

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: - (1938)

Heft: 861

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 9595/9596. Published every Friday at 23, LEONARD STREET, LONDON, E.C.2.

Telegrams: FREPRINCO, LONDON.

VOL. 15—No. 361

LONDON, 14 MAY, 1938.

PRICE 3d.

PREPAID SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

UNITED KINGDOM	3 Months (13 issues. post free)	3/6
AND COLONIES	12 " (62 " " ")	6/6
SWITZERLAND	6 Months (26 issues. post free)	Fr. 14.—
	12 " (62 " " ")	12.—

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

HOME NEWS

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

FEDERAL.

SWISS FINANCES.

The Swiss Federal Government has given its approval to the accounts of the Confederation for 1937. Receipts were 522,060,000fr. and expenditure 537,000,000fr., leaving a deficit of 14,940,000fr., against 28,950,000fr. estimated in the Budget. As supplementary expenses voted after the Budget had been passed by Parliament reached 29,380,000fr., the deficit was expected to be 58,330,000fr., so that the improvement is in reality 43,400,000fr.. During 1937 10,000,000fr. was expended for helping milk producers and 3,500,000fr. for reducing the price of bread, while 2,600,000fr. was paid into the special fund for the protection of vinegrowers. At the end of 1937 the public debt stood at 1,431,720,000fr., a rise of 19,800,000fr. over 1936.

NEW SWISS STAMPS.

Switzerland has just issued four new postage stamps, two of them reproducing views of the International Labour Office building in Geneva and two of them views of the new League Palace.

They are oblong in shape and in two colours on white paper. They are on sale only until the end of the month.

SWISS LOAN TO NORWAY.

The Norwegian Government has contracted a loan of 46,500,000 Swiss francs, at 3 per cent., with a consortium of Swiss banks under the direction of the Schweizerischer Bankverein, of Basle, and the Schweizerische Kreditanstalt, of Zurich. The new loan will be used for the conversion of the remaining part of the old Four per Cent. loan contracted with the Hambros Bank, of London, and the Schweizerische Bankverein in 1911. It will be redeemable in 32 years, and will be issued in Switzerland in the latter half of May at 95 per cent.

SWISS NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION.

On the occasion of the General Meeting of the Swiss Newspaper Publishers Association, Dr. Karl Sartorius, has been elected President of the Association.

FAMOUS RAILWAY JUBILEE.

Next week in Switzerland there will be celebrations to mark the jubilee of one of the most famous railways in Europe.

It is the line that runs down from Berne, past the lovely Lake of Thun, and then climbs up to the mountains of the Bernese Oberland until it tunnels its way through the Loetschberg and Simplon.

It is one of the great strategic traffic lines, joining England and France with Italy and the Balkans.

But it is probably the Jungfrau branch which interests the holiday maker, or the amateur of railways. If it cannot boast of international significance, it has the more immediately impressive claim of being the highest railway in Europe.

It was finished, after 16 years' work, in 1912, at the cost of 12,000,000 francs, and M. Guyer-Zeller, who designed it, probably created the most romantic railway in existence.

The gradient is at times 1 in 4.

GENEVA'S BROADCASTING HOUSE.

The studios of the Radio-Genève Broadcasting Company have long been inadequate. As in most other countries, it was not foreseen, when they were built in 1930, that the broadcasting service would develop so rapidly. In 1936, therefore, the company considered the question of larger premises. Various plans were examined, but the cost proved prohibitive.

The organisation of broadcasting in Switzerland, being based on the principle of the decentralisation — and almost autonomy — of

the linguistic regions, is no parallel with that in other countries. For example, at Lausanne it was due to private initiative that the Société Romande de Radiodiffusion was able to have its own broadcasting house as early as 1935. Similarly, in Geneva, a group of private persons formed, not a building society, but a "foundation," with the object of "constructing and renting a suitable building to the Radio-Genève Broadcasting Company." The construction of the building has now been decided upon, in entire agreement with the local administrative authorities of the Federal Administration of Posts and Railways on which Swiss broadcasting depends, and it is hoped that the Geneva Broadcasting House will be opened next spring.

TRADE PACT WITH SWITZERLAND.

Under a trade agreement between New Zealand and Switzerland, announced recently, Switzerland promises to take an annual quota of 1,500 tons of New Zealand apples and pears. In return New Zealand will admit a number of Swiss products at the duty rates provided for in the agreements which New Zealand has concluded with Germany and Belgium.

IMPORTS OF MOTOR CARS.

Motor-cars imported into Switzerland last year totalled 9,858, of which 3,572 came from the United States, 3,372 from Germany, 1,427 from Italy, 851 France, and 532 from Great Britain (against 1,019 in 1936). Increased imports from the United States and Germany were due partly to lower prices.

PROFESSOR FRITZ DE QUERVAIN SEVENTY YEARS OLD.

Professor Dr. Fritz de Quervain, one of Switzerland's most famous surgeons, has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary; Professor de Quervain will shortly resign his post as Professor of Medicine at the University in Berne. He was a pupil of the well-known Professor Kocher, whose successor he later on became.

Professor de Quervain started his medical career in La Chaux-de-Fonds where he was consulting surgeon at the local hospital, he also held a similar position at the hospital in Le Locle.

In 1902 he became a lecturer (Privat-Dozent) at the University of Berne, during this period, a large number of works on medical subjects appeared from his pen, which have given him an international reputation. Many of his scientific essays were translated into a number of foreign languages.

In 1910 Professor de Quervain was appointed Professor at the medical faculty of the University in Basle, eight years later he became the successor of Professor Kocher, at the University of Berne.

A great number of Swiss and foreign Universities have honoured our famous countryman, who has rendered eminent services to our homeland.

THE VILLA "HASLIHORN" SOLD.

The famous villa "Haslihorn" near Lucerne, which was for many years in the possession of the Belgian Royal family has been recently sold by King Leopold III to an industrialist in Basle. It was from this house the late Queen Astrid undertook, together with the King, their motor excursion which ended with disaster.

THE GENERAL CONSULATE IN MUNICH.

Counsellor of Legation, Dr. W. de Bourg, who was recently appointed General Consul in Munich, has been transferred to Vienna in the same capacity.

The Federal Council has appointed, Dr. Paul Ritter, secretary of Legation as successor to Dr. de Bourg.

CITY SWISS CLUB

REUNION D'ETE

à laquelle les dames sont cordialement invitées

MARDI 28 JUIN à 7 HEURES 30

au BRENT BRIDGE HOTEL, HENDON,

Diner (7/6) — Dance jusqu'à minuit.

Tenue de Ville.

Pour faciliter les arrangements, les participants sont priés de bien vouloir s'inscrire au plus tôt auprès de Monsieur P. F. Boehringer, 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2. (Téléphone: Clerkenwell 9595)

Le Comité.

NO DEVALUATION OF THE SWISS FRANC.

It is officially stated that the devaluation of the French Franc, will not affect the Swiss currency.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN SWITZERLAND.

According to official figures just published, there are at present 60,370 unemployed registered, or 10,423 less than twelve months ago.

THE BERNES ELECTIONS.

The newly elected Grand Council of the canton of Berne numbers 184 seats against 224 seats in the old Council. The strength of the various parties is as follows:

Peasant and Bourgeois Party 64 seats (84); Socialist Party 55 seats (79); Liberal Party 28 seats (32); Young Peasant Party 22 seats (17); Cath. Popular Party 11 seats (11); Heimatwehr Party 1 seat (3); Freiwirtschaftsbund Party 1 seat (1); Independent Party 1 seat (1); Landesring Party 1 seat (0).

The strength of the parties (in percentage) in the new Council in comparison to the old Council is as follows:

Peasant and Bourgeois Party 34.7 per cent. (36.8%); Socialist Party 29.7 per cent. (34.7%); Liberal Party 15.1 per cent. (14%); Young Peasant Party 12.6 per cent. (7.5%); Cath. Pop. Party 5.8 per cent. (4.9%); Heimatwehr, Freiwirtschaft, Independent and Landesring Parties 2.1 per cent. (2.1%).

The elections for the cantonal government show the following result, elected are: Dürrenmatt, Guggisberg, Joss, Stähli (Peasant and Bourgeois Party); Mouttet, Rudolf, Seematter (Liberal Party); Grimm, Möckli (Socialist Party); the two latter have not been elected and a second ballot will have to be held. 63.5 per cent. of the electors have gone to the polls. The Socialist and Peasant Parties have received a set back, whilst the Liberal and Young Peasant Parties have registered a gain.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

A large fire partly destroyed the soap works of the firm Friedrich Steinfels, A.G., in Zurich. The damage caused is estimated to reach the sum of 150,000 frs.

The Superior Court in Zurich has passed a sentence of one year imprisonment on a motorist who was drunk while in charge of a car.

BERNE.

The death has occurred in Berne of Dr. Julius Mai, from 1906-1933, Professor of Chemistry at the University of Berne, at the age of 76.

LUCERNE.

The twenty-fourth International Horse Show and Jumping Competition will be held at Lucerne from July 2nd to July 10th. There will be 12 contests, entries for which will be received up to June 17th.

GLARUS.

National Councillor, Dr. Rudolf Gallati (Liberal), who has been a member of the cantonal government since 1926, has been elected to the post of "Landammann."

M. Melchior Hefti, formerly head of the cantonal government, has been elected a member of the States Council (Ständerat) in succession to Mr. Edwin Hauser.

BASEL.

Dr. Robert Bing, Professor of Neurology at the University of Basle, has celebrated his 60th birthday anniversary.

AARGAU.

In spite of unforeseen expenses, the yearly budget (1937) of the canton of Aargau shows a credit balance of 44,581 frs.

THURGAU.

The accounts of the canton of Thurgau for the year 1937 close with a credit balance of 157,665 frs.

Drink delicious Ovaltine
at every meal—for Health!