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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

From the latest report of the Swiss National Bank it would appear that our claims under the different clearing agreements amount to about 1.3 milliard francs; most of it is unrecoverable the largest debtor being Germany with 938.7 million francs.

* * *

The Federal Council approved the trade agreement with Argentine which was concluded on January 20th in Buenos Aires by a Swiss trade delegation.

The agreement runs for five years and provides for Argentine deliveries of wheat, rye, corn, oats, edible oils, leather, meat, butter, lard, castor oil, while Switzerland will supply industrial machinery of all kinds, textile machines, looms, motors, steamboilers and electrical, telephone, telegraph and radio materials as well as chemical and pharmaceutical products.

* * *

A new Anglo-Swiss trade and monetary agreement is stated to have been the subject of negotiations which commenced at Berne on February 24th. Nothing official has so far appeared in the Swiss press but the following reprinted from the February issue of "The Banker" will be of interest: "The British Government has agreed to Swiss measures designed to keep tourist traffic and the expenditure of British tourists in Switzerland within reasonable limits. A special Swiss certificate is now required before funds are allocated by the authorization officer in cash; for the rest he receives vouchers in denominations of Frs. 10 each valid in Switzerland for any of the services normally required by a tourist."

* * *

The Allied War Criminals Court at Hamburg recently sentenced to death a Swiss girl who was charged with cruelty to inmates of a German concentration camp where she occupied a controlling position though a prisoner herself. Her name is Carmen Mory (described by sympathisers as the "Black Angel of Ravensbruck") who has an adventurous life behind

her. At her trial the evidence is said to have been conflicting and her lawyers and relatives have approached the Federal Council with the plea that a reprieve might be suggested by the Council. The Federal Council stated that the information at his disposal was not sufficient to form an independent judgment but has consented to convey the plea to the British authorities in the hope that the verdict might be reconsidered.

Cantonal

After a lengthy discussion the Zurich cantonal council decided by a large majority to exempt from income tax the recipients of special long-service gratifications; on the other hand members of the communist party are pressing, among other demands, for increased death duties on large estates. [A.T.S.]

* * *

On account of the scarcity of current the municipal tramways of Zurich ceased running on Sundays between noon and 6 p.m. [A.T.S.]

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