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In November, a home for the mentally handicapped was opened at Malvielliers in the Val-de-Ruz, financed by the Foundation "Les Perces-Neige". The Neuchâtel Friends of Nature have appointed keepers whose task it is to report unscrupulous tourists who spoil plants. A farm house dating to 1505 near la Brévine has been restored and will be used for exhibitions by Neuchâtel artists.

The Neuchâtel Underwater Research and Sports Centre recently inaugurated a "Diving Centre", the first of its kind in Europe and a project that took two years of effort and work to complete. Along with a research centre, it will house a fresh-water diving school.

Cultural life of the town of Neuchâtel is to be promoted; the former Mayor Georges Béguin was elected President of this "Fondation pour le Rayonnement de Neuchâtel". The Natural History Museum has been enlarged and improved. In November, the town's General Council voted a credit of 1.68m. francs for the completion of the renovation of the Municipal Hospital. The new Chief of the Municipal Police is Lieut. R. Habersaat, in succession of the retiring W. Bleuler.

La Chaux-de-Fonds, as usual, is progressive in its views and actions. A new sports training centre is now in use near the town, the Legislative have agreed to the creation of a "Musée et Technorama de l'Horlogerie Suisse"; a permanent theatre commission has been formed for the promotion of theatre life; the "Théâtre Populaire Romand" is to stay in the town and will receive a subsidy, and to mark the 50th anniversary of Debussy's death, a special concert was given. In the Commune Council, the Socialists declined a third seat in favour of the National Progressive Party, a decision made entirely for reasons of fair representation.

A waste-water plant was opened at Col des Roches in the autumn, which will serve the town of Le Locle. At Cernier, the first woman president of a legal tribunal in Switzerland, has taken office — Mrs. Ruth Schaer-Robert.

(Compiled from news and information received by courtesy of Agence Télégraphique Suisse and O.S.E.C.)

ANGLO-SWISS NEWS ITEMS

Ten paintings, drawings and sculptures, belonging to Swiss collectors, were sold at Christie's in London for nearly 400,000 francs mid-December. The highest price was realised by an Utrillo "La Rue du Mont-Cénis", owned by Prof. W. Hadorn, Berne.

On the newly-elected Executive Committee of the World Wildlife Fund whose headquarters are at Morges, there are two British members (Peter Scott and Ernest G. Kleinwort) and two Swiss (Dr. Lukas Hoffmann and Dr. Samuel Schweizer), in addition to one American and one Dutchman.

Great Britain was official guest at the "Microtecnic 69" in Zurich. The international fair on precision technique and dimensional measuring and checking had 140 exhibitors representing 300 firms in 15 countries.

The Swiss Winston Churchill Foundation, founded in 1966, arranged this year's lecture at Basle University. Prof. F. W. Deakin, D.S.O., Warden of St. Antony's College Oxford from 1950-1968, gave a lecture on "Sir Winston as an Historian". The Government of the Canton of Basle gave a dinner at the "Schuetzenhaus" afterwards.

The 13th British-Swiss Parliamentarians' Ski-ing Race took place at Davos on 12th January. The Swiss won and National Councillor Dr. Fred Rubi, Grindelwald, was individual winner.

(By courtesy of A.T.S. and "Weekly Tribune".)

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