

NOTES AND MEMORANDA.

STILL another collection of German economic monographs is announced,—the *Volkswirtschaftliche Abhandlungen der badischen Hochschulen*, edited by Professors Fuchs, Herkner, v. Schulze-Gävernitz, and Weber. As the title indicates, the series will publish the results of investigations carried on in the universities of Baden. The first number, by Dr. Liefmann, is duly noted in the current bibliography.

THE Swiss Assembly has acted favorably on the proposal made to it by the Federal Council for the purchase and management by the state of the principal railway lines of Switzerland. The Council had made its proposal in a message of March 25, 1897; and the main provisions of the bill then submitted are incorporated in the act passed by the Assembly on October 15.

The act provides that the five main lines of Switzerland, with a total length of 2,644 kilometres, shall pass into the hands of the Confederation; namely, the Jura-Simplon (939), the Nord-Ost. (764), the Central (398), the Vereinigte Schweizer (269), the Gotthard (273). As the railways of Switzerland had in 1895 a total length of but 2,949 kilometres, the purchase would lead to a system of practically complete state ownership. The five lines mentioned are to be bought on the terms of purchase reserved for the state in the charters of the several companies; but the Federal Council is authorized also to buy them by agreement with the companies, and, further, to contract for the purchase of other railways and of connecting steamer lines. For four of the main lines the state's right of purchase accrues in 1903, but notice of its intention to exercise the right must be given in February and April of 1898. For the Gotthard line the date for notice is

1904, and that for purchase is 1909. The conditions of purchase are laid down in nearly the same terms in the charters of all the companies: the state may buy on paying twenty-five times the average net earnings of the preceding ten years, but not less than the cost of construction. The Federal Council estimated the total sum needed at 964 millions of francs. As was to be expected, the referendum has been demanded on this important question; and the popular vote will be taken in February.

THE first issue of *L'Année Sociologique* is announced for the beginning of 1898 by the firm of F. Alcan, Paris, under the editorial charge of Professor M. E. Durkheim, of Bordeaux. The new annual will publish papers and memoirs and systematic surveys of the literature of sociology. The papers in the first volume are two,—*La Prohibition de l'Inceste et ses Origines*, by the editor, and *Comment les Formes Sociales se maintiennent*, by Professor Simmel. The literary notices are grouped under the heads of general sociology, religious sociology, legal and moral sociology, criminal sociology, economic sociology, and the like, each section being in charge of one or more reporters. The price of the volume is 7.50 francs.

THE firm of G. Fischer, Jena, announces a *Wörterbuch der Volkswirtschaft*, under the editorial charge of Professor E. Elster. A number of German scholars, mainly of the younger generation, will contribute. The *Wörterbuch* will be in two large volumes of some 1,000 pages each, of which the first is expected to be published in the spring. The price for the entire work will be 20 marks. It is designed to give "an exposition, popular in the best sense, and strictly scientific, of the present stage of economic knowledge."

The same firm continue the supplementing and revision of the larger and fuller *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, already favorably known to students of economics and politics. An additional supplementary volume for the first edition is