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The total turnover of the Swiss Postscheckkonto for 1921 amounts to 17.8 milliards of francs.

From 33,745 in 1920 the number of accounts opened has been increased to 42,740 during 1921.

The stamp duties on shares, debentures and other securities realised 20,480,000 francs for 1921, against 21,665,000 francs in 1920.

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The Bâle municipal budget for 1922 anticipates receipts of 37,838,927 francs and an expenditure of 44,368,793 frs., causing a probable deficit of 6,529,866 francs.

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The Vevey correspondent of the *Daily Mail* reports that a mild sensation has been caused in certain towns of German Switzerland by the appearance of what looked like a miniature Noah's Ark on wheels.

Having acquired a small property in Alsace, a farmer dismantled his chalet and reconstructed it on a huge motor-lorry. When all his furniture and poultry had been installed, the farmer and his wife and four children moved into the front room. A stable at the back was occupied by a horse and cow, who gazed complacently out while the farmstead rumbled along in easy stages towards the new home.

* * *

Last Monday, at Interlaken, Dr. Jacot-Guillarmot gave a lecture on his journey through India and the Himalayas. As is well known, Dr. Jacot-Guillarmot is the only Swiss who has successfully climbed the Chogari and the Kanschin-junga, which, next to Mount Everest, are the highest points on earth.

NOTES & GLEANINGS.

The abundant fall of snow at all the Alpine resorts—accompanied by some rain in the lower regions—has been termed “the most acceptable New Year's gift which Switzerland could have had.” It is not only the hotel industry which will derive considerable benefit, but the country in general will be very much relieved on account of an increased water supply for domestic, agricultural and electricity generation purposes. The drought during 1921 has been a most serious one, the water-level on most of the rivers not having been so low for several centuries; the amount of atmospheric precipitation is best illustrated by the fact that at Basle the Rhine registered on the 9th inst. a rise of no less than six feet. Adverse conditions still prevail, however, on the southern slopes of the Alps, the shortage of water seriously interfering with the economic life in the Ticino, where numerous forest fires are spreading, some pine and chestnut woods having already been destroyed.

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Another fascinating contribution from the pen of Sir John Foster Fraser on “Life in St. Moritz” is published by *The Evening Standard* (Jan. 16th). “For those who ‘are less strenuous in their winter sportsmanship there are ‘many things to be done besides sitting in the sun and ‘watching beautiful Continental skating.’” If you cannot actively participate in sports you may with some satisfaction follow the exertions of those who endeavour to amuse themselves in this direction like—

“The stout lady who has come from London equipped with

every requisite of the ski-runner. She has a yellow jersey, a green cap, tobacco-hued expansive knickerbockers, putties, the correct boots. As the gliders are strapped to her feet she exclaims she ‘never will be able to do it.’ She is right. She gives a little scream, a lurch forward, and then she flops in undignified confusion. With ski twisted she lies in a locked position and shouts for someone to come and take the wretched things off. There is lots of fun at the misfortunes of other folk. . . .”

People are leaving only to make room for others:—

“. . . The Lord Chancellor and his viscountess and the three little Honourable Smiths have gone home, the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland have gone to Paris, but there are still a few celebrities amongst the two thousand holiday makers in the village. . . . There is the Principessa Odescalchi, Lady Nunburnholme, the Comte de Rougemont, the Marquis de Casa Calderon, the famous film star ‘Pola Negri,’ the Maharajah and Maharanee of Porbandar, Lady Ribblesdale, Sir Hall Caine, Sir Arthur and Lady Crosfield. . . .”

* * *

A motor tour “Over the Simplon Pass” is described in the January number of *The Badminton Magazine*. Starting from the Lago Maggiore, the episodes of the journey and the picturesque villages on the route are the subjects of a delightful article and original photographs. We cull the following about the village of Simplon and the St. Bernard's Pass:—

“We slowed down to pass through the little village of Simplon, rebuilt after the great landslip of the sixteenth century, but scarcely was its square church tower hidden from our eyes before we came upon a vast space piled up with rocks in the wildest and most indescribable confusion. Once there had stood here a tiny village, built on the gentle slope of the smiling pastureland beneath the shadow of the mighty peaks. But one cold March day in 1901, at which time the inhabitants were fortunately residing at a lower altitude for the winter, the great Rossboden Glacier burst, and millions of tons of gigantic rocks were hurled upon the sleeping village. Thirty feet below the newly-constructed road the little hamlet lies buried to-day, the glacier, an icy green mass clinging to a cleft in the mountains, still gazes down upon the utter desolation which it has wrought, while thousands and thousands of jagged crags lay strewn in the valley below. It is just as if the giants had waged a Titanic battle or the gods had rained rocks upon the earth; and one trembles as one thinks of what the scene must have been like when the overpowering onrush of displaced débris came hurtling like a fury down the side of the mountain, carrying destruction and obliteration in its train.

The scenery became rather more rugged in character as, climbing gradually by the gently rising road, we attained nearer unto the summit of the pass. On our left, standing in the midst of a wild and rocky plateau which lay nestling at the foot of a gigantic mass of snow-clad mountain, we could see the little square building with its belfry tower which was once occupied by the Augustine Brothers of St. Bernard. Lonely and forsaken it stands amidst the mountains, a romantic memory indeed. For what visions it calls up of cold winter nights upon the pass, when the snow fell heavily, forming into gigantic drifts, and the icy winds born of the eternal glacial snows swept down through the hidden crevices of the mountains. Then it was that the good monks of St. Bernard went forth, their dogs running on before them, and many a traveller exhausted through battling against the fury of the elements was found and brought in to the warm fire of the Hospice, to be sheltered from the biting cold. But of the many who perished before the Brothers could reach them little was known until the summer sun had melted away the snow which lay thick over the Pass and exposed their poor whitened bones.

Even as far back as the beginning of the fourteenth century the Knights of Malta had erected a hospice for wayfarers on the Simplon summit, for there was a track across the Simplon in Roman times, while in 1250, in a contract drawn up between the Bishop of Sion and a great business firm in Milan we find the following passage:—“With a view to employing that path across the Simplon, which, since the Roman era, has fallen into disuse.” By 1650 the original hospice had become but a pile of ruins, and it was then that Kaspar Stockalper built that tower which served as a residence for himself and his family during the summer months and a refuge for travellers all the year through, they being lodged free of charge in the basement.

A turn in the road brought us to that more modern building, the present Hospice which was completed on a smaller scale by the monks of the Great St. Bernard when the downfall of Napoleon necessitated the abandonment of his colossal scheme of erecting a hospice-barracks near the Simplon summit at a cost of some eight hundred thousand francs. It is a large stone construction with a steeply sloping roof, and doubtless proves an inestimable blessing to those unfortunate beings who, unable to scrape together the necessary sum which would secure their passage through the tunnel, are obliged to try their luck on the Great Simplon road in the cold, dark days of winter. . . .

Far, far below us, buried in the depths of the valley and built on the banks of that river which we knew must be the Rhone, we could see a little tower of roofs, roofs which were flashing and glittering in the summer sunlight and which bore in their midst three great cupola-topped towers only overshadowed by the adjacent mountains. It was the palace of Kaspar Stockalper, the King of the Simplon who, having made a huge fortune by trading over the Pass during the seventeenth century, built that château—the largest private house in Switzerland even unto this day—wherein to end his years in peace. But the people of the Valais were jealous of his wealth, declaring it to have been unlawfully gained, and in 1678 the old merchant-prince had to fly for his life into Italy, never again to set his eyes on the home he had loved so well. While now—so do things change in the inevitable passing of time—that beautiful château with its outside gallery and old courtyard arcade, is the abode of the Simplon Railway officials."

* * *

The Times (Jan. 11th) in a leader on "Forests and Civilization" quotes a passage from a lecture delivered in Yale (U.S.A.) by Prof. J. W. Toumey. After pointing out the depletion of virgin forests in most parts of the world and the certainty of a world competition for this essential raw material of civilization (timber) the Professor states that there is no indication of forestry being pursued in any large country with a scope sufficiently wide to cover future needs; however, he awards the palm to Switzerland in this respect. Some of the Swiss forests, he says, were organized more than a thousand years ago, have been continuously under timber production ever since, and are now more intensively managed and more productive than ever before.

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The Christian World (Jan. 5th) contains an appreciation of Pfarrer Adolf Keller, of Zurich, the secretary of the recently-formed Swiss Protestant Conference; "he is a Church statesman, and much of his influence is due to his fine linguistic gifts."

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Mr. Ernest Ansermet, the well-known musical conductor, who has just returned to his home in Geneva, records in the *Daily News* (Jan. 9th) his impressions of the London musical public.

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In the *Lancet* (Jan. 7th) Dr. Henry Spahlinger explains his method of treating tuberculosis, which is based on two different therapeutic principles, according to the nature of the disease.

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The *Manchester Guardian* (Jan. 11th) contains an adverse criticism of the dual-keyboard piano invented by Emmanuel Moor, the Swiss composer. The principle of Mr. Moor's invention is "by a dove-tailing and close approximation of the two keyboards, to bring distant things near and hard things under the easy grasp of the hand. By ingenious devices the two keyboards are brought so closely together as to be simultaneously under the control of a single hand." Whilst admitting that recent demonstrations in England have proved that the instrument is making headway and is accepted in some quarters as a legitimate development, the writer maintains a sceptic attitude on aesthetic grounds.

To "make hay while the sun shines" is according to the *Daily News* (Jan. 11th) a proverb which has outlived its usefulness, for a method was recently worked out in Switzerland for preserving newly-mown grass without first drying it in the sun:—

"The newly-mown grass is stored on metal sheets in silos of about 400 cubic feet capacity. The top of the silo is closed by another metal sheet, and the sheets at the top and bottom of the silo are connected into an electric circuit, so that alternating current at a pressure of from 200 to 500 volts is passed through the grass between them.

The effect of passing this current for several days is to kill all the microbes whose presence would otherwise cause the damp grass to decay.

It is claimed that the process enables the grass to be preserved in its natural state until required, and that in addition it can be cut and stored irrespective of weather conditions and it contains twice the nutriment of an equal quantity of hay.

Experiments tried so far have been successful, and the milk output of the cows fed on this electrically preserved grass is slightly greater than on ordinary hay.

The question of the suitability of this milk for cheese making is still under investigation. It is claimed that from 130—200 Board of Trade units or kilowatt hours are sufficient to treat five tons of grass."

* * *

The many friends of Mr. Ed. Neuschwander, our distinguished compatriot, who originates from Ouchy (Lausanne) and is one of the mainstays of our Colony, being a very popular member of most of the Swiss Societies in London, will be delighted with the following published in *The Evening News* (Jan. 16th):—

"Fifty years ago there came to the Charing Cross Hotel, on a three months' engagement, a Swiss waiter, aged 24.

He was frightened of London, at first, and wanted to go home; but he stayed to learn English, which he picked up by spelling out newspaper paragraphs. Meanwhile he was a good waiter, and found himself "getting on" in the hotel. London became less terrifying.

So M. Edouard Neuschwander didn't go home at all. He became head waiter, then superintendent, and finally (in 1885) manager of the hotel. He is, of course, still its manager, and now quite famous.

Dr. Johnson held that 'the full tide of human existence' flowed at Charing Cross. That was possibly an insular notion, but M. Neuschwander recalls that when he first came to the 'centre' of the Metropolis the traffic in the Strand was nearly as great as it is to-day. It was a terminus for omnibuses of the old 'knifeboard' type, and the hotel yard was as busy then with 'growlers' and hansom cabs as it is now with taxicabs.

The greatest change in the neighbourhood remembered by M. Neuschwander was the passing in 1874 of Northumberland House, the magnificent home of the Dukes of Northumberland, which stood where the Grand Hotel now is.

London had few great hotels then. The Langham, Morley's, the Golden Cross, and the Charing Cross were the chief.

The Charing Cross was patronised by foreign royal personages. The Empress Eugenie was an annual visitor for many years; the King of Spain (father of King Alfonso), Prince Ferdinand of Austria, the Prince Imperial (son of the Empress Eugenie), and the Emperor Napoleon III. are remembered, by the veteran manager as guests.

When the Emperor Napoleon III. died, the hotel was the

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lodging of all the distinguished folk who attended the funeral at Chislehurst. The dining-room at that time presented as brilliant a picture, with that display of varied and magnificent uniforms, as could have been seen in all Europe.

M. Neuschwander thinks that Queen Victoria's Jubilee procession, which he witnessed from Hungerford Bridge, was the unforgettable spectacle of a lifetime, and he says that London has not seen such crowds since.

He has come to love London as ardently as any native, and even when he has been visiting his beloved Switzerland he is glad to return. 'There is no place in the world like London,' he says. 'When I retire I shall live in London, though I have relatives in France.'

M. Neuschwander had thoughts at one time of becoming naturalised, but because King Edward advised a fellow-countryman and friend of his to remain a Swiss, M. Neuschwander tore up his papers.

He married a London woman, and all his five children were born in Charing Cross Hotel."

IMMATRICULATION.*

Nombre de Suisses fixés à l'étranger n'ont appris que pendant la guerre à apprécier à sa juste valeur le lien qui les unit à la mère-patrie. Certains d'entre eux qui, en temps de paix, ne fréquentaient guère la Colonie, considérèrent, dès la première reprise de contact avec elle, leur nationalité comme un bienfait du sort. Ceux-ci, de même que nos nombreux compatriotes qui, malgré leur éloignement prolongé du pays, lui sont toujours demeurés fidèles, ne devraient pas interpréter l'immatriculation comme une simple mesure administrative de contrôle; au contraire, ils devraient la saluer comme une occasion favorable de marquer à la Suisse la reconnaissance pour les services qu'elle leur a rendus.

Bien que l'établissement d'un registre matricule accuse un progrès considérable sur les rapports plutôt lâches qui existaient autrefois avec les Colonies, il ne paraît pas toujours fort aisément de convaincre nos compatriotes établis à l'étranger des avantages que comporte l'immatriculation obligatoire, telle que la prescrit le nouveau règlement. En temps de paix, l'ancien état de choses eut pu, à la rigueur, être maintenu simplement; mais aujourd'hui, où la lutte ouverte et cachée de tous contre un et d'un contre tous se poursuit sans merci sur le terrain économique, et où un nationalisme presque morbide rend parfois l'existence à l'étranger très précaire, il nous a paru d'une absolue nécessité de chercher à grouper les Suisses qui s'y trouvent et à leur donner un sentiment, encore plus vif si possible, de leur solidarité. La meilleure voie pour atteindre ce but nous semble être celle de l'immatriculation obligatoire.

L'article 41 du Règlement consulaire prescrit qu'un mois au plus tard après leur arrivée dans un arrondissement consulaire, les Suisses établis à l'étranger ont l'obligation de s'annoncer, avec leur famille, au Consulat compétent afin d'être portés sur son registre matricule. L'avis peut aussi être donné par la poste. Dans les pays où la Confédération n'a pas de représentant, on fera bien de s'annoncer au poste suisse le plus proche.

L'inscription sur le registre d'immatriculation ne sera effectuée qu'une fois que la preuve de la nationalité suisse aura été fournie par la production d'un passeport délivré par une autorité suisse ou de l'acte d'origine. Lorsque cette formalité sera accomplie, l'intéressé recevra une carte-matricule, valable pour une année. Elle sera renouvelée chaque année, en tant que possible, au commencement de l'exercice. Les changements d'adresse ou d'état civil survenus au cours de l'année seront communiqués au Consulat sans retard. En cas de transfert de domicile d'un arrondissement consulaire

dans un autre, on en avertira de même incessamment les deux postes intéressés. Dans des cas de ce genre, la nouvelle carte-matricule sera délivrée sans frais, en tant que le porteur se sera d'ores et déjà conformé aux dispositions relatives à l'immatriculation à son précédent domicile. La carte-matricule a force probante pour le poste qui l'a dressée, de même que pour les autres membres de la Colonie. Elle met, à première vue, le porteur au bénéfice de la présomption qu'il s'est acquitté en tous points de ses devoirs envers la Suisse.

La taxe, fixée à 10 francs pour la première inscription et à 5 francs pour chaque réinscription annuelle, a paru, il est vrai, quelque peu élevée à certaines personnes. Relevons, à ce propos, que les Légations et Consulats sont autorisés à faire remise totale ou partielle de ces émoluments aux Suisses qui sont dénués de ressources, ou dont les moyens sont relativement très restreints. En outre, le Département Politique a prescrit à nos représentants, résidant dans des pays à change particulièrement déprécié, un cours de faveur pour les taxes consulaires qu'ils ont à réclamer des Suisses. Au surplus, le ressortissant suisse, établi à l'étranger, peut être dispensé du paiement de la taxe d'immatriculation pour sa femme et ses enfants. Des timbres spéciaux, qui sont collés chaque fois sur les pièces voulues, tiennent lieu de quittance pour les émoluments versés.

Au demeurant, il ne s'agit pas, en l'espèce, comme on l'a parfois avancé à tort, d'un impôt, mais d'une sorte de taxe pour frais d'écriture, identique à celle que perçoivent aussi les autres Etats. Les recettes que ce droit fait entrer dans la Caisse de la Confédération sont affectées exclusivement au développement de notre représentation à l'étranger. Or, attendu que les Suisses de l'étranger sont, de par leur situation même, intéressés les tout premiers à ce que notre représentation extérieure soit bonne et à ce que son action soit efficace, il paraît de toute équité qu'ils contribuent aussi pour une faible part aux frais d'extension de ce coûteux organisme. A noter, d'ailleurs, que les fonds recueillis de ce chef sont un appoint plutôt modeste en regard des charges financières considérables qui incombent à la Confédération.

Enfin, aussitôt que les dispositions légales le permettront, nos Autorités s'efforceront, dans la mesure du possible, de simplifier encore le système actuel et de réduire éventuellement les taxes qu'il implique.

Malheureusement, il y a encore des Suisses qui ne savent pas apprécier à leur réelle valeur les avantages d'une représentation extérieure bien organisée et méconnaissent, en particulier, le bénéfice d'ordre personnel qu'ils peuvent retirer de l'immatriculation, en raison sans doute du dérangement et des taxes que comporte inévitablement l'accomplissement de cette formalité. Nous tenons tout particulièrement à souligner ici ce que leur attitude a de peu patriotique. Il est possible d'ailleurs, qu'un jour, mais alors, ce sera trop tard, hélas, ils viennent à résipiscence. Le sentiment du devoir accompli et d'appui mutuel que procure l'observation de cette formalité est, et demeure pour tout Suisse à l'étranger, une précieuse garantie de nature à l'aider à surmonter maintes difficultés des temps actuels.

Nombre de pays ont édicté des dispositions beaucoup moins accommodantes que les nôtres en matière d'immatriculation. Certains d'entre eux punissent de la perte de l'indigénat ceux de leurs ressortissants qui, à plusieurs reprises, ont négligé de se faire inscrire. Jusqu'à présent, les Autorités fédérales n'ont pas cru devoir adopter des principes aussi rigoureux, car elles comptent que tout Suisse établi à l'étranger mettra son point d'honneur à se faire immatriculer, comme aussi à renouveler régulièrement son inscription chaque année.

* Reprint from the January number of the "Pulletin Consulaire."