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HOME NEWS



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FEDERAL.

SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAY.

The annual report for 1930 of the Swiss Federal Railways shows that the account was balanced with a net profit of 1,594,838 frs. as against 15,034,165 frs. in 1929, thus reflecting the depressed economic conditions which prevailed in Switzerland during last year. The provisional estimates, however, had placed the profit at 451,000 frs., so that the final results are considerably better than were anticipated. The number of passengers conveyed increased by 1,400,000 compared with the previous year; but the tonnage of goods traffic decreased by 700,000. The actual working receipts amounted to 420,546,374 frs., whilst working expenditure totalled 291,419,950 frs., a balance on the right side of 129,126,424 frs., compared with 150,975,841 frs. in 1929. The gross profit totalled 154,831,536 frs., and after deducting financial charges and obligations amounting, in the aggregate, to 153,236,698 frs., the net revenue was little more than a million and a half francs. Owing to trade depression and the departure from the gold standard in Great Britain and other countries there has since been a serious decline in the tourist traffic in Switzerland. This is likely to have further adverse effect on the railway returns, which will be reflected in the report for 1931.

BANKRUPTCIES IN SWITZERLAND.

The severe depression which has swept over the world has not resulted in an increased number of bankruptcies in Switzerland. In 1927, 652 bankruptcies were reported for the twelve months; in 1928 there were 623; in 1929, 619; and in 1930 616. During the first seven months of 1931 the total number of bankruptcies was 362 compared with 407 in the same period last year.

ZÜRICH.

The death is reported of M. Otto Ulmer-Hemmman, Senior Partner in the firm Ulmer & Knecht at the age of 71.

A large fire partly destroyed the Strebelerwerke (Fabrik für Zentralheizungs Anlagen) at the Herdern-Hohlstrasse. The damage caused is estimated at over 100,000fr.

BERNE.

M. F. G. Neuenschwander, member of the Grand Council, and a well-known figure in Bernese political circles, has died at Oberdiessbach at the age of 68.

The Guarantee Fund amounting to 300,000fr. for the "Hyspa" (Ausstellung für Hygiene and Sport) which was held this summer has been paid back in full.

LUCERNE.

Dr. George Amrein, a well-known and popular medical practitioner has died at Sursee.

The Banking firm, Messrs. Spieler & Co., in Lucerne has closed and applied to the Court for permission to go into voluntary liquidation. M. F. Frank has been appointed receiver.

BASLE.

When the world-drug traffic trial was resumed at Basle on Monday, it was alleged that a large quantity of drug had been consigned to a doctor at Fribourg as "infant food."

The allegation was made during the examination of Dr. Rauch, a Geneva chemist, who was accused of having sold to the doctor heroin of the value of £4,600.

Part of the consignment, it was stated, arrived at Basle in tins, packed in boxes, which were declared to contain infant milk food.

Dr. Rauch denied having sent heroin through the doctor, and insisted that the boxes must have been changed at Basle or elsewhere.

BASLE.

Dr. Gadiant Engli, a director of the "Gesellschaft für Chemische Industrie" has received the degree of *Dr. phil. honoris causa* by the University of Basle.

GENEVA.

M. Moriaud, late member of the Geneva Government, who was arrested two months ago in connection with the Banque de Genève affair, has been liberated on bail, after having been previously refused bail thrice. It is reported that the deciding factor in acceding to the entreatments of Moriaud's council, was the state of health of the prisoner. Bail was fixed at the sum of 200,000fr.

According to the balance sheet of the Banque de Genève which was prepared by the "Schweiz. Treuhandgesellschaft, the creditors of the aforesaid institution will lose about 47 million francs.

THURGAU.

The firm of Saurer in Arbon, has placed an amount of 55,000fr. at the disposal of their workmen, who are partially unemployed; this brings the funds voted for this purpose to a total of 300,000fr. since the crisis started.

SOLOTHURN.

A meeting of creditors of the Kammgarnfabrik O. Walther-Obrecht A.G. Mülliswil took place at Balstal. According to the report of the appointed receiver, the assets of the concern amount to 1,046,210fr. against 1,613,514fr. liabilities. The share capital of 1.3 million francs is considered lost.

FOOTBALL.

SWITZERLAND v. AUSTRIA.

Next Sunday, 29th November, Switzerland are due to play the first International Match of the season, against the famous Austrain team, in Basel. The Swiss team was chosen on the 14th inst., to play as follows:—

Pasche, Minelli, Weiler H. (Grasshoppers); Fasson (Young Boys); Imhof (Biel); Spiller (Lausanne); Jaek (Servette); Trello (Grasshoppers); Büche (Nordstern); Springer (Blue Stars); Kramer (Lausanne).

This selection has a good press and appears to be just about the best representative eleven we can call upon. Let the players be determined to play their normal, hard and unyielding game and forget the brilliant successes of their opponents over Germany and Scotland. Only thus may we hope the result to be fit for publication. LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP 22nd NOVEMBER.

National League.

Young Fellows 3, Urania 2.
St. Gallen 2, Chaux-de-Fonds 2.
Servette 0, Grasshoppers 4.
Young Boys 3, Blue Stars 1.
Old Boys 0, Biel 2.
Aarau 2, Etoile 4

League I

Lausanne 5, Solothurn 0.
Cantonal 0, Racing 3.
Grenchen 6, Stade Lausanne 1.
Oerlikon 1, Chiasso 0.
Winterthur 2, Concordia 2.
Locarno 4, Luzern 1.

SWISS CUP

2nd Round: Fribourg 3, Monthey 0.
2nd Round Replay: Lugano 0, Basel 1.

In the National League, Groupe I, Young Fellows displace Zurich at the top of the table, the other positions remaining practically unchanged. In Groupe II, Grasshoppers are now first with 9 points followed by Carouge 8, Aarau 7, Biel 7, Blue Stars, Young Boys, Etoile 6, Old Boys 4, and Servette 3 points.

In the First League, Groupe I, Lausanne Sports after 7 games have not lost a point, goals for 36, against 7, followed by Racing Lausanne with 10 points. In contrast, the third Lausanne Club, Stade, have lost all seven games. In the second Groupe Concordia now have a clear point lead over Brühl. Locarno with one match in hand is third with 8 points, 2 points behind Brühl.

In the Swiss Cup replay in Lugano, Basel gave further evidence of their improvement by their narrow win. Basel will meet Brühl in St. Gallen in the next round, a very interesting fixture. Fribourg is at home to Young Fellows Bern, who should make certain to be in the last eight. M.G.

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

Barbar and Römer a new book by Felix Möschlin (A. Francke A. G. Berne) published at Swiss francs, 8.20.

The story, in short, tells of a Journalist and Scientist of Basle travelling to Rome to participate there in one of those Congresses which, holding their meetings now in this, now in that Capital or Seaside Place of Europe, hardly ever seem to achieve any real progress, as far as the international question which they are supposed to settle, are concerned.

There, in the capital of Fascismo our hero very soon enters into political conflicts, as unexpected as they are violent and a political outrage the repercussions of which might be as those of the tragedy of Serajevo, threatens.

How this moral conflict, interwoven with political and economical arguments, finally finds a solution, is the fascinating and exciting secret which it would be a pity to divulge here.

Apart from the story itself, however, the chief value of the book, to my mind, lies in the excellent descriptions of Rome the Eternal City. Reading through these pages, I felt again the influence which Rome, that colossal shrine of inherited culture must exercise on any thinking person. I imagined myself again wandering on the Pincio on a Sunday morning, I felt the cold shadows of the Corso Umberto, I blinked in the vivid sunlight when turning towards the Piazza Venetia and the wonderful National Monument below the Capitol.

Again I saw the Eternal City lying at my feet, below the Garibaldi monument on the Janicolo, St. Peter and its majestic dome giving the Town an appearance almost of the East, especially at the time when the last rays of sunshine turning from gold to blue and then to steely grey, linger over all those churches and monuments all those Hills and dark narrow streets down below that were Rome when I saw it.

At that time the saying was "if you have not seen the Pope you have not seen Rome" while now, it is the Duce you must see. And Fascismo about which we really know so very little, plays a big rôle in this book of Felix Moeschlin. Not that the author really takes sides for or against, although he pretends to do so. At least, when I had read the book, I was not sure in my mind, whether or not that Swiss Journalist and Scientist had finally succumbed and decided that what he calls the Positive in Fascismo outweighed the inevitable drawbacks of that system of Government.

The positive in Fascismo counts among its achievements the colonisation of the Agro Romano, the Campagna Romana which, in living memory was a desert almost with swamps, malarial tracts and, on the whole, unproductive. Some 200,000 hectares have to be won back for cultivation and we find, page 255:

"Da sehen Sie in den ersten Musterwirtschaften das Bild des zukünftigen Ganzen: Traktoren, Strassen, Bewässerungsanlagen, Brunnenanlagen, Windmühlen, die Wasser pumpen, Reservoirs wie Seen, ungeheure Rohrleitungen, Korn, Zucker-Rüben, schweizerisches und holländisches Zuchtvieh. Statt 10,000 Stück Rindvieh anno 1922 haben wir heute 20,000 Stück, statt 15,000 Hektaren Getreidefeldern 32,000, statt 4,000 Hektaren Kunstwiesen 32,500 Hektaren."

"Und was hätten Sie ohne Fascismus?"

"Nichts!".....And here is a thought which might give a number of British landed proprietors who neglect the cultivation of their land, furiously to think:

"Mann hatte Gesetze, aber keine Ausführung der Gesetze. Man wusste, was zu tun war, aber man tat es nicht. Die Grossgrundbesitzer waren dagegen. Heute setzt man sie ins Gefängnis, man enteignet sie, wenn sie nicht mitkamen."

Again, positive probably is also the colossal but fertile opinion of the Duce in himself and in his mission..... page 347:

"Einen Wahnsinnigen nennen sie dich. O, dass es einen gibt, der wahnsinnig genug ist, die Freude am Kinde zu predigen, da alle Angst haben, Kinder zu zeugen."

Dass es einen gibt, der Weizen säht zwischen den Steinen, da kein Mensch mehr an den Boden glaubt.

Dass es einen gibt, der es wagt, seinem Volke ein Opfer aufzuerlegen, da sich alle fürchten, ein Opfer zu verlangen, von sich wie von den anderen.

Dass es einen gibt, der die Menschen meisseln will nach seiner Sehnsucht, wie der Bildhauer den Marmor.

The hero feels inwardly that Fascismus, in spite of its enormous capacity for doing heroic and wonderful things, in spite of its success in lifting a whole Nation out of the rut of economic and cultural damnation, is a tragic weapon and that it can succeed only if it puts itself high above all other considerations.

He who is not for, is against Fascismus. There is no middle path, no compromise possible and all other consideration must be and are subordinate to this first principle.

Hence and seeing Fascismus deals, as far as its human raw material is concerned, human beings, each imbued, if not gifted, with the power of thinking and, therefore, each thinking occasionally differently from the other, bitter conflicts.

Conflicts which are one-sided, because Fascismus can remain true to itself only as long as such conflicts remain one-sided.

The other side of the medal makes a very sad picture. Here we have the Liparian Islands and their prisoners, here we have Matteotti! Here we have 200 human beings doing 1,200 years of imprisonment, here we have stiletto and tortures, needles under the fingernails, feet in boiling water, ropes around necks, or, to quote the author:

"Kanäle voll Blut, ja, voll Blut.....doch an den Ufern blühten Recht und Ordnung."

Yes, orderliness and enjoyment of common rights, but only as far as the Duce considers good for you! No right of free speech, hardly of free thought. Spying everywhere, every private house harbouring spies. And over it all the Duce.

It is a very disturbing problem this trying to appraise this Benito Mussolini. Unless we grant a priori, that he is unlike other, ordinary mortals, that he has been called by providence to rule Italy, that his powers which enable him to maintain his system and to bring untold blessings to his people, are really quite exceptional powers and not to be judged by ordinary standards, we would rather be excused passing judgment at all. We busy ants with our strictly limited outlook, as against the godlike self-opinion of the Duce.

This difficulty of bringing our thoughts into line with the colossal vistas without which the Duce could not possibly have done half the work he actually has achieved, frightens us. So does the paraphernalia which surrounds him. When our Journalistic Congressman goes to a Tea Party given by the Duce in honour of the international conference, he walks up the staircase between two rows of black-clad young men, their arms folded over the breast, a stiletto their only, but sufficient alarming weapon. These young men, we are informed, are the bodyguard of the Duce, they are interested in nothing else, not even in love! Their lives are yielded up to the service of the Duce!

From the above extracts and comments, you will gather how intensely interesting this new novel by Felix Moeschlin is.

It left in me a whirlwind of conflicting emotions and it will be some time before my thoughts have clarified themselves. Perhaps the author is right when he makes his hero say:

"Es handelt sich nämlich noch nicht um die Wahrheit. Wir sind viel zu früh. Es handelt sich nur um die Macht. Wer siegt, hat recht. Und wenn die Kommunisten siegen, dann haben sie recht. Die Wahrheit kommt erst viel später."

"Matteotti und ich, wir sind zu früh. Ich glaube wir werden noch eine Weile zu früh sein, vielleicht immer. Christus muss immer wieder ans Kreuz geschlagen werden, sonst wäre er nicht Christus. Ein siegreicher Christus, das ist kein Christus."

More and more disturbing thoughts, not necessarily final ones, not necessarily even correct ones, but... disturbing ones.

Like a clarion call from our silvery, snow-capped mountains, like a crystal-clear, strong and icy draught of refreshing mind-cleansing water, came that really excellent speech of Dr. Bauer, Editor of the Basler Nationalzeitung, who, one evening last week, over the Swiss Beromünster-Radio-Station, talked about

"Die grosse Mission der Schweiz bei der moralischen Abrüstung"

in the course of which speech, Dr. Bauer called upon Switzerland to assert itself in the counsels of the various Nations, so as to bring them back to a proper focussing of the most vital questions and to work together for peace and understanding. Switzerland, a League of Nations in existence and which could and ought to serve as a model for the larger League of Nations or the Federated States of Europe. Thanks Mr. Bauer! After reading "Barbar & Roemer" your speech came as a wonderful tonic and I only wish it could be translated into English and broadcast over here or made to appear in the English Press.

M. MICHELI on "SWITZERLAND and the WORLD CRISIS." A LECTURE AT THE N.S.H.

A confident message of hope regarding Switzerland's ability to weather the worst economic storm, at present raging all over the world, was conveyed by Monsieur Louis H. Micheli to the London members of the Nouvelle Société Helvétique who were present at the last monthly meeting. The lecturer, who will so shortly leave us to join our Legation at Washington as acting Councillor, gave the N.S.H. by his causerie a last and most enjoyable proof of the active interest he has always taken in the society's activities.

M. Micheli prefaced his observations regarding the Swiss position with a comprehensive survey of the chaotic economic and financial conditions prevailing in every part of the world, of the shrinking international trade, the growing economic nationalism and trade barriers, the lack of confidence resulting from such factors as reparation and war debts and finally the monetary earthquake that has overtaken England and so many other countries.

That Switzerland could not hope, and in fact did not escape very severe repercussions of the world crisis was fully admitted by M. Micheli. The comparative detachment which Switzerland managed to maintain before the Great War had become more and more impossible in our age of ever growing international interdependence. The lecturer had recently undertaken a journey of enquiry and observation in Switzerland, and there he heard the same tale of great anxiety regarding the future wherever he went. Our export industries apprehend growing difficulties in the foreign markets and especially in Great Britain, hitherto, their mainstay and chief customer in a world ever less prepared to receive our goods at reasonable prices. And now on top of the depreciation of the pound-sterling, which acts like a 25 per cent. import duty, we have to contend against the fierce temporary dumping duties to be followed by a permanent British tariff.

Still there were grounds for congratulation and hope for Switzerland, the lecturer continued.

Thanks to the solid financial policy of the Federal Government, the careful handling of the monetary situation by the National Bank, the sound business practices both of our important banks and our industries, and last, but not least, the skill, adaptability, industry and reasonably good will of the Swiss workers, we had not only withstood the impact of the world crisis up till now remarkably well, but we could also hope to maintain a tolerable position in the international economic network by a period of redoubled effort, hard work and frugality. The relatively small banking failure in Geneva served only to underline the inherent strength of the more important of our banking institutions. Despite our large credits frozen up in Germany there was an ample liquidity in the Swiss banking position, the possession of a record gold reserve being an additional reassuring factor. The Swiss authorities and public opinion were absolutely united in the determination to maintain the Gold standard unimpaired.

Dr.E.

SWISS TARIFFS IN SIGHT.

M. Schulthess, the President of the Swiss Board of Trade and a member of the Federal Council, speaking at a big assembly on Sunday on the economic situation in Switzerland and the Protectionist tendencies abroad, made the sensational declaration that the Swiss Government might be forced to ask Parliament for liberty of action (plein pouvoirs) — similar to the urgent measures against invasion taken by Switzerland during the war — to protect the Swiss market against foreign goods.

M. Schulthess dealt with the complete change of the commercial policy of other countries in the direction of exorbitant Protectionism as justifying his thesis.

Doubtless the latest legislative measures of England and France and the German-Swiss negotiations have influenced his attitude. Never since the war period has a Swiss Minister spoken as M. Schulthess spoke. All the Swiss papers devote much space to comments on this statement.

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