

News from Switzerland

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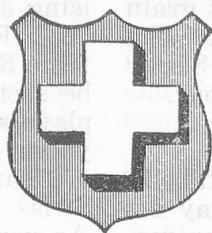
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AUCKLAND.

BOTSCHAFT DES BUNDESPRASIDENTEN AN DIE AUSLANDSCHWEIZER

Getreue liebe Schweizer und Schweizerinnen im Ausland,

Wenn im Schweizerland des Tages gedacht wird, an dem vor mehr als 6½ Jahrhunderten beherzte Männer der drei Waldstätte zum Rütli Schwur zusammentraten, dann feiert auch Ihr in Euern Kolonien mit uns den Geburtstag unserer Heimat. Mit Wort und Lied ruft Ihr die Erinnerung wach an den kleinen freiheitlich demokratischen Staat, der Euch den Bürgerbrief gegeben hat und dem Ihr, wenn auch weit weg in fernen Landen, die Treue geleistet und weiter zu halten geloben werdet.

Ihr lasst die herrliche Landschaft Eurer Heimat vor Eurem geistigen Auge erstehen, die grünen Matten, die blauen Seen, die stolzen und trotzigten Berge und die regsamen Städte und sauberen Dörfer, Ihr seht in Gedanken die markanten Gestalten unserer Geschichte, denen wir Entstehung, Erhaltung und Ausbau unseres Schweizerhauses verdanken.

Ihr nehmt auch regen Anteil an unsern heutigen Freuden und Sorgen, die Euch Verwandte und Freunde, Zeitungen und Radioberichte aus Eurer Heimat vermitteln. Auch Eure Anliegen und Wünsche sind uns vertraut und wir bemühen uns ernsthaft, Eure Interessen zu wahren und die brennendsten Probleme lösen zu helfen und freuen uns über jeden Erfolg.

Wir wissen, dass Ihr in fernen Landen auf Vorposten steht, als Vorposten unserer Wirtschaft und Kultur. Wir wissen, dass Ihr der Heimat Freunde werbet durch Eure vornehme Gesinnung, Eure Zuverlässigkeit und Eure Arbeitsleistung.

Die Wertschätzung unseres Landes bei den andern Völkern verdanken wir zu einem grossen Teil dem Wirken unserer Landsleute im Ausland. Wir danken Euch dafür.

Der Bundesrat und das Schweizervolk entbieten Euch in enger Verbundenheit vaterländischen Gruss.

INVITATION (1st August Celebration)

To celebrate the National Day, the Swiss Consul and Mrs. Blanchard cordially invite all the Swiss to supper at their home, 16 Wesley Road, Wellington (corner of Bolton Street and Wesley Road) on Saturday, August 2nd, at 7 p.m.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

Swiss Supplies for a New Plant in Portugal.

Swiss industry is participating in the construction of a Portuguese factory for the production of ammonium sulphate fertiliser. Portugal, which until now has imported considerable amounts of ammonium sulphate for fertilisation purposes, has decided to build a factory with a yearly production capacity of 20,000 tons of ammonium sulphate. The L. de Roll Ltd. in Zurich will plan and construct a complete sulphuric acid plant, with a daily production capacity of 60 tons of 100 per cent. sulphuric acid. The plant includes three roasting furnaces several stories high, producing 18-20 tons of pyrite per day. The Oerlikon Machine Factory will supply the necessary electrolytic apparatuses, while the Brown, Boveri Co. in Baden will construct the transformer station and rectifier plant. The Basle firm, Burckhardt Ltd., also participates in the project by supplying the compressors needed for the plant.

The Launching of New Swiss Ships Romandie and Basilea.

A new Swiss ship, the Romandie, was recently launched in Scotland. It is a motor vessel of 10,700 tons, which was built on behalf of a Lausanne shipping company. The ship, which is the biggest unit in the Swiss merchant navy, has been fitted out with a 4,000 h.p. Diesel motor built by Messrs. Sulzer Bros. Ltd., of Winterthur. Her maximum speed is 13 knots.

A new ship, the Basilea, was launched recently from a Flensburg shipyard. Built for a Swiss shipping company, she has a size of 6,200 tons

and is 432 feet long and 55 feet wide. The ship was especially constructed for transporting grain and is equipped with a powerful windlass. The ship's six-cylinder 4,200 h.p. motor, built by Sulzer Bros., can reach a speed of 14 knots per hour.

Swiss Railway Supplies for India.

The Swiss Lokomotiv-und Maschinenfabrik, Winterthur, has just delivered three railway engines to the Indian Railways. Two further machines are still being built and will be ready for delivery in the near future.

The Swiss Industries Fair in Basle has Closed its Gates.

The Swiss Industries Fair in Basle closed its gates on 29th April, after eleven days of extremely successful show period. The number of visitors was 420,000, or nearly as many as in the previous year. A total of 16,000 visitors came from abroad, of which 15,000 were from European countries and the other 1,000 from overseas.

Death of Robert Zurbriggen, Champion Skier and Alpine Guide.

The well-known Swiss champion skier and alpine guide, Robert Zurbriggen, aged 36, who was instructor to the Indian Army in 1949, fell into a glacier crevasse in the Schwarzberg Weisster and was killed. In 1948 at the Olympic Games in St. Moritz, he was first in the "Patrouillenlauf" and at the Olympic Games at Oslo his patrol won the European championship.

Request for Chinese Communists to Release Five St. Bernard Monks.

Switzerland has asked the Chinese Communists to release five St. Bernard monks who were taken to Yunnan Province from Tibet, where they had been training Tibetan dogs in snow rescue work.

The monks, sent to Tibet from the St. Bernard Monastery in the Swiss Alps 20 years ago, were organising the building of a similar hospice in the Lhasa mountains.

Former German Colonel Expelled from Switzerland.

A former German colonel, Eugene Dolmann, has been expelled from Switzerland after living at Lugano for two years under an assumed name.

Butter Supplies.

In Switzerland, butter supplies had to be checked as they threatened to become excessive.

Musical Festival in Geneva.

Following the great success of last year's International Music Festival in Geneva, in which 218

candidates from 29 countries took part, the organising committee is already making plans for the 1952 Festival—the eighth—which will be held from September 22nd to October 5th. There will be sections for singers, pianists, harpsichord players, violinists, oboists and saxophonists, and young people from all countries between the ages of 15 and 30 can take part. Prizes totalling 11,000 Swiss francs will be awarded to the winners. As usual the Festival is being organised in collaboration with Radio Geneva and the Orchestre de la Suisse romande.

The prospectus containing rules and the Festival programme has been issued and will be sent free of charge on application to the Festival Secretariat, Conservatoire de Musique, Geneva. The list of adjudicators, which will consist of eminent musicians from Switzerland and other countries, will be published at the end of February. Closing date for entries is July 15th, 1952.

Switzerland, Land of Electricity.

In 1951, the use of electric power in Switzerland has, for the first time, been over 10 billion kwh. This is 16 per cent. more than in 1950, and amounts altogether to 10,429 billion kwh. These figures show the industrial activity in the country, mainly the increase in usage of electrical energy in the chemical, metallurgical concerns, and industries concerned with heating.

The Swiss Industry of Wool Rugs.

It is not too well known that wool rugs are produced in Switzerland, and that one year's production of wool rugs would cover over one million square yards. Swiss exports before the war amounted yearly to 440,000 francs and have risen in the last twelve months to approximately one million francs. This branch of the textile industry was introduced a half century ago and, at present, six large concerns are producing wool rugs. There are also many firms which produce hand woven wool rugs; this branch is fairly important in the Swiss wool industry and employs approximately 10,000 persons. The Swiss rug industry equals that of any foreign nation in the quality of its products and the variety of designs used. The larger firms carry out every process from the preliminary spinning to the finishing of the rug, and their designers are trained to please the public with traditional and modern patterns.

Rare Honour Bestowed Upon Mr. Adolf Odermatt, Proprietor of the Hotel Bellvue, Engelberg.

A rare honour has been bestowed by the Ski Club of Great Britain upon Mr. Adolf Odermatt,

Proprietor of the Hotel Bellvue, Engelberg. The Editor of the British Ski Year Book and Honorary Member of the Ski Club of Great Britain, Mr. Arnold Lunn, has personally presented him with a medallion in recognition of his great merits in strengthening the Anglo-Swiss ski friendship.

Death of Well-known Swiss Composer, Carlo Boller.

One of the best-known—and best-loved—composers in French-speaking Switzerland, Carlo Boller, has died suddenly. He was in charge of many choral societies, and his passing has been a loss to singers throughout the whole of Switzerland. He founded and directed, among many others, the celebrated "Chanson de Montreux," with which he has made many successful tours of Europe. Carlo Boller studied composition and conducting in Paris, under Vincent d'Indy, and won first prize for conducting at the "Schola Cantorum." Last winter he was invited to conduct the Nice-Cote d'Azur Orchestra.

Carlo Boller has an important place in the history of Swiss music: he wrote and adapted numerous songs and ballads for young and old, and for mixed choirs, he composed many festivals (the music of the last Narcissus Festival at Montreux, "Hades et Core," on a poem by R. L. Piachaud, with Clotilde Sakharoff, was his), and oratorios. His melodious and harmonious style fitted in perfectly with the need for musical expression so typically Swiss, and after the deaths of Jaques-Dalcroze and Gustave Doret—and, more recently the Abbe Bovet—Carlo Boller had become the most famed interpreter of folklore in French Switzerland.

Travel Agencies in Britain can now Sell Tickets for Funiculars, Ski Lifts and Other Transport in Switzerland.

The Swiss tourist and hotel organisations have arranged that tickets for funiculars, ski lifts and other transport in Switzerland can be bought at travel agencies in Britain and paid for in sterling. This would save the average British skier at least £1 a day of his basic £25 allowance.

The "Gotthard White Arrow."

A new Swiss express train called the "Gotthard White Arrow" will run every Sunday from Milan to the Gotthard. This will facilitate the trip of skiing resorts on the Gotthard for Italian sports enthusiasts. The trip was made possible through the courtesy of the Italian National Railways. It will take four hours from Milan to Andermatt.

The Motorisation of the Swiss Agriculture.

Agriculture in Switzerland is becoming more mechanised. There are now three times as many agricultural machines as there were in 1939.

At present, approximately 50,000 tractors and reaping machines are in use. These numbers become still more significant if one considers the fact that Switzerland is a very small country and that its productive surface is only a little more than six million acres.

The Part Played by Swiss Reinsurance Societies in the World.

About one-fourth of all contracts for reinsurance in the world are made with Swiss insurance companies. This places Switzerland second only to England. Payments on premiums to Swiss insurance companies amount every year to more than two billion francs, half of which are premiums for reinsurance. It is significant that 60 per cent. of this amount comes from foreign countries.

An Interesting Experiment in Zurich.

A new experiment in Zurich may avoid many accidents caused by ice and snow on the streets, and involves the heating of the street surface. A heating surface was installed three centimetres below the surface of a sidewalk which melted all snow and ice on the surface. Insulation was not necessary since the voltage was very low. The electricity used was 50 to 100 watts per square metre, and it seemed that any surface could be heated in such a manner.

LETTER FROM SWITZERLAND

(Continued from last issue)

Moreover, about half of Switzerland's industrial concerns make a contribution to the expenses incurred by the birth of a child, either in the form of financial help or the gift of the layette. Nursery schools have been set up in many places, as well as class-rooms where school children may come and do their homework while waiting for their parents to finish work. These day-nurseries are very pleasant in appearance and run on the most modern lines.

Firms give particular attention to the training of apprentices. The theoretical and practical instruction given to future workers is very complete, and the running of special workshops, the salaries of the instructors and the training are not negligible items in the budgets of firms.

Let us also draw attention to the important role played by welfare officers in the lives of Swiss workers. At the present moment, almost all firms of a certain standing employ one or more welfare officers. The sums placed at their disposal vary according to the factories; one well-known Swiss firm, for example, allots 40,000 Swiss francs annually to welfare work.

Holidays and Recreation

At the present moment, almost all men and women workers enjoy holidays with pay, gener-