

# News at random

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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 decided to be represented in the Republics of Columbia and Ecuador by a Minister, instead of, as hitherto, by a Chargé d'Affaires.

Monsieur Jaques-Albert Cottat has been promoted to the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary; he will retain his residence at Bogotá.

The new Minister is a citizen of Rossemaison (Ct. Berne) and was born at Delsberg in 1909. He studied law and philosophy at the Universities of Berne and Paris; at the former he obtained the degree of doctor of law. In 1935, he entered the Political Department (Foreign Office), and from 1938-1946 was attached to the Swiss Legation in Buenos Aires, first as Attaché, then Secretary of Legation and Counsellor of Legation. In 1946, he returned to Berne as *Chef du Protocole* and later on, as Assistant to the head of the Division for political affairs. Five years later (1951), Minister Cottat was appointed Chargé d'Affaires to the Republics of Columbia and Ecuador.

\* \* \*

The Swiss Confederation is in future to be represented by a Minister instead of a Chargé d'Affaires in Venezuela and Panama. Consequently Monsieur Pierre François Brügger has been advanced to the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary with residence in Caracas. He is succeeding Monsieur Werner Fuchss, who has recently been appointed Swiss Minister to Poland.

Minister Brügger is *originaire* of Tavers (Ct. Fribourg) and was born at Lucerne in 1900. He studied political and economic science at the University of Fribourg. He entered into the service of the Political Department in 1924, and successively occupied posts at the Swiss Consulates in Liverpool, Sao Paulo and Bogotá. In 1940, he was transferred to the Swiss Legation in Lisbon where he was promoted in 1942 to the rank of Vice-Consul, a year later to the grade of Secretary of Legation and three years later to Counsellor of Legation. In the same capacity

he was attached in 1946 to the Swiss Legation in Czecho-Slovakia, and in 1949 to the Swiss Legation in the Argentine. In 1952, he was recalled to Berne where he occupied an important post in the Foreign Office.

\* \* \*

Monsieur Ramon Ventimilla Ramirez, Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the Republic of Ecuador, has presented his credentials to Monsieur Rubattel, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Monsieur Petitpierre, Foreign Minister.

\* \* \*

During the month of January, 1954, the Swiss Federal Railways carried 17.34 million passengers, or 233,000 more than in January 1953. Receipts: 21.83 million francs. Goods traffic has increased by 14,000 tons over the January 1953 figures and is returned as 1.38 million tons. Receipts: 27.52 million francs. (Jan. 1953: 26.72 million francs.)

\* \* \*

The Federal Council has elected Mr. Oscar de Chastonay, Manager of the Cantonal Bank, Sitten, a member of the Board of the Swiss Federal Railways in succession to the late States Councillor Joseph Piller.

#### Cantonal

At this year's International Music Festival in Lucerne, the following conductors have been engaged: Wilhelm Furtwängler, Herbert von Karajan, Rafael Kubelik, Ference Fricsay, Edwin Fischer and André Cluytens. Amongst the soloists are: Gioconda de Vito, Clara Haskil, Edwin Fischer, Wolfgang Schneiderhan, Enrico Mainardi and Igor Oistrakh, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Elsa Caveltti, Ernst Häfliger

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and Otto Edelmann. The London Philharmonic Orchestra has also been engaged. [A.T.S.]

The chamber music orchestra "Collegium Musicum", Zurich, has been invited to give three concerts, under the conductorship of Dr. Paul Sacher (Basle) at the Edinburgh Festival next September. [A.T.S.]

The accounts for 1953 of the canton of Glarus, close with a *credit* balance of Frs. 54,966.—francs. Those of the canton of Zug show a *credit* balance of 101.390.—francs. [A.T.S.]

Dr. med. M. Müller, Director of the "Heil & Pflegeanstalt" Münsingen, has been elected in the same capacity at the "Heil & Pflegeanstalt Waldau" in Berne. [A.T.S.]

Crowds filled the large Minster Square in Berne and overflowed into the adjoining streets in unprecedented demonstrations in defence of the architectural character of the old part of the Swiss capital.

The stir was caused because a successful Bernese baker, Mr. A. W. Ischi, bought a chain of old houses with handsome arcades in the "Gerechtigkeitsgasse" and the "Junkerngasse" in order to replace them by modern blocks of flats. This idea shocked the citizens and there was an outcry in the press. The City Council ("Bürgerat") offered to buy back the houses from Mr. Ischi but preliminary negotiations yielded no result. Instead Mr. Ischi announced that he would display in a shop window in the Minster Square the plans for his new houses and that he would show that he would not deprive the public of arcades as such.

The crowds reacted and came to the Minster Square not to contemplate the new plans but to give vent to their indignation. Everybody seems to have been there: the young and old, rich and poor, workers and employers, members of the professions and of the diplomatic corps, and not least M. Rubattel, President of the Swiss Confederation, accompanied by two Federal Councillors, M. Etter, and M. Feldmann. Even the Swiss Colony in Washington sent a cable supporting the demonstration.

Speeches were made by a clergyman, a journalist, an architect, and a Government spokesman all in favour of retaining the character of the old town and appealing to Mr. Ischi to subordinate his personal interest to those of the community. [A.T.S.]

(On going to press we hear, that Mr. Ischi, after an interview with the City Council, has declared his willingness to sell the houses, with certain reservation, to the Council, the latter intends to allocate the space to citizens who have fallen on bad times.)

M. Henri Gendre, aged 54, an agriculturist of Fribourg has succeeded M. Torch as a member of the National Council, the latter having been elected a States Councillor. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Paul Sacher, a music-conductor of Basle has been invited to conduct Strawinsky's opera "The Rake's Progress" at the Glyndebourne Festival next July. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Ch. Köpke, Commercial Manager of the airport Basle-Mülhausen, has tendered his resignation for health reasons. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Abraham Schmid, "Kantons-Oberingenieur" (Grisons) has retired from his post. [A.T.S.]

M. Jean-Pierre Porchat, Journalist, has been appointed Chancelier d'Etat of the canton of Neuchâtel in succession to the late Pierre Court.

M. Porchat has been since 1934 a member of the editorial staff of the "Feuille d'Avis de Neuchâtel". In 1950/51, he was President of the Neuchâtel Press Association. [A.T.S.]

The elections for a new period of office of the Government of the canton of Vaud took place recently. The following members were re-elected: Paul Chaudet (rad.) 27,554 votes; Pierre Ogney (rad.) 27,268 votes; Edmond Jaquet (lib.) 26,569 votes; Alfred Oulevay (rad.) 25,810 votes; Gabriel Desplands (rad.) 24,830 votes. Arthur Maret (soc.) a former member, and Léon Jaquier, a new candidate (soc.) have not polled a sufficient majority and a further poll will be necessary.

To replace M. Lucien Rubattel, who has resigned, M. Louis Guisan (lib.) has been elected with 25,336 votes.

The new member of the cantonal Government was born in 1911 at Lausanne. He studied law at the Universities of Lausanne, Berlin, Kiel and Rome, after which he established himself as a lawyer in Yverdon. [A.T.S.]

M. Antoine Pugin, a member of the Government of the canton of Geneva is shortly retiring from his post. He was born in 1898 in Geneva, and has belonged to the cantonal Government for the last 18 years. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Franklin C. Gowen has been appointed American Consul General at Geneva, in succession to Consul General Robert E. Ward. [A.T.S.]

### Army

Lieutenant Kurt Schmucki, aged 36, a technician at Kloten was killed when a Mustang machine, which he was piloting crashed when he undertook an emergency landing. [A.T.S.]

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Théophile Robert, painter, Neuchâtel at the age of 74. The deceased is the descendant of a well-known Neuchâtel painter family. He studied in Paris,

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Florence and Berlin. After the first world war, he settled down in Paris and later returned to his ancestral estate at St. Blaise.

Ernst Egli, since 1952 "Kreispost-Direktor" of the town of St. Gall, in St. Gall, aged 63.

Dr. Rudolf Baumann, a lawyer, and President of the Board of the "Volksbank" Reinach, and for many years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Aargau, in Leutwil, at the age of 65.

Emil Freimann, a former civil engineer, and the oldest inhabitant of the town of Winterthur, in Winterthur aged 97.

Colonel Eduard Birnstiel, civil engineer. The deceased was, during the last war, commander of the 7th artillery regiment, in Winterthur, at the age of 64.

Rudolf Staub, civil engineer, in Glarus, aged 80. The deceased was the founder of the Swiss Academic Alpine Club. He spent the greater part of his life in the United States of America and France, where he was occupied in the shipbuilding and armament industry.

Rudolf Scheidegger, "Regierungsstatthalter" of the canton of Berne, in Burgdorf, at the age of 58.

Dr. Jakob Schneider, vicar, and a well-known geologist, in Altstätten, Ct. St. Gall, aged 84.

Franz Goetz, a former President of the "Basler Gewerkschaftskartells", and member of the Grand Council of the canton of Basle-Town, in Basle, at the age of 57.

Dr. med. Hans Imfeld, Head of the blood transfusion service of the Swiss Red Cross, in Berne, owing to a skiing accident, at the age of 40.

Ernst Sigg, Director of the "Lebensmittelverein" Zurich, in Zurich, at the age of 42.

Mme. Sophie Niess, the oldest inhabitant of the canton of Geneva, in Geneva, aged 101.

Dr. A. Kramer, a member of the Superior Court of the canton of Thurgau, in Frauenfeld, at the age of 67.

Paul Rosset, a former Mayor of the town of Lausanne, in Lausanne, aged 82. [A.T.S.]

The undermentioned donations and legacies are published in the Swiss Press:

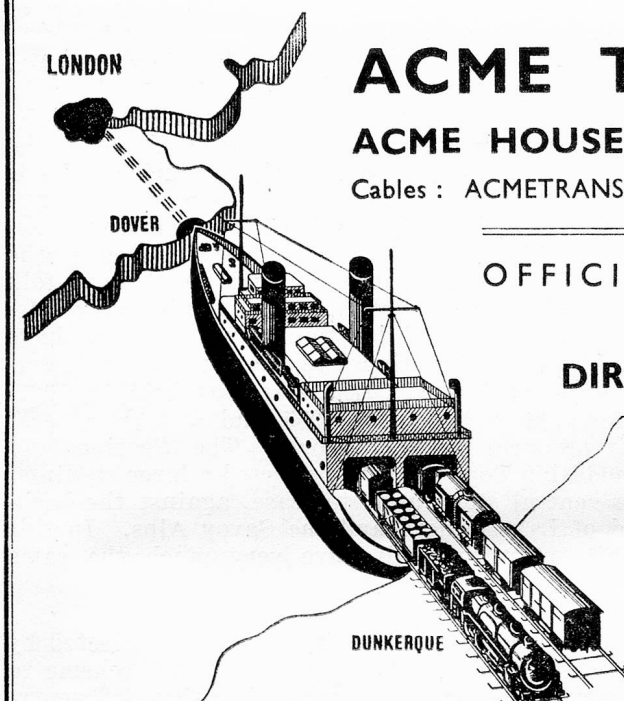
The heirs of the late Dr. h.c. Emil Barell of Basle, Mme. D. Barell-Sachs and Mlle. Maria Barell, have made a donation amounting to 250,000.— francs to the University of Basle for the creation of an "Emil Barell Fund".

The Textile concern SAPT of Adliswil (Ct. Zurich) has given the parish of Adliswil an amount of 240,000.— francs for the erection of a *crèche* and "Kindergarten."

The late Alfred Schär, Bank-Manager, who died in Zurich, has donated an amount of 10,000.— to the "Krankenhaus" Wil. (Ct. St. Gall).

The "Schweizerische Stiftung für das Alter" has received an amount of 20,000.— francs from an anonymous donor, who has lately died.

The late Friedrich Lanz-Kohler, a former notary and President of the parish of Roggwil, and his wife have left an amount of 250,000.— frs. to a Foundation to be called "Lanz-Kohler" Foundation the revenue from which is to be used for charitable purposes. [A.T.S.]



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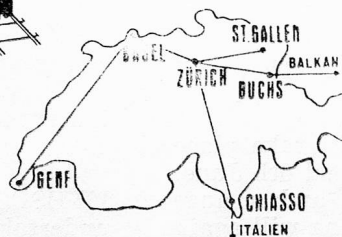
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The undermentioned anniversaries are reported in the Swiss Press:

Professor, Dr. med. Emil Feer (90) of Zurich, a former Director of the children's hospital Zurich, and from 1911-1929, Professor of medicine at the University of Zurich.

Hans Etter, civil engineer (80) of Berne, from 1926-1938, General Manager, and from 1938-1940, President of the "Generaldirektion" of the Swiss Federal Railways.

Dr. Rudolf Laemmel, (75) of Zurich, pedagogue and author. Founder of the "Reformgymnasium", Zurich.

Traugott Vogel (60) of Zurich, author. Amongst his best-known novels are: "Unsereiner", "Ich liebe, Du liebst", "Der blinde Seher", und "Leben im Grund".

Emanuel Stickelberger (70) of Amriswil (Ct. Thurgau) a well-known writer. [A.T.S.]

The price of petrol and oil in Switzerland has just been reduced. Petrol now costs 57 cents per litre (4/3d a gallon). Oil is Sfr. 2.90-3.60 per litre (2/8-3/4 a pint), according to quality.

#### THE HOSPES EXHIBITION.

At this very large and original exhibition, which will take place in Berne from May 14th to June 21st, sixteen nations are to be represented. Apart from these, Russian chefs from the largest Russian restaurant in Paris will prepare and serve their finest speciality dishes. At the great INTERNATIONAL RESTAURANT, visitors will be able to enjoy "zakouski" — the true Russian relishes or "hors d'oeuvres" — and vodka.

A Yugoslav delegation has also announced its intention to take part in the Exhibition and will certainly demonstrate a few national culinary specialities. Fish — of which more than 300 varieties are found in the Dalmatian Sea — is, of course, a great speciality of Yugoslavia. Furthermore, there are numerous local and regional specialities: paprika, for example, pork and mutton dishes, grilled meats, rice dishes, stews, poultry, and so on. Visitors versed in gastronomy will also enjoy the Serbian "Slivovica", a very strong spirit.

Great Britain also intends to be worthily represented at the HOSPES Exhibition. The English national "team" of chefs and other British exhibitors have already had what might be termed a "dress rehearsal" at the "Hotelympia Exhibition" in London. It was made evident there that refined English specialities are amongst the best in the world.

During the "British Week" (May 20th-26th), typical British National dishes will be prepared by prominent chefs from this country. A Londoner, Swiss-born Mr. Walter Bachmann, who is well-known as the author of several standard works on Cooking, Baking and Pastry-Making, is also a "Chevalier de la Chaîne des Rôtisseurs de Paris". He will be in charge of the party, who are his guests. They will fly by Swissair to Berne on May 19th.

The 23rd "Fête des Narcisses" will take place this year on Saturday and Sunday, 5th and 6th June. A grand flower corso in the afternoon and a huge firework display on the Lake in the evening will again be the principal attractions.

On June 2nd, 3rd and 4th, preceding the Narcissus Festival, Motor Coaches from many countries will gather at Montreux for the 6th International Motor Coach Rally.

The world famous open-air Tell plays, at Inter-laken with more than 300 participants, will be staged with ten afternoon and four evening performances during the period July 3rd-September 5th.

10th International Musical Competition Geneva 1954. This great annual event will take place from September 20th to October 3rd, 1954. Applications should reach the Secretariat of the "Conservatoire de musique" in Geneva by July 15th at the latest. Further information may be obtained from the same address.

Ten special tours for advanced and expert skiers will be arranged by the well-known guide Heinrich Zurbriggen of Saas-Fee during the period March 28th-June 12th, 1954. A pamphlet giving full information can be obtained from the Swiss National Tourist Office.

Similar tours are planned by Jack Neuhausler, guide, of Klosters, for the period March 7th-May 22nd, 1954.

A delegation of members of the Organising Committee of the 1955 Vintners' Festival recently attended a partial audition of the musical score of the Festival Play given at the Lausanne Broadcasting House (Maison de la Radio). The score has been composed by Carlo Hemmerling. A synopsis of the scenario was given by Mr. Maurice Lehmann, art director of the Festival. Sketches and descriptions of the stage sets were demonstrated by Mr. Louis Fost and Mr. Geo Blanc, author of the libretto, read a few passages from his work. The musical score was rendered by two pianists and a few soloists. The producer of the Festival Play is Mr. Oscar Eberlé of Zurich, who is a historian of folk plays and has, for some twenty years, specialised in the production of modern open-air folk festivals. The Lucerne Music Weeks, the Calderon Theatre at Einsiedeln and the Schwyz folk plays (on the occasion of the 650th anniversary celebrations of the Confederation) for example, have earned him an international reputation.

The Vevey Festival (the last was held in 1927) will take place in August 1955 and already several committees are hard at work. The Seating and Accommodation Committee has selected a large stadium, with a central stage and staircase, against the background of Lake Geneva and the Savoy Alps. In this way, all spectators will have very much the same view.

The Locarno Girls' Seminary has been selected by UNESCO to take part in an experimental scheme to co-ordinate international civic education. Twenty-five schools in 14 different countries will take part in the experiment during 1954. The scheme includes exchange of correspondence between the different schools and the organization of international competitions. UNESCO will co-ordinate the different activities undertaken, facilitate the regular exchange of information and supply financial help.

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The European Athletic Championships to be held at Berne from August 25th to 29th are arousing great interest in sports circles. Already, the Organizing Committee has reserved seating accommodation in the Stadium to the amount of over 100,000 Swiss francs. Enquiries and requests for reservations are flowing in from Switzerland and abroad.

During the Summer 1954 holiday courses at Swiss Universities, in the French, German and Italian languages will again be held. A complete list is available from the Swiss National Tourist Office.

During 1953, traffic on the Swiss Federal Railways totalled 946,490 trains. 6,500 more train services (regular, optional, special) as compared with the previous year were run on the national network. Goods traffic was also much heavier: 418,923 trains were run, or 7,600 more than in 1952.

The Board of the Swiss Federal Railways recently approved the plan for the building of a double-track line between Cottens and Rosé (the last portion of Romont-Fribourg line on the Geneva-Lausanne-Berne-Zurich-St. Gallen/Romanshorn route which still has a single track). Furthermore, the Board approved the purchase of 20 railway cars to be used for international travel: their cost is estimated at 5.6 million francs.

Swiss Alpine Postal Coaches. Holiday planning for the coming season is now well under way, and bookings are made in ever increasing numbers. Visitors to Switzerland are well advised to ask for the advantageous Holiday Ticket with the five control squares for half-fare excursions.

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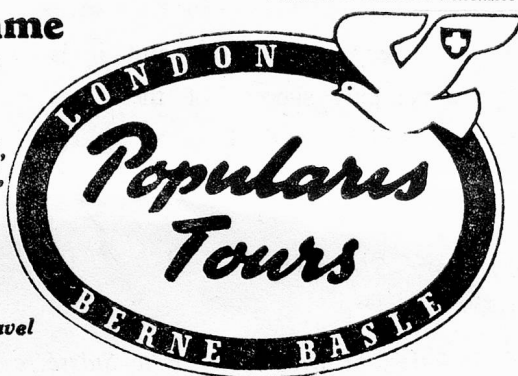
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The Swiss National Tourist Office will gladly submit itineraries and quotations.

## PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.

"Semaine Suisse" (Service de Presse).

L'industrie suisse de la broderie bénéficie, depuis trois ans, d'une période de plein emploi telle qu'elle n'en a connue que dans les meilleures années de l'avant-guerre.

Les libraires et éditeurs suisses ont enregistré, à l'occasion des fêtes des fin d'année, un chiffre d'affaires amélioré d'environ 10% par rapport à celui de l'année précédente. Il faut se réjouir tout particulièrement de l'accroissement de la demande de littérature scientifique.

La carte des boissons de nos cantines de fêtes n'est pas toujours à l'unisson de l'élévation patriotique des discours qu'on y prononce! Les rafraîchissements étrangers y ont trop souvent la préséance. On peut donc noter avec d'autant plus de plaisir que seuls des vins suisses ont été servis aux participants à la fête fédérale de lutte et de jeux alpestres de Winterthour.

De tous les jardins zoologiques du monde, celui de Bâle possède le plus beau groupe d'éléphants d'Afrique.

Une des plus anciennes maisons parisiennes d'orfèvrerie vient d'éditer une série d'une quarantaine de médailles de bronze du graveur lausannois Léon Prébandler; ces oeuvres retiennent l'attention des critiques par l'effort tenté d'appliquer la sculpture moderne à une technique ancienne.

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