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The Swiss Observer

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Swiss Chargé d'Affaires in Sofia, Mr. Walter Hofer was received by the newly appointed Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mincho Neitcheff. The latter, who for several years studied in Geneva and Berne, discussed with the Swiss Chargé d'Affaires some of the pending problems between the two countries, particularly of an economical and financial nature. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Australian Foreign Minister, Spender, and his wife, have arrived in Switzerland on a private visit. They are staying in Geneva for a few days before continuing their journey to Paris. The visit has no official character and no receptions are planned. [A.T.S.]

* * *

On August 3rd the additional commercial agreement of 20th January, 1947, with Argentina was signed in Buenos Aires.

The Federal Council has ratified this agreement. The new arrangements contain precise lists for the importation of Swiss goods into Argentina and of Argentine goods into Switzerland. Most of the traditional Swiss export goods have received consideration.

The Argentine import list for Swiss goods amounts for the contract year, 1st July, 1950, to 30th June, 1951, to 120 million Swiss francs, of which 38 millions are for products of the machine and metal industry, 32.5 millions for textiles (10 mil. for yarn, 22.5 mil. tissues, embroideries, ribbons and straw plaits), 31 millions of chemical products, 15.5 millions for watches and 3 millions of miscellaneous goods.

The deliberations were conducted in the spirit of traditional amicableness which always existed between the two republics. The agreement attained should prove an appropriate foundation for a prosperous development of economic relations between Switzerland and Argentina. [A.T.S.]

Cantonal

The Town Council of Zurich submitted to the Borough Council a project for the renewal of the refrigeration plant at the slaughter houses. The estimate amounts to Frs.993,585.—. A further project is to pull down the old buildings of the electricity works on the Limmat-quai, to widen that thoroughfare and to enlarge the approach to the Uranian bridge. The credit required for this proposal amounts to Frs.740,000.—. [A.T.S.]

* * *

On the occasion of the international congress of Pre-historian, an exhibition of Masks and Sculptures is being held at the Helmhaus in Zurich. It is organised also to make known to a larger public the treasures of the ethnological collection of the University of Zurich. The objects of the exhibition are products of the magic-religious spheres, particularly of the veneration of ancestor cults, and the cult of death, of sorcery and totemism of the peoples of Africa, Indonesia and of the Malay States. There are also a large number of representations of Hindustanian paganism and Chinese and Japanese mythology. [A.T.S.]

* * *

In connection with a continuing revival of industry in July, which exceeds the usual seasonal position, another reduction in the number of unemployed is to be noted. The number of totally unemployed, registered with the Employment Exchanges in the canton of Berne, has been reduced by 871 to 3,522, and is thereby lower by 559 compared with July 1949. Calculated by the number of employed persons, according to the 1941 census, the number of unemployed is only 0.2%. This reduction is spread over the majority of trade groups. Above all the metal workers and watch-makers, the building trade and its dependent branches are affected. The number of vacancies is considerably higher than last year and in the metal and building industries is roughly twice as high than in July, 1949.

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R.A.C.

According to the published deliberations of the Government of Basle Town, the federal Political Department has announced that the President of the French Republic has promulgated the law concerning the Franco-Swiss agreement regarding the construction and management of the air-port Basel-Mülhausen.

* * *

The Government of the canton Baselland declared its decision of July 3rd regarding the invalidity of the election of a member of the cantonal government, as null and void. It agreed to the proposal of the Council that, owing to an error, found out only later, the seat in dispute shall fall to the Socialist party. The latter, after having been assured that the costs so far incurred, will be borne by the cantonal government, withdrew its recourse which it had presented to the federal court. [A.T.S.]

* * *

At another sitting, Councillor H. Abegg replied to an inquiry that the Management of the District II of the Federal Railways had no intention to break up the old line through the Hauenstein in favour of an Autobus service. On the contrary, the work of electrification of the line Sissach-Läutelfingen Olten is actually proceeding. The work is expected to be finished by 1952 or 1953. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Government of the canton Schaffhausen has agreed to the request to resign by Dr. Armin Billeter, director of the cantonal hospital and head of the surgical section, at the same time expressing its thanks for the valuable services rendered by him. His resignation will take place at the end of the year. Prior to his call to Schaffhausen, he was until 1925 head of the district hospital of Männedorf. As president of the association of doctors in the canton of Schaffhausen, as a member of the Swiss chamber of doctors and as chief of the German-speaking societies of doctors, he has created a name for himself well above his ordinary sphere of activity. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Since 1947, arable land in the canton Schaffhausen has been reduced by 10%. By an area of 5,003 hectares it has again dropped to the level of 1941. The largest area was reached in 1944/45 with about 5,800h. The federal authorities, at one time, fixed 5,300h. as an optional figure. In 1950 the area under wheat and cereals is 3,483h., for root crops 1,394h., vineyards 344h., vegetables 98h., and soft fruit 80h. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The small town of Neunkirch in the Klettgau, celebrated its 1100th anniversary of its being for the first time mentioned in the chronicles.

In the year 850, the Landgrave of the Klettgau gave a piece of land in the neighbourhood of the then little village of Niuchilchun to the convent Rheinau. In the 11th century, the bishops of Constance obtained the ground property, the jurisdiction and the church rights. For strategical reasons, the village was elevated into a township at the turn of the 12th and 13th century. In 1525 the town became the property of Schaffhausen by purchase and Neunkirch became the seat of a bailiff and the administrative centre of the

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Klettgau. To-day, with its 1100 inhabitants, Neunkirch is the principal town in the district Oberklettgau. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Initiative Committee of the canton Thurgau, which was formed after 9,200 voters signed a petition against a taxation proposal by the cantonal Government, decided to make use of the withdrawal paragraph and withdrew the Initiative, as at the discussion of the taxation proposal by the authorities, important demands embodied in the Initiative had mostly been given consideration. [A.T.S.]

Economics

According to the latest return of the Swiss National Bank, gold holdings dropped by Frs.25m. to Frs.6,155m. during the week to August 15th, bringing the bank's total gold losses during the past month to nearly Frs.100m.

The losses were, however, partly counterbalanced by a gain in foreign exchange holdings, which rose during the week by Frs.23m., increasing this item to Frs.349m.

Notes in circulation during the week declined by Frs.46m. to Frs.4,163m., the gold cover being nearly 148 per cent. without taking into account the Frs.500m. worth of gold held by the Swiss Confederation.

* * *

The United States will cancel her trade pact with Switzerland if an escape clause is not included within two months, it is officially announced here.

The American legation in Berne has presented a note denouncing as of February 10th, 1951 — that is, with the contractual six month's notice — the trade agreement concluded on January 9th, 1936.

Cancellation will be nullified provided an escape clause is inserted before October 15th, 1950. Such a clause would permit the contracting State to amend or cancel by its own will some commitments, including tariff concessions.

—oOo—

A railway accident between St. Blaise and Cornaux caused the interruption of traffic for some considerable time. The coupling of the last but one truck of an express goods train, laden with railway rails, broke, causing some of the rails to slip. One of these rails tore down a conductor mast, which caused a current stoppage. The last truck left the rails, blocking the traffic in both directions. The immediately following light express Geneva-Zurich, which left Neuchâtel at 11 p.m., could be diverted in time and ran via La Chaux-de-Fonds—St. Imier. For travellers on the early trains between Landernon and Neuchâtel a provisional service was instituted. The damage is very considerable. [A.T.S.]

* * *

As from August 9th a direct air service between Switzerland and South America by the Panairdo Brasil has again been resumed. The service opened on September 6th, 1948, between Zurich and Rio, was lately carried via Frankfurt-Buenos Aires. For technical reasons the service was interrupted for a short time. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The British Consul general in Zurich and the Vice-Consul in Lucerne were the guests of the cantonal government of Schwyz. The guests were received by Landamman Josef Heinzer from Goldau and Statthalter Dr. R. Sidler from Schwyz. During the Luncheon an exchange of views took place. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Two mountaineers, members of the S.A.C., section Berne, met with an accident on the Great Schreckhorn near Grindelwald. The accident occurred on the descent in the snow couloir, about 300 m. above the "Schrund" when one of them slipped and pulled his

companion with him into the depths. The 21 year old Heinz Gamper from Sirmach, resident in Berne was killed, his companion was taken to Grindelwald where he received medical attention. His injuries do not appear to be serious. [A.T.S.]

* * *

After some considerable interruption, the "Society Cathedral Plays Bern" has again revived its activity. It has instructed the Bernese Town Theatre to produce Hofmannsthal's "Everyman" in front of the

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Cathedral. Rehearsals are under way under the direction of Marc Doswald and the first production is to take place on August 26th. Five performances are foreseen. [A.T.S.]

A serious accident took place on the Gliderdrome of Dällikon near Regensdorf (Zurich) where a glider demonstration was carried out. The well-known glider pilot, Siegbert Maurer, on a two-seater Mosway 6 reached a height of about 3,000 feet, when suddenly the glider broke in two and fell to earth. The parachute of the pilot was seen to open shortly before touching the ground and was caught in a group of trees. The pilot was carried away with a fractured leg. The passenger, however, a twelve year old boy from Schwarnendingen, Hans Haupt, lost his life. Haurer, during his drop tried his utmost but in vain, to undo the safety belt holding the boy. It was for this reason that he pulled the parachute cord so late in order to land in the trees. [A.T.S.]

The 14th federal festival of the Hornussen sport (Swiss Criquet?) was held at Utzensdorf in the second week of August when 254 clubs from a number of cantons took part. The largest contingent came from the canton of Berne. The President of the Organising Committee, Grand Councillor Alfred Burren, welcomed amongst others ex Federal Councillor Minger, who appeared to be particularly popular and received a special ovation, Colonel of division Jahn, and a large number of cantonal representatives, as well as those of the Federal Association of wrestling clubs, yodler clubs, and gymnastic societies. Colonel of division Jahn stressed the necessity of keeping up national health, particularly in the service of defense of the country. [A.T.S.]

On August 11th and 12th, amongst the beautiful landscape of the "Franche Montaignes", the traditional national Horse Show and market of Sainlégier, took place. The Show opened on Saturday with the judging of the high class specimens of horse breeding in the Jura, of which 450 horses were shown. At the following sale considerably higher prices were obtained, compared with last year, owing to the exceptionally high quality of the animals, as well as of the strained international relations.

The climax of the show was reached on Sunday, when the winning horses were paraded in front of the large assembled public, as well as the races, 40,000 people from all parts of Switzerland and the adjoining French territory came by special trains and motor vehicles of every kind and never before has this Jura village had such a mass invasion.

The President of the Organising Committee, Mr. Marc Jobin, welcomed General Guisan, Federal Councillor Rubattel, the representatives of the cantons of Bern, Vaud, Fribourg, Genève, Valais and Ticino, the diplomatic corps and the French Departements du Jura.

The races which followed proved to the full the high quality of the horses bred in the Franche Montaignes. [A.T.S.]

Twenty-five members of the nautical society Horburg in Basle started on their 839 km. water voyage by long boat. The boat 16 m. long, weighing 2 tons, fitted with eight oars and a 32H.P. motor will be

taken via the Rhine, the Saône, Rhone and several connecting canals and is to arrive after a seventeen day journey in Marseille on August 28th. At the start National Councillor Dr. N. Jacquet was present and Dr. A. Schaller, a member of the cantonal government of Basle handed greetings and messages to the towns of Mülhausen, Lyons and Marseille. [A.T.S.]

After having been working for some time in order to prove its suitability, the newly erected sewage clearing plant, alongside the river Glutt, of the town of Zurich was officially inaugurated, in the presence of representatives of the cantonal Government, the town council, the press and members of the firms which erected the installation. The new sewage clearing plant consists in its larger buildings arrangements of the: approach canal, the inlet building, the mechanical rakes plant, the sand filter, the clarifying basin, the outlet plant, the mud and muck disposal system, the machine house and the service buildings. The new sewage clearing installation is one of the most modern constructions and deals with the sewage from 60,000 inhabitants of the town. It is so constructed that it can deal with a still greater number of people. The cost of the installation including the present canal network and the approach road amounted to 7.3 million francs. It took three and a half years to construct. [A.T.S.]

In the village of Hammegg, above Biglen, where the Bernese dialect poet, Karl Gander, passed his youth, as the son of a smallholder, who was not blessed with too many earthly goods; a simple memorial place

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was inaugurated. The commemoration was in honour of the 70th anniversary of his birth and took the form of a little folks festival. The memorial consists of an oaken seat, bearing an inscription cut into the wood, and set up so as to face the alps and the height of the Emmental. The memorial seat was erected by the Bernese Chörli "Daheim" of which society Karl Gunder was an honorary member for many years past. [A.T.S.]

On August 30th, 1850, the Swiss painter, Eugène Barnard was born in Moudon. The hundredth anniversary of the birth of the artist is celebrated in Lausanne by an exhibition of his works at the Musée des Beaux-Arts. The exhibition comprises 150 works of this painter, most of these works up to the present have remained unknown to the public. [A.T.S.]

At the age of 67, the sculptor Walther von Vigier, died at Subingen, Solothurn. The dead artist, who after having studied art at Munich, Paris and Vienna, made a name for himself through his plastic and ceramic works. He was the son of the painter, Walther Vigier and the nephew of Landammann Wilhelm Vigier. The works of the artist are mostly in private possession. Amongst the public institutions which possess some of his works are the arts and crafts museum in Aarau, the museum for applied art in Zurich, the town Library in Olten, the town-hall in Solothurn, the arts society in Solothurn and the Predigersaal in Suringen in which is the reformatoren relief. [A.T.S.]

An unnamed benefactress who recently died in Frauenfeld, bequeathed to various public institutions, sums amounting to a total of 27,000 francs. [A.T.S.]

The weaving mills Grüneck in Müllheim have made a donation of 10,000 francs towards the building of a kindergarden and a gymnasium in Müllheim.

After eating self gathered mushrooms, two adults, living at the Habsburgstrasse in Zurich, and a 6 year old boy who was on holiday with these people, fell ill. Whereas the sickness of the two adults did not prove serious, the boy, Elie Fontana, had to be taken to hospital, where he died. [A.T.S.]

A 23 year old bank employee in Gossau, St. Gall, misappropriated a sum between 1,000 to 10,000 francs.

The money was spent on his own personal expenditure. He was arrested at Basle when attempting to cross the French frontier. [A.T.S.]

PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.

"Semaine Suisse" (Service de Presse).

A l'occasion d'une exposition internationale de la brasserie à Edimbourg, la Brasserie Salmenbräu, de Rheinfelden, a remporté un premier et un second prix, soit une médaille d'or pour sa bière blonde spéciale "Rheingold" et une médaille d'argent pour sa brune spéciale "Kapuzinerbräu". Ce succès d'une maison suisse a été très remarqué des spécialistes étrangers.

Radio-Lausanne a diffusé les 5 et 6 août un reportage unique en son genre dans le monde : l'ascension du Cervin. Cette émission a été relayée à l'attention des 5 parties du monde.

En présence d'une délégation de la Ville et du Canton de Genève, le Maire de Monte-Carlo a baptisé l'un des plus beaux boulevards de la ville : Boulevard de Suisse.

A Nice a eu lieu l'inauguration d'une nouvelle Maison Suisse.

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Miles flown	2,549,736	2,214,453
Passengers	81,126	63,780
Freight (lbs.)	2,041,068	1,213,799
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