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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The two Federal Chambers (National Council and States Council) at their combined sitting, have elected, on the 11th of this month, M. Enrico Celio, President of the Swiss Confederation for the year 1948.

Federal Councillor Nobs has been elected Vice-President.

The new President was born on June 19th, 1889, at Ambri di Quito, in the Leventina valley. After absolving the local schools and the College at Balerna he completed his early education at Milan and Einsiedeln, at the same time as Federal-Councillor Etter. Afterwards he studied literature and law at the Universities of Florence, Milan and Freiburg i.Ue.

Returning home, Dr. Celio was entrusted with the editorship of the catholic-conservative "Popolo e Libertà," and later on practised as an advocate in Biasca.

In 1924, he was for the first time elected a member of the National Council, but in 1932 he had to relinquish his seat on being chosen — in succession to Cattori — President of the Ticinese Government as the Constitution forbids contemporaneous membership of the Federal Parliament.

On the death of Federal Councillor G. Motta, he entered, in 1940, the Federal Government. He was President of the Swiss Confederation in 1943.

Owing to the resignation of Federal-Councillor Stampfli, a new member of the Federal Government had to be elected.

There were two candidates in the field, namely: Rodolphe Rubattel (Liberal) member of the government of the canton of Vaud, and States-Councillor G. Wenk (Socialist) a member of the cantonal government of Basle. Rubattel received 138 votes and Wenk 62 votes. The former was therefore declared as elected. The following also received votes: Speiser 21, Müller (Amriswil) 4, and Wey 3.

Federal-Councillor Rodolphe Rubattel was born on the 4th of December, 1896, at Villarzel, in the Broye valley. On completion of his school education he

studied law at the University in Lausanne where he obtained the degree of doctor of law. He then took up journalism as a profession, and in turn was Editor of the "Feuille d'Avis de Montreux," "Tribune de Lausanne," "Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne" and "La Revue."

In 1933, he entered the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud as a liberal, and eleven years later (1944) he became a member of the cantonal government, which post he occupied up to the date of his election as a Federal-Councillor.

The Belgian Premier, Monsieur P. H. Spaak, who, on behalf of the Belgian Government and the Belgian people, presented the Swiss people with a present of three grammes of radium, was received at the Federal Palais in Berne by Dr. Ph. Etter, President of the Swiss Confederation and members of the Government.

Monsieur Spaak, in handing over the precious gift, said that Belgium was happy to make this presentation as a thank-offering for all that Switzerland has done for the Belgian people during and after the war.

Dr. Etter, in accepting the present, thanked the Minister for the *beau geste* of his people, and expressed the wish for the further welfare and prosperity of the Belgian nation. [A.T.S.]

The death is reported from Berne of Monsieur Arthur de Pury. The deceased was a citizen of Neuchâtel. He studied law at the Universities of Neuchâtel and Leipzig and later on entered the Diplomatic Service.

As Secretary of Legation he occupied posts in Vienna, Berlin and Washington, and from 1912-1914 he was Counsellor of Legation in St. Petersburg. For four years (1918-1922) Monsieur de Pury was Swiss Minister to Argentina, and from 1922-1942 Swiss Minister at the Hague. He retired from the Diplomatic Service a few years ago. [A.T.S.]

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