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The territory of the town is divided into eleven arrondissements corresponding to the precincts of the old town and the boroughs incorporated more or less recently. Each arrondissement represents a constituency of its own, each has its own bankruptcy office, its justice of the peace, its local office building and its police-station. Besides, there exist five school-districts. The arrondissements again are divided into quarters. Owing to the fact that each of the eleven arrondissements represents a constituency, the political parties too are organized accordingly, with the result that each arrondissement has, politically, an existence of its own. These arrondissements are cells comparable with those of a honeycomb.

Despite the town's 346,000 inhabitants the individual citizen is held in respect, in great respect even, considering the size of the town as a whole.

In point of fact every enfranchised citizen is, according to the statute of the town, entitled to address motions to the chairman of the town parliament (municipal council), and such motions have to be made the object of a plebiscite if supported by at least 2000 citizens or 30 municipal councillors. In other words, even if such a matter meets with the opposition of the majority of the municipal council, it must under such circumstances be brought before the people. The promoter of a motion, i.e. any enfranchised citizen, may even defend the matter personally before the municipal council, if ten council-members so request; a far-reaching democratic prerogative of the individual which is, however, rarely made use of.

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## SUNDRY NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The three Cabinet Ministers, Sir Stafford Cripps, Aneurin Bevan and Miss Ellen Wilkinson, on the conclusion of their stay in our country, were entertained to an official luncheon on August 28th at the Wattenwyl house in Berne. Fed. President Kobelt submitted the toast to which Miss Wilkinson responded. Among those present was the Swiss Minister in London.

Switzerland has been elected a member of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation at the plenary session which took place at Copenhagen on September 3rd. The secret ballot returned 26 votes (unanimous) and our contribution has been fixed at $90,000.

In adjusting the tax liability of our magistrates the finance committee of the States Council has fixed the assessment for 1946 to 1951 of a Federal Councillor at 48,000 francs.

The opening concert of the Musical Festival at Lucerne was under the direction of Dr. Malcolm Sargent; his orchestra brought together the hundred best players from different parts of our country. In the view of Dr. Sargent conditions were perfect - the more meritorious as some of the English works by Elgar and Holst must have been somewhat unfamiliar to our musicians. The success was such that even the players rose excitedly to their feet to cheer their conductor.

The British Health Minister Aneurin Bevan, accompanied by his wife, Jennie Lee, on his return journey from his holidays in the Ticino, was entertained to an official tea by the Stadtrat of Zurich on August 25th. Dr. Lüchinger, the president, in his short address, was confounded in admitting that in Switzerland the fair sex had not yet attained the equality of rights enjoyed in England.

Frau Camenzind-Rüegg, a pensioned-off telegraphist from the post office in Zurich, died in Ragaz at the age of 85; she had during the war knitted no less than 700 pairs of socks for our soldiers for which she received a personal letter of thanks from General Guisan.

Said to be the oldest survivor of the 1870/71 mobilisation, Christian Abegglen of Brienz celebrated his 100th anniversary; he was on duty as a sergeant when the Bourbaki army crossed our frontiers.

Jacob Lorenz died in Fribourg at the age of 63. Born in St. Gall, he was a leading promoter of many social institutions, a prolific worker, a member of many Federal commissions and in later years professor of social sciences and economics at the University of Fribourg. In 1933 he founded and edited an independent weekly "Das Aufgebot"; he also published an original autobiography.

The Basle extreme-left daily "Vorwärts", directed by the in other spheres conspicuous Peter Suvara, has ceased publications; shortage of ink and paper are said to be the reasons.

A vote of the electors in the canton Aargau passed two bills with large majorities: one to extend building operations and the other to grant cantonal old-age and dependants' annuities.

A tremendous mass of rock broke away in the morning of September 3rd on the northern shore of the Walensee between Betlis and Quinten and dispersed partly in the lake and partly on the property of the Hartschotter works Gattiker-Tanner without causing any damage to the latter; all the workmen were able to run into safety. However, the abnormally huge waves destroyed boats and timber on the opposite shore near Mühlehorn. One woman, the 49 year old innkeeper Elsie Maria Suter, was drowned in one of the many boats that were swamped.

An old liberal paper, the "Neuchâtelois", with which the former States Councillor Ernest Bäguin was closely identified, has ceased publication. Financial considerations and lack of interest of the younger generation are said to be the reasons. The paper was founded in 1902 as a daily and since 1941 was published three times a week and latterly once only.

One of Britain's jet-propelled Gloster Meteor fighters, fastest aircraft in the world, is expected in Geneva to give demonstrations to officers of our Air Force.

From a prisoners of war camp in Belgium 18 young Swiss who had volunteered in the German army were handed over at Basle by the English military police. Three of them were discovered to be German nationals and promptly rejected, while the remainder will be dealt with as deserters.

The opening of the Susten pass has attracted such an enormous volume of motor vehicles that the authorities have been compelled to introduce temporarily one-way traffic. From the beginning of this month cars will be allowed to travel on Sundays in one direction only and the opposite on the following Sunday. Soon after the opening about 12,500 cars used the road, causing untold obstruction.

The regular air service to Switzerland has been duplicated by a daily flight inaugurated on the 9th September by British European Airways Corporation. The plane leaves Northolt airport at 10 a.m. and arrives in Zurich at 1.05 p.m., returning at 3 p.m. and due at 6.30 p.m. Dakotas are being used with a seating capacity for 21 passengers.

At the annual meeting of Swissair the president, Dr. Ehinger, stated that trial flights are to be made across the Atlantic with the intention of operating regular overseas routes in the coming years.

A visit of British railway workers has been organised by the "Railway Review" to inspect and study our railway system. The first of two tours arrived in Basle on the 2nd September and returned on the 13th September; they are the guests of the Swiss Federal Railways.

A tightening of rationing is likely to come into force in the near future; milk and dairy products are the main shortages.

At a meeting of wholesalers and distributors in the bicycle trade it was revealed that before the end of this year nearly half a million tyres will have been imported.

Unofficial statistics claim that 31.4% of Swiss labour are organised in trade unions; the highest proportion is found in the cantons of Neuchâtel (55.5%), Berne (43.9%), Zurich and Appenzell (35.1% each) and the lowest in the forest cantons.

During July last 28 planes were imported into Switzerland, all, barring one, from the United States, the average value being Frs. 12,000 each. In the same month over a thousand cars, very few from the U.S.A., were delivered from abroad.

About 4,000 typewriters to the value of a million francs were exported in July last: 1,000 went to the U.S.A., 600 to the Argentine, 500 to France, etc. Strange to say, we imported 400 machines from America and 200 from Italy.

Official statistics disclose that the average rise in monthly clerical staff salaries from June 1939 to October 1945 reached 41.5%, while the cost of living index registered an increase of 52%.

The "Auslandschweizer-Tag" brought - according to an official communication - 500 delegates from 170 foreign colonies to the annual meeting which took place at Berne on August 24th. The gathering lacked the enthusiasm and spiritual elevation of pre-war meetings and was practically monopolised by lamentations and aggressive complaints from compatriots living in - or repatriated from - Germany and Austria. The many government representatives present were generally at a loss to reprove the reasonable demands of those who had "carried the baby" during the five years of war. Those from beyond the Rhine resented the impossibility, owing to the continuance of war restrictions, to visit relatives in Switzerland while soldiers from the Allied forces could spend holidays there without hindrance. The different treatment of foreign tourists by the customs and frontier officials when compared to the vexatious formalities reserved for the Swiss was also sharply criticised. An old complaint was voiced again with emphasis, namely that our compatriots were unable to send home their life-long savings and were forced to witness their gradual depreciation and complete evaporation. Our authorities are, of course, helpless in this matter in view of a pre-war economic agreement, sanctioned by the Federal Council, which prohibits capital transfers; we, in this country, are similarly impaired by virtue of the British Finance Act of February 1939. It shows again the impotence of small states when confronted with the requisitions of a large power; an inevitable corollary is the sacrifice of individual interests - in this case of Swiss residing in the respective countries - in favour of unilateral considerations. The French delegates while recognising the easing of the passport and vise regulations, expressed indignation over the ridiculously small amount of Frs. 50 (Frs. 175 for business trips) allowed to be taken out of the country. There were many appeasing perorations from government spokesmen, the last one being Prof. William Rappard, who admonished his audience that the duty of the Swiss at home was to resist all pressure from abroad which threatened a departure from the traditional policy dictated by our history and the duty of the Swiss abroad to generate and disseminate a true appreciation of our peculiar position in the world.

The well-known biography of Winston Churchill by Capt. Ben Tucker in course of translation by Prof. A. Latt, is now being widely advertised in the Swiss press: it is to be sold at Frs. 27.

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## PRESENTATION OF 100 SETS OF FURNITURE AS A GIFT FROM THE SWISS COLONY IN GREAT BRITAIN.

In one of the recent numbers of the "Swiss Observer" we informed our readers, that the Swiss Colony, as a contribution towards the efforts to rehabilitate British families, who have severely suffered through the war, had offered a gift of 100 suites of furniture.

These were officially handed over to the Women's Voluntary Service, who had been asked by the Ministry of Health to distribute them, at a ceremony which took place on Friday, May 31st, 1946, at the Ministry of Health, Whitehall, S.W.1.

The Chairman, Mr. Charles Key, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health, in addressing the gathering expressed his regrets for the unavoidable absence of Mr. Aneurin Bevan. In his name, and also on behalf of the Metropolitan Boroughs, he thanked the Swiss Minister for this most generous gift which he said was deeply appreciated as a token of fellowship between the two countries.

The speaker also mentioned the further contributions which will be