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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

Customs receipts during the month of July, 1952, amounted to 60.8 million francs or 7.6 million francs more than during the same period in the previous year.

The receipts for the first seven months of the year 1952 total 352.8 million francs, which is 12.6 million francs less than for the same period in 1951.

Switzerland, concerned about continued access to its traditional coal and steel sources, will follow closely the operations of the Schuman Plan. Monsieur M. Petitpierre, the Swiss Foreign Minister, expressed his country's readiness to conclude a general agreement with the High Authority set up by the Schuman Plan and to encourage its work so long as it remains an instrument of co-operation between constituent members and does not prejudice the interests of countries which are not members of the Plan.

Mr. Ch. W. Thomas, for the last three and a half years, American Consul in Geneva, has been transferred to Rome, he is succeeded by Mr. R. J. Redington of the Consulate.

The Swiss National Day was celebrated officially for the first time in the Union on August 1st in Pretoria. The Prime Minister, Dr. Malan, proposed the toast to Switzerland.

Cantonal

A woman employee of a business house in Lucerne, having just collected an amount of 4,000.—frs. from the Post Office, was followed by a man, who snatched her bag and ran away. The young woman called for help, and some of the passers by pursued the man, who was later on arrested. [A.T.S.]

A pupil at a Flying school in Lucerne, was practising air acrobatics accompanied by an instructor when for reasons so far unknown the sports machine crashed. The instructor was able to jump clear by

parachute whilst his pupil, a Gottfried Rölli (36) from Willisau, was killed. The machine was totally wrecked. [A.T.S.]

A boy playing with matches caused a fire at the Court building at Präflikon (Ct. Zurich). The damage caused is estimated to be between 200-300,000.—frs. [A.T.S.]

A serious railway accident occurred on the Bönigen-Interlaken line near the Interlaken East station, when a passenger train collided with a goods train.

Four persons were killed, and about 10 injured. The names of the dead are: Mlle Y. Foubert (64), Directrice du Collège des Jeunes Filles, Montargis (France), Christian Michel, Spiez, H. Schallenberg-Baumann (30), Thun, Fritz Heiz-Wafelman, Berne. An investigation has been ordered by the authorities. [A.T.S.]

Two persons were killed when motoring through the "Taubenlochschlucht" (Ct. Berne). The car collided with a rock. The names of the victims are: Albert Burri (40) of St. Imier and Mme. Müller (45) also of St. Imier. [A.T.S.]

On the occasion of the 100th Jubilee of the "Bünder Tagblatt", a special illustrated number has been issued. [A.T.S.]

Two persons were injured when on the "Sesseli-lift" Arosa-Hörnli, two of the seats became detached and fell down. The authorities have ordered an investigation. [A.T.S.]

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Private Emil Bischof (22) of Dietikon was seriously injured during bayonet practice at the "Rekrutenschule" in Aarau. He was taken to hospital where he later succumbed to his injuries.

[A.T.S.]

Madame Clara Bost of Lausanne has celebrated her 102nd birthday. [A.T.S.]

The oldest inhabitant of the town of Neuchâtel, Mme. Gabrielle de Bosset-de Coulon, has celebrated her 100th birthday. [A.T.S.]

—oOo—

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Dr. K. Lux, a lawyer, in Oberriet (Ct. St. Gall) at the age of 79. He was for a number of years Editor of the "Rheintalische Volkszeitung", Altstätten and afterwards practiced as a lawyer at Oberriet. For many years he occupied the post of "Gemeindeammann"; and was also a member of the Grand Council of the canton of St. Gall.

Emile Steinmann, a former mathematics teacher at the Gymnasium Geneva, in Geneva, aged 85.

Professor, Dr. Ernst Anderes, in Lenzerheide, at the age of 70. The deceased studied medicine at the Universities of Zurich, Geneva, Kiel and Berlin. He was a well-known gynaecologist, Professor at the University of Zurich and Director of the "Zürcher Universitäts-Frauenklinik".

Rudolf Kottmann, Managing-Director and President of the Board of the "Uhrenfabrik, Langendorf (Ct. Solothurn), in Solothurn, aged 74.

Albin Stebler, for 50 years drawing master in Solothurn and author of the book "Zeichenkünstler" in Solothurn, at the age of 73.

Dr. Heinrich Pletscher, at one time a member of the government of the canton of Schaffhausen, Mayor of the town of Schaffhausen and President of the High Court of Justice of the canton of Schaffhausen, aged 74.

Dr. Oscar Weber, founder and President of the Board of the stores "Oscar Weber" and the "Neuen Warenhaus, A.G., "Zug, in Zug, at the age of 84.

[A.T.S.]

Mgr. Nestor Adam, Superior General of the Great St. Bernard monks, has been appointed bishop of Sion (Ct. Valais) in succession to the late Mgr. Bieler. Mgr. Adam is the 84th bishop of Sion.

Edgar Woog, secretary-general of the Swiss Worker's (communist) Party has left Switzerland on a secret mission to Moscow.

The toll of mountaineering accidents is alarmingly mounting. A Swiss girl guide, Mlle. M. Mouron, aged 19, fell while rock climbing on the Dent du Midi and was killed. On the mountain above Andeer (Ct. Grisons), M. Walter Reifer, aged 64 of canton Thurgau, fell 300 feet and was killed. He was gathering Edelweiss. Mlle. Alice Krebsler (Zurich) on a mountaineering expedition in the Calanda district, fell down a precipice and lost her life.

On Switzerland's National Day 40 years ago — August 1st, 1912 — a simple ceremony took place to mark the opening of the Jungfrau railway station

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the highest in Europe. The entire Jungfrau railway was built between 1896 and 1912 and opened by stages. The Kleine Scheidegg — Eigergletscher section was inaugurated in 1898, followed by Rotstock in 1899, Eigerwand in 1903, Eismeer in 1905 and Jungfrauoch in 1912. The hard struggle against the rock produced untold difficulties, for the whole of the line between Eigergletscher and Jungfrauoch passed through a five-mile long tunnel which had to be bored through the hard limestone and gneiss of the Eiger and Mönch mountains. This tunnel was completed in February, 1912, and the terminal station, constructed at a height of 11,340 feet, was opened six months later.

A unique masterpiece of railway engineering, the line had cost 15 million francs, took 16 years to complete, and its construction was beset throughout by tough negotiations between financiers. Then, in 1924, the comfortable Berghaus Hotel opened its doors. This was followed, in 1931, by the opening of the High Alpine Scientific Research Station (foreseen and partly financed by Adolf Guyer-Zeller, the man who pioneered the line), and six years later by the Sphinx Meteorological Observatory at a height of 11,723 ft. Thanks to the Wengernalp and the Jungfrau railways, travellers leaving the region of trees and meadows of Grindelwald or Lauterbrunnen can, in two hours, reach the land of high peaks and eternal snows. The contrast is startling. The Jungfrau line is 5.75 miles long and has a maximum gradient of one in four, and in about one hour climbs more than 4,593 feet. The Jungfrauoch is not only the terminus of the line, but also the

departure point for ski runs, beautiful glacier excursions and many climbs.

In its first working year, 1913, the Jungfrau railway carried 86,000 passengers. Last year the total passed the 190,000 mark. The railway is also considered of great importance in the world of science, for it permits easy access all the year round to the Research Station and the Sphinx Meteorological and Astronomical Observatory. It is also used by engineers now setting up television installations on the eastern ridge of the Jungfrau.

Coinciding with the re-introduction of through carriages by the Glacier Express on the transalpine line Valais-Uri-Grisons, the Furka-Oberalp Railway Company has issued a new guide which will be of practical interest to all travellers. With text by the journalist Pierre Grellet, it has many illustrations and three maps, one of which shows the whole length of the line indicating distances and altitudes. An illustration of the 60-mile stretch from Brig to Disentis includes connections by rail, road and aerial cable-railway.

Swiss gymnasts did well at the recent Olympic Games at Helsinki by carrying off a total of 34 medals — 11 gold, 15 silver and eight bronze. Totals for other countries included Finland, 19 Czechoslovakia, 16; and Italy and Germany 12 each. In the compulsory events Switzerland came second with 281.85 points. First was Russia with 284.35 points, and others in the first four were Finland (280.45) and Germany (279.30). Switzerland's Stalder gained the best individual result with 57.15 points. Behind him came three Russian

athletes, the first two of which gained 57.00 points each, and a Czech athlete who had the same number of points (56.60 as another Swiss, Tschabold).

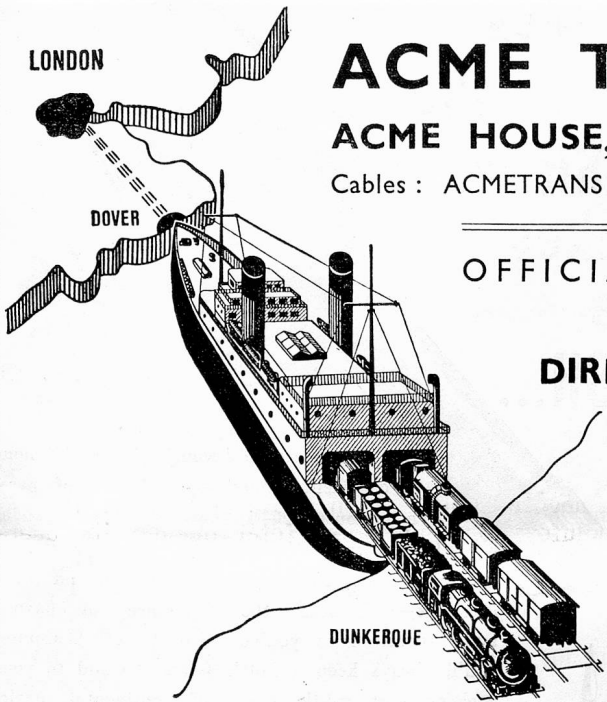
In the optional events Russian gymnasts were in the lead, and were awarded a total of 574.40 points. Switzerland came second with 567.55, followed by Finland and Germany. In individual results two Russians took the lead, while three Swiss took third, fifth and eighth places.

One of the Swiss gymnasts, Walter Lehmann, a world champion, was injured during training and could not take part in the Games.

Swiss gymnasts have a proud and distinguished Olympic record. At Amsterdam in 1928 their team came first, and was placed second at Berlin in 1936 and at London in 1948. Switzerland was awarded third place at Paris in 1924.

Switzerland's star marksman, Auguste Hollenstein, won a world record at the world Shooting Championships at Oslo last month. The final result showed Hollenstein first with 1,123 points (in three positions — standing 359, kneeling 376 and lying 388). Taitto (Finland) was second with 1,121 points, and Robert Burchler (Switzerland) third with 1,121 points.

Result in order of countries were: 1. Switzerland, 5,540 points (individual figures — Hollenstein 1,123 (world record), Burchler 1,121, Horber, 1,108, Huber 1099, and Grunig 1,089; 2. Sweden, 5,489 points; 3. Finland, 5,481 points; Norway, 5,410 points; 5. United States, 5,405 points; 6. Yugoslavia, 5343 points; 7. Argentine, 5,304 points; 8. Denmark 5,195 points; 9. Egypt, 4,943 points.



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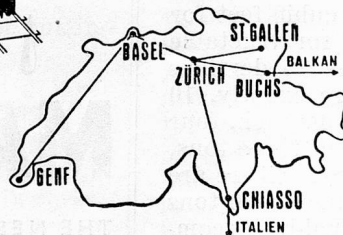
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The "Mannerheim" Cup, for which competitors used Norwegian Army rifles, in the three positions, was also won by Switzerland.

* * *

The Olympic Games of 1960 may be held in Lausanne, the Swiss resort on the shores of the Lake of Geneva. An official request for Lausanne to be considered was made to the International Olympic Committee at Helsinki by a delegation consisting of Mr. Pierre Graber, a town councillor and Swiss MP, Mr. Paul-Henri Jaccard, head of the Lausanne Enquiry Office, and Mr. René A. Alblas, head of the Tourist Office for the Canton of Vaud.

Olympic officials and others were given an excellent brochure outlining the claims of Lausanne, which is the present HQ of the International Committee,

The brochure was issued in three editions — English, Spanish and French. In an appreciation by Mr. Albert Mayor, Switzerland's delegate to the International Committee, he states that while the heart of Pierre de Coubertin, who revived the Games, is kept in a stele at Olympia, his body rests in Lausanne, and adds: "Switzerland has been called the Playground of Europe. Lausanne hopes that tomorrow it will be the sportsground of the whole world — the meeting place of the Olympic Games. That is a great ambition, but Lausanne is worthy of many titles, and it is a great pleasure for me to recommend the candidature of this town". He goes on: "This great town, which welcomes so many personalities from all the Continents, this second cradle of the Olympic idea, has all that is needed for the success of the Olympic Games."

According to a United Press dispatch from Helsinki, Mr. Edström, the Swedish President of the International Olympic Committee, who is shortly to leave his post, has announced his approval of Lausanne as choice for 1960.

In the course of his last official speech he said: "When I visited Baron de Coubertin at Lausanne shortly before his death he expressed the strong hope that Lausanne would one day have the honour of organising the Olympic Games. Mr. de Coubertin asked me to do all in my power to have this candidature accepted".

* * *

The Lucerne Town Council have decided to buy a manuscript by Richard Wagner, "The Young Siegfried", comprising 49 pages, for the sum of 12,000 francs.

* * *

Switzerland is constantly adding new and efficient units to her merchant fleet. Reference may be made to two among the most important recent additions: one is the motor-vessel *Helvetia*, of 5,762 tons built in the shipyards of the Cantieri Riuniti del l'Adriatico, Trieste, for the Nautilus, S.A. di Navigazione Marittima, Lugano. This cargo vessel has 440,806 cubic feet of general cargo space, 12,058 cubic feet for refrigerated cargo and 31,364 cubic feet for vegetable oils. Her cargo-handling gear comprises 15 derricks operated by 14 electric winches, or, more exactly, 10 derricks with a lifting capacity of eight tons each, four derricks to handle five tons each and one of three tons, which is to serve the propelling machinery. There are also provided two heavy cargo derricks, one of 30 tons at No. 2 hold and one of 20 tons at No. 3 hold. Accommodation for 12 passengers is also available. She will

be employed in trading between Genoa, Marseilles and West Africa ports.

The other new unit is the 12,300-tons gross tanker *Bern*, built for a Swiss shipping Company and launched from the yard of the Cantieri Riuniti del l'Adriatico, Monfalcone, on 24th July. The vessel is 172.20 metres in length and 22.2 metres in breadth. Her propelling machinery consists of Diesel engines developing 7,000 h.p. and giving her a service speed of 14.5 knots.

* * *

A Basle laboratory has produced an apparatus which will destroy all bacteria in gaseous, solid or liquid form. Scientific and official tests have shown that air can be made 99.9% bacteria-free. Other tests made in barn stalls have produced remarkable results, and stalls have been purified up to 95% free of bacteria. The principle of this new invention lies in its application of invisible rays of various strengths.

* * *

The Bühler Bros. Machine Factory in Uzwil has received a 4 million francs order for the technical installations in a grain silo which will be constructed by a Palestine shipping company in Haifa.

* * *

One of the highlights of the "Fêtes de Genève", which took place a few days ago, has been the concert given by the Band of the Royal Marines, which was specially invited to Geneva for the occasion. This concert met with enormous success and was followed by a ceremonial display. An audience of 15,000 frantically applauded the Band and its leaders, Captain Lang and Captain Maclean.

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