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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

TRADE OF SWITZERLAND.

For the first nine months of the current year imports into Switzerland were 934,254,057fr., a decrease of 121,423,880fr., in comparison with the corresponding period of 1934. Exports were 590,367,948fr., a decrease of 18,455,751fr. The reduction of the adverse balance is due to import quotas. The exports of the four chief industries — watchmaking, silk, cotton goods and machines — showed an aggregate increase of about 65,000,000fr., but they decreased during the third quarter except watches, the exports of which continue to rise month after month.

Imports from Great Britain increased 9,800,000fr. to 55,945,940fr., while exports to Great Britain decreased 9,000,000fr. to 53,493,238fr. Great Britain is fourth among the suppliers of the Swiss market. Germany sent 247,000,000fr., France 152,000,000fr., Italy 74,100,000fr., and the United States 49,800,000fr. Great Britain is the only country which increased its exports to Switzerland.

In regard to imports from Switzerland, Germany took 134,800,000fr., France 86,500,000fr., Italy 54,800,000fr., Great Britain 53,100,000fr., and the United States 43,300,000fr. Italy and the United States show increases.

MORATORIUM FOR A SWISS BANK.

The Swiss Federal Council has granted a moratorium of one year to the Spar- und Leihkasse in Berne. This bank has large "frozen" assets in Germany and heavy mortgages on Swiss hotels and establishments connected with the Swiss touring industry. The paid-up share capital is 12,000,000 Swiss francs. The bonds and other liabilities, the bank claims, are covered by "frozen" assets.

The announcement of the moratorium has caused consternation, as the bank has always been considered a most reliable establishment among the middle-class of the Canton of Berne. It is the fourth bank that has had to apply for a moratorium this year.

FEDERAL RAILWAYS' 1936 PROGRAMME.

The 1936 budget of the Federal Railways, particulars of which were recently published, shows a deficit of fr. 69.7 million. Works to be undertaken during that year at a total expenditure of fr. 29.7 million include: (1) the first stage of the deviation between Berne station and the Wilerfeld yards; (2) the construction of a connecting line between Cornavin and Eaux-Vives stations at Geneva; (3) further steps in the reconstruction and enlargement of Geneva and Neuchâtel stations; (4) the doubling of the line between Emmenbrücke and Sentimatt junction, Lucerne; and (5) the electrification of the Giubiasco-Locarno and Gossau-Sulgen single-line sections. A sum of fr. 9.6 million is to be expended on new rolling-stock, including four light high-speed electric railcars, some electric and petrol shunting engines, thirty coaches, twelve vans and a hundred goods wagons are to be ordered, while thirty steam engines and seventy wagons will be scrapped. The equipment of goods wagons with the Kunze-Knorr air brake is to be continued, and automatic train control extended.

Rail Excursions.

The station staffs of the Swiss Federal Railways, and particularly the inquiry offices in the larger stations, are showing considerable activity in organising special excursions by rail, in competition with the numerous road transport concerns. During 1934, as many as 1,947 such excursions were arranged, carrying a total of

143,251 passengers. These figures, of course, do not include the traffic secured for ordinary excursion trains.

An excursion innovation is the use of the new light streamlined cars for special trips on Saturdays and Sundays, when they are not in regular service and their place is taken by light trains. Since the introduction of the two electric cars last May, a number of trips has been arranged from all parts of the country, invariably including some line on which the maximum speed of 125 km.p.h. may be attained. These runs have proved very popular, and further developments on these lines may be expected when the two diesel cars are placed in service in November. (R.G.)

NEW SWISS MINISTER IN POLAND.

Monsieur Maxim de Stoutz, the newly appointed Swiss Minister to Poland has presented his credentials to the President of the Republic. On this occasion, cordial speeches were made both by President Moscicki and Monsieur de Stoutz.

FEDERAL JUDGE RETIRES.

Dr. Albert Ursprung, Federal Judge has resigned from his high office for reasons of health. He was born in 1862 and later on studied law at the Universities of Basle and Munich. Dr. Ursprung started his career as a clerk of the court (1883-1886); from 1886-1892 he occupied the post of President of the District Court in Zurzach. In 1892 he was appointed a member of the superior court of the canton of Aargau over which he presided in 1900-1901. A year later (1902) he was elected by the Federal Chambers to the Supreme Court over which he presided in 1918/19; in 1927 he celebrated his 25th Jubilee as a Federal Judge. Already as a young man Dr. Ursprung took an interest in politics, he entered the Grand Council at the early age of 24. From 1890-1902, he was a member of the National Council; he is a *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Basle.

INCREASE OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN SWITZERLAND.

The unemployment figures at the end of October are given as 82,386 or 23,000 higher than in October of last year.

RECEPTIONS AT THE FEDERAL PALAIS.

The Papal Nuncios, Msgr. Philippe Bernardini was received in audience by M. Minger, President of the Swiss Confederation, and the members of the Government, on presenting his credentials.

M. Minger, in the presence of M. Motta has received M. Falkry Pascha, the first appointed Egyptian Minister accredited to the Confederation. M. Falkry Pascha is also representing his country in Paris.

NEW SWISS CONSUL IN AMSTERDAM.

The Federal Council has appointed Dr. Walter Siegfried Lanz to be Swiss Consul at Amsterdam in succession to the late M. Scheller.

WINTER SESSION OF THE FEDERAL CHAMBERS.

The Winter Session of the two Federal Chambers will start on the 2nd of December next. During this sitting, the President of the Confederation will be elected, as well as the Federal Councillors, and the Federal Chancellor; a new Federal Judge will also be elected to fill the vacancy caused through the retirement of Federal Judge Dr. Ursprung.

BASLE FAIR.

The 20th Annual Swiss Industries Fair will be held at Basle, permanent seat of this important national industrial manifestation, from April 18th-28th, 1936, and preliminary work is already under way to ensure its all-around success.

GLACIER MOVEMENTS.

The Glacier Commission of the Swiss Society for Natural Science announces in its recently issued report for the year 1934 that of 100 Swiss glaciers which have been under special observation, eight were showing an increase, 89 a decrease, and three had remained stationary.

These alternate advances and retreats of glaciers are an accepted fact in the Alps. During cold and rainy periods the glaciers grow; during hot, dry spells they recede. However, according to scientific research, an extraordinary expansion of glaciers, leading them down through valleys, across the lakes into the open plains, takes place but once in many thousands of years. The last expansion of this kind for which geological proof is still found in many parts, dates back to some 20,000 years ago.

SWISS MOTOR SHOW.

The XIIIth International Automobile and Bicycle Show will be held in the Palais des Expositions at Geneva from March 20th-29th, 1936.

60 HOURS OF RAIN IN SWITZERLAND.

Much damage has been caused in Switzerland by floods due to torrential rain, which has not stopped for the last 60 hours. Near Geneva wide areas are under 2ft. of water, which has invaded several houses, and in the town itself a dozen houses have had to be evacuated. No such floods have been recorded since 1890.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

Dr. D. Schindler-Huber, General-Manager and Member of the Board of the "Maschinenfabrik" Oerlikon, has retired from his post. Dr. Schindler was a member of the Board since 1894, and in 1911 he was appointed General-Manager; he enjoyed a great reputation in Swiss industrial circles.

BERNE.

M. Rudolf Weber, since 1919 a member of the National Council, has been elected a member of the States Council. M. Weber is President of the Peasant Party. M. Montet (Liberal) occupies the second seat.

BASLE.

M. Fritz Hatt, Manager of the Forwarding firm Danzas & Cie., in Basle, has celebrated his 60th birthday anniversary; he was appointed Manager in 1919. M. Hatt occupies a leading position in his profession.

A deficit of 13 million francs is anticipated in the budget of the canton of Basle for 1936.

LUCERNE.

Professor J. Vetter, the eminent Swiss sculptor has celebrated his 75th birthday anniversary in Lucerne.

GRISONS.

M. Paul Raschein, late National Councillor has died in Malix at the age of 72. The deceased was a member of the Grand Council from 1891-1907, and from 1925-1931. During the period of 1907-1911 M. Raschein was a member of the Cantonal Government. He entered the National Council in 1911 where he sat for 8 years. In the army he held the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. (Infantry).

NEUCHÂTEL.

M. Emil Lauber, the well-known Swiss composer has died at Neuchâtel at the age of 69. M. Lauber who was born in Lucerne, studied music in Frankfurt, Vienna, Paris, Munich and Berlin. From 1925-1931 he was President of the "Schweizerische Tonkünstlerverein."

ZUG.

The canton of Zug has issued a decree forbidding all outdoor advertising displays along municipal and cantonal highways and railroad lines outside of communities. The time fixed for the removal of all such advertisements is December 31st, after which date the authorities will have them taken away at the expense of the owner, with a fine awaiting the offender. This new measure is to protect the natural beauty of the Zug country from being disfigured by commercial announcements.

The Swiss Legation wish to notify all Swiss citizens resident within this Consular district that since January 1st, 1934, a new form of passport has been in use. Consequently all the old passports (green covers) will cease to be valid after December 31st, 1935.

Such old passports (green covers) as are still valid for three months or more on December 31st, 1935, will however be exchanged free of charge for a new passport.

For the issue of a new passport it is necessary to remit to the Legation two recent full-face photographs (without a hat and NOT Photomats), as well as the old passport and the Swiss Registration Card.

Passports can be issued for periods of 1, 3 or 5 years.

Holders of old passports (green covers) are advised to apply for their passports before December 31st, 1935.