

# News from Switzerland

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chine, which also captured the gaze of many of the male visitors, especially during a demonstration of sock darning and fabric mending; in fact, one gentleman took off his top coat right on the spot to have a cigarette burn mended and proudly handed it to onlookers afterwards to see if they could find where the hole had been, and this proved quite a difficult task.

## NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

### An Invention of the Swiss Watchmaking Industry: the Pendulum with Automatic Winding by Light

In the experimental workshops of Messrs. Patek Philippe, of Geneva, light has been used, for the past year, as the source of energy for automatic winding of a pendulum clock. This prototype was publicly shown, for the first time, at the Swiss Industries Fair at Basle.

A photo-electric cell is used in this apparatus, the current of which is led to a tiny motor. The main difficulty lay in the construction of a sufficiently small machine and then to adapt it so as to enable this extremely weak driving power to assist in winding up a clock spring. Both these problems have been solved with noteworthy success.

As soon as the winding operation has been completed, for which exposure in the sun for a period of two hours is sufficient, the motor switches off automatically, and the clock can keep going for four days without renewed exposure to the sun. This new invention proves, once again, that the Swiss watch industry is successfully endeavouring to retain its lead also in technical matters.

### Increase of the National Income

The net national income in Switzerland in 1951 amounted to 19.5 milliard fcs. This figure is made up as follows: Income from work 11.7 milliard fcs. (last year this figure stood at 10.8 md. fcs.), income from business 4 md. fcs. (last year it was 3.8 md.); income from capital, 3.8 md. fcs. (last year 3.5 md.). Thus it will be seen that income from work registers the greatest increase. This is due, apart from the generally favourable employment position above all also to wage increases which have taken place in the past year.

### An Interesting Example

The workers' union of Brown Boveri & Co. Ltd. in Baden, which has a membership of some 2000, has addressed an open letter to the Federal Government and the State authorities in which attention is drawn to the fact that during recent wage negotiations, the union's representatives have voluntarily dropped their claim for full compensation of higher living costs, in order to pre-

vent the firm, which mainly produces for export, from having to increase its prices. The open letter says, among other things: "We believe that it should be possible to stop the rising price-wage spiral if all Swiss would be prepared to make a similar sacrifice. . . . We expect that our authorities too will recognise this viewpoint and will do everything in their power to halt inflationary tendencies. . . . We hope that all producers in industry, agriculture and domestic trade will co-operate by reducing their margins of profit."

### Yodlers' Festival

Thousand of yodlers, clad in gay native costumes, will take part in a rustic pageant, when the 9th Swiss national yodler's festival convenes at St. Gall on July 11th to 13th.

The programme for the three-day festival includes processions of yodlers and costume groups on Saturday and Sunday, July 12th and 13th. The pageant will depict local folk customs in the various parts of Switzerland throughout the year.

The festival is expected to attract some ten thousand spectators. Visitors from abroad will be able to combine their enjoyment of costume pageants, yodeling, Alpine horn blowing and flag throwing with a visit to St. Gall's permanent attraction, its abbey, one of the most famous in Europe with its rich collection of early manuscripts and printed books.

### Spring Session of Federal Chambers

The Federal Chambers have concluded their spring session. The summer session will start on June 3rd, 1952.

In the Council of States the most important business dealt with was the debate on the draft bill of a revised law on Civic Rights. The most important of the innovations put forward concerns the question of the maintenance of her civic rights by a Swiss woman who marries a foreigner.

The Lower House of the Swiss Parliament (National Council) rejected by 80 votes to 31 a private Bill to reintroduce capital punishment.

The Government opposed the Bill on the grounds there was not sufficient evidence to prove capital punishment was a deterrent to crime.

In 1874 Switzerland abolished the death penalty, but a crime wave followed and in 1879 individual cantons were allowed to reintroduce it. Parliament abolished it again in 1937.

### Winning of Major Road Events by Ferdinand Kubler

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 Lemman, in Switzerland, he followed up by a breakaway win in the Tour of Tessin, at Lugano, the next day.

### Number of Protestants and Catholics in Switzerland

Of the nearly 5,000,000 population of Switzerland, 2.46 million or 57.6 per cent. are Protestant and 1.75 million or 41.4 per cent. Catholics, according to the last census.

### Geneva Car Show

Dr. Kobelt, President of the Swiss Confederation, opening the Geneva Car Show, urged motorists to buy cars that could be used by the army, if mobilised. "It is part of our militia system of 'weapons at home' that not only the soldier but horses and motor-cars must be called up," he said.

### Foreign Refugees in Switzerland

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.

### New "Statute of Agriculture"

The electorate of Switzerland accepted by 480,852 votes to 413,944 a law developing agriculture and protecting agriculturists. With the growing industrialisation 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 1000 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.
Zurich .....	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
Graubunden .....	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
Neuchatel .....	11,849	9,085
Geneve .....	10,967	9,342

Total ..... 480,852      413,944  
63.5% of the electors went to the Poll.

## THE SWISS SEEN BY A SWISS

(Continued from last issue)

### "Deutschschweiz v. Suisse Romande"

When I was at school, I used to get beaten up regularly once a month for laughing at my French-speaking friends, who weren't able to utter a single sentence in German, save "Dubisch-tumm." Of course, that didn't alter the point at issue. It is an acknowledged fact that our friends in the "Suisse Romande" take the least possible interest in languages other than their own. By way of contrast, the thing for well-bred northern girls to do is to spend a year in places like Corgemont or Villars. They usually come back after ten months, with a change of hairstyle, and knowing less French than they did before.

A friend once told me that, if he could marry again, he would make sure to choose a "Romande" this time, for the two years of plain food he had already endured were just about as much as he could bear. This statement is rather unjust, and little did he say about his meal always being on the table when he came back from work.

It is said that one dresses very smartly on the shores of Lac Lemman, but it is also said that Zurich is a very fashionable town. So we will be prudent and leave it at that.

We will not start to compare qualities, either, for how can you weigh the charm, gaiety and unconsciousness of the ones against the solidity, seriousness and efficiency of the others? Why is it that expressions like "die frache Waltsche" and "ces Suisses Teutons" are in existence? Do you think it is because the "Vaudois" cannot forget a certain day in 1536, when Bernese troops, under the command of Hans-Franz Nageli, occupied the Canton of Vaud and hoisted their flag on Chillon Castle?

And I feel quite sure that the two Federal Inspectors, who ventured to hold an inquest on a black-marketing deal in Bulle, remembered the days of Morgarten, when they were on the point of being stoned by a furious crowd of bearded "Gruyériens."

However, the Bernese troops retired, the Federal Inspectors didn't get stoned, and since the flag of the "Jurassiens" has been officially recognised, everybody should be happy and satisfied.