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The Swiss Observer

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Federal Council has appointed Monsieur Alexandre Girardet, hitherto Swiss Minister in Prague, to the post of Swiss Minister in Copenhagen.

Minister Girardet was born in 1889 at Prilly near Lausanne; he studied law at the University of Lausanne where he obtained the degree of doctor of law; he then became *avocat au barreau vaudois*.

In 1917, he joined the Federal Political Department, and at one time occupied the post of private secretary to the late Federal Councillor Gustave Ador. A year later (1918) he was promoted to Secretary of Legation, and later for some time was attached to the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva.

In 1924, he acted as Chargé d'Affaires in Warsaw. From 1925-1927, Monsieur Girardet held the post of First Secretary at the Swiss Legation in Washington, after which he spent two years in Berne, where he was attached to the commercial division of the "Département fédéral de l'Economie publique." In 1929, he joined the well-known engineering works of Adolphe Saurer in Arbon in the capacity of general secretary, and later on was appointed Sub-Manager of this concern, which he left in 1938 to re-enter the diplomatic service.

In that year, he was transferred to the Swiss Legation in London, where he was in charge of the commercial division. In 1943, Monsieur Girardet was promoted to Counsellor of Legation and from November 1943 to August 1944 acted as Chargé d'Affaires at the Legation in London. On February 27th, the Federal Council appointed him Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Czechoslovakia.

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Minister Reinhard Hohl, Chief of the legal section of the Swiss Political Department in Berne, has been appointed Swiss Minister in Prague in succession to Minister Girardet.

Minister Hohl was born in 1893 in Rheineck. After having studied law at the Universities of Zurich, Berne

and Geneva, where he obtained the degree of doctor of law, he entered the Swiss Foreign Office in 1919, where he occupied various important posts the latest of which was Head of the Department of Legal, Financial and Traffic Affairs. In 1941, he was promoted to Counsellor of Legation, and six years later (1948) received the title of Minister.

* * *

Monsieur Edouard de Haller, has been appointed Swiss Minister in Oslo, in succession to Minister Zurlinden, who has been transferred, some time ago, to Moscow.

Minister de Haller, who is a citizen of Berne, was born in 1897 in Cologny (Geneva). He studied law at the Universities of Geneva and Zurich, where he obtained the degree of doctor of law.

From 1921-1923 he was a member of the Danzig commission, and for several years afterwards sat on various commissions dealing with the transfer of populations between Greece and Turkey.

Minister de Haller entered in 1940 into the services of the International Red Cross Committee. Since 1942, he has been Head of the International Department for "Hilfswerk" at the Federal Political Department in Berne.

* * *

The newly appointed Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the Kingdom of Siam to the Swiss Confederation, Monsieur Luang Dithakar Bhakdi, was born in 1906. He studied law in Bangkok and London. Amongst his various diplomatic posts are London and Washington.

* * *

The news which appeared in various English newspapers regarding the appointment of General Guisan as successor to Count Bernadotte, has apparently no foundation.

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The autumn session of the Swiss Parliament started on the 20th of last month. The President of the National Council, M. Albert Picot (Geneva), in his opening address, paid a moving tribute to the late Count Bernadotte, who lost his life under such tragic circumstances.

The members honoured the memory of Count Bernadotte by rising from their seats. A further tribute was paid to the late Army-Corps-Commander Dollfuss, who was a member of the National Council.

* * *

The aircraft carrying the bodies of Count Bernadotte and Colonel Serot, landed at the Geneva aerodrome where it was met by representatives of the Swiss and Geneva Governments. A guard of Swiss artillery cadets was drawn up, and guarded the bodies whilst on Swiss territory.

Amongst the high functionaries who paid their respect were, Minister Paul Ruegger, President of the International Red Cross Committee.

* * *

The Federal Council delegated Monsieur Karl Bruggmann, Swiss Minister in Washington to attend the initiation celebrations of the new President of the Republic of Cuba, which have taken place on the 10th of this month.

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During the month of August 1948, the Swiss Federal Railways have carried altogether 15.90 million passengers, or 1.98 million less than in August 1947. The receipts from passenger service amount to 26.66

million frs. or 489,000 less than in August 1947. Goods traffic has diminished by 92,165 tons reaching a total of 1.40 million tons.

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Argentine values have improved on Swiss markets as a result of the partial settlement of the Swiss-Argentine trade dispute. Argentine has agreed to lift some of the quota restrictions on imports from Switzerland, who, in return, will increase exports to the Argentine by extending credit facilities.

Argentine maintains an embargo on exports to Switzerland pending the final settlement of the question of Argentine funds blocked by Switzerland as a guarantee for Swiss creditors. The improvement of Argentine values is taken as an indication that financial circles hope the partial agreement will be followed by a settlement of the question of blocked funds and Swiss credits.

* * *

The Swiss wholesale price index was 0.6 per cent. down at 215.2 at end-August, compared with the figure a month previously (August, 1939=100). This decline is attributable to lower prices in all three main groups—foodstuffs, raw and auxiliary materials, fodder and fertilisers.

* * *

Egypt and Switzerland have signed a monetary agreement which provides for an exchange of goods. The terms disclosed are rather vague, but they involve chiefly payment for the electrical material required for the Aswan scheme against the export of cotton.

The Swiss may export to Egypt other commodities. A list of quotas has been drawn up but not yet disclosed.

The agreement is for four months only but is noteworthy because it is the first agreed with a hard currency country. The Minister of Commerce intimated his readiness to issue permits for the export of Egyptian mineral products (manganese, phosphates, etc.) on the condition that payment is in hard currency.

This would hit the gold-dollar pool since 60 per cent. of the exports of phosphates would be to the sterling area. Such a policy renders still more difficult Egypt's export problem.

Reopening of the cotton futures market has not given the results anticipated. Hardly any foreign business is being done, and even local transactions are restrained through the restrictions which have been imposed. These latter also have resulted in much business being transacted outside the Bourse.

* * *

The conclusion of a trade and payments agreement between Switzerland and Czechoslovakia was announced in Berne.

Effective on October 1st if approved by both Governments, it is valid for one year and remains in force until denounced by either country.

Czechoslovakia will deliver steel and iron products, heavy machinery, coke, automobiles, textiles, paper, glass and china ware, chemical products, sugar, malt and hops.

Switzerland will supply principally light machinery and precision tools, dyes, medicines, watches, textiles and some agricultural products.

The payments agreement concerns chiefly financial transfers.



The Swedish Foreign Minister, Monsieur Undén, was received by Monsieur Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister, in Berne, on which occasion a dinner was given in his honour at "Wattenwylhaus."

Cantonal

Madame A. Gehrig, in charge of the station restaurant at Andermatt (Uri), fell accidentally under a train in Andermatt and was killed, she was 58 years old

[A.T.S.]

The late Karl Fuchs, of Steinen, domiciled in Einsiedeln, has left an amount of Frs.14,000.— to the building fund of the cantonal asylum.

[A.T.S.]

The death is reported from Zurich of Dr. Hans Bodmer at the age of 85. The deceased played for many years an important rôle in the public life of the town of Zurich. He was the founder of the Gottfried Keller Society and head of the "Zürcher Vereins für Verbreitung guter Schriften"; he was also closely connected with the "Lesezirkel Hottingen."

[A.T.S.]

Professor Robert Rittmeyer, from 1899-1933 teacher of architecture at the "Technikum" in Winterthur, has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary. As a partner of the firm of architects, Rittmeyer and Furrer, he made the plans for the Municipal Arts Museum and Library of Winterthur.

[A.T.S.]

The district Court Höfe has passed sentence on the railway official who was responsible for the railway

accident which occurred at the "Biberbrücke" (Ct. Zurich) on the 26th of July, 1948, when ten people were killed and 38 injured.

He was found guilty of negligence and sentenced to eight months imprisonment (on probation). The costs of the trial will have to be borne by the accused.

[A.T.S.]

Fifteen people were injured when a supplementary car (trailer) of the municipal tramway company in Zurich became derailed and overturned at the crossing Rämistrasse-Gloriastrasse. Of the ten passengers who were taken to the cantonal hospital all but one have now been discharged.

[A.T.S.]

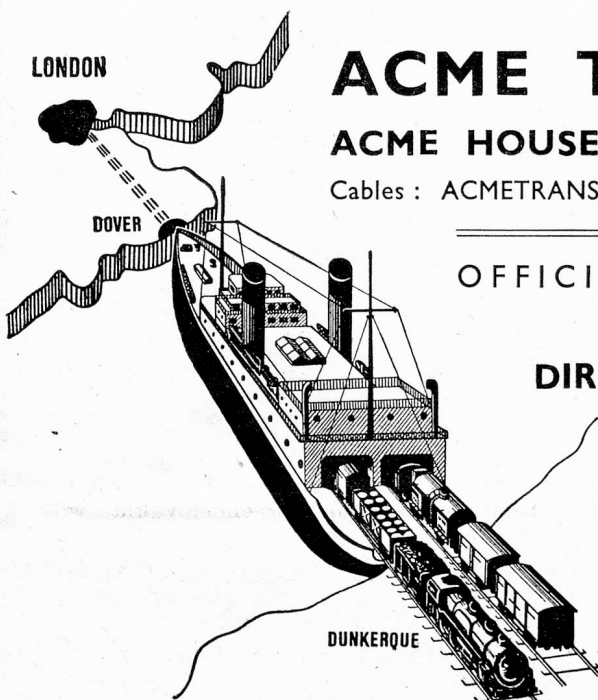
The late Doctor h.c. Adolf Frei, for many years President of the Swiss Chamber of Commerce in Vienna, has left an amount of 20,000.—frs. to his native community Weisslingen (Ct. Zurich) for charitable purposes.

[A.T.S.]

The municipal council of the town of Winterthur, has, on the occasion of the 60th birthday anniversary of the Winterthur poetess, Marie Bretscher, presented her with a magnificent edition of "Winterthurer Kleinmeister" and a cash present of 1,000.—frs. as an appreciation of her work. (Our readers might be interested to know that Marie Bretscher is the sister of our late and lamented collaborator Uli Bretscher, who wrote under the nom de plume of "Kyburg".

ED.)

Dr. Hugo Kräyenbühl, from Zihlschlacht (Ct. Thurgau), at present head of the neuro-surgical section



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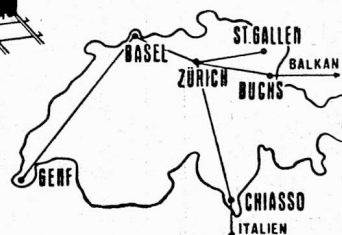
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of the cantonal hospital in Zurich, has been appointed Professor at the medical faculty of the University in Zurich. [A.T.S.]

Burglars entered, during the night, the jewellery firm of Kofmehl in the Bahnhofstrasse in Zurich. They got away with articles to the value of 100,000.frs. [A.T.S.]

The death is announced from Zurich of A. L. Tobler at the age of 76. The deceased was for nearly fifty years in the service of the "Zurich," Allgemeine Unfall und Haftpflicht-Versicherungs A.G.

He was from 1918-1927 General Manager and from 1927-1929 a member of the Board, and from 1929-1943, President of the Board of the company. After his retirement he was nominated Honorary President of the concern. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Paul Jaberg, a former Manager and at present President of the Board of the "Schweizerische Bankgesellschaft" has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary. He is a *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Lausanne. [A.T.S.]

The death has occurred in Bienne of Max Baumann-Keller, Founder and Head of the School of Music of the town of Bienne, at the age of 51. [A.T.S.]

The Board of Directors of the "Banque Populaire Suisse" has appointed Dr. Alfred Wegelin, at present Manager of the St. Gall branch office, a member of the General Direction in Berne. [A.T.S.]

The 8th Federal Yodler Festival will take place in Berne from the 11th-13th June, 1949. [A.T.S.]

The Swiss Bankers Association held their Annual Meeting on the 26th of last month at Interlaken under the Presidency of Mr. Bernhard Sarasin (Basle).

Amongst the distinguished visitors who attended were: Federal-Councillor Nobs, Ministers Stucki, Hotz and Hohl, Messrs. Schaffner, Troendle, Iklé and Professor Keller and Dr. Rossy of the Swiss National Bank. [A.T.S.]

The death is reported from Biberist of Max Kaiser at the age of 68. The deceased was from 1921-1937 a member of the "Kantonsrat" of Solothurn. In former years, he had been rector of the Commercial School in Bienne. [A.T.S.]

After having been a member of the "Kantonsrat" of St. Gall for thirty years, E. Hardegger (socialist) has resigned. [A.T.S.]

The late Otto Fischer, of Möhlin (Ct. Aargau) has left an amount of 33,000.—frs. for charitable purposes. [A.T.S.]

The town of Aarau has celebrated on the 14th of last month the 700th anniversary of its foundation, at the same time an exhibition entitled "700 Jahre Aarau" was opened. Amongst the numerous guests which attended the celebration, were Federal-Councillor Kobelt and General Guisan. [A.T.S.]

Madame Colomba Fonti-Delmenico of Arosia (Ct. Ticino) has celebrated her 100th birthday anniversary. Madame Fonti is the mother of twelve children of whom eight are still living. [A.T.S.]

The death has occurred, at his home in Ascona, of the writer, Emil Ludwig, at the age of 67.

The deceased, who was born in Breslau, became a Swiss citizen in 1932. He was best known as a biographer of Goethe, Napoleon, Bismarck and the former Kaiser. Among his later works are "Stalin" (1942); "How to treat the Germans" (1944); and "Othello" (1947). [A.T.S.]

The death has occurred in Stamford (U.S.A.) of M. Eduard Müller, President of the Nestlé-Unilac world-wide group of 150 companies, at the age of 63.

M. Müller, who originated from the canton of Aargau, was born in 1885 at La Tour de Peilz. In 1905 he entered into the service of the Nestlé company. After a stay of ten years at the London Office (1905-1915) he was transferred and put in charge of the Near East agencies, at the same time he was appointed Delegate of the International Red Cross in Athens. In 1919, M. Müller was appointed Manager of the Administration in Paris, and three years later (1922) he was

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recalled to Vevey in order to assist at the reorganisation of the Nestlé concern. In 1926, he was nominated General Manager and later on became a member of the Board of which he became its President in 1937. M. Müller was a *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Lausanne and an honorary citizen of the town of Vevey. [A.T.S.]

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M. Edmond Crisinel, since 1921, editor of the "Nouvelle Revue de Lausanne" has died in Lausanne at the age of 51. The deceased was one of the co-founders of the "Cercle Lausannois" and known as a writer of poetry for which he received in 1946 the "Schillerpreis." [A.T.S.]

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On the conclusion of the 10th anniversary celebration of the opening of the bus route Rolle-Gimel, a number of the participants went for a boat trip on the lake. On changing places in the boat, Paul Messieux lost his balance and fell into the water and was drowned. The deceased, a married man, aged forty, with two children, was a member of the Grand Council of the canton Vaud. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The death has occurred in Lausanne of Professor E. Wilceck at the age of 81. He was Professor of Botany at the University of Lausanne from 1892-1933, he also held the post of Conservator of the Botanical Museum and Director of the Botanical Gardens of the University of Lausanne. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Swedish Watchmaker Association has honoured Dr. h.c. James Pellaton, formerly Director of the watch-makers school in Le Locle with a gold medal. [A.T.S.]

* * *

A bronze-bust in memory of the late Federal Councillor Robert Comtesse was inaugurated at Neuchâtel. He was a member of the Federal Government from 1899-1912. Previous to his entering the Government, he was a member of the government of the canton of Neuchâtel and a member of the National Council. He was one of the principal advocates for the foundation of the National Bank. He died in 1922. [A.T.S.]

The members of the Geneva Government and the Municipal Council have received in solemn audience, M. David Morse, the new General Manager of the International Labour Office in Geneva. [A.T.S.]

* * *

M. Maurice Pictet de Rochemont, one of the founders of the "Orchestre de la Suisse Romande" and a member of its Board for seventeen years, has died at Geneva, at the age of 78. [A.T.S.]

Army

A corporal and two recruits of the "Grenadier-Rekrutenschule" were drowned when trying to cross the river Maggia near Ponte Brolla.

The victims are: Corporal Jörg Oeschger, from Bottmingen (Basle County); recruit Louis Cotting, from Wumerwil (Fribourg) and recruit Karl Nussbaumer, from Berne.

An inquiry has been ordered by the military authorities. [A.T.S.]

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Between Jsleten and Jsenthal (Uri) a jeep, driven by lieutenant Werner Balz of the "Festungs Artillerie Komp. 23" from Wolhusen, domiciled in Zurich, and a passenger, lieutenant Werner Furrer, engineer in Zurich, left the road and was smashed. Lieutenant Balz was killed. [A.T.S.]

Economics

Figures issued show that whereas before the war Britain supplied Switzerland with 6 per cent. of her total requirements of motor-cars, the percentage has now risen to 21 per cent.

The United States supplied 50 per cent., compared with 38 per cent. before the war.

France supplied 15 per cent., against 11 per cent., while Italy's share dropped from 15 to 11 per cent.

Germany's supplies amounted to 29 per cent. in 1938, but are only 3 per cent. at present. There is every likelihood that this figure will be increased in the near future.

During the first seven months of this year the number of British cars imported into Switzerland was 4,055.

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The "Financial Times" in their issue of the 22nd of September, writes under the heading "Swiss and Gold" the following:—

"The latest return of the Swiss National Bank, dated September 15th, shows an unusually large addition to the gold holdings of that institution. The actual increase during the week was just over 122,000,000 Swiss francs—nearly £7,000,000—and it makes a total expansion in this item of more than 163,000,000 Swiss francs (about £9½ millions) in a little over a month.

Moreover, the aggregate holding of 5,749,925,708 Swiss francs (more than £300,000,000) is now some 500,000,000 francs above that at the beginning of the current year.

The continued expansion of these gold holdings has occasioned some surprise in City circles. It does not fit in with the trend of Swiss trade and it is assumed that, in part at least, the growth is due to special circumstances. In this connection, it may be recalled that, on a previous occasion when additions to the stock were on a large scale, the explanation lay in the fact that the Swiss Federal Treasury was transferring some of its holdings back to the National Bank. During the war, when gold was flowing into Switzerland despite all the defensive measures taken by the National Bank, the Federal Treasury arranged to take over some of the gold of the National Bank. The object was to mop up the purchasing power it would have created otherwise. These operations were financed by internal borrowing.

The change in the trend of trading for Switzerland had led to some depletion of the National Bank stocks and the Federal authorities may have decided to replace these losses from their own holdings. It may be, also, that some of the recent additions may have come by way of other Central Banks."

—oo—

In 1946-47 the Directorate of the Swiss General Post Office decided to erect a high aerial mast at the Sottens transmitting station. The type decided upon was a 625ft. vertical mast and the design was entrusted to Mr. Dick, Consulting Engineer, Lucerne, Entreprise Rüttimann Frères, Zoug, carried out the erection of the mast. The steelwork, of the lattice truss type, is composed of booms (solid bars, with diameters up to ½ in.) and tubular diagonals. The mast is provided with horizontal bracing in order to resist torsional stresses. At its base, 59ft. square, the mast is supported on four soapstone insulators. The erection of the mast,

composed of bars and tubes, presented many technical difficulties. To overcome these difficulties, the engineers used welded gussets for tubes and special coupling sleeves for assembly of the bars. Ateliers de Constructions Mécaniques de Vévey were responsible for the fabrication of the lower part of the mast, about 345ft. high.

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It was stated in Parliament, in reply to a question, that Dr. Schacht had made inquiries whether he would be granted permission to live in Switzerland. He was told that his request had no chance of being considered. As his life was not in danger it was unnecessary to grant him refuge in Switzerland.

* * *

PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.

(*"Semaine Suisse"*) Service de Presse.

Le Dr. G. Carnat, Privat-docent, vétérinaire à Délémont, a été invité par l'Université de Paris à y donner une conférence.

* * *

Un congrès italo-suisse de médecine s'est tenu à Zurich. Les orateurs italiens se sont déclarés heureux que cette réunion ait lieu dans un pays qui, avec ses 4 langues nationales et ses 3 formes de cultures, est le noyau autour duquel doit se cristalliser la compréhension internationale. Les 150 médecins italiens se sont ensuite rendus à Bâle où ils ont visité les établissements Ciba, Geigy, Hoffmann-La Roche et Sandoz. Ils ont été émerveillés à la vue des méthodes générales de recherche scientifique, qui ont fait la réputation de notre industrie chimique.

* * *

Un nouveau chaland à moteur du Rhin de la S.A. Neptune, équipé d'un moteur Sulzer de 900HP, vient d'entreprendre son voyage inaugural.

* * *

Le gouvernement militaire américain a remis un exemplaire de la Constitution suisse aux hommes politiques allemands qui doivent élaborer la nouvelle constitution pour l'Allemagne.

* * *

Les nouveaux timbres poste indiens, avec l'effigie de Gandhi, ont été imprimés en Suisse.

* * *

Après 5 premières dans la Cordillère Blanche (Pérou), l'expédition du club alpin académique de Zurich a vaincu le "Nevado Santa Cruz," haut de 6.259 m., qui avait résisté jusqu'à présent aux 5 assauts qui lui ont été livrés.

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Le Prof. A. von Muralt, président central de la Société helvétique des sciences naturelles à été nommé président de la commission de l'Unesco pour les stations de recherches scientifiques de haute altitude.

* * *

Le Prof. H. Mooser (Zurich) a été désigné comme conseiller de l'organisation mondiale de la santé pour l'aide aux réfugiés palestiniens.

* * *

Lors de la reconstruction de l'hôpital de Stuttgart, l'appareillage électrique n'a pas pu être installé faute de matières premières. Des industriels suisses ont fait don de 3.500 kg. de fil de cuivre qui ont été expédiés sans frais au moyen d'avions de fret de la Swissair.

* * *

La reine-mère Wilhelmine des Pays-Bas est bourgeoise de Genève, elle possède par conséquent la nationalité suisse. Le droit de bourgeoisie avait été conféré en 1815 au duc Frédéric François de Mecklenburg-Schwerin, grandpère de son époux.

* * *

L'Inde a demandé des offres pour des machines à écrire suisses munies de caractères Hindî.

* * *

Cette année, 462 candidats venant de 29 pays (dont 44 Suisses), se sont inscrits pour participer aux concours internationaux d'exécution musicale du Conservatoire de Genève.

* * *

Le Dr. Oscar Eberle (Zurich) qui fait autorité en matière de théâtre mettra en scène un jeu de la Passion "La Rédemption" au Festspielhaus de Vienne.

Le Don Suisse a terminé son activité. Le peuple suisse a fait don à cette institution de 200 millions de francs. En plus des campagnes en faveur des pays en détresse, il a été possible d'hospitaliser en Suisse 3450 tuberculeux venant de 27 pays. La "Suisse guérisseuse" est devenue une expression courante en Europe.

IMPORTS OF SWISS GOODS INTO THE UNITED KINGDOM DURING 1948.

(Communicated by Swiss Legation.)

Further to the arrangements made during the Trade talks of February last, providing for the admission by the United Kingdom of various Swiss exports during 1948, provision has since been made for a number of additional items. A first supplementary list of July last included utility furniture, staple fibre yarns, woollen piece goods, certain plastic articles, drawing pencils and glue. To these have now been added quotas for: electric screen heaters for cars, hob nails, combs, white wines, Kirsch and similar spirits; furthermore, an increase has been arranged for Swiss exports to the United Kingdom of cheese, files and rasps and for certain cotton piece goods.

It should be added that the amounts involved are in most cases rather modest (a number of these articles being considered in the United Kingdom as so called "less essentials"), and that in some cases licensing is subject to special conditions with regard to types, quality, prices, etc.

SCHWEIZERBUND (Swiss Club)

Founded 1879.

74, CHARLOTTE STREET, W.1.

Film Show

of

"MARIE LOUISE"

THE FAMOUS SWISS FILM

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11th, 1948

AT 3 p.m. FOR CHILDREN
WITH A MICKEY MOUSE FILM

Entrance 1/- for Children

2/6 for Adults incl. (tax)

Free tea and cakes during interval.

AT 7 p.m. WITH A DANCE TO FOLLOW

Entrance 6/- (incl. tax)

Announcements of the re-opening of the Club will be made later, but the above show will take place in any case.

Admittance for the Film to Members and Non-Members

STOP !!

Do not buy that Christmas Present till you have been to our

Grand Christmas Bazaar

To be held by the Sezione Femminile of the Unione Ticinese at:—

SWISS HOUSE, 35, FITZROY SQUARE, W.1
on

SATURDAY, 27th NOVEMBER, 1948 at 2 p.m.

(Make a note of the Date)

There will be colourful Gifts from Switzerland including, Brooches, Scarves, Woodcraft, Leather Goods, etc. Also Embroidery, Knitwear, Painting, Handcraft and Household Goods.

USEFUL AND ATTRACTIVE PRESENTS
FOR EACH MEMBER OF THE FAMILY

Bring your friends and don't forget to bring the Kiddies to our 'Lucky Dip'.