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The Swiss Observer

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NEWS AT RANDOM

A recent decree promulgated by the Federal Council will practically eliminate unemployment. All citizens between the ages of 19 and 60 registered as unemployed will be placed under army orders and incorporated in labour companies; they will have to undertake such military work as constructing ramparts, road building, etc. This will enable the army command to grant dispensations more freely to those who have held vital positions in the fields of industry and agriculture.

* * *

The Swiss trade delegation under the leadership of Prof. Paul Keller has returned to Switzerland for the Xmas holidays; it is expected to resume the trade talks in London early in the new year. It is unofficially stated that certain concessions have been secured: watches up to a third of the former figure can be imported again and embroidery articles are also admitted under certain conditions. On the other hand Switzerland is to buy increased quantities of English coal.

* * *

A special army school to train ski instructors is at present operating in the region of the Kleine Scheidegg and Jungfrauoch. When qualified, these instructors will later on conduct ski courses lasting several weeks for the benefit of the field army.

* * *

In Geneva the financing of the presumed deficit of five million francs in the 1940 accounts is meeting with considerable difficulties. A small saving is effected by suspending the amortisation scheme of the existing debts but the socialists led by Nicole are utterly against any increase in taxation.

* * *

A bomb-proof hospital is to be constructed at Basle at a cost of Frs.700,000; it will be in the form of a subterranean annex to the existing municipal hospital.

* * *

The work and staff of the International Red Cross organisation in Geneva is increasing week by week. Some three thousand enquiries relating to prisoners of war are being dealt with daily and the information re-transmitted to the local services in London, Paris and Berlin. The fate of civilians and others interned

in neutral countries is the subject of another branch of its humanitarian activities.

* * *

A new Catholic church to replace an old one was consecrated in Amriswil by Dr. F. von Streng, the Bishop of Basle and Lugano. The cost of the new building amounts to about Frs.700,000; it has seats for about 800 people and contains a church hall in the basement for 400 persons.

* * *

In order to cover the anticipated deficit for the coming season of the Basle Stadttheater, Frs.200,000 is being allotted from the municipal treasury.

* * *

The appeal of National Councillor Otto Pfändler, against the decision of the St. Gall Board of Education preventing him from exercising two public functions has been dismissed. He will have to concentrate on his scholastic duties and former National Councillor Eggenberger, one of his unsuccessful opponents, will return to the National Council.

* * *

Judgment has now been published in the action for damages which the "Neue Basler Zeitung" brought against another publication (Beobachter) for having stated that the N.B.Z. exercised the functions of a German propaganda sheet whilst sailing under the Swiss flag. The Basle courts rejected the claim of the N.B.Z. which will also have to bear the costs of the action.

* * *

Rodolfo Pedroni, the head of the tobacco factory bearing his name, died in Chiasso at the age of 70, after a short illness; his "Brissagos" earned him a worldwide reputation.

* * *

A new 10cts. stamp will be issued as soon as the existing stock is exhausted; the previous design (Castle

CITY SWISS CLUB.

Messieurs les membres sont avisés que

L'ASSEMBLEE MENSUELLE

aura lieu Mardi le 2 Janvier à 5.30 h. précises au
Restaurant PAGANI 42, Great Portland Street,
W.1.

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sont priés de bien vouloir s'inscrire au plus tôt
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Le Comité