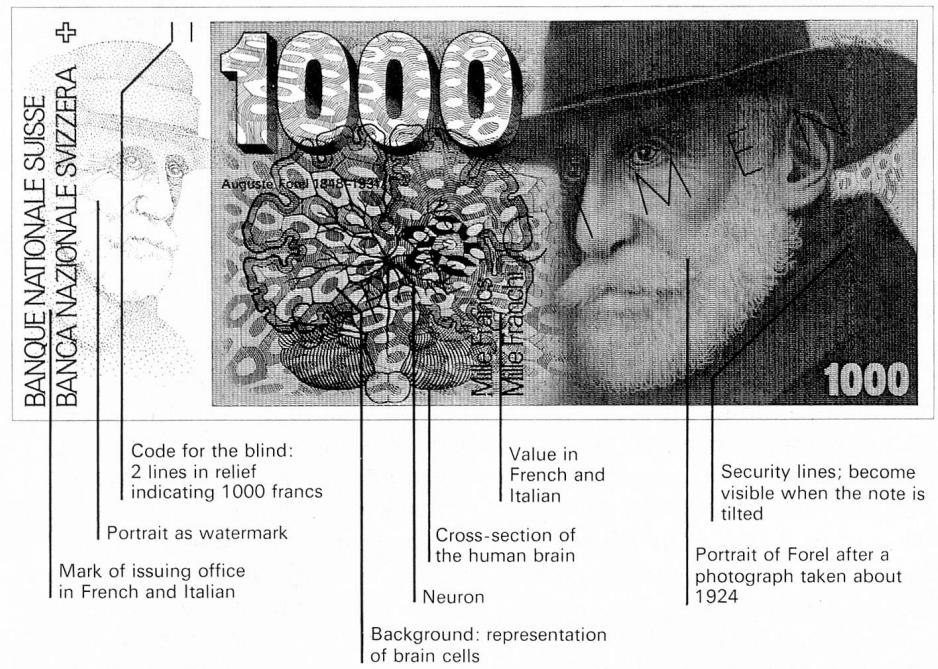
The reverse side reminds us of Forel's activities in the field of entomology and more especially his two works «Ants of Switzerland» and «The Ant World». The large insect reproduced in offset is the queen of the native red wood ant, «Formica rufa». Violet at the top, it shades into a reddish colour towards the bottom. Beside it, in blue gravure, can be seen the female of «Strongylognathus huberi», a type of flying ant which Forel discovered in the Valais. At the bottom of the note, in a reddish shade and also in gravure, appears the worker of «Polyrhachis caulomma», an ant found in New Guinea and portrayed in Forel's «The Ant world». The light motif in the middle of the note shows a diagrammatic vertical section of an ant-hill, with its various chambers, its eggs, larvae and pupae. This central motif is the starting-point of a polychrome circular network which combines, in the lower part of the note, with the lines on the abdomen of the red wood ant. The predominant colour on the back of the note is violet.

Like the two previous notes in the series, the 1000-franc note has four main features which enable its genuineness to be easily checked; the watermark (portrait of Forel) in the border, the metallic security thread in the paper, the transparent spot front/back and the so-called optical effect. The latter consists in the portrait on the front becoming darker the more sharply the note is tilted, while at the same time four fine pale lines appear on the right of the portrait.

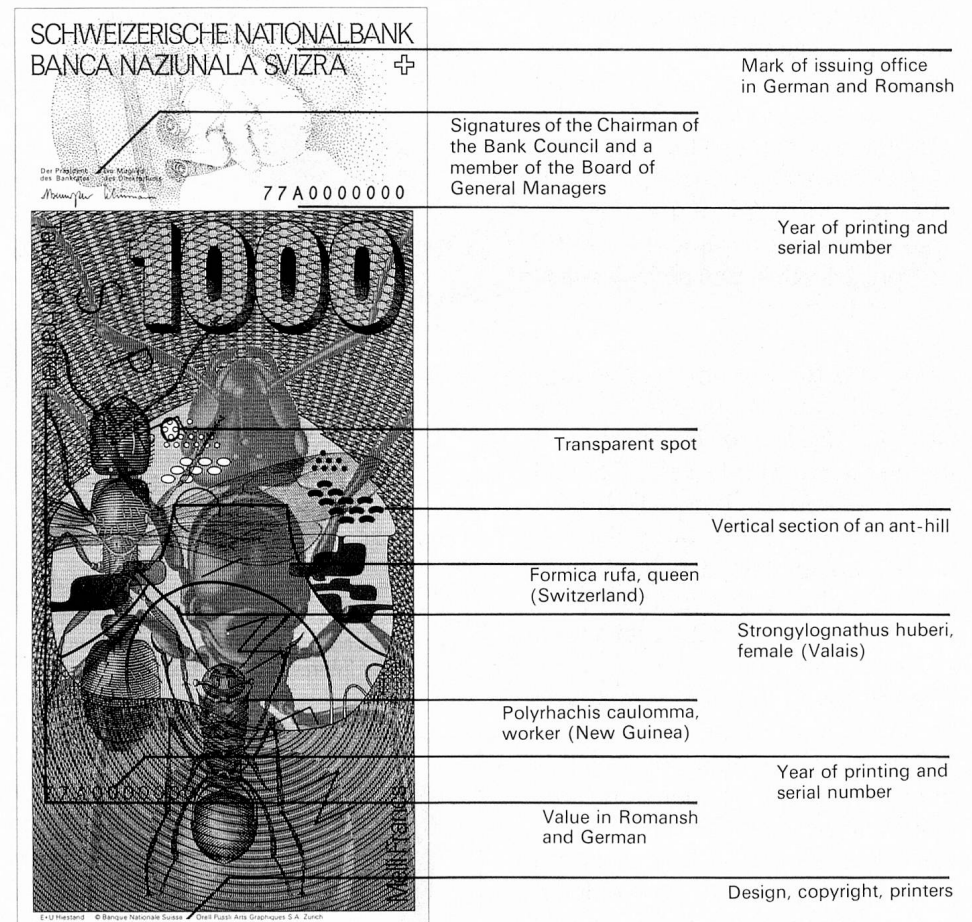
Another new banknote, the 50-franc, is being printed now and will be issued next October. It is devoted to the Zurich scholar Conrad Gessner. The 20-franc and 10-franc notes (Horace-Bénédict de Saussure and Leonard Euler respectively) will follow in 1979.

The Swiss National Bank will then have issued all the new note types needed to replace the issue of the years 1956 and 1957. As Willy Rotzler remarked in 1971 in the periodical «Graphis», Switzerland will have a «family» of notes which is quite distinct from the previous paper money, is of a high graphic quality and, through its themes, has a real information value. Besides their monetary function, these banknotes will recall Swiss intellectual life at home and abroad.

Format 192 mm × 86 mm



Format 192 mm × 86 mm



According to information received from the Swiss National Bank, circulating notes of the old series will not be recalled until the last denomination, i. e. the 10-franc note, has been issued (provisionally at the end of 1979). The National Bank will then issue a general recall. It is obliged by law to exchange notes of the old series for a further twenty years after that.

