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The Swiss Observer

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HOME NEWS



FEDERAL.

SWISS PARLIAMENT RE-OPENS.

The two houses of the Swiss Parliament re-assembled last Monday for their autumn session which is expected to last about two weeks.

The National Council passed a credit of about 1½ million francs towards the cost of a suggested road to be built by the canton Ticino from Castagnola to the Italian frontier (Gandria road) on the condition that the Ticino expend a similar amount and that Italy on her side will continue the road from the frontier.

The States Council, on the recommendation of the Federal Council, voted an amount of half a million francs in favour of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

THE BUDGET FOR 1931.

Tentative figures compiled by the different Federal departments anticipate an increase in our budget for 1931 of about 28 million francs.

NO CHANGE IN THE INDEX FIGURE.

The index figure for the cost of living in Switzerland has remained stationary during the last few months at 159 (Basis: 100 in July 1914) and compares with 162 in August 1929.

"ALL QUIET" AT HOME.

In his official address at the opening of the Comptoir Suisse at Lausanne Federal Councillor Schulthess expressed himself in encouraging terms on the present economic conditions in Switzerland. He stated that, as a whole, our industries rested on a firm and healthy basis and we had every reason to be satisfied considering the critical difficulties encountered by other countries in order to maintain our independence we must be prepared for further sacrifices as only an efficient army could guarantee peace.

LOWER TRAFFIC RETURNS ON THE S.F.R.

The traffic returns on the system of the Swiss Federal Railways continue on their downward scale. For August, as compared with the same period last year, the loss in gross revenue is about two million francs, which brings up the total for the eight months to about eight millions. Added to an increase in the working expenses of about eight million francs the surplus to end of August is down about 17 million francs. The passengers carried during the same period show an increase of about one-and-a-half million the total to end of August being just over 86 million.

UNEMPLOYMENT.

A fairly satisfactory state is disclosed by the official figures for the month of August, though the number of unemployed seeking situations (10,351) is still about 6,000 more than at the same time last year. The textile trades, especially the silk ribbon and embroidery branches, are still reducing staff. On the other hand a slight improvement is recorded in the watch industry. In the clothing line there seems to be a shortage of tailors of both sexes. Shoe-makers are also much in demand.

BACK TO NORMAL TIME.

In the night from Saturday October 4th to Sunday October 5th France, Belgium, England and the other Western European countries will return to normal time. (Holland will go back to Amsterdam time). Western European time (W.E.T.) is one hour behind Central European time (C.E.T.). Amsterdam time differs from C.E.T. by 40 minutes. On this date most European countries will introduce their Winter time tables, which show alterations from the summer time tables especially with regard to the international trains to the winter resorts.

IMPORTANT ALTERATIONS BY OCTOBER 5TH.

To-day's bulletin is accompanied by a list of all the important alterations of the international time-table, so far as Switzerland is concerned. This list was made up by the time-table office of the Swiss Federal Railways and is meant to be of some help to the travel agencies and enquiry offices. Further copies may be had from the Swiss National Tourist Office at Zurich. Special attention is drawn to good international service to our winter sport districts.

FRENCH-SWISS CUSTOMS.

The French customs authorities have decided that the custom house Bourgfelden situated on the Swiss frontier on the international route 19, and which so far has been closed on Sundays and festival days, should be authorised, as an experiment, to carry out the customs control of the traffic (triptyque, frontier pass, customs and pass examination) also on these days. The customs house Bourgfelden lies on one of the roads leading to Bâle and will therefore effectively relieve the custom house at St. Louis.

"TOURING IN SWITZERLAND 1929."

The Swiss National Tourist Office has published a booklet in French and German entitled: "Touring in Switzerland 1929." It contains a general survey of the past year, statistics of the number of visitors to the different resorts and towns of Switzerland, based on the arrivals and the nights spent at those places. In addition to previous publications of this kind the booklet contains the revenue of the Swiss transport companies, of the mountain and season railways, the steamship companies and the air service. The reader will also find a table of the motor-cars temporarily staying in Switzerland. A diagram at the end illustrates clearly the statements in the text. This booklet will be sent free of charge to any applicants from abroad. Write to the Swiss National Tourist Office at Zurich and Lausanne.

NEW REGULATIONS FOR INFANTRY.

The old Infantry Regulations of 1908, with alterations of 1914 has at last been superseded. It was none too early as in each division there existed a different conception in the execution of movements according to the views of the responsible instructor and thus chaos prevailed.

The Defence Commission, which worked for several years, submitted the result of its labours and the proposals were accepted by the Military Department on June 6th, they will be in force during the autumn manoeuvres. Much importance is laid upon the light machine guns attached to the infantry, as well as on the easy movement of the latter.

It appears that much more freedom is left to the individual leader as compared with the 1908 regulations and there is also a new paragraph to the effect that officers and non-commissioned officers must take up duties in Rifle Associations as instructors and leaders of the men, during the time they are not on military service.

DANGER OF HIGH-TENSION WIRES.

The Inspectorate of the High-tension system reports that during the year 1929, ninety-four accidents to persons occurred through high-tension wires, as compared with ninety-nine in the preceding year. Of these accidents twenty-three were fatal (30 in 1928). These figures do not include the railways. The number of accidents on the railway system for 1929 amounts to eighteen, of which seven involved railway employees and eleven passengers or third persons. Seven of these accidents were fatal.

LIONS AND BEARS.

A couple of bears escaped from the wild beast enclosure near Chaux-de-Fonds and inspected in due course the level-crossing at "Vanel." After a prolonged chase by the keepers and others one of them was captured whilst the other, who developed an atrocious fighting spirit, had to be shot. On the other hand, our wild beast stock has been enriched by four lions which were presented by Mr. Stosch-Sarrasani, who has been touring in Switzerland with his menagerie. A beautiful pair of stud-lions went to the Zoological Gardens at Basle and the lonely lion kept at the monastery of Einsiedeln has now been amply rewarded by being joined by two fair mates.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

On Monday last a boy fell from the Rathaus bridge into the Limmat. His cries for help were heard by the 18-year-old youth H. Meier, who is well-known in swimming circles in Zurich. Meier jumped into the water without taking off any of his clothing and brought the boy, who was unconscious, back to land. This is the second time within ten days that Meier has been able to save life whilst risking his own. Official recognition is due to him for his courageous acts. *St.G.T.*

BERNE.

From the 28th of October to the 23rd of December, the Radio station Berne, in conjunction with some school authorities, is making

trials with scholastic programmes, to test the utility of radio in the schools. The transmissions will take place every Tuesday from 2.10 to 2.40 and Thursday from 10.30 to 11 o'clock. The programmes to be transmitted consist of music, German, French, English, Geography, Natural History, and "Technic." The whole syllabus will last for 20 half-lessons and is only available for the higher schools (7th and 9th school year). *N.Z.*

SCHWYZ.

The motor car driver who, on the 17th of October last year, knocked down and killed the mayor of Steinen, J. Suter, was last week sentenced to two months imprisonment and to a fine of 300 Frs., as well as to a withdrawal of his driver's licence for 5 years. He has further to pay a compensation of 1,000 Frs. to each of the two sons and 5,000 Frs. to the widow. To the latter he has also to make a monthly grant of 120 Frs. until April 1950. On top of all this he has to pay all the costs. Against the civil claim he has lodged an appeal. *V.*

BASLE.

The employee of the Firma Parasin in Bâle, who, as already reported in the *S.O.*, simulated a pepper attack and robbery of 21,500 Frs., which amount has to a large extent been recovered, has been condemned to seven months imprisonment. His accomplice, a 31-year-old antiquarian received five months conditional imprisonment. They also have to bear the costs of the case and to make up the balance of the money missing, to the amount of 1,912 Frs. *N.Z.*

FRIBOURG.

Near Delley a car skidded on the slippery road and ran into a telegraph post over into the road ditch. Of the four occupants the two children of Mme. Vessaz contracted serious injuries and had to have each a leg amputated at the cantonal hospital in Lausanne.

GENEVA.

In the presence of a large number of distinguished Polish visitors and local leaders of society and art a memorial tablet has been unveiled by the Polish Foreign Minister at No. 2 Rue du Rhone to mark the place where the great Polish poet Sigismund Krasinski used to reside.

NEUCHÂTEL.

Fresh cases of diphtheria are reported from several districts; the malady has also appeared at Berne where some of the schools had to be closed.

SCHAFFHOUSE.

The central committee of the Swiss Communist Party has decided that the *Schaffhauser Arbeiter Zeitung* shall no longer be an organ of the Communist Party, but that they would start a new paper under the title of the "Rote Schaffhauser Arbeiter Zeitung." *N.Z.Z.*

CHUR.

Miss Stecher of Celerina, on a trial run in her motor-car to Chur, lost control when passing over the Alberta Pass near the hospital, and the car overturned. Her father, the proprietor of the "Bernina" in Celerina was killed outright, whilst his two daughters received serious injuries. *St.G.T.*

BELLINZONA.

The chamois hunter G. Bougio, who was hunting in the mountains of Grono, had been missing for two days when a rescue column found him near to the Italian frontier lying between rocks and close to a dead chamois.

His head was smashed in through a fall and death must have been instantaneous. *St.G.T.*

ALPINE ACCIDENTS.

The treacherous Edelweiss claims many victims among the Swiss Alps during the summer, but it has a new rival, according to dispatches from Montboven, a mountain village near Châteaud'Ex. The official report recording the death of an eight-year-old boy reads: "Killed in a fall while picking framboises." It appears that during the late summer "fraises du bois," or wild mountain strawberries, and the wild raspberries are to be found at high altitudes, and especially in patches on steep rocky cliffs which are practically inaccessible. To obtain these out-of-season dainties the mountaineers take almost unbelievable risks.

The ironic fact, little known among amateur Alpinists, is, however, that Edelweiss is easily found in certain soil in accessible mountain valleys without the slightest risk to life or inconvenience.