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The Swiss Observer

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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

SWISS FOREIGN TRADE IN NOVEMBER.

Swiss foreign trade returns for November reflect the effects of currency devaluation. Imports reached a value of £6,646,158, compared with £5,325,103 in November, 1935, and £6,024,035 in October last. Exports, on the other hand, totalled £1,307,009, against £3,735,594 in November, 1935, and £3,510,363 in October last. This increase in value is accompanied by a rise in weight. The progress is noticeable in the sales of the principal exporting industries, which aggregated £2,122,353, compared with £1,717,647 in November, 1935, and with £1,821,176 in October last. The export of watches reached £900,000, a rise of £200,000 over October; of silk goods £300,000, of cotton goods £400,000, a rise of £100,000, and of machines £500,000.

SWITZERLAND RECOGNISES ITALY'S CONQUEST OF ABYSSINIA.

The Swiss Federal Government has formally notified Italy that it recognises Italian sovereignty over Abyssinia.

The Swiss Minister in Rome informed Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, of the decision. The communication states that the Swiss Federal Council, recognising Italian sovereignty over Abyssinian territory, considers this territory as forming part of the consular district devolving on the Legation in Rome.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS APPOINTMENT.

The Council of the League of Nations has appointed Colonel von Wattenwyl to be a member of a mission which is to be sent to the districts of Alexandretta and Antioch. The two other members are a Dutchman and a Norwegian. (Colonel v. Wattenwyl is a brother of Mme. Paravicini, wife of the Swiss Minister).

A PILOT'S JUBILEE.

M. Franz Zimmermann, pilot of the "Swissair" has just accomplished his 1 million kilometres flight.

M. Zimmermann was born in 1901 at Mitlödi (Glarus). He joined in 1926 the "Balair" and later on, when the company amalgamated, the "Swissair."

The "Jubilar" is a well-known personality in International Flying circles, he has principally flown on the Zurich-London route.

We extend our heartiest congratulations to Flight-Captain Zimmermann, who was present at the last City Swiss Club dinner at the Grosvenor House.

FIRST OF AUGUST COLLECTION.

The 1st of August collection for combatting tuberculosis in Switzerland has amounted to 410,000 frs.

SWISS BUDGET DEFICIT.

A deficit of 40,000,000fr. is estimated on the Swiss Budget for 1937, which was adopted by the Swiss Parliament.

The total sum budgeted for is 525,000,000fr.

MME. VINCENT PARAVICINI RESCUES SKI-ING BARONET.

Sir Anthony Weldon, thirty-four year old Irish baronet, fell while skiing on the slopes at Suvretta, near St. Moritz, and broke his leg.

With him were Mr. Vincent Paravicini, son of the Swiss Minister in London, and his wife, daughter of novelist Somerset Maugham.

Roughly binding his leg, they went in search of help, securing a sleigh. Then began a five-mile trek across the snow-slopes to the nearest hospital at Samaden, three miles north of St. Moritz.

Although in great pain, Sir Anthony bore the journey cheerfully.

At the Ruppenan clinic it was found that Sir Anthony had broken his shin in two places and dislocated his ankle.

CELEBRATIONS AT THE GREAT ST. BERNARD.

Christmas was celebrated this year at the Hospice of the Great St. Bernard, 9,000ft., in the traditional way with the arrival of a number of skiers of all countries. The weather was beautiful, the snow deep, and the cold intense. Mass was celebrated at midnight in the small church.

Late on Christmas Eve a strange layman arrived from the Himalayas with Christmas boxes from Fathers Coquoz and Melly, who have been engaged for the last four years in building a hospice similar to that of the St. Bernard on the Lo-Tza pass (Tibet) at a height of over 14,000ft. The gifts consisted of specimens of dried grapes which had been grown by the two Fathers in the valley of the Lo-Tza.

WAGE INCREASES DEMAND.

At a recent meeting of the Textile Workers' Association in Zurich it was decided to take immediate steps towards the obtaining of an increase in the lowest wages paid, and the fixing of minimum wages; other demands include increases in wages with every rise in the cost of living, and the introduction of the forty-hour week in the textile industry without this being accompanied by any deterioration in the former standard of living of the operatives.

THREE TONS OF SOVIET BOOKS SEIZED.

Seventeen boxes of Communist books and papers, weighing over three tons, were seized by the Swiss frontier officials.

It was the first instance of the stringent measures authorised by the Swiss Government on November 3rd to protect the country from Soviet propaganda.

The books were written in German, and edited and published in Moscow.

A part of the consignment, held by the Swiss public ministry to be scientific works, was allowed to pass through, but a vast quantity of papers for young workers was confiscated.

SWISS WINTER SPORTS.

All the Swiss winter resorts have now their official skiing schools, under the direction of an instructor possessing a certificate of the Swiss Association of Ski Clubs. Hitherto, owing to their distance from the skiing fields, the towns have been left out of that organization, but as the principal mountain roads are now kept open during the winter season, the situation has changed.

From Geneva one can reach the Jura skiing fields of La Faucille and Saint Cergues by motor-car in less than an hour, and the snow-fields of Haute Savoie in three-quarters of an hour. The Ski Club of Geneva has accordingly opened a Swiss Skiing School, with headquarters at the Geneva Inquiry Office and M. Paul Schnaidt as chief. Any single skier or group of skiers may now, at an hour's notice secure the services of an expert skier either for training practice, or — which is even more interesting — for making an ascent in the neighbouring mountains, including the Mont Blanc range.

CHRISTMAS VISITORS TO SWITZERLAND.

All previous records for the number of tourists in Switzerland over the Christmas holiday period have been broken this year.

The visitors have been arriving for days by special trains from all over Europe, and the services have had to be multiplied considerably.

THE POPE CONGRATULATES M. MOTTA.

His Holiness the Pope has sent a congratulatory message to M. Motta on the occasion of his 25th anniversary as a member of the Swiss government.

* * *

Amongst the latest messages received at the Federal Palace are the following: Queen Wilhelmine of the Netherlands, King Leopold III of Belgium, M. Largo Caballero the Spanish Prime Minister, Sir George Warner, H. M. Minister in Berne.

SWISS SENTENCED FOR ENLISTING IN SPAIN.

In conformity with the decree of August 4th forbidding Swiss citizens to serve in Spain, the Military Court at Zürich has sentenced to 10 months' imprisonment a Swiss private who had enlisted in the Spanish Government forces and taken part in fighting in Spain. A Zürich writer who incited him to enlist has been sentenced to one month's imprisonment.

NEW SWISS BANK.

The Schweizerische Spar- und Kredit-Bank (Swiss Savings and Loan Bank) has just started to function. Its share capital amounts to 13,400,000fr., and reserves are valued at 1,300,000fr. This new bank takes the place of the Schweizerische Genossenschaftsbank (Banque Coopérative Suisse).

As reported last February, surprise was caused when the Genossenschaftsbank announced its inability to pay. An agreement was reached recently between the bank and its creditors which permitted the bank to reorganise and to carry on business under its new name. It has taken over all the assets and liabilities, the old bank's capital of 18,662,000fr. having been written off completely.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

M. Hans Engelmann, who has been connected for over 46 years with the administration of the Technical University in Zurich has retired from his post.

* * *

Mr. H. Blass and Mr. H. Grandjean have been appointed General Managers of the "Crédit Suisse" (Schweizerische Kredit Anstalt).

BERNE.

M. E. Stauffer, late Managing-Director of the Federal Bank in Berne, has celebrated his 75th birthday anniversary.

* * *

The death has occurred at Lugano of Dr. Arnold Eichmann, a former chief of the Federal Commercial Department at the age of 83.

* * *

M. Albert Schmidt-Flohr, the well-known piano manufacturer, has died in Berne at the age of 70.

FRIBOURG.

The late National-Councillor Alexandre Cailler has left an amount of 50,000 frs. to the community of Broc.

* * *

M. Richard Corboz has been elected a member of the cantonal government.

BASLE.

The government of the canton of Basle has decided to pension off all civil servants who have completed their 65th year, with the exception of University Professors.

GRISONS.

The ten million francs loan (3¾%) of the canton of Grisons has been over subscribed.