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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

LESS UNEMPLOYED IN SWITZERLAND.

According to figures just published, there were at the end of February, 105,736 unemployed registered, or 10,059 less than last year at the same period.

EUROPEAN GRAND PRIX.

This year the European Grand Prix races will be organised by the Union Motocycliste Suisse on July 3rd and 4th. The races will be held over the 4½-mile circuit round the Bremgarten Forest, on the outskirts of Berne.

On July 3rd, in the afternoon, the 350 c.c. On July 3rd, in the afternoon, the 350 c.c. race will be held, and during the course of the following day the 250 c.c. and 175 c.c. will be run off together, followed by sidecar races for 600 c.c. and 1,000 c.c. machines, and finally the 500 c.c. as olo event. Entries close on June 12th, and should be sent to Mr. W. Bretscher, Chutzenstrasse 27, Berne, Switzerland.

JOURNALISTS AT GENEVA.

A full review of Mr. a Prato's case and of the rights of journalists accredited to the League of Nations took place in the Swiss National Coun-

The Socialist deputy from Geneva had again raised the question of the expulsion of the anti-Fascist editor of the "Journal des Nations." M. Fascist editor of the "Journal des Nations." M. Motta (President) stated once more that Mr. a Prato had abused the privileges extended to him, but that his expulsion had not been, as the Socialist member alleged, the result of Italian pressure. The Swiss authorities would never interfere with any foreign journalists in the exercise of their duties as long as they did not during their stay in Switzerland systematically or unjustly criticise Swiss institutions under the pretext of being accredited to the League of Nations.

The International Association of Journalists The International Association of Journalists had presented the League Council with a petition, M. Motta said, and the Council had considered this in private session. Should the Council ask the Swiss Government for its views, it would be glad to inform the Council. Experience had shown, M. Motta said, that journalists had nothing to fear from the Swiss Government.

ARGENTINE FRUIT FOR SWITZERLAND.

The Argentine Ministry of Agriculture announces that after laborious negotiations in which the Foreign Ministry collaborated, the Government of Switzerland has been induced to fix the ment of Switzerland has been induced to fix the quota of Argentine pears and apples which may be imported into the country during the current year. The quantity established by the Swiss Government is 24,000 cases of pears and apples (together), the same as last year. The pears are allowed to enter Switzerland from February 1st to March 31st, and the apples from March 1st to May 31st. May 31st.

ENLARGEMENT OF THE PORT OF BASLE.

The constant increase of traffic in the port of Basle has made its enlargement necessary. It has consequently been decided to undertake the conconsequently been decided to undertake the construction of new installations at Klein-Hüningen and in the Southern part of the town of Basle-Birsfelden. The following will show the extent to which the port of Basle is overcrowded as compared with German ports: the port of Duisburg has unloading wharves 44 km. in length, and an annual traffic of 14,628,900 tons which is equivalent to 232 tons of goods new matter of wharf of the strength of the lent to 332 tons of goods per metre of wharf; the traffic of the port of Basle amounts to 2,217,000 tons of goods for 2.15 km. of wharf only, this being equivalent to 1,031 tons of unloaded goods per metre of wharf. The traffic of goods in the port of Basle shows a great increase since 1928. As this expansion is likely to continue in the future and since there has been a lack in storage space for coal and cereals for the last few years, the competent authorities have decided to enlarge the port on the right bank of the Rhine by build-ing a second basin at Klein-Hüningen. This basin will be 590 m. in length. The rail network of the port is also to be considerably extended. The cost of the new installation is estimated at 3.5 million francs.

In addition to the enlargement of the port of In addition to the enlargement of the port of Klein-Hüningen, the construction of a new port at Basle-Birsfelden is also planned, which is to comprise a large surface for storage and industries. The cost of the installations at Birsfelden is estimated at about 5 million francs. After completion of the work planned at Klein-Hüningen and Birsfelden, Basle's and Switzerland's port installations will be such as to comply with all requirements. with all requirements.

SWISS SOCIALISM.

A special Conference of the Swiss Socialist Party, held recently, considered its attitude to-wards the Communists, a Popular Front and national defence.

By 370 votes to 72 the following guiding principles were adopted: firstly, an unreserved recognition of democracy while rejecting any connection or co-operation with any anti-democratic organisation or movement (the Communist movement is held to belong to this category); secondly, a positive attitude towards military, economic and intellectual national defence; thirdly, respect for religious convictions, and finally, the obliga-tion to pursue a common programme for economic reconstruction and the solution of social prob-lems in a spirit of social justice and reciprocal solidarity.

The conference declared further that a per manent and satisfactory solution of economic problems was only possible on a Socialist basis. The former Socialist Mayor of Geneva Nicole,

protested against the ban on co-operation with the Communists; and the declaration in favour of national defence was rejected by Graber, leader of the Socialist left wing, who contended that force was the negation of right and that it was impossible to support militarism without falling into nationalism.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

M. Rosenbaum, a well-known advocate in Zurich, has been arrested, so far, no reason has been given for his arrest.

BERNE.

M. Fritz Spichiger, Manager of the "Bigla" in Biglen and a former National-Councillor (1918-1921) has died at the age of 62.

Dr. Hans Mühlestein, the Bernese writer, has celebrated his 50th birthday anniversary.

SOLOTHURN.

The cantonal judge, M. Hans Stampfli, President of the criminal tribunal of the canton of Solothurn, has resigned from his post after having been for over 50 years in the service of the

An anonymous donor has sent an amount of 51,000 frs. to the "Bürgerspital" in Solothurn.

GRISONS.

At Samaden, died after a long illness at the age of 81, M. Gian Töndury-Zehnder, for many years President of the Board of the "Rätischen Bahn." In former years he was several times President of the District Oberengadin, he was also a member of the Grand Council of the canton

Sterilization has been made legal in the can-

VALAIS.

Dr. Raymond Lorétan has withdrawn his candidature for a seat in the second ballot for the cantonal government. The fight remains now between M. Anthamatten, Conservative and M. Dellberg, Socialist.

GENEVA.

The death has occurred at Geneva of Dr. A. Pictet, who was for nearly 40 years Professor of Chemistry at the University of Geneva. He retired in 1932, and reached the age of 80.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY LTD.

The Monthly Meeting of the Society was held Swiss House on Wednesday, March 10th. The at Swiss House on Wednesday, March 10th. The Society was fortunate in having Lord Passfield to lecture to the Meeting on "WHAT ABOUT U.S.S.R.?" The lecture room was filled to capacity when the Chairman, Mr. A. Steinmann, in introducing Lord Passfield, who is better known as Mr. Sidney Webb, referred to the lecturer's outstanding work in local and national government. He particularly mentioned his acclaimed book on Soviet Russia, a masterpiece and standard work on the Soviet Union.

Lord Passfield, a sentingengrian received

Lord Passfield, a septuagenarian, received a very hearty ovation when he rose to address the assembly. He expressed his pleasure at having been invited to lecture to the Swiss Mercantile Society because his connection with Switzerland had been an old one. He had been at school at the age of twelve to thirteen at Neuveville. He had not often been to Switzerland since as his time during the last fifty years was fully occupied in going from one English town and one constitu-In going from one English town and one constitu-ency to another, and in writing books. He said he was particularly pleased to have come to speak to the Society about the Soviet Union, and had no intention of going too deeply into the political question. The Soviet and Switzerland had not question. The Soviet and Switzerland had not been on the best of terms, they had had consider-able differences, reciprocal differences, and he felt sure that if only for that reason the audience would do well to know more about the Soviet

On.

He said at once that he and his wife who

There is together were under the disrised at once that he and his wife who visited Russia together were under the disadvantage of not knowing a word of Russian. Some people, he said, might call it presumptuous to describe Soviet Russia and to express an opinion about it without knowing the language. However, he maintained that his experience was that people who had been to another country numerous times and knew its language well, invariably knew very little about the administra-tion, etc. A great number of English people who went to Switzerland had no idea how Switzerland was governed, the same as what the ordinary citizen knew about the London County Council was dismal enough,

was dismat enough,

No country other than the U.S.S.R. published so
much about itself as the U.S.S.R. The Soviet not
only published in its own language but also in
English, French and German. If one knew any of
these languages one could learn a great deal.
Russia broadcasts in 14 languages as well as in
Esperanto. These broadcasts were entirely
devoted to discussing themselves, the success of
that factory and the failure of another, a magnificent advertisement. He could only say that if one
had a nowerful wireless set one should not miss had a powerful wireless set one should not miss the opportunity of listening to Moscow.

Why should one trouble about the U.S.S.R.? They were not going to invade Switzerland. But one had to remember that it represented one sixth of the entire land surface of the world with a population of 175 million. What was very important was that although Russia had always been as big as that, it had never hitherto had a government, which organized it from out to end been as big as that, it had never hitherto had a government which organised it from end to end right into the desert and the Arctic Circle. What was more was the fact that Russia was not troubled with the anomaly so common to all Western Europe and all the Dominions, that the next generation was falling off. The U.S.S.R. had the largest birth rate. The annual increase of population was 3½ million a year, as much as the whole of Europe put together. One might expect, of course, a very unhealthy population. Under the Car the death rate had been a very large one. It was still large but had been reduced by at least one third in the last twenty years since the Revolution. The infant death rate which was the best test had been halved. They had got rid practically altogether of cholera and typhus and had greatly reduced enteric fever. They had got rid practically altogether of cholera and typhus and had greatly reduced enteric fever. There was still a lot of maleria but generally speaking great strides had been made for health and greater strides still, in education. Before the war the vast masses outside the cities had been illiterate and with something like 150 separate races, some of whom were cannibals in an actual savage state, many had not even an alphabet. But now they all were got to school and in all 25 million children were attending school, even those that had had no alphabet. In about 40 cases an alphabet was actually found, a about 40 cases an alphabet was actually found, a Latin alphabet and not a Slavonic alphabet...