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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

SWISS PARLIAMENTARY SESSION.

Both Chambers of the Swiss Parliament have started their session on March 27th, they will sit for about three weeks.

NEW ARMY COMMANDS.

Colonel E. Dübi has been appointed commander of the 2nd Artillery Brigade; Colonel E. Burgunder from Berne will take over the command of the 3rd Artillery Brigade.

POLITICAL REFUGEES IN SWITZERLAND.

The Federal Police Dept. has issued instructions to the cantonal authorities regarding the immigration of political refugees and especially Jews. Owing to the seriousness of their situation, they will be allowed to enter Switzerland for the time being, but they will not be allowed to take up a position. Any foreigner, who is using his stay for political propaganda for and against a foreign country, or endangers the security of the State, will be expelled forthwith.

BASLE FAIR.

M. Schulthess, President of the Swiss Confederation, was prevented, owing to illness, attending the official day at the Basle Fair; his place was taken by Federal Councillor Pilet, Vice-President of the Confederation. Amongst the official guests were Dr. Waggnère and Dr. Dunant, Swiss Ministers at Bruxelles and Paris respectively, as well as the Swiss Consuls in Besançon, Lyon, Mannheim, Mühlhausen, Strassburg and Stuttgart.

The Swiss Parliament was represented by M. Huber, Vice-President of the National Council, and M. H. Schupbach, National Councillor; M. A. Riva, Vice-President States Council, and M. Edwin Hauser, States Councillor; the Federal Tribunal delegated Dr. Engeler and Dr. Léon Robert. Most of the cantonal governments were also represented by delegations. During the Banquet which was offered to the official guests, various speeches were made.

Federal Councillor Pilet in his speech pointed out, that the situation in which Switzerland finds itself at the present moment, was serious but not desperate. "Switzerland has," he said, "weathered the storm during the world war, and has emerged from this struggle stronger than before; in spite of great competition from abroad, our country has been able during the last years, to get a fair share in the export market, and without the backing of a great Army has been able to assert its place in the sun. Although times are bad, and small hope can be held out for an immediate improvement, we must not lose courage, as this would be the surest sign of defeat; we have the will to live, and to fight, this will is tenacious and inexorable, and combined with the will to fair competition and a strict honesty in all our dealings, we will be able to affirm our position, which we have honourably held hitherto in the world market."

CENTENARY JUBILEE OF THE "VATERLAND."

Our contemporary the "Vaterland," which circulates in Lucerne, has celebrated its 100th birthday anniversary, on which occasion a very interesting Jubilee number has been published.

Many prominent politicians, amongst them Federal Councillors Motta and Musy have sent their congratulations; high dignitaries of the Catholic church, diplomats and a score of men famous in Art and Literature have sent greetings.

The Swiss Observer sends across the sea its fraternal greetings and congratulations to this conspicuous event, coupling it with the best wishes for future fruitful work in the interest of our country.

INTERNATIONAL DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE.

The Swiss Federal Government has examined the British Disarmament Plan and has decided to instruct the Swiss delegation at the Disarmament Conference to support it. The Federal Council, however, makes some reservations in regard to the number of aeroplanes that would be allowed to Switzerland, being of opinion that the number is insufficient to ensure the defence of the country.

SWISS GERMAN TRADE AGREEMENT.

The trade agreement between Switzerland and Germany, which normally would have ended on the 31st of March, has been extended until 31st July.

LOCAL.

ZÜRICH.

A large fire, which lasted for over 12 hours, has completely destroyed the builder's yard of the firm Locher & Co., at the Allmendstrasse, the damage caused is estimated to reach nearly 1 million francs.

The case of the Banking firm Wolfensberger-Widmer, which was opened last week before the Zurich Criminal Court, is likely to suffer some delay, owing to the fact that the prosecution has not yet been able to put the necessary material before the Court. Considering that this action is pending since 1928, the entire Press condemns the slow practice of the Zurich judicial authorities.

Dr. E. Buomberger has been elected member of the town council of Zurich with 26,782 votes, M. E. Muntwyler (Socialist) has received 25,130 votes.

BASLE.

Dr. August Huber, keeper of the archives, of the canton of Basle has retired from his post which he occupied for fifteen years.

ST. GALLEN.

As a result of the recent elections to the Grand Council the strength of the parties is as follows: 79 conservatives (76); 56 radicals (62); 34 socialists (33); 1 democrat (1); 1 evangelical party (1); 2 peasants party (0); 1 communist (0); a total of 174 members (173).

VAUD.

The population of the town of Lausanne per 31st of March amounts to 81,387 inhabitants.

TICINO.

The accounts of the Canton of Ticino for 1932 show a deficit of 420,974f.

M. Polar, the successor of National Councillor Tarehini, who recently resigned his seat, has taken the oath, on the occasion of the opening of the present Parliamentary session.

FOOTBALL.

2nd April, 1933.

INTERNATIONALS.

In Geneva:
Switzerland0 Italy3

In Novara:
Italy B5 Switzerland B0

FIRST LEAGUE.

Montreux5 Grenchen0
Etoile0 Bern0

And so the bubble has burst before 24,000 disappointed spectators in Geneva. We have lost, and how! A year ago we broke a long sequence of defeats by drawing with France in Bern, followed by victories over Czecho-Slovakia and Hungary, an honourable 3:1 defeat in Vienna, then again wins over Sweden and in Holland. Three weeks ago we could only hold Belgium to a draw and now this clear and decisive 0:3 defeat. And our second string fared even worse. Here are the teams:

Switzerland: Séchéhaye; Minelli, Weiler; Gilardoni, Baumgartner, Rauch; v. Känel, Passello, Poretti, Xam, Jaeck.

Italy: Combi; Rosetta, Caligaris; Pizziolo, Monti, Bertolini; Costantino, Meazza, Schiavio, Ferrari, Orsi.

Referee: L. Baert (Belgium).

During the first quarter of an hour, both teams were well matched but the superior speed of the Italians was coming more and more in

evidence. Jaeck misses an easy chance 10 yards out after 20 minutes even play. The Azzurri are thankful for this let-off and return the kindness by continued pressure and in the 34th minute the centre forward Schiavio scores. Italy dominate play till half-time.

Barely three minutes after resuming Costantino shoots. Séchéhaye can only beat out the ball and Schiavio converts easily. Some twenty minutes later a surprise shot from 25 yards out by Meazza beats Séchéhaye again, to make it 3:0. Italy were far quicker on the ball, had better ball control and superior tactics. Our team on the day was clearly outclassed (corners 10:2 against) and Italy deservedly won a clean game, the first in the new series for the Europa Cup.

And in May we are to meet Jugo-Slavia and England. How many goals start would we get against the latter, if there was such a thing as a handicap in football? As you know, England play Italy first in Rome and at home the Azzurri are just as dangerous as the Austrians. It is a pity the England team did not fulfil all expectations in Glasgow, meaning further changes for the Continental games.

M.G.

SWITZERLAND'S ECONOMIC POSITION.

DR. RUEFFENACHT'S N.S.H. LECTURE.

Owing to the generally sound condition of her economic and financial structure, Switzerland has felt the effects of the world crisis later than most of the other countries. Whilst in other nations the crisis began already two or even three years ago, it was really only last year, 1932, that she became aware, first of all, of the very disquieting shrinkage of her export trade, which forms a vital branch of Swiss economy. Being a country which has practically no raw materials, Switzerland has, for years, had an adverse balance of trade, with the exception of the year 1916 only. There was, however, nothing to worry about as long as our flourishing tourist industry and the incoming receipts from investments abroad compensated, in our balance of payments, for the loss. The end of 1932, however, showed, that our exports had dropped to 801 million francs as compared with 1,350 million francs in 1931, while our imports shrunk from 2,251 million francs to 1,763 million francs. I may mention in this connection that, according to the most recent estimates of the League of Nations, the volume of international trade has fallen by about a third since 1929 and prices by a half. At the end of last year, we were left with an adverse balance of trade of nearly one milliard francs, to be exact 962 million francs. In order to reduce, as much as possible, the adversity of the balances of trade, the Government have decreed a system of import quotas, according to which importers in Switzerland have to obtain licences to import certain goods at the old rates of duty. Under otherwise normal conditions even such a tremendous deficit in our external trade as mentioned above could perhaps be met, but unfortunately the crisis is not only felt in our export trade, but also in the home industry and in the field of what is often called our invisible exports.

As a consequence to world conditions in general and to restrictive measures taken by many countries with regard to travel, our tourist industry was very severely hit and the Swiss hotels which had just recovered from the effects of the war, stood empty again. I can myself remember an instance, when, in the summer of 1931, I was staying at a large hotel in the Bernese Oberland where there were 60 visitors and 65 employees. This was deemed bad enough at the time, but it would perhaps have been considered satisfactory during the winter season 1931/32 and the summer of 1932, which were probably the worst ever experienced by our hotel industry. I am glad to say, however, that since then a certain improvement can be observed and this winter season seems to be considerably better than could be expected.

Another item of our invisible exports, the receipts from our investments abroad, presents a great difficulty owing to the fact that most of these credits are what is called "frozen." The Swiss Government have concluded clearing agreements with several countries but these have not proved very satisfactory so far. Therefore these receipts are lacking, just like those of the tourist industry, and cannot make up for the heavy loss in our balance of trade.