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IT HAPPENED IN THE CANTON OF AARGAU

The administrative accounts for 1962 showed a surplus also for the Canton of Aargau. It amounted to 1¼ million francs. The extraordinary accounts for road building also showed a surplus of 3½ millions with a high expenditure of 32.33 million francs. The second special account concerned the fight against tuberculosis which also showed an excess of income over expenditure. Including large sums written off before the closing of the books the actual surplus amounted to nearly 19 million francs. The Cantonal Bank had an overall surplus of 3,374 million francs.

In a previous report it was said that attendance at commune assemblies had been poor and that new ways would have to be found to make sure of a more active participation. It is interesting to learn that in the preparatory stages none of the proposals put forward to reduce or even eliminate the quorum were approved, and Parliament left the quorum at 50%, whilst reducing the age of attendance from 65 to 60 years.

The Cantonal Government submitted a proposal to Parliament to put ¼ million francs at the disposal of agriculture which had suffered a lot through drought in 1962.

Children's allowances were decided on and Parliament also voted a subsidy towards the enlargement of the tuberculosis sanatorium of Barmelweid.

An electronic date computer (at a cost of Fr.800,000.—) was acquired.

The new hospital bill was accepted by the Cantonal Grand Council. It will result in expenditure of 231 million francs, 83 millions will be spent on an extension of the Cantonal Hospital of Aarau, 75 millions will be required for the erection of a new Cantonal Hospital (with 500 beds) near Baden. The remainder will be used for regional and district hospitals.

Parliament also voted a credit of 1.1 million francs for the new building of the Cantonal Penitentiary at Lenzburg.

An additional 53 millions have been proposed to Parliament by the Government for new roads. Especially in Baden traffic improvement schemes will cost several million francs.

In May there was a debate of some magnitude on whether taxes could be reduced. This followed a rejection by the popular vote in March. A new plan has now been worked out proposing a cut of 5% (minimum of Fr.25.—.)

In May the Communes of Oberwynental, Reinach, Menziken and Burg, together with Pfeffikon (Lucerne), were able to start the communal water purification plant, the first of its size and kind in Aarau. It can cope with a daily intake of 8—9 million litres of dirty water.

Aargau has demanded a better representation on the two radio stations of Basle and Zurich. It is unsatisfactory that there is no representation on the programme commission of Radio Zurich, which, together with Basle, looks after the interests of the Canton.

AARAU

The administrative accounts for 1962 closed with a surplus (income 10.3 million, expenditure 9.75 m.). As in other towns the good result is mainly due to higher revenue from taxes.

The Commune Assembly of Aarau (attended by 1,809 citizens) voted 3.15 million francs for the re-planning of the Kreuzplatz and 1.5 million for a subterranean passage at the Bahnhofplatz. At the same time, 4.1 million francs were granted by the electorate for an underground first aid station for civil defence (Zelgli district).

BADEN

The chief source of drinking water for the district of Baden is the Limmat, from which nearly 9 million cubic metres of water were taken in 1962. The degree of pollution of the river is now such that it has become dangerous. Baden, together with some other communes, is now also to receive a water purification plant. Towards the cost of over 36 million francs a Federal subsidy is expected. The citizens of Wettingen, Ennetbaden and Neuenhof have already voted in favour of participating in the scheme.

The two citizens' communes of Baden and Daettwil have been united.

OTHER COMMUNES

The Commune Assembly of LENZBURG agreed to a credit of 1 million francs towards the building of a new old age home and to the present one being transformed into a library.

The voters of WETTINGEN agreed that there should be an "Inhabitants' Council" instead of a large and cumbersome Commune Assembly. This follows an earlier decision by Parliament.

WOHLEN is to have a new swimming pool with four basins — so its citizen voters decided in July. Those of RIKENBACH agreed to the erection of a cement factory within the commune boundaries.

The small Commune of BIRR, which consists of only 233 citizens, decided on a 2½ million franc project for a school and gymnasium building.

STRENGELBACH has awarded honorary citizenship to the writer and poet, Dr. Otto Zinniker.

EDUCATION

Aargau, too, has a shortage of teachers. Special training courses are being held to counteract this. The question of whether there should be a University in the Canton is still being studied by experts. Windisch is to have a new technical college. Zofingen is to have a middle school and there will soon be matriculation classes at the commercial schools of the Canton.

CHURCH

The Church of the Canton of Aargau has to issue a report every ten years. The latest one covers 1950—1959 and shows an increase in activities. New parishes have been created, but unfortunately not enough clergymen are available. Only seven new ministers started during the period under review as against 33 in the previous one.

The Council of the Church has decided to build a home for mentally retarded but practically minded children, which should allow 80 boarders and 20 external pupils to attend training classes hitherto unknown for that type of child. (Cost: 7.5 million francs.)

CONFERENCES AND EXHIBITIONS

In May a number of conferences and exhibitions took place in the Aargau. It started with a special fair for civil defence and first aid requirements at Baden.

Next came the 5th Conference of the Swiss workers foremen which was attended by about 1,000 technical foremen from all parts of Switzerland.

At Rheinfelden was the annual meeting of the Liberal-Democratic Party at which the head of the Federal Military Department, Federal Councillor Chaudet, gave an address. Federal Councillor Schaffner had interrupted his attendance at the GATT Conference in order to be at the party meeting.

A hundred delegates of the association in aid of self help for the sick and invalids, "Das Band", met in Aarau, and at the end of May Baden was host to the "Swiss Working Community for Wood".

Two hundred delegates celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the Aargau Bakers' Association at Rheinfelden.

Early in June two hundred engineers and technicians held their annual delegates' meeting in Aarau.

The fourth Swiss folk dance festival, which should have taken place in the Roman amphitheatre at Vindonissa in June, had to be postponed indefinitely because of foot-and-mouth disease.

At the Art Gallery in Aarau an important exhibition of 300 works by Swiss painters and sculptors was shown — all artists who had benefited from a Federal scholarship grant between 1950 and 1963.

The International Museum Council held a conference in Aarau. It is a foundation of UNESCO and aims at furthering co-operation between museums and organisations caring for monuments.

Finally, the organisation of local banks celebrated its 50th anniversary early in July.

(Based on reports received from A.T.S.)

EXPO 1964

In the section "Art of Living" of the Swiss National Exhibition in Lausanne next year, the Protestant, Roman Catholic and the Old-Catholic Churches will have a communal place of worship. The church will be some twenty metres long, eighteen wide and seven or eight metres high. It will have 150 seats and accommodate 400 people.

As it will be used by different denominations it will contain a communion table for the Protestants, an altar with a tabernacle for the Roman Catholics and a portable altar for the Old-Catholics. In the centre a large bible will be exhibited as a visible witness of that in which the three denominations are trying to unite.

At the entrance there will be a giant cross, the most important symbol of Christendom. The organ will be in the gallery; it will be used for concerts as well as during divine services.

In the vestry the clergymen will receive any callers who desire an interview.

There will be a kind of lobby decorated with sixteen pictures from the Sermon on the Mount, and at the far end there will be a carillon of twenty-five bells.

[A.T.S.]

NEWS IN BRIEF

From the highest railway terminus in Europe a 260 yards tunnel leads to the Sphinx lift, the Eskimo dogs' kennels and the Jungfrau Ski School. The tunnel has recently been extended a further sixty yards through rock and fifty yards through solid ice to provide a new exit. The huskies are within easy access of this. On fine days they take visitors for short sledge rides in true Far North style (at the altitude of 11,332 feet).

The Mürren-Allmendhubel cableway has been equipped with two new carriages operated by remote control. Accommodating sixty-five passengers, these will provide a rapid and comfortable shuttle-service to the Allmendhubel (6,273 ft.), high above Mürren, where the views of the surrounding Alps are second to none.

The Berghotel at **Schnyge Platte** (6,453 ft.), has undergone a good deal of conversion since last autumn and it now boasts a new covered terrace. It offers meals and drinks at reasonable prices, an ideal excursion centre for parties and schools, an Alpine garden, and a unique panorama of the imposing Jungfrau massif dominated by the three giants, the Eiger, the Mönch and the Jungfrau.

It has recently been reported that the monks of the Great Saint Bernard had sold the last dog bred in their famous kennels, and that they had done so because traffic over the historic Alpine pass would in future be channelled through the new road tunnel to be inaugurated next year. Luckily, we are able to report that this is not so. In fact, there are still fifteen dogs at the hospice and the closing down of the kennels was never contemplated. Tourists visiting the venerable Saint Bernard hospice founded in 1049, therefore, will still be able to admire these lovely dogs, the history of which relates so many incidents of faithfulness and courage in the service of man.

"The World of Impressionism", to be held at the All Saints Museum at Schaffhausen, is an exhibition culled from a variety of different collections. Thus, until September visitors will have an opportunity of seeing a great epoch of art unfolding before their eyes.

In recent years special efforts have been made by the people of "Conche" Valley, situated between Brig and Gletsch (Valais), with a view to improving its tourist amenities. Münster, approximately 15 miles north-east of Brig, now has a new hotel, the "Gomesia", with accommodation for seventy guests. All rooms have private bath, balcony, telephone and radio.

The well-known Swiss aquarellist Lotte Günthart, from Regensberg near Zurich, has been honoured in France for her book, "The Glory of the Rose". She was invited to select the most beautiful of the latest roses bred in the "Rosaies Gaujard" near Lyons, the oldest rosaries in the world, and to have it named after herself. The godfathers were the presidents of the French and Swiss Rose Societies.

The Swiss Transport Museum in Lucerne holds a supplementary exhibition every year in addition to its permanent display. This year "Mountain Railways, Cableways and Mountain Footpaths" is the theme to be illustrated.

[S.N.T.O.]