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The Swiss Observer

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HOME NEWS

FEDERAL.

An Anglo-Swiss Commission will meet presently at Geneva to draw up an agreement to obviate double taxation in the two countries. The Federal Council has appointed the following as members: Director Blau, Federal Tax-Administration; Guggisberg, President of State Council and Financial Director of the Canton Berne; State-Councillor Morand, Chief of the Financial Department of the Canton Geneva; and Dr. Fröhlicher, Secretary of Legation, at the Political Department in Berne. The deliberations will also be attended by Sub-Director Ruoff, Federal Tax-Administration, and Dr. Rezzonico, Secretary of Legation, at the Swiss Legation in London. The Experts attached to the Commission are: Dr. Hultegeger, Swiss Association of Commerce and Industry, and Juillard, President of the Comptoir d'Escompte de Genève and Committee-Member of the Association of Bankers.

N.Z.Z.

WATCH INDUSTRY.

The imports for the first 9 months of 1929 shew an increase of Frs. 682,000 and exports of Frs. 8½ million in comparison with the corresponding period of 1928.

SYNTHETIC RUBBER.

There has been quite a stir created by a supposed sensational discovery by a Bâle chemist, Mr. E. Kleiber, who claims to have discovered a formula for the manufacture of synthetic rubber. Whereas similar claims made previously were handicapped by the fact that the synthetic process was far more expensive than the natural one, in this instance Mr. Kleiber claims that his rubber would not cost more than 0.50 cms per kilo; that it has all the properties of natural rubber and even shews more elasticity. A German syndicate is being constituted to exploit this discovery on a large scale.

SWISS CONSULATES.

The Swiss Colony in New York, since the death of their honorary General Consul, have asked energetically for the establishment in their city of a General Consul, who would devote his whole time to consular work and be a fully paid agent of our Government. They even state who, in their opinion, should be appointed to this position. The blunt manner in which this proposition has been put forward has somewhat surprised our political circles who are accustomed to silent submission to Federal public powers. It has a slightly rebellious accent which does not fit in well with a bureaucratic atmosphere. Nevertheless, this will, no doubt, bring this question up at the next session of the National Council, as it is not only in New York but in several other Swiss colonies that the need is felt for full-blown consulates. The expense incurred by the establishment of one or two such consulates, where most needed, would, one feels, be more than compensated for by the advantages which would be gained by Swiss Industry.

LOCAL.

LUCERNE.

Philomena Waller, factory hand, disappeared on October 13th, and all endeavours to solve the mystery have, so far, been in vain. The Cantonal Government now offers a reward of Frs. 500 for the recovery of her body. A young man from Ballwil, who was last seen in her company at a dance hall, has been arrested.

St. G.T.

SCHWYZ.

Teacher Albert Haasheer, from Killwangen, left Schwyz on October 18th, alone, to climb the small Mythen and did not return. A salvage column of the S.A.C. section Mythen has recovered his badly battered body among the rocks near the northern peak.

N.

ST. GALL.

The old, old story! Mrs. Inauen-Schlumpf, Kobelvies-Oberriet, used petrol to light a fire. She died in the hospital at Altstätten from the burns received.

St. G.T.

Karl Nobel, aged 23, who only recently entered the railway service as shunter, was found dead on the line at Wil. It is supposed that he was crushed between two trains.

N.

AARAU.

A traffic problem of old standing has suddenly been solved at Zurzach. The centuries old barn of the well-known market house "zur Rose" collapsed and thus established a thoroughfare from the Schwertgasse to the station. The collapse has only slightly damaged the goods stored in the building; the long-desired passage has now become reality, and at small cost.

N.

BALE.

The offertories at the Antonius and the Klara churches have received the attentions of burglars. The gain was small.

A Bale angler plying his rod at the Kander has made a most curious catch. He used a grasshopper as bait and was throwing his line in the approved fashion, when from a near-by poplar something grey darted forth, caught the bait and endeavoured to get away with it. Picture the angler's astonishment, when he saw his line rising skyward. Hauling in was a matter of skill and patience beyond the ordinary, and produced a full-grown sparrow-hawk! Unused to such fishing, our angler received a good few scratches before he secured the proof of his story.

The carters and chauffeurs of the Allgemeine Konsumverein are on strike. They demand higher wages and a 48-hour week. The A.C.V. declares the acceptance of these demands an impossibility, as long as competing private undertakings are allowed to impose less favourable conditions for the same services. According to the present law, a 51-hour week may be demanded from transport workers without any payment for overtime, i.e., more than the hours now put in at the A.C.V. The wages scale for A.C.V. workers is as follows: Motor mechanics Frs. 4849-5161; chauffeurs Frs. 4615-4927; carters Frs. 4459-4771. They are also met generously with regard to holidays, sickness, and old age and invalidity insurance.—Needless to say, this strike is causing considerable inconvenience in the distribution of supplies to the various branches.

N.

VAUD.

For the last six months borings for petrol have been made in the plain on both banks of the Orbe river, as several geologists were of the opinion that oil would be found there. Although wells were sunk to a depth of 300 metres, no result was obtained, and the works have now been abandoned.

FRIBOURG.

The budget for 1930 forecasts an excess of receipts of Frs. 67,271, that is to say total receipts amounting to Frs. 13,362,062 and expenses to Frs. 13,294,970.

GIFT FROM MR. MOSCIEKI.

Mr. Moscicki, President of the Polish republic, who studied in Switzerland and was professor of chemistry in the Fribourg university, had adopted Swiss nationality. He was a bourgeois of Chandon, a borough in the Broye district. Mr. Moscicki has handed over a sum of Frs. 1,000 to the Committee for the relief of the victims of the cyclone which ravaged this part of the country in July last.

NEWS FROM THE LEGATION.

Madame PARAVICINI is due back to London this week.

M. Th. de SONNENBERG, Counsellor of the Legation, is on leave.

M. LOUIS MICHELI, first Secretary, who had been called to Berne in order to replace temporarily one of the officials of the Political Department, has taken up again his duties at the Legation some time ago.

M. CL. REZZONICO has been asked by the Volkswirtschaftsdepartement to go for a fortnight to Geneva in order to work with the Swiss and British delegates who are negotiating concerning certain technical matters.

At the Chancery, M. WALKER has left and has been replaced by M. MAGNIN.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

Fore!

I have received two post-cards from Swiss Golfers in the London District, in response to my appeal of last week. Together with two friends who, I know, will participate, we are now five, hardly a sufficient number for a competition and I would, therefore, once more ask Swiss Golfers in the London area to communicate with me, *without delay*, with a view to enabling me to fix up some mid-week jollity.

The new Zoo at Zurich.

Leicester Mail 10th Oct.

From the educational point of view it is probably better to have small collections of animals in various towns. From all other points of view it would seem to me that one really fine ZOO in Switzerland would have been enough and, although a "Zürblieter" myself, I should have thought that the very fine Basle Zoo might have been enlarged. But the Zurich children, young and old, will no doubt enjoy their new Zoo, especially as it is situated so delightfully.

After 70 years of trials and disappointments, Zurich has at last succeeded in establishing a Zoo.

Most large Swiss towns contain a small collection of animals, limited strictly to chamois, deer, bear and other native fauna. The Zurich venture, however, is the first successful attempt to establish a proper zoological garden representative of the animals of the whole world.

The lions are the main feature at Zurich, where some particularly fine specimens are now to be seen in captivity. There is also a large aquarium, open-air and indoor monkey-houses, and a bear-pit.

The lions have a particular interest for Zurich in that the lion is the municipal heraldic animal appearing in the city's arms. Many years ago King Menelik of Abyssinia, one of whose ministers was a Swiss from Zurich, wished to present the city with some lions, but the gift had to be reluctantly refused, there being no accommodation for them.

From various sources I have heard, with trembling and disgust to be sure, that ladies are going to wear a lot more cloth again, some even talk of the dust-trailing skirts coming in again. Heaven forbid! Besides, what about traffic regulations?

On the other hand, there seems a chance of ladies being able to wear real silken gowns once more and yet not so heavy as before, i.e., not so weighted with metal. Funny idea that! We often think of the times "When Knights were bold," but it never occurs to us to think of our women folk weighted down with metal in their silken garments, what? However, read on:

Less Tin in Silk

Daily Mirror 14th Oct.

Most women are probably unaware that when they buy a silk dress part of its weight may be tin; but it is a fact that some silks sold nowadays are heavily charged with salts of tin.

Up to a point, "weighting," as it is called, does not unduly impoverish silk; but if the percentage of tin content is too high silk will quickly rot in wear. In recent years the over-weighting of silks has been far too common, and at last the trade itself has had to take steps to check a growing evil.

As a result of an agreement between the chief European silk manufacturing countries (negotiated at an international congress at Zurich) there is likely to be less trouble in future.

The agreement, I hear, provides for certain definite limits on weighting for various types of silk.

It further provides for the marking of all silks conforming to the agreement to be hallmark'd, as it were, so that the public may be safeguarded against excessive adulteration.

And still . . .

Please reserve FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22nd,
for the BANQUET and BALL of the
CITY SWISS CLUB.