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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

The Federal Council has fixed the Swiss Government's financial participation in the Swiss Marconi Company at 400,000 francs.

\* \* \*

The Federal Council has refused permission to M. Rakowsky, one of the Russian delegates at the Genoa Conference, to come to Zurich for the purpose of discussing business with Swiss industrials.

In answer to a renewed request the Federal Council now intimates that no objection would be raised to a visit of M. Krassin, who would be permitted to stay at Zurich for—*one day*.

(Compared with the facilities which M. Krassin enjoyed in this country as the head of the Russian Trade Delegation, the above "concession" will probably appear out of all proportion to him, and the benefit which Swiss industry is likely to derive from one day's interview with M. Krassin will surely also be infinitesimal. Yet, unemployment is as rampant as ever in Switzerland. How incompatible politics and business seem to be!)

\* \* \*

To aid export of certain Swiss products, the Swiss Federal Railways have reduced their freight tariffs in some cases by as much as 35 per cent.

The commodities which will be particularly favoured by these reductions, if consisting of consignments of five and ten tons, are: aluminium, sterilized milk, wood and wood shavings, and asphalt.

\* \* \*

The International Union of Astronomy has terminated its 1922 Congress at the Academy of Science in Rome, fixing the next meeting for 1925 at the Cambridge University.

Professor Raoul Gautier, Director of the Geneva Observatory, was the delegate of the Swiss Geodetical Society, at the same time representing the Association for Geodesy of the Neutral States in his capacity as President of that Association.

M. Paul Dietisheim, watch manufacturer, of La Chaux-de-Fonds, was appointed by the Swiss Federal Council to watch the proceedings of the Congress as delegate of the Swiss Horological Chamber, the work of the conference offering particular interest for the chronometer industry. The members of the Congress were invited to pay a visit to the scientific institutes of Florence; they were further received by the Pope before they left Rome, and some of

the congressists were permitted to visit the Observatory of the Vatican, a privilege which has been accorded on rare occasions only.

\* \* \*

The alpine guide Peter Steier from Reams (Gräubünden) has been chosen from 400 applicants for the post of guardian of the Saentis Observatory.

\* \* \*

Tests made at the Thermal Springs of Ragaz have led to the discovery of mercury and uranium deposits of considerable magnitude, not far from Vättis (Graubünden). As is known, radium is extracted from uranium.

\* \* \*

It has required a whole fortnight's work of 30 men before the Niesen mountain railway could resume its summer service this year, and the opening of the Niesenkulm-Hotel could only be accomplished after the tremendous deposits of snow, reaching in some places a height of 15 metres, had been cleared away and the railway track laid bare.

\* \* \*

At a meeting of the Zurich Bank Employees Association, which was attended by over 800 of its members, a resolution was passed to protest against the intended move of the Banking Syndicate to reduce salaries from the 1st of August next, to shorten duration of holidays, and to increase additional unpaid overtime working hours.

\* \* \*

Piloted by Lieutenant Henri Pillichody (known to our readers from his lecture given in London under the auspices of *The Swiss Observer*), the first aeroplane in the Geneva-Nürnberg air service arrived at Nürnberg at noon on June 1st, carrying one passenger.

The same aeroplane departed again at 2.30 p.m. from that city, having taken on board four passengers and the German mails. Making a stop of half-an-hour's duration at Dübendorf, it safely descended at Geneva at 7 p.m. the same day.

The following time-table has been fixed for this first International Airway Service established in Switzerland:—

Geneva, dep. 8 a.m.

Berlin, dep. 8 a.m.

Dübendorf, dep. 10.15 a.m.

Nürnberg, dep. 12.30 p.m.

Nürnberg, arr. 12.30 p.m.

Dübendorf, arr. 3.15 p.m.

Berlin, arr. 5 p.m.

Geneva, arr. 5 p.m.

It is hoped to extend the service from Geneva in a southerly direction to Lyons, Marseilles and beyond in the near future.

The charges are fixed at 110 francs (Swiss) for the journey from Geneva to Zurich (Dübendorf) or vice versa. Zurich-Nürnberg 125 francs, Nürnberg-Zurich 85 francs, the difference in the fare for the return journey being due to exchange variations. \* \* \*

\* \* \*

A family named Fehr, from Zurich, were enjoying a few days' stay with relatives in the country at Höngg. The children entered a shed, where they discovered a bottle from which the 3-year-old sister innocently gave a drink