

# News at random

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# The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY P. F. BOEHRINGER.

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## PUBLISHER'S ANNOUNCEMENT.

Many subscribers have on different occasions expressed the opinion, that under the present changed conditions the "Swiss Observer" might be published at shorter intervals; we feel that we can now gratify their wish.

In future we shall go to publication twice monthly, namely on the 2nd and 4th Friday (a week later where there are five Fridays in the month).

We are sure that our subscribers as well as the advertisers will continue to give us the same support that has enabled us to carry on during the critical years of the war.

We have to remind our readers that the issue of our publication is only permitted on the condition that all the copies are prepaid and in order to fulfill our obligation, we shall be obliged if subscribers would promptly re-new their subscriptions on becoming due, as otherwise we shall be reluctantly compelled to remove such names from the mailing list.

## ROYAL VICTORIA HOTEL

### ST. LEONARDS-ON-SEA

(Extract from the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung.")

"The Swiss Students staying in England celebrated their National Independence by beginning in earnest at the best Hotel in the South of England, namely, the **Royal Victoria Hotel, St. Leonards-on-Sea, in Sussex**. In this Anglo-Swiss establishment a warm welcome was extended to the visitors.

During the excellent dinner, music of Tchaikowsky and Mozart was played by the orchestra, which, after the dinner, with versatility switched to dance music and Swiss tunes and dances; English guests succeeded in dancing in the Continental style and all enjoyed themselves.

Greetings were exchanged between the two oldest democracies over the microphone.

It is quite clear that the Swiss are welcome guests in the United Kingdom."

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

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.

\* \* \*

Vice-Consul Jakob Huber from Mägenwil (Aargau) has been appointed administrator of the Swiss Consulate at Manchester.

### Cantonal

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.

\* \* \*

At a soldiers' day celebration of the Lucerne parish of Meggen each of their warriors was presented with a soldier's knife.

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. Lühinger, 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.

The large cork factory in Dürrenäsch, belonging to Bumax A.G., was practically destroyed by a fire which broke out in the night of August 29th. The damage is estimated to approximate one million francs; no lives were lost.

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.

A lenient retribution was meted out in Glaris to two youngsters who were found guilty of having caused the death of a pensioned-off railway employee, Zacharias Zwicky. They had a grudge against him and tripped him over the Dorfbach bridge at Netstal; 14 months' imprisonment was the "tit for tat."

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.

Prof. Dr. Adolf Liechti died after a long illness at Berne at the age of 48; he was the director of the Röntgen institute of the Berne University.

A large mushroom — an edible boletus — weighing 1.1 kg. has been gathered near Tramelan (Bernese Jura); its diameter is 30 cm.

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.

Dr. Hermann Kienzle, the former director of the Basle Technical College (Gewerbeschule) and museum, died at the age of 70; he was a well-known expert and

represented our country on many international conferences.

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.

An accident on his holiday, which caused the death of his wife, brought about the transmittal from hospital to police detention of the postmaster of Dottikon (Aargau); during his protracted absence the postal accounts were examined when defalcations to the amount of Frs. 25,000 were established. Emil Saxer, the sinning postmaster, has confessed.

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.

The latest development in the chase for the evasive and unidentified cattle killer in the Valais is the temptation of a prize of Frs. 300 offered for its capture or destruction by the Staatsrat.

An old liberal paper, the "Neuchâtelais," with which the former States Councillor Ernest Béguin 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.

#### Army

During a routine flight a plane crashed on August 29th near Schwarzenburg, causing the death of two pilots: Lt. Hans Ulrich Grimm and Lt. Peter Vogt from Zurich.

One of Britain's jet-propelled Gloster Meteor fighters, fastest aircraft in the world, is expected in

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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.

### Traffic

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 inst. 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.

The "white cross in the red field" will disappear from the high seas as the Swiss Merchant Marine will dispose of the four steamers as soon as normal chartering and shipping conditions return. The four steamers were acquired in 1942.

A visit of 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 inst. and returned on the 13th inst.; they are the guests of the Swiss Federal Railways.

### Economics

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.

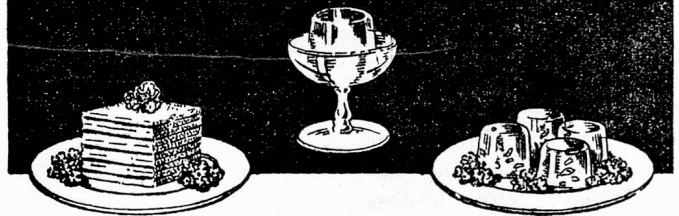
During July last 28 planes were imported into Switzerland, all, barring one, from the United States, the average value being Frs. 12,000 each. In the same month over a thousand cars, very few from the U.S.A., were delivered from abroad.

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%.

Official estimates disclose that over 60,000 British visitors have so far spent their holidays in Switzerland and to judge from the alluring and gratifying reports published in the English press our hoteliers would appear to have experienced a very prosperous season. Things, however, have not turned out entirely to their satisfaction as the £75 allowed to each visitor has not been spent on the hotel premises, in fact a good part of it went in purchases of clothes, shoes and presents for people at home. As the existing exchange agreement is now the subject of negotiation for its renewal the hotel trade has asked our government to propose a system of vouchers which will vary to their satisfaction the expenditure of the whole of the £75. To us it reminds us of the "closed shop" to the detriment of other trading sections; as far as visitors and tourists are concerned they will have to submit to another batch of rules, regulations and limitations as if they were falling out of the frying pan into the fire.

## VARIED AND APPETISING



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Maggie Aspic Jelly in a small mould daintily served with two or three small strips of toast will be a welcome change from "beef tea."

### FISH ASPIC

Cod or Salmon remaining from the boiled fish can be used, also prawns or shrimps. Fill the mould  $\frac{3}{4}$  full and when nearly set put in the flakes of fish and fill up.

### MEAT ASPIC

Cooked fresh sausage meat or meat left over from the joints may be used minced. Drop the meat into the jelly before setting and serve with a little watercress or cress.

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The "Sunday Times," September 2nd, refers to this matter as follows:

"The powerful Swiss Hotel Keepers' Association aims at replacing the present system of a £75 lump sum which is all that any British traveller may bring, by one allocating to the visitor weekly or fortnightly travel quotas as now exist for American and Belgian visitors.

The official 'Hotel Revue' explains: 'Experience has shown that the British visitor has the desire not only to enjoy a holiday rest but to buy clothes, shoes, stockings, etc., which are scarce at home but abundant in Switzerland. Having quickly spent a great proportion of £75 in the big shopping centres, the guest has little money left to stay for any length in the resort hotels.

'The arrangement must be altered to guarantee that the greater proportion of the money is spent on the actual holiday, as the agreement originally intended, and this would be safeguarded by the weekly quotas.'

The present Anglo-Swiss agreement expires on August 31st, but there is no doubt that it will be renewed in some form."

—oo—

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 visé 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.

\* \* \*

"There are now 1,754,161 Catholics in Switzerland according to the latest census. There are 2,457,044 Protestants and 19,430 Jews. Only 35,065 Swiss profess no religion at all." This is what the "Catholic Times" proclaimed on August 23rd. The census referred to seems to be more visionary than recent.

\* \* \*

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

\* \* \*

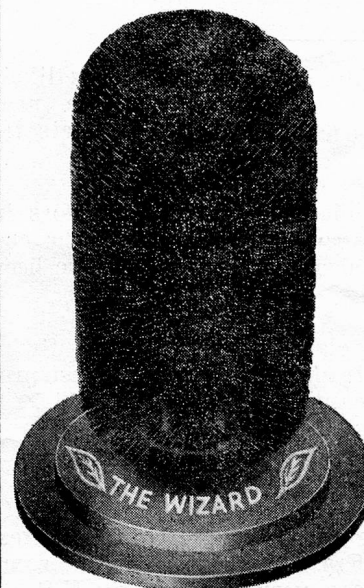
Among the unconventional imports from Switzerland is the aluminium boat in which the Zurich See-klub competed at Henley last July; it has now been bought for £190 by the Thames Rowing Club.

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A fatal accident is reported from the Weissshorn where the 38 years old Robert William Esquillant from London lost his life; elsewhere he is described as a New Zealand Air Force officer.

\* \* \*

Robert Burns' famous dictum in search of self-contemplation seems to be stultified or anyhow simplified by a discovery of "The Scotsman" which on September 5th publishes the following advice. After this, some of our readers will no doubt begin the examination of old and "nearly-new" shoes and boots within their reach (they need not wait for two months) — an instructive pastime or study when the weather forecast lets us down:

"Some years ago a Swiss scientist, Dr. Garre of Basle, declared: 'Show me one of your shoes after two months' wear and I will tell your character.' According to his reading of footwear, the heel of a shoe worn evenly denotes in a man energy and in a woman motherliness. A shoe worn only on the outside of the tread marks a person of initiative, but excessive wear on the outside tread may indicate that the wearer takes life too easily and trusts overmuch to chance.

If the mark of wear is on the inside, it denotes, in a man, weakness and irresolution, but in a woman a sweet and gentle disposition."



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## BRITISH BOOKS AND PERIODICALS FOR SWITZERLAND.

An exhibition of over 1,200 modern British books, arranged by the British Council, has opened in Berne on September 3rd and will later be shown in Basle, Zurich, Geneva and Lausanne. The British Council assisted in the arrangements for the exhibition of Swiss books held in London in May and reciprocal aid to the British exhibition is being given by the Society of Swiss Libraries.

The exhibition consists mainly of books published during the war, and the twenty-four sections include books on agriculture, architecture and the arts, economics, education, history, sociology and reconstruction, medical, scientific and technical works, fiction and children's books.

There is also a group of 73 fine and rare books illustrating the development of the craft of printing in Britain. The first exhibit is an original leaf of "The Chronicles of England" printed by Caxton in 1840 and the last a copy of John Piper's "Brighton Acquaintants," published by Duckworth and printed by the Curwen Press in 1939.

A separate section will show copies of about 400 periodicals representative of the whole range of the British periodical press from popular magazines to "newsletters" and the journals of learned societies.

## HOME SPUN YARNS.

*Gemütsathlet.*— Ein junger Mann fällt in den Zürichsee und schreit energisch: "Hülf, hülf, i chaa nüd schwümme!" Ein Passant ruft ihm in aller Seelenruhe zu: "I jo au nüd, aber wegem sebe mach i doch kei so'ne Sauläarme!"

\* \* \*

*Sport und Kunst.*— "Dies, meine Herrschaften," sagte der Führer zu einer Reisegesellschaft, "ist der grösste Wasserfall der Alpen. Ich bitte die Damen, einen Augenblick ihre Unterhaltung zu unterbrechen, damit man das donnernde Getöse der stürzenden Wasser hören kann!"

\* \* \*

*Im Eifer.*— Wahlkandidat (in seiner Agitationsrede): "Wollt ihr eine neue Strasse — wählt mich! Wollt ihr eine neue Schule wählt mich! Wollt ihr ein rassenreines Rindvieh — wählt mich!"