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The Swiss Observer

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The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Federal Council has appointed Minister Max Grässli to the post of Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to the Kingdom of Sweden, in succession to Monsieur Armin Daeniker, who has been transferred to London.

Minister Grässli was born at St. Gall, and is a citizen of Grabs (Ct. St. Gall). He studied *juris prudencia* at the Universities of Geneva, Paris and Berne, afterwards practising as a lawyer in Berne, Aarau and Geneva. In 1930, he entered the Diplomatic Service, and was attached to the Swiss Legation in Paris. Three years later (1934) Monsieur Grässli returned to Berne and was promoted to Secretary of Legation. In 1936, he was sent to Berlin, which post he left in 1942, on his appointment as Consul General in Bratislava. In 1945, he was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation and transferred to Washington, which post he occupied until 1948, when he went on a diplomatic mission to Japan. After a few months, Minister Grässli returned to Berne. From May 25th to September 22nd, 1948, he was Chargé d'Affaires in Moscow, and the following year he was appointed Swiss Minister to Hungary. In April, 1952, he was nominated Minister to India and Thailand, with residence in New Dehli.

* * *

The Federal Council has made several appointments in the Swiss Consular Service, namely:

Mr. Harold Müller to be Honorary Consul at Kobe (Japan). The new Consul was born in 1897 in Zurich, and has been a resident in Japan for the last 27 years. He is Managing-Director of the firm Liebermann, Walchli & Cie, in Kobe.

Mr. Edouard Hofer, Vice-Consul at the Swiss Consulate in Tananarive, has been promoted to the rank of Consul. He was born in 1905 in Ballmoos (Ct. Berne) and entered the Consular Service in 1926. He occupied previously posts at the Swiss Consulates in

Milan, Buenos-Aires, Montevideo, Santiago, and Algier.

Consul-General Hans Gremminger has been put in charge of the Swiss Consulate in Barcelona; born in 1894 in Lommis (Ct. Thurgau) he entered into the service of the Federal Political Department in 1921, and occupied posts in Buenos Aires, Montreal, Lisbon, Leipzig and Munich. In 1942, he was transferred to Montevideo, and appointed Chargé d'Affaires, with the rank of Counsellor of Legation, and three years later (1945) he went to San Francisco as Consul-General.

Consul-General August Ochsenbein has been put in charge of the Swiss Consulate San Francisco. He was born in 1901 in Solothurn, and entered into the service of the Federal Political Department in 1925. He was successively attached to the Consulates in Manchester, Danzig, Breslau, and Berlin, at the latter post he was promoted to the rank of 1st Secretary of Legation. In 1949, Mr. Ochsenbein was transferred to Madrid, and promoted to the grade of Counsellor of Legation.

Vice-Consul Charles Mayor, since 1953 in charge of the Swiss Consulate at Laurenço-Marques, has been promoted to the rank of Consul. He was born in 1908 at Echallens (Ct. Vaud), and entered the Consular Service in 1934. He held posts at the Consulates of Sao Paulo and Johannesburg.

* * *

Monsieur Pedro Nel Rueda Uribe, Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the Republic of Columbia, has presented his credentials to Monsieur M. Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation. He was previously a member of the Columbian Government.

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The Government of the Republic of Egypt has raised the status of their Legation in Berne to that of an Embassy.

* * *

The Swiss Government will be officially represented at the installation of the new President of the Republic of Cuba, Monsieur F. B. Y. Zaldivar, by Monsieur F. Brenni, Swiss Minister in Cuba, and Mr. E. Steiner, Swiss Consul in Havana.

* * *

Mr. Paul Brunschweiler, since 1931 Honorary Swiss Consul at Le Havre, has tendered his resignation to the Federal Council. Born in 1878, he was a citizen of Bischofszell (Ct. Thurgau).

* * *

Customs receipts during the month of December, 1954, amounted to 62.7 million francs, or 5.9 million francs more than in December, 1953.

Receipts for the whole year of 1954 are returned as 511.4 million francs, or 48.6 million francs more than in 1953.

Cantonal

Traffic accidents in the canton of Obwalden during 1954, numbered 139. Two persons were killed and 108 injured. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The parish of Meggen (Ct. Lucerne) has nominated Mr. J. H. Frey-Baumann of Meggenhorn, an Honorary citizen. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Dr. Vinzenz Winiker, and Dr. Gotthard Egli, both members of the Government of the canton of Lucerne, have intimated that they will not be candidates at the next elections which will take place in May. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The population of the town of Winterthur on December 31st, 1954, numbered 70,463. [A.T.S.]

* * *

During the month of December, 1954, 777 traffic accidents occurred in the canton of Zurich. Seventeen people were killed, and 319 received injuries. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The commune of Uster (Ct. Zurich) has nominated Minister, Dr. Jean Hotz, formerly Chief of the commercial section at the Federal Political Department, an Honorary Citizen. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Dr. med. Rudolf Schmid, (Ennenda) since 1941, a member of the Government of the canton of Glarus, has tendered his resignation; he has occupied the post of "Landesstatthalter" since 1950. Mr. Fritz Landolt, also a member of the cantonal government is retiring shortly. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Traffic accidents in the canton of Zug in 1954, numbered 408. Eleven people were killed, and 289 injured. [A.T.S.]

* * *

In the canton of Berne, during December, 1954, 405 (Dec. 1953: 334) traffic accidents were reported, 258 (Dec. 1953: 218) persons were injured of whom 11 succumbed to their injuries. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Hans Voegeli and Mr. Arthur Kammermann have been nominated Managers of the Banque Populaire Suisse, Berne. [A.T.S.]

* * *

M. Edouard Coendet of Burg nr. Murten has celebrated his 104th birthday, he is the oldest Swiss citizen. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Mme. Melanie Quartenoud, mother of M. Maxime Quartenoud, a member of the Government of the canton of Fribourg, has celebrated her 100th birthday. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The newly appointed French Ambassador, Monsieur Etienne Dennery, paid an official visit to the town of Basle. He was received, together with his wife, at the Town Hall, by the members of the cantonal Government.

In the evening a reception was held, at which were present members of the French colony, the Consular Corps and eminent personalities in Basle.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The population of the town of Basle on December 31st, 1954, numbered 207,530. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Figures just published by the Federal Statistical Office in Berne in connection with the census taken on the 1st of December, 1950, show that the population of the canton of Schaffhausen numbered 57,515 inhabitants (27,707 males and 29,808 females).

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Schaffhausen : 25,971 inhabitants; Neuhausen : 7,969; Thayngen : 2,461; Schleithelm : 1,529; Stein a Rh. : 2,352; Ramsen : 1,103 and Hallau : 1,959.

The population of the canton of Ticino, on that date numbered 175,055 inhabitants (80,848 males and 94,207 females).

Bellinzona : 12,060 inhabitants; Giubiasco : 3,311; Airolo : 1,848; Locarno : 7,767; Brissago : 1,931; Aseona : 2,923; Minusio : 2,771; Muralto : 2,673; Gordola : 1,419; Losone : 1,437; Castagnola : 2,926; Lugano : 18,122; Massagna : 2,304; Paradiso : 1,660; Chiasso : 5,744; Mendrisio : 4,602; Novazzana : 1,340; Stabio : 1,796; Vacallo : 1,434 and Biasca : 2,882.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

Dr. Wolfhart F. Bürgi, has been elected rector of the Commercial University of St. Gall for 1955/57.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

On December 31st, 1954, the population of the town of St. Gall numbered 70,653.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The traffic accidents in the canton of Neuchâtel during the year of 1954, numbered 913. 881 persons were injured of whom 31 succumbed to their injuries.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The house of Vidoudez, violin makers of Geneva has celebrated its 50th anniversary. This widely known firm of Swiss violin makers was founded in 1904 by Alfred Vidoudez, in the Rue des Rois, Geneva. Since then it has changed its place of business several

times, but has always been located in Geneva, and since 1937 has been at 22, Rue de la Corraterie.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

On December 31st, 1954, the population of the canton of Geneva, numbered 216,072 inhabitants, included in this figure are 36,000 foreigners.

[A.T.S.]

Police-captain Hugo Rolli, has been elected Chief of the Police of the canton of Geneva, with promotion the rank of major.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

DEATHS.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland :

Professor Léon Morf, from 1911-1925, Professor at the Commercial University, Lausanne, and at one time financial adviser to the Turkish Government, in Lausanne, at the age of 81.

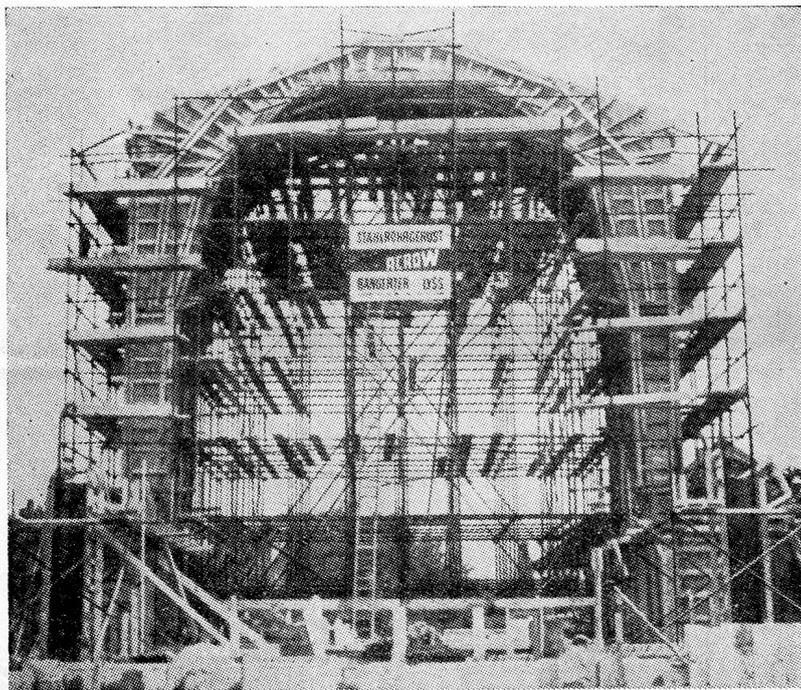
Dr. Luigi Albrecht, a member of the Government of the canton of Grisons, and Member of Parliament (National Council) in Chur, aged 66.

Dr. Adolf Gutzwiller, President of the Board, and Manager of the "Signum, A.G.", Wallisellen, in Zurich, at the age of 73.

Léon Jaquier, Mayor of the town of Yverdon from 1945-1953, and a Member of the cantonal Grand Council, in Yverdon, aged 58.

Eduard Geilinger, Head of the firm "Geilinger & Cie", Winterthur, and President of the Board of the "Hypothekbank", Winterthur, in Winterthur, at the age of 69.

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Dr. h. c. Ernst Homberger, in Schaffhausen, aged 86. The deceased was for over 50 years at the head of the Georg Fischer, A.G., Schaffhausen, he was also managing the watch manufacturing concern E. Homberger-Rauschenbach, Schaffhausen. The Commercial University of St. Gall honoured him with the degree of *doctor honoris causa*, and the town of Schaffhausen made him an Honorary Citizen.

Emil Bollman, from 1912-1949 drawing-master first at the *Gymnasium* and afterwards at the "Kantonsschule", Winterthur, in Winterthur, at the age of 70.

Natale Montorfani, Assistant Mayor of the town of Lugano, and since 1948 a councillor of the parish of Lugano, in Lugano aged 70.

Dr. Adrian Stüchelberg, for over 30 years in charge of the "Erbschaftamt", Basle, and a well-known historian, in Basle, at the age of 81.

Jean Spinedi, Founder and President of the Board of J. Spinedi, S.A., Geneva, in Geneva, aged 70.

Joseph Meyer, Founder of the firm Joseph Meyer, Eisenbau, A.G., Lucerne, and for years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Lucerne, in Lucerne, aged 78.

Karl Felix Marx, from 1903-1946, drawing master at the "Höheren Stadtschulen", Lucerne, in Lucerne, aged 78.

Hermann Gamma, since 1936 a teacher at the "Kantonsschule", Lucerne, owing to an accident.

Mme. Adele Gaudard-Grillet, in Romanens, at the age of 100.

Raoul de Diesbach, civil engineer, and lecturer at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich, in Fribourg, aged 80.

Jean Affeltranger, a well-known land-scape painter, in Winterthur, at the age of 81.

Paul Dubois, teacher, and from 1928-1953, Secretary of the Geographical Society of Geneva, in Geneva, aged 66.

Ernst Gutzwiller, Director of the "Buss, A.G.", Basle, in Basle, at the age of 77. [A.T.S.]

ANNIVERSARIES.

The undermentioned anniversaries are published in the Swiss Press:

Carl Ziegler (80) of Schaffhausen, Founder and Head of the "Schaffhauser Jugendsportbewegung".

Dr. Michel Plancherel (70) of Fribourg, from 1911-1920, Professor of mathematics at the University of Fribourg, and since 1920, Professor of mathematics at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich. In the army, he held the rank of Colonel (Infantry).

States Councillor Adrian Lachenal (70), of Geneva, President of the Swiss Touring Club, and the "Alliance Internationale du Tourisme". [A.T.S.]

BANK DIVIDENDS.

The following Swiss Banks have declared their dividends for 1954: Bank in Burgdorf: 6 per cent (1953: 6%); Gewerbekasse, Baden: 5 per cent (1953: 5%); Volksbank Willisau: 5 per cent (1953: 5%); Solothurner Handelsbank, Solothurn: 6 per cent (1953: 6%); Gewerbekasse, Berne: 8 per cent (1953:

8%); Banque Populaire Suisse: Berne: 5 per cent (1953: 5%); Gewerbekasse, Zurich: 6 per cent (1953: 6%); Schweiz. Spar- und Kreditbank, St. Gall: 4½ per cent (1953: 4½%). [A.T.S.]

The following have celebrated their diamond wedding (60) anniversary in Switzerland: Mr. and Mrs. E. Kohler-Wannier of Soyhières (Jura Bernois); Mr. and Mrs. B. Keller-Sprenger of Döttingen; Mr. and Mrs. L. Ruffieux of Avry-devant-Pont, and Mr. and Mrs. Schori-Conrad of Neuenstadt. [A.T.S.]

Last year's 1st of August collection for needy apprentices of both sexes amounted to 1,083,000.—frs. Approximately 60,000.—frs. less than last year. [A.T.S.]

The central committee of the Swiss Red Cross has sent, on the occasion of Dr. Albert Schweitzer's 80th birthday, a donation of 5,000.—frs. to his hospital in Lambarene. [A.T.S.]

Sherpa Tensing, co-conqueror of Everest, will be a member of the new Swiss expedition to the Himalayas, led by Raymond Lambert, this spring.

The Swiss Army has banned "Hitch-hiking" by soldiers in uniform.

About 300 children from Austria, mostly refugees, are spending three months as the guests of Swiss families.



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Dr. A. J. Cromin, the author disclosed that he plans to settle in Switzerland.

* * *

Harrowby Mills, Farnworth, which ceased production nearly twenty years ago and have since been used only as warehouse accommodation, have been taken over by Swiss Yarn Spinners for nylon production.

* * *

Total Swiss watch exports for 1954 are expected to be worth about £81,700,000 — 10 per cent less than 1953.

* * *

The Swiss Federal Railways have decided to start from next February the sale of emergency umbrellas at some stations for people overtaken by sudden rain. For two francs — about 3s. — travellers will be able to buy oil paper umbrellas on ordinary wire ribs fixed to coarse wooden handles. The experiment is to be tried for three months.

* * *

The Royal Commission on Awards to inventors announced that they had recommended a joint award of £6,000 to Mr. J. R. Geigy of Basle, and the Geigy Company of Manchester, for the manufacture of D.D.T.

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Mr. Marc Spitzer has been elected president of the Swiss Corporation for Canadian Investments and Mr. Alan A. Macnaughton, Q.C., has been elected a director.

* * *

Switzerland has urged the United States and China to disband or reduce the size of the four-Power neutral armistice control commission in Korea.

* * *

Switzerland's atomic pile, financed jointly by the public authorities and private enterprise, is to be built on the banks of the River Aar, near Wurenlingen, Canton Aargau.

The pile, which will be used for research into the peaceful uses of atomic energy, will take several years to build.

There is some nervousness among the people of the region which the organisers of the project are doing their best to allay.

* * *

St. Moritz — With both two-man and four-man world bobsled crowns, the Swiss are solid favourites for the 1956 Olympics — especially with the apparent elimination of the two top United States drivers.

Switzerland completed a grand slam of the 1955 world championships with a victory in the four-man event by Franz Kapus, a 42-year-old Zurich chauffeur.

He and his three-man crew completed the winding milelong St. Moritz slide four times in a total time of 5 min. 10.52sec. to beat bobsleders from six other nations.

New Aerial Cableways at St. Moritz and Lucerne.

Switzerland's highest aerial cableway, from Conviglia to the Piz Nair (10,000 ft. a.s.l.) has now been completed.

Europe's longest aerial cableway has been inaugurated near Lucerne. Excellent skiing slopes are now within easy reach of Lucerne. A chain of small cabins is capable of transporting 400 people per hour in each direction. There are two sections for the total distance of three miles, and the journey from Kriens to Fräkmüntegg on the Northern slopes of Mount Pilatus takes approximately 30 minutes.

* * *

Bâle-Mulhouse Airport.

The Swiss Bank Corporation have recently opened an Exchange Office at Bâle-Mulhouse Airport for the benefit of air travellers using that airport.

* * *

The Telephone in the Mountains.

A completely automatic telephone exchange, of the latest type, has just been inaugurated at Zermatt. It is ten years since the underground connection was completed between Zermatt-Visp-Brigue, thus ensuring that tourist resorts should not be cut off by avalanches from the rest of the world. A telephone link has also existed for some time now by radio, between the village, the Theodule Pass and the Mont-Rose hut, as well as with the Belvedere Hotel at the foot of the Matterhorn.

The Great Vingrowers Festival at Vevey (August 1-14, 1955).

A celebration on the scale of the great Vine-growers Festival (August 1-14, 1955), which is held only once every 25 years, in the lovely town of Vevey on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, between Lausanne and Montreux, involves a considerable outlay. The figure quoted provisionally is put as high as 3 million 700,000 francs. The construction of the stands alone with all their installations will cost in the neighbourhood of one million Swiss francs. The elliptical form of the stands will ensure excellent visibility for all seats, a big improvement in fact on 1927 when the stands were horse-shoe shaped. In 1955, all the spectators will be facing the main stage where the principal scenes will be performed.

In 1927, expenditure amounted to 1 million 200 thousand francs and the price of tickets varied between Swiss francs 5.50 and Swiss francs 82.50 inclusive of taxes; all seats were sold out for the last performances, the public coming in ever greater numbers, owing to the great success of the Festival. In August 1955, in spite of the expenses being 3 1/2 times greater and in spite of the increase in prices in general, the seats have been fixed at from Sw. francs 10. to 70. for the day performances and Sw. francs 10. to 80. for the evening, inclusive of all taxes with the exception of a slight surtax for insurance against rain.

* * *

The 11th International Competition for Musical Performers 1955 in Geneva.

After the big success of the 10th International Competition for Musical Performers in Geneva, in which participated 227 candidates belonging to 34 countries, the Organising Committee has decided to carry out another International Competition in 1955. This is to take place from September 17th to October 1st and will comprise the following categories: Voice, Piano, Organ, Viola, Trumpet and Sonatas for Piano and Violin.

Young artists, between 15 and 30 years, from all countries may compete. Money prizes amounting to 12,000 Swiss francs are anticipated. Once again the Competition will be organised in collaboration with Radio Geneva and the Swiss Romand Orchestra. The list of the jury, formed by eminent international and Swiss masters, will be published at the end of February.

* * *

Calderon's Great World Theatre at Swiss Marian Shrine. Maria Einsiedeln, Switzerland:—

One of the most spectacular attractions of the 1955 European summer season will be, from mid-June to the end of September, a production of Don Pedro Calderon de la Barca's religious play, "The Great World Theatre", with a cast of hundreds in the historic Monastery Square at this famous pilgrimage centre and Marian Shrine. The setting, dominated by the sumptuous Baroque front of the twin-towered Benedictine Abbey Church, the statue-framed ramps of the Monastery and the famous Fountain of Our Lady, will be one of the most beautiful to find anywhere in the world. Maria Einsiedeln's theatrical traditions date back to the 12th century, when the Benedictine monastery saw its first golden age as a

stronghold of Christian culture. The Monastery, easy to reach from Zurich and Lucerne by rail or road, or a combined lake steamer and rail excursion, stands on the site where a holy man, St. Meinrad, was murdered by highwaymen in his hermitage in the year 861. "The Great World Theatre", to be performed twice to three times a week, will be directed by Dr. Oscar Eberle, Switzerland's outstanding expert on folk theatricals.

39th SWISS INDUSTRIES FAIR

Basel, April 16th to 26th, 1955.

The Swiss Industries Fair has been held in Basel every spring since 1917. Its 17 technical divisions, comprising 2,300 exhibitors, give an excellent survey of what is being done in the various branches of production. For a number of years the export industries have played a predominant part and the interest taken by foreign business firms in the Basel Fair has grown accordingly. During the 1954 Fair, for instance, 12,275 visitors from 78 countries were welcomed.

Products ready for export and sure to interest overseas buyers are to be found in every division and even if people do not buy, they will have a splendid opportunity to make comparisons. Foreign firms, however, will be particularly interested in the following large export divisions which will be represented at the next Fair: watches, textiles, shoes and leather goods, electrical engineering, general mechanical engineering, machine tools, industrial requirements.

At the watch fair, which will be held in conjunction with the Industries Fair for the 25th time, about 150 actual watch factories will be represented. In addition, there will be 50 exhibitors from branches related to the watch industry. Roughly 280 exhibitors will be displaying their goods in the textiles, shoes and leather goods sector. In the technical industries division, where this year it will be the turn of machine tools to occupy the place reserved last year for textile machines, about 500 firms will be represented, some of whom have long been world famous. Thus, the next Swiss Industries Fair to be held from April 16th to 26th, 1955 will display an abundant selection of products and it will be well worth while coming a long way to see them.

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