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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The electorate of Switzerland accepted by 480,852 votes to 413,944 a law developing agriculture and protecting agriculturists. With the growing industrialization of Switzerland, emigration from the land has reached a dangerous level. Since 1850 the proportion of agriculturists has fallen from about 50 per cent to 18 per cent of the total population, and it is estimated that nearly 1,000 farms are abandoned every year. The new "Statute of Agriculture" provides for the protection of farm products by means of Custom duties and import quotas, as well as by regulating prices on the home market by subsidies derived from Customs duties on foreign agricultural products. Here are detailed results of the voting:—

	Yes.	No.
Zürich	69,353	102,906
Bern	88,926	58,681
Luzern	26,583	23,659
Uri	3,523	2,467
Schwyz	6,419	6,869
Obwalden	2,371	2,087
Nidwalden	2,075	2,057
Glarus	3,282	4,609
Zug	3,124	4,737
Fribourg	22,379	6,366
Solothurn	18,424	14,783
Baselstadt	10,185	18,476
Baselland	10,287	9,672
Schaffhausen	7,038	7,390
Appenzell A.Rh.	3,484	7,406
Appenzell I.Rh.	1,415	1,088
St. Gallen	27,333	36,539
Graubünden	19,353	6,641
Aargau	36,357	36,012
Thurgau	19,360	15,058
Ticino	15,593	4,054
Vaud	38,135	19,915
Valais	23,037	4,045
Neuchâtel	11,849	9,085
Genève	10,967	9,342
Total	480,852	413,944

63.5% of the electors went to the Poll.

M. Rubattel, Swiss Finance Minister, told the Council of States (Upper Chamber) that Switzerland is negotiating with Britain to increase the tourist allowance.

The Government are asking for the allowance to be increased from £25 to £35.

* * *

The Swiss Federal Government announced a new 18-year, 3 per cent bond issue for a total of 200 million francs.

* * *

Monsieur Victor Salomon Pinto Juarez, the newly appointed Minister of the Republic of Guatemala, has presented his credentials to Monsieur K. Kobelt, President of the Swiss Confederation.

* * *

According to a report issued by the Federal Political Department in Berne, there are at present 53 countries accredited to the Confederation. The Diplomatic Corps numbers 256 members (1951: 266).

The personnel of the Political Department (Foreign Office) numbers 1,288 persons (1951: 1,346).

* * *

Customs duties receipts during March 1952, amounted to 46.3 million francs, or 5.1 million francs less than in March 1951.

Receipts in the first three months of the current year totalled 132.1 million francs, which is 15.1 million francs less than during the same period in the previous year.

* * *

The Swiss Federal Railways carried in February 1952, 17.13 million passengers or 1.38 million more than in February 1951. The receipts totalled 19.96 million francs, which is an increase of 1.61 million francs over the February, 1951, figures.

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