

News at random

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The Swiss Observer

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

On New Year's Day, Monsieur E. Nobs, President of the Swiss Confederation, received at the Federal Palais in Berne, the representatives of the cantonal and municipal authorities of Berne, members of the Diplomatic Corps, representing fifty accredited missions, and members of the European Branch of the General Secretariat of UNO in Geneva.

* * *

Monsieur Robert Schumann, French Foreign Minister, arrived in Berne on the 17th of this month on an official two days visit to the Swiss Government; he was received by the Federal Council *in corpore*. In honour of the distinguished guest, a Banquet was held at the "von Wattenwyl Haus" in Berne.

The French Foreign Minister also paid a visit to the town of Fribourg. His main object was to thank Switzerland for the help afforded to the people of France during and after the war.

* * *

The Federal Council has entrusted Albert Greutert, hitherto Swiss Consul in Chicago, with the direction of the Swiss Consulate in Stuttgart (Germany). Consul Greutert, who hails from Stadel (Zurich) was born in Berne in 1899. By profession an advocate, he entered in 1939 into the service of the Political Department (Swiss Foreign Office) in Berne. After having occupied various posts at Swiss Consulates in Barcelona, Mexico, Havanna and New Orleans, he was, in 1946, appointed Swiss Consul in Chicago.

* * *

The Egyptian Government has renewed the commercial agreement concluded mid-September with the Swiss Government, which expired December 31st, for one month with the understanding of a prolongation for a further three months.

Under the plan the Government undertakes to supply Swiss spinners with Karnak cotton from its own stores at a price of 71 tallaris per qantar for fully good grade and with other varieties on the basis of fully good Ashmuni of 50 tarraris per qantar.

Against this Frs.30.6m. from the proceeds of this sale of cotton and other exports, the sum of Frs.10.6m. will be reserved for imports of machinery, medicines and other necessities, Frs.2.5m. for textiles, watches and less necessary goods, Frs.9.5m. for material required for the Aswan hydro-electric project and Frs.8m. for invisibles, including arrears.

* * *

Gold stocks of the Swiss National Bank rose by Frs.17.9m. (£1.03m.) to Frs.5,821m. (£335m.) during the last December week. Foreign exchange holdings were Frs.14m. (£8m.) up at Frs.237m. (£13.7m.).

Notes in circulation advanced by a further Frs.74m. (£4.3m.), bringing the total to a new height of Frs.4,594m. (£265m.).

* * *

Swiss imports from Britain during December amounted to Frs.23.7 millions, against Frs.24.5 millions during the previous month, while exports to Britain in December rose from Frs.12.4 millions to Frs.16.5 millions.

Switzerland's exports to India during December advanced from Frs.10.4 millions to Frs.18.5 millions, while supplies in the opposite direction remained almost unchanged at Frs.1 million.

During the period under review, Switzerland's exports to the Union of South Africa declined from Frs.12.5 millions to Frs.3.1 millions, while imports were slightly higher at Frs.1.7 millions.

Germany is again becoming an important supplier, her exports to Switzerland attained the figure of Frs.29.6 millions in December.

* * *

During the first week of January foreign exchange holdings of the Swiss National Bank dropped by as

CITY SWISS CLUB

Membres are informed that the next **Monthly Meeting** will take place **Tuesday, 8th February, 1949**, at the **Dorchester Hotel, London, W.1**, at **6.30 p.m.**, dinner starting at **7 p.m.**

Mr. EDWARD ELLUL,

Commissioner General for Malta,

will be the guest of the Club and will address the Meeting.

Members wishing to attend, should advise the Manager, Dorchester Hotel, Park Lane, W.1, not later than February 7th.

THE COMMITTEE.

much as Frs.19.7 millions to Frs.217 millions. Gold stocks fell by Frs.1.2 millions to Frs.5,820 millions. A substantial decline is recorded in notes in circulation, which were Frs.167 millions lower at Frs.4,427 millions.

Cantonal

The firm, Camenzind & Co. (Floret-spinnerei), in Gersau (Ct. Schwyz), has, during Xmas, made a donation of 40,000.—frs. to the "Kleinkinderschule und Sekundarschul — Fonds" Gersau. In addition the employees have received bonuses totalling 65,000.—frs. [A.T.S.]

Following the example of the canton of Zurich, the Government of the canton of Schwyz will in future publish names and addresses in the "Amtsblatt" of motorists who have been prosecuted and found guilty of motoring offences. [A.T.S.]

The late M. Müller-Koller, Textile Manufacturer, Zurich, has left a legacy amounting to 100,000.—frs. to the "Krankenasy" Adliswil, near Zurich. [A.T.S.]

Professor, Dr. h.c. Walter Schädelin, has celebrated his 75th birthday anniversary; he was for 24 years in the service of the "Burggemeinde" Berne in the capacity of "Oberförster." In 1924, he was appointed Professor of Forestry at the Federal Technical University in Zurich, from which post he retired in 1940. [A.T.S.]

J. Lack, of the "Eidg. Konstruktionswerkstätte" in Thun, has been appointed technical Vice-Director of "Swissair." [A.T.S.]

Dr. h.c. Hans Hunziker, Director of the "Zentralamtes für den internationalen Eisenbahnverkehr", has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary. [A.T.S.]

Watches, amounting to the value of 20,000.—frs., were stolen during the night from a watch-manufacturing firm in St. Imier (Ct. Berne). [A.T.S.]

Professor, Dr. Paul Gruner-Bovet, formerly Professor of Physics at the University of Berne, has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary. [A.T.S.]

Lucien Despond, a former President of the Chamber of Commerce and member of the Grand Council of the canton of Fribourg, celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary. [A.T.S.]

A serious motor-car accident, occurred near Bellach (Ct. Solothurn) when a car ran into a vehicle drawn by two horses. The driver of the car, Domenico Ragazzi, proprietor of a cinematograph theatre in Bienne, and his passenger, Jean Stoll, film distributor in Basle were killed. One of the horses had to be destroyed. [A.T.S.]

A terrible tragedy has occurred in Chateau d'Oex (Ct. Vaud). On the 12th of this month; a fire broke out at the Children's Home "Les Oisillens," during the night and rapidly spread over the whole building.

Twelve children, between 3-14 years and two adults lost their lives, whilst a number were badly burned and had to be taken to hospital. Most of the children originate from Geneva.

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The home was managed by Mlle. Berthoud and her niece, Mlle. de Martini, a qualified nurse. The latter lost her life on attempting to save one of the children.

The names of the victims are : Rosemarie Altherr (5 years), Geneva ; Gilbert Bouvard (4 years), Geneva ; Yvette Clot (5 years), Lausanne ; Monique Favres (3 years), Chateau-d'Oex ; Michèle Meyer (3 years), Geneva ; Monique Monnet (4 years), Geneva ; Maggy Lanier (3 years), Geneva ; Gilbert Tiatti (14 years), Geneva ; Daniel Rohrbach (3 years), Geneva ; Raynald Farinelli (4 years), Geneva ; Claude Froidevaux (7 years), Geneva ; Suzanne de Martini (25 years), Ella Lawier Marchant (25 years), English ; Patricia Caretti, Italian.

Those taken to hospital were : René Guine, Pierre Altherr, Gerald and Micheline Heimneier. [A.T.S.]

A. H. Pellegrini, painter, has received the Art-Prize of the town of Basle. [A.T.S.]

E. Frey-Vogt, formerly Manager of the "Handelsbank" Basle, and a leading member of the "Christ-katholischen" church, has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary in Basle. [A.T.S.]

Francis Pellaton, chief of police at Montreux-les-Planches, was sentenced to six months imprisonment and dismissed from public service after being convicted on a series of charges ranging from fraud to abuse of confidence.

He is succeeded by Edmond Cosandey of Sassel (Vaud), a member of the Police force of Montreux. [A.T.S.]

During the year 1948, donations totalling 1,098,000.—frs. have been made in the canton Appenzell a. Rh.; 111,000.—frs. for educational purposes, 116,000.—frs. for the poor, 73,000.—frs. for hospitals, 180,000.—frs. for churches, 125,000.—frs. for inmates of Asylums and 468,000.—frs. for public utility purposes. [A.T.S.]

Fritz Herren in Lourtens (Ct. Fribourg) has been elected a member of Parliament (National-Council) in succession to M. Eusebius Philipona. [A.T.S.]

Madame Jos. Suter-Bütler, has celebrated her 100th birthday anniversary in Solderstock, community of Sins (Ct. Aargau). [A.T.S.]

The community of Baden (Ct. Aargau), has decided to present in future, all fathers of twins with 25 bottles of wine. (What about the mothers? Ed.) [A.T.S.]

André Pellaton, Restaurant keeper in La Chaux-de-Fonds, was killed, and two passengers seriously injured, when their car collided with a delivery van on the route des Gorges du Seyon. [A.T.S.]

Traffic

According to a decision taken at a recent conference of the Swiss Federal Railways, chair lifts or chair ropeways operated by Swiss private railways and other undertakings of which there is a number in Switzerland, are now considered a regular means of transport.

Chair lifts have developed from the war-time mountain lifts or primitive ropeways set up by the military

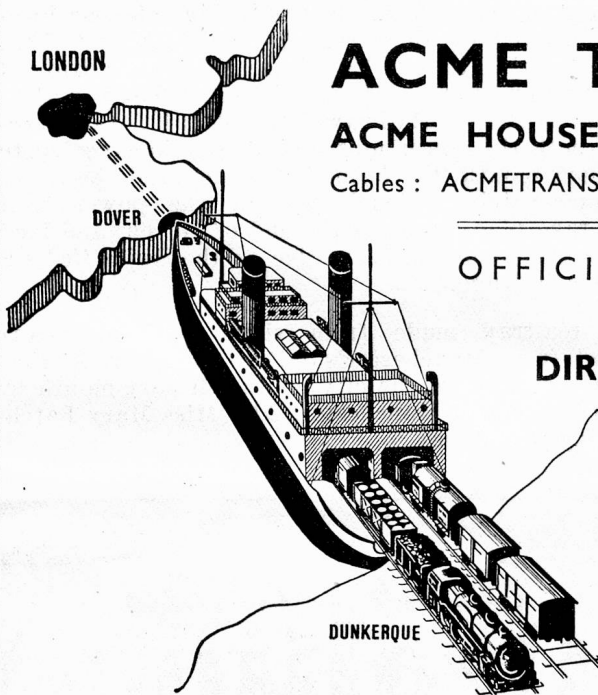
to assure the regular supply of munitions to lonely defence stations in remote parts of the Alps. In many cases, the first post-war chair lifts intended for private traffic were built with surplus military materials, but gradually they developed into more comfortable and safer ropeways mainly for the use of skiers and others indulging in mountain sports. They may be classed as minor ropeways using chairs (single-seater or double-seater) instead of cabins. They are well patronised by tourists and excursionists, and now operate to fixed schedules. There are limited facilities for the conveyance of goods; hence their official recognition as a further link in the transport system. For the first time, the official Swiss railway time-table (covering also postal services, lake services, and air services) contains the schedules of thirteen chair lifts.

On January 1st, the headquarters of the Swiss Restaurant Car Company, formerly at Berne, were transferred to Olten, the railway centre at the junction of the Zurich-Berne, Basle-Gothard, and Olten-Neuchâtel-Lausanne main lines. Olten is the busiest railway centre in Switzerland with 392 trains a day leaving or arriving, on one train every 3½ min. The Swiss Restaurant Car Company is responsible for the catering services on 36 dining cars and five buffet cars, all owned by the Federal Railways.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Dr. Werner Jost, for many years surgeon-in-chief of the "Tuberkulose Heilstätte Barmelweid," in Thun, at the age of 58.

David Sprüngli, in Zurich, formerly Manager of



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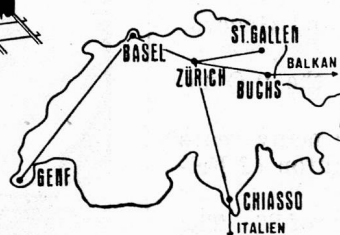
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the Chocolate Works, Lindt & Sprüngli. The deceased was connected for over 50 years with this concern, of which his father was the founder.

Dr. Fridolin Holdener-Bürgi, well-known medical practitioner for over fifty years in Goldau (Ct. Schwyz), at the age of 77.

Gottlieb Wernli, during many years Foreign Correspondent of the "Tages-Anzeiger für Stadt und Kanton Zürich," "Basler Nachrichten", etc., in Milan (Italy), at the age of 52.

Pastor Wilhelm Probst, formerly Pastor of the parishes Diemtgen-Eptingen and Allschwil, in Basle, aged 60.

Otto Sutter, formerly Manager of the "Schweiz. Bankgesellschaft" in Basle, in Basle, aged 69.

Robert Güdel, Machine Manufacturer, in Bienne, at the age of 73. The deceased was for a great number of years a member of the Municipal Council of Bienne.

Hotelier Louis Rufer, member of the Grand Council of the canton Neuchâtel, founder of the 1st of August Committee at La Chaux-de-Fonds, in La Chaux-de-Fonds, at the age of 70.

Professor, Dr. Max Haller, at the age of 70, for twenty years Pastor in Herzogenbuchsee, and later on Professor of Theology at the University of Berne. The deceased received the degree of *doctor honoris causa* from the University of Geissen, in Berne.

Dölf Meier, well-known Sports Journalist, and from 1946-1948, chief of the Propaganda Department of the "Swissair", in Waedenswil, at the age of 46.

Dr. Caspar-Arnold Studer, well-known specialist for tubercular diseases, in Winterthur, aged 72.

Professor, Dr. Richard König, President of the Board of the "Kantonal Bank Bern" and since 1929, Professor of National Economics at the University of Berne, at the age of 59, and his wife, owing to gas poisoning due to a leaking of a faulty gas tube.

Dr. Wilhelm Wegelin, formerly President of the cantonal Tribunal St. Gall, in St. Gall, aged 75.

Aloys Reding, Vice-Director of the P.T.T. Administration, in Berne, at the age of 62.

Rudolf Scheibler, for 39 years administrator of the community of Birsfelden and during 31 years a member of the "Landrat" of Basle-County, in Birsfelden, aged 70. The deceased sat in Parliament (National Council) from 1935-1939.

Johann Bissig, former "Landrats-Präsident" and "Oberriechter", in Altdorf, at the age of 80.

Robert Ducret, of St. Sulpice (Vaud), for twenty-five years in the service of the Federal Military Department in Berne, aged 59.

Anton Perren, senior Zermatt guide, and oldest inhabitant of Zermatt, in Zermatt, at the age of 91.

Professor Gustave Colomb, a former Pastor of Vufflens-la-Ville, and Professor of Theology at the University of Lausanne, author of "Catechisme de l'Eglise nationale vaudoise", in Aubonne, at the age of 85.

Pasteur Henri Hug, from 1914-1918, Pastor in Marseille and afterwards in Constantine and Geneva, at the age of 59.

Henri Mercier, formerly Professor at the "Gymnasium" in Geneva, at the age of 82.

Hippolyte Lippacher, dentist and for many years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Fribourg, in Fribourg, at the age of 73.

Dr. Arnold Steiner, in Basle, at the age of 86. The deceased was for over 60 years connected with the

Chemical Works, A.G. Sandoz, first as a chemist and later on as a technical Manager and member of the Board.

Dr. Hans Keller, in Berne, aged 61. Hans Keller was head of the "Forschungs und Versuchsanstalt der PTT" administration.

Dr. Albert Baur, in Basle, as the age of 72. He was formerly an editor of the publications "Wissen und Leben" and "Schweiz. Beobachter." [A.T.S.]

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The following Swiss newspapers have recently celebrated jubilees:—

"Neue Zürcher Zeitung," Zurich, 170th; "Thurgauer Zeitung," Frauenfeld, 150th; "Der Bund," Berne, 100th; "Anzeiger des Bezirkes Horgen," 100th; "Linth," Rapperswil, 100th; "Badener Tagblatt," Baden, 100th; "Bülach-Dielsdorfer Wochenzeitung," 100th; "Amtsblatt des Kantons Uri," 100th; "Schweizerische Bodensee Zeitung," Romanshorn, 100th; "Bote der Urschweiz," 90th; "Volks Blatt vom Bachtel" in Wald, 90th; "Werdenberger und Obentoggenburger" in Buchs, 80th; "L'Agricoltors Ticinese," 80th; "Ostschweiz," St. Gall, 75th; "Schleitheimer Bote," 75th; "Glarner Nachrichten," 50th; "Rorschacher Zeitung," Rorschach, 50th; "Brugger Tagblatt," Brugg, 50th; "Popolo e Libertà," 50th. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The following couple has celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary— (60th): Mr. and Mrs. Flury-Nuesch, in St. Gall. [A.T.S.]

* * *

More than 1,600,000 foreign visitors passed through Basle into Switzerland in 1948. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The 2,500 h.p. 90 p.m.h. gas-turbine electric locomotive ordered by the Great Western Railway from Brown-Boveri, Ltd., in 1946 is reaching an advanced stage of manufacture. It is anticipated that it will be delivered to British Railways in July, 1949. Construction of both the power unit and chassis is expected to begin next month, the former at Baden and the latter at Munchenstein. Bench test of the power unit should take place towards the end of March, and load trials of the complete locomotive on the Swiss Federal Railways in June.

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A tea-tray made from silver and mahogany salvaged from Manchester's blitzed Free Trade Hall will be presented to the city of Zurich next month by the Lord Mayor of Manchester, Ald. Miss Mary Latchford Kingsmill-Jones.



PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.

"Semain Suisse" (Service de Presse).

Le journal de modes "International Textiles," paraissant en 5 langues à Amsterdam, écrit: "La Suisse est un phénomène mondial. Elle ne compte pas plus d'habitants que Paris, et c'est pourtant un pays d'une importance unique sur terre. Elle ne possède pas de matières premières tout en étant un pays industriel de premier ordre." — Le film suisse "Parures" a été expédié en Egypte en 1939, il a dès lors été projeté dans les cinémas du Caire et d'Alexandre, dans les écoles d'Egypte et finalement dans les nombreux camps militaires britanniques du désert de Lybie. — Tous les tissus d'ameublement (rideaux, sièges, coussins et couvertures) du nouveau paquebot de 34,000 tonnes "Caronia," de la Cunard White Star, ont été dessinés par une Suissesse, Melle Straub d'Amriswil. L'un des "magasins-flottants" de ce bateau vend un jeu de société: "Voyage de vacances en Suisse."

Diverses fabriques suisses ont participé à la construction de la première station espagnole de télévision, à Barcelone.

La haute précision d'une machine à dessiner, fabriquée à Dietikon (Zurich) lui a immédiatement assuré un écoulement mondial.

Les machines à trier les coupons des bulletins de versement, créées par M. Philippe Maffei, le directeur de la division des Postes à la Direction générale des PTT qui vient de prendre sa retraite, sont maintenant connues dans le monde entier; on vient d'en livrer d'urgence outre-Atlantique.

A Genève vient de s'ouvrir la première école internationale pour chefs d'entreprises: le "Centre d'études industrielles" dont les "élèves", âgés de 25 à 40 ans, occupent déjà des places en vue dans l'industrie.

L'expédition ethnographique du Prof. Jean Gabus au Nigeria, au Soudan et au Sahara est rentrée avec une riche documentation et une collection de films et de disques enregistrés.

Le Dr. Paul Egli, d'Uzwil (St. Gall) a été nommé professeur à l'université japonaise de Kioto.

Selon le "New-York Star", le chef d'orchestre Ernest Ansermet a remporté un tel succès lors de sa dernière tournée en Amérique, qu'il ne pourra pas se dérober aux invitations qui lui seront faites pour la prochaine saison.

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Une affiche (St. Mauritz) du dessinateur St. Gallois Werner Weiskönig a été primée à l'exposition internationale d'affiches de Vienne.

LA QUESTION JURASSIENNE.

Le rapport du Conseil d'Etat bernois relatif aux revendications présentées par le Comité de Montier et à d'autres aspects de la question jurassienne sera achevé ces prochains jours. Il sera discuté ensuite par la commission de 21 membres instituée à cet effet par le Grand Conseil et au sein de laquelle divers changements sont survenus. C'est ainsi que le conseiller national Buri, président du groupe du parti des paysans, artisans et bourgeois du Grand Conseil et président de la commission, s'est retiré pour raison de santé. Il sera remplacé par M. Schneiter, de Muri, du même parti. M. Schneiter est député au Grand Conseil et président du Conseil communal de Muri. M. Werner Bickel, chef du groupe catholique-conservateur au Grand Conseil qui a également donné sa démission à cause de son état de santé, aura pour successeur à la commission M. Sylvain Michel, ancien président du Grand Conseil, député catholique-conservateur de Courtedoux. Enfin M. Zingg, député agrarien de Laupen, démissionnaire, sera remplacé par M. Meuter, de Fenil, également du parti des paysans, artisans et bourgeois.

SWISS SOCIETIES, INSTITUTIONS AND CLUBS IN THE LONDON COLONY.

- SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY (FONDS DE SECOURS),
31, Conway Street, Fitzroy Square, W.1.
- SECOURS MUTUELS DES SUISSES A LONDRES,
74, Charlotte Street, W.1.
- CITY SWISS CLUB, Brown's Hotel, Dover Street, W.1.
- UNIONE TICINESE,
"Swiss House," 35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.
- UNIONE TICINESE (SEZIONE FEMINILE),
"Swiss House," 35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.
- SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY,
"Swiss House," 35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.
- UNION HELVETIA,
1, Gerrard Place, W.1.
- SCHWEIZERBUND (SWISS CLUB),
74, Charlotte Street, W.1.
- NOUVELLE SOCIÉTÉ HELVÉTIQUE,
"Swiss House," 35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.
- SWISS Y.M.C.A.,
12, Bateman Street, W.1.
- SWISS MALE CHOIR,
74, Charlotte Street, W.1.
- SWISS ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY
35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.
- LONDON-SWISS PHILATELIC SOCIETY,
"Swiss House," 35, Fitzroy Square, W.1.
- THE RÜTLI CLUB,
74, Carleton Road, N.7.
- ALPENROSEN-CLUB,
St. Peter's Hall,
Westminster Cathedral, Ashley Gardens, S.W.1.
- EGLISE SUISSE,
Endell Street, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.C.2.
- SCHWEIZERKIRCHE,
"Oak Room," Kingsway Hall, W.C.2.