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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

M. Raymond Christinger, has been appointed Chargé d'Affaires *ad int.* at the Swiss Legation in Bangkok, during the absence of Minister Armin Daeniker, who is also Swiss Minister to India.

The Federal Council has nominated Dr. Paul Lenzinger to the post of Swiss Consul in Baden-Baden (Germany) in succession to Consul Gabriel Naville, who has been transferred to Capetown.

Consul Lenzinger hails from Weinfelden (Ct. Thurgau) and was born in Berne in 1898. He entered the Consular Service in 1930, and was successively employed at the Swiss Consulates in Leipzig, Stuttgart and Berlin. In 1937, he was transferred to the Consulate in Batavia, and three years later (1940) he was promoted to the rank of Consul; since 1941, Consul Lenzinger has been in charge of the Swiss Consulate in Bangkok.

A farewell dinner was offered in Berne to the American Minister, M. John Carter Vincent, who has been transferred to Tangier. His successor, Minister Patterson, will take over his post shortly.

The Federal Council has asked the two Chambers to grant the necessary credits for establishing Legations in Iceland, Indonesia and Ethiopia.

During the month of March, 1951, the Swiss Federal Railways have carried 17.34 million passengers, or 1.45 million more than in March 1950. The receipts are given as 23.18 million francs (March, 1950: 19 million francs).

Goods traffic has increased by 312,000 tons and is returned as 1.67 million tons carried; the receipts reached the sum of 30.80 million francs or 5.14 million francs more than during March 1950.

Cantonal

The "Nidwaldner Landsgemeinde" met at Stans on April 29th. Mr. Wymann (Beckenried) was elected "Landammann". The "Landsgemeinde" of the

canton of Obwalden was held at Sarnen, Mr. Arnold Ming (Lungern) was nominated "Landammann".

[A.T.S.]

* * *

On the occasion of the 50th Jubilee of the "Zürcher Heilstätten Wald and Clavadel, the Municipal Council of the town of Zurich has made a donation of 50,000.—frs. to these institutions.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The Mayor of the town of Amsterdam, Dr. Arnold J. d'Ailly has paid an official visit to the town of Zurich. He was welcomed by Dr. E. Landolt "Stadtpräsident" of Zurich in the presence of all the members of the "Stadtrat".

* * *

The University of Zurich has bestowed the degree of *doctor honoris causa* on the following: Dr. Oscar Reinhart, Winterthur; Dr. H. Weilenmann, Director of the "Volkshochschule" of the canton of Zurich; Dr. R. Briner, member of the government of the canton of Zurich; Professor Fritz Hunziker, rector of the "Literaturgymnasium" Zurich and Dr. Charles Zölly, General Manager of the "Schweiz. Bankgesellschaft."

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The late Mme. Ziegler-Kühn of Wädenswil (Ct. Zurich) has left an amount of 89,000.—frs. to the commune of Wädenswil for charitable purposes.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The traditional "Sechseläuten" was held in Zurich linked with celebrations marking the sixth century of Zurich's entry as a canton into the Swiss Confederation.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The "Landsgemeinde" of the canton Appenzel a-Rh. took place in Hundwil on April 29th. Mr. Bodmer (Trogen) was elected as "Landammann".

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R.A.C.

The "Landsgemeinde" of the canton of Appenzell I.-Rh. was held on the same day in Appenzell. States Councillor A. Locher, was nominated "Landammann." [A.T.S.]

Dr. Josef Lenzlinger, since 1938, a member of the Tribunal of the canton of St. Gall is shortly relinquishing his post for reasons of health. He is 63 years of age. [A.T.S.]

Mr. H. Bachmann (Aadorf), President of the Cantonal Bank Thurgau, is shortly vacating his post. [A.T.S.]

Army

Two military planes collided in mid-air during manœuvres near Belp (Ct. Berne), one of the pilots, sergeant-major, Hanspeter Egger, parachuted from his machine and made a safe landing. The other pilot, Lieutenant W. Aebersold (Berne), tried an emergency landing which was unsuccessful; he was killed and the machine was destroyed, he was 39 years of age. [A.T.S.]

A Vampire military plane, piloted by Lieutenant Francesco Masina, aged 27 crashed near the Lake of Sihl. The pilot was killed, and the machine was wrecked. [A.T.S.]

A mechanic, Jakob Stücklin, employed at one of the military aerodromes in the Bernese Oberland was killed when he came in contact with a propeller. He was 35 years of age, and the father of two children. [A.T.S.]

:o:

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:—

Dr. Karl Gnädinger, Journalist, owing to an accident, in Zurich, at the age of 51. The deceased was for many years connected with the newspaper "Die Tat" of Zurich.

Karl Locher, a former member of the government of the canton Appenzell I.Rh., in Appenzell, aged 73.

Abbé Raoul Snell, from 1910-1916, Editor of the "Courier de Genève", and a former Professor of the "Ecole St. Louis" Geneva, in Fribourg, at the age of 77.

Hanns Erisman, a teacher and composer, in Seegräben (Ct. Zurich), aged 63.

Alexander Schäfer, for many years Chief Engineer of the "Bernischen Kraftswerke" in St. Tropez (France) at the age of 80.

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Henri Bovet, a member of the Grand Council of the canton Neuchâtel, in Areuse, aged 71. The deceased reached the army rank of Colonel.

Dr. Julien Frossard, a medical practitioner in Chexbres, owing to an accident.

Dr. V. Jäggi, at one time chief of the Legal Department of the Swiss Federal Railways in Basle, at the age of 86.

Dr. Richard B. Matzig, Professor of the German language and literatur at the "Kantonsschule" St. Gall and a teacher at the University of Berne, in Zurich, aged 47.

Dr. med. Ferdinand Schubiger, a former member of the "Kantonsrat" of Solothurn, in Solothurn, at the age of 81.

Heinrich Schellenberg-Frei, a well-known marksman; at the International Shooting Competition at Rome in 1902, he was declared "Weltmeister", in Winterthur, aged 88.

Dr. Joh. C. Gasser, for thirty years Pastor at the "Stadtkirche" Winterthur, in Winterthur, at the age of 81.

[A.T.S.]

The following birthday anniversaries are reported from Switzerland:—

Henri Robert (70) portrait painter, and for many years a teacher at the cantonal "Technikum" in Fribourg.

Mme. Lisette Eichenberger-Häuselmann (101) of Triengen.

Colonel, Th. G. Kölliker (80) President of the "Radiogenossenschaft" Zurich. During the first world war he was commander of the South Front of the Gotthard fortress and from 1924-31 he held the command of the entire Gotthard fortress.

[A.T.S.]

The undermentioned have celebrated their diamond wedding anniversary (60) in Switzerland: Mr. and Mrs. J. Christen-Seitz of Teufen (Ct. Appenzell A.Rh.), and Mr. and Mrs. J. Epp-Aschwanden of Altdorf. [A.T.S.]

Here are further balances of accounts for 1950, of the following cantons:

Schwyz	Credit Balance	70,816.—frs.
Thurgau	Credit	525,000.—frs.
Berne	Credit	1,209,812.—frs.
Ticino	Credit	90,514.—frs.
Basle Town	Credit	2,916,000.—frs.
Basle County	Credit	230,114.—frs.
Solothurn	Credit	246,731.—frs.

[A.T.S.]

General Henri Guisan, Commander-in-Chief of the Swiss Army during the last war, has left Switzerland on a visit to North Africa, where he will lecture to various Swiss Societies. [A.T.S.]

Milk and butter prices in Switzerland have been increased by two per cent., starting on the first of this month, but the milk producers are to get less.

[A.T.S.]

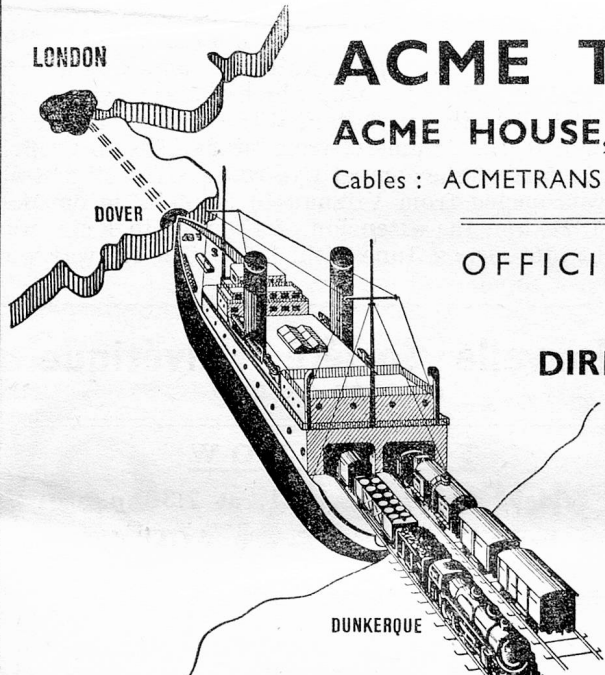
International voluntary work camps are to be organised in the Swiss valleys to help to repair the damage done by avalanches during the winter.

* * *

Because of an increase of 1d. in inland postage the Swiss will now pay 5d. on letters and 3d. on postcards.

* * *

Swissair intends to inaugurate a number of new services under this year's summer flight schedule, as well as operating more flights on routes already served. This will bring the total of routes to be flown under the summer schedule to 39,000 km. A new Zurich—Munich—Nuremberg—Hamburg is to start at the beginning of May and regular flights to Austria will be resumed for the first time since the war on May 26th, with flights five times weekly Zurich—Innsbruck—Salzburg, with extension on two days a week to Linz. Night flights between Zurich and London are to be resumed on May 25. Meanwhile, a thrice-weekly service from Basle to London started on April 15th, and will become daily from May 10th. A daily service between Berne and London is to be reintroduced from June 8th. Swissair intends to introduce early Saturday morning flights to Innsbruck and Salzburg, which will connect up with the night service from London to Zurich. Flights between Zurich and Manchester are being made three times weekly now and five times per week from May 22. The existing weekly service Zurich—Geneva—Cairo—Basrah—Abadan is to be supplemented by an additional weekly flight via Geneva to Cairo and the flights between Switzerland to New York are to be increased from twice to thrice weekly as from May 15th.



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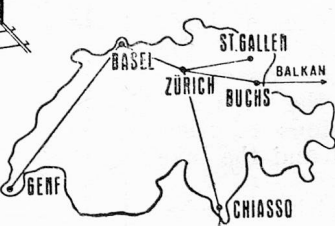
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A fire that broke out on May 1st during a rehearsal of Wagner's opera *Die Walküre* completely gutted the interior of the Geneva municipal theatre. Built in 1877, this theatre was well known as a successful replica, though somewhat smaller, of the Paris Opéra. With the destruction of most of the library, the music, instruments, archives, and all the sets, the damage amounts to about £300,000.

Amendments to the route of the Tour of Switzerland which starts on June 16th may have to be made due to the heavy falls of snow in the Alps this winter. It is estimated that some of the Alpine passes, including the St. Gothard, may not be open until after the middle of June.

Railway passengers in Switzerland will soon be able to dance their way from one station to another while travelling at 78 m.p.h.

Work is to start shortly on the first of two self-contained trains which the Swiss Federal Railways have ordered for use on the country's mountain railway system. In addition to a clear space for dancing, they will have upholstered seats and a bar where drinks can be obtained at any hour of the day or night.

Lighting will be by fluorescent tubes, and loudspeakers will be provided for dance music and commentaries.

The Belgian royal family have recently travelled for a family reunion at Zermatt. Accompanied by his wife, the Princess de Réthy and young Prince Alexandre, King Leopold has rejoined Crown Prince Baudoin, Princess Joséphine-Charlotte and Prince Albert, who were already on holiday at Zermatt. Keen winter sports enthusiasts, the King and his children have been enjoying themselves on the famous Gornergrat and Blauherd ski-runs.

The Swiss shortwave station of Schwarzenburg, which has just issued its summer bulletin, now transmits nine programmes in English. Two of them are beamed to the United States, and others are directed to the British Isles, South Africa, Western Australia and New Zealand, Eastern Australia and the Far East, South-east Asia and Japan, India and Pakistan, and the Middle East. For Spain and Latin America there are two programmes in Spanish, while there are transmissions in Portuguese for Portugal and Brazil, and in French, German and Italian for Europe and Africa. In its round-the-world coverage of news, views and music, Radio Schwarzenburg broadcasts a total of 15 different programmes.

Daily sailings between the two Swiss lakes of Neuchâtel and Morat by the Canal de la Broye recommence on June 3rd. Since Easter there have been two sailings in both directions only on Sundays and public holidays. In addition to the two sailings operated last summer, this year's timetable includes a third, leaving Neuchâtel and Morat in the middle of the afternoon. This allows excursions to the top of the Vully, a magnificent belvedere between the Alps and the Jura mountains, as well as excursions to other beauty spots on the banks of the canal and the lake of Morat.

The service linking Neuchâtel with Béroche, Estavayer-le-Lac and Yverdon recommences at Whitsun. It will be limited to Sundays, but the num-

ber of sailings has been increased and the timetable improved.

The Fine Arts museum at La Chaux-ed-Fonds is honouring one of Switzerland's boldest painters, André Evard, by an exhibition of his works which is being held there until May 13th.

Evard, who is now 75, is known for the rich colours of his canvasses, and for the past ten years has sent them each year to the Salon d'Automne and to the Indépendants in Paris. He was a pupil of Charles L'Eplattenier, father of the school that produced painters like Ed. Jeanneret and the architect Le Corbusier.

The first section of the Rigi Railway, the earliest of the Swiss mountain rack railways, was authorised under a concession granted by the Canton of Lucerne, on June 9th, 1869. Before the passing of the Swiss Federal Law of December 23rd, 1872, authority to build railways in Switzerland was granted by the Cantons, and the concession of 1869, was for a line from Vitznau (on the Lake Lucerne) to Staffelhöhe (on the frontier of the Canton of Schwyz), a distance of $3\frac{1}{4}$ miles. On October 16th, 1869, the company applied to the Canton of Schwyz for permission to extend the line from the frontier to Kulm, but this was refused. The Schwyz people wanted a line of their own, and a concession was granted to a group of Arth citizens to build a line "from the Lucerne-Schwyz cantonal frontier above Kaltbad to Rigi Kulm, and thence on the north side of the Rigi to the valley bottom at Arth-Goldau." The Staffelhöhe-Kulm section was built first, and leased to the Rigi Railway, and the whole line from Vitznau to Kulm was opened before the Arth-Rigi line was begun. The railway from Arth-Goldau to Kulm built to the standard gauge, was opened on June 4th, 1875. Thus the Arth Rigi Railway owns not only a track parallel with its own, which is used exclusively by the Rigi Railway, but also a portion of line in another direction, namely, from Staffelhöhe to Staffel, which is part of the competitive route. The Rigi Railway was opened from Vitznau to Staffelhöhe on May 23rd, 1871, and the extension of $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles to Kulm was brought into use on June 27th, 1873. The railway was

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of standard gauge, and the rack rail was of the type patented by Nicholas Riggenschach in 1863. The chief engineering works were the Schwanden tunnel, 256 ft. long, and the adjacent Schnurtobel bridge, 235 ft. long, supported on five trestles. The maximum gradient was 1 in 4. The trains consisted of a single coach, seating about 50 passengers, and were propelled by the locomotive up the mountain, and trailed on the descent. The first locomotives had vertical boilers, set at a rake to reduce the variations in water level arising from changes of gradient. They ran on four wheels, and had outside cylinders, which drove the pinion wheel through gearing. These engines remained in service for about 11 years, and were replaced by engines with boilers of the horizontal type, but with special provision for overcoming changes in the water level. Electric traction was introduced on the Arth-Rigi Railway in 1907, but the Rigi Railway was not electrified until October 3rd, 1937.

FUND FOR AVALANCHE VICTIMS IN SWITZERLAND.

Dear Compatriots,

The Fund for Avalanche Victims in Switzerland was closed to-day and the grand total of £3,221.2.3 is being transferred to the Swiss Red Cross in Berne. This splendid response to our appeal of February 1st is all the more gratifying as nearly one-third represents contributions received from British friends of our country. Many of these offerings reached us with touching messages of sympathy as well as thanks for kindness received in Switzerland.

In the name of the Swiss Societies in London and the provinces as well as on behalf of the victims of this unprecedented disaster, we express our deep gratitude to all our compatriots and British friends who have contributed so generously. We wish to thank also the Minister, M. Henri de Torrenté, the Swiss Legation, the Swiss Observer and the Swiss Bank Corporation who devoted a great deal of work and time to the collection of this fund.

Yours sincerely,
(Sig.) R. DUPRAZ,
for the Presidents Assembly.

March, 31st, 1951.

THE NIGHT WATCH OF LAUSANNE.

Regularly at 9 P.M. the present night watchman of Lausanne has, for the last 22 years, climbed 250 steps to reach his little room in the square tower of the 12th century cathedral. Pière Mignot, as he is affectionately called by the citizens, keeps watch while Lausanne sleeps. Next to his carpenter's bench, where he busies himself in his moments of leisure, he keeps a long speaking trumpet which he uses only to sound an alarm of fire.

Throughout the night Père Mignot calls the hours from each of the four corners of the tower. In winter when the north wind blows he can only call at two corners.

Who hears this lonely night watchman? Wakeful souls, sick people, policemen on their beat below, even sharp ears down at the port of Ouchy, if the wind is in the right direction. At present this quaint custom may seem antiquated and useless. Yet, the citizens of Lausanne appreciated their night watch. In their waking hours they have a strange sense of security when they hear that voice call out the hours.

The 12th century Gothic cathedral of Lausanne rises proudly on one of the five hills on which this city is built. In this place of worship Rudolph of Habsburg was crowned Emperor by Pope Gregory X in 1275 A.D. and here in 1536 took place the celebrated discussion between Calvin Viret and Farel.

No one entering the lofty vaulted spaces of Lausanne Cathedral can refrain from being deeply impressed. Although there are a few inequalities, due to the long period of construction, for instance in the variously fashioned pillars of the nave, the whole effect is imposing and harmonious. In these lofty spaces, illumined by shafts of light, one is conscious of an exalted inspiration which characterizes this edifice as the finest medieval creation in Switzerland.

Artistic masterpieces are the rose-window, the Apostles' Door with its early-Gothic statues on the pillars and the relief of the sepulture and resurrection of Mary in the lunette of the porchway.

Inside the Cathedral are several tombs dating from various periods, the remains of the oldest early-Gothic choir stalls in Switzerland and particularly elaborate choir stalls of the late-Gothic era.



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