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The Swiss Observer

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Foreign Press Association in Switzerland, recently gave a dinner in Berne, in honour of Monsieur E. Celio, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Monsieur M. Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister. Amongst the guests present were: Ministers Dr. W. Stucki and Dr. A. Zehnder, Counsellors of Legations Dr. G. Keel and M. Graessli and representatives of the Swiss Press.

Mr. R. A. Langford (Reuter), President of the Association, in welcoming the principal guests, voiced, on behalf of his colleagues, the satisfaction of being able to work in a free country, where the truth can be said and reported without the risk of being escorted to the frontier by police officers.

Dr. Celio in reply spoke of the great responsibility of the Press and explained why Switzerland could not give up its neutrality, which, however does not mean that our country wishes to live in isolation. "Switzerland," he said, "has repeatedly made offers to collaborate in the efforts to bring about lasting peace and prosperity to the world at large."

* * *

Dr. Werner Lüthi, has been nominated "Bundesanwalt" in succession to Dr. F. Stämpfli, who recently retired from this office.

Dr. Lüthi was born in 1892 in Rüderswil (Ct. Berne) and has been in the service of the Confederation since 1917. He has been for many years a lecturer for "Bundesstrafrecht" at the University of Berne.

* * *

The Federal Council has appointed W. A. Thomann, Consul in Canton (China) and Isidor Sembinelli, Consul in Toronto (Canada).

* * *

The Swiss cost-of-living index figure for October, based on June, 1914, equalling 100, was 223.2, compared with 223.1 in September. The index number based on August, 1939, equalling 100, rose to 162.7 in October from 162.6 in September.

Cantonal

The death is reported from Porrentruy of M. Charles Theurillat, Manufacturer of watch-stones, at the age of 67.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

During the month of October, 1948, 366 traffic accidents have occurred in the canton of Berne; 272 persons were injured of whom 11 received fatal injuries.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The death has occurred at St. Imier, of M. Etienne Chappuis, advocate and for 33 years President of the community of St. Imier. In the army, he reached the rank of Colonel.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

Dr. Emil Misslin, a former lecturer of Chemistry at the Technical University in Zurich, and a member of the administration of the Ciba A.G., in Basle, has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

Walter Bringolf (Socialist) has been re-elected mayor of the town of Schaffhausen, he was not opposed.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

Three soldiers fell down a cliff whilst climbing the Palu glacier; two were badly injured whilst the third was struck dumb by the shock. He was unable to tell a rescue party what had happened.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

M. Ernst Geiger, secondary school teacher in Hüttwilen (Ct. Thurgau), has been honoured with the degree of *doctor honoris causa* by the Federal Technical University in Zurich for his work on Geology.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

Flight-lieutenant Otto Heule, aged 26, a technician, was killed when his machine collided with a tree in the neighbourhood of Savigny (Ct. Vaud). He leaves behind a widow and a 7 weeks old child.

[A.T.S.]

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PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.
 "Semain Suisse" (Service de Presse).

"L'American Society for Friendship with Switzerland" a organisé un concours de composition littéraire sur la Suisse dans 26,000 écoles américaines. Le premier prix consiste en un voyage gratuit en Suisse avec les "Swissair-Lines." Cent montres suisses d'origine constituent les autres prix.

L'association internationale des Sociétés des auteurs et compositeurs a élu pour président le compositeur suisse Arthur Honegger, qui vient de recevoir, à Paris, le prix "Hector Berlioz." Le célèbre chef d'orchestre Ernest Ansermet a été invité à Sofia pour y diriger un concert symphonique.

Quatre savants suisses viennent d'être honorés à nouveau par de Hautes Ecoles étrangères qui leur ont décerné le grade de docteurs honoris causa; ce sont les professeurs Lugeon (Zurich), Meylan (Lausanne) Scherrer (Zurich) et l'ingénieur Straumann (Waldenbourg).

Le rédacteur en chef Ginström écrit dans le plus grand quotidien suédois paraissant en Finlande: "Si le travail ennoblit l'homme, les Suisses forment un peuple de haute noblesse qui a recueilli des générations passées un précieux héritage de liberté et de culture et qui veut le transmettre encore enrichi aux générations futures."

Les tableaux du peintre bernois Rolf Dürig, qui n'est âgé que de 22 ans, constituent l'attraction d'une exposition automnale de la Galerie Maeght, de Paris, exposition à laquelle participent de jeunes artistes de 8 pays différents.

Le gouvernement ture a chargé le graveur lucernois Rüegg d'exécuter une série de timbres-poste commémoratifs du traité de paix italo-ture signé à Lausanne il y a 25 ans. Certaines valeurs représentent des édifices lausannois tels que l'université. En 1947, Rüegg avait déjà gravé les timbres luxembourgeois émis en l'honneur du Général Patton.

Le récent congrès international pour la lutte contre l'alcoolisme a reconnu le rôle éminent joué par la Suisse dans le domaine de la fabrication du cidre doux et du jus de raisin. C'est le Dr. Müller, précédemment directeur de la station fédérale d'essais de Wädenswil qui, le premier, a appliqué les découvertes de Pasteur à la conservation des jus de raisin.

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A DEPARTURE.

We are informed, that Monsieur Alfred Escher, up to now 1st Counsellor of the Swiss Legation in London, until a few days ago, has left the service of the Federal Political Department. He has accepted the offer of the International Committee of the Red Cross to become "Commissioner of the International Committee of the Red Cross for Relief to Refugees in Palestine." Monsieur Escher has taken up his new post immediately and arrived in Beirut on December 7th, 1948.

Monsieur Escher studied Law in Zurich, Kiel and Berlin; Dr. of Law of the University of Zurich; worked for 1½ years in an Insurance Company.

He became a member of the staff of the Federal Political Department in 1931, and after four months at the Swiss Legation in London and one month spent in Singapore, was appointed Consular Attaché in Bangkok (Thailand). Towards the end of 1935 he was transferred to Warsaw as Secretary of Legation; 1939 to 1941 he was Secretary of Legation in Berlin, 1941 to 1942 he held the same post in Ankara; in April 1942 he was appointed Consul in Baghdad and consul in Athens in 1944; he was promoted Counsellor of Legation end of 1944 and transferred to London in June 1945.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

Owing to lack of space, several reports of recent Swiss functions had to be kept over, they will be published in the next issue.