

It happened in Southern and South-Western Switzerland

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and there is now a regular air service Sion-Geneva, for which the glacier pilots are responsible.

The annual accounts of the Valais ended with a deficit of 6m. francs. The new President of the Cantonal Parliament is Joseph Gaudard (Conservative) from Leytron, the new Head of Government Ernest von Roten, Raron. René Spahr, Sion, was elected President of the Cantonal Tribunal. The Canton of Valais has set an excellent example: No citizen who has been fined for tax evasion is to receive any orders for public construction and other work for five years.

There are now 200km. of milk pipelines in the Valais whose milk production is estimated at about 70m. litres p.a. In 1965, the Canton produced 30.9m. kg. of fruit and 18.3m. kg. of vegetables. This is less than in the previous year when the total amounted to nearly 60m.kg. There is now a "Confrérie de Vignerons-Encaveurs" in the Valais.

Considerable damage was caused by adverse weather at various periods recently. There were floods in February, landslides in March (St. Léonard), avalanches (Hotel Grimselblick near the Grimselpass was destroyed), more flooding due to melting snow in April, more land subsidence in April (Huteggen), two avalanches near the St. Bernard Tunnel, and yet more landslides in May near Martigny and in the Val d'Anniviers.

A large supermarket is to be built in **Sion**. When it was realised that this meant several thousands of people coming and going daily, plus vehicle traffic, negotiations were started for a possible exchange of land, as the store would be on the main road Lausanne-Brigue, on the site of the former Hotel Planta — a considerable traffic obstacle. On 9th June, the "Foyer Saint-Hubert" was founded, a home for invalids. Sion has also a new fully automatic telephone exchange.

The twenty Communes of the **Goms** have agreed to regional planning. The centre at **Fiesch** (courses and recuperation) has been started; it is to have about 1,000 beds for young people. The Commune of **Fully** kept its citizens busy, for they had to go to the poll three times until the seven members of the Commune Council were finally elected in May. The Radical F. Carron was chosen as President.

On 19th December, "Leuca Fortis", the strong **Leuk** celebrated the 1,450th anniversary of its first mention in writing. The Burgundy King Sigismund gave Leuk to the Abbey of St. Maurice in 515, and it became one of the most important places in the Valais in the Middle Ages. Castle Sonvillaz at **St. Léonard** is to be restored. Accompanied by drums and fifes, the villagers of **St. Luc** went to the vineyards to prepare the vines in March. For this old custom, one of its citizens even returned by air from Amsterdam where he lives. **St. Romain** adheres to the traditional custom at Whitsun, when bread, wine and cheese were blessed by the village priest. These symbols of Valais hospitality and of Christian neighbourly love were then distributed to tourists and villagers.

GENEVA

As every first of June, the Republic of Geneva commemorated the arrival of the federal contingents in 1814, which event started Geneva's entry into the Confederation.

The annual accounts showed a surplus of 8½ million francs (revenue of nearly 380m.). At the end of April, the electorate had to vote for 84 members and deputies of the Geneva Courts. Not even 3% of the men and women entitled to suffrage took part. Jean Babel, member of the Geneva Government, is the new National Councillor in

succession to the late Yves Maître.

At a meeting of the Geneva Chamber of Commerce and Industry it was stated that the number of flats to rent in the Canton of Geneva had reached a record figure: 6,386 or 40% more than in 1964. A large new hospital building was opened on 9th June. It cost 38m. francs plus 8.5m. for equipment and furnishing. There are six operating theatres on the ground floor, and the ten storeys are divided into sixty units (1,200 beds in all).

The statement made by the Dean of the Medical Faculty of the University of Geneva that the number of students of medicine would have to be limited temporarily from next autumn caused strong reactions all over Switzerland. Students whose parents live in Geneva will not be affected.

The foundation stone for the future EFTA building was laid in Geneva early in June (rue de Varembe); it will have six floors and three conference halls.

For several weeks now, pyromaniacs have been at work in Geneva. A young German was arrested and confessed to a score of cases of arson, mainly in cellars. But as more fires have been started, one or more further men must be active.

The new Municipal President of the town of **Geneva** is Frédéric Rochat. The electorate of Geneva rejected the credit of 4.8m. francs for the restoration of the *Grand Casino*. On 6th June, the Geneva Literary Association celebrated its 150th anniversary. In April, a Pakistani Week was held in Geneva, and early in May, the new fire brigade headquarters were opened in the rue Moillebeau (Petit Saconnex).

At **Prégny-Chambésy**, the former goldsmith Eugène Humberst, aged 92, married a librarian of 60.

(Based on news received by courtesy of Agence Télégraphique Suisse.)

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