

News at random

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Federal Council will be officially represented on the occasion of the installation, on October, 1st, of the new President of the Republic of Panama, Monsieur José-Antonio Remon Canera. The following will attend the celebrations at Panama: Monsieur Werner Fuchs, Swiss Chargé d'Affaires at Caracas, and Monsieur Hans, Rudolf Blau, Swiss Consul General at Panama.

The Indian Minister, Monsieur Asaf Ali, held a reception at the Legation in Berne, in honour of the members of the new Swiss expedition which is to make a fresh attempt to climb Mount Everest. They left Geneva on August 28th for Nepal.

A luncheon was offered to the German Chancellor, Dr. Adenauer, by the Federal Council on the occasion of his passing through Berne. The following members of the Swiss Government attended: Dr. C. Kobelt, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Federal Councillors Etter and Petitpierre.

Dr. C. Kobelt, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Monsieur M. Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister, addressed the members of the Inter-parliamentarian Union assembled in Berne.

The Swiss Federal Railways carried during the month of July, 1952, 17.76 million passengers or 4,000 passengers more than in July, 1951. The receipts are returned as 32.32 million francs. (July, 1951: 30.89 million francs.)

Goods traffic reached 1.76 million tons or 19,000 tons more than in July, 1951. Receipts: 31.87 million francs which is 2.90 million francs more than during the same period in the previous year.

Cantonal

A serious motoring accident occurred on the road between Root and Ebikon (Ct. Lucerne) when three cars were involved in a collision.

Two persons were killed and three seriously injured. The names of the victims are: Emil Rubrecht, master-plumber, of Zurich and his wife, née Greil, aged 56. The names of the injured are: Dr. med. Renatus Kälin, aged 30, of Gelterkinden; his wife Jaqueline, and their servant, Miss Alice Rebsamen, aged 25. [A.T.S.]

The watch manufacturing concern, "Lavina, S.A." in Villeret (Ct. Berne) has celebrated the 100th anniversary of its foundation. The firm was founded in 1852 by the Brack family, and in 1916, was taken over by Dubois-Peseux. In the year 1937, a Limited Company was formed which at present is under the management of Mr. Maurice Baehler. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Walter Keller, well-known for his translations of old Italian novels, and Ticinese folklore, has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary in Basle. In 1927, he was awarded the "Schiller Preis". [A.T.S.]

The late Mr. Leonard Erzinger, consulting engineer of Zurich, has left an amount of 100,000.—frs. to his native commune of Schleithem (Ct. Schaffhausen) for the purpose of educating young members of both sexes of the commune of Schleithem. [A.T.S.]

Madame Esterina Somazzi-Bottani has celebrated her 100th birthday at Montagnola. (Ct. Ticino.) [A.T.S.]

A cashier of the "Raiffeisenkasse" in the commune of Herdern (Ct. Thurgau) has been arrested, having embezzled an amount of 50,000.—frs. [A.T.S.]

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R.A.C.

The inauguration of a monument to the late J. C. Heer, famous Swiss novelist and author of the book "Der König der Bernina" took place at Montebello nr. Pontresina. (Ct. Grisons). [A.T.S.]

Dr. Maurice Jeanneret, a member of the National Council and the communist party, and by profession a medical practitioner in Lausanne, has resigned his seat in Parliament for reasons of health. [A.T.S.]

M. René Auberjonois, well-known portrait and landscape painter has celebrated his 80th birthday at Yverdon.

Many of his works are exhibited in Swiss and Foreign art galleries. [A.T.S.]

M. Jean-Jacques Bolens, since 1945 examining magistrate at Lausanne, has been appointed prefect of Lausanne, in succession to M. A. Blancs, who has reached retiring age. [A.T.S.]

Burglars entered the premises of a watch manufacturing firm at Fontainemelon and stole goods to the value of 10,000.—frs. [A.T.S.]

A motor-car driven by a locomotive driver of the Swiss Federal Railways, named Gilbert Michel of Geneva, collided with a tramway car in Chatelaine, near Geneva.

The driver of the motor-car was killed outright, whilst his passenger, M. Constant Gleyre, a railway man, aged 29, was seriously injured. [A.T.S.]

Army

Captain William Hurter, attached to the Federal Military Department in Berne has been appointed to the Swiss Legation in Warsaw in the capacity of Military and Air Attaché. (Captain Hurter was for some time at the Swiss Legation in London as technical assistant to the Air and Military Attaché).

Colonel Emilio Lucchini of Montagnola (Ct. Ticino) Instructor (Infantry) has been appointed Military and Air Attaché to the Swiss Legation in Rome.

Flight-seargent, Peter Roth, aged 27, a secondary school teacher in Zurich, was killed when his machine crashed near Rümligen. (Ct. Zurich.) [A.T.S.]

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Albert Züst, late States Councillor, in Lucerne, at the age of 78.

The deceased was born in 1874 at Sursee. He studied law at the Universities of Freiburg, i. Br., Munich, Leipzig, Basle, Zurich and Berne. From 1901-1912, he occupied the post of clerk of the Court at the High Court of Justice in Lucerne, and afterwards until 1920 he acted as a judge at the same Court.

For nine years (1911-1920) he was a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Lucerne over which he presided in 1919. In 1920, Albert Züst was elected a member of the cantonal government, which post he held until 1929. He was elected a member of Parliament in 1929, (States Council), where he sat for 14 years occupying the Chair in 1939/40. The deceased was a member of the Board of many industrial concerns.

Georges Dessoulavy, well-known frescoe painter, in Yverdon, aged 54.

Pater Thietland Kälin of the monastery at Einsiedeln. He was known as an art historian.

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Dr. Roland Zehnde, former Manager of the Montreux-Oberland railway. The deceased was a member of the Board of the Lötschberg, and the Siders-Montana railways, in Montreux, aged 78.

Dr. Heinrich Fehlmann-Ricmar, Member of the Board of the "Schweiz. Unfallversicherungs-Gesellschaft Winterthur", in Winterthur, at the age of 73.

Dr. Josef Henggeler, a well-known Zurich lawyer, in Interlaken, aged 67.

The deceased was a lecturer on "Genossenschaftsrecht" at the University of Zurich, and from 1939-1947 held the post of President of the "Schweiz. Textilsyndikat."

Theodor Moeckli, a former primary school inspector of the Jura district, Mayor of the town of Neuville, and from 1919-1922, a member of Parliament (National-Council) in Neuville, aged 89. [A.T.S.]

Alderman Bowen, Lord Mayor of Birmingham, accompanied by his wife, has visited several Swiss towns on his recent visit to Switzerland. In Geneva, they were the guests of M. Cottier, Mayor of Geneva at a Luncheon. Dr. Landolt, Mayor of the town of Zurich welcomed the guests at a reception held at the "Muraltengut" which was attended by representatives of the local authorities, Zurich University and the Swiss-British Society. . . In Berne the distinguished visitors were greeted by the Mayor of the Federal capital at the "Erlacherhof"; they later on attended a concert of British folk music and popular songs given by the Birmingham children's choir. [A.T.S.]

The following mountaineering accidents are reported from Switzerland:

Three young men from Unterwalden on an ascent, without guides, to the "Südlenspitze" (4,3000 m.) fell down the steep wall of the "Grand Gendarmes". A rescue party from Saas Fee found the mountaineers. George Parpan of Stansstaad, was found dead, and the remaining two were seriously injured.

A 19 year old student, André Bonvin, was killed when ascending the Ghiridon. (Ct. Ticino.)

Traffic accidents in Switzerland are alarmingly high. According to statistics just published by the Federal Statistical Office in Berne, for the period of January-June, 1952, 16,709 accidents were reported. 9,489 persons were injured and 359 lost their lives. Comparing the figures with the same period in 1951, the number of accidents show an increase of 11 per cent, those of the injured 10 per cent and those killed 13 per cent. [A.T.S.]

At Simplon Kulm on August 12th, Switzerland received a particular honour as a tourist country, when Maurice Dreicer, the well-known American epicure and globe-trotter, handed to Councillor Escher a golden "T" (Travel), as an expression of his "appreciation of Switzerland as the best organised tourist country" — to quote the words of the accompanying scroll.

In a short speech, Mr. Dreicer, who is a permanent contributor to the trade paper for American tourist bureaus, stated that his conviction that Switzerland was the best organised tourist country, had been confirmed by his experiences and travels in practically every country in the world. Our country was pre-

eminent over all others in that not only the first-class hotels, but also the more modest guest-houses offered tourists a hospitality which was clean, courteous, and above all of good value. Apart from accommodation itself Mr. Dreicer included in his praise of Swiss tourism the transport services reception of guests, and in particular the publicity campaign for the trade which was clearly making progress.

On behalf of the Federal Council, Councillor Escher, as chief of the Department for Post and Railways, to which the tourist services are subordinate, stated his appreciation of the honour. He particularly emphasized that Switzerland had no notable raw-materials or natural resources, and no access to the oceans of the world; it had the beauties of nature instead, and had consequently become a tourist country.

The meeting, which was organised by Mr. S. Bittel, director of the Swiss National Tourist Office, closed with the presentation of a Valais pewter-tankard to the American guest.

The Councils of the Wine-growers Brotherhood have agreed for the next festival to take place at Vevey in 1955. Experience has shown that a two years' interval is required for preparing so important a manifestation. The "Fête des Vignerons" is dedicated to the work done in the vineyards and is at the same time a performance of high artistic value. It requires the active and enthusiastic participation of the population of the whole Vevey region. Like the previous festivals, it must leave in the mind of both spectators and actors memories of dazzling beauty and be a communion of the whole people.

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The Councils have fixed August 1955 for the next "Fête des Vignerons". On the last occasion, it was celebrated in 1927, with great success. Two thousand actors, choir-singers and musicians took part, and the vast open-air theatre welcomed an average of 16,000 spectators at each performance.

* * *

The Swiss Foundation for Alpine Research communicates as follows: "In order to make use of the experience acquired during the reconnaissance of the Southern approaches to Mount Everest, last spring, an expedition will be sent there again next October and November — i.e. the period of stable weather conditions following the monsoon. A new attempt to reach the summit will be made. The authorisation of the Nepalese Government has been obtained for this expedition. Owing to the fact that several members of the spring expedition are prevented by their professional commitments from taking part in this new expedition, new elements, fresh and in top-form, have been engaged. Dr. Gabriel Chevalley, of Bex, has been chosen as head of the expedition, which will be composed of the following three guides: Raymond Lambert, of Geneva; Arthur Spoehel, of Berne, Gustave Gross of Salvan (Valais), and of two alpinists: Mr. Jean Buzio, of Geneva and Ernest Reiss, of Meiringen. Bhothia Tensing has again been chosen as sirdar (head) of the Sherpas, and is now considered as a member of the alpinists' group. The number of porters (Sherpas) will be doubled, in order to facilitate and speed-up the transport of material to the altitude camps".

HOME AFFAIRS.

by DR. MAX NEF.


The communication from Washington, according to which the President of the United States of America has rejected the proposal put forward by the Tariff Commission for an increase in the rates of duty on watches and on watch-parts, has been received in Berne with great pleasure and satisfaction. A very grave burden of anxiety has been removed from the most important branch of the Swiss export industry. For the first six months of 1952 its exports attained the value of 500 million francs. That is almost a quarter of the total value of Swiss exports. Some 50 thousand workers earn their livelihood in the Swiss watch-making industry.

It will doubtless be recalled that in the Autumn of 1950, in compliance with American wishes, and in spite of considerable misgivings on the part of the Swiss, the so-called "evasion clause" was added to the Swiss-American Trade Agreement of 1936. In accordance with this clause, unilateral increases in Customs duties are permitted, in so far as certain stipulations of an economic nature have been fulfilled. The fact that, contrary to the fears which have been entertained during many a long month, the liberal principles for the structure of international trade have triumphed in the United States, was learnt with particular satisfaction in Switzerland. For our country, also, has always been a partisan of the re-establishment of foreign trade which is unhampered to the largest possible extent, in the conviction that therein lies the most effective and lasting means for the normalisation of world economy. Had America turned more and more towards a system rendering imports more difficult, whilst, at the same time, supplying the world market with increasing quantities of its own export goods, this would have meant, in the long run, an impoverishment of many a country in the rehabilitation of which Switzerland, being a land engaged in very active export trade, is particularly interested.

But, also in the reciprocal trade exchange between the United States and Switzerland, the balance would have been considerably disturbed. Swiss purchases of American goods exceed 900 million francs in value per annum, whilst Swiss exports to the U.S.A. amount to approximately 600 millions a year, so that at the present time, Swiss imports from America surpass her exports to that country by about one-third. Moreover, almost half of Switzerland's export value to America is in respect of deliveries of watches.

The introduction of prohibitive American customs duties would have struck a very serious blow at the Swiss watch-making industry, in view of the fact that about one-third of the exports from this particular branch of our industry goes to the United States. There would, undoubtedly, have been reactions on the Labour Market so that it will easily be understood that the whole of our economy and, of course, our authorities also, gave a big sigh of relief when the good news came from America.

However, in spite of the momentary escape from this danger, all anxiety is by no means eliminated. The reason for this is that there exists a tendency among some of the most important American watch-manufacturers, to carry out the production of watches



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