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HOME NEWS

The news appears in the Swiss Press that the definite ratification by France of the Franco-Swiss arbitration compromise in the Savoy Zones controversy is suffering a further considerable delay. The French Chamber endorsed the compromise last July, more than twelve months after the ratification in the Swiss parliament, but there is no definite news yet as to when the French Senate will follow the lead of the lower chamber.

Apart from a number of cantonal questions, the Swiss electorate will have to give a decision during this week-end on the "corn monopoly," a bill which seeks to prolong and establish certain war measures rendered necessary in order to secure a regular supply of cereals. Opinion in Switzerland is divided, and a keen controversy has been roused by long articles in the press; it is, however, anticipated that the bill will on balance find favour.

Col. L. H. Bornand has resigned his command of the first army corps to which he was promoted in 1918 after having been in charge of the first division. Col. Charles Sarasin, of Geneva, at present commander of the second division, has been appointed as his successor; before joining the army in 1920, Col. Sarasin was lecturing at the university of Geneva on geology.

Protests have been addressed to the Federal Council against its policy of limiting the payment of the traditional bounty to the male sex, i.e., to families with at least ten boys; it is asserted that all parents with at least ten children, regardless of sex, should enjoy this "encouragement." It is computed that the number of families in Switzerland having more than ten children exceeds 2,800, so that the expense to the Confederation would constitute a heavy item if the suggestion were acceded to.

The budget for 1927 of the canton Basel-Stadt shows a deficit of nearly four million francs.

"No change" is the result of the elections for the Cantonal Council of Zug during the last week-end, the Conservative party retaining 44 mandates out of 76 seats.

In the course of a discussion in the Lucerne Grosse Rat recommending the establishment of a Cantonal Sanatorium it was stated that out of every 10,000 people in the Canton 140 succumbed every year to tuberculosis.

After an agitated discussion in the Ticinese Council, the President admitted that the local police had recently discovered a black list giving the names of prominent Ticinese residents who were believed to be unfriendly to the Fascist regime.

In order to economise, the Commune of Liestal (Baselland) has reduced the salary of its President (Mayor) from Frs. 5,200 to Frs. 4,400.

The cantonal council of Valais has voted a credit of Frs. 20,000 for the erection of historic monuments.

After over a fortnight's deliberations the Lausanne courts have given their verdict in the proceedings against the management of the insolvent "Banque d'escompte de Lausanne." Arnold Bürgi, manager, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment, Walther Kieser, the sub-manager, to eight months' and Armand Dupont, a local notary and president of the Board, to ten months' imprisonment. All were found guilty of fraud and of issuing false balance-sheets.

The resident population of the town of Zurich has increased within the last twelve months by 5,500, the figures to the end of October being 213,400.

The Socialist party of Zurich has decided to erect a statue in memory of their deceased leader and founder, Hermann Greulich.

At a meeting held in Chur of the League for preserving the purity of the "rumantsch" language, it was decided to take energetic measures against the threatened incursion of the German and Italian vernacular. The League is subsidised both by the canton of Grisons and the Confederation.

A house-to-house collection is to be made in the canton of Berne on February 17th, the 100th anniversary of Pestalozzi's death, with a view to raising a fund for the further instruction of backward children discharged from the State schools.

For losing control of his car whilst driving at an excessive speed, Aviation Capt. Wuhrmann, instructing officer at the Dübendorf aerodrome, has been sentenced by the Zurich military tribunal to one month's imprisonment. In the anticipation of participating in the "Klausen" race, Capt. Wuhrmann took his Bugatti car for a trial run on August 3rd when he met with a serious accident just before crossing the bridge over the Breitenbach. His colleague, Aviation Lieut. Busigny, was killed on the spot, whilst the captain suffered serious injuries, from which he has since recovered.

In view of the general unemployment in the Canton, the musical societies of Bühler (Appenzell) have decided to curtail during the coming two years their social functions.

Two successful starts were made last Sunday morning by Lieut. Mittelholzer in his transcontinental flight to the Cape but on each occasion he was forced to return to the Zurichhorn on account of visibility and adverse weather conditions (vide extracts).

A fire partly destroyed the furniture factory Dreher in Gottlieben (Thurgau) which employs about a hundred hands. The damage exceeds Frs. 100,000 and a book-keeper of the firm has been arrested on a charge of arson.

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EXTRACTS FROM SWISS PAPERS.

Mittelholzers Startversuche zum Africaflug. — "Mittelholzer startet Sonntag früh," meldete uns am Samstag mittag ein Telegramm aus Zürich. Die vielseitigen Vorbereitungen zur grossen Luftreise waren beendet, "Switzerland" "tropenfähig" gemacht, die Wetterberichte nicht ungünstig. Also stand dem Start nichts mehr im Wege.

Bei dichtem Nebel fuhr ich in der Frühe des Sonntags dem idealen Wasserhafen der Ad Astra im Zürichhorn zu. Auf seinen plumpen Schwimmern wiegte sich bereits der stolze Vogel in den fächernden Wellen des dampfenden Zürichsees. Monteure — allen voran Hartmann, der Expeditionsmechaniker — prüften den Eindecker an allen Ecken und Enden. Bis über die Knie steckten sie in Taucherhosen im Wasser, trugen Oel und Benzin herbei und hätschelten das stumme Ungetüm mit rührender Liebe und Sorgfalt. Die Temperatur war unter Null, so dass man alle Mühe hatte, den erkalteten Motor mit Leben zu durchströmen. Die weitem Expeditionsmitglieder hatten sich unterdessen ebenfalls eingestellt: Pilot Mittelholzer in schlechtem Sportsdress der den Lesern der "National-Zeitung" bestbekannte Afrikaforscher und Pressechef Gouzy und Prof. Heim, der Wissenschaftler, begleitet vom 70jährigen Vater und seiner Familie. In grossen Scharen war auch die Bevölkerung aus der Stadt herbeigeeilt, um Zeuge des denkwürdigen Abflugs zu sein. Die Nebel begannen zu weichen und die Sonne sandte als schalkhaften Gruss ihre mattgelben fahlen Strahlen, die See und Ufer in

Winter Sports at Engelberg.

A small party of from 20 to 25 persons is being arranged for the Hotel Schweizerhof at Engelberg, from December 14th to 28th inclusive. Full 'en pension' terms including room, heating, lighting, breakfast, lunch, tea, dinner, Sports- and Kur-tax, but exclusive of tips, 13/6 per person, per day. Very nice, comfortable rooms and first-class cuisine.

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bunte zarte Farben tauchten. Alles schien programmässig in bester Ordnung. Es sollte aber anders kommen!

Während Hartmann den Motor auf Herz und Nieren prüfte und zum Schluss zu voller Tourenzahl steigerte, schob sich die Maschine mit den Schwimmern in einem Ruck in das nahe Ufer, wo sie fest verankert stecken blieben. Es brauchte nahezu stündige angestrengte Arbeit, in die sich Expeditionsteilnehmer, Mechaniker (die im Wasser stampften) und ein gutes Dutzend handfeste Zuschauer teilten, um den unerwünschten Wasservogel vom Land zu vertreiben. Leider verabschiedete sich inzwischen die Sonne, worauf ein leichter Wolkenschleier, der sich immer mehr verdichtete, unerwartet "weissen Segen" spendete: es schneite. Schon war es 9 Uhr vorbei, als die Fluggesellschaft sich von Angehörigen und Bevölkerung verabschiedete und die Kabine bestieg. Nun ging es — trotz heftigstem Schneegestöber — prompt. Mittelholzer ergriff das Steuer, erfüllte den starren Vogel mit zuckendem Leben und startete unter lebhaftem Beifall des Publikums. Kaum hundert Meter zog die Maschine im Wasser eine tiefe Furche, als sie auch schon in Schnee und Nebel verschwand. Noch donnerte der Motor, um dann aber plötzlich zu verstummen. Man war nicht wenig überrascht, als nach zehn Minuten der Eindecker im Dunst wieder sichtbar wurde — nicht in der Luft, sondern noch auf dem Wasser — um dem Hangar zuzusteuern. Mittelholzer teilte den Grund seiner Rückkehr der harrenden Menge vom Führersitz aus mit: "Jede Sicht verunmöglichlich. Kaum fünfzig Meter Orientierungsmöglichkeit. Start um zirka zwei Stunden verschoben zur Einholung neuer Wettermeldungen.

11 Uhr 15 schwingt der Propeller des 450 PS-Motors wieder. Es hat aufgehört zu schneien, doch lagert über Zürich und dem See fast undurchdringbare Nebel- und Wolkenmauer. Die "Afrikaner" bestiegen neuerdings die Koje, und zum zweitenmal sticht der Eindecker in See. Diesmal geht er rascher hoch und forsch hinein ins Dunstmeer. Mittelholzer will auf diesen zweiten Erkundungsflug, versuchen, die Alpen zu traversieren. Deshalb nimmt er direkt Richtung Gotthard, schraubt sich trotz ungünstigster Verhältnisse höher und vermag auch die Voralpen zu überfliegen. Ueber dem Gotthard wird er aber neuerdings zur Rückkehr gezwungen.

Auch südlich der Alpen sind die Witterungsverhältnisse unter den Einwirkungen des Föhn wieder ungünstig geworden. Nach fünfviertelstündigem Fluge landete die Expedition wieder im Zürichhorn. Ein frühes unfreiwilliges Wiedersehen! Erfreulich ist die grosse überlegene Vorschicht, mit der Mittelholzer stets ans Werk geht. Es ist dies eine Eigenschaft, die das Gelingen seiner früheren kühnen Fahrten ermöglichen half.

Sobald die meteorologische Anstalt günstigere Bulletins nach dem Hangar vermitteln kann, werden die vier "Afrikallieger" — am nächsten schönen Tag — den Flug antreten. Es muss bemerkt werden, dass die mit viel "nötigem Ballast" (darunter nicht weniger als 160 Kilo Post) beladene Maschine sehr schwer ist, weshalb eine günstige Witterungslage zum Fliegen als Voraussetzung gilt.

National Zeitung.

Ein alter Brauch — In Lenzburg (Aargau) und seiner nächsten Umgebung besteht noch der uralte Brauch des "Klausenklopfens." Die ganz Jungmannschaft nimmt daran teil. "Geklopft," und zwar sehr laut "Geklopft" wird mit einer besonders dazu konstruierten Geissel, die einen kurzen, kräftigen Stock und eine mehrere Meter lange Schnur mit einem Zwick aufweist. Wenn die Geissel mit beiden Händen kräftig geschwungen wird, was eine gesunde körperliche Betätigung ist, entsteht ein gewehrshussartiger Knall, der gelegentlich auch den älteren Leuten Freude macht. Am Klausmarkt und am Vorabend desselben findet dann in den engen Strassen und auf den Plätzen der Stadt das "Klausenklopfen" statt, und es soll ein Höllenlärm sein. Da sich diese Kunst aber nicht an einem Tage erlernt sondern wie jede Sportleistung geübt sein will, nehmen die Burschen schon 3—4 Wochen vor dem Klausstag das "Training" auf. Um aber die Ohren und Nerven der Stadtbewohner davor zu schützen, hat der Stadtrat sich dieses Jahr das Ueben im Gebiet des Städtchens verboten und die Lärmbelässigen auf die Höhen des Gofferberges verwiesen.

IN THE SWISS TEXTILE INDUSTRY.

The jubilees that are celebrated in certain big undertakings afford one the opportunity to glance back at their beginnings and growth and note the important part they have played in the economic life of the country. Such an opportunity is given to us through the publication of a very interesting

commemoration booklet on the fiftieth anniversary of the Swiss String Works of Flurlingen, near Schaffhausen, and of its allied firm, the Swiss Linen Industry Co., Ltd., of Niederlenz, in the canton of Aargau.

Ever since the Middle Ages, and for centuries afterwards, the cultivation of flax and hemp has formed an important branch of Swiss Agriculture. It is not surprising, therefore, to find the manufacture of linen yarn and linen fabrics established on Swiss territory as early as the 13th century. That industry, though thriving during more than one period, began, however, to decline as soon as cotton made its appearance. Not before the second half of the 19th century was there any revival of it. Then it was that a factory was founded at Flurlingen, near Schaffhausen, for the manufacture of strings by machine; and ever since its foundation, in 1874, that factory produced not only strings and ropes, but also boot and shoe-laces, linen yarn and other such articles. Its normal output was 1,100 kgs. a day. From the outset, that enterprise was placed on a rational footing with such machinery as could turn out articles adapted to the requirements of customers. The total value of goods sold in the course of the first year of its existence amounted to 400,000 francs, Switzerland absorbing for her own needs a quantity worth 190,000 frs., Germany coming in for a share of 210,000 frs., and various other countries for 40,000 frs. Following on such a promising beginning, difficulties soon arose. As in other Swiss industries at that period, the disposal of the products of the Flurlingen Works was seriously checked through the putting up of customs duties in Germany, France, Austria, etc. In spite of this, the quantities exported amounted up to the year 1884 to 40 or 50 per cent. of the total output. Owing to various difficulties, it became necessary in 1896 to re-organise the firm on a new financial basis, which allowed an improvement in the means of production and inaugurated a new era of prosperity. In 1906 two factories, producing linen and hempen yarns and fabrics, were purchased at Niederlenz and at Schleithelm (Ct. of Aargau), the latter of which was closed and the former enlarged and finally made self-supporting and independent in 1918 under the title of "Swiss Linen Industry Co., Ltd." The effect of this aggrandisement, coupled with a new technical re-organisation, was both to strengthen the position of the enterprise as a whole in regard to foreign competition, and to increase its production. The capital of the Flurlingen Enterprise was, after several successive increments, raised up to 6 million francs. During the Great War, both works were kept pretty busy generally, although great difficulties had to be overcome in regard to the supply of raw materials. After the war, the competition of countries with depreciated currencies constituted no small obstacle. But the gradual recovery of exchanges, coupled with the readjustment of prices which ensued, made it once more possible for the enterprise to find a ready outlet for its goods on the international market. Its export trade has developed even to a greater extent than before the war. In addition to the above historical survey, we hope some of our readers will be interested in the following information as to the present situation of the Flurlingen and Niederlenz Works so far as production is concerned.

The buildings and plant have been insured for 10 million francs, while the stocks of raw materials and manufactured articles are covered by an insurance of 6 million francs. Six hundred workmen are employed by the enterprise, and its consumption of electric energy amounts to 2 million Kw. per annum. The yearly output is 2 million kgms., total value 7 million francs. As regards raw materials, hemp comes chiefly from Italy, jute from India and flax—in order of importance—from Belgium, Holland, Lettland, Russia, France, Checo-Slovakia and Ireland. The consumption of home-grown flax amounts to not more than 30 tons per annum. The variety of specialities produced by both works is worth noting. It is as follows: The Flurlingen Spinning-mills produce hempen and jute yarns, destined not only to be used for the manufacture of strings in the same works, but also for sale as twine to saddlers, shoemakers, upholsterers, etc., yarns for the weaving of belts, carpets, hose-pipes, etc. The spinning-mill at Niederlenz supplies sewing yarns, yarns for the weaving of cloths, both at the works themselves and for sale. The manufacture of strings and ropes includes all species and kinds in that line. The Flurlingen factory has about 180 different kinds in stock. The Niederlenz weaving works specialise in coarse linen and hempen fabrics for technical and domestic use, e.g., sail cloth, waterproof canvas for awnings, as well as certain kinds of coarse mixed linen and cotton fabrics, especially for aprons, kitchen cloths, etc.

—B.T.S.

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