

Bad news ... and good

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up and down the country. The dismissal of Mr. Hommel could be, the writer surmises, "the start of a major overhaul of the way banking is run in one of Europe's most prosperous countries".

Since then, the Swiss Bank Corporation has established a new subsidiary, the Schweizerische Gewerbebank, to conduct the bulk of the banking business of the former Banque Suisse d'Epargne et de Credit, St. Gall, the principal liabilities and assets of which were recently taken over. The new bank which will concentrate on domestic banking, has a capital of 30 million Swiss francs. Operations commenced on the 15th of July.

(News mainly from A.T.S.)

BAD NEWS . . .

A Vampire aircraft crashed in the neighbourhood of the Dent de Morcle in the Valais; fortunately the pilot was able to escape by parachute. The same day, 17th May, a Beechcraft "Baron" crashed near the Fluelapass; four people lost their lives, amongst them the KLM Director and his wife.

All friends of animal life are appalled every year at the large number of fawns which get mauled by motor mowing machines. Usually, the animals are not killed, and they grow up maimed and crippled, a prey to foxes and other animals. Special action has been taken. In the Oberaargau for instance, 80 schoolchildren under the leadership of huntsmen, saved 90 fawns in four days by patrolling the meadows in front of the mowing machines. It is estimated that every year between 5,000 and 12,000 fawns are threatened by the mowing machines.

The sugar factory Frauenfeld made a loss of several million francs already in the first year, and since the price of sugar has dropped again, the losses are expected to double. The small shareholders are disappointed, to say the least, that they have not yet received any dividends.

A farmer caused a serious explosion and fire at Gansingen (Aargau) when he filled petrol into his tractor in the light of a lantern.

A new record of fire damage was reached in 1964, when 125.2 million francs were paid out in compensation, 6.9 mio. more than in the previous year. Fires in industrial undertakings have shown an alarming increase, 40 against 26 million francs in 1963.

. . . AND GOOD

A successful sale of oranges and grapefruit was arranged in Zurich in favour of the Swiss Agricultural College Nachlat Jehuda in Israel.

At the Swiss Children's Village Kirjath Jearim in Israel, the foundation stone for a new building was laid recently in the presence of the former Federal Councillor Dr. M. Petitpierre and the Swiss Ambassador Monsieur de Stoutz.

It has become a tradition for the Swiss Circus Knie to give its last performance in Zurich every year in aid of charity. Several thousand francs are distributed annually for charitable purposes.

On the occasion of the centenary of the Red Cross, Swiss children collected Fr.600,000.— for the purchase of a special coach for invalids. On 10th June, this coach was presented at the Ebenrain near Sissach, and it will enable 4,000 invalids annually to make sightseeing tours of Switzerland.

The sale of stamps and post cards in aid of the "Pro Juventute" Foundation yielded 4.6 million francs net, 14% more than in 1963/64. During the past year, the Foundation was able to spend 7.5 million francs on various activities to help Swiss youth.

19,960 working days were put voluntarily at the disposal of the Swiss mountain farmers by about one thousand young (and not so young) people of both sexes. An average of three weeks was spent by these mostly unpaid helpers in small farmsteads, and many an overworked and discouraged farmer and his family took on a new lease of life thanks to these volunteers supplied through the "Pro Juventute" Agency.

Swiss cattle have recently scored successes in South Africa (Rand Easter Show) and in Italy (Fair of Verona), the latter for the third year in succession.

The Foundation "Casa Henry Dunant, Varazze" renovated an old mansion near Genoa, which had been put at the disposal of the Swiss youth by the Swiss Red Cross, and this home is now ready for holiday courses and Red Cross training to be enjoyed by Swiss apprentices. Swiss firms and organisations presented the material for the renovation, and over 500 apprentices worked in their holidays in 1963 and 1964, and the last group, a class of future domestic science teachers from Basle, gave the house the final polish and saw to appropriate food being served at the official opening. A Swiss couple are in charge, and sixty young boys and girls between 16 and 25 can be accommodated.

Thanks to the excellence of the "Streifendienst" (Patrol service) of the Zurich Municipal Police, a small baby who was drowned in his bath, could be saved. The headquarters of the Police had all the traffic lights adjusted along the route from the home to the children's hospital, so that, in spite of rush hour traffic, the Police car could race non-stop through the busy town, in order to save the child's life.

[A.T.S.]

GYMNASTICS

The Information Service of the Federal Military Department announced the appointment of Jack Guenthard as Chief Instructor of gymnastics and sports at the "Eidgenössische Turn- und Sportschule" Magglingen. Moreover, he will coach the gymnasts of the Swiss team.

Born in 1920 at Hirzel, but educated at Maennedorf, Jack Guenthard won his first laurels as a gymnast at the age of 17. In 1952, at the Olympic Games in Helsinki, he was Olympic champion (Gold Medal) on the horizontal bars. Five years later, in Paris, he won the European titles for horizontal and parallel bars. Three times (1956-1958) he won the Swiss championship. After 1958, he coached the national team of Italy which won third place at the Olympic Games in Rome.

It would have been very strange if Switzerland had not recalled the man who is considered the best coach for apparatus gymnastics in Western Europe.

Jack Guenthard will take up his duties on 1st September. He has said that he does not expect any miracles. An improvement is possible only if the Swiss gymnasts benefit from the conditions that apply in foreign countries.

It is hoped that Jack Guenthard's work with Swiss gymnasts will prove successful and will enable Swiss gymnastics to regain their standing of former years.

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