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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

In the Swiss Federal Budget for 1923 revenue is estimated at fr. 430,730,000, and expenditure at fr. 511,510,000, with a probable excess of expenditure of fr. 80,780,000. The budget for 1922 showed a deficit of fr. 99,400,000, while in 1921 the deficit reached the figure of fr. 127,571,870.

The estimate of Customs revenue for 1923 totals fr. 145,200,000, comparing favourably with the fr. 130,200,000 of 1922. Postal and Railway revenue is anticipated to amount to fr. 203,373,649 (for 1922 this was fr. 210,945,685).

Estimates for expenditure include interest on the national debt rated as fr. 114,624,000 (as against fr. 113,498,005 in 1922) and also includes the Political Department for fr. 6,829,413 (fr. 6,662,922 in 1922). Of the latter sum fr. 2,814,085 is allotted to legations, fr. 1,744,928 to consulates, fr. 440,000 to the League of Nations, and fr. 600,000 in aid of incapacitated Swiss citizens returned home from abroad (fr. 300,000 in 1922).

The development of education, science and art will cost the Confederation fr. 7,547,406; forestry, fishing and hunting fr. 3,892,852; hygiene fr. 1,362,164.

The estimate for military expenditure amounts to fr. 78,895,693 (fr. 80,930,107), of which fr. 17,408,562 is devoted to equipment, the remainder to be allotted to military instruction.

The total estimates for the Department of Political Economy will absorb fr. 37,601,286 (fr. 36,208,877).

\* \* \*

To-day and to-morrow the joint elections will take place in Switzerland for the National and State Councils.

\* \* \*

Since the proposal to exact a capital levy was first discussed in the National Council a month ago, though the voting for this measure only takes place on the 2nd and 3rd December and its adoption is considered unlikely, an exodus of capital has already taken place, the sale of securities causing an all-round drop on the Swiss Stock Exchanges of 10% to 15%. According to a calculation made by the Swiss National Bank this fall corresponds to an aggregate loss to Swiss investors of one milliard francs. The Swiss franc is approaching par value, and in some circles it is expected that before long it may temporarily exceed 25. The effect on trade is already being felt and will no doubt result in a very considerable increase of unemployment.

\* \* \*

The "Semaine Suisse," with its motto *Hommage au travail national*, is now being held for the sixth time. This somewhat lengthy "week" extends from 21st October to 4th November, and during this period all shops in Switzerland are expected to display only goods of Swiss manufacture or the products of national art. An appeal is issued to the people to buy only national products throughout the "Semaine," thus showing the most effective way of assisting the unemployed.

\* \* \*

The subsidy granted by the Federal Government to the watch industry in Switzerland has been the subject of representations by watch interests in the Franche-Comté, who state that they have been hard hit by this subsidized Swiss competition and demand that the Ministry of Commerce in Paris should take counter measures.

\* \* \*

Special measures are under discussion by the Federal authorities to cope with the crisis created by the conditions of the wine market this year, following an exceptionally abundant harvest.

Nearly 18,000,000 gallons of Swiss wine have been produced, and prices are coming down.

It was proposed that the greater part of the harvest should be taken over by the wine dealers and that the rest should be stored. The requisition of wine cellars and wine barrels by the Federal authorities was also discussed, and finally it was decided to form a special commission representing all the interests concerned to further examine the whole situation.

Owing to a printers' dispute, the *Basler Anzeiger* and the *Reformierte Schweizer Zeitung*, two papers published at Basle, did not appear for the reason that the staff refused to set up and print an article dealing with the dispute in the Swiss printing trade, although liberty was given them to submit their point of view for publication as a reply.

\* \* \*

A lively debate took place on Saturday last during a sitting of the Commission for the regulation of the International Labour Conference, when M. Jouhaux, a French labour delegate, proposed to add German to the two official languages—French and English—already adopted by the Conference. The delegates of the other Great Powers, jealous of this prerogative, advocated the adoption of their respective languages, and in a short time Spanish, Italian, the Slav languages, even Hindustani and Esperanto were proposed, backed by eloquent arguments, as additions to English, French and German. A repetition of the confusion of the Tower of Babel was already anticipated by the dismayed workmen's delegates, when the voting fortunately showed a majority against the motion.

We Swiss may consider our reputation as linguists reasonably justified, but even our own delegates must have heaved a sigh of relief that their recognised capacities were spared so severe a test.

\* \* \*

## OBITUARY.

Colonel Hermann Schlatter has succumbed, at the age of 77, to a cardiac affection at St. Gall. Col. Schlatter was a prominent citizen of St. Gall, where he held responsible posts in cantonal state affairs and in the commercial world. His record as an officer was distinguished, and he had travelled widely. He has described his ride to Rome and his journeys through Egypt and Palestine in two interesting volumes. He presided for a long time, at the height of its prosperity, over the Central Association of the Machine Embroidery Industry of St. Gall.

Mr. Albert Borer, the Director of the Swiss Isola Works, died suddenly of apoplexy on the 19th October at Breitenbach. Mr. Borer was born in 1875, and equipped with only an elementary education, he made his way by sheer force of character and hard work to the directorship of the Isola Works, Breitenbach, which he created and led to prosperity, employing over 300 workmen. The story of Albert Borer's life reads like a romance of endurance and energy, and his untimely end will be widely deplored.

## A LEAGUE OF NATIONS EXHIBITION.

A most interesting International Exhibition of Arts and Handicrafts will be held at St. Albans from the 6th to 14th November under the auspices of the League of Nations Union.

Fifty-two nations (all members of the League) will send examples of their home industries to be exhibited in national pavilions. Switzerland, the home of the League, will have her pavilion decorated with Swiss flags and cantonal coats of arms. Swiss paintings will be shown, and arrangements are being made to exhibit a fine collection of the beautiful lace made by the Tréfle of Geneva. These will be for sale, and interesting Swiss literature will be provided for distribution.

It is hoped that Swiss ladies resident here will largely attend this Exhibition and patronize the sales on the Swiss stand, especially the Tréfle of Geneva, not only to acquire the beautiful lace, but also to support the admirable charitable work this represents.

The programme is so varied that it is impossible to give it in detail; contributions to the Art section will come from most of the countries of Europe, America and Asia. Lectures, Readings and "Mystery Plays" will be given, and the lighter side of the programme comprises music and dancing.

## A WARNING.

There are, unfortunately, several cases where Swiss who have obtained a limited English visa on their passports for the purpose of pursuing their studies here, have subsequently accepted employment without informing the English authorities and obtaining the necessary extension to stay. The police have, these last few days, visited some of the large City houses who are known to employ a considerable number of our nationals, and have insisted on the production of their respective passports; needless to say, those not in possession of the official permit will have to suffer for their inattention to the English regulations.

## HERE AND THERE.

By J. H. Corthesy.

While London's sky has come back to its own grey tint and overcoats have reappeared, as a wintry indication, politics have suddenly forced themselves upon the people. The long-threatened storm over Coalition has broken in a flash in Carlton House with a devastating effect on that political party, which has for many years ruled not only British destinies, but affected Continental ones. For the moment Mr. Bonar Law has taken Mr. Lloyd George's chair, and the world is awaiting impatiently the chain of events, with the hope that out of it a panacea will be produced for the cure of all worldly ills. This wonderful medicine may be discovered any day, for do we not live in the age of miracles?

The elixir of life, which—like the philosopher's stone, perpetual motion, and other "impossible" problems, the solution of which has so long captivated man's attention—has at last been bestowed upon him. This is not a joke or something of the like nature to give journalists a subject to dwell on, wittily or otherwise, but it is a simple reality. Nor is it a consequence to be feared that, because monkey glands are used in the process, monkey tricks are sure to follow. Yet, however incredulous one might be of the fact that old men can be made young again—and it must be admitted that a certain mental effort is required to realize this—such a feasibility is amply proved, for several Harley Street specialists gathered one afternoon last week in a flat in Baker Street, W., to prod and punch the seventy-six-year-old Mr. Liardet, the Englishman on whom Dr. Voronoff grafted monkey glands—gratuitously, as an experiment, And, says the *Daily Express*:

"Mr. Liardet liked it. Old men hate being punched suddenly in the back, but as some unknown monkey has given him at least thirty years of his life back, he treated it just like any other young fellow would have done, and even punched them back!"

"Do I look seventy-six years old?" he cried fiercely to a spectacled old man of thirty-five who timidly asked him if he really felt fit.

"N-no! You look about forty!" cried the other, retreating. But he was not allowed to escape. Mr. Liardet caught him by the shoulder and grasped his hand with the enthusiasm of an orang-outang.

"How's that grip for an orang-outang!"

The poor old man of thirty-five said it was colossal and went round showing his white, crushed hand to the other visitors.

Before he met monkey glands Mr. Liardet stated that he could not walk without a stick. Two months after he was skipping about like a lamb, and even dancing.

The specialists who accepted Mr. Liardet's invitation to feel his arms and his legs looked at each other over their glasses and said, "Marvellous!"

\* \* \*

Miracles! Not so long ago we heard constantly that "man is not made to fly. It is against nature to do so!"—as so many attempts had been made and all of them had ended disastrously. But with the advent of the internal combustion engine the saying that "this factor alone had made flying possible" is proved as erroneous as "man is not made to fly," and, wonder of wonders, M. Mancroy's engineless monoplane that won him the *Daily Mail* first prize of £1,000 in a flight of 3 hours and 22 minutes, was of a design dating 40 years back, that is, long before the practical existence of the oil internal combustion engine. Well, may one ask what could have been the cause of the delay in bringing to light an invention of such practical value? Probably the same old story of the man who knows and has not the means, and of the man who has the means but does not know or believe.

The scene of a man flying downwards towards the spectators to ask the time, as he could not see it on his watch, is unique. Not once did he do so, but several times. He had to remain in the air long enough to beat the record of 3 hours 10 minutes set up by Herr Hentzen.

Gliding with ease, down and up again, moving along as if carried by a wave, keeping this up for hours, even in rain, he landed about 100 yards from the starting point.

And what may be the cost of a gliding machine? One of them, which stayed up an hour, a R.A.F., caused an expense of 18s. 6d., or much below that of a bicycle!

And again it is said that soaring causes no feeling of danger—just sheer pleasure and an unequalled opportunity for tasting the joy of living!

\* \* \*

Another miracle:

Persons who have suddenly dropped through the air with a rope round their necks, otherwise been hanged, and whose life, it has been attested