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HOME NEWS

A new *règlement consulaire*, to be applied as from the 1st of January next, has been approved by the Federal Council. Generally speaking, the many prescriptions have been simplified and more clearly defined than in the old one dating from 1919, the experience gained in these five years having contributed to this end. Fees have been reduced—the immatriculation card will in future cost Frs. 3.- only—and passports can be renewed for a period of five years.

* * *

According to the index figures, calculated by the Swiss Co-operative Societies (Konsumvereine), the cost of living has, since the 1st of August this year, slightly increased, chiefly due to higher prices for sugar and meat. Another rise in the price of milk, butter and cheese has set in with the beginning of this month.

* * *

Tumultuous scenes characterized the meeting, last Monday, of the Zurich cantonal council, when the Socialist and Communist parties insisted that the Federal Council should be called upon to cancel the recent dispositions curtailing unemployment assistance.

* * *

Vevey is to be one of the first districts in which a Sunday postal delivery will be re-introduced; according to the demands of local bodies, the postal authorities will revert to the old conditions as from next Sunday.

* * *

Torrential rain, accompanied by violent thunderstorms, visited last week the cantons of Schwyz and Lucerne, as well as the lower portion of the Ticino.

* * *

Swiss artists, residing abroad, are invited to submit to the jury sketches or photographs of subjects, suitable for being reproduced for the special post-cards to be issued on the occasion of the 1st of August celebration in 1924; these cards are to represent or symbolise the relations and ties which unite the Swiss living abroad to our compatriots at home. Designs will have to be addressed, not later than December 1st, to Mr. Victor Schuster, 18, Bahnhofstrasse, Zurich. Prizes up to Frs. 300.—each are offered in addition to a similar amount to those whose ideas are ultimately reproduced.

* * *

The French Government has now replied to the Swiss note with reference to the Free Zones controversy. M. Poincaré entirely ignores the proposal of the Federal Council to have recourse to the services of an impartial tribunal, but reiterates his willingness to continue the negotiations; in the meantime the decree abolishing the zones on Nov. 10th is to remain in force. The *Journal de Genève* (Oct. 27th), under the heading "Un jeu de cache-cache," deals with the French note as follows:—

"Constatons tout d'abord une fois de plus que le ton de cette conversation est, de part et d'autre, très amical. C'est fort bien. Malgré la divergence fondamentale des manières de voir, il n'est pas nécessaire de recourir aux paroles blessantes ni aux accusations injustifiées. Nous souhaitons que cet échange d'explications conserve jusqu'au bout ce caractère."

"Mais nous souhaitons aussi — et nous sommes certains qu'il en sera ainsi — que le Conseil fédéral ne se laisse pas abuser par la forme courtoise de la note française. L'opinion suisse, elle, ne s'y est pas trompée. En réalité, c'est une fin de non-recevoir que M. Poincaré nous oppose. Sur ce point, comme sur d'autres points encore plus graves des négociations internationales, c'est le côté purement négatif de sa politique qui apparaît trop clairement."

"On a été très frappé et pas mal surpris en Suisse du fait que la note française ne mentionne même pas la proposition ferme d'arbitrage que le gouvernement suisse a formulée de la façon la plus nette. Qu'est-ce donc que cette réponse qui reste muette sur la demande principale du partenaire. Faut-il croire que cette proposition embarrassse tellement le quai d'Orsay qu'il ne veut dire ni oui ni non ?

"Un avocat, un parlementaire peut passer à côté d'un argument qui le gêne. Un homme d'Etat ne

le peut pas. La demande d'arbitrage est présentée par le Conseil fédéral suisse, appuyée par l'opinion publique unanime. La France lui doit une réponse. Elle ne peut pas se soustraire à l'obligation de dire oui ou non.

"Quant à la thèse française que les conversations continuent, elle est en contradiction avec la décision du gouvernement fédéral de ne pas négocier sous la pression du fait accompli. Nous nous trouvons actuellement en présence du décret et de la notification du 10 octobre annonçant le transfert du cordon douanier à la frontière pour le 10 novembre. La Suisse ne négociera pas, *elle ne peut et ne doit pas négocier* avant que ce décret ait été rapporté ou expressément suspendu. Il est insoutenable d'affirmer que ce décret ne préjuge pas du résultat de la négociation.

"Du reste, nous l'avons déjà dit, des pourparlers nouveaux n'auront pas d'effet utile avant que l'on ait précisé le sens de l'art. 435. Il existe une opposition absolue d'interprétation entre la France et la Suisse sur la portée de cet article. Depuis le mois de mai 1919, on tourne autour de cette divergence sans obtenir aucun résultat positif. Il ne reste qu'une chose à faire avant de conclure une nouvelle convention de détail, c'est de faire trancher par une instance impartiale le sens exact de cet article, qui doit servir de base à tout nouvel accord. Nous regrettons seulement que le Conseil fédéral n'ait pas fait cette proposition dès le lendemain du vote populaire du 18 février. Cela aurait encore beaucoup mieux valu.

"Une demande d'interprétation authentique par une instance impartiale. Voilà la signification exacte de la proposition de la Suisse. Le Conseil fédéral ne peut pas faire autre chose que de la maintenir intégralement. Nous espérons fermement et nous sommes convaincus qu'il en agira ainsi dans sa réplique. Quant au gouvernement français, s'il désire vraiment un accord comme nous le croyons, il ferait bien mieux de prendre le chemin de l'arbitrage, qui mène droit au but par les moyens les plus simples et les plus amicaux, plutôt que de de continuer à jouer à cache-cache avec l'article 435 et avec la proposition du Conseil fédéral."

Since the despatch of this note the French Customs officials at Annecy, Hauteville and Pringy have received instructions to quit their present offices between the 5th and 9th of November, and to take up their new posts along the political frontier.

Last Tuesday our Minister in Paris, M. Dumant, handed to the Quai d'Orsay the official Swiss reply, the contents of which have not yet been published.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG."

Franco-Swiss Frontier Dispute.

Having touched upon this matter in my last week's notes, I think it will be interesting for my readers to hear something more, and among all the various papers I have perused I find the following article in the *Manchester Guardian* (Oct. 18th) very much the best:

The Swiss Federal Council published on Oct. 17th the full text of its Note, handed that morning by the Swiss Minister in Paris to the French Government, in answer to M. Poincaré's Note of Oct. 10th, announcing that on Nov. 10th French Customs officers will be posted at the political frontier between France and Switzerland, thereby abolishing the free zones of Upper Savoy. Although it was already known that the Swiss Government would protest against France's one-sided change of the situation instituted by the Vienna Treaty of 1815, and would propose submission of the dispute to the International Court of Justice, nevertheless the Swiss Note causes surprise by its extraordinarily firm tone, not usual in documents issued by the Governments of small States to Great Powers.

The Federal Council, by using this firm, though never discourteous, language to France, without doubt conforms to the almost unanimous feelings of the whole Swiss population, without distinction of language or politics. The Swiss Note first refutes in great detail the French accusation of slowness in the efforts to attain agreement after the rejection of the Convention of August, 1921, by Swiss referendum. The Swiss Note affirms that the Swiss Foreign Minister informed the French Government in September that a new Draft Convention would be submitted to France in the course of the month of October. Therefore, the Swiss Government is much surprised that "the French Government brusquely interrupted negotiations and without sufficient reason."

The Swiss Note then repeats the reasons why the Government is convinced that France has no right to post her customs officers along the political frontier without Swiss consent. The Swiss Government is obliged to protest against the French decision of Oct. 10th, and to declare that "the decision, if executed, would violate the treaty rights of Switzerland and the principles which international law upholds as the basis for international relations."

The Swiss Government maintains the point of view that, owing to totally different Swiss and French interpretations of the real meaning of article 435 of the Treaty of Versailles, it is essential to ask impartial



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judges to decide whether article 435 has indeed annulled the Swiss treaty right of free zones, as France maintains. The Swiss Government proposes to submit this juridical question of the interpretation of the Versailles Treaty to the League International Court, but declares its willingness to accept other arbiters, if France prefers.

The Swiss Government calls M. Poincaré's attention to the fact that "France and Switzerland are both members, on an equal footing, of the League of Nations, one of the highest aims of which institution is to find friendly solutions of disputes between States."

In this connection it is not without interest to recall to mind that the second paragraph of article 19 of the Covenant expressly states that "disputes as to the interpretation of the treaty . . . are declared to be among those which are generally suitable for submission for arbitration," and that the first paragraph of the same article stipulates that the members of the League agree that, whenever any disputes shall arise between them which they recognise to be suitable for submission to arbitration and which cannot be satisfactorily settled by diplomacy, they will submit the whole subject matter to arbitration." Finally, perhaps the most striking point in the Swiss Note is the twice repeated declaration that the Swiss Government cannot enter into new direct negotiation about the zone Convention until France has declared that during the whole course of negotiations French Customs officers will remain where they are now. The Swiss Government refuses to undertake negotiations under pressure of an accomplished fact.

Personally I like the last sentence, as it seems to confirm my opinion that Switzerland is not going to be bullied, even if the other chap is more powerful! It is perhaps that, as a Swiss friend said to me the other day, France thinks we Swiss are too lethargic to fight against a *fait accompli*, but I hardly think so. At all events, in case this should be so, the Weather Clerk for once seems to have taken an intelligent interest in our country's affair, for, according to the now defunct *Pall Mall Gazette* and *Globe* (Oct. 26th):—

Unusual heat prevails in Switzerland. At Geneva the thermometer registered 73.4 deg., at Zurich 66.2, at Basle 69.8, in the Alpine valleys 68, and on Pilatus and the Rigi from 48 to 55.4.

Such temperatures have not been registered in October since 1890.

And, as we all know, high temperatures are not conducive to taking things calmly. So M. Poincaré had better beware! By the way, according to the *Manchester Guardian* of Oct. 23th, the French Government has discovered something new again, as you will judge by the following:—

In rejecting the Swiss demand for reference of the "free zones" dispute to the League of Nations for arbitration, France is about to put forward a new doctrine, especially interesting to the United States, but no less important to other States that are members of the League. It will be remembered that a draft agreement between the French and Swiss Governments was, in accordance with the Swiss Constitution, submitted some months ago to national plebiscite and rejected by the Swiss people. The parallel with the American Senate's refusal to ratify the Versailles Treaty is complete.

M. Poincaré now argues that nations with such constitutional checks upon their diplomacy put other nations in a state of inferiority and cannot, therefore, be allowed to appeal to the League. A semi-official announcement in the press makes it clear. To quote from the "Temps" version, which is the longest and most explicit:

In fact, could not the Swiss people decide by a referendum to cease to belong to the League, or to refuse to conform to its decision? Did it not, indeed, decide in February last that the Franco-Swiss Convention of August 7, 1921, ratified by the Federal Parlia-

ment, should be null and void? Before a tribunal of the League of Nations there would in reality be no equality between Switzerland, whose international engagements could be annulled by a referendum, and France, who has not this means of getting herself free of her engagements.

It is a far-reaching doctrine. It is put forward in the incidental way characteristic of French diplomacy, for there is hardly any doubt that on this issue Paris will take pains to reach an eventual agreement directly with Berne. But obviously it affects the whole future of the League, and no less of the Hague International Court.

I do not pretend to be able to lay down the law governing international politics. But I would point out to my readers that the League of Nations is a Convention, come to between various nations, each of which has accepted it with the means of acceptance open to it. In similar ways Conventions are in force, for instance, between various countries, including France and Switzerland, with the United States of America, and every student of politics knows that the United States of North America have quite a different Constitution, providing quite different means of accepting international Conventions, than the two States, and others, cited. If, I conclude therefore, France's contention has to be accepted, it would first of all be necessary for all States to amend their Constitution in such manner as to acquire the same means of accepting or rejecting international Conventions as are open to France. Which is the *reductio ad absurdum*, it seems to my humble mind, although, no doubt, eminently to the liking of M. Poincaré's ultra-nationalist mind.

Again quoting from the *Manchester Guardian* (will my readers please not run away with the idea that "Kyburg" has been too lazy this week to read the other papers for them, because, as it happens, I find the most interesting matter in the paper quoted) I think the following may interest many of my readers:—

From a Swiss Lady in Cologne.

I do not believe I shall be able to give any idea of the overwhelming impressions which have crowded in on me since we left Switzerland—so many and so sad that on the whole journey I had but one wish—that a good number of foreigners should experience this journey in a third-class compartment. They would then realise our unhappy conditions, and if they had a spark of humanity in their hearts, they would be deeply moved.

Since my return I heard more than I can describe; everybody is struggling and suffering from cold and starvation. The talk is mostly, of course, of prices, rate of exchange, and 'multiplicator.' It is really enough to drive one mad. The other morning, for instance, a roll cost three millions, to-day 29 millions. To-day all the shops are closed on account of the new terrific rise. There was no looting of the shops, but the food carts and motor-cars have been plundered. Since yesterday prices are quoted in milliards.

You ought to have seen the luncheon the people had in the train! The sight of the bread would have made you ill. We were ashamed to open our basket of Swiss food.

Amid all this misery the people show such noble resignation and have even kept a bitter sense of humour. A charming old gentleman, who had not tasted butter for 1½ years, showed me his golden watch chain and said: "This is my coffin! It comforts me to know that my family can get one in exchange for the chain."

People travel a whole day in quest of food. On their return there is always the danger of the police taking it away from them, as hoarding is forbidden. There is a general shortage of potatoes. As this is almost the only food of the masses, you can imagine what this means. The prices of all other foodstuffs are so fantastically high that the majority cannot afford them.

Oh! Jack, if you had seen the French, smoking cigarettes and joking over their luggage, as they stood freezing around the Customs! We went four times through the Customs in an hour. But in "England" (i.e., the Cologne area) everything went perfectly smoothly.

A very respected member of our Swiss Colony, a French-Swiss gentleman, whose sympathies cannot be said to make him pro-German, to put it mildly, told us the other evening at the C.S.C. that, when crossing from Switzerland into Germany (Black Forest) recently, he was very much struck by the absolutely starved look of the chickens! Thinking he was joking, I asked him again, when he confirmed the statement in all seriousness, and I must say, it made me think hard. How long will it be—German war-guilt and arrogance are admitted, but fade away by comparison with other people's *peace-guilt*—before the whole civilised world rises up in holy anger and combines, with arms, if necessary, to sweep away the foul, hellish militarism which to-day, more than ever, poisons the world? Of all the British Press, Mr. Garvin, of the *Observer*, who lost his only son in the war, which was fought to "make the world safe for Democracy!", seems almost the only one who for years now has seen the issue clearly, and who, although with his heart almost rent asunder, has taken up the fight against the foulness, propagated covertly at first, openly now, by Britain's War Allies. Where is the Statesman to come from who will re-light President Wilson's glorious torch and carry it to victory? If Jesus Christ came on earth again, he would be crucified as before. What are the Churches doing? Asking their people to pray, and all the while folding their hands! Really, I am disgusted with 20th century, so-called Christian civilisation, and I hope that I may be able to infuse this disgust into some of my readers too. Every one who feels this disgust is *ipso facto* a factor for better things.

It is refreshing to turn away from politics to

the realm of earnest human endeavour. There are men who think little of personal ambition and who value truth for its own sake, who are prepared to fight a life-long fight, against overwhelming odds, for a cause which they know will help their brethren by and by. Such a man, and a Swiss too, is Dr. Spahlinger, and I make no apology for reverting once more to him. I find in the *Pall Mall Gazette and Globe* (26th Oct.):—

Spahlinger's Great Achievements.

During the last few years medical science has produced three remarkable men—Dr. Banting, Professor Voronoff, and Mr. Spahlinger.

Banting and his insulin have thrilled the whole world. The "monkey gland" theory, or the transformation of old-age into healthy youth is intimately associated with the name of Serge Voronoff. During Spahlinger's visit to London we have heard more of his serum for the treatment of tuberculosis.

The story of his life and work reads more like a romance. It is now many years since he commenced his experiments at the laboratory near Geneva.

From the first he was conscious of his mission.

A fury of zeal seemed to possess him. He had witnessed at first hand the ravages of consumption, and he resolved to devote his life to the annihilation of this terrible scourge. Day and night he toiled.

At last a vaccine was prepared, and he sought for opportunities to demonstrate its value. Experiments were carried out on various animals suffering from tuberculosis.

Then one day the miracle happened. An animal which had been injected with the serum recovered, and in a short while all traces of tuberculosis had disappeared.

Human sufferers were then treated, with the same glorious result.

Years have passed since I saw this strange and fascinating personality for the first time and heard him declare that consumption had been conquered. It was a thrilling experience.

That experience has been repeated—repeated with absolute conviction for Spahlinger has translated the ideals of those earlier days into the realms of realisation. Now he has human lives by the score to prove his claims.

Over eighty per cent. of the cases treated by him have recovered, and bear in mind, he has only taken in hand those people who have been looked upon by others as hopeless cases.

To-day, Spahlinger is a poor man. He has spent a huge fortune on his work. He asks for no return, except to wipe consumption from the face of the earth. That will bring its own reward.

And is not the following little paragraph a parable in itself? *Birmingham Evening Dispatch* (18th Oct.):—

Two sharply contrasted visitors to London at the present time are Mr. Henri Spahlinger, of Geneva, and Sir Basil Zaharoff, of half a dozen of the world's cities.

Mr. Spahlinger's researches into the treatment and cure of tuberculosis have attracted widespread attention. He has been at work 20 years, and has spent the resources of his family, amounting to £80,000.

Sir Basil Zaharoff, on the other hand, an international financier, is reputed to be worth £20,000,000. A Greek of Russian antecedents, a friend of Mr. Lloyd George while he was Prime Minister, Sir Basil was once described by a member of the present Government as a man of mystery, with great interests in the firms supplying international munitions.

And a Swiss again, this time a lady, is also making her effort to assuage human passions and direct them into more gentle ways by the softening influence of sweet music, *Bradford Daily Telegraph* (Oct. 16th):—

Mlle. Hegner's Recital in Bradford.

In a recital of well-known classical gems from the repertoire of the violin virtuoso, Mlle. Anna Hegner, the Swiss violinist, imposed upon herself a severe task at the Bradford Mechanics' Institute last night. The audience was by no means of large proportions, but the violinist had at least the satisfaction of receiving the heartiest applause for her fine performance.

Mlle. Hegner is not only a highly accomplished technician, but her playing reveals absolute sincerity and understanding. To say that in including the Bach Chaconne in her recital she was thoroughly justified, will give all musicians an idea of her standard of playing. Apart from anything else, the playing of this massive piece for violin alone imposes upon the performer no little physical strain, and in this respect Mlle. Hegner proved herself thoroughly capable of maintaining the sustained tone necessary, without the effort being apparent to her audience.

But it was in the more lyrical items of her recital that her playing had its greatest appeal. In a charming adagio by Mozart the poetic quality of her playing was quite alluring, as was her interpretation of the slow movements of the Max Bruch concerto. In some of the more lively pieces in her programme—two of the Brahmo-Joachim dances, for instance—there was lacking a little of the dashing abandon that contributes so largely to their appeal, but this criticism could certainly not be levelled at her performance of the finale of the Bruch concerto, a movement so gracious to the brilliant executants.

Her accompanist was Miss Vera Dawson, who rendered fine service, and the two artistes collaborated successfully in the second Beethoven sonata for violin and piano.

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FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The September returns of the Swiss Federal Railways are now available and make a very satisfactory showing. For the month the excess of revenue over expenditure amounted to 12,783,000 francs, and for the first nine months of the present year the net revenue has amounted to 81,318,000 francs, as compared with 23,062,000 frs. The railways still have a long way to go before they become an economic paying concern, but the present improvement is a very material step towards the eventual balancing of all the accounts, which is hoped for at a future date.

The A.G. Adolf Saurer, motor manufacturers in Arbat, have closed the year 1922-23 with a loss of Frs. 1,309,132, which compares with a net profit of Frs. 65,381 in the preceding year.

The Bodencreditbank in Basle is to reduce its capital from Frs. 10,000,000 to Frs. 1,000,000. This will enable the losses on German mortgages to be written off, and, as far as the proposed writing down of the capital will permit, the existing debit balance of Frs. 1,476,405 will be paid off.

In his speech at the meeting of the Swiss Locomotive and Engineering Works in Winterthur, Dr. Denzler made some interesting remarks regarding the effects on the locomotive industry of the conversion of lines from steam to electric traction. He put it on record that it is now 25 years since the company constructed the first electric locomotives for the Burgdorf-Thun railway, Messrs. Brown & Boveri providing the electrical equipment. Since then it has been the company's task to build locomotives capable of drawing the heaviest traffic, and, in spite of the war and the subsequent period of difficulties, the company have been able to make steady progress in their work and to win a high reputation in their line of construction. Great thanks are due to the progressive policy of the Swiss Federal Railways, which has made it possible to carry on the work. Thirty-five electric locomotives have been delivered to the railways during the current year, which brings up the total hitherto turned out by the Company to 400. Orders have also been received from abroad, notably from the Paris Orleans Railway, from the Japanese State Railways, and for Java.

The Company have also specialised in aeroplane engines, and orders are in hand from the Swiss military authorities for two engines for large military aeroplanes.

STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

	Nom.	Oct. 23	Oct. 30
Swiss Confederation 3% 1903	75.80%	75.25%	
Swiss Confed. 9th Mob. Loan 5%	106.50%	100.50%	
Federal Railways A—K 3½%	79.25%	78.15%	
Canton Basle-Stadt 5½% 1921	102.75%	102.00%	
Canton Fribourg 3% 1892...	71.50%	69.00%	

SHARES.	Nom.	Oct. 23	Oct. 30
Swiss Bank Corporation	500	641	642
Credit Suisse...	500	672	680
Union de Banques Suisses...	500	537	536
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	3040	3025
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	2107	2145
C. F. Bally S.A.	1000	1095	1090
Fabrique de Machines Oerlikon...	500	632	612
Entreprises Sulzer ...	1000	650	616
S.A. Brown Boveri (new) ...	500	284	287
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	170	168
Choc. Suisses Peter-Cailler-Kohler	100	109	108
Comp. de Navig. sur le Lac Léman	500	480	495

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