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The Swiss Observer

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The Official Organ of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

Advisory Council: R. DE CINTRA (Chairman); O. F. BOEHRINGER, LS. CHAPUIS, J. EUSEBIO, GOTTFRIED KELLER, R. J. KELLER, R. PFENNINGER, A. STAUFFER, G. E. SUTER.

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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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Goods traffic has declined by 60,000 tons and is returned as 1.44 million tons; the receipts are given as 28.87 million francs (February, 1951: 29,639 million francs).

Cantonal

Mr. August Bettschart has announced that he wishes to retire from the government of the canton of Schwyz of which he has been a member since 1928. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Arnold Ming, "Landammann" of the canton of Obwalden, and a member of the cantonal government since 1946, is shortly retiring from his post. [A.T.S.]

Two members of a skiing party were killed and five seriously injured, on a tour from the Titlis to the Hotel Trübsee. Owing to icy conditions they were unable to stop and were hurled over the edge of a rock. The names of the dead are: Bruno Huber, chemist of Zurich, aged 23, and Miss Martha Schiess, shop assistant of Zurich, aged 21. [A.T.S.]

On the occasion of an official visit of the Mayor of Milan, Professor, Dr. Virgilio Ferrari, to the town of Zurich, the municipal authorities gave a dinner to the distinguished guest at the "Muraltengut". [A.T.S.]

A serious tramway accident occurred in Zurich, when a car left the track at the Feldstrasse-Schöneeggstrasse stop, and overturned. One person was killed, and eight injured. The name of the victim is Walter Müller, a pedlar, born in 1914. [A.T.S.]

The government of the canton of Berne has elected Mr. A. Seematter, as President of the Organisation Committee for the 600th centenary celebration of the entry of the canton into the Confederation, which will take place from June 19th-June 21st, 1953. [A.T.S.]

Three inhabitants of Vuadens (Greyerz District) have made a donation of altogether 33,600.—frs. to the community for charitable purposes. The donors are: Paul Tercier (10,800.—frs.), his sister Marceline (14,800.—frs.) and Jules Moret (8,000.—frs.). [A.T.S.]

The Basle Mission has received an anonymous legacy of 10,000.—frs. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Ernst Homberger-Rauschenbach, President of the Board of the Georg Fischer, A.G., Schaffhausen, has celebrated 50 years of service with the firm. In 1902, he was entrusted with the direction of the firm, and subsequently occupied the posts of General Manager, Delegate of the Board, and, ultimately President of the Board. Fifty years ago, the Works employed 929 men, whilst now more than 8,800 men and employees are in the service of the firm. [A.T.S.]

Three children of Mr. R. Müller, a joiner in Les Poses nr. Bex, lost their lives when the house caught fire during the absence of their parents. The ages of the victims are a boy 4 years, two girls one of 3 years and the other of 1 year. [A.T.S.]

The work for the enlargement of the Cathedral at Sitten (Ct. Valais) is now nearly completed; an amount of 1,230,000.—frs. has been spent so far [A.T.S.]

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Mme. Marie-Hortense Besson Hediger of Gland, nr. Nyon, has celebrated her 103rd birthday. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Jean Schütz, a watchmaker, has celebrated his 100th birthday in Neuchâtel. The government of the canton of Neuchâtel has presented him with the traditional "easy chair". [A.T.S.]

Army

During military manoeuvres a Mustang machine, piloted by Lieutenant Kurt Sempert, consulting engineer, crashed near Malters and caught fire. The pilot, aged 31, and living at Baden, was killed. [A.T.S.]

:o:

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:—

Charles Arragon, for 28 years a chemist (Kantons-chemiker) of the canton of Vaud, and a lecturer at the University of Lausanne, in Vevey, at the age of 77.

Karl Friedemann, for many years conductor of the "Stadt Musik, Berne" and a well-known composer, in Berne, aged 90.

Professor, Dr. Jos. Schwendimann, since 1905, Professor of Theology at the University of Lucerne, and since 1921, "Kanonikus" at the "Stift St. Leodegar" Lucerne, in Lucerne, at the age of 79.

Professor, Dr. Hans Schulthess, Professor of Gynaecology at the University of Basle, in Basle, aged 61.

Colonel Louis Reusser, Director of the Federal ammunition works Altdorf, in Altdorf, at the age of 63.

Henry Bühler, a former teacher at the Commercial High School, La Chaux-de-Fonds, and founder of the "Revue Internationale de l'Horlogerie", in La Chaux-de-Fonds, aged 79.

Dr. Benedikt Malin, for many years a deacon of the monastery Disentis, and teacher at the *Gymnasium* Disentis, in Disentis, at the age of 56.

Henry Cavin, since 1943 Director of the Yverdon-Ste. Croix railway, in Yverdon, aged 51. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Here are further balances of the accounts for 1951 of the following cantons :—

Obwalden	Credit Balance	16,206.—frs.
Nidwalden	Credit Balance	72,934.—frs.
Solothurn	Debit Balance	538,831.—frs.
Geneva	Credit Balance	2,053,366.—frs.
Schwyz	Credit Balance	142,621.—frs.
Schaffhausen ...	Credit Balance	8,305.—frs.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The Federal Justice and Police Department reports that there are at present still about 10,000 foreign refugees in Switzerland, the majority of them have received permission to stay in the country.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

Ferdinand Kubler, who last year caused a sensation by winning two major road events on successive days, repeated the feat recently when, after winning the Tour of Lake Lemán, in Switzerland, he followed up by a breakaway win in the Tour of Tessin, at Lugano, the next day.

The Swiss regulation concerning imports of nylon stockings which has been in force since November 21st, 1949, has now been cancelled. Future import licences for nylon stockings will be issued without the importers being obliged to import equal quantities of synthetic fibre threads.

* * *

Mme. Marguerite Lobsinger-Dellenbach, only woman member of the Swiss expedition to Mount Everest, has returned to Katmandu because of ill-health.

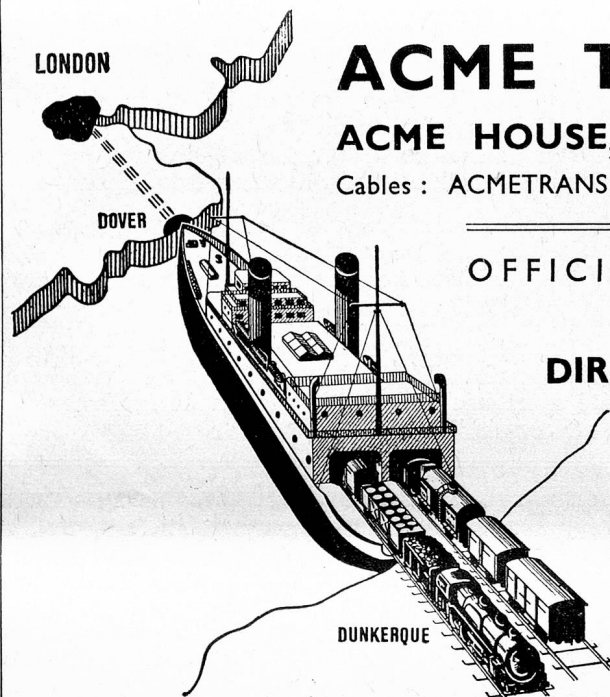
* * *

England beat Switzerland 4—0 in an international youth Soccer tournament at Madrid.

* * *

Orders for a large number of passenger carriages, pilot, coaches, restaurant cars and railcars have been confirmed at a meeting of the Administrative Council of the Swiss Federal Railways in Berne. The purchases had already been approved in principle at a meeting held in December. In view of attempts by the Swiss Government to resist over-employment, only preliminary work will be started this year. Deliveries will not begin until the middle of 1953, and the total orders will not be completed until well into 1954. The delay may be even further extended if the manufacturers find difficulty in completing the orders in time.

The orders have been placed with the vehicle workshops of Neuhausen, Schlieren, Pratteln and Altenrhein, the locomotive works of Winterthur, the Brown-Boveri company at Baden, the Oerlikon Constructional Workshops and the Sécheron factory at Geneva.



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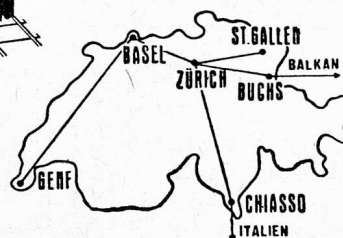
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The halls of Lucerne's Arts and Congress House have been transformed in preparation for the World Photography Exhibition which is to be held in the famed Swiss holiday resort from May 15th to July 31st. Professional and amateur photographers from more than 40 countries will be represented. Britain is sending works by Cecil Beaton, Brandt, Hoskins, Suschitzky, and many other well-known names. Modern American photography will be represented by photographic artists like Henle, Platt-Lynes, Sinsabaugh and Blumenfeld. France will exhibit works by Brassai, Hervé, Cartier-Bresson, Amson de Prat and Lipnitzky, as well as the "Groupe des XV", noted for their individual technique. Italy is sending many beautiful examples of modern photography by people like Stefani, Donzelle and Clari, and the German representatives will include Steinert, Schneider, Lauterwasser and Hajek-Halke.

For the first time two guides from the Canton of Valais have succeeded in the winter crossing of the Aiguilles Rouges d'Arolla, which dominate the Val des Dix and the Val d'Hérens.

The two men — Charles Troillet from Hérémece and Michel Bovier from Vex — left by ski during the night from the Val des Dix dam, crossed the Darbonne glacier and by early morning started attacking the southern peak, followed by the difficult Crête du Coq, at which point superhuman efforts were needed to climb the 15 snow-covered pinnacles. At this stage the temperature was — 13° Fahrenheit. When the two climbers stopped at the Col Sud for refreshments they found the food they had brought with them was frozen and they had to be content with biscuits.

The next conquest was the Centrale (11,700 ft.), which had never previously been climbed in winter. After descending from the peak in three stages of 90 feet, they reached the top of the Aiguille Nord and returned via the Col Nord. Having successfully completed the first winter crossing of the Aiguilles d'Arolla, the two guides returned to the Val des Dix by a steep couloir, along a route which had never before been accomplished, either in winter or summer.

For his novel "Armes et baggages" 32-year-old Pierre Moinot has won the Swiss literary award, the Veillon Prize, by a narrow margin.

More than 150 manuscripts and books — which had to be written in French — had been submitted, and were considered by an international jury which met in Lausanne. The two names that stood out among the rest were those of Pierre Moinot and Marie Moirout, and it was the former who was judged the winner by five votes to four.

Moinot, who is a magistrate, visited Switzerland for the first time to receive his prize. The action of his novel takes place in Italy.

The jury, which was meeting for the fifth time, consisted of four French writers (André Chamson, Louis Martin-Chauffier, Louis Guilloux and Vercors), two Belgians (Franz Hellens and Robert Vivier) and three Swiss (Léon Bopp, Maurice Zermatten and Gilbert Guisan).

The object of the 6th International Film Festival, which will be held from the 3rd to 13th July, 1952, is to present to interested circles of the Film Industry and the general public a number of new films specially selected for their artistic and commercial value and

so to contribute to the development of the Film Industry. The International Film Festival of Locarno is recognised by the International Federation of Film Producers. More than 15 nations will take part in this important event, which is expected to attract 200-300 film camera men, artists, journalists and film critics.

PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.

"Semaine Suisse" (Service de Presse).

La société anonyme Georges Fischer de Schaffhouse fêtera son 150e anniversaire en juin 1952. L'entreprise fut fondée en 1802 par le chaudronnier Johann Conrad Fischer. Avec ses 4000 ouvriers et employés, travaillant tous à Schaffhouse, les fonderies de fer et acier Georges Fischer comptent parmi les plus importantes entreprises industrielles de Suisse et la marque G + F est universellement connue.

Une installation de projection en grand, du système suisse *Eidophor* a été expédiée, par voie aérienne, aux Etats-Unis, pour démonstrations. Il s'agit d'une invention de feu le professeur Dr. Fritz Fischer, de l'EPF, qui permet la restitution d'images télévisées en couleurs, de plus de 100 m2. L'appareil, encore développé par la maison Dr. Edgar Gretener S.A., de Zürich, a fait la plus grande impression sur les spécialistes américains du film. La fabrication pour le marché européen a été réservée à la Suisse.

Selon une attestation de l'établissement fédéral de contrôle des matériaux, les allumettes de fabrication suisse sont de bien meilleure qualité, à différents points de vue (bois, paraffinage, combustion), que celles provenant des pays communistes. Ces dernières, en outre, mettent en péril notre industrie indigène des allumettes.

Le jury du prix international des journalistes de Turin a attribué des prix de 100,000 livres à chacun de journalistes suisses suivants: Eros Bellinelli, Lugano, Ida Kleiner, Zürich et Annina Volonterio, Locarno.

L'un des plus grands journaux provinciaux d'Argentine, "Los Principios" de Cordoba, a publié toute une série d'articles sur la Suisse et ses capacités scientifiques et culturelles.

Le film suisse "Quatre dans une jeep" a reçu le "prix des Nations Unies". La même distinction avait déjà été attribuée en 1949 à un film de la Praesens: "Les réprouvés".

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