

Home news

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HOME NEWS

His Majesty King George V. has sent the following reply to the wireless telegram addressed to him by the President of the Swiss Confederation anent the opening of the Marconi Wireless Service at Berne last week:—

"To the President of the Swiss Confederation.

“I desire to thank Monsieur le Président for your
“cordial telegram first sent by new wireless service
“linking our two Countries, and to assure you that I
“heartily reciprocate the friendly sentiments and wishes
“to which it gives expression. — George R.I.”

—It is noted with satisfaction at home that members of the Swiss delegation to Genoa have been called upon to serve on various sub-commissions; thus, M. Motta on the Political, M. Schulthess on the Economical, M. Dubois (President of the Swiss Bank Corporation) on the Finance, and M. Niquille on the Transport Commission.

* * *

150,000 francs were disbursed by the Federal Treasury in the past year for supporting necessitous Swiss living abroad, of whom 1,207 are domiciled in Germany, 526 in France, 80 in Austria, 34 in Poland, 20 in Hungary, 13 in Italy, and 7 in Great Britain.

The Canton of Berne is represented by the greatest number of necessitous natives with 647, while the Canton of Basle with 22 and the Canton of Geneva with 11 have the fewest.

* * *

During 1921 Switzerland addressed 141 requests for extradition to various foreign countries, amongst which 69 to France 37 to Germany, 13 to Italy, and 11 to Austria. In 93 cases the request was complied with.

On the other hand, Germany made 44 requests for extradition, France 17, Italy 15, and Austria 11. Of these, 61 were granted.

* * *

According to the Federal Labour Office, the number of unemployed decreased during March from 146,302 to 120,414.

* * *

The Swiss Consul General in Shanghai having reported that it is out of the question for Swiss artisans and labourers, who are not in possession of engagement contracts before leaving for China, to find employment in that

country, the Federal Emigration Office issues a warning against emigrating to China, whence a number of Swiss have recently had to be repatriated, having failed to secure work of any description.

* * *

Swiss papers report that the demand for a referendum against the "lex Häberlin," the new penal code which was passed by the Federal Assembly during the first session of this year, is likely to prove successful, as already over 100,000 signatures have been obtained in favour of the referendum.

* * *

The 5% Loan of the Canton of Geneva for 30 million francs has been over-subscribed nearly 30 times, the subscriptions totalling 880 million francs.

* * *

The Swiss authorities having impeded the import of French cheese into Switzerland by increase of duty and import restrictions, the French authorities promptly retaliated by raising the import duty for Gruyère and Emmenthaler cheese from 12 frs. to 42 frs. per 100 kilos.

* * *

J. Hartmann, a provision dealer from Thal (St. Gall), has been severely dealt with by the Court of Feldkirch (Austria). He was caught trying to smuggle 493 eggs and 12 kilos of butter from Austrian to Swiss territory, provisions which to-day represent a value of 50,000 Austrian kronen. The goods were confiscated, and sentence of ten weeks' imprisonment passed on Hartmann, and a fine of 200,000 kronen also inflicted. Should he fail to pay the fine, Hartmann will be imprisoned for a further 3 months.

* * *

The Federal accounts for 1921 contain the following details respecting revenue and expenditure connected with the most important State departments:—

	Revenue	Expenditure
	Frs.	Frs.
National Council	—	914,187
States Council	—	101,885
Federal Council	—	184,500
Federal Chancellery	101,266	1,295,402
Federal Court of Justice	153,415	893,643
Political Department	2,161,131	6,465,356
Dept. of the Interior	1,042,284	27,256,789
Dept. of Justice & Police	2,902,692	7,128,316
Dept. of Military	2,186,654	75,314,010
Dept. of Finance & Customs	142,764,061	23,401,904
Dept. of Public Economy	2,105,253	32,211,213
Federal Posts and Railways	190,826,767	212,507,191
Various	6,899,382	4,095,150

The total expenditure for the year under review amounts to 508,431,226 frs., while the revenue totals 380,859,356 francs, leaving a deficit of 127,571,870 frs.

For the financial years 1914, 1915 and 1916, the first three to fall within the period of the Great War, the deficits were: 22,533,117 frs., 21,551,507 frs. and 16,645,455 francs respectively, then in 1917 the excess of expenditure over revenue mounted to treble that of 1916, increasing alarmingly year by year ever since, viz.:—

1917 deficit	50 747,865 frs.
1918	„	...	61,894,687 „
1919	„	...	95,655,686 „
1920	„	...	99,536,730 „
1921	„	...	127,571,870 „

* * *

A landscape by Ferdinand Hodler fetched 25,000 frs. at a recent sale of paintings at Geneva.

In 1880 the same picture was bought for 300 frs. and resold in 1918 for 19,000 frs.

* * *

Twenty-one countries are represented at the International Technical Conference on the Teaching of Esperanto in Schools, which has been opened in Geneva under the auspices of the League of Nations.

* * *

As arbiter in the dispute between Columbia and Venezuela in regard to frontiers, which was referred to it in 1916, the Swiss Federal Council has decided in favour of Columbia on the principal point of discussion, and recognized the rights of Columbia in the disputed territories.

* * *

During the first quarter of the present year Swiss Customs yielded a total revenue of 36,808,931 frs. against 22,661,960 frs. for the corresponding period of 1921.

CONCOURS INTERNATIONAL DE REGLAGE DE CHRONOMETRES.

Le Conseil d'Etat de la République et Canton de Neuchâtel, considérant que le monde horloger s'apprête à célébrer le centenaire d'Abram-Louis Breguet, horloger neuchâtelois, membre de l'Institut de France et du Bureau des longitudes, né à Neuchâtel (Suisse), le 10 janvier 1747, mort à Paris, le 17 septembre 1823; considérant que la patrie de Breguet ne saurait s'associer mieux à cette manifestation que par l'institution, à l'Observatoire de Neuchâtel, d'un concours international de réglage de chronomètres; vu le préavis de la Commission de l'Observatoire; sur la proposition des conseillers d'Etat, chefs des départements de l'Instruction publique et de l'Industrie,

Arrête:

Art. 1.—Il est institué, à l'Observatoire de Neuchâtel (Suisse), à l'occasion du centenaire d'Abram-Louis Breguet, un concours international de réglage de chronomètres, qui aura lieu en 1923.

Art. 2.—Un règlement spécial fixera les formalités et les conditions du concours; ce règlement sera remis gratuitement à tout intéressé qui en fera la demande à la Chancellerie d'Etat ou à la Direction de l'Observatoire de Neuchâtel.

Art. 3.—Les départements de l'Instruction publique et de l'Industrie sont chargés de veiller à l'exécution du présent arrêté.

Neuchâtel, 14 février 1922.

Au nom du Conseil d'Etat:

Le président, E. BEGUIN.

Le chancelier, STUDER-JEANRENAUD.

NOTES & GLEANINGS.

The not very unbiassed arguments in the English press as to whether English cases of consumption have better prospects of a cure by a stay at one of the Swiss health stations than by British sanatorium treatment, are now relieved by a discussion on the sun cure of tuberculosis. On April 10th, the medical members of the House of Commons were addressed by some English specialists on the method so successfully practised by Dr. Rollier at Leysin, and a medical correspondent in one of the papers describes the English treatment of tuberculosis as a "tragic farce."

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The "Freedom of the Rhine" continues to be extensively referred to, as, for example, in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (April 11th) and *The Observer* (April 9th).

* * *

What promises to be an instructive visit—and one that will help to further cement the relations between the Swiss and English dye industries—has just been arranged, for according to the *Yorkshire Observer* (April 10th)—

"The three principal Swiss firms—the Society of Chemical Industry, the Sandoz Chemical Company, and J. R. Geigy, all of Basle—have now sent an invitation to the West Riding section of the Society of Dyers and Colourists to visit their works in Switzerland.

The invitation is extended to representative users of colour in the West Riding, and already sixty names have been sent in. Ladies are to take part in the visit, and the three companies concerned are making arrangements for social events in addition to the works visits. The visit is to be made from June 3 to June 10, and is likely to prove both useful and enjoyable to those who are interested."

* * *

The *Saturday Review*, in which from the pen of a Geneva correspondent two articles appeared under the heading "A Paradise of Socialism," criticising in a superficial and deprecating manner Swiss administrative methods, has now published (April 8th) an excellent reply from Dr. Paul Lang, which, it is to be hoped, will correct the erroneous impressions created by the original missiles. The following is an extract:—

"It is hard to hear that we have no native art in Switzerland and that we are content with mediocrity, that consequently we can have 'no poets, statesmen, dramatists and painters or any of the more supreme achievements in intellect, beauty or wit.' It is the curse of Switzerland, being a tri-lingual nation, that as soon as a Swiss has attained any kind of fame, the big nation, speaking the same language as the part of Switzerland to which he belongs, embraces him as one of its sons. It is perhaps as well to state that 12 per cent. of all the receivers of the different Nobel prizes were of Swiss nationality, including one winner of the literary Nobel Prize. It is grotesque to have to reply to an article pretending that there is no native art in Switzerland. England rightly boasts of Hans Holbein, the younger, who won his great fame in London. Yet he, although born in the neighbouring part of Germany, was educated in Basle, a citizen of Basle and the husband of a lady of that town. His nationality may be disputed; it cannot, however be denied that Fuseli, Calame, Stauffer, Welti, Böcklin, Burnand and Hodler were Swiss. It may be as well to remind your correspondent, who thinks us a nation without poets, that not only Gottfried Keller, Conrad Ferdinand Meyer and Carl Spitteler are Swiss, but that the 'Times Literary Supplement' only last year declared that there is no lack of poets in Switzerland today, that 'there is, in fact, a high degree of original inspiration in the most important of the younger Swiss poets'; that Nietzsche declared Spitteler the finest of German æsthetic writers; that Professor Robertson, when giving an extensive account of Spitteler's works in the 'Fortnightly Review,' wrote: 'Not a few well-balanced minds in Germany and France have, since the passing of Nietzsche, regarded Spitteler as a kind of sleeping Barbarossa who would some day wake to assume the long unclaimed sceptre in German poetry'; that Rousseau was