

Recent Events in Switzerland

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RECENT EVENTS IN SWITZERLAND

In a country which is the seat of so many international organisations, and which has so many places suitable for conferences, special events take place almost daily. Amongst the large number of meetings and gatherings of cantonal, intercantonal, nation-wide and international, of scientific, economic, cultural, political, educational or social character, just a few shall be mentioned which are perhaps of more unusual interest.

One of the most important events of last autumn was the 20th anniversary of UNESCO. Federal Councillor Tschudi, head of the Swiss delegation to the celebrations in Paris, addressed the illustrious gathering.

Also in October, the Swiss "Winterhilfe" celebrated its 30th anniversary. This organisation gives assistance in the form of money, vouchers, food, furniture and practical home help.

Early in November, a balloon started from Muerren in the Bernese Oberland, which carried over 10,000 specially stamped letters. These were later dispatched from the post office nearest to the balloon's landing. The flight was organised in aid of the Pestalozzi Foundation, and Fr.25,000.— resulted.

The "Gewerkschaftskorrespondenz", press service of the Swiss Trade Union Federation, celebrated its Golden Jubilee in November, and the PTT Union was 75 years old at the same time.

Friends and supporters of the movement for *Heimarbeit* (home-industries) met to receive the report by President von Goumoens. The Central Office helps in organising work to be carried out at home, in conjunction with the firms concerned. The organisation also arranges for the purchase of light machinery suitable for the home and, with financial help from other bodies, it supports local industries such as lace-making in the Lauterbrunnen Valley and Gruyère, spinning and weaving in Evolène and others. Additional problems the organisation has to deal with is to establish suitable training centres for home workers.

On 12th November, the association of former students of the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich presented their Rector with a gold medallion weighing 1.102 kg. This is the first time in the 110 years of the ETH's history that such a presentation has been made, although the Rectors of universities the world over have traditionally been presented with such medallions. The new insignia carries the inscription "Remember to be a human being before you are an engineer", famous words by a former professor of Italian literature, de Santis.

At the end of November, a celebration took place at Berne University commemorating the 400th anniversary of the *Confessio Helvetica Posterior*, the spiritual testament of Zwingli's successor Heinrich Bullinger in Zurich, who sent it to the Reformation centre at Heidelberg in 1565. After that, it began its triumphal journey through the Reformed world, reaching 120 editions in thirteen languages. In Switzerland, it was first Zurich and Schaffhausen which accepted it, and later the other Federal States.

Early in December, an instruction course was held in Berne of the "Schweizerische Kriminalistische Gesellschaft", during which various topics to do with crime and the law were studied, even such a subject as telephone tapping and postal censure.

At the same time, an international philatelic meeting took place in Basle, combined with stamp exhibitions.

In Zurich, the Swiss organisation for the fight against cancer and cancer research held a *Krebstagung*. It was stated that the cancer research institutes in Lausanne, Zurich and Berne were faced with financial difficulties, and the sale of picture postcards was again decided. The federal subsidy of a quarter of a million francs was much appreciated, all the more since there is no law providing for regular contributions, unlike for the fight against tuberculosis and rheumatic diseases.

Adult education in connection with television was the subject of the Fourth International Seminar for educational T.V. in Basle.

The centenary of Rudolf von Tavel's birth was celebrated in Berne, by reading from this popular author's works and remembering his literary achievements.

Just before Christmas, the Nouvelle Société Helvétique held its annual meeting in Berne. In the President's report (Mr. Oskar Reck), two events in 1966 were given pride of place: the working party in April when the subject was the total revision of the Federal Constitution, and the meeting in Baden in September, when the NSH met the delegates of all the Cantonal Governments in order to discuss a re-appraisal and renewal of federalism. The representatives approved the plan for a foundation concerned with this vital problem.

Just before the end of the year, the well-known writer Carl Zuckmayer was 70, and this event was duly celebrated in Lucerne by an international gathering of admirers, followed by the première in Zurich of a new short play.

Early in January, seventy delegates from nearly all East and West European students organisations met at a big conference in Zurich. The main topics for discussion were old structures and new functions of universities, the relation between professional training, science and educational systems, and the political mandate of a students' federation.

Three international meetings took place in the middle of January. One was in Winterthur of choir leaders and conductors, attended from Great Britain by John Byrd (Oxford). Amongst the supporters of the congress was the "Pro Helvetia" Foundation and the Volkart *Stiftung*. The second one was the annual meeting of the International Association for the Exchange of Students, which today has a membership of 38 countries and provides something like 10,000 exchanges. During 1966, Switzerland sent 243 students abroad and received 333 at home. The third world-wide gathering was a symposium on infectious inflammation, organised at Adelboden by the medical department of J. R. Geigy A.G., Basle. The findings will be published in bookform. [A.T.S.]

A SWISS ENTERPRISE ENTRUSTED WITH AN IMPORTANT STUDY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERU

The company Motor-Columbus of Baden, a firm of consulting engineers in the field of electric power production, has just been commissioned by Sociedad Eléctrica de Arequipa Ltda to carry out a study on the feasibility of building a hydroelectric power station (Charcani V) on the Rio Chili in Peru. The Charcani V station would be the fifth in a series of four hydroelectric power stations of the same name and would supply energy to the city of Arequipa and the surrounding area. The project would comprise a large installation with a total power output of 75m. watts, the first group of 25m. watts going into operation in 1972. [O.S.E.C.]