

One year after the Mattmark catastrophe

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JUBILEES AND ANNIVERSARIES

Thousands of Zurich citizens gathered at the anniversary celebration of the famous "Europe Speech" by Sir Winston Churchill (19th September 1946). It was organised by the Zurich branch of "Europa Union" to commemorate the day twenty years ago when the great British statesman expressed his vision of a united Europe and appealed to the students of the world to realise the idea. Many prominent personalities were present, and the Zurich Municipal President, Dr. S. Widmer, was in the chair. The main address was delivered by the former Austrian Foreign Minister Dr. Bruno Kreisky. The first of the Churchill Foundation Lectures will be given by Lord Butler on 24th January 1967, when a tablet will be unveiled in the *Aula* of the University of Zurich.

Another twentieth anniversary was celebrated by "Popularis Tours" in Berne, and it is 25 years since the Swiss flag appeared on the high seas for the first time. Today, the Swiss merchant fleet numbers over 30 ships with a total displacement of 267,297 tons and a total crew of 763 of whom 600 are Swiss.

The Irish poet James Joyce who had close connections with Zurich, died there 25 years ago. A commemoration service was held and a monument unveiled. The Foundation "Gott Hilft" celebrated its Golden Jubilee at Igis (Grisons); in the twelve homes belonging to the institution, 360 children are taken care of.

Two organisations could look back on 75 years of existence, the *Schweizerischer Spenglermeister- und Installateurverband* and the *Schweizerischer Wirteverein*; Federal Councillor Gnaegi addressed the latter meeting in Zurich.

Several centenaries have been celebrated this summer. At Zurich University, a special commemoration meeting was held for the great Swiss chemist Alfred Werner (1866-1919). The birth of the Swiss composer Gustave Doret (1866) was commemorated at the village of Lutry where he had lived for 16 years; some of his compositions from the *Fête des Vignerons* 1905 and 1927 and choir music were performed in the church. The town of Martigny bought an old mansion "Manoir" where art exhibitions are now held; this year's is "100 years Edition in Western Switzerland" (books, M.Ss, prints and engravings). At Basle University, 100 years ago, the first lectures in obstetrics were given by Prof. J. J. Bischoff, the first chief of the Basle Women's Clinic.

The *Schweizerischer Studentenverein* celebrated 125 years of existence this summer by holding their 120th Zentralfest at Altstaetten (St. Gall); a seminar preceded it on the theme "Consilium and Swiss Reality". The *Geschichtsforschende Gesellschaft der Schweiz* also celebrated its 125th anniversary (Engelberg, September).

The latest edition of "Strom und See" is devoted to the 150th anniversary of the *Rheinzentralkommission*, the commission was one of the outcomes of the Vienna Congress. The birth of two great personalities are commemorated this year, that of Madame Germaine de Staël-Necker and Philipp Albert Stapfer. To honour Madame de Staël, a colloquium was held at *Château de Coppet*. On 10th September, the Aargau Government, the towns of Brugg and Lenzburg and personalities from all parts of Switzerland honoured the memory of Stapfer at the Castle of Lenzburg. He was the man who, at a time of foreign domination after the fall of the old Confederation, became the first Helvetic Minister for science and the arts (1800-1803) and influenced Swiss *Bildungswesen* and the whole spiritual life of the country. Many of his ideas and

ideals were ahead of his time and could only be realised much later, and even today, many of his visions influence Swiss cultural life. (A.T.S. and "Basler Nachrichten".)

COMPTOIR SUISSE

The 47th Comptoir Suisse was opened in Lausanne on 10th September. The two countries represented this year were Pakistan and Finland; both had a special day devoted to them. Federal Councillor Spuehler delivered an address on the "Official Day" which was attended by The Presidents of the two Chambers and many personalities from various spheres of public life. Other special days were devoted to "Aviation" when the theme of training future Swiss pilots was discussed and to "The Horse" when 225 animals were shown. 800 people in national costumes attended the "Valais Day". During the Comptoir, ballet performances were given at the theatre of Beaulieu by the *Corps de Ballet* of the Finnish State Opera. The French dancer Babilée and the famous dancer and choreographer Serge Lifar were present.

Visitors came from seventy-six countries, and the total number of admissions was well over a million.

[A.T.S.]

ONE YEAR AFTER THE MATTMARK CATASTROPHE

Early in September, the Press was invited to visit the site of the Mattmark Dam where, on 30th August 1965, a glacier avalanche killed 88 men. Today, machines are working again, and the huge earth barrage which will eventually reach 2,200m. above sea-level is growing. The delay of a year due to the catastrophe is responsible for an increase in cost of 50m. francs, i.e. about Fr.450m. The Commission investigating the catastrophe is still at work; it is chaired by Mr. A. Casagrande of Harvard University.

A simple commemoration service was held at Zermeggern on the anniversary in August, at which relatives of the victims and authorities of the Valais took part. The Swiss Foundation "Pro Mattmark" published accounts showing that Fr.3,122,298.— had been collected, and that at Christmas, Fr.134,950.— had been distributed to the bereaved families.

[A.T.S.]

EIGHT DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

The following Diamond Wedding Anniversaries (60 years) have been reported from Switzerland:

Mr. and Mrs. Ernst and Fanny Gass-Hochreuthener, St. Gall.

Mr. and Mrs. Marcel Lovy-Prelez, Delémont; well-known political personality and former Commune President.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert and Anna Gutknecht-Kramer, Winterthur.

Mr. and Mrs. Hermann and Fanny Leuch-Merz, Oberhofen on Lake of Thun.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul and Marie Ziegelbauer-Trugenberger, Affeltrangen, Thurgau.

Mr. and Mrs. Oskar and Rosa Weishaupt-Locher, Wettingen; Mr. Weishaupt had been tram conductor in St. Gall for 45 years.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul and Jakobea Mueller-Hosang, La Punt (Engadine), for many years the couple have been in charge of a Christian boarding house.

Mr. and Mrs. Josef Hammer-Keller, Delémont.

[A.T.S.]