

News at random

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The elections for the Grand Council in the canton of Vaud have taken place recently. With the exception of six seats, for which a second ballot has to be taken, the cantonal parliament will have the following representation of parties:

108 Radicals (7 gains); 38 Liberals (3 gains), 19 Communists (22 losses); 31 Socialists (4 gains); 7 Agrarians (1 loss); 4 Independants (1 loss); 1 Middle Class party and 3 Christian Socialists. [A.T.S.]

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The accounts of the canton of Vaud for the year 1948, show a deficit of 2,777,900.—frs. [A.T.S.]

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Paul Rochat, a teacher at the Protestant School in Siders, has been elected Director of the Educational School in Vennes. [A.T.S.]

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The accounts of the 29th "Comptoir Suisse" in Lausanne, for the year 1948, close with a credit balance of 2,877.—frs. During 1948, more than half a million francs were spent for new buildings.

This year's Comptoir will take place from the 10th to 25th September. [A.T.S.]

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A 22 year-old sales girl was killed and five others severely injured by flying glass when a gas container for filling toy balloons exploded at the Grands Magasins, S.A. in Vevey. All the windows in the building were broken. [A.T.S.]

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The elections for the cantonal parliament of the Valais have brought little change. The conservative

party commands, as hitherto, the majority. The radicals gained four seats, whilst the socialists have lost two. None of the communist candidates have been elected.

The following members of the cantonal government have been elected: Troillet (Cons.); Pitteloud (Cons.); Schnyder (Cons.); Anthamatten (Cons.); Gard (Radical). [A.T.S.]

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Owing to the exceptionally low water level of the lake of Geneva, the harbours between Ouchy and Geneva cannot be used and the steamboat service had to be cancelled. [A.T.S.]

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The University of Bruxelles has bestowed the title of *doctor of philosophy* upon Jean Piaget, Director of the International Bureau of Education and Professor at the Universities of Geneva and Lausanne. Professor Piaget is already a *doctor honoris causa* of the Universities of Harvard (U.S.A.) and Paris. [A.T.S.]

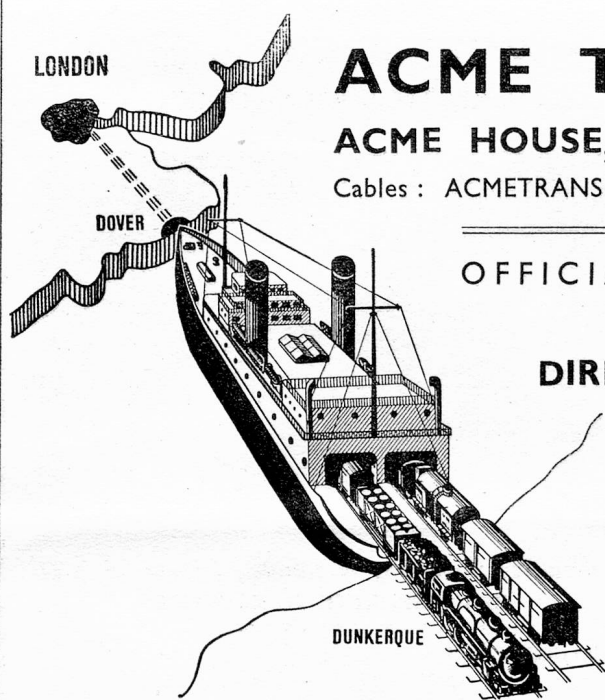
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Considerable damage, owing to a fire, has been caused at the Sécheron Works in Geneva. It is estimated that the losses will exceed 1½ million francs.

[A.T.S.]

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John Rechaix, a former member of the government of Geneva, and member of Parliament (National Council), has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary in Geneva. [A.T.S.]



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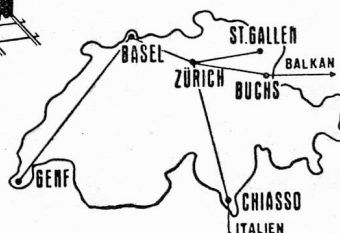
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The 19th International Motor Salon was opened at Geneva, on Thursday, March 17th, by Monsieur Nobs, President of the Swiss Confederation. [A.T.S.]

— 00 —

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Dr. Adolf Seiler, a former member of the government of the canton of Basle County, and member of Parliament, in Liestal, at the age of 74.

The deceased was born in Frauenfeld in 1874, and studied law at the Universities of Basle and Leipzig. From 1899-1922, he practised as an advocate in Liestal and Basle. After having been for several years a member of the "Landrat", he entered the government of the canton Basle County in 1922, as a Liberal. After having occupied the posts of head of the Finance and Military Department for 17 years, he retired in 1939. He sat in Parliament (National Council) from 1913-1943.

Dr. Alfred Curchod, pharmacist, in Morges, at the age of 84. He reached the rank of Colonel of artillery in the army, and from 1932-1943 occupied the post of "Platzkommandant" of Morges.

Robert Steffen, Proprietor of the Printing Works Robert Steffen, in Geneva, at the age of 52.

Hotelier Oggier, Proprietor of the Hotel Terminus Siders, in Siders, aged 73.

Emanuel de Roguin, head of the Banking Establishment Roguin & Cie of Lausanne, and President of the Board of the railway company Visp-Zermatt, at Lausanne, aged 71.

The deceased was at one time Commander of the Infantry Brigade 1.

Fritz Zeuner, formerly Manager of the Sulzer A.G., in Ludwigshafen a. Rh., in Basle, at the age of 85.

Emile Agassis, a former member of the Grand Council and Judge of the District Court in Bavois, at the age of 75. The deceased was for 28 years President of the community of Bavois.

Jean Gaberell, founder of the Jean Gaberell, A.G., in Thalwil, in Thalwil at the age of 62.

David Brollet, for many years a member of the Grand Council of Geneva, and former President of the community of Onex, aged 82. [A.T.S.]

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Minister, Dr. Paul Ruegger, President of the International Red Cross Committee in Geneva, has returned

from a three weeks inspection tour of the Near East, during which time he has visited nine countries.

[A.T.S.]

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The following Swiss Banks have declared their dividends for the year 1948: Gewerbekasse, Baden: 5 per cent.; A. G. Leu, A.G., Zurich: 5 per cent. (1947: 5%); Crédit Foncier Vaudois: 4½ per cent.; Gewerbebank, Zurich: 5 per cent. (1947: 5%); Solothurner Handelsbank: 5 per cent. [A.T.S.]

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General Henri Guisan has accepted an invitation to visit the various Swiss Colonies in Italy in the near future.

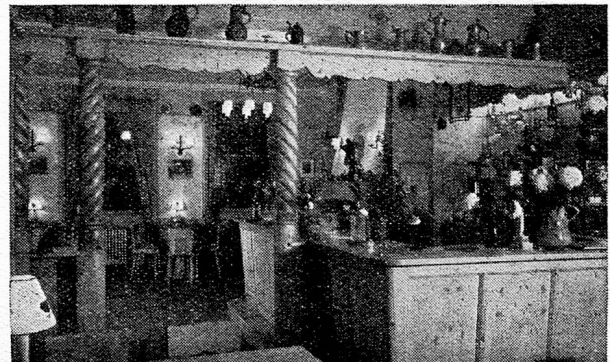
The General has recently been made an honorary citizen of the town of St. Gingolph. [A.T.S.]

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The educational reform measures introduced in the canton of Vaud, in 1944 have led to a considerable reduction in the time normally spent in teaching Latin in secondary schools. A further modification has been found necessary during the past year. In the written examinations for the classical *baccalauréat* candidates no longer have to write an essay in Latin; they are now only required to translate, since the reduction in time spent on Latin in class has necessitated concentrating almost entirely on translation and the reading of prescribed texts. It is felt that this constant comparison of Latin will be beneficial to the teaching of both languages.

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Swiss military controls on the German-Austrian border are being tightened following a rush of refugees from Iron Curtain countries.

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A plan to build a tower of from 12 to 15 storeys high over the main block of the Palais des Nations was one of the projects discussed by Mr. Trygve Lie, Secretary-General of the United Nations, during a series of conferences which have just ended. Other proposals put forward were: to construct a new wing, to raise the whole of the building by adding a new floor and to add three additional storeys to the Ariana wing. These projects were examined by representatives of the specialized agencies, of the Swiss Government, and of the city and canton of Geneva. No final decision was reached. Pressure on the present space is great and it may be necessary to build annexes for the special agencies on adjacent sites, but it is the intention to keep the Palais des Nations as a centre for international conferences.

* * *

Switzerland's small merchant fleet, organised during the war to carry Swiss overseas trade, is still regarded as indispensable to the country's economy. Far from being disbanded, it is being expanded.

Eight cargo vessels, two tankers and one wine tanker are now operating under the Swiss flag, the largest being the 9,100-ton "General Guisan." All are privately-owned and operated. Two more cargo vessels of 3,000 tons are under construction.

But Switzerland has no intention of competing with the long-established maritime nations for trade. With no sea outlets of her own, this would be difficult and unprofitable. Swiss shipping operations will be just enough to meet the country's own needs.

There is no confirmation, however, in recent reports that two Atlantic passenger liners are to be operated by Switzerland to carry U.S. tourists to the country.

It is believed that these reports grew out of a proposal by Swiss financiers to use up some of their frozen lire credits in Italy by backing the construction of liners in Italian yards. Such liners would be Italian-owned and operated.

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The Swiss Federal Railways have compiled a hopeful social survey from a statistical analysis of the ages of engine-drivers over the past 35 years. In 1913 the average age of a Swiss engine-driver was 41, and there

were few drivers over fifty. Last year the average age was nearly 49, and 15 per cent. of Swiss drivers were aged between 61 and the retiring age of 65.

Commenting on these figures in its bulletin, the International Transport Workers' Federation observes: "Virtually every driver can now look forward with good prospects to remaining in active service on the footplate until he reaches the compulsory retiring age of 65, whereas thirty years ago very few men were able to continue as drivers once they had reached 50."

The Swiss administration suggests five main causes for the driver's increased working life: the reduction in hours of work from eleven a day to eight, by legislation in 1920; the general adoption of electric traction; a general improvement in social conditions; improved health and increased expectation of life for the population as a whole; and "the appreciable reduction in the consumption of alcohol."

PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.

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

L'ancien directeur de l'école d'horlogerie du Locle, le Dr. J. Pellaton, titulaire depuis peu de la rare "médaille suédoise", vient de se voir décerner l'ordre de la "Rose blanche" de la Finlande.

* * *

Le Professeur P. Schauffelberger, qui fait autorité en matière d'économie rurale, domicilié en Colombie, vient d'être appelé par l'Université de Madrid pour y donner une conférence.

* * *

Le Professeur L. Birchler, qui enseigne l'histoire de l'art à l'EPF de Zurich, a été nommé membre de l'académie Ambrosiana de Milan.

* * *

Le fils du "Roi des Hôtels" américains, Conrad Nicholasin Hilton est élève de l'Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne.

* * *

A Prague a lieu une exposition d'affiches suisses.

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Une pièce nouvelle d'Arnold Schwengeler, "Le Faussaire", a été jouée en première simultanément à St. Gall et à Innsbruck, avec le même succès.

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En avril débutera la construction, à Milan, d'un nouveau "Centro svizzero". L'école suisse de cette ville compte 379 élèves, dont 154 suisses et 164 italiens.

"El Ahram", le plus important des journaux arabes du Proche-Orient écrit: "Nos concitoyens égyptiens apprécient tout particulièrement en Suisse sa liberté et sa neutralité, son sens de la dignité et sa foi dans la paix". Le journal "La bourse égyptienne" qui paraît au Caire et à Alexandrie, parlant de la presse suisse, dit que ses vertus sont la culture, la probité intellectuelle, le désintéressement et le courage civique.

Une équipe suisse de gymnastes artistiques à Lisbonne a enthousiasmé 12.000 spectateurs qui ont suivi toutes les représentations avec le plus grand intérêt. Si l'on considère la sympathie témoignée par le public à notre équipe, cette manifestation est un témoignage vibrant de sympathie pour notre pays.

Le pianiste et professeur de musique suisse Max Geiger a été appelé au poste de Directeur du conservatoire international de musique de Paris.

L'action de secours en faveur de nos proches voisins de la frontière orientale a fait distribuer des habits et des chaussures aux habitants de Friedrichshafen. De source privée on a organisé une nouvelle distribution alimentaire aux vieillards de Constance.

Une école suisse de l'industrie du bois doit s'ouvrir à Bienne.

Une nouvelle fabrique de machines de la Suisse orientale est la seule entreprise de notre pays fournissant toutes les machines pour les emballages métalliques et l'industrie de la conserve. — Une industrie de

la Suisse centrale vient de lancer un nouveau matériel d'emballage. — Une maison zurichoise vient de mettre au point un procédé d'impression en plusieurs couleurs pour faibles tirages, qu'on peut qualifier de sensationnel.

SWISSAIR

has for the first time
transported more than 100,000 passengers in one year.

Swissair has just published their traffic statistics for the year 1948 which show a very considerable increase in the transportation of passengers, as, for the first time since 1931 when Swissair was founded, more than 100,000 passengers have flown with the Swiss national air transport company.

Many more kilometres have been flown, too, but the rate of exploitation is about 10% lower. This decrease is due to the rising competition on the one hand and, on the other hand, to the fact that, although the demand did not increase to the same extent, a greater amount of seats was available than in 1947, larger planes having put in use. However, it will be seen from the figures below that the rate of exploitation for the year 1948 is higher than that of 1938 which it is considered, shows the best pre-war results.

	1938	1946	1947	1948
Kilometres flown	1,483,794	2,473,413	4,106,208	6,224,920
Passengers	35,249	62,378	95,519	113,622
Freight (kgs.)	136,309	414,266	878,610	1,224,971
Mail (kgs.)	341,318	259,141	379,092	430,996
Rate of exploitation	55.54%	85.44%	70.10%	60.97%
Regularity	98.67%	99.31%	99.23%	98.81%

SEEING BRITISH WATER POWER INSTALLATIONS.

Dr. A. Stucky, Director of the Polytechnic School of the University of Lausanne, is visiting Britain for two weeks under the auspices of the British Council.

Since 1926, he has been Professor of hydraulics and water power in the university, and one of the objects of his visit is to see civil engineering work in progress, particularly river rectification projects and marine work.

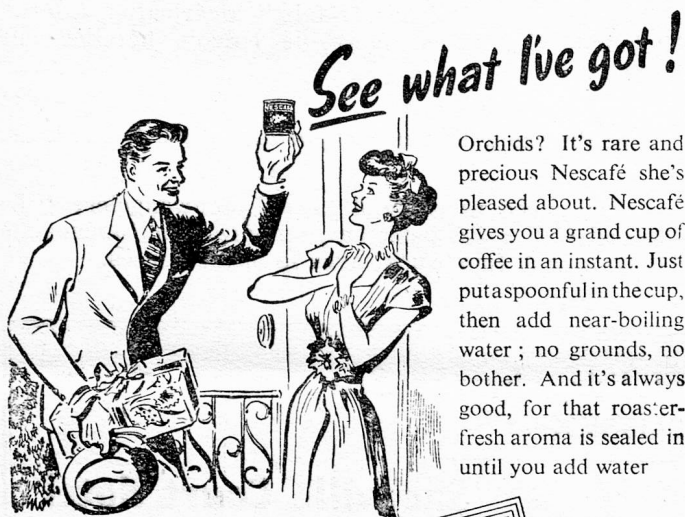
He is also visiting technical colleges and other institutions for training engineers, and factories making turbines and sluices.

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