

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: - (1934)
Heft: 659

Rubrik: Home news

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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. 13—No. 659

LONDON, JUNE 9, 1934.

PRICE 3d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UNITED KINGDOM AND COLONIES	3 Months (13 issues, post free)	3/6
	6 Months (26 issues, post free)	6/6
SWITZERLAND	3 Months (13 issues, post free)	Fr. 7.50
	6 Months (26 issues, post free)	Fr. 14.—

(Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postchech-Konto Basle V 5718).



HOME NEWS

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

FEDERAL.

SWISS FEDERAL FINANCE.

The Federal accounts which have just been made public show that with revenue at 409,800,000 francs (419,900,000 francs in 1932) and expenditure at 482,100,000 frs. (444,100,000 francs in 1932), the deterioration in the Federal finances between 1933 and the previous year is represented by a sum of 48,000,000 francs, the deficit being 72,300,000 francs, as compared with 24,200,000 francs.

The total receipts exceeded the estimate by 38,600,000 francs, mainly in respect of Customs, post, telegraph and telephones, military taxes, profits of the Central Bureau for the import of fodder, and fees collected by the Federal Section for imports. In expenditure the original estimates were exceeded chiefly in unemployment insurance and benefit grants to the embroidery and watch-making industries, subsidy to milk producers (this item was 16,000,000 francs more than the budget figure), tourist traffic, and corn subsidies.

The accounts of 1933 did not benefit from the provisions of the financial programme passed in the autumn of 1933, which provided for savings in expenditure amounting to 22,000,000 francs, for new sources of revenue computed at 52,000,000 francs, and for higher taxes on tobacco, calculated to bring in approximately 40,000,000 francs, thus making an estimated total improvement of 114,000,000 francs in the 1934 budget. It is hoped that at the end of that year there will be a sum which, after balancing the budget, will help to cover the deficit on the Federal railways.

The general opinion is that the solution of the economic problem in Switzerland lies in reducing the cost of living and applying a strong brake on public expenditure. In the 12 years between 1920 and 1932 Customs receipts have risen from 98,000,000 francs to 315,000,000 francs per annum, while in the autumn of 1933 new levies, amounting to 114,000,000 francs, were added to the already heavy burden of taxation. Any further taxation will meet with considerable resistance.

SWISS DISSATISFACTION OVER GERMAN TRANSFER.

M. Bachmann, director of the Swiss National Bank, stated last Monday that the negative result of the Berlin conference caused some dissatisfaction in Swiss Government and financial quarters. Official opinion is that this is only a temporary situation, as Switzerland does not intend leaving things in their present state.

The Swiss Federal Council is examining the possibility of resuming negotiations with the Reichsbank and even with the German Government with a view to coming to some agreement. This might be possible if Germany took into account the very favourable position she holds in regard to commercial exchange. As a matter of fact, Germany exports goods worth about £33,000,000 into Switzerland, from which she gets products to the value of nearly £9,000,000 a year.

The general opinion is that Switzerland cannot accept the present situation. Should Germany refuse to consider the particular situation of Switzerland, then Swiss official and trade circles would take the necessary measures for stopping imports from Germany, and Switzerland would make her purchases from those countries where there are frozen credits, but whose commercial balance is not as favourable as that of Germany.

SWISS AVIATOR KILLED.

Captain Leo Künzli, adjutant of the 3rd Air Detachment, was killed last week at Thun, when his machine crashed from a height of 1,200 meters into the Hasli Wood. Captain Künzli was stunt flying when the accident occurred; investigations by the Federal Air Office have begun.

The deceased was born in 1896 and hails from Dagmersellen. He was for some time an inspector of the Federal Air Office, and he gained his certificate as a pilot in 1929. Captain Künzli was one of the crack flyers in the Swiss Flying Corps, and his untimely death is greatly deplored.

CITE UNIVERSITAIRE IN PARIS.

The Federal Council has voted a credit of 60,000 francs for the Swiss House in the Cité Universitaire in Paris.

SWISS UNIVERSITY DISTINCTION.

The University of Berne has conferred an honorary doctorate on Professor Share Jones, Director of Veterinary Studies at Liverpool University, at its centenary celebrations. He was the only representative of a British university to be thus honoured. The grounds announced for the conferment of the degree were that he had "changed and enlarged the conception of veterinary science, created for it new opportunities for service, and advanced the cause of university education."

Professor Share Jones has been a pioneer in university veterinary education. Besides being a fluent lecturer and speaker, he is the author of books on applied anatomy which have secured for him an international reputation. He has written widely on university education and agriculture. In a scheme of higher agricultural education for Wales, approved and published twenty years ago by the Welsh Rural Development and Agricultural Association, he urged the University of Wales to establish at once what would have been the first complete Faculty of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Science.

He has been president of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, which bestowed upon him its greatest distinction — the Steel Memorial Medal — for his contributions to this branch of science.

An energetic supporter of the Liberal party, he played a leading part in framing its agricultural policy, and when he fought North Shropshire as Parliamentary candidate, he almost doubled the Liberal vote.

Professor Share Jones went to Liverpool from London to help to found the University School of Veterinary Science, of which, for nearly twenty years, he has been the Director, and when the first Veterinary Chair was endowed in Britain, he was invited to be its occupant.

BEROMÜNSTER.

In a few months' time the power of the Beromünster station will be increased from 50 to 100 kw., and during the month of August Sottens will broadcast the programmes of both French and German Switzerland.

INCREASED INCOME FROM WIRELESS TAX.

According to the third annual report of the Société Suisse de Radiodiffusion, the Government's wireless tax of 15 francs produced an income of 3,048,000 francs (about £203,200 at the present rate of exchange) in 1932, and 4,156,000 francs (£277,066) in 1933. Of the income for 1933, the P.T.T. retained 2,156,000 francs (£143,733) for general expenses, salaries, etc., the balance of 2,000,000 francs (£133,330), being allotted to the Société for programme and other expenses. The average number of hours broadcast per day during 1933 was: Sottens, 8.05 hours; Beromünster, 8.20 hours; Monte Ceneri, 3.40 hours.

UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF.

The Swiss Federal Council has resolved to widen the scope of the decision taken in March, 1932, concerning productive unemployment relief, in virtue of which Swiss export industries could already be subsidised in unusual circumstances. The new regulations provide for export industries that have to contend with specially keen competition owing, for instance, to currency depreciation, receiving in future from the Government and cantons manufacturing subsidies amounting, in exceptional cases, to 30 per cent. of the contracted delivery price. The sum

of 5,000,000 francs is to be set aside for this purpose, so that taking into consideration this year's contributions by the cantons, a total of 7,500,000 francs will be available.

AID FOR SWISS FILMS.

The Film-Finanzierungs A.G. Zurich, whose object is to aid financially films whose exterior are shot in Switzerland, has increased its capital from 350,000 francs to 500,000 francs.

The following institutions who are interested in "tourisme" are backing the venture. The Swiss Federal Railway, Swiss Tourist Office, Swiss Hotelkeepers' Society, and several private railway companies.

Since its creation the Film-Finanzierungs has financially helped three important films, "Guillaume Tell," "La Majesté Blanche," and "La Vallée Perdue." Three other films to be produced in Switzerland have been promised financial aid.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The death has occurred in Zurich of M. Sigmund Waackerling at the age of 82. He was formerly manager of the private banking house G. Koerner for 25 years, and was a well-known personality in Swiss banking circles.

On the occasion of a meeting which was held by the "Nationale Front" at the "Stadthalle" in Zurich, it came to ugly scenes between members of the Front and Communists. When the police endeavoured to disperse the crowd, they were shot at and pelted with stones; several policemen were injured and many arrests were made.

The "Stadtheater" in Zurich is celebrating the 100th anniversary of its foundation. A banquet was held, at which Dr. Ernst Zahn, the well-known author, recited a prologue which he had specially composed for the occasion. Dr. Klöti, mayor of Zurich, extended the greetings of the town of Zurich to the 100th birthday child.

Dr. Robert Schmid, a prominent member of the Liberal party at Zurich, has died at the age of 67. Dr. Schmid was a Member of Parliament from 1913 to 1919.

BERNE.

The late Mlle. Ida Weber, a teacher at the primary school at Hedingen, has left an amount of nearly 60,000 francs to the community of Hedingen.

Professor Weese, who held the chair of Historical Art at the University of Berne since 1905, has died at the age of 66 at a nursing home in Berne.

M. Pilet, President of the Swiss Confederation, and M. Motta, Foreign Minister, received last week the Venezuelan Minister, who has presented his credentials to our chief magistrates.

Early on Sunday morning a motor car driven by M. Schwenter, President of the Tribunal at Langnau, ran into some pedestrians at the Theaterplatz in Berne, with the result that a Mrs. Renfer-Eggmann was killed outright, whilst two other ladies had to be taken to hospital in a serious condition. M. Schwenter, the driver of the car, was arrested, as he seemed to be under the influence of drink.

From Berne comes the news of the death of M. Hans Dinkelmann, late general manager of the Swiss Federal Railways, at the age of 77.

M. Dinkelmann was from 1890 to 1892 a member of the cantonal government. From 1892 to 1905 he was manager of the "Emmentalbahn" and the "Burgdorf-Thun Bahn." In 1905 he entered into the services of the Swiss Federal Railways as general manager. From 1912 to 1922 he was president of the "General-Direktion." M. Dinkelmann was a member of Parliament from 1893 to 1905. In 1922 he was appointed "Direktor des Zentralamtes für den Internationalen Eisenbahntransport," in succession to the late Federal Councillor Forrer, from which post he retired in 1928.

LUCERNE.

It is reported that copies of last Monday's issue of the "Vaterland" were confiscated in Germany, and that the further sale of the journal in the Reich has been prohibited.

URI.

The "Landrat" of Uri has elected Alois Püntener as its president for the session of 1934-1935. The deficit for the year 1933 amounts to 39,000 francs.

SCHWYZ.

M. Theiler, member of the cantonal government, has been elected "Landammann" and M. Betschart "Landesstatthalter."

GLARUS.

M. J. Schlittler, State Prosecutor of the canton of Glarus, died in Glarus at the age of 63. M. Schlittler was a member of the "Landrat" for 26 years.

BASLE.

The late States Councillor, Dr. Paul Scherrer, has been elected "Landammann" and Dr. Scherrer entered in 1884 the office of Dr. E. Brenner, and when the latter became Federal Councillor he carried on his practice.

The "Flugplatzgenossenschaft" in Basle has celebrated last Sunday the tenth anniversary of its foundation, on which occasion a great display took place, which was witnessed by over 12,000 spectators.

M. Hermann Bächtold, Professor of History at the University of Basle and an eminent scholar, has died in Basle. His numerous works on historical subjects were known to thousands of our younger generation.

BASLE COUNTY.

The accounts for 1933 of the canton of Basle County show a deficit of 317,534 francs.

GENEVA.

According to an act which has been passed by the cantonal executive, children under sixteen years of age are not allowed to visit boxing matches.

M. Philippe Briquet has been nominated manager of the "Caisse hypothécaire" at Geneva.

NIDWALDEN.

M. C. Flüeler, president of the "Obergericht" and for many years president of the community of Stans, has died at the age of 82.

GRISONS.

A large fire which broke out in the Val Cuoz near Disentis destroyed three houses; the damage is estimated to exceed 60,000 francs.

VAUD.

Mme. Alice Cossy de la Harpe, who recently died, has left an amount of 28,000 francs for charitable purposes. Mme. Cossy was the widow of the late M. Robert Cossy, States Councillor.

THE HISTORICAL RELATIONS OF ENGLAND AND SWITZERLAND.

(Translation from a Pamphlet which appeared in the N.Z.Z. in March, 1919, and published in Oechsli's "History of Switzerland." — Cambridge University Press.)

(Continued from Previous Number.)

Switzerland was thus to exchange the sure pledge which she possessed in the captives for the vague assertions of the doubtful friend on the Seine, that he thought he could contribute to the happy solution of the question. Stämpfli the President of the Confederation, refused this offer courteously but firmly; on the other hand, the Federal Executive was ready to propose to the Federal Assembly an amnesty, provided that, at the same time, a solution of the main question could be regarded as assured in the sense of the complete independence of Neuchâtel. Stämpfli could give no other answer to the Russian and Austrian envoys, who also demanded the immediate and unconditional release of the captives.

England alone declined to require from Switzerland this unconditional release of the captives. Instead, she took much trouble to prepare the ground for the clearing away of all doubts in a manner which should be honourable for both parties. On October 4th Clarendon telegraphed to Lord Bloomfield that in his opinion a compromise on the basis of the complete independence of Neuchâtel was the only method of obtaining the release of the captives. After at first resisting, Manteuffel declared on October 13th to the British envoy "in the strictest confidence, and without authorising him to inform the Swiss of this declaration," that the King was ready to renounce his rights, with three reservations, (1) continuance of the use of the title of "Prince," (2) retention of his private property in Neuchâtel, and (3) a guarantee for certain religious and charitable institutions. Without troubling himself much as to the confidential character of this communication, Clarendon through Gordon put (October 25th) the question to Stämpfli whether the Federal Executive would bring about the release of the

M. Jean Zehnder-Cornu, from Prilly, was killed by lightning when ascending the Cornettes de Bise. M. Zehnder leaves a widow and three children.

TIR FEDERAL 1934.

EIDGENÖSSISCHES SCHÜTZENFEST 1934.

Every five years the riflemen throughout Switzerland are summoned to a great display in order, in the first instance, to give proof of their efficiency in what is considered our premier national sport — rifle shooting. It is also a patriotic manifestation of men hailing from all and every part of Switzerland, ready to defend the sacred heritage so heroically acquired and sustained by our ancestors.

The committee of the "Tir Fédéral" has extended a hearty invitation to the Swiss residing abroad, who will be specially entertained during the festivities at Fribourg. A small band of riflemen have grouped themselves together, and will represent the London Colony at this great exhibition of national unity.

It is an old custom in our country to collect prizes and donations in order to reward the riflemen for their efforts and personal sacrifice. For this purpose in every canton local committees have been constituted, where gifts in kind and money may be deposited. As the London Colony will wish to contribute to the success of this festival by adequately furnishing the "Gabentempel," we are appealing to the generosity and patriotism of our readers. M. C. R. Paravicini, the Swiss Minister, has kindly identified himself with this appeal, which, we are sure, will find a hearty response. Any donations — even the smallest — will be considered as a token of loyalty to our country — may be sent to the Swiss Legation, 18, Montagu Place, W.1., or the "Swiss Observer," 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2, and will be acknowledged in our columns.

So far the following amounts and prizes have been received:—

Unione Ticinese	...	...	100 Frs.
City Swiss Club	...	...	£5 5 0
Swiss Mercantile Society, Ltd.	...	...	5 5 0
Nouvelle Société Helvétique...	...	...	2 2 0
Société de Secours Mutuels des Suisses à Londres	...	...	2 2 0
Collection of Swiss Consulate at Glasgow	...	...	5 0 0
Swiss Mercantile Society College	...	...	2 0 0
Swiss Gymnastic Society	...	...	2 2 0
P. F. Boehringer	...	...	1 1 0
F. St.	...	...	5 0
Union Helvetia	...	...	Silver Cup
Swiss Culinary Society	...	...	Silver Cup

captives in return for the confidential assurance of Prussia to England that she would be satisfied to renounce her rights, with the three reservations just mentioned. The Federal Executive on October 29th declared that it was ready to accept this proposal, with two reservations: (1) that domain-lands and sources of income which the King possessed in Neuchâtel as the lord of the land should not be held to fall under the head of "private property"; and (2) that a guarantee for the charitable and religious institutions could only be undertaken by the Confederation. Clarendon thought that the Federal Executive had thus given a proof of its peaceful spirit, and invited France, together with England, to make the conditions of Switzerland known in Berlin.

But Napoleon declined this joint action; for meanwhile he had, at the renewed request of Frederick William IV., begun his second intervention in Switzerland by his letter (October 24th) to Dufour. In this he engaged, in the event of the unconditional release of the captives, to solve the Neuchâtel question in a sense that should be advantageous for Switzerland; otherwise he would not prevent the march of Prussian troops into the Grand Duchy of Baden. The Federal Executive did not wish to offend the powerful Emperor, and determined to send a confidential envoy (Dufour) to Paris. It knew now from England that Frederick William IV. was ready to renounce Neuchâtel, but it knew also that he wished to attach to this renunciation certain conditions, as to which it was necessary to be prudent. Dufour was instructed to agree to no reservations which would in any way include the dependence of Neuchâtel on a foreign Power, or involve any limit of its rights to internal legislation and administration. As a matter of fact, the King had added for Napoleon to his three conditions (which were to be kept secret from Switzerland) a fourth — the restoration of the four "Bourgeoisies" of Neuchâtel, Valangin, Landern and Bondry — a condition which could not be accepted by Switzerland, as it involved an interference in the internal business of the Canton, and would have kept open for Prussia a pretext for revoking the promise,

YODELLING IS CULTIVATED.

The Swiss Yodelers Association was founded in 1912. Its immediate object was to promote characteristic Swiss pastimes and customs, such as yodeling, alphorn-playing, singing of folk-songs and flag-swinging. At this time the association has about 1,200 members, belonging to all the different cantons.

Yodeling dates back to the earliest days when the people of the mountains made up their own melodies and songs. Thus high up in his solitary pastoral realm the dairyman sang of his love and longing and of the joys of his vast, free domain. But the ever-present, overwhelming majesty of the mountains affects singers and listeners alike in these Alpine domains, and Alpine music features therefore a certain consecration by Nature herself.

In the beginning yodeling was strictly confined to its original home, the mountains. Later, however, the Swiss who went on military expeditions into foreign lands began to yodel on their weary marches — and many a tough warrior began to long for home. Early in the 19th century some observing Swiss began to take notes of the words and melodies of different yodel songs. Many of the best native yodelers are direct descendants of mountain dwellers, and that curious gift within their throats is a true heritage handed down through generations.

The Swiss yodels are not uniform in their cadences. In the beginning all yodels contained long-drawn, far-sounding tones which echoed in the mountains. According to his individual gifts a mountain dweller would know how to form and vary the tones. Especially in the Bernese and Lucerne mountain regions yodel melodies came into being which contained a wider range and demanded more skill. But on the whole the Swiss yodel is rather uniform and has nothing in common with the yodel of the Tyrol. The cultivation of the uniform characteristics in the yodel of the different cantons is one of the main objects of the Swiss Yodelers' Association.

Alphorn playing dates back to the 9th century. This ancient 9 to 10-foot long wooden instrument is a typically Swiss product. It can only produce the natural tones, and belongs therefore out-of-doors. Up in the lofty pastoral realms it affords the dairymen a means to commune with a far-off neighbour after the day's work is done. It is said that Louis XIV. forbade the Swiss in his regiments to play the alphorn, for fear that resulting homesickness would prompt them to desert the army.

given to Napoleon, to renounce his claims on Neuchâtel. Dufour was charged also to require that the renunciation by the King should be officially announced at the same time as the amnesty, or else that "guarantees of equal value" should be secured to Switzerland. By that expression the Federal Executive understood that England as well as France would engage to work for the renunciation by Prussia.

Dufour and the permanent Swiss Minister in Paris, Barmann, sought to attain this agreement between the two Powers. But it was a moment when profound ill-humour existed between France and England by reason of their different policies towards Russia and Turkey. England had no intention of simply following the French lead. On November 25th Clarendon caused it to be known in Bern that, if France refused to support the steps taken by England in Berlin, the British Government would not give way, because the principle of the proposed compromise seemed to rest on a knowledge of the intentions of the King of Prussia which it did not possess. If the prisoners were released, he was indeed willing to endeavour, in conjunction with France, to induce Prussia to agree to the wishes of the Swiss, but he could not guarantee that the concession would attain its object.

That was a warning to Switzerland to think twice before she gave up her pledge. On November 26th Fénélon delivered a written note in which no mention was made of the co-operation of England. Napoleon promised to use "all his efforts," if the captives were released, to induce the King to consent to a renunciation, but he would give no guarantee that this renunciation would be made, or that the King's conditions would be acceptable. The Federal Executive could now do nothing else but persist in its refusal, for a definitive agreement might fail all too easily because of the conditions placed on his renunciation by the King; it was not possible to put greater confidence in the intentions of Prussia unless the Emperor should be acquainted with, and explain, the conditions which the King intended to lay down, and would declare that these conditions were not in contradiction with

(To be continued).