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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Swiss Chargé d'Affaires in Sofia, Mr. Walter Hofer was received by the newly appointed Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mincho Neitcheff. The latter, who for several years studied in Geneva and Berne, discussed with the Swiss Chargé d'Affaires some of the pending problems between the two countries, particularly of an economical and financial nature. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Australian Foreign Minister, Spender, and his wife, have arrived in Switzerland on a private visit. They are staying in Geneva for a few days before continuing their journey to Paris. The visit has no official character and no receptions are planned. [A.T.S.]

* * *

On August 3rd the additional commercial agreement of 20th January, 1947, with Argentina was signed in Buenos Aires.

The Federal Council has ratified this agreement. The new arrangements contain precise lists for the importation of Swiss goods into Argentina and of Argentine goods into Switzerland. Most of the traditional Swiss export goods have received consideration.

The Argentine import list for Swiss goods amounts for the contract year, 1st July, 1950, to 30th June, 1951, to 120 million Swiss francs, of which 38 millions are for products of the machine and metal industry, 32.5 millions for textiles (10 mil. for yarn, 22.5 mil. tissues, embroideries, ribbons and straw plait), 31 millions of chemical products, 15.5 millions for watches and 3 millions of miscellaneous goods.

The deliberations were conducted in the spirit of traditional amicability which always existed between the two republics. The agreement attained should prove an appropriate foundation for a prosperous development of economic relations between Switzerland and Argentina. [A.T.S.]

Cantonal

The Town Council of Zurich submitted to the Borough Council a project for the renewal of the refrigeration plant at the slaughter houses. The estimate amounts to Frs.993,585.—. A further project is to pull down the old buildings of the electricity works on the Limmatquai, to widen that thoroughfare and to enlarge the approach to the Uranian bridge. The credit required for this proposal amounts to Frs.740,000.—. [A.T.S.]

On the occasion of the international congress of Pre-historian, an exhibition of Masks and Sculptures is being held at the Helmhaus in Zurich. It is organised also to make known to a larger public the treasures of the ethnological collection of the University of Zurich. The objects of the exhibition are products of the magic-religious spheres, particularly of the veneration of ancestor cults, and the cult of death, of sorcery and totemism of the peoples of Africa, Indonesia and of the Malay States. There are also a large number of representations of Hindustanian paganism and Chinese and Japanese mythology. [A.T.S.]

In connection with a continuing revival of industry in July, which exceeds the usual seasonal position, another reduction in the number of unemployed is to be noted. The number of totally unemployed, registered with the Employment Exchanges in the canton of Berne, has been reduced by 871 to 3,522, and is thereby lower by 559 compared with July 1949. Calculated by the number of employed persons, according to the 1941 census, the number of unemployed is only 0.2%. This reduction is spread over the majority of trade groups. Above all the metal workers and watchmakers, the building trade and its dependent branches are affected. The number of vacancies is considerably higher than last year and in the metal and building industries is roughly twice as high than in July, 1949.

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