

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1931)

Heft: 521

Rubrik: Prepaid subscription rates

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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

EDITED WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MEMBERS OF THE LONDON COLONY.

Telephone: CLERKENWELL 9595

Published every Friday at 23, LEONARD STREET, LONDON, E.C.2.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO. LONDON.

VOL. 11—No. 521

LONDON, OCTOBER 17, 1931.

PRICE 3d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UNITED KINGDOM	{ 3 Months (13 issues, post free) : 36
AND COLONIES	{ 6 " " 66
	{ 12 " " 12-
SWITZERLAND	{ 6 Months (26 issues, post free) : Frs. 7.50
	{ 12 " " 14-

*Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postscheck-Konto
Basle V 5718.*



(Compiled by courtesy of the following contemporaries: *National Zeitung*, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, *St. Galler Tagblatt*, *Vaterland* and *Tribune de Genève*.)

FEDERAL.

SWITZERLAND AND THE GOLD STANDARD.

The Swiss Federal Council discussed at some length the present financial and economic situation, and though no definite decision was arrived at it may be said that the Government has resolved to maintain the gold standard. It is possible that the rise in the adverse trade balance may compel the Government to set up some import limitation. On the other hand, the decrease in the revenue derived from Customs duties, from the tax on coupons, and from the stamp duty make it necessary to make some drastic reduction in next year's expenditure.

NEW GENERAL MANAGER OF THE SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS.

As foreshadowed in our number of the 3rd inst., the Federal Council has appointed M. Maurice Paschoud, a member of the Government of the Canton of Vaud, General Manager of the Swiss Federal Railways in succession to the late M. Arsène Niquille.

M. Paschoud was born in 1882 in Lutry, he studied in Lausanne, Berlin and Paris and is a Lic. ès sc. math. of the University of Paris and Dr. ès. sc. math. of the Sorbonne in Paris. He was also a National Councillor from 1928 until his election as member of the "Vaudois" Government. For some time he occupied the post of Professor of Mathematics at the University at Lausanne.

ZONE DISPUTE.

The last act in this protracted dispute will take place shortly. The Swiss delegate, Professor Logoz, has already left for the Hague.

SWISS CUSTOM'S RECEIPTS.

The Swiss Custom's Receipts for the 3rd quarter 1931, amount to 72,265,357f., against 68,163,467f. during the equivalent quarter in 1930. The increase therefore amounts to 4,101,890f.

FEDERAL GYMNASTIC FESTIVAL 1932.

The Federal Council has voted a credit amounting to 20,000f. towards the cost of the Federal Gymnastic Festival which will take place during next year at Aarau.

THE NEW FEDERAL LIBRARY.

The official inauguration of the Federal Library in Berne, has been fixed for the 31st of this month. The Federal Government will be officially represented at this function.

RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION IN SWITZERLAND.

In view of the fact that the Swiss Federal Railways have decided to electrify 504km. more of their system during the next five years, and in order to cover their growing requirements in power, a new power station is to be erected at Etzel, on the River Sihl. The project involves harnessing the Sihl by means of a dam near Einsiedeln at an altitude of 892 metres and the diversion of its course by a pressure tunnel and pipe line to the power house situated at Altendorf, at the upper end of the Lake of Zürich. The catchment area is estimated at approximately 156 sq. km., and the reservoir, consisting of an artificial lake 9km. in length and 1.3km. in width, will cover an area of 11 sq. km. and will have an effective storage capacity of 91,500,000 cubic metres.

The Swiss Federal Railways are to construct and work the new Etzel Station in conjunction with the North-Eastern Swiss Power Supply Company. The railways will have a right to 55 per cent. and the Power Supply Company to 45 per cent. of the output, calculated at 156,000,000 kw. hours. The railways will install single-phase

units rated at 60,000 h.p., and the Power Supply Company three-phase units, also of 60,000 h.p.

Building is to be begun during next autumn, and it is expected that the work will be finished in 1935.

NEW SWISS ALPINE CLUB HUT.

The "Dr. Rossier Hut" (10,800ft.), built by the "Jaman" section of the Swiss Alpine Club to accommodate 30 persons and to facilitate the ascent of the Dent Blanche, was opened on that mountain early this month.

MOUNTAIN RESCUES.

During the past three years some interesting experiments have been made by the Swiss Alpine Club and the Federal Military Department with a view to testing the value of aeroplane co-operation in the case of mountain accidents. A further experiment took place this year in the upper Turtmann Valley, based on the supposition that a party of climbers had met with an accident in an unknown place.

A search party was waiting for instructions at the Turtmann hut. A military aeroplane summoned from Berne circled over the region between the Turtmann and Topali huts, and in spite of adverse weather it found the "victims" after a search of 15 minutes, dropped food parcels and blankets for them, and flew back to the hut. In another five minutes it dropped a map indicating to the search party the situation of the stranded party. One hour and a half later the search party reached the indicated spot and the "tourists" were all "saved."

Within the next few days a real rescue was effected with the help of an aeroplane. Four tourists of Sion were marooned on the Aiguilles Rouges d'Arolla and unable to move from a small rock ledge they had reached. Abundant snow and thick mist had made the task of finding them extremely difficult for the search parties, and the stranded alpinists, who had no food left and no warm clothing, had already spent four days and three nights in the snow before a search party came and rescued them.

The value of aeroplane co-operation was clearly proved on this occasion. The aircraft, summoned by telephone at 6.30 a.m., left Lausanne at 7; within half an hour it discovered the marooned alpinists and dropped several parcels. Shortly after, the airmen saw that a search party had arrived on the spot. They flew back to Sion, where they reported their news five hours before they could have reached that town by usual means.

The task of the airmen was difficult, as they had to drop their parcels on a snow-covered rock ledge of an area of about 50 square yards hanging over a precipice. They could not use the ordinary 50lb. parcels employed during previous experiments, but they managed to use small bags attached in couples at the end of ropes 12 yards long, and all their bags landed safely on the rock platform. But, on the other hand, it was noticed that, owing to the lack of proper signals, the airmen and search parties could not communicate. It will therefore be necessary to set up a special code of signals for such cases, and it is expected that further experiments will be made next year both with a new model for parcels and a code.

LUCKY WINNER IN THE "HYPSP" LOTTERY.

The first prize (25,000f.) in the "Hypsp" Exhibition Lottery went to a young out-of-work man Gottfried Hodler.

THE RHEIN—BRIDGES.

The following statistical figures have lately been published.

In the Middle Ages only two solid bridges over the Rhein were in existence, namely at Konstanz and Basle. Up to 1859 not a single solid bridge from Basle to the mouth of the river was built. To-day 117 bridges are leading over the Rhein, 55 road, 46 Railway and 16 Ferry bridges. From the source down to Reichenau there are 16, and from the latter place to the "Bodensee"

21, and from this Lake to Basle 22 bridges are in existence. From Basle downwards to the mouth 58 bridges span the river.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

A legacy amounting to 200,000f. was left to the Kranken und Diakonissen-Anstalt Neumünster by the executors of the late Miss Ida Müller.

* * *

An anti-fascist "Kampftag," organised by the Swiss Communist Party took place last Sunday at Zurich.

A procession through the town was arranged, and over 50 flags and posters were carried along. The participants were then addressed on the Fraumünsterplatz by various speakers, amongst them the notorious agitator Fritz Platten.

The latter eulogized conditions in Russia, mentioning that the difference of the capitalist States are causing immense amusement in Soviet Russia, a country where unemployment was an unknown factor.

Russia, he said, has an army of millions ready to march at any moment to defend their country, and if necessary would not hesitate to cross their borders to fight those who are opposed to the Soviet Government.

BERNE.

M. Otto Boss, a member of the well-known family of Hoteliers has died at Grindelwald at the age of 44.

GLARIS.

On the occasion of his 70th birthday Anniversary, M. Jacques Ruch-Müller, a resident of Zurich has made bequests totalling at 100,000f. to his home community Miltödi.

BASLE.

A Swiss scientist returning from an expedition to Australia brought in his luggage the skeleton of an aborigine.

Customs officials were unable to find "skeletons" listed in the tariff schedule, so they admitted the bones, duty free, under the category "Articles already worn."

* * *

The work on the "Dreirosenbrücke," the fifth Rhein Bridge at Basle started last week.

From Basle comes the news of the death of M. Adolf Siegrist, a well-known painter and former collaborator of the late Franz Baur, decorative painter of the famous town Hall.

GENEVA.

M. Martin Naef, a member of the Geneva Government has resigned from his post for reasons of health. M. Naef had been in poor health for some considerable time.

* * *

Through the failure of the Banque de Genève, the canton of Geneva suffers a loss of 15,000,000f.

AARAU.

The late Wilhelm Meier, from Kappelerhof, near Baden, has left an amount of 50,000f. to be distributed amongst various charitable institutions.

APPENZELL A.Rh.

Only a few days after the death of his brother, M. Täfner-Fritsch, the other partner in the well-known Embroidery firm of E. Tanner and Co., Eugen Tanner-Heer has died in Heerisau at the age of 63.

THURGAU.

Dr. Eugen Dünnerberger of Weinfelden, who had died last February has left his whole fortune of nearly 900,000f. to various Institutions.

OBWALDEN.

The oldest female inhabitant of the Canton of Obwalden has died at Lungern. Katharina Imfeld would have celebrated her 100th birthday on the 19th of November. For fully 80 years the deceased was in constant service with the same family.

A TRAVERS LA SUISSE.

The first Film Show of the Season arranged by the Nouvelle Société Helvétique (London Group) took place last Saturday afternoon, at King George's Hall, Tottenham Court Road. A full report will appear in next week's issue.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

PLEASE RESERVE
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20th
for the
ANNUAL BANQUET AND BALL,
at the
May Fair Hotel, Berkeley Square, W.1.