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HOME NEWS



FEDERAL.

GOVERNMENT MONOPOLY FOR THE SALE OF SPIRITS.

The result of last Sunday's voting in the much discussed new regulations for the sale of spirits, with special reference to home-distilled Schnaps, shows the gratifying result of:—For 490,311; Against 320,635.

The new legislation was accepted by 16 cantons and 2 half-cantons, and rejected by 3 cantons and 4 half-cantons.

A complete review of the voting is given in the following list:—

	For	Against
Zurich	88,236	35,311
Berne	80,790	58,483
Lucerne	14,339	27,211
Uri	2,386	2,217
Schwyz	4,740	8,342
Obwalden	1,246	2,921
Nidwalden	818	2,395
Glarus	4,247	3,393
Zug	2,741	4,146
Fribourg	20,065	10,150
Soleure	15,925	15,088
Basle (Stadt)	15,780	5,736
Basle (Land)	8,829	8,951
Schaffhausen	7,427	3,688
Appenzell (A. Rh.)	4,758	5,948
Appenzell (I. Rh.)	1,349	1,139
St. Gall	34,181	26,059
Grisons	15,517	6,435
Aargau	33,462	26,685
Thurgau	19,489	9,868
Ticino	13,428	5,006
Vaud	48,188	31,933
Valais	15,000	7,000
Neuchâtel	19,107	6,304
Geneva	18,272	5,226

(Cantons which have rejected the motion are shown in italics.)

As the new law was recommended by all political parties, apart from the Communists, the result was practically a foregone conclusion, and the referendum has once again clearly shown the opinion of the population. The objection of the Communists was not based on the demerits of the legislation, but must be explained as an attempt to destroy all and everything which means the constitutional welfare of Switzerland.

The Federal Government hopes that the new tax of one franc per litre will yield a yearly revenue of at least 25,000,000 francs, which will be devoted to social welfare work. Whilst the new legislation not only gives the farmers every chance of gaining in the end, it will also improve the quality of table fruit and incidentally educate a large proportion of the population in showing them the value of fresh fruit when consumed as such.

In 1885 during the 'temperance' movement the slogan was "Down with Schnaps! Drink more Wine and Beer!" This time it sounded different "Down with Schnaps! Enjoy Fruit as Nature offers it to You!" surely a sign that great progress has been made during the last 45 years.

Finally it must be remembered that, although statistics clearly prove that our past records in the consumption of alcoholic beverages were a black spot in our social system, it must not be forgotten that Switzerland's population of not quite 4 million was not alone responsible for the high percentage, as the number of visitors is calculated to be about another 4 million per year.

FOREIGN TRADE IN SWITZERLAND.

Owing to the time of the season, foreign trade is generally slack during the month of January. Concerning the exports the figures relative to watchmaking particularly show a tendency to decline, after the lively business in December.

In January 1930, this decrease has been particularly evident as compared with the corresponding month of the preceding year. The amount of exports and of imports was 354.8 millions against 418.7 millions in December last and 365.7 millions in January 1929. The deficit of

exportation is 61.6 millions. Exports amount to only 70.1 per cent. of Imports.

In order to arrive at a more exact comparison in dealing with these figures it is necessary to take into consideration the fall of prices.

In January the Imports were 208.2 million francs against 241.3 million in December and 212.1 million in January 1929, which, when dissected gives the following figures (in millions of francs): Foodstuffs: 39 (47 and 43.5); Raw materials for agriculture: 11 (13 and 14); Fuel and heating materials: 17 (18 and 13); Raw materials for industry: 51.5 (58 and 55); Manufactured goods: 47 (49 and 43); Other headings: 43.5 (83 and 44).

If we consider the Exports, their total amount in January 1930 was 146.6 millions against 177.4 in December and 153.6 in January 1929;—

Foodstuffs: 12.3 (11.4 and 12.5); Textile Products: 51.3 (54.5 and 61.7); Machinery and metals: 40.5 (43.5 and 34.6); Watchmaking: 11.6 (36.3 and 14.5); Chemical products, dyes, etc.: 13 (14.1 and 13.8).

These figures show that compared with the preceding month the exports also point to an almost general decline with a single insignificant exception. The same may be said in regard to January 1929. Nevertheless, the exception is more important, as the exports of metals, etc. show an increase of nearly 6 millions between these two periods.

If we consider the principal purchasers of Swiss products, we find that the figures relative to each country varied as follows between the three periods alluded to: Germany: 24.8 (30.4 and 28.9); France: 16 (16.7 and 13.9); Italy: 9.7 (12.6 and 11.6); England: 20.3 (22.2 and 21.1); Other European countries: 35.7 (47.6 and 33.3); United States of America: 10.4 (13.1 and 13.2).

In December, the decline is general, whereas in comparison with January 1929 two important exceptions are to be noted in favour of Germany and of the collective heading of other European countries. S.I.T.

A NEW AIR LINE.

A new line has been inaugurated by the Balair company who has taken into service four of the latest triple engine Fokker monoplanes, for use on the route Geneva-Zurich-Munich-Vienna-Budapest. The liner leaves Geneva at 8.30 a.m. and is due at Budapest at 6.35 p.m. Another company takes the passengers from Budapest via Bucarest to Constantinople, which is reached after 19 hours. It is therefore possible to reach the borders of the Black Sea within less than 48 hours after leaving Geneva.

RESTORATION OF A CATHEDRAL.

The Federal Council has decided to allocate the sum of 50,000 francs for the restoration of the cathedral of St. Gall.

SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS.

The Directors of the S.B.B. have agreed on a novel and very commendable way of commemorating the opening of the St. Gotthard and Simplon tunnels. They have allowed a special reduction of the fares by 50 per cent. for schools for any journeys on which one of the two tunnels is included. This concession enters into force on the 1st May 1930 and reductions will be made until the end of 1932.

THE RED SUNDAY.

The Federal Council has expelled from Switzerland two German communist leaders who had managed to cross the frontiers in order to take part in the Zurich demonstration of "Red Sunday"; one of them was wearing the uniform of the "Rote Frontkämpfer" under his ordinary clothing.

PROGRESS OF SWISS CONCERN.

The Nestlé & Anglo Swiss Condensed Milk Co. has just published its 63rd annual report which bears witness of the strong position and steady progress of this great undertaking. The dividend has been increased from 12 per cent. to 16 per cent. Though the Company has entered into close working arrangements with similar concerns in Germany and Holland the present policy of establishing separate companies in those foreign countries where imports are rendered difficult is being extended. The report also states that the sale of its products in Great Britain meets with considerable competition.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

Robert Steiger, Director of the Schweizerische Volksbank, has spent 25 years in the service of the Bank. Entering in 1905 as one of the junior employees, he was elected to the Board in March

1914. Mr. Steiger has been instrumental in enlarging the scope of the post-school education of commercial apprentices at the schools of the Swiss Mercantile Society, of which he is an Honorary Member. N.Z.Z.

On the occasion of the 400th anniversary in 1889 of Hans Waldmann's death, a committee instituted a fund for the purpose of a monument to Zurich's famous Burgomaster, who prided himself on having made his town the most beautiful in the confederation after the turmoils of the old Zurich wars.

The town council of Zurich has now given permission for the erection of the monument near the Münsterbrücke and it is hoped that the project will be realised in the near future. Hermann Haller, the sculptor, has been commissioned to submit a model and when the necessary funds, about 100,000 francs, have been obtained, Zurich will become the richer by another monument.

BERNE.

The Executive Council of the Canton Berne was present in corpore to celebrate the happy solution of the Grauholz Denkmal problem. This monument was practically hidden by the new extension of the Federal Remount Depot, so that it was decided to move it to a vantage point near Fraubrunnen. The population of Berne and surroundings arrived in great numbers for the festive act, which terminated with the singing of the Schweizerpsalm. N.Z.Z.

LUCERNE.

The Lion of Lucerne is still out of sight behind its usual wooden winter cover. Apparently the beautiful weather of the early Spring days has not penetrated into the offices of our Authorities. Visitors to the town are greatly disappointed at missing this well-known monument to the prowess of our forebears.

Propst Dr. Franz von Segesser, at the Hofkirche, has celebrated the golden jubilee of his priesthood. Lucerne and catholics throughout the country are unanimous in wishing him continued good health and in expressing to him their appreciation and gratitude for his beneficent work. V.

SCHWYZ.

The dwelling and sawmill of Meinrad Kälin "im Burket" in Wilerzell has been totally destroyed by fire. The fire broke out in the sawmill and made such rapid progress, that Kälin and his family had just time to escape with their lives. Not a single piece of furniture could be saved. A few days before fire broke out in Kälin's house, but was discovered early enough to prevent serious consequences. The cause of the second fire is not yet known. N.Z.Z.

BASLE.

The Communal Council of Bottmingen has received a most curious document from the Cantonal Office of Police and Justice. It is no less than a demand for the repatriation of 20 descendants of one Mathias Jundt, who left Bottmingen in 1807 for Southern Russia. It appears that these people are destitute and of no fixed abode and therefore run the risk of being exiled to Siberia. The Council, while realizing the urgency of the matter, has decided to obtain further particulars and to ascertain the extent to which Federal and Cantonal help may be expected. N.

Ch. Schaublin of Titterten, employed at the Elektrogenossenschaft, found a cigar in the works. He took it home and lit it. Immediately the cigar exploded and tore off the tips of three fingers. He was also badly burned in the face. It has been established that the cigar contained an explosive cartridge; so far, it has been impossible to find out who placed the cigar in the works and for what purpose. N.Z.Z.

ST. GALL.

At the elections for the Grand Council of the Canton, the Liberals have retained their previous number of seats. The Catholic-Conservatives lost 2 seats, and the Social-Democrats won 7 seats. The two Democratic parties have been almost wiped out, as only one candidate of each was returned as against 4 each in the previous Council. N.

NEUCHÂTEL.

The accounts for the canton of Neuchâtel for 1929 show a deficit of 212,771 francs.

VAUD.

The death occurred at Yverdon of Miss Anne-Adèle Correvon, a well-known painter of Alpine and Jura scenes. (Continued on back page)