

Sundry news from Switzerland

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SUNDRY NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The Swiss National Bank.

(Berne.....) On October 7th, 1941, the gold balance of the above bank amounted to 2.345,5 million francs. Liabilities for discount and advances on securities amounted to 178,5 million francs. Notes in circulation (2.111,6 million francs) and bills at sight (1.525,3 million francs) were covered by gold in the ratio of 96,3%.

The Swiss Industries Fair.

(Basle.....) The report recently issued by the managers of the Basle Fair confirms the impression that this year's spring exhibition (the 25th achieved very satisfactory results in spite of present-day difficulties. The number of exhibitors had gone up from 1050 to 1200 in one year. The number of visitors, beat all previous records. In spite of complications of all kinds connected with international travel, 1097 persons from 22 different countries visited the Fair. The success which attended the 25th annual fair thus opens up very encouraging prospects (234.000) for the next exhibition, which is to take place at Basle from April 18th to 28th, 1942.

The Manufacture of Artificial Wool in Switzerland.

(Lausanne.....) In order to replace goods from abroad, ^{of} which it is no longer possible to import sufficiently large quantities, Switzerland is doing her utmost to manufacture substitutes of various kinds, such as "fibranne" or artificial wool, extracted from wood and manufactures according to methods similar to those employed for the manufacture of "rayonne". The new installations which are now ready for use will enable Switzerland to produce about 30.000 kilos of fibranne daily. Although this quantity sounds prodigious, it should be borne in mind that supply does not, as yet, meet demand, the normal daily consumption of wool and cotton in this country amounting to 135.000 kilos.

A New Locomotive.

(Baden.....) A railway engine of an entirely new type has lately made trial runs on the Swiss Federal Railways. It is a thermo-electric engine whose turbo-generators are fed by combustion gas. This new creation of Swiss inventive genius, with a total weight of 92 tons and a capacity of 2.200 HP, presents numerous advantages. Its speed is 110 km per hour, rendering it particularly suitable for the traction of fast trains in hilly country.

Civil Aviation in Switzerland.

(Berne.....) The Swiss Government has recently adopted methods of re-organisation for the purpose of developing civil aviation after the war. A professor at the Federal Polytechnic has been requested to submit proposals to the competent authorities.

The Swiss Fair at Lausanne.

(Lausanne.....) This important economic exhibition took place as usual in September. Business was very brisk, the number of visitors during the fortnight amounting to 500.000, thus beating all records.

Swiss Customs Receipts.

(Berne....) Swiss customs receipts amounted to 121,5 million francs in the course of the first 9 months of 1941, as compared with 186,2 million francs during the same period in 1940. The difference of 64,7 million bears witness to the decrease in imports.

A Census of the Population of Switzerland.

(Berne....) More than 20.000 workers will be engaged in carrying out the work connected with the census that is to take place on December 1st next. This step is considered necessary on account of numerous changes

and also because the State requires exact data for the fulfilment of its economic and social duties.

The Swiss Merchant Fleet.

(Berne....) The young Swiss Merchant Fleet, created in April 1941, now counts 7 units with a total capacity of 39.120 tons. This tonnage, however, is clearly insufficient for the nation's imports and exports. Considering the difficulties now prevailing with regard to the acquisition of new vessels, Switzerland is doing her best to charter foreign vessels sailing under their own flag.

Several Millions of Letters.

(Geneva....) The activity of the Central Agency for Prisoners of War in Geneva is constantly on the increase. As it is well known, this organisation endeavours to maintain contact between prisoners and their families and thus to afford relief to both parties. The average number of letters and post-cards despatched daily by this agency amounts to about 50.000, although it has occurred that as many as 113.532 letters have been sent on one single day. The total amount of letters and post-cards so far despatched since the beginning of the war is about 8 million.

Aid Rendered by Switzerland.

(Berne....) During the previous World War medical delegations, consisting of Swiss doctors and nurses were sent to the different belligerent countries, where they rendered help that was highly appreciated on all sides. Being anxious to keep up this humanitarian tradition during the present conflict, Swiss medical men have lately appointed a committee under the auspices of the Swiss Red Cross Society and with the help of the Swiss Government. This committee undertakes to send medical aid to victims of the war. Help is accorded not only to wounded soldiers, but also to civilians in certain countries, for whom the consequences of the war entail cruel suffering. Having so far been spared the horrors of warfare herself, Switzerland is anxious to accomplish this humanitarian task to the best of her powers, while remaining faithful to her principles of strict neutrality.

A Swiss Red Cross Film.

(Montreux....) A Swiss Cinema company has this autumn begun to prepare a Swiss film entitled "Oasis in the Torment", in which the functions of the different branches of the International Red Cross Society are shown. The cast is exclusively composed of Swiss artists.

DEATH OF PRIESTS' FATHER.

Mr. Louis Carmine, Takaka.

The death has occurred of Mr. Louis Ambrose Carmine of Takaka, the father of two priests, Rev. Father E.J. Carmine, parish priest of Pungarehu, Taranaki, and Rev. Father P.A. Carmine, parish priest of South Broken Hill, New South Wales.

The late Mr. Carmine was born in Locarno, Switzerland, in 1843. At the age of sixteen he went to London and in 1860 left Liverpool for Australia in the sailing vessel "Queen of the East". He took part in gold rushes in various districts in Australia and later in New Zealand. In January, 1865, the late Mr. Carmine arrived in Nelson, along with a number of his mates and the party tramped from Nelson to Hokitika to take part in the West Coast gold rush of that period. Later he was associated with the late Right Hon. R.J. Seddon in gold mining ventures on the West Coast. After a visit to the Thames district he returned to Sydney in 1877 and there he married Miss Catherine Concannon.

After his marriage he returned with his wife to New Zealand and set