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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 50th anniversary of the opening of the Simplon tunnel was commemorated on May 17th and 18th, in Milan, Domodossola, Brigue and Lausanne.

On Thursday, May 17th, the President of the Swiss Confederation, Dr. Markus Feldmann, accompanied by Federal-Councillors Petitpierre and Lepori, the Federal Chancellor, the "Chef du Protocole", and Army-corps commander Nager (the latter acting as aide-de-camp to the Italian President whilst in Switzerland) left Berne by special train for Domodossola and Milan.

A second special train carrying about 200 guests also left the Swiss capital; amongst them were the Presidents of the two Federal Chambers, representatives of the cantons of Berne, Geneva, Vaud, Valais and Neuchâtel, the General Managers of the Swiss Federal Railways, the P.T.T. administration, the Mayors of the towns of Berne, Lausanne, Geneva, Neuchâtel, Fribourg, Sion, Thun, and Brig, high Government functionaries, Press, etc.

On the arrival in Domodossola, the Swiss President was greeted by Monsieur Giovanni Gronchi, President of the Italian Republic. Military honours were accorded to the two chiefs of State. Later on the company travelled to Milan to the opening of the Simplon exhibition. The first day ended with an official banquet during which cordial speeches were made by the two Presidents, followed by a Gala Performance at the Scala.

The next day (Friday) the two Heads of States, accompanied by the Italian and Swiss guests left Milan for Domodossola, where the two Presidents toured the town in open carriages, enthusiastically cheered by the population, after which they joined the special train which took them through the Simplon to Brigue. On arrival on Swiss soil military honours were accorded to them. A reception and luncheon was held at the Stockalper castle where the President of the Government of the canton of Valais welcomed

the distinguished guests. After the luncheon a special train took the company to Lausanne, where the official commemoration was held at the "Théâtre de Beaulieu". Here speeches were delivered by the President of the Government of the canton of Vaud, by Federal-Councillor Lepori, and by the Italian Minister of Transport. Then followed the inauguration of an exhibition dedicated to the Simplon.

The festivities concluded by a Banquet, during which addresses were given by Presidents Feldmann and Gronchi. The Italian President left for Rome on Saturday morning.

* * *

The Federal Council has nominated M. Jean-Frederick Wagnière, at present Swiss Minister in Belgrade as Head of the Swiss Delegation of the Neutral International Commission for the exchange of prisoners of war in Korea; he is succeeding Minister Fritz Real.

General-Staff Colonel Arthur Gruenholzer, will replace Colonel Jacques Bullet, as deputy to M. Wagnière.

* * *

The Swiss Government has appointed Mr. Hans Schaer to the post of Honorary Swiss Consul at Bahia (Brazil), in succession to the late Ernst Holzmann.

The new Consul was born in Berg (canton Thurgau) in 1914, and is General Manager of the firm "Wildberger, A.G.", Bahia.

* * *

The President of the Republic of Indonesia, Dr. Ahmed Sukarno, and his Foreign Minister, M. Ruslan

CITY SWISS CLUB

Will members kindly note that the next

MONTHLY MEETING

will take place on **Tuesday, July 10th, 1956,**
at **6.30 p.m.** for **7 p.m.** at the **Dorchester Hotel,**
Park Lane, W.1 (Stanhope Room).

The Dinner will be followed by a game of
Jass, Bridge or Canasta.

Members wishing to be present should send
their card to the Manager of the Dorchester
Hotel, Park Lane, W.1, to reach him not later
than Monday, July 9th, 1956.

THE COMMITTEE.

Abdulgani, are paying an official visit to Switzerland. From June 27th to June 29th, they will be the guests of the Confederation.

Cantonal

The Karl Borromaeus College in Altdorf recently celebrated its 50th Jubilee. The number of its students at present is over 300. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Albert Krebs, commander of the Police Force of the canton of Berne, has been promoted to the rank of Colonel of the Police Force. [A.T.S.]

M. Jean Bourgknecht, Mayor of the town of Fribourg, has been elected a member of the States Council, in succession to the late M. Quarteneoud. [A.T.S.]

Professor H. P. Tschudi of Basle has been elected a member of the States Council, in succession to the late Dr. h.c. Gustav Wenk.

The new Member of Parliament was born in 1913. On completion of his law studies, he held from 1938-1953 the post of "Gewerbeinspektor". In 1943, he was elected a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Basle Town. In 1952, he was appointed Professor of Social Insurance at the University of Basle, and a year later (1953) entered the cantonal Government, in succession to the late Dr. Wenk. Professor Tschudi is a member of the Socialist party. [A.T.S.]

During 1955, 688,612 persons paid admittance to the Basle Zoo. This figure does not include season ticket holders, and exceeds last year's figures by 22,000. Receipts amounted to 921,000.—frs. or 11,500.—frs. more than in 1954. [A.T.S.]

The Austrian Minister in Berne, Monsieur Johannes Coreth, has paid an official visit to the town of Basle, he was received at the Town Hall, and later on visited the premises of an important chemical concern. [A.T.S.]

Mme. A. Mörikofer-Ledermann of Frauenfeld has celebrated her 100th birthday. [A.T.S.]

The Government of the canton of Ticino has officially received the Hungarian Minister in Berne, in Bellinzona. [A.T.S.]

The final accounts of the Federal Shooting Competition which was held at Lausanne in 1954, have now been passed, they show a credit-balance of 88,575.—frs. [A.T.S.]

Two bandits entered the premises of the branch office of the Cantonal Bank at Lutry (Ct. Vaud), bound and gagged three employees, and decamped with an amount of 180,000.—frs. in bank notes. So far no arrest has been made. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Leon Stoffel (Christian Socialist), has been elected President of the Grand Council of the canton of Valais for 1956/57. [A.T.S.]

M. Fernand Cottier (Christian Socialist) has been elected Mayor of the town of Geneva for 1956/57. [A.T.S.]

The Russian Ambassador in Berne, M. Pawel Erschow, has paid an official visit to the Government and town of Geneva. [A.T.S.]

DEATHS.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Ullyse Cochard, from 1931-1941, President of the commune of Chernex-sur-Montreux, and a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud, in Chernex, at the age of 73.

Dr. med. E. Wehrle, from 1928-1939, physician-in-chief of the Clara Hospital, Basle, and at one time a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Basle-Town, in Basle, aged 76.

Maxime Quartenoud, since 1935, a member of the Government of the canton of Fribourg, and formerly editor of the paper "Paysan Fribourgeois", in Fribourg at the age of 59. The deceased was from 1935-1947, a member of the National Council, and since 1947 sat in the States Council.

Pasteur Paul Rochodieu, in Blonay, aged 93.

Fritz Blaser, Industrialist, and from 1936-47, a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Basle-Town, in Basle, at the age of 63.

Gustav Chappuis, civil-engineer, in Vevey, aged 77. The deceased was formerly chief-engineer of the Furka railway, Director of the Nyon St. Cergues-Morez railway, and from 1929-1944 Director of the electric railways of Vevey.

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Fritz Zaugg, from 1929-1949, a member of the Government of the canton of Aargau, in Dielsdorf, at the age of 70.

Dr. Herbert Jobin, for many years a teacher at the cantonal school, Porrentruy, in Abbévillars (France).

Adolphe Zoller, until 1954, Director of the 6th Customs District (Geneva), in Geneva, aged 67.

Max Briegger, Manager of the Geneva office of the "Schweiz. Bankgesellschaft", in Geneva, at the age of 64.

Professor Dr. Eugen Dieth, lecturer of English Philology at the University of Zurich, and a *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Aberdeen, in Zurich, aged 63.

Professor Dr. Fritz Becker, Surgeon-in-chief of the cantonal hospital, Chur, and Professor of medicine at the University of Basle, in Chur, at the age of 55.

Gustave Chaudet, from 1930-1936, Mayor of the town of Vevey, and from 1933-1937, a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud, in Vevey.

Carl Huegly, for nearly 50 years Treasurer of the commune of Horw (Ct. Lucerne), and for many years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Lucerne, in Horw, at the age of 75. [A.T.S.]

* * * ANNIVERSARIES * * *

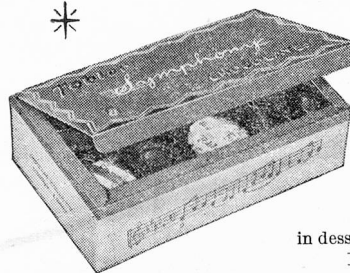
Walter Reinhart (70) of Eglisau, founder and conductor of the well known Reinhart choir. [A.T.S.]

* * * DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES. * * *

Mr. & Mrs. J. Bänziger-Kobelt of Rebstein (Ct. St. Gall), Mr. & Mrs. E. Walser-Meier of Wallenstadt,

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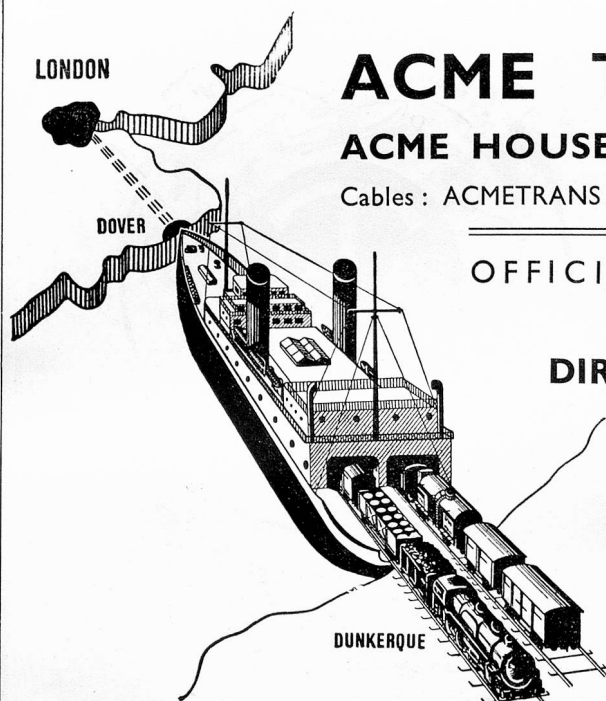
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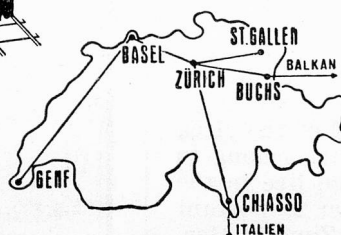
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Mr. & Mrs. G. Julmi-Schaefer of Basle, Mrs. S. Hubler-Roesselet, of Wingreis, nr. Twann. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The following have celebrated their iron wedding anniversary (65): Mr. & Mrs. A. Hafner-Hafner of Dinhard (Winterthur), Mr. & Mrs. J. Tschudi-Luipold of Schwanden (Ct. Glarus), Mr. & Mrs. J. Scheppeler-Studer of Braunwald. [A.T.S.]

HOME AFFAIRS.

by MAX NEF.

According to official statistics, 155 Swiss from abroad, returned to their homeland, last year. More than half of them came from the East Zone in Germany, whilst other groups came from Rumania and Poland. Last Autumn, the Rumanian Government authorised seventy Swiss citizens to leave the country, of which number, however only a portion returned to Switzerland. In the Soviet Union, also, there would appear to be signs that a somewhat more generous practice, in this respect, is being established, so that it may be anticipated that further Swiss citizens, who have been striving for years to obtain permission to leave that country, may be coming back, here, shortly.

In regard to the question as to what help is given to these returned wanderers by the Confederation, the Statement of Accounts of the Central Office for Questions Relating to Swiss Citizens from Abroad, provides the following information. Between three and a half and five and a half million francs are available each year for Relief Activities, being appropriated for this purpose by the Federal Chambers, within the framework of the Ordinary Budget of the Confederation.

The task of finding employment for these people is not so easy in regard to the older generations, in spite of the prevailing economic boom. Approximately 1,600 persons have to be kept permanently, at the expense of the State, partly for reasons of health and partly because of their age, as quite one-third of them are already over seventy-five years of age.

In such cases where the returned emigrants are willing and able because of their qualifications and capacities, to undertake some *independent* activity, this is made possible for them through the granting of loans. In this way, during the last ten years, about ten million francs have been paid out by the Confederation, either in the shape of direct loans or as security. Approximately one-third of such loans have been paid back, after their object had been achieved. Rather more than one-tenth has had to be written off as a dead loss.

In addition to those Swiss who have returned to their own country from abroad, there are also distressed Swiss citizens residing abroad, who have to be helped. Here, in each case it is necessary to ascertain — and this is no easy matter — whether the distressful situation has really been caused by the war or the post-bellum conditions, in the meaning of the legal Ordinance. Almost exactly half of the circa 1,700 cases requiring relief measures, which belong to this category, relate to Swiss citizens who live in the West German Federal Republic; another important group resides in France, or in the East Zone of Ger-

many. Here also permanent relief is required in respect of one-third of the people, which consists of elderly persons who are over seventy-five.

Individual financial aid is supplemented by collective relief, most of which consists in deliveries in kind. Although this particular kind of aid, could be cut down somewhat latterly, there still exists a penury of all manner of goods, in a great many countries. Thus, Swiss citizens established in Poland, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia received aid from the home-country in the form of occasional consignments of goods, sent to them last year.

Finally, mention should also be made, in this connection, of the aid brought to the Swiss children abroad. In 1955, no fewer than four hundred children belonging to our fellow-countrymen abroad were able to spend their holidays in Switzerland. Furthermore, the Swiss abroad are given the opportunity to have their children educated, during a certain time, in the Schools and educational establishments here, in Switzerland, in order to obtain some technical training. In this way, these young people are made acquainted with the Swiss way of living and thinking, and their ties with their home-country are strengthened; this is of considerable importance for the renewal and rejuvenation of the Swiss colonies abroad which, in general, have grown somewhat too old. Private organisations also help a great deal in the carrying out of these relief activities, the Confederation repaying them a certain part of their financial outlay.



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