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HOME NEWS

The Federal Council proposed to the Federal Assembly to extend the Arrêté Fédéral of February 18th, 1921, on the limitation of imports, to March 31st, 1923. To this Message two sets of statistics are added showing the extent of unemployment in the principal industries of Switzerland during the second half of 1920 and in 1921.

* * *

Demonstrations of the Social Democrats against the economic policy of the Federal Council are announced from different parts of the country. In Winterthur a big one took place on October 1st. National Councillor Dr. Arthur Schmid protested against the Referendum having been annulled when the modified custom tariff was introduced. The Labour Leader, Conrad Wyss, and National Councillor Rob. Grimm spoke also. A resolution was carried which protested that the protective measures adopted by the Federal Council would never have been ratified by the people had they been submitted to them.

* * *

The growing opposition to the re-organisation project of the Federal Railways, especially on the part of St. Gall and Basle, and more particularly to the reduction of the administrative arrondissements from five to three, has induced the Federal Railways Department to issue a supplementary Message in which all the arguments for this reform are exhaustively dealt with. The Commission of the National Council, which has to study this item, started its sittings on September 26th at Lugano and decided to recommend the proposed solution.

* * *

The Grand Council of Lucerne voted against the Income Tax Initiative which asked for an extension of the subsistence minimum. It will be brought before the people without a recommendation from the Grand Council.

* * *

A serious disagreement arose in the Constitutional Council of Tessin on Friday, September 30th. Because of the rejection of their proposal to adjourn the Council to October 21st, the Radical-Liberal party made a statement to the effect that they had decided to keep away from the further deliberations. The members of the other parties continued to discuss Articles 38 to 57 of the constitutional project. The proceedings were then adjourned till October 10th.

The fruit harvest in Thurgau promises to be wonderful. It is reckoned that the Thurgau can export this year 2,000 waggons of fruit, which would be equal to 20 million kilograms. Owing to the valuta troubles there is no possibility of exporting into Germany, as has been done in former years. Some fruit, however, has of late been exported to the Scandinavian countries. The initiative in this kind of export to such far-off countries is attributed to the Arenenberger School, where the sons of the Thurgau farmers are educated to a modern and comprehensive understanding of their profession.

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Minister Le Trocquer welcomed on Saturday the 28th of September the Swiss delegates who had been invited to visit the port of Bordeaux-Bassens. The delegation consisted of Mr. Oltramare, Municipal Councillor, of Geneva; President Mazuy; Vice-President Antonio, and Chief Secretary Marcel Gudin, of the French Chamber of Commerce in Switzerland; delegates of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce of Geneva, Lausanne, and Berne; State Councillor J. Sigg, President of the Association "De la Suisse à la Mer"; Monsieur Riverdin, Secretary; the members of the Committee of the Rhine and Rhone Association, and some prominent Swiss journalists. The Minister also received the Bordeaux-Odessa Committee which, amongst other claims, expressed the wish that an early decision should be taken with a view to achieve the line Bordeaux-Lyons-Geneva.

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The International Conference of the Anti-Prohibitionists which met at Lausanne decided to form a committee in which every country should be represented by two delegates. This Committee is entrusted with the preliminary preparations for a great International Congress which will shortly be convened to meet in London.

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The Delegates of the Swiss Benevolent Society met for the Annual Assembly at Zurich on September 19th. The main feature of the deliberations was the question of the care of the aged and infirm. The funds of the Society amount at present to 165,000 frs., and the money bequests left to the Society to 510,000 frs. The Central Committee, at the head of which is Dr. R. von Schulthess-Schindler, was unanimously re-elected. The Director, Dr. Stadlin, of Berne, who reported on the question of the care of the aged and infirm, was very much in favour of a provisional scheme being introduced until the Old Age Assurance Act became law. He reckons that it would take ten million francs annually to make it possible for everybody in need over sixty-five years of age to be paid an average pension of 500 francs yearly.

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The Swiss Cities' Day celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary at St. Gall on the 24th and 25th of September. Monsieur le président Chappuis, of St. Imier, was again elected President. Other members of the new Committee