

Departure of Mr. Oesch

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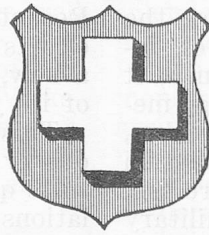
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Departure of Mr. Oesch

Mr. Oscar Oesch, Chancellor of the Consulate, will be leaving New Zealand towards the end of March to take up his new appointment with the Consulate of Switzerland in Cincinnati, U.S.A.

Mr. Walter Sollberger, who has already arrived, is succeeding Mr. Oesch as Chancellor of the Consulate.

THE 100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE FEDERAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Federal Technical University of Zurich (Federal Institute of Technology), the rector of which is Professor Karl Schmid, has recently celebrated the hundredth anniversary of its foundation, and scholars from all over the world have united in paying their tribute to an institution which has contributed not only to the economic advance of Switzerland but also to research far beyond her frontiers.

The Government and municipal authorities gave a reception in honour of the many guests whom the university had invited, amongst them were present former Federal Councillors, scientists, industrialists, artists, politicians, high-ranking officers, technicians, etc., etc.

Amongst the many speakers was Monsieur Max Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation.

The following article by Dr. h.c. E. Speiser, President of the Swiss Association of Machinery Manufacturers, has appeared in the latest issue of "Swiss Technics":

The Federal Constitution, adopted in 1848 by the people and their representatives, contained in Article 22 this provision: "The Confederation is authorised to establish a University and a Polytechnic." The revised Constitution of 1874, Article 27, speaks of the already "existing" Polytechnic.

In actual fact the young Confederation, with the enthusiasm that characterised it at that time, had immediately exercised its right in respect of the Polytechnic and as early as 1855 all the preparatory work was completed and the

Institute could open its doors to the benefit of Swiss youth athirst for knowledge and to the advantage of the entire Swiss economy. The time of the Institute's foundation was well chosen. The breaking down of all the guild barriers in the first half of the last century, the principle of commercial and industrial freedom which corresponded to the liberal spirit prevailing at that time and which meant, simply, the right of the individual to choose his profession and place of work as he thought fit, had released unprecedented energies. The triumph march of the machine, driven first by steam and later by electric power as well, was beginning, and the whole life, both of the individual and of the community, was transformed. Chemistry and pharmaceuticals received a new impetus and scientific research penetrated into many another field dominated until then by custom and traditional methods of work.

There thus arose a constantly growing need for technically trained youths. The young Federal Institute could only satisfy this need by making tremendous efforts and by becoming ever larger.

A few figures will serve to illustrate this. The Institute began its work in the autumn of 1855 with a teaching staff of 45 (professors, staff lecturers and outside lecturers). Today it has a staff of 282, to which must be added another 237 assistants. Whereas the number of students a hundred years ago was only 68, it has grown almost uninterruptedly to the present normal figure of between 2800 and 3000 matriculated students; in addition, there are a very great number of non-matriculated students. About one-sixth of the students as a rule come from abroad—a proof of the high esteem enjoyed by the Institute which is now able to award some 450 diplomas each year. Owing to special circumstances, such as studies being interrupted by frequent military service and an exceptionally large influx of students from abroad, numbers of over 4000 were attained during and immediately after the war, but this was not regarded as an ideal state of affairs.