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The Swiss Observer

FOUNDED IN 1919 BY PAUL F. BOEHRINGER.

The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

Advisory Council: R. DE CINTRA (Chairman); O. F. BOEHRINGER, L.S. CHAPUIS, J. EUSEBIO, GOTTFRIED KELLER, R. J. KELLER, R. PFENNINGER, A. STAUFFER, G. E. SUTER.

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

Monsieur Henry, Beat von Fischer, Swiss Minister in Egypt, has also been accredited to the Kingdom of Ethiopia, he will reside in Cairo.

Dr. Friedrich Wilhelm Holzapfel, has been nominated Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the German Federal Republic in Berne.

Swiss electors, in a referendum, rejected by 290,000 votes to 247,000 a Government-sponsored Bill to prolong the law under which the building and enlarging of hotels in tourist centres is subject to Government authorisation. The Government wanted to prolong the law, which has been in force since 1915, to 1955.

The Israeli Minister of Health, Dr. Joseph Burgh, who has been visiting Switzerland in connection with the United Israel campaign, called on the Swiss Minister of the Interior.

The Swiss Federal Railways are this year celebrating their fiftieth anniversary. Here are a few figures which will help to explain the extent of this national railway system. The total length of the Federal Railway network is approximately 2,000 miles. Another 2,000 miles are operated by private companies. Only some 60 miles of the nationally owned lines are still used for steam transportation because of the geography of the country, the network includes over 3,000 railway bridges and 240 tunnels, the longest of which is the Simplon tunnel with a total length of 12 miles.

A serious crime wave which has swept Switzerland during recent months has given rise once more to the question whether the death sentence should be re-introduced into the Swiss penal code.

The matter is to be debated in Parliament shortly. The death sentence in Switzerland was repealed once before (1874), following a nation wide referendum. In the next four years a crime wave, similar to the present one, swept the country.

By another referendum it was decided to authorise cantonal governments to reintroduce the death sentence. It was not until 1938, that a new penal code covering the whole of Switzerland was finally approved, and abolished capital punishment.

The Federal Council has instructed the Swiss Minister in Peking, Dr. C. Rezzonico, to obtain from the Chinese Government exit-visas for the five St. Bernhard monks, who are at the present segregated in the Province of Yunnan.

M. Bolivar Parades Zarama, Chargé d'Affaires, of the Republic of Ecuador, has presented his credentials to M. M. Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister.

M. Eugen Wimmer (Zurich), has been appointed Honorary Vice-Consul, and will be in charge of the Swiss Consulate in Abidjan. He is since 1925 in Abidjan, where he is Manager of a building firm.

The Swiss Federal Railways carried 18.08 million passengers in January, 1952, or 1.26 million more than in January, 1951, the receipts show an increase of 1.55 million francs over last year's figures and total 21.08 million francs.

Goods traffic has declined by 51,000 tons compared with January, 1951, figures, 1.61 million tons having been carried.

Cantonal

A new steamer carrying 800 passengers, has been launched at the building yard at Wollishofen, of the "Zürcher Dampfboot, A.G.". The name of the new boat is "Linth". [A.T.S.]

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R.A.C.

The late Mme. Milly Hardmeyer, of Zurich, has left an amount of 97,000 frs. to various charitable institutions. [A.T.S.]

During January, 1952, 527 traffic accidents (Jan. 1951: 422), have occurred in the canton of Zurich, nine persons were killed and 158 injured. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Dietrich Stauffacher, a member of the "Landrat", has been elected Mayor of the town of Glarus. [A.T.S.]

A two engined Beechcroft plane, which had been missing for several days, has been found on the South-West slope of the Galmihorn (2,950 ft.) in the Bernese Oberland, totally wrecked. The pilot, Hans Schafroth, technician of Köniz, father of two children, was found dead, the three passengers: Max Brenneisen, engineer of Köniz, father of two children, Jos. Joh. Früh, technician of Münchenbuchsee, father of two children, and W. Paul Beda, an aircraft engineer, were all killed as well. [A.T.S.]

The late Mme. Netta Steiner-Stettler of Thun, has left various legacies to charitable institutions amounting to 95,000.—frs. [A.T.S.]

At the beginning of this year, the population of the town of Schaffhausen numbered 26,865. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Hans Rudolf Stettbacher, of Zurich, has been elected physician-in-chief to the Sanatorium Schatzalp-Davos, in succession to Dr. Gustave Maurer who has resigned. [A.T.S.]

Army

Lieut.-Colonel Paul Gygli (born 1909), of Utzenstorf, a member of the Instructors Corps (artillery) and the General Staff, has been appointed Military and Air Attaché to the Swiss Legation in London, in succession to Colonel Hans Ryser who, is returning to Switzerland. [A.T.S.]

—00—

The following deaths are announced in Switzerland:—

Dr. Oscar Wettstein, a former States Councillor, in Zurich, aged 86.

The deceased was born in Winterthur, studied law and afterwards changed over to journalism becoming a member of the editorial staff of the "Zürcher Post". In 1897 he was elected a member of the "Grossen-Stadtrat" over which he presided in 1913. From 1919-1935, Dr. Wettstein was a member of the Government of the canton of Zurich. He sat in the States Council (Ständerat) from 1914-1939. For 35 years he was "Privatdozent" at the University of Zurich, which honoured him with the degree of *doctor honoris causa*.

Henri Stierlin-Vallon, pianist, composer and teacher at the *conservatoire of Lausanne*, in Lausanne, aged 65.

Maxime Courvoisier, Journalist, and secretary of the "Société Romande de Radiodiffusion" and editor of the paper "Radio", in Lausanne, at the age of 71.

Jean-Paul Zimmermann, from 1919-1951, a teacher of French literature at the *Gymnasium of La Chaux-de-Fonds* at the age of 62. He was the author of several novels and poems.

Joh. Hasler, for many years "Verwalter des Christlichen Hospizes Blaukreuzhaus" Basle, and a member

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of the Grand Council of the canton Basle-Town, in Basle, aged 87.

Dr. Anna Baltisschwiler, from 1923-1945 physician-in-chief of the "Schweiz. Pflegerinnenschule" 'Zurich, in Zurich, at the age of 76.

Professor Felix Stähelin, for many years Professor of History at the University of Basle and author of a great number of historical works, in Basle, at the age of 79.

Carl Egger, painter, and for a great number of years editor of the "Jahrbuch Ski", in Basle, aged 79. [A.T.S.]

The following anniversaries are reported from Switzerland:—

National-Councillor, Dr. Eugen Bircher (70), he was surgeon-in-chief and Director of the cantonal hospital Aarau. In 1934, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel of Division and as such was in command, first of the 4th, and afterwards of the 5th Division.

National-Councillor, Kaspar Knobel (70), "Kantonssoberförster" of Schwyz, and since 1943 a member of the National Council.

René Gouzy (75), of Geneva, well-known author of travel books, and Journalist.

Mme. Eugénie Frésey-Pyhtoud (100) of Bulle.

[A.T.S.]

The following Swiss Banks have declared their dividends for the year 1951:—

Schweiz. Bankgesellschaft, Zurich: 8 per cent, (1950: 7%); Schweiz Volksbank, Berne: 5 per cent,

1950: 4½%); Hypothekarkasse des Kantons Bern: 4½ per cent; Schweiz Hypothekenbank, Solothurn: 5 per cent; Obwaldner Gewerbebank, Sarnen: 5 per cent (1950: 4½%). [A.T.S.]

Here are some balances of the accounts for 1951 of the following cantons:

Zurich	<i>Credit</i> Balance	3,542,963.—frs.
Zug	<i>Credit</i> Balance	238,280.—frs.
Glarus	<i>Credit</i> Balance	9,832.—frs.

[A.T.S.]

Up to the 15th of last month, the Swiss Red Cross had collected an amount of 1,127,559.—frs. for the victims of inundations in North and South Italy. In addition food and various other goods have been sent to the value of 1½ million francs. [A.T.S.]

Switzerland's gross receipts in agriculture for the year 1951 showed a rise of 49 million francs over the previous year and amounted to 2,310 million francs. One fourth of this gross income is due to crop farming and three fourth are due to cattle breeding.

A country's development can be judged by statistical numbers. Here are a few from the official statistical register. At the end of 1951 there existed 10,000 business partnerships and 72,000 single firms in Switzerland; that is 2,000 more than the previous year. A record number of 22,000 corporations were registered and 1,200 new firms came into existence against 500 liquidations.

The Swiss Federal Department of Industry, Trade and Work has again published statistics about the average living salaries and spendings of workers' and employees' families. The statistical work was done in 1950 and the results showed a relatively high standard of living and satisfactory social conditions in Switzerland. The average yearly income of those families is a little over 10,000 francs. The largest part of their expenses about one-third, is used for food, then in order follow rent, clothes, insurance, education, heating and so on.

The Zurich city authorities are testing a new type of transportation because of the rapid growth of

the city of Zurich and its traffic. The new type of transportation is a so-called "joined bus", which can also be used as a trolley bus. The bus is 56 feet long, weighs 28 tons, and can carry 184 persons. The joined bus was constructed by a Swiss firm.

The Swiss conductor Ernest Ansermet, who for the last few weeks has been guest conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, has been acclaimed by the music critics of the New York papers. Following his appearance with the orchestra in New York, where he conducted works by Beethoven, Ravel and Stravinsky, the "New York Times" expressed its regret that the celebrated Swiss conductor did not visit the city more frequently.

For many years Ernest Ansermet has enjoyed a high reputation in the United States, where he is classed among the great conductors of the country. Under his baton, the Boston Symphony Orchestra has proved to the Americans his outstanding qualities as a conductor of the works of both classical and contemporary composers.

PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.

(Semaine Suisse — Service de Presse.)

12% des moteurs Diesel propulsant les navires du monde entier proviennent de la Fabrique Sulzer S.A. de Winterthour, ou ont été construits sous des licences Sulzer.

Huit des dix équipes nationales qui ont participé aux concours de bobsleigh des Jeux olympiques d'hiver en Norvège ont utilisé des bobs suisses, modèle "Feierabend".

L'école des hautes études techniques de Ljubljana a décerné le doctorat honoris causa à M. Ros, qui fut longtemps directeur de l'Institut fédéral dessai des matériaux. Le vice-président du gouvernement et le ministre de la culture et des sciences de Yougoslavie, ainsi que le ministre de Suisse, étaient présents à la cérémonie. Le professeur Ros a reçu la mission de créer à Belgrade un laboratoire d'essai de matériaux conçu sur le modèle suisse.

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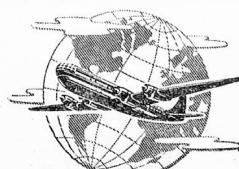
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M. E. Peter, inspecteur de l'office zurichois de l'industrie et de l'artisanat a été appelé aux Indes pour y organiser la construction d'une grande école destinée à la formation des ouvriers métallurgistes.

L'ingénieur forestier, Dr. H. Lamprecht, de l'EPF, a été nommé professeur ordinaire d'économie forestière à l'Université de Merida (Venezuela).

Le pionnier polaire suisse, Dr. Hans Stauber, qui a poursuivi pendant des années des recherches géologiques pour le ministère d'Etat danois, vient de découvrir un gisement de plomb au Groenland, représentant une valeur de quelque 25 milliards de francs suisses.

En Suisse, le Dr. Stauber est connu sous le nom de "docteur des montagnes" depuis qu'il a préservé de l'éboulement le village de Schuders.

Les concerts dirigés à Madrid par le chef d'orchestre vaudois Henri Baud ont remporté un tel succès que ce chef a été engagé pour 20 concerts à donner en Espagne, au Portugal et en Afrique du Nord.

EDITOR'S POST-BAG.

A. Stauffer, Esq.,
Editor,

The Swiss Observer,
London, E.C.2.

Dear Mr. Stauffer,

On page 6315 of your February 29th issue, you mention that tickets for funiculars, ski-lifts and other transport in Switzerland can be bought in Great Britain, payable in sterling. I wish you were right. A saving of £1 per day of the small allowance of £25 would no doubt be very acceptable.

Unfortunately, H.M. Treasury have decided otherwise. Since January 29th, 1952, all such sports season tickets, regional season tickets and tickets for any excursion which is not a direct continuation of the main journey (side-trips) require a V-Form, i.e., if they are bought here the fare is deducted from the £25 basic allowance. On the other hand, a return ticket from England to any place in Switzerland, even if it includes a short circular tour in our country, can still be purchased in sterling without deduction from the £25 allowance.

Yours very sincerely,
Swiss National Tourist Office
& Swiss Federal Railways,
Sig. H. O. ERNST.

Manager.

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