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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 Mr. Theodor Schmidlin, at present 1st Secretary at the Swiss Legation in Prague, to the post of Consul-General in Saigon, in succession to Mr. Jean Studer.

The new Consul-General was born in Wahlen (Jura Bernois) in 1917, and studied law at the University of Berne. He entered the diplomatic service in 1942. Mr. Schmidlin previously held a post at the Swiss Legation in Belgrade.

\* \* \*

The Swiss Colonies abroad number roughly 165,000 persons who are registered at the various Consulates. To be added to these are about 121,000 persons who have not registered.

A further 300,000 persons possess double nationality; of these alone 275,000 reside in the U.S.A. It is estimated that about 566,000 Swiss are residing abroad.

\* \* \*

According to a statement issued by the Federal Central Office for questions relating to Swiss abroad (Eidg. Zentralstelle für Auslandschweizerfragen), a thousand people applied in 1957 for temporary assistance, owing either to political or economic circumstances.

Continued assistance was given to a further 2,500 persons, either still living abroad or having returned home, of whom ninety received loans up to the maximum amount of 30,000.— francs.

The sum of 4.44 million francs was required in 1957. From 1939 to the end of 1957 the Confederation has disbursed the amount of 165 million francs for assistance to Swiss abroad.

\* \* \*

On 31st December 1957 the number of civil servants employed by the Swiss Confederation numbered 101,178.

The Swiss Federal Railways have carried 17.9 million passengers in the month of February 1958, or 800,000 more than in February 1957. Receipts: 22.8 million francs (February 1957: 21.7 million francs).

Goods traffic is returned as 1.57 million tons, or 470,000 tons less than during the same period in 1957. Receipts: 34.4 million francs (February 1957: 41.1 million francs).

\* \* \*

M. Marcel Pilet-Golaz, who was President of the Swiss Confederation in 1934 and 1940, died in Paris at the age of 68.

He came of an old agricultural family of the canton of Vaud and attended the Universities of Lausanne, Leipzig and Paris. He practised law before entering local and then federal politics as a Radical. As chief of the Federal Railway Department he introduced reforms to make the department more independent of politics. When he was elected President for his first term he was 44 and the youngest member of the Government. After a period as Director of the Interior and of the Department of Posts and Telegraphs he became, in 1940, head of the Political Department, which is equivalent to Foreign Minister. As the war progressed he came under increasingly strong criticism as a person who was not in a position to negotiate with the allies on terms of friendliness and confidence, and he resigned in November 1944, at a time when Switzerland had failed to renew diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.

\* \* \*

Madame Amalia de Castillo-Ledon, Ambassador Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the

## SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

### MONTHLY MEETING

on Wednesday, May 14th, 1958 at 7 p.m.  
at Swiss House, 34/35 Fitzroy Square, W.1.

followed by comment on colour slides by

CONSUL E. RIBI

of the Swiss Embassy

on

**MEXICO.**

Members and friends are cordially invited. The Students' Canteen will be open for light meals and refreshments from 6 to 7 p.m.

Republic of Mexico, has presented her credentials to Dr. Th. Holenstein, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Dr. M. Petitpierre, Foreign Minister, at the Palais Fédéral in Berne.

### Cantonal

A motor-car travelling at excessive speed (100 km.p.h.) skidded on the main road between Mettendorf and Wellhausen and crashed into a tree. The driver and his two passengers were thrown out of the car. Two of them, Frau Maria Trinket (26), wife of the driver, and Fräulein Christine Semlitsch (26), hairdresser, were killed instantaneously. The driver was taken to the hospital in Frauenfeld suffering from serious head injuries. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Heinrich Baechtold-Müller (64), a farmer in Uhwiesen (Ct. Zurich), was run over by a motor-car. He was taken to hospital in Schaffhausen where he succumbed to his injuries. [A.T.S.]

Mr. C. Mohr, formerly chief engineer at the Rhaetischen railways, has taken up an appointment as Director of the Emmental-Burgdorf-Thun railway, in succession to Mr. K. Braun, who has resigned.

The accounts of the canton of Berne for 1957 show a credit-balance of 304,196,000.— francs. [A.T.S.]

A motorist, who by dangerous driving caused the death of a motor-cyclist and injured the latter's pillion rider, was sentenced by the Police Court of Grandson to two months' imprisonment (conditional) and a fine of 500.— francs (!) [A.T.S.]

The accounts for 1957 of the canton of Solothurn have balanced. [A.T.S.]

Mlle. Josephine Macneil, Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the Republic of Eire, has paid an official visit to the town of Olten, where she was received by the municipal authorities. [A.T.S.]

The "Art-Prize" of the canton of Solothurn, amounting to 5,000.— francs, has been awarded to the painter, Cuno Amiet. [A.T.S.]

The Canadian Ambassador, Monsieur E. Turcotte, has paid an official visit to the Government of the canton of Basle-Town. He was received at the Town Hall by the President of the cantonal Government, Mr. F. Brechbühl. The distinguished guest visited afterwards the Basle Ports, a chemical factory and the Art and Historical Museums. [A.T.S.]

The well-known mountain guide, Arno Grass of Pontresina, President of the Alpine Guide Association of the canton of Grisons, and the ski-ing instructress, Mlle. Riz a Porta from Silvaplana, had undertaken a ski-ing excursion from the Diavolezza via the Pers and Morteratsch glaciers. Owing to the breaking-in of a snow bridge, Grass fell into a glacier crevasse thirty metres deep.

A rescue party from Pontresina was able to liberate him from his dangerous position. He had received considerable injuries and was transported to the Morteratsch station. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Ernst Haller (Socialist) has been elected President, and Mr. H. Frick (Peasant Party) Vice-President, of the Government of the canton of Aargau. [A.T.S.]

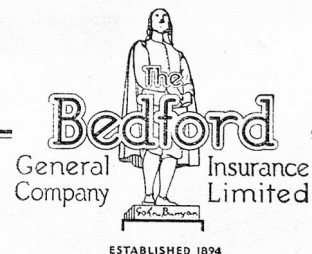
Mr. Adolf Richner has been appointed "Landammann" of the canton of Aargau, and Dr. Ernst Bachmann, "Landesstatthalter", for 1958/59. [A.T.S.]

The accounts of the canton of Basle-Country for 1957 close with a credit-balance of 407,054.— francs. [A.T.S.]

Two young men entered the shop of Mr. Jean Baumann, ironmonger, at the Rue du Simplon in Vevey, with the intention of getting hold of the contents of the till, and without any warning attacked him with some heavy instruments. He collapsed, and soon afterwards succumbed to the injuries inflicted on him. The intruders then took to their heels, but were later arrested by the police. One of the assailants, Genet (18), who had formerly been employed as an apprentice by the victim, committed suicide whilst on remand. [A.T.S.]

The accounts of last year's Narcissus Festival held at Montreux show a net profit of 27,385.— francs. The next Festival will be held in 1960. [A.T.S.]

The accounts for 1957 of the canton of Vaud close with a deficit of 17,449,000.— francs. [A.T.S.]



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A man smashed the show-window of a jewellers' establishment in the Rue d'Italie in Vevey and stole goods to the value of 10,000.— francs. He escaped on a bicycle. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The 4½ per cent loan issued by the canton of Valais has been heavily over-subscribed, and allocations have had to be considerably reduced. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The accounts for 1957 of the canton of Valais show a credit-balance of 534,860 francs. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Dr. Mlle. E. Droz, of Geneva, has been honoured by the University of Fribourg i. Breisgau with the degree of *doctor honoris causa*. She is already an honorary doctor of the Universities of Paris and Geneva. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The next Federal Singing Competition has been fixed to take place at Geneva from 17th to 28th June 1960. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

A woman pedestrian was run over by a motor-cyclist at the Quai Gustave-Ador in Geneva and killed. The motor-cyclist, who was found to be drunk, was arrested. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

M. René Braichet, chief editor of the "Feuille d'Avis du Neuchâtel", has celebrated his 25th service jubilee. [A.T.S.]

Burglars entered the premises of the "Change" office of the Swiss Federal Railways in Neuchâtel and removed a safe containing bank-notes to the value of 25,000.— francs. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

**DEATHS.**

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Professor Dr. Fritz Ernst, in Zurich, at the age of 69. The deceased was Professor of German Literature at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich. For his three books, "Essais", he received the Gottfried Keller prize of the Martin Bodmer Foundation, and in 1951 he was awarded the prize for literature of the town of Zurich.

Canon Johann Baptist Ackermann, for forty years a priest in Rebstein (Ct. St. Gall), in Rebstein, aged 87.

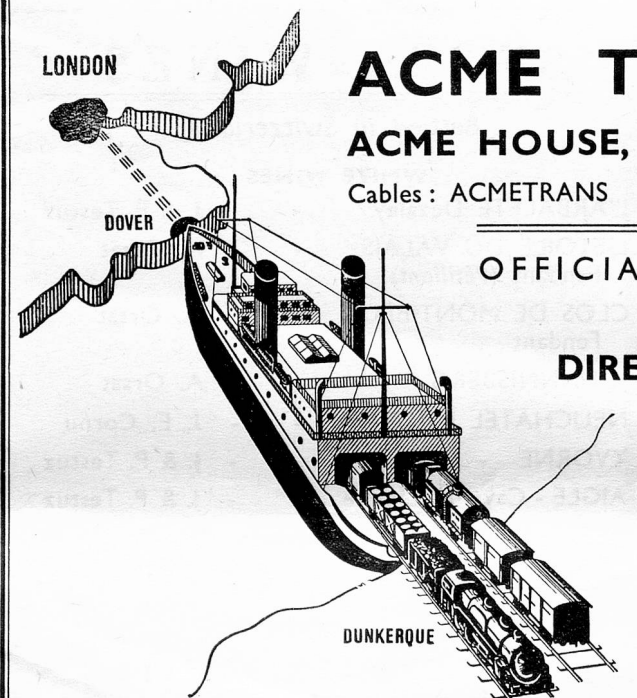
Jules Barrelet, the well-known lawyer, in Neuchâtel, aged 84.

Charles Schaeublin, industrialist, founder and President of the Board of the "Maschinenfabrik Schaeublin, A.G." Malleray-Bevilard, in Malleray-Bevilard, at the age of 75.

Paul Wyss, a pioneer of Swiss aviation, in Geneva, aged 71.

Charles Humbert, the well-known landscape painter, in La Chaux-de-Fonds, at the age of 67.

Gottlieb Schwab, a former "Bankverwalter", and from 1936 to 1956 a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Fribourg, in Kerzers, aged 73.



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Gustav Lorenz, civil-engineer, in Thusis, at the age of 73. The deceased had been since 1924 Director of the "Bündner Kraftwerke" Klosters.

Eduard Boss, landscape painter, and a member of the "Eidg. Kunstkommission", in Berne, aged 85.

Professor Dr. Arnold von Salis, in Zurich, at the age of 77. The deceased studied archaeology at the Universities of Bonn and Berlin, and afterwards was "Privat-Dozent" at the Universities of Bonn, Rostock, Münster and Heidelberg. From 1940 to 1951 Dr. von Salis was Professor of archaeology at the University of Zurich. He wrote a great number of scientific works. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

#### ANNIVERSARIES.

Cuno Amiet (90), of Solothurn, eminent portrait and landscape painter.

To celebrate his birthday, an exhibition of his works was opened at the "Kunsthalle" in Berne by Federal Councillor Dr. Ph. Etter. Amongst the large number of visitors at the opening of the exhibition was Dr. Th. Holenstein, President of the Swiss Confederation, who conveyed to the "Jubilär" the congratulations of the Federal Council. Cuno Amiet studied in Munich and Paris.

Professor Logoz (70), of Geneva, Professor of Law at the University of Geneva and a member of the Supreme Federal Court. On the occasion of his 70th birthday the juridical faculty of the University of Basle has honoured him with the degree of *doctor honoris causa*.

August Leuba (80), of Buttes, a former member of the Grand Council of the canton of Neuchâtel, President of the Board of the Cantonal Bank, and a Member of Parliament (National Council).

Professor Dr. phil. Guggenbuehl (70), of Zurich, Professor of History at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich. He is the author of a great number of works on Swiss history. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

#### ARMY.

A P.16 jet fighter-bomber, piloted by Mr. J. Brunner, of the "Kriegstechnischen Abteilung", in an experimental flight, crashed into the "Bodensee" near Rorschach. The pilot was able to bale out before the crash, and was rescued by three boys in a pedal boat. The Federal Military Department has ordered an enquiry. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

#### LEGACIES AND DONATIONS.

The recently deceased Emil Ackermann, licensee, of Riniken, has left the amount of 45,000.— francs to various cultural and public utility institutions of the district Brugg.

The late Dr. Max Fretz, industrialist, of Aarau, has left his large collection of pictures and sketches to the "Kunstverein" of the canton of Argau. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

#### DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES.

Mr. & Mrs. E. Gysi-Jaeggi of Zug. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

#### VARIOUS.

An epidemic of blindness among chamois, which hitherto seems to have been limited to the nature reserve south of Château d'Oex in the Alpes Vaudoises, is now spreading eastward. The disease, an infectious conjunctivitis, is caused by a virus, and blindness is brought about by perforation or ulceration of the

cornea. Gamekeepers in the Simmethal report that they have already counted some six hundred blind or half-blind animals, and measures are to be taken with a view to shooting those whose condition is hopeless. T.

\* \* \*

The Official Trade Gazette has celebrated its 75th Jubilee. The "Feuille officielle Suisse du commerce" was published for the first time at the beginning of 1883, as a result of the coming into force of the Federal Code of Obligations, which contains the Swiss commercial law.

The oldest Swiss publication of this kind is the "Feuille d'Avis officielle de la République et Canton de Genève", of which the first issue bears the date, 5th August, 1752.

\* \* \*

France has now also decided to abolish the customs documents for visiting motorists. British Motorists wishing to visit Switzerland (by travelling through France) need in future take only their British Registration Book (log book), their British Driving Licence and Form 29C (Temporary Exportation Certificate) for the British Customs. In addition, the Insurance Company should be informed in order that third party risk for Continental Travel may be covered.

Switzerland, Austria, Western Germany and Sweden have now abolished the "earnets" and "triptyques" for visiting motorists. Germany however still requires the International Driving Licence.

Form 29C can be obtained from H.M. Customs, H.M. Stationery Office, York House, Kingsway,

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Caravans, however, still require the usual Customs documents.

\* \* \*

At the famous resort of Zermatt, Valais, the first section of the Gornergrat-Stockhorn cable-way leading to Hohtälligrat (10,715 ft.) was recently opened for regular service.

\* \* \*

Flights by helicopter are fast becoming fashionable. Prices are quite reasonable, as the following list published by "Heliport Trübsee", Engelberg, shows:

Short circular flight over Engelberg, Frs.25.— per person; Alpine circular flight, Frs.75.— per person; Gerschnialp-Trübsee, Frs.25.— per person; Mount Titlis (10,800 ft.), Frs.150.— per two persons.

\* \* \*

A new Alpine aerodrome was completed recently at an altitude of 7,200 ft. above the Swiss resort of Verbier, Valais. It will mainly serve tourist purposes.

\* \* \*

Numerous summer courses on modern languages will again be held in Switzerland this summer. An

index featuring all details as to length, subjects and tuition fees of these courses at some hundred universities, public and private schools is available from the Swiss National Tourist Office, 458 Strand, London, W.C.2.

\* \* \*

The resort of Gstaad (Bernese Oberland) is featuring in its summer programme an International Fencing Competition (5th and 6th July), the International Tennis Championship of Switzerland (21st and 27th July), a Yehudi Menuhin Festival with world-famous artists including Sir Benjamin Britten (3rd to 9th August) and the traditional Folklore Festival of Gstaad (10th August).

\* \* \*

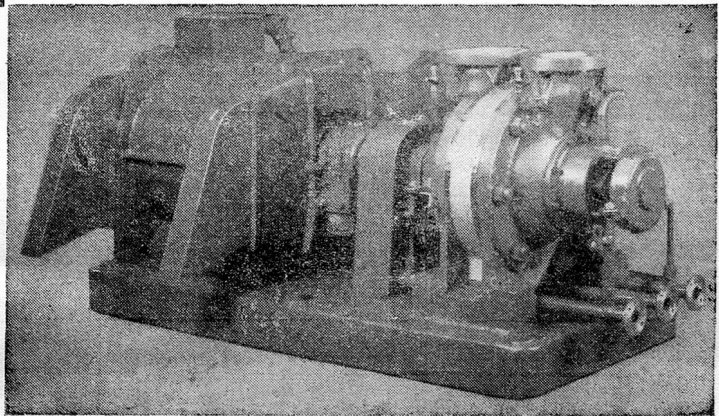
The 23rd Music Festival Week at the Swiss mountain resort of Braunwald, taking place from 20th to 30th July, will be marked this year by "SAFFA". Daily lectures on the subject "Woman and Music: Three Centuries of European Music" will be given by eminent music experts, and four concerts with the Swiss conductor Hedy Salquin are highlighting the festival programme.

\* \* \*

A spacious new wing of Zurich's Kunsthaus (Fine-Arts Museum), sponsored by the late industrialist, E. G. Bührle, will be inaugurated during the famous Zurich June Festival. On this occasion the precious Bührle art collection will be exhibited for the first time in its complete set-up.

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