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The Swiss Observer

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The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Swiss Ambassador in Washington, Monsieur Henry de Torrenté, who in accordance with a decision of the Federal Council was accorded in 1958 an extension of two years above the official age limit set for retirement of Swiss Government officials, has expressed the wish to vacate his post. The Federal Council has accepted his resignation, expressing thanks for the services he has rendered.

Until the appointment of a successor, Monsieur Ernesto Thalmann, Counsellor of Embassy, in the capacity of *Chargé d'Affaires a.i.* will be in charge of the Embassy.

Son of a former president of the Upper Chamber of Deputies, Monsieur de Torrenté was born in November 1893 a citizen of Sion and Ayer. He was educated at Sion and Einsiedeln, and took distinguished degrees in Law, and Social Science and Economic Science respectively at the Universities of Berne, Basle and Geneva.

After several years abroad he entered the service of the Federal Economic Department in 1925, where he became associated with the Swiss delegation at the International Labour Office. In 1929 Monsieur de Torrenté was appointed 1st Secretary of Legation at the then Swiss Legation in Paris, and four years later (1933) was promoted to the rank of Counsellor and First Collaborator to the Minister. During his *séjour* in Paris he acted on several occasions as *Chargé d'Affaires a.i.*

In 1939, at the outbreak of the Second World War, he organised the repatriation of Swiss nationals, and took charge of the Legation in Paris in the absence of the Minister in Vichy until June 1941, when the Legation was closed.

After his return to Switzerland he occupied various commands in the Swiss army, and in December 1941 was promoted to the rank of a General Staff Colonel.

Subsequently Monsieur de Torrenté spent three years in conducting important negotiations with the United States, with Spain, France, Portugal, Belgium and Holland, in the capacity of "Delegate for Commercial Treaties".

Having been promoted to the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary in February 1945, he went a few months later to Nanking as first Swiss Minister to Chiang Kai-Shek. In 1948 the Federal Council appointed him Swiss Minister and Envoy Extraordinary to the Court of St. James's in succession to Monsieur Paul Ruegger. During his seven years' stay in London he took a great interest in the doings of the Swiss Colony, and many are the services which he rendered whilst *en poste* in London, not only to our country but to the Swiss community in Great Britain.

In 1955 Monsieur de Torrenté was nominated Minister at Washington, and in 1957, when the Legation in Washington was raised to the status of Embassy, he received ambassadorial rank.

On the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the University of Geneva he was honoured with the degree of *doctor rer.pol. honoris causa*.

We wish Monsieur de Torrenté, and Madame de Torrenté, a long and happy retirement. (Ed.)

Nouvelle Société Helvétique (LONDON GROUP)

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Customs receipts for the month of April 1960 total 105 million francs; of this amount the Confederation (Bund) receives 76.2 million francs or 9.6 million francs more than in April 1959.

During the first four months of the current year the receipts earmarked for the Confederation amount to 273.3 million francs, or 49.4 million francs more than during the same period in 1959.

* * *

The Diplomatic corps in Berne gave the traditional dinner to the members of the Swiss Government. Six Federal Councillors were present, amongst them M. M. Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation. The only absentee was Federal Councillor F. T. Wahlen, who was abroad.

Also invited were the Presidents of the National and States Councils, Messieurs Gaston Clottu and M. G. Desplands respectively, the President of the Federal Supreme Court, M. C. Pometta, the President of the Federal Insurance Court, M. A. Gysin, representatives of the governments of the cantons of Berne and Solothurn, army-corps commanders Annason and Frick, and a number of high civil servants.

* * *

Monsieur Hector Serrano has presented his credentials, as Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the Republic El Salvador, to Federal Councillor P. Chaudet, head of the Federal Military Department, and Federal Councillor Ludwig von Moos, head of the Federal Justice and Police Department, at the Palais Fédéral in Berne.

* * *

The administrative council of the "Weltpostverein" on the recommendation of the Federal Council has accepted the resignation of Dr. Fritz Hess, Director of this International Buro, and has elected as his successor Dr. Eduard Weber, at present General Director of the Federal Post, Telegraph and Telephone administration (PTT).

The new "Weltpostdirektor", who will take up his post on 1st January 1961, was born on 2nd October 1901 in Biel, of which town he is a citizen. He studied Law at the Universities of Lausanne, Paris and Berne. Dr. Weber entered the service of the Federal Administration in 1930. After having occupied various important posts in the administration, he was elected in 1949 General Director of the Federal Post, Telegraph and Telephone Administration.

* * *

Cantonal

Dr. Werner Kaempfen has been appointed general manager of the Swiss Tourist Office in succession to Mr. Siegfried Bittel.

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A native of Brig, Dr. Kaempfen studied Law at the Universities of Zurich and Berne. After receiving his Doctorate, his first position was as free-lance coordinator for the Zermatt Tourist Office. During this period he also edited several text-books on publicity. In 1938 Dr. Kaempfen began travelling abroad to study the problems of road tourism, later helping to organise various conventions dealing with highway problems.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

Frau Anna Fürst-Ochsner, of Ottikon-Illnau, has celebrated her 100th birthday. [A.T.S.]

* * *

On 20th May 1960 the town of Zug numbered 20,000 inhabitants. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Mr. Fritz Trümpi-Alder (47), of Glarus, father of six children, was killed by a falling stone on the Vorderglärnisch. Mr. Urs Kehrer (23) of Zurich, whilst climbing the Clariden, fell over a rockwall and was killed. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Swiss-British Society in Berne has given a farewell luncheon to the British Ambassador in Berne, Sir William Montagu-Pollock, and to Lady Pollock. Sir William is shortly leaving the Swiss capital for Copenhagen. The president of the society, Dr. R. Schneebeli, voiced the regret of the members at losing him after only a two years' stay in Berne. [A.T.S.]

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The new officers' barracks in Berne are called after the name of General Guisan, and the "Militärplatz" in Berne will in future be known as "General Guisan Platz". [A.T.S.]

* * *

The commune of Wattwil (Ct. St. Gall) has honoured Mr. Fritz Schiess, consulting engineer, and his wife Babetta Schiess, with honorary citizenship. Mr. Schiess hails from Herisau. [A.T.S.]

* * *

On the occasion of his 40th jubilee as a teacher at the "Oberschule" Staretschwil (Ct. Aargau) the commune has bestowed on Mr. Josef Blunschli honorary citizenship. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The accounts of the canton of Thurgau for 1959 close with a deficit of 2,024,000.—francs. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The medical faculty of the University of Lausanne has bestowed the degree of *doctor honoris causa* on M. Enrico Bignomi and M. Jean C. Corthesy, members of the board of the firm Nestlé Alimentana S.A. [A.T.S.]

* * *

A mountaineer, Eduard Meichtry (20), of Leuk, occupying the post of a pastry-cook at Adelboden, lost his life whilst on an ascent of the Wildstrubel. [A.T.S.]

* * * DEATHS.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Dr. Adolf Nadig, in Chur, at the age of 83. The deceased was from 1926 to 1935 Mayor of the town of Chur. In 1936 he was elected a member of the government of the canton of Grisons, from which he retired in 1941. Dr. Nadig sat in the National Council from 1943 to 1947 as a Liberal.

B. Keller-Bonomo, since 1946 president of the "Alpina-Vereinigung Schweizerischer Uhrmacher", in Baden.

Charles Juillerat, editor of the paper "Le Jura" published in Porrentruy, in Porrentruy, at the age of 33.

André Germanier, in Sion, aged 64. The deceased was for a number of years a member of the cantonal tribunal, the Grand Council of the canton of Valais, and the National Council.

René Bille, farmer, and a former member of the Grand Council of the canton of Neuchâtel, in Le Landeron, at the age of 79.

Dr. h.c. Charles Auguste Scheuchzer, technical manager of the firm "Lausanne-Echallens-Bercher", in Lausanne, aged 82.

Dr. jur. Paul Engeli, from 1921 to 1955 "Gemeindeammann" of Weinfelden, and since 1930 an honorary citizen of Weinfelden, in Weinfelden, at the age of 71.

Jules Schiffmann, a former "Oberzollinspektor", and commander of the 43rd infantry regiment, in Berne, aged 79.

Dr. jur. and phil. Michael Schabad, well-known psychologist, in Basle, at the age of 66. [A.T.S.]

* * * ANNIVERSARIES.

Henri de Diesbach (80), of Fribourg, formerly Professor of Natural Science, Director of the Botanical Institute, and at one time Rector of the University of Fribourg. The "Jubilar" is still a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Fribourg, to which he was elected in 1921 and over which he has presided twice.

Aloys Horat (70), of Schwyz, from 1913 to 1920 editor of the "Bündner Tagblatt", and from 1920 to 1950 editor of the paper "Ostschweiz" published in St. Gall. For fifteen years he was a member of the Grand Council of the canton of St. Gall, over which he presided in 1943/44. From 1931 to 1933 he was President of the Swiss Press Association.

Dr. h.c. Rudolf Reichling (70), of Staefa (Zurich), agriculturist. In 1923 he was elected a member of the "Kantonsrat" Zurich, over which he presided in 1932/33. Dr. Reichling entered the National Council in 1929, presiding over it in 1935/36. He was one of the founders of the Zurich Peasant Party, and its president from 1926 to 1944; he was also elected, in 1949, president of the Swiss Peasant Association. The vet-medical faculty of the Zurich University honoured him in 1959 with honorary doctorship. [A.T.S.]

* * * LEGACIES AND DONATIONS.

The late Josef Hürlimann-Hochstrasser, of Walchwil (Ct. Zug), has left 25,000.—francs to the "Bürgerfonds" of the commune of Walchwil, and 30,000.—francs to the Roman Catholic Church Fund.

The late Fräulein Martha Stierli, who recently died at the "Städtischen Krankenhaus" Baden, has left 24,800.—francs to that institution.

An anonymous donor has given 10,000.—francs to the "Krankenhaus" Wattwil (Ct. St. Gall). [A.T.S.]

* * * DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Brunner-Bühler of Hemberg (Ct. St. Gall), Mr. and Mrs. R. Lendi-Clavadetscher of Schmerikon, Mr. and Mrs. E. Dallèves of Sitten, Mr.

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TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.

Mr. Rico Blattmann (62), manufacturer, of Wädenswil, was run over by a motor-car at the Seestrasse in Wädenswil and killed.

Hansruedi Roschi (20), mechanic, of Berne, crashed into a transmission mast near Chaney, and was instantaneously killed; his passenger received serious injuries and was taken to hospital.

A motor-cyclist, Robert Fatzer (27) of Arbon, fell off his machine in Horn (Ct. Aargau) and received fatal injuries.

Theodor Senn (62), a policeman, of Lenzburg, was run over by a motor-car on leaving his home in Lenzburg and was killed.

At the Kreuzstutz in Lucerne two moped drivers were involved in a head-on collision. Both were taken to hospital, where one of them, Gottfried Knüsel (67), of Meisterkappel, died as the result of his injuries.

Ernst Teutsch, a wine-grower, of Schafis, was killed on the road between Neuenstadt and Ligerz (Ct. Berne), when a motor-car collided with his bicycle.

Three youths of Dietikon drove a motor-car at excessive speed through the village of Berikon near Bremgarten. On a bend the driver lost control, and the car mounted the footpath and crashed into a group of four children. Antoinette Grüniger (11) was killed outright, whilst the other three girls received serious injuries and were taken to hospital. The driver of the car has been arrested. [A.T.S.] * * *

VARIOUS.

Switzerland has during the first three months of the current year exported 8,972,000 watches to the value of 248.8 million francs. [A.T.S.] * * *

According to statistics published by the Swiss Federal Railways, the receipts at the following railway stations for 1959 were: Zurich 52 million francs, Basle 20.5 million francs, Berne 20.3 million francs, Geneva 17.7 million francs, Lausanne 15.7 million francs, Lucerne 10.4 million francs, Winterthur 7.7 million francs, Biel 6.3 million francs, St. Gall 5.7 million francs, Lugano 4.3 million francs, Olten 4.3 million francs.

The receipts in freight transit at the following stations are returned as follows: Basle (S.B.B.) 38 million francs, Chiasso 35.5 million francs, Brig 29.4 million francs, Zurich (H.B.) 28.2 million francs, Geneva-Cornavin 22.8 million francs, Basle Harbour

Kleinhünigen 16.4 million francs, Berne 11.5 million francs, Luino 11 million francs, Buchs 10.3 million francs, Lausanne 7.1 million francs.

The total receipts of the three Basle goods stations amount to nearly 60 million francs, those of the twelve Zurich goods stations to 51.5 million, and the two goods stations Cornavin and Praille to 28.7 million francs. [A.T.S.] * * *

A DC-4 airliner of the "Balair" company, on a flight from Khartoum to Niamey (Sudan), has crashed 170 km. off El Fasher.

All the crew of ten and the two passengers lost their lives. They were: Flight-captain Edgar Hansen (42), a Norwegian, of Basle; co-pilots René Widmer (31), of Basle, Rolf Camenzind (29), of Basle, Rolf Rein (30), of Zurich, all of Swiss nationality; navigators Pietro Nocentini (50), of Rome, and Rinaldo Greco (51), of Milan, both of Italian nationality; mechanics Ernst Mathys (30), of Basle, Hans Kost (30), of Lucerne, Emil Städeli, of Basle; steward, Giovachine Mazzi (39), of Zurich; passengers Otto Lehmann (54), of Radio Basle, and Hans Schürmann (41), journalist, of Basle. [A.T.S.] * * *

The sale of the usual stamps, postcards and badges for the Swiss National Day celebration (1st of August) started on 1st June. The receipts from the various sales are earmarked for the professional education of young people. [A.T.S.] * * *

Dhaulagiri is no longer the world's highest unclimbed mountain — a Swiss-led team of climbers reached the 26,795-foot summit on 13th May. Mr. Max Eiselin, a sports writer, who led the expedition, returned to Katmandu in advance to report the third mountaineering success in Nepal this season.

The eleven-man expedition includes a Swiss postal employee, a Polish doctor, a Swiss student, an Austrian student, and a Polish author. The Swiss expedition was the first to use an aircraft, a Pilatus Porter, in an attempt on a Himalayan peak. It is reported to have landed expedition baggage on a snowfield at 16,000 feet.

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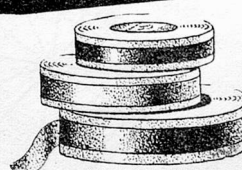
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