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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED BY PAUL F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain.

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

Swiss citizens voted on the 11th of September in a nation-wide referendum to curtail the Federal Council's emergency powers granted during the war.

In a vote of 281,961 against 272,359, our countrymen decided on a "return to direct democracy." The Bill, proposed by way of a public initiative, was strongly opposed by the Government and Parliament as well as by the political parties forming the Government. The vote can therefore be regarded both as a censure for the Federal Council and two Chambers of Parliament and as a clear disapproval of the attitude of the political parties now in the majority.

Here are particulars of the voting:

CANTONS.	YES.	No.
Zurich	77,916	75,158
Berne	24,276	25,380
Lucerne	8,533	7,999
Uri	1,733	1,535
Schwyz	2,651	3,607
Obwalden	729	933
Nidwalden	863	1,199
Glarus	3,356	1,755
Zug	2,116	1,638
Fribourg	5,698	5,266
Solothurn	7,224	9,763
Basle-Town	12,287	12,251
Basle-County	5,888	4,567
Schaffhausen	4,972	5,841
Appenzell A.Rh.	6,248	2,464
Appenzell I.Rh.	669	985
St. Gall	23,660	23,929
Grisons	6,328	8,598
Aargau	23,625	35,861
Thurgau	9,780	15,801
Ticino	4,454	3,736
Vaud	24,704	11,571
Valais	8,748	3,778
Neuchâtel	7,903	3,895
Geneva	7,600	4,849
Total	281,961	272,359

Customs receipts in August, 1949, amounted to 41 million francs, or 0.2 million francs less than during the same period in 1948.

In the first eight months of the current year altogether 309.3 million francs were collected, or 59.1 million less than in the same period in the previous year.

* * *

Dr. Eduard Zellweger, Swiss Minister in Belgrade, has tendered his resignation to the Federal Council, which has accepted same, expressing to him at the same time the appreciation for the services he had rendered.

Minister Zellweger, a native of Zurich and Trogen, was born in 1901 and studied law at various Universities. From 1924-1929 he was chief of the "Auslandschweizer Sekretariates" of the New Helvetic Society, and from 1930-1945 was a member of the Tribunal (Kassationsgericht) Zurich. In 1943, he was elected a member of Parliament (National Council). In 1945, Dr. Zellweger was nominated Swiss Minister in Belgrade.

* * *

The Foreign Office announces that the King has approved the appointment of Mr. Patrick Stratford Scrivener, Deputy Commissioner-General for the United Kingdom Government in South-East Asia, to be His Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne, in succession to Mr. Thomas Maitland Snow, who is retiring.

Mr. Scrivener was formerly Minister in Damascus. Earlier he served in Warsaw, Cairo, Budapest, Addis Ababa, Ankara, Rome and Lisbon.

Cantonal

The well-known Lift and Electrical Motor concern, Schindler & Co. A.G., in Lucerne, has celebrated its 75th Jubilee. [A.T.S.]

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75th Anniversary Celebration BANQUET AND BALL

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SUNDAY, 23rd OCTOBER, 1949 at 6.30 p.m.

H.E. THE SWISS MINISTER IN THE CHAIR

Tickets 25/- each are obtainable from Committee Members and the Editor of the Swiss Observer.

Mr. and Mrs. Josef Zingg-Blankart, of Meggen (Ct. Lucerne), have celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary.

Mr. Zingg, who is 86 years old, was for many years Director of the Gotthard railway and when this concern was taken over by the Confederation he was appointed one of the General Managers of the Swiss Federal Railways. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Six persons were injured, two seriously, when a motor-car, driven at an excessive speed collided with a tree at the Albisrieder Strasse, in Zurich.

It is stated that the driver of the car was under the influence of drink [A.T.S.]

* * *

The late Mme. Ida Zuppinger-Guggenbuhl has left considerable property in Wallisellen (Ct. Zurich), to the community of Wallisellen, the value of which is estimated to exceed several hundred thousand francs. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Swiss-British Society in Zurich, which is the parent Society of the Anglo-Swiss Society in London, gave a luncheon in honour of the newly appointed British General Consul in Zurich, Mr. Marriott, C.B.E.

The President of the Society, Professor Straumann, welcomed Mr. Marriott, wishing him a successful stay in our country, the latter thanked the President and the members for having honoured him and expressed the wish that he might be allowed to occupy his post for some time to come.

Amongst other speakers were Geoffrey Crowther, Editor and Publisher of the "Economist" and Mr. Arnold Lunn. [A.T.S.]

* * *

A railway accident occurred on the 4th of this month at the station of Heimberg on the Burgdorf-Thun railway, when a train was derailed.

Two people were killed, a Miss Alice Braun, of Aeschlen nr. Oberdiesbach (aged 19), and a boy (aged 7), by the name of Kurt Müller, of Niederhünigen. Several passengers were injured. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Burglars entering a watch manufacturing firm in Tramelan, got away with 1,200 watches representing a value of between 50-100,000.—frs. The watches bear the names of Damas or Hydepard.

A part of the stolen watches was recovered, when a frontier guard near Thônex stopped a man who was trying to pass the frontier. On being challenged the man dropped two parcels, containing 500 watches stolen at Tramelan, and took to his heels, so far no arrest has been made. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Fifty years ago, Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of the newly founded State of Israeli, received the degree of doctor of natural science from the University of Fribourg. To celebrate this event, Dr. Weizmann, who is at present in Switzerland, was invited by the rector of the University to a reception at which over 300 guests were present.

Speeches were made by Messrs. Isidor Nordmann, President of the Israelitic community of Fribourg, Dr. G. Brunschvig, President of the Swiss Israelitic

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community, M. Bartsch, President of the Grand Council of the canton of Fribourg, J. Bovet, President of the Cantonal Government, the Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg, Mgr. Charrière and Professors Dr. Oscar Vasella and Blum.

President Weizmann, in his reply, thanked the Senate of the University for having invited him and thus also honouring his country. He paid a great tribute to Switzerland as a land of Liberty and Tolerance. [A.T.S.]

* * *

A serious motoring accident occurred in Bellach (Ct. Solothurn) on the 6th of this month, which caused the death of two people: Christian Zahnd, of Langendorf and Max Liechti of Luterbach. The accident was caused through the negligence of the cyclist who was killed (Ch. Zahnd). The driver of the car, Director Ringwald of Lucerne, and his son, Walter, were injured. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Dr. G. Rudolf Mohr (Liberal), Mayor of the town of Chur, has been re-elected. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The 400th anniversary of the independence of the Misoix was celebrated in Roveredo in the presence of the Government of the canton of Grisons *in corpore*, and representatives of the Government of the canton of Ticino, and a large number of the population. To commemorate this event the Museum Moesano in San Vittore was inaugurated. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Early this month the Swiss Bankers Association held their Annual General Meeting at Flims (Ct.

tonnes) than in the first half year of 1948, and goods receipts, inclusive of receipts in respect of luggage, livestock and mail, were about 18½ per cent. lower. Total traffic receipts contracted by some 11.1 per cent. In the first half of 1948 the number of passengers conveyed was also lower than in the same period in 1947, but passenger receipts were higher, benefiting from the increase introduced in February of 1948."

Economics

The 21st General Meeting of the "Schweizerischen Zentrale für Handelsförderung" took place in Zurich at the beginning of this month under the Presidency of Mr. Edgar Primault (Berne).

Mr. A. J. Stachelin, Director of the Zurich Office in a very efficient *exposé*, spoke on "Schweizerische wirtschaftliche Propaganda an Messen und Ausstellungen im Ausland." He mentioned, that Switzerland has taken part for nearly a hundred years, at most of the International Fairs and Exhibitions, and for many years with the support of the "Zentrale für Handelsförderung."

Amongst other things, he said: "Angesichts der überdimensionierten nationalen Gruppierungen der heutigen Ausstellungen im Ausland müsse das Augenmerk auf die Förderung gediegener schweizerischer Kollektiveausstellungen gerichtet werden, was sich jedoch nur durch eine planmässige Zusammenarbeit

aller an Export beteiligter Branchen verwirklichen lassen."

Dr. Albert Masnata, Director of the Lausanne Office spoke on "Die Entwicklung der internationalen Wirtschaft und der schweizerische Export."

Amongst the many distinguished guests, who attended the meeting, were the Swiss Ministers in London, Prague, Buenos-Aires and Bucarest, as well as the Chargé d'Affaires in Dublin and Santiago de Chile. The Swiss Consular Corps was also well represented. The Zurich authorities delegated Mr. Jakob Kägi, President of the cantonal government, and Dr. Landolt, first Vice-President of the "Stadtrates" (now Mayor of the town of Zurich) to the meeting. The various Federal Offices, send delegates, amongst them Minister Jean Hotz, Director of the commercial section of the "Eidgenössischen Volkswirtschaftsdepartementen" and Counsellor of Legation, Julien Rossa of the Federal Political Dept. in Berne. The National Bank was represented by its General Manager Hirs.

The attendance of so many leading men connected with Swiss industry and commerce, Banking and Diplomacy was a sure proof of the importance of this concern.

(The Directors of the Zurich and Lausanne offices, Messrs. A. J. Stachelin and Dr. Albert Masnata, are well-known in the Swiss Colony in London, the former occupied the post of Manager of the London Office, and the latter, on several occasions addressed the members of the City Swiss Club.)

* * *

Dutch-Swiss negotiations have led to a new trade pact ruling from October 1st, 1949, to September 30th, 1950.

Though no details have yet been published it is officially stated that earnings of Dutch exports of goods, services and capital have remained far below expectations, and therefore a reduction in the imports from Switzerland will be unavoidable.

Dutch exports to Switzerland in the first half of 1949 were worth Swiss Frs.60m. (about £3.5m.), against Frs.79m. in the corresponding period of 1948, whereas Dutch imports from Switzerland were valued at Frs. 92m. (£5.3m.), against Frs.84m. in the corresponding period of 1948.

* * *

"The City Press" published in their issue of September 9th, under the heading "Swiss Watch Exports" the following:

"Last year the Swiss exported £12,000,000 of watches and watch movements to the United States.

That sum represented 9,045,000 watches and watch movements. The Swiss claim that those sales brought a business in which Americans received income and wages worth £81,000,000 in casing straps and sales of the resultant goods.

A leading Swiss authority has recently stated that after transport costs the final cost of the American and Swiss movements vary by only a few cents.

The Swiss claim that if the Americans increase duties against Swiss watches there would be a fall off in the trade and that, in consequence, American sales of goods to Switzerland would also decline.

Last year Switzerland bought goods from the United States totalling £55,000,000, while the United



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States imported from Switzerland goods worth £27,000,000."

* * *

The Swiss typewriter industry which expanded remarkably in the post-war years, continued to expand its exports in the first seven months of this year, when 25,927 machines were sent abroad. This figure compares with 22,906 exported in the first seven months of 1948. The 13.5% increase was due largely to increased deliveries to Belgium, Brazil, India and the United States, which more than compensated for a contraction of sales to France, Portugal, Mexico and Turkey.

* * *

British exports to Switzerland have suffered the worst slump since the end of the war. They dropped in August by almost £300,000.

* * *

Gold continues to flow into Switzerland, as evidenced by the return of the Swiss National Bank for the week to September 7th.

The gold reserve rose by Frs.44.m. to Frs.6,281m., mainly as a result of a conversion of foreign exchange into gold. Foreign exchange holdings dropped by Frs.31.3m. to Frs.296m.

Notes in circulation declined by Frs.55.9m. to Frs.4,257m.

—oo—

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Joseph Kluser, Proprietor and Manager of the Hotels Kluser, Martigny, in Martigny.

Karl Geigy-Hagenbach, one of the leading personalities of the firm J. F. Geigy, A.G., Chemical Works, Basle, in Basle, aged 84.

The deceased entered the concern, which had been founded by his father in the year 1891 as a partner. In turning it into a limited company, he was elected a member of the Board in 1901. He retired from this office in 1927.

Louis Geiser, Manufacturer of watch-springs, in Sonvilier, at the age of 76.

[A.T.S.]

Mr. and Mrs. Jakob Ffund-Bringolf, of Hallau, and Mr. and Mrs. J. Ott-Keller, of Winterthur, have celebrated their iron wedding anniversaries (65 years).
[A.T.S.]

* * *

Accidents at level crossings are an evil which has been on the increase in Switzerland since the war, with the fresh expansion of motor traffic. There are some 4,200 level crossings in Switzerland, sub-divided into three categories: (1) level crossings with barriers which are closed (manually or by remote control) whenever a train or a light engine is due to pass; (2) level crossings without barriers but provided with optical (luminous signals) and (3) level crossings signalled only by the St. Andrew's cross type of warning.

Lack of road discipline and patience, as well as lack of road courtesy unfortunately so prominent in our country, have had deplorable consequences as the following figures denote.

Annual average of accidents at level crossings with barriers 1945-1947: 11.3 per cent. Annual average on open level crossings provided with St. Andrews Cross Type warning signals, 1945-1947: 20 per cent.

* * *

A Swiss Himalayan expedition, which has succeeded in penetrating regions of Nepal so far unknown to Europeans and conquering the Pyramid Peak (23,350ft.), has returned to Geneva. The expedition, which was divided into two parties, included Dr. Wyss-Dunant and Mrs. Anne Lohner. Although this year's early monsoon complicated the task of the climbers and heavy snowfalls made ascents unusually difficult and dangerous, a number of other mountains were climbed. They included the Sphinx (20,460ft.) and Kongma Peaks (18,750ft.). The expedition also explored the unknown region north of Kanchenjunga and scaled the Dzany Peak (19,830ft.).

* * *

The S.A. de l'Aletsch, a subsidiary of the S.A. Lonza, is at present engaged in the erection of a new power station in the Conches valley. This plant will utilise water of the Massa, a channel of the Aletsch Glacier. The S.A. d'Entreprises Electriques Motor-

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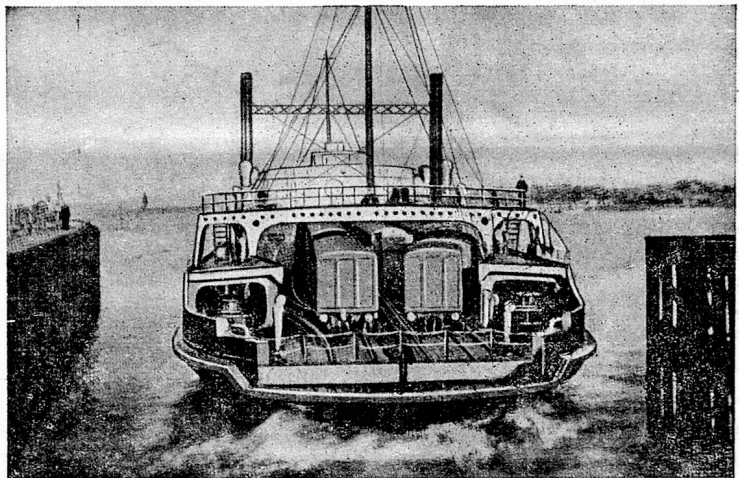
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Columbus, of Baden, is entrusted with the design of the scheme. Water will be taken some hundred yards downstream by the glacier's neck and will be diverted into the valley of the Rhone River, through a tunnel, passing below the Riederhorn and ending at the Ried village. A concrete spillway dam will be constructed at the intake. The penstocks will be 5,400ft long, the diameter varying between 30in. and 36in. The power station will be equipped with two Pelton turbines and two alternators and will have a capacity of 15,000kW. Works started in the spring of 1948 and it is hoped that the first group will be in service by April, 1950, and the whole scheme completed one year later.

* * *

The Swiss Alpine Club has decided to consider next year the enlargement of the Britannia Hut. This hut, which was presented to the Swiss Alpine Club by its British members, was erected in 1912 on the Hinter Allalin, above Saas Fee, at a height of 9,908ft. In 1921 the Geneva section of the club set up there a memorial tablet to its British members who fell during the 1914-18 war, and another was placed recalling the memory of T. Clinton Dent, the well-known alpinist. It is understood that the Geneva section intends to make the Britannia Hut a lasting monument of Anglo-Swiss friendship and plans to erect there some memorial to the British climbers who were killed during the war.

* * *

The drought which has prevailed in Switzerland since the beginning of June — broken only by four insufficient rainfalls — has been the longest experienced since 1868, and it is estimated that it has caused a loss of about 200m. francs to Swiss agriculture, a figure which represents nearly 15 per cent. of the annual income.

Vines and cereals alone have survived the drought. The hay crop is nearly 500,000 tons below the average, and, as the alpine pastures were scorched and consequently abandoned in August, the production of milk, butter, and cheese is dangerously low, though it can be compensated for temporarily by imports. The lack of fodder has resulted in an alarming increase in the slaughtering of cattle. The vegetable yield is far below the average, and the potato crop is nearly 35,000 wagons less than last year. The fruit crop shows a decrease of 5,000 wagons compared with 1948.

The Swiss vine growers are now faced with a critical situation because the greater part of last year's vintage is unsold and is lying in the cellars. This year's vintage is likely to be slightly under the average — which is about 800,000 hectolitres — and the problem is to store that amount of wine in cellars already containing some 400,000 hectolitres. The Government is trying to help the sale of home wines by lowering their price, which is excessive compared with imported wines. French and Italian "vins ordinaires" can be bought at Fr.2.50 a litre, and Swiss "ordinaire" is being sold at Fr. 4.50.

* * *

Details are announced of the Swiss Government's plan to use Alpine peaks for so-called "Hertzian cables" — radio links on very short waves. This will enable television programmes to cross the Alps from France to Italy and be distributed throughout Switzerland.

A transmitter will be built on Jungfrauoch and another station will be erected on Mt. Generoso, near Lugano. From the latter station pictures would be relayed to other stations in the Apennines, besides feeding programmes to Turin and Milan.

The scheme, a vital link in any European television network, will also be used for multi-channel telephone calls. French relay points could be on Jura and the Vosges peaks.

PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.

"Semaine Suisse" (Service de Presse).

Les directeurs de l'Institut national d'études pédagogiques du Brésil se sont déclarés "élèves de la Suisse." Ils ont été mis au courant des méthodes suisses d'éducation et d'enseignement par une élève russe du professeur Claparède, de Genève.

* * *

Le président de l'Association suisse des détaillants en alimentation, M. P. Wirz-Burri, d'Olten, a été nommé membre d'honneur de l'Association suédoise des commerçants et de l'Association des épiciers détaillants de Finlande.

* * *

Des représentants de diverses industries américaines se trouvent présentement en Suisse "pays des inventions" pour chercher sur le marché des produits susceptibles d'être introduits aux Etats-Unis.

* * *

On espère écouler cet automne environ 4 millions de kg de raisin suisse de table. Grâce à la participation du fonds fédéral de viticulture, le prix du raisin pourra être abaissé. Sur les principales routes du vignoble, on peut acheter du raisin sans même sortir de voiture.

* * *

La presse suisse fait état du travail accompli par les fabriques fédérales de munitions et les ateliers de constructions; elle mentionne spécialement les travaux de recherches et les brillants résultats obtenus dans le même domaine par l'industrie privée. Les uns et les autres nous permettent de maintenir notre défense nationale, du point de vue de la technique de l'armement, au niveau des autres pays.

* * *

L'usine électrique Marmorera à l'Oberhalbstein (Grisons), dont la construction est projetée par la ville de Zurich, aurait la digne la plus grande d'Europe. Elle coûterait à elle seule environ 30 millions de francs.

* * *

Dans un discours qu'il a prononcé à Berne, le Dr. Jokl, du département sud-africain de l'instruction publique, à Prétoria, a déclaré que l'expédition que les gymnastes suisses ont faite en Afrique du Sud en 1947 a été un triomphe, non seulement en ce qui concerne les exercices corporels mais aussi en ce qui regarde la Suisse elle-même, auprès d'hommes qui n'avaient presque jamais entendu parler de ce pays et de ses habitants.

* * *

Notre pays possède dans le marbre de calcite pure de Peccia (Tessin) l'une des plus nobles pierres naturelles. Selon les géologues et les spécialistes, il peut soutenir toute comparaison avec le célèbre marbre de Carrare et avec les meilleurs marbres grecs.

La maison Thorens, à Ste Croix, a résolu le problème du réglage à distance des postes de radio. Son nouvel appareil permet de desservir le récepteur de n'importe quelle place, même d'un autre pièce.

La Fédération internationale des Sociétés d'instituteurs a nommé, en qualité de secrétaire général, M. Robert Michel, instituteur à Lausanne, président de la Société pédagogique romande.

Le film "Switzerland today" ("La Suisse d'aujourd'hui"), édité par une société américaine de production, a été présenté dans plus de 7,000 salles du Canada et de l'Amérique du Nord et du Sud, devant plus de 40 millions de spectateurs. Un prochain film de la même société retracera les aventures d'un soldat américain qui refait, quelques années après la guerre, le voyage qu'il y fit comme G.I.

Le président de l'association des éditeurs allemands écrit, dans un journal économique, qu'il admire l'audace et la capacité culturelle avec lesquelles l'industrie suisse du livre a travaillé pendant la déplorable période politique que l'Allemagne vient de traverser. L'édition suisse a rendu, à cette époque, un service inappréciable à la langue et à la poésie allemandes.

On vient de donner à Fehraltorf (Zurich) la première du drame "Sous le signe de la Croix" de Maria Fischer. Cette œuvre retrace la victoire du christianisme dans l'Helvétie dominée par les Romains.

Lausanne a abrité du 23 au 27 août le 7e congrès de la Fédération internationale des géomètres auquel prenaient part des délégués de 16 pays.

L'écrivain politique William Henry Chamberlin remarque dans le "Wallstreet Journal", à propos de la Suisse: "Le vivant exemple de ce pays de montagnes, qui n'a pas de colonies ni de richesses naturelles, mais qui possède le niveau de vie le plus élevé en Europe, est preuve d'un moral qui pourrait être étudié avec profit aussi bien par l'Europe que par les Etats-Unis." La plus grande louange que puisse décerner un Américain se trouve dans sa conclusion, lorsqu'il écrit que si les pères de la Constitution américaine revenaient sur cette Terre, ils trouveraient dans la Suisse "un pays selon leur cœur."

Le directeur d'une maison d'importation et d'exportation de New-York, qui vient de rentrer de Suisse, a établi des plans pour affréter, l'année prochaine, un vapeur destiné exclusivement aux voyages à destination de la Suisse.

A Philadelphie (USA), a lieu, de la mi-août à la mi-septembre, une exposition philatélique réunissant des collections de la Suisse et du Liechtenstein. Grâce à leur tenue artistique et à leur perfection technique, les timbres suisses jouissent depuis longtemps d'une grande faveur auprès des collectionneurs américains.

Le "Wall Street Journal" de New-York qualifie la Suisse d'île de liberté économique au milieu d'un océan de contrôles, de contingents et de restrictions de toutes sortes. La monnaie suisse est très forte; elle est la plus saine du monde entier.

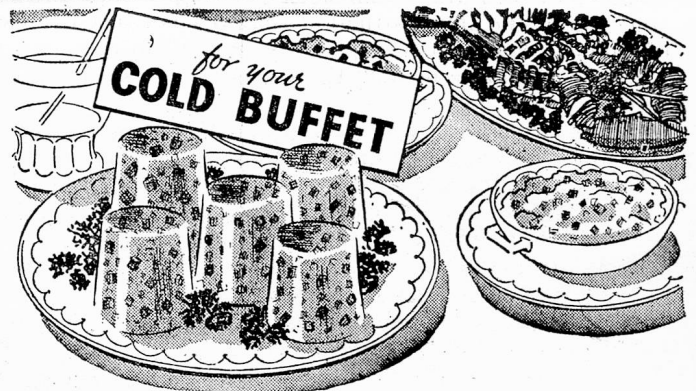
Soixante participants à la "Semaine artistique internationale" de Bruxelles, venant de plusieurs pays, ont visité pendant une semaine de nombreux centres artistiques de Suisse.

Le premier août a été fêté avec ferveur dans le monde entier par les colonies de Suisses à l'étranger.

An American film company has produced a film called "Switzerland of to-day" which has been shown in over 7,000 cinemas in Canada, North and South America and has been seen by over 40 million people. A further film by the same producers will present the experiences of an American soldier in Switzerland, who, some years after the war, undertook a second Swiss tour.

RECENT WILLS.

Mr. Heinrich (or Henry) Senn, of Basle, Streatham Hill, S.W.1., and Mark Lane, E.C., partner in C. Hoffman and Company, shipbrokers, London, E.C., during the war chief of the shipping section, Swiss War Transport Ministry, and formerly a shipping industrialist in Britain, who died on February 14th last, intestate, aged 61 years, left estate in England valued at £17,770 gross (£15,423 net).



Aspic dishes make meat go further

In these days one cannot afford to neglect any device that makes the most of the meat ration. Aspic dishes do this in an attractive and appetizing manner. With Maggi's Beef Aspic Jelly one can convert unattractive meat, fish and vegetable 'left-overs' into sparkling supplementary dishes that invite the eye and moisten the palate.

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