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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 bestowed upon Dr. Albert Weitnauer, Delegate for Commercial Treaties at the Commercial Division of the Federal Economic Department, the title of Minister *ad personam*. (Minister Weitnauer was from 1953 to 1954 Commercial Counsellor at the then Swiss Legation in London.)

\* \* \*

Counsellor of Legation Monsieur Pierre Dumont will shortly relinquish his post as head of the Swiss delegation of the Neutral Nations Commission for the Repatriation of Prisoners of War in Korea. He will be succeeded by Monsieur Rudolf Hartmann, Counsellor at the Swiss Embassy in Cologne.

\* \* \*

The Federal Council has elected Dr. rer.pol. Hugo Allemann, of Welschenrohr, to the post of Vice-Director of the Federal Statistical Bureau.

\* \* \*

Monsieur Iossif Iossijowitch Kusmin, the newly appointed Soviet Ambassador, has presented his credentials to Monsieur M. Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Monsieur C. F. Wahlen, Vice-President, at the Palais Fédéral in Berne.

\* \* \*

On the occasion of the Independence celebrations of Somaliland and Madagascar, the President of the Swiss Confederation has sent congratulatory messages to the respective presidents, which signifies that Switzerland has recognised the two new republics.

\* \* \*

The Swiss Federal Railways carried 17.1 million passengers in the month of May 1960, or 500,000 fewer than in May 1959. Receipts: 31.3 million francs.

Goods traffic is returned as 2.5 million tons, which is 360,000 tons more than during the same period in 1959. Receipts: 48.4 million francs (May 1959: 41.8 million francs).

#### Cantonal

In the year 1959, 526,000 persons visited the Zurich Zoological Gardens. In spite of heavy expenses for the purchase of animals, and the building of a new monkey-house, the accounts for 1959 show only a small deficit amounting to 9,078.— francs. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The C. F. Bally, A.G. (Holding Company) Zurich, has declared a dividend of 8 per cent for the year 1959.

\* \* \* [A.T.S.]

Dr. Willy Zeller, until recently commercial editor of the paper "Basler Nachrichten", has been appointed economic correspondent of the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" in Brussels. Dr. Rudolf Hafter, who occupied the post at Brussels *ad int.* is returning to the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung". [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The municipal council of Winterthur has decided to name the new military barracks in Ohrbühl after General Guisan. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \* [A.T.S.]

The "Juvenia" watch manufacturing concern of La Chaux-de-Fonds has celebrated its 100th jubilee. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

A tractor was in collision with a train of the Freiburg-Murten-Ins railway at a level crossing near Ins. The driver of the tractor, Fritz Binggeli (29), of Ins, was killed. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Furs valued at between 100,000 and 200,000 francs were stolen from the "Pelzgeschäft Hanky" at the Pelikanstrasse in Zurich. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

M. André Sandoz (Socialist) has been elected Mayor of the town of La Chaux-de-Fonds in succession to M. Marcel Itten. [A.T.S.]

### CITY SWISS CLUB

Will Members please note that no meeting will be held during

AUGUST.

They will be advised in due course of the resumption in September next.

THE COMMITTEE.

Mr. Paul Suter (50), biscuit manufacturer, of Bätterkinden, was killed when, at a level-crossing near Solothurn, his car collided with a train of the Solothurn-Zollikofen-Bern railway. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The 500th anniversary celebrations of the foundation of the University of Basle were held from Wednesday, 29th June, to Saturday, 2nd July, in Basle.

On Wednesday the Swiss and foreign universities delegations were received by Professor A. Werthemann, "Prorektor"; the foreign guests numbered 1,800. After the reception, solemn services were held at the Minster, the "Klarakirche", the "Predigerkirche" and the Synagogue, followed by academic lectures. In the evening, gala dances for the students were held at the "Stadtkasino" and the "Kunsthalle".

Thursday was reserved for the reception of the scientists at the "Neuen Kongresshalle". Professor Dr. E. Staehelin, Rector of the University, welcomed the large gathering, after which Professor Dr. Karl Jaspers spoke on "Wahrheit und Wissenschaft", and Professor Dr. Adolf Portmann gave a lecture on "Naturforschung und Humanismus". In the evening, a performance of "Orestie", by Aischylos, was given at the municipal theatre.

Friday was the official day. After the acceptance of congratulatory addresses and presents at the "Neuen Kongresshalle", in the presence of M. Max Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Federal Councillor H. P. Tschudy, a procession wended its way to the Minster, where addresses were given by, among others, Professor Dr. E. Staehelin, in the capacity of *rector magnificus*, Dr. C. Peter, President of the Government of the canton of Basle, and the President of the Swiss Confederation. In the evening a torchlight procession was held.

Saturday saw the closing of the festivities; it began with the announcing of honorary degrees. Five Swiss and twenty-five foreigners were honoured with the degree of *doctor honoris causa*. Professor E. Staehelin presented the 1959 and 1960 prizes, for "scientific valor", of 10,000.— francs each, given by the town of Basle, to Dr. J. Hürzeler (Basle) and Dr. G. Meyer (Basle). In the afternoon, the various Faculties undertook excursions, and in the evening there was much merrymaking, in which the population of Basle took part. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The Grand Council of the canton of Basle-Town, on the recommendation of the cantonal government, has, on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the Basle University, voted a credit of 150,000.— francs for the education of its students. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

A Bill for the second *étape* of building development at the airport Basle-Mulhausen — costing 75 million francs — has been rejected by the electorate of the town

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of Basle by 11,517 votes to 11,004. Only 34.5 per cent of the electorate went to the poll. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Dr. Nikolaus Portmann, press chief, and Mr. Karl Siegmund, head of the technical service of the Basle Fair, have gone into retirement after 36 years of service. They are succeeded by Dr. Martin Trottmann and Mr. Werner Meisenholzer. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Mr. N. C. G. Bischoff, for forty years a member of the editorial staff of the "Basler Nachrichten", has retired from his post. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Dr. Georg Sprecher (Democrat) has been elected Mayor of the town of Chur, with 2,046 votes. His opponent, Dr. Kaspar Laely (Liberal) received 1,688 votes.

The new "Stadtpräsident" (47) is chief editor of the "Neuen Bündner Zeitung". He sat in the National Council from 1941 to 1959. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Dr. J. Riedener (Conservative Christian Socialist), and Dr. A. Gemperli (Conservative Christian Socialist) have retired from the government of the canton of St. Gall, of which they have been members since 1936.

Dr. Riedener was from 1939 to 1947 a member of the National Council, and Dr. Gemperli had sat in the National Council for the last twelve years. [A.T.S.]



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A man called at the counter of the branch office of the "Bündner Kantonalbank" at Andermatt. Brandishing a revolver he ordered the cashier to hand over the contents of the safe. The cashier, however, was able to put the alarm system into action, whereupon the gangster took to his heels. He was later arrested by the police in the person of a twenty-year-old German national. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

A fire which broke out at the "Papierfabrik Widmer-Walty & Co." in Oftringen (Ct. Aargau) caused considerable damage. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The commune of Brugg (Ct. Aargau) has bestowed honorary citizenship upon Professor Dr. E. Laur and his wife. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Heavy damage was caused by a fire which broke out at the "Verbandstoff Fabrik" Netstal (Ct. Glarus). [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Securities, savings books and cash amounting to 160,000.— francs in value were stolen from a farmhouse at Ellighausen (Ct. Thurgau). [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

During a violent storm on the Bodensee a motor-boat driven by a hotelier of Bottigkofen (Ct. Thurgau), and also containing two members of his staff, became water-logged and overturned between Meersburg and Staad. The hotelier and his kitchen chef clung to the boat, and were later rescued. The twenty-four-year-old kitchen porter, Erich Lüttmann, of Konstanz, who tried to swim to the shore, was drowned. [A.T.S.]

The "Suchard Holding S.A." Lausanne, has declared a dividend of 8 per cent for the year 1959. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Miss Greti Leibundgut (19), a nurse at the District Hospital, Thun, whilst climbing in the "Langgletscher" district (Ct. Valais), lost her life; she was struck by a falling stone. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The "Conseil d'Etat" of the republic and canton of Geneva has decided to name the Quai along the "Jardin anglais" to the "Place de Rhône" the "Quai General Guisan". [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

#### DEATHS

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Roger de Cerenville, from 1912 to 1946 a banker in Lausanne, and from 1920 to 1955 Belgian Consul, in Lausanne, at the age of 79.

Dr. Sebastian Huwyler, Professor of Latin and German at the "Kantonsschule" Lucerne, and for a number of years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Lucerne, in Lucerne, aged 74.

Frau Elisabeth Thommen, in Zurich, at the age of 72. The deceased was a prolific writer and journalist.

Professor Dr. Eduard Ruebel, from 1923 to 1934 Professor of Natural Science at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich, and at one time a member of the "Kantonsrat" Zurich, in Zurich, aged 84.

Hans Wilsdorf, founder and chairman of the Rolex Watch Company Ltd., in Geneva, at the age of 79. The deceased invented and improved self-winding

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mechanism on the "rotor" principle. In the Second World-War he became well known to Allied prisoners of war for his generosity in providing them with "Oyster" watches through the Red Cross. In 1945 he decided to hand over his fortune to a trust which bears the name, Hans Wilsdorf Foundation. This trust ensures the continuity of the Rolex organization and provides large annual grants to the many charitable institutions that he has specified. Of Swiss nationality, he became a British subject before the First World-War.

Dr. Martha Sidler, for many years a teacher in Psychology at the "Arbeitslehrerinnen Seminar" of the canton of Zurich, and for ten years editor of the paper "Pro Infirmis", in Zurich, aged 71.

Colonel Dr. med. E. Isler, Instructor of the Swiss Medical Corps, in Basle, at the age of 64.

Dr. med. Max Luedin, head of the "Röntgen Institut" of the University of Basle and the "Institut für Physikalische Therapie" of the "Bürgerspital" Basle, in Basle, aged 77. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*  
**ANNIVERSARIES**

Jakob Bruderer (70), of Teufen (Ct. Appenzell A.Rh.), a former member of the "Kantonsrat" and the Government of the canton of Appenzell A.Rh. He has held the post of "Landammann" five times, and from 1951 to 1956 sat in the National Council.

Canon Jacques-George Rageth (70), of the Abbey of St. Maurice, teacher in Philosophy at the *Gymnasium* St. Maurice.

Carl Schuricht (80), of Corseaux s. Vevey, eminent orchestral conductor.

Emil Rumpel (80), of Balstal, a former teacher at the district school Balstal, and Honorary President of the Federal Music Association. On his 80th birthday the commune of Balstal has bestowed on him honorary citizenship. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*  
**DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES**

Mr. and Mrs. J. Schweizer-Amweg of Mellingen (Ct. Aargau), Mr. and Mrs. M. von Arx-Steffen of Dornach, Mr. and Mrs. R. Burlet-Fleischmann of Oberurnen (Ct. Glarus). [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*  
**LEGACIES AND DONATIONS**

The Evangelical Parish of Bischofszell-Hauptwil has received a donation of 50,000.— francs, from an anonymous donor, towards the cost of a new church.

The Government of the canton of Vaud has received an anonymous donation of 100,000.— francs for cancer research.

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The recently deceased Frederic Cart, Notary, of Lausanne, has left 1,400,000.— francs to the Orthopaedic Hospital of Western Switzerland.

The late Fräulein Emilie Freund, of Schaffhausen, has left a legacy of 10,000.— francs to various evangelical institutions of the commune of Altstaetten.

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

#### TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

In spite of constant endeavours by the authorities to reduce road accidents, these are increasing alarmingly, causing much loss of life.

A car driven by a 19-year-old youth who held no driving licence or permit to drive, crashed into a tree between Meerach and Dielsdorf (Ct. Zurich). The passenger, Adolf Stampfer (21), cabinet-maker, of Murach, was killed. The driver received serious injuries and was taken to hospital.

A motor-cycle with side-car, driven at excessive speed, was involved in a head-on collision with a car travelling in the opposite direction, at the village of Petersburg nr. Ramsen (Ct. Schaffhausen). The driver of the motor-cycle, Ernst Wieland, and the occupant of the side-car, Wilhelm Schiele, were killed. One of the four people travelling in the motor-car, Mrs. Elsa Meier (55), of Singen, received fatal injuries, and the other three occupants were taken to hospital injured.

A motor-car driven by nineteen-year-old Herbert Notter, of Wohlen (Ct. Aargau), when taking a corner skidded and crashed into an oncoming French-registered car at Alaman nr. Morges. The driver of the French car, Pierre Tambolini (35), of Fontenay (French Jura), and his wife, Jeanne (33), were killed, and their passenger was seriously injured. The driver of the Swiss car sustained concussion, and the other occupants, Ditmar Kuch (19), Dettles Kuch (17) and Rolf Lüthi (19), all of Wohlen, were taken to hospital at Aubonne, suffering from injuries.

A cyclist, Frau Dora Fischer-Wanzenried (49), of Ennetbaden, was killed in the "Weiten Gasse" Baden when in collision with a lorry.

Three persons lost their lives in a collision between a motor-cycle and two cars on the road between Porcelles and Oron-le-Châtel. Those killed were Paul Menon (37), of La Joux, Fernand Davet, of Porcelles, and Mrs. Betty Baechler (38), of Geneva.

Frau Rosa Attinger (67), of Effretikon, riding a bicycle, failed to notice a traffic-stop at the Lindenauerstrasse in Effretikon, and was run over and killed by a car.

Urs Wiederkehr (7), of Regensburg (Ct. Zurich), whilst crossing the road, was run over and killed by a car.

The driver of a moped, Allessandro Martinaglia (17), of Winterthur, was killed when he crashed into a tree at the Bruder-Laus Strasse in Winterthur.

The driver of a motor-car carrying four persons lost control of his vehicle at the entry of Niederbipp, and crashed with great force into an approaching car, causing the death of four persons: Ernst Waldvogel, of Dübendorf, Gertrud Waldvogel-Ulrich (52), of Dübendorf, Jakob Widmer-Meyer (40), of Muttenz, and Mrs. Ulrich-Schreiber (74), of Büren an der Aare.

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

#### VARIOUS

According to the Federal Statistical Bureau, the population of Switzerland on 30th June 1960 numbered 5,270,000, or 30,000 more than at the beginning of 1959.

The population of the following cantons is returned as: Zurich, 926,500, Berne, 869,000, Vaud, 408,700, Aargau, 343,800, St. Gall, 337,000, Lucerne, 250,000, Geneva, 247,900, Basle-Town, 223,200, Grisons, 144,200, Neuchâtel, 143,400; and of the following towns: Berne, 163,000, Zurich, 434,000, Basle, 227,000, Geneva, 172,000, Lausanne, 121,000, Winterthur, 77,000, St. Gall, 74,000, Lucerne, 67,000, Biel, 57,000, Neuchâtel, 33,000, La Chaux-de-Fonds, 35,000.

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

From 1910 — when for the first time a collection for the 1st of August celebration was instituted — until 1959, a total sum of 33 million francs was collected for the benefit of various public utility and cultural institutions. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Professor Dr. Hans Stettbacher, of "Luegeten" (Ct. Schwyz), formerly Professor of Pedagogics at the University of Zurich, and publisher of the Pestalozzi letters, has been awarded by the Pestalozzi World Foundation — founded by the Swiss-American, H. C. Honegger — the "1959 Weltjugendhilfe" prize. Since its establishment, the Foundation has collected over 25 million francs. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

On Sunday, 25th September, at 4 p.m., a performance of Giuseppe Verdi's "Requiem" will be given in St. Gall's beautiful cathedral. Conductor, Heinz Wallberg, Vienna-Wiesbaden; Viennese choir and orchestra; soloists, Ilva Ligabue, Fiorenza Cossotto, Luigi Ottolini and Ivo Vinco, Milan.

\* \* \*

The Yehudi Menuhin Festival, Gstaad, 8th to 18th August, will feature six concerts with world-famous soloists and the Zürich Chamber Orchestra conducted by Edmond de Stoutz. Gstaad, one of the finest winter and summer resorts in the Bernese Oberland, is likewise known for its scenic beauty and its fashionable social life.

\* \* \*

Work has started on the new artificial ice-rink at Adelboden, the inauguration of which is planned for the beginning of December. As a contribution to the

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national campaign against noise, building operations are being suspended during the summer season. The entertainment programme contains some 60 events including International Competitions for Ski-ing, Skating and Curling.

\* \* \*

Davos, one of Switzerland's oldest and most popular summer resorts and winter sports centres, is to improve its sports facilities. In an effort to extend the ice-skating season — from early November till around Easter, which traditionally marks the last peak of the ski-ing period — the local authorities plan to replace the ice-hockey stadium by an artificial ice-rink which is expected to be completed for the 1960-61 winter sports season. Earmarked for an early opening in the summer of 1961 is a new nine-hole golf course and country-club house.

\* \* \*

The Spa of Bad Ragaz has recently inaugurated its second indoor swimming pool, which may be used by the general public in the afternoons, the mornings being reserved for the hotel guests taking cures.

The golf course has been enlarged to 18 holes and a number of improvements have been carried out in the Spa and the hotels.

Great importance is attached to the new method for registering various aspects of the blood circulation with apparatus constructed by Drs. Fenyves and Gut, of Bale. It permits more reliable diagnosis and at the same time the new method is appreciated by the patients as the unpleasant needle can be dispensed with.

\* \* \*

Switzerland, the land of world-famous private schools, possesses a good many excellent commercial schools which are grouped in an association of their own within the scope of the Federation of Associations of Swiss Private Schools. A descriptive folder recently issued by this association lists 21 commercial schools in French-speaking Switzerland and a total of 18 in the German- and Italian-speaking parts of the country.

\* \* \*

Europe's most progressive and modernistic "village" is Wettingen (population 18,000), which has rapidly outgrown all other towns in the Canton Aargau, including the neighbouring spa and industrial centre of Baden. In order to cope with further developments which are expected to bring the population up to 40,000 within the next few years, town-planners are busy building a completely new city with an ultra-modern civic centre. Near the new glass-and-chromium town hall several sky-scraper apartment houses with accommodation for hundreds of families are now under construction.

\* \* \*

Saas-Fee, one of the most charming summer and winter resorts in the Valais Alps, recently extended its high-Alpine suspension railway as far up as the 9,300-foot-high Längfluh, thus opening up new roads into the realm of Canton Valais's sky-high peaks. At the same time, the motor-road in the Saas valley was improved. Yet motor-cars remain banned from the village proper, which is one of Switzerland's few traffic-free oases. Cars are to be parked in the "automobile terminus" outside the village.

\* \* \*

357 new hotels, accommodating a total of 8,342 persons, were opened in Switzerland last year. The average of less than 24 guest beds per hotel shows that

the Swiss hotel trade continues to stick to one of its time-honoured principles: Quality comes before Quantity.

\* \* \*

Vevey and Montreux, two gay lakeside cities and resorts on Lake Geneva, are busy preparing their traditional "Musical September", or 15th International Music Festival, to take place from 31st August to 6th October. Among the guest performers are the Symphony Orchestra of the North-German Radio in Hamburg, the National Orchestra of Paris, the Choir of the St. Hedwiga's Cathedral of Berlin, and the Orchestre de la Suisse Romande of Geneva. The soloists include Clara Haskil, Wilhelm Backhaus, Pierre Fournier, Nathan Milstein, Zino Francescatti, Artur Rubinstein, Geza Anda, Robert Casadesus and Isaac Stern.

\* \* \*

A new type of underground garage is now under construction in Geneva. It consists of a circular wall with a surface of 2,500 square metres, into which the car-boxes are built. The structure will be completed above the ground and is then to be sunk into the earth by its own weight. For this purpose the cylindrical wall, in its lower part, is knife-shaped and equipped with a sharp metallic edge. It is expected that it will sink some four inches a day after the scaffolding is removed.

\* \* \*

A large-scale Swiss costume festival, which is to be held in Basel on 2nd and 3rd September next year, is already being planned. For the first time in the history of these traditional Swiss folklore festivals there will be two official parades — a daylight procession, and a night parade which is to feature some unusual aspects of Swiss folklore.

\* \* \*

Richard Wagner and Queen Victoria of England — the latter, in 1868, ordered a regular expedition to be set up in order to carry her up to the legend-haunted Mt. Pilatus above Lucerne — are just two of the many celebrities who signed the guest book of the Bellevue mountain-top inn which recently became 100 years old. Since 1889, visitors to Mt. Pilatus, which formerly was known as the "Fräkmünt" (from the Latin "Mons Fractus" — "Fissured Mountain"), instead of relying on mules, horses and sedan chairs, have by the million used the cog-wheel railway to climb this fabulous lookout peak in the heart of Switzerland.

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The Swiss mountain guides and ski instructors, Xavier Kalt and René Droz, have just announced the inauguration of a Summer and Winter Alpinist Centre at La Fouly (5,300 feet), Val Ferret, Canton Valais. The hamlet of La Fouly is reached from Martigny in the Rhône Valley by mountain railway to Orsière, and from there by postal motor-coach. The seven-day alpinist courses for beginners and advanced afford a complete training in rock-climbing, ice-walking, roping and step-hewing, followed by mountaineering expeditions throughout the Swiss Mont Blanc area. Enrolments can be made for any period between June and 30th September. In the spring, high-Alpine ski-excursions will be organized from La Fouly.

The boring of the tunnel from the Zmutt valley above Zermatt to Bricolla in Val d'Hérens has just been completed after four years' work. It is nearly 12 miles long and, after the Simplon (12½ miles), the longest Alpine tunnel.

It is to be used for diverting, during the summer, the waters dammed in the higher Zermatt glen into an artificial lake which feeds the turbines of the Grande Dixence hydroelectric plant near Sion in the Rhône valley. The lake, formed by the erection of a 300 foot dam, is being raised by the building of a new dam which when finished two years hence will be the highest in the world — nearly 900 feet.

The new tunnel will, every summer, bring nearly 524 million cubic yards of water to the artificial lake.

\* \* \*

A concession has been granted for the building of a hydroelectric power plant in the valley of Saas (Ct. Valais). It will be fed by the waters of the river Visp (the "Saaser Visp") and those of an artificial lake to be created at Mattmark (6,890 feet). The building of a dam at the outlet of the Mattmark glen will in fact re-create the lake which existed at Mattmark many years ago and was reduced to a marshy plain by the sand and rubble brought down by the torrents.

The new lake will be bigger than the original one and it will cover a wider area, as the famous "Blaue Stein", the huge serpentine block deposited by the Schwarzeck glacier at the southern end of the glen, will be under water. The builders of the plant say that there will be enough water in the Visp lower down in the valley once the dam is finished, but some people fear that lack of water along the path of the Visp may be harmful to plants and trees. [A.T.S.]

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