

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 5 (1939-1940)
Heft: 5

Rubrik: Sundry news from Switzerland

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 17.01.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

SUNDRY NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

A Pastoral People.

(Lausanne) Foreigners often have a very erroneous idea of the economic structure of Switzerland. They believe that this country is chiefly inhabited by agriculturalists and hotel-keepers. A few figures will prove that the contrary is the case. Among those who pursue a profession or a trade in this country, 22% are engaged in agriculture, 44% in various trades, industries and arts, 10% in commerce, 5% in the hotelkeeping branch and 19% in other professional vocations. (P.3927)

A Thrifty People.

(Lausanne) With a population of 4,176,000, 4,204,000 savings bank books and other deposit accounts have been counted in Switzerland. The value of savings bank and other deposits amounted to 1624 million Swiss francs in 1907, and to 5991 million in 1937. (P.3928)

A Country Abounding in Electric Power.

(Zurich) Switzerland possesses 350 electric power stations, whose total power amounts to 300 million horse power. Their annual output amounts to seven milliard kilowatt hours. In other words the power produced by all the Swiss power stations would be sufficient to enable a train to travel round the world 20,000 times every year. It is the equivalent of 90,000 truck-loads of coal.

With a population of about four million inhabitants, Switzerland has 896,000 electric engines, 13 million lamps, 150,000 electric cookers, 578,000 wireless sets. The proportion of Swiss railways run by electricity, viz. 80%, is greater than in any other country in the world. (P.3929)

Switzerland's Voice.

(Lausanne) Like most other countries, Switzerland has introduced broadcasting on short waves. Many oversea countries, particularly Africa and North and South America, can hear Switzerland speaking in English and Spanish regularly every week. Swiss legations and consulates give full information on this subject. (P.3930)

A Record Number of Visitors to the Swiss National Exhibition.

(Zurich) The number of visitors to the Swiss National Exhibition, which closed on October 29th, as had been previously arranged, has beaten all the records of its forerunners. Ten and a half million persons visited the exhibition in the course of six months, surpassing the most optimistic expectations. An astonishing success for a nation of four million inhabitants. (P.3931)

Death of an Eminent Lawyer.

(Berne) In October last, Professor Burckhard, a lawyer known far beyond the boundaries of Switzerland, died in Berne. Prof. Burckhard was an authority on questions of public and constitutional law. He was a member of the Swiss delegation to the League of Nations. The best known of the many books written by him is a Commentary on the Swiss Federal Constitution. (P.3932)

Swiss Forests.

(Berne) Switzerland produces about three million cubic metres of timber per annum. In 1929, the date of the last statistics, about 14,000 labourers were employed in forestry, 2,600 of this number working the whole year round. Those branches of trade which work in wood only employed 65,000 workmen at that time. (P.3933)

Broadcasting in Switzerland.

(Berne) At the end of September 1939 there were 578,411 wireless subscribers in Switzerland, i.e. 5000 more than at the end of August. Since the beginning of the year the number of wireless sets installed had gone up by 30,000. (P.3934)

Well-known personages at the Swiss National Exhibition.

(Zurich) Various well-known personages from other countries visited the Swiss National Exhibition, which closed at the end of October. Among these there were Monsieur Gentin, the French Minister of Trade, the Lord Mayor of London, Mr. Grover Whalen, President of the New-York World's Fair, Mr. Cini, Senator of the Kingdom of Italy, President of the exhibition which is to take place in Rome in 1942. (P.3935)

+++++

SWISS FEDERAL COUNSELLOR GUISEPPE MOTTA PASSES AWAY.

On January 23rd the radio news from London at 9 p.m. contained the information that the Veteran Statesman of Switzerland, her Foreign Minister, has passed away. This announcement was a hard blow to all of the Swiss people in New Zealand and, as I have already been assured, is also keenly regretted by those New Zealanders who knew Guiseppe Motta through their connection with the League of Nations. The statement over the radio was as follows :-

"The death has occurred of the Foreign Minister of Switzerland, Dr. Guiseppe Motta, aged 69 years. Dr. Motta was the son of a village postmaster and began his political career when 24 years of age. He was a member of the Swiss Federal Council for 30 years and was five times President of Switzerland. He was one of the most familiar figures at the League of Nations and was invariably Switzerland's leading delegate. He was honorary president of the first Assembly in 1920 and president in 1924. Ten years later he made a bitter attack on Communism when he opposed Russia's entry into the League."

I do not wish at this hour to relate and comment upon the facts which have made of the life of Guiseppe Motta an event of great significance in the history of Switzerland. In a few weeks' time the mail and newspapers from Switzerland will bring us the wording of the tributes of those in Switzerland who are in a position to speak with authority. At this hour we bow our heads in silent grief before his bier, and in our thoughts we are with our innumerable fellow countrymen at home, who on the 26th of January will partake in or witness his state funeral.

The life of Guiseppe Motta has been an inspiration to every Swiss patriot. His career as Federal Counsellor was accompanied by outstanding successes for the benefit of the Swiss Confederation. In addition to his achievements as one of the greatest statesmen of Switzerland, Guiseppe Motta also was recognised beyond national frontiers, partly through his activities in the League of Nations. But further than this, his philosophy, as expressed in his innumerable speeches during his long public career, will raise Guiseppe Motta to the pedestal of a "Prophet of the Fatherland." Of Italian-Swiss descent, but with a background of century old family traditions in the region of the Central Swiss Alps, natural close ties linked him with the history and people of the heart and cradle of Switzerland, the country around Lake of Lucerne. From such traditional background grew a profound understanding of the basic principles on which the Swiss Confederation must rest: Personal liberty within decentralised local democracies, religious and cultural freedom. He was a devout son of the Catholic church, and his speeches are full of religious thoughts. Being a member of the Italian speaking people of the world family, he was as true a disciple of Italian culture, as he was a true Swiss patriot. His perfect