

**Zeitschrift:** The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

**Herausgeber:** Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

**Band:** - (1922)

**Heft:** 33

**Rubrik:** Subscription rates

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# The Swiss Observer

Telegrams : FREPRINCO, LONDON.

Published weekly at  
21, GARLICK HILL, E.C. 4.

Telephone : CITY 4603.

No. 33

LONDON, JANUARY 21, 1922.

PRICE 3D.

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## HOME NEWS

The Swiss National Council and the Swiss Council of States are entering upon ordinary session at Berne on Monday, January 23rd.

\*\*\*

At the next general elections the members' roll of the National Council will be increased by nine seats as a result of the increase of the Swiss population as revealed by the last census. The following seven Cantons can claim additional seats:—

Berne ...	...	2, new total	34 seats.
Zurich ...	...	2, " "	27 "
Geneva ...	...	1, " "	9 "
Lucerne ...	...	1, " "	9 "
Solothurn ...	...	1, " "	7 "
Schaffhausen ...	...	1, " "	3 "
Zug ...	...	1, " "	2 "

\*\*\*

The total expenditure involved by the Swiss Mobilisation since the outbreak of the war, according to the final accounts, reaches a total of just on 1,200 million francs.

\*\*\*

It is anticipated that the Swiss Federal Council will nominate three delegates to represent Switzerland at the forthcoming Conference at Genoa.

\*\*\*

The Federal Department for Public Economics has, on request, granted permission to Bally's Boot Factory to temporarily increase the weekly working hours from 48 to 52. Foreign orders, which during the better part of 1921 were totally absent, are beginning to come in again, occasioning a steady increase of output for some time ahead in this important factory.

\*\*\*

*Crisis in the Swiss Tobacco Industry.*—The Manifattura Luganese Tabachi, employing 80 hands, have been compelled to close down their works. Vautier Frères, of Grandson, are also forced to dismiss a considerable number of their staff.

\*\*\*

A contingent of 125 American troops from the army of occupation on the Rhine passed through Bâle, Olten, Chiasso, on Monday last, on their way to Rome, where they will take part in the burial ceremony of Italy's "Unknown Warrior."

According to the *Neue Berner Zeitung* the administrative council of the Swiss National Bank has decided to recommend the increase of the bank director's salary from 35,000 to 40,000 francs—a proposal against which the representatives of agriculture on the bank's council lodged a protest.

\*\*\*

Forty French doctors have arrived at Leysin for the purpose of attending lectures by Dr. Rollier and his collaborators on helio-therapeutics.

\*\*\*

A second instalment, amounting to 34 million francs, of the credits voted for the relief of unemployment has been apportioned to the various Cantons by the Federal Council.

\*\*\*

An avalanche which swept into the Vorderrhein Valley near Brigels (Grisons) carried away in its course of destruction a small shed sheltering three head of cattle and a young lad who tended them. Two other men, who were also caught by the avalanche, managed to extricate themselves, but the lad and the animals perished under the masses of snow.

\*\*\*

The navigation on the Rhine between Strasbourg and Bâle, which had been suspended for some time past owing to the low water level, is now suffering from the other extreme of too much water.

In the night from Monday to Tuesday last, as a consequence of the torrential falls of rain which followed immediately upon copious deposits of snow all over Switzerland, the river rose at Bâle from 50 centimetres to 3 metres. When this abnormally high water level is reached at Bâle, navigation is rendered impossible, as the boats cannot pass under the bridge at Kehl.

\*\*\*

The Committee of Swiss Artists, appointed by the Federal Council to examine and judge the 542 designs which have been submitted for the new Swiss five-franc piece, have selected six of these for an award of 500 francs each. The successful competitors were:—

René Dubloz, Geneva;  
Alfred Girardclos, Chaux-de-Fonds;  
Giovanni Bianchi, Coire;  
Paul Wilde, Bâle;  
Julius Schwyzer, Zurich;  
Paul Bourcart, Munich.

Most of the successful designs symbolise the ear of corn or a hand raised as for taking the oath. Eleven consolation prizes of 150 francs each have also been awarded by the jury.

The 542 models, which have been executed in plaster or clay, are on exhibition in the Federal Palace and attract a large number of visitors.