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NEWS AT RANDOM

Though it is stated that the regular mail service between England and Switzerland is in operation again we have so far only received a few newspapers dated June 13th and 14th.

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The authorities represented in the Federal Council have met since the resignation of Bundesrat Obrecht was announced, to discuss the question of his successor.

The Radical-Democrat Parliamentary party met last Saturday in Bern and decided to propose National Councillor, Dr. Walter Stämpfli, Managing Director of the Von Roll Ironworks. After this nomination became known, the Radical-Democrat party of Bâle-Ville met and decided to withdraw their candidate — Köchlin.

The Social-Democrat party also gathered last week-end. They agreed to put forward as their candidate State Councillor Gustav Wenk, of Bâle-Ville. At the same time the meeting agreed to oppose the Federal Council's latest decree concerning the limitation of the right to hold political assemblies.

Latest report says that Dr. W. Stämpfli has been elected Federal Councillor.

The new Federal Councillor was born in Büren (Solothurn) and is in his 56th year. He started his political career as a member of the editorial staff of the Oltener Tagblatt. From 1918 to 1921 he was Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce in Solothurn. He was then offered a post with the von Roll'sche Eisenwerke in Gerlafingen. In 1931 he was elected to the National Council of which he has been a member ever since.

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The Federal Department of Justice and Police have announced that all foreigners unable to return to their own countries for political reasons must send in their names and those of their dependents, to the Federal Police for Aliens by July 31st. Those who do not comply with this regulation are liable to be expelled from the country. The following are exempted:

- a) Foreigners who took up residence in Switzerland before 1929 and who have lived there since.
- b) Foreigners who, owing to lack of travelling facilities, are unable to return of their own countries for the time being.
- c) Foreigners who were engaged in military service before they came to Switzerland.

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On July 15th representatives of Denmark and Switzerland signed a new trade agreement in Bern. This enables business relations to be continued. Some alterations and limitations proved, however, to be unavoidable, and all payments, etc., have in future to be conducted through the Swiss National Bank in Zurich.

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The Federal Council has decreed that all owners of carrier pigeons must register them by July 20th.

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The new Swedish Minister presented his credentials to the President of the Swiss Confederation and the Federal Councillor Etter on July 12th.

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Last Monday the Government of Canton Zurich commemorated the anniversary of the death of Gottfried Keller. A number of speeches were made, all of them underlining the significance of the poet's teaching on the subject of the education of the citizen in the service of his country.

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The Government of Canton Solothurn has decided on a programme of public works to the amount of 3,200,000 Swiss francs.

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The University of Fribourg has elected Father Professor Rohner of the Faculty for Philosophy as its Rector.

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Professor Lätt, who as we all know has done so much with regard to fostering contact between Switzerland and the Swiss Colonies abroad, spoke the other day on the Swiss radio about the problems confronting the authorities owing to the return of thousands of Swiss from abroad. He told his listeners that repatriation was still going on and that there had been a collection made recently on behalf of those who come back in the unfortunate position of having no substantial means. The whole country is endeavouring to absorb these people into industrial and agricultural activities. This is not an easy process and certain difficulties ahead will make the task no easier. Pro-

fessor Lätt is fully aware of this and his message of encouragement to those Swiss abroad who continue to hold their posts, sometimes in conditions of great hardship, will be appreciated here and elsewhere.

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The organisation of Swiss Civil Servants has drawn the attention of the Federal Council to the fact that wages should be adapted to the higher cost of living.

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The Swiss Chamber of Commerce met last Saturday in Zurich under the Chairmanship of Dr. Hans Sulzer. Dr. Homberger gave a résumé of Switzerland's position. He was able to tell his audience that the belligerent states showed a certain understanding of Switzerland's position and difficulties, so that there was a hope of future negotiations with a view to maintaining exports.

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The Federal Office for Trade, Industry and Labour announces the result of its enquiries among the various branches of the Swiss labour market. It concludes that there are no grounds for apprehension. Thanks to the sensible attitude adopted by the Swiss employers, most of those who have returned from military service have found work again. Those who could not return to their former jobs will be able to go back to military service or to get employment through the Government scheme for Unemployment. The Federal Council is preparing new measures to create work under this scheme.

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The Swiss National Bank has just published an appeal to the population, telling them that it is no longer necessary to keep Bank notes in reserve and asking them to put them into circulation once more.

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The General Staff Office for Press and Radio announces that the press commission has forbidden the publication of three newspapers for the time being: "Libera Stampa," "Avanguardia," "Gazetta di Locarno."

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A project which as far back as 1912 has been sanctioned by both the Confederation and the canton Geneva, has now been revived. It is a narrow-gauge railway line connecting the two stations of Cornavin and Eaux Vives. The cost is estimated at between 12 and 17 million francs and will be borne in the proportion of a third each by the Confederation, the canton of Geneva and the Federal Railways. The work is to be taken in hand without further delay.

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Heavy thunder storms with hail have raged over parts of Switzerland, especially in the Cantons Lucerne and Zurich. In many places hail lay 15 cm deep on the fields for hours after it fell. In the district of Andelfingen the whole harvest has been destroyed.

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Colonel Robert Fierz has died at the age of 57 in Berne. Colonel Fierz was head of the advisory board on technical matters in the Military Department.

Of about 80 Swiss citizens established in Bessarabia, 30 have arrived in Bucharest where they have been given hospitality in Swiss families for the time being. Some others are living in refugee camps and some have remained in Bessarabia on their farms.

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The Postal service between Switzerland and England via France, Spain and Portugal, has definitely been resumed.

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Two trains loaded with food have left Geneva for the unoccupied and occupied parts of France. This gift has been made possible through the generosity of the American Red Cross which has put 100,000 Swiss francs at the disposal of the International Red Cross for this purpose.

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Compulsory registration of all Swiss and foreign correspondents who represent — or contribute occasionally to — foreign newspapers has been decreed.

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Record mails are being handled by the International Agency for War Prisoners in Geneva; in one day last week something like 50,000 letters had to be dealt with.

"Evening Standard," July 15th.

From Rome via New York:—

Signor Gayda, writing in the *Voce d'Italia*, gives a serious warning to the Swiss to be more friendly towards Italy and less tolerant of England.

He complains that the Swiss papers are using British as well as Italian versions of naval battles, and are showing a preference for the British reports, or else wondering which is true.

Gayda calls this "immeasurable pettiness."

When Swiss correspondents here took up the matter with political circles they were told:

"Italy does not like the attitude of your papers. It is not enough to feel friendly towards Italy. You must be realistic. The Press of small neutral countries must conform to the present situation. The news from English sources, which is always tendentious, is being published without reserve and with big headlines."

The attitude of the American Press is also criticised verbally, but American correspondents have replied that the British story was given out twelve hours before the Italian story.

From Zurich:—

The Swiss Press is attacked by Signor Gayda, the Italian writer, for "unbounded impertinence" in its comments on German and Italian actions.

The attack which appears in the "Voce d'Italia," is aimed particularly against three newspapers which Gayda accuses of giving undue prominence to the British accounts of the Mediterranean sea battles.

The Italian Press is intensifying its campaign against the Vichy government which Signor Farinacci describes in the "Regime Fascista" as an "obvious swindle" and a "Jewish manœuvre aimed at saving the synagogues and masonic lodges."

"If the French intentions are serious," he says, "it would be better if they put off reconstruction until the German and Italian bill is paid."