

# News at random

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# The Swiss Observer

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

The Federal Council has decided to be represented by a Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary in Uruguay, instead, as hitherto, by a Chargé d'Affaires.

Monsieur Jean Merminod has been appointed Minister, who will replace Monsieur Emile Fontanel.

The newly appointed Minister is a citizen of Geneva, and was born at St. Gall in 1903. He received his schooling in St. Gall, Bulle and Geneva, and studied law at the Universities of Berlin and Geneva.

Monsieur Merminod entered into the service of the Confederation in 1928, where he occupied a post in the Transport Section, of which he became its head in 1945, having been promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation. Five years later (1950) he was transferred to Paris as 1st collaborator to the Minister.

Monsieur Bernard Turretini of the section for International Organisations at the Federal Political Department (Swiss Foreign Office) has been promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation.

Professor Georges Sauser-Hall, Swiss member of the Permanent Court of International Arbitration, has been appointed supreme arbitrator in all legal disputes which the mixed German-Israel commission may be unable to settle in the first instance.

Monsieur Dag Hammarskjöld, General Secretary of the United Nations has paid a courtesy visit to the President of the Swiss Confederation and the Swiss Foreign Minister.

Customs receipts for the month of June, 1954, totalled 62.6 million francs, or 7 million francs more than in the same month of the previous year.

In the first six months of the current year the receipts amounted to 247.3 million francs which exceeds last year's figures for the same period by 25.6 million francs.

### Cantonal

A motor-boat driven by Franz Blank, proprietor of the Hotel Lützelau, Weggis, owing to steering trouble, collided with a wall of the quay and sank. He, and his brother Ernst Blank of Zurich, were drowned, not being able to swim, whilst three other passengers saved themselves by swimming. Ernst Blank was married and father of four children, his brother was also married and father of two young children.

[A.T.S.]

A Zurich taxi-driver was attacked by his fare near Wollishofen, and on calling for help the assailant took to his heels. He was later arrested by the police, who identified him as a German national.

[A.T.S.]

Goods amounting to 20,000.—francs were stolen during the night from a jeweller's shop in the Bahnhofstrasse of Schlieren (Zurich).

[A.T.S.]

The Martin Bodmer Foundation has awarded the Gottfried Keller Prize for 1954 to Professor, Dr. Werner Kaegi, the historian and lecturer at the University of Basle.

[A.T.S.]

The Bernese Cantonal Government have agreed to the construction of an airport for the Federal capital, which will be big enough for full international air services. (Bern has only a small airfield at present.)

[A.T.S.]

The University of Berne has elected Professor Dr. theol. Guggisberg as rector.

[A.T.S.]

Mr. and Mrs. Ulrich Liechti-Rüeggsegger of Heimenschwand nr. Thun, have celebrated their iron wedding anniversary (65).

[A.T.S.]

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Mgr. F. Schoenenberger "Domprobst" of the cathedral of Fribourg has celebrated 50 years of service as a priest. [A.T.S.]

The Evangelical Teacher Seminary Muristalden, Berne, has celebrated its 100th anniversary of its foundation. [A.T.S.]

In recognition for the hospitality accorded, a hundred years ago, to Giuseppe Mazzini, champion for an Italian Republic, the Republican party of Italy has given to the town of Grenchen a bust of Mazzini. The unveiling of the monument will take place on the last Sunday in August. [A.T.S.]

Two persons were killed, and one injured when a motor-car collided with a tree owing to a skid. The driver, Mr. Oberrauch and his wife, both of Binningen (Basle) were killed outright whilst their daughter received only slight injuries. [A.T.S.]

The late Otto Wilhelm Schweizer-Helbling of St. Gall has left an amount of 20,000.—francs to the poor of the community of Rapperswil. [A.T.S.]

The "Lyceum Alpinum" Zuoz has recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. It was founded in 1904, under the name "Institut Engiadina", eight years later (1912) it was enlarged and enjoys today a great reputation. [A.T.S.]

During the first six months of 1954, 808 traffic accidents have occurred in the canton of Aargau. 631 persons were injured of whom 30 succumbed to their injuries. In the canton of Fribourg for the same period, 307 accidents have been reported. 136 persons were injured, and 8 lost their lives. [A.T.S.]

Dr. René Burnand, son of the painter Eugène Burnand, has had the title of honorary Professor conferred on him by the University of Lausanne.

Professor Burnand was formerly medical Director of the Fuad Sanatorium in Helwan (Egypt) and since 1922 a lecturer at the medical faculty of the University of Lausanne. He has also made a name for himself as a writer, and some of his works have received prizes from the Académie Française. [A.T.S.]

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Dr. J. E. Brandenberger, inventor of transparent wrapping paper (cellophane), citizen of Zurich, in Zurich, at the age of 82.

J. Bauler, Journalist, in Neuchâtel, aged 77.

Professor Henri Lagotala, Professor at the Universities of Neuchâtel and Geneva, at the age of 65.

Mme. Johanna Matthaei, formerly singing-mistress at the Conservatoire of Basle, and a well-known concert singer, in Basle, aged 71.

Gustav Altherr, in Speicher, at the age of 84. The deceased was for several years "Gemeindehauptmann" in Speicher, and a member of the District Court and the "Kantonsrat". From 1918-1943, he was a member of the cantonal Government, during which time he occupied the post of "Landammann" for three years. Altherr sat from 1931-1935 in the National Council.

Dr. Antoine Nebel, a well-known medical practitioner, and founder of the "Société rhodanienne des médecins homéopathés" in Lausanne, aged 84.

Dr. Georges Cornaz, head of the Dermatological Institute of the University of Lausanne, in Lausanne, at the age of 66.

Dr. Henri Décombaz, medical practitioner at Lutry, and formerly for 18 years at St. Croix, in Lutry, aged 81.

M. Pellaton, a former President of the Grand Council of the canton of Neuchâtel, at Le Locle, at the age of 66.

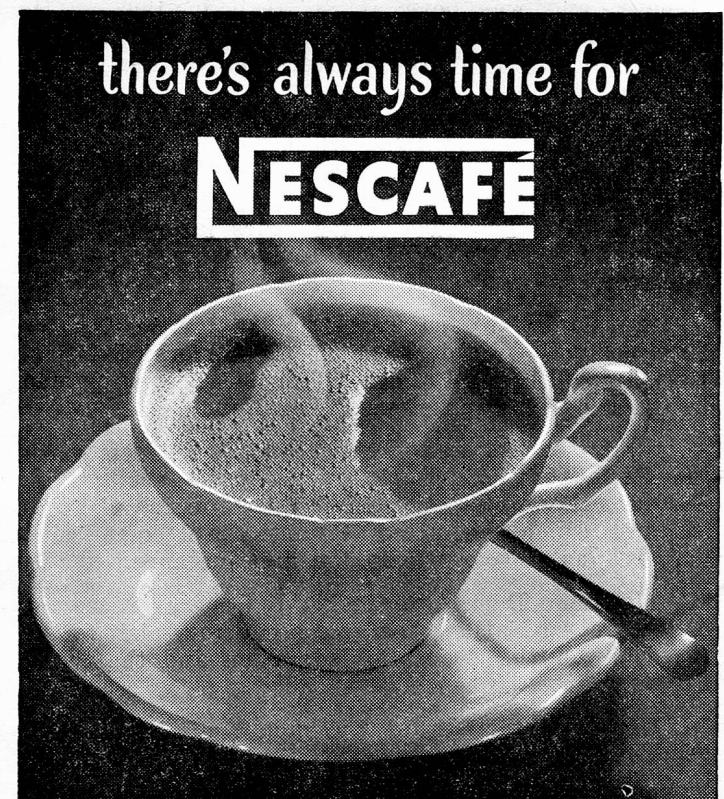
Professor Dr. Robert Haller, chemist, in Basle, aged 81. The deceased was for many years in the service of the CIBA, A.G., and a lecturer at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), Zurich. He was also a well-known botanist, and an honorary member of the "Botanischen Gesellschaft".

Emil Hügi, during 40 drawing-master at the Primary and Secondary Schools Lucerne, in Lucerne, at the age of 72.

Dr. Ulrich Oertli, Director of the "Schweizerischen Unfallversicherung", Lucerne, in Lucerne aged 65.

Pasteur Henri Nardel, in Vevey, at the age of 76.

Mlle. Mathilde Paravicini, in Basle, aged 79. The deceased was a prominent welfare officer, and rendered great services especially during the first and second world wars, by organising transport for wounded soldiers, children and evaquese. The University of Basle honoured her with the degree of *doctor*



ANOTHER OF NESTLÉ'S GOOD THINGS

*honoris causa*, and the French Government made her an officer of the Légion d'Honneur.

Friedrich Pabst, Industrialist, and co-founder of the paper "Schweizer Woche", in Murgenthal, at the age of 82.

R. O. Muller, in Zurich, aged 82. The deceased was a well-known balloonist and alpinist, and from 1909-1952 a member of the Swiss Aero-Club. Amongst his many alpine ascents was the one of the Kilimandjaro, the highest mountain in Africa. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The undermentioned anniversaries are mentioned in the Swiss Press:

National-Councillor, Dr. Hans Oprecht (60) of Zurich. He was secretary of the VPOD (Schweiz. Verbandes des Personals öffentlicher Dienste) from 1927-1946, and from 1946-1953 head of the Book Guild Gutenberg. Since 1925, Dr. Oprecht has been a Member of Parliament (National Council), and from 1936-1952 he was President of the Swiss Socialist party.

Dr. H. C. Erwin Pöschel (70) of Davos, eminent art historian, critic, and writer. Amongst his works are a biography of the Swiss painter Agostino Giacometti, three volumes "Das Bündnerhaus der Schweiz", "Das Burgenbuch von Graubünden", and "Bündner Kunstdenkmäler".

Emil Rieder (80) of Zurich, formerly District Judge of the Tribunal Zurich, and a member of the "Kantonsrat", Zurich. He played for many years a conspicuous role in the Labour movement. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The Swiss Red Cross has sent 50,000 parcels containing clothing and blankets to the victims of the

inundations in Bavaria and Austria, in addition cash amounts collected so far reaching over 300,000.—francs will be made available for the victims.

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Professor H. G. Wright, who is retiring from the Chair of English at the University College of North Wales, Bangor, after occupying it since 1919, has accepted an invitation to hold the Chair of English Language and Mediaeval Literature at the University of Basle for four years.

\* \* \*

Flight mechanic Max Heer, who has been in the service of Swissair since 1943, has completed his 3 millionth kilometers. Steward Max Hintermann, a member of the staff of Swissair since 1946, has also flown 3 million kilometers. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

The "Académie Française" has awarded the Monthyon Prize for his book "Château en Espagne" to René Burnand, the Tessonnière Prize to Paul André for his book "La jeunesse de Bayle", and the Soest Prize to Henri Perrochon for his work "Quelques Vaudois". Mlle. Eléonore Niquille has received a prize for her book of poetry "Les pellerin émerveillé."

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

*The European Light Athletics Championship, Berne, August 25th-29th.* The Secretariat of the 5th European Light Athletics Championships reports that great interest is shown for this event. Twenty-nine countries have been invited to send their best athletes to take part in these Championships which will take place at the Neufeld Stadium, Berne. The athletes

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will train at the Wankdorf Stadium, situated on the outskirts of Berne. Ideal conditions are offered also by the Federal School at Macolin, near Bienne. Guest athletes will also be able, if they so wish, to train at the Lachen Stadium, Thun; this stadium is situated on the shore of Lake Thun, in an ideal scenic setting.

\* \* \*  
The Swiss Red Cross in a communiqué gives the following figures and particulars of help given for the victims of the inundations which occurred on the 1st of February, 1953, in Holland, England and Belgium. Altogether an amount of seven million francs was collected in Switzerland.

Holland received 46 complete wooden dwelling houses, household linen, agricultural machines, and a cash amount of 2.4 million francs. England, apart from a cash amount, has received kitchen ware and foodstuffs amounting to 450,000.-francs. Belgium, apart from cash amounts has received beds, sewing machines, etc. to the value of 150,000.-francs. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*  
*The annual postage stamp issue.* As is customary every year on the occasion of National Day, August 1st, an issue of 5 special postage stamps is on sale throughout Switzerland, until August 31st, 1954 and obtainable at all Swiss post-offices and in newspaper kiosks; until September 15th, these stamps are also available from the Philately Department of the Federal General Post Office, Berne. A small supplement is charged for these stamps, above their actual postal value; 5 centimes on the 5cts. stamp; 10 centimes on the 10 cts., 20 cts., 30 cts. and 40 cts. stamps. These supplementary charges are always used to augment the funds of welfare societies, selected in rotation; this year, the beneficiaries are to be youth training centres (90%) and the Swiss Association of Family Aid Societies (10%).

The whole issue represents typical Swiss views: 10 centimes stamp — Lake Neuchâtel; 20 centimes — The Maggia Valley (Ticino); 30 centimes — the Suze Gorges in the Taubenloch (Bernese Jura); 40 centimes — the Upper Engadine. The 5 centimes stamp is dedicated to the memory of the Swiss composer, Zwyssig, author of the national song: "Trittst im Morgenrot" — "Sur nos monts quand le soleil" — "Quando bionda aurora".

\* \* \*  
*Switzerland and the electrification of French Railways.* On May 11th last, a Franco-Swiss Agreement was signed concerning the electrification of the Reding-Strasbourg-Bâle and the Dijon-Vallorbe (including the Frasné-Neuchâtel track) main railway lines. The French Government has undertaken to make it possible for the French National Railways to electrify all these lines simultaneously; The Swiss Government has undertaken to finance the operation by a loan from the Swiss Federal Railways; in the amount of 200 million Swiss francs. This loan may, if necessary, be increased to 250 million francs.

\* \* \*  
The Geneva alpine guide M. Raymond Lambert, who in 1952 reached a height of about 28,000ft. on Everest, has received from the Nepalese Government permission for an expedition this year in the Himalayas. The expedition intends exploring the southern side of Gauri Sankar (about 30 miles west of Everest) so far unmapped. M. Lambert will be accompanied by Mme. Kogan, a well-known French climber, who re-

cently visited the Andes, and by four Swiss—guide M. Franz Lochmatter, son of the late famous St. Nicholas guide, Professor Jean Juge, M. Zimmermann, botanist of the Swiss Everest expedition, who is going to complete his studies on Nepalese flora, and a photographer. The expedition hopes to leave in August.

\* \* \*  
The are now 300 self service shops in Norway, and a further 300 to 400 are planning to switch over soon. In Europe, Sweden and Switzerland have the highest proportion of self-service shops. Norway is third with 1.5 per cent of its shops now on that basis.

\* \* \*  
Montreux will hold its 9th International Festival of Music from September 8th to 21st and Vevey organizes on September 28th, October 3rd and 8th a piano recital (Clara Haskil), a chamber music concert (Wiener Octet) and a violin recital (Isaac Stern). The National Orchestra from Paris, which will give the seven concerts of the programme of the Montreux Musical September Festival, and its hundred musicians will be conducted in succession by Paul Klecki, Josef Krips, Karl Schuricht, André Cluytens, Otto Klemperer and Igor Markevitch. The soloists will be Clara Haskil, Nathan Milstein, Edwin Fischer. On September 19th, the fifth concert will be conducted by Roberto Benzi, the young prodigy. The Symphony Concerts will be given in the Pavilion Hall and the Concert Serenade on September 15th will take place at the Casino Kursaal, with the participation of the Wind Instruments Quintet and the pianist Jean Françaix.

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The National Assembly ratified the agreement signed by 12 European countries in Paris on July 1st, 1953, for the construction of a joint nuclear laboratory on the Franco-Swiss border near Geneva. This agreement originated in a motion voted at the 1950 Unesco (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) conference in Florence, calling on all European member nations to study the possibility of constructing jointly a 10m. electron-volt particle accelerator. It was ratified by Britain on November 15th.

\* \* \*

The Swiss Telephone Administration (PTT de la Suisse, Berne) recently connected the 700,000th subscriber to the network. Switzerland now occupies fourth place in the world in regard to the density of its telephone network and is only surpassed in Europe by Sweden.

In the course of the last few years, the Swiss telephone system has been continually modernised. At the present time, practically all its cables are underground and it is almost completely automatic.

Moreover, the ordinary telephone service has been supplemented by numerous auxiliary services, such as the information service, the speaking clock, meteorological bulletins, and news service.

The number of annual conversations per capita of Switzerland's population amounts to 150. In this particular comparison, Switzerland is behind Sweden, where there are 300 conversations recorded per inhabitant.

The giant clock of the new Sample Fair building at Bâle has a "sweep second hand" of nearly 13 feet in length. The face of the clock is approximately of the same dimensions as those of London's "Big Ben". The circumference is nearly 79 feet and the point of the "sweep second hand" travels a distance of  $1' 3\frac{1}{2}''$  per second. This equals 21 miles a day or about 7,800 miles per year.

\* \* \*

In a drive for greater efficiency and more cleanliness, the Monte Generoso Railway Company have replaced their steam locomotives by new traction units powered by twelve-cylinder Diesel motors. These vehicles can push two carriages (instead of one) to the top of the Monte Generoso, near Lugano, at a speed of 7.4 miles per hour and the time of the journey is reduced by 20 minutes to approximately one hour.

\* \* \*

It is announced that a Customs Officer will be in attendance at the luggage office at Coire for the arrival and departure of international trains during the following periods:—28th June—18th September, 1954. Middle of December, 1954—middle of March, 1955. Personal effects registered through to Coire and neighbouring resorts may therefore be cleared through Swiss Customs at Coire if the respective consignments arrive there under customs seal.

\* \* \*

Between September 8th and October 8th, 1954, the French National Orchestra will give 8 symphony concerts in Montreux.



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A concert of chamber music and two recitals (piano and violin) will be performed at Vevey.

From October 14th-23rd, the 5th Festival of Italian Opera will be held at the Casino—Kursaal of Montreux. A special folder with full details of the programme may be obtained from the Swiss National Tourist Office, 458, Strand, London, W.C.2.

*The highest chairlift in the world.* A new chairlift has just been opened on the Great St. Bernard Pass. Passengers are carried to a 8,202-foot high viewpoint in eight minutes; the view extends over 27 glaciers and the whole of the Mont-Blanc range.

*A new cable cabin in the Ticino.* A new cable cabin is to be built at Intragna in the Centovalli near Locarno. This aerial lift will carry sightseers to a number of small villages which, up to now, have been accessible only by mule tracks. The district is famed for its wealth of rare Alpine flowers.

*The Seventh International Art Week in Switzerland.* We have already noted the excellent work done by Professor P. Monfort (310 Avenue de Tervueren, Woluwé-Brussels), President of the International Federation of Art Weeks. Under the official patronage and with the collaboration of national tourist organizations, art trips have been organized every summer in different countries. The aim is to enable persons interested in art and wishing to spend their holidays abroad to enjoy the artistic treasures of a region or a country, its natural beauty, and to come into contact with foreign personalities. This year, Algeria, Scandinavia, Belgium, France, Netherland, Italy and Switzerland are on the programme. The trips are not made under hasty conditions, so that a harmonious balance between visits of museums, monuments and places can be maintained. Time for concerts and folkloric shows is also scheduled and art publications will be offered in certain cases. Until now, 4,500 persons coming from 52 different countries have taken part and enjoyed the 46 International Art Weeks organized by Mr. Monfort and his assistants. This year's itinerary for the Swiss tour (Tuesday, August 10th to Thursday, August 19th) is the following: First day, visit of the Cathedral of Strasbourg; second day, tour of Alsace which will end in the evening in Bâle. The trip in Switzerland itself will start on Thursday 12th with the following programme: visit of the town of Bâle and travelling by train back to Zurich. Friday 13th, a tour by bus to Stein am Rhein, Schaffhausen, Rheinfelden and back to Zurich. Saturday 14th, Zurich, National Museum, old town, boat trip on the lake, Rapperswil, by train to St. Gall. Sunday 15th, bus trip; visit of canton of Appenzell, Rhine Valley, Vaduz (Liechtenstein), Grisons, Bad-Ragaz, Sargans and back to St. Gall. Monday 16th, by train to Romanshorn, Constance, boat trip on the lake of Constance and back to St.

Gall. Tuesday 17th, visit of the town of St. Gall, Abbey, Library; afternoon: optional excursion to Trogen (village in the canton of Appenzell) and to the Pestalozzi Village (where foreign children are received), back to St. Gall; farewell evening party. Wednesday 18th; free day in St. Gall or optional excursion (by bus and cable cabin) to the Saentis (8,200 feet) via Appenzell; back to St. Gall. Thursday 19th, in St. Gall, end of the Art Week in Switzerland.

In a drive for greater efficiency and more cleanliness, the Monte Generoso Railway Company have replaced their steam locomotives by new traction units powered by diesel motors. These vehicles can push two carriages to the top of Monte Generoso, near Lugano, at a speed of 7.4 miles per hour. The time of the journey has been reduced by 20 minutes to about one hour.

August 8th-28th. The annual Lucerne Music Festival has this year been organized around the London Philharmonia Orchestra. The programme of the Festival is as follows: Symphony Concerts: Sunday, August 8, Conductor Herbert von Karajan; Tuesday 10, Conductor: Rafael Kubelik, Soloist: Gioconda de Vito; Thursday 12, Herbert von Karajan, Soloist: to be published at a later date; Saturday 14, Conductor: Ferenc Fricsay, Soloist: Clara Haskil, Wednesday 18, Conductor: Edwin Fischer, Soloists: Schneiderhan and Maimardi; Saturday 21 and Sunday 22, Conductor: Wilhelm Furtwaengler; (Beethoven's IXth Symphony, with the Lucerne Festival Choir and Elisabeth Schwarzkopf (Soprano), Elsa Cavelti (alto), Ernst Haefliger (tenor), Otto Edelmann (bass); Wednesday 25, Conductor: Furtwaengler; Saturday 28, Conductor André Cluytens, Soloist: Igor Oistrakh.

On Tuesday, August 24th, a performance of Heinrich von Kleist's comedy "Amphitryon," will be given at the Lucerne Municipal Theatre (as also on August 27th, 28th and 30th).

On August 15th and 16th, the Zurich Collegium Musicum, conducted by Paul Sacher, will give a performance of Mozart's Serenades, with Maria Stader (soprano) as soloist. "Beethoven Evenings" are planned for August 17th and 18th, starring Pierre Fournier (cello) and Reine Gianoli (piano).

An Exhibition of American Painting is to be held in Lucerne, from July 17th to October 11th.

#### PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.

"Semaine Suisse" (Service de Presse).

Les chemins de fer nationaux mexicains ont mis en service, entre Mexico City et Laredo (Texas), un nouveau train aérodynamique, l'"Aztec Eagle". Cette composition en métal léger a été construite à Pratteln.

**IF YOU ARE IN SWITZERLAND DO NOT MISS  
THE "JOURNÉE", AUGUST 27th - 29th AT GENEVA**

La cantine de la fête fédérale de chant 1954 à St. Gall ne vendra que des vins suisses! Voilà un exemple que nous recommandons vivement aux comités de fêtes entre Genève et Romanshorn.

\* \* \*

Lors de la dernière session de commission des Instituts européens faisant partie de l'organisation météorologique internationale, les délégués de 20 pays ont félicité la Suisse de l'excellence de son service météorologique.

\* \* \*

L'Italie et les Etats-Unis s'intéressent vivement à la découverte du médecin genevois Dr. Steiner qui est parvenu à neutraliser l'effet de la nicotine en ajoutant des vitamines au tabac.

### RECORD FREQUENCY ENGLAND-SWITZERLAND.

On Saturday July 24th SWISSAIR carried a record number of passengers from England to Switzerland. A total of 639 passengers were flown on fourteen flights from England to the four Swiss airports of Zurich, Geneva, Basle, and Berne. In order to carry all these passengers, Swissair put on three extra flights in addition to the normal services. This is the highest number of passengers which has been carried in any 24 hour-period from England to Switzerland. The previous highest total was 500 passengers on the 25th July last year.

### LES JOURNEES DES SUISSSES DE L'ETRANGER 1954.

Les Journées des Suisses de l'étranger auront lieu les 27, 28 et 29 août prochains à Genève.

C'est M. Rodolphe Rubattel, président de la Confédération, qui apportera aux congressistes le salut du Conseil fédéral.

Seuls les délégués officiels des colonies pourront prendre la parole au nom de la société à laquelle ils appartiennent. Mais tous les Suisses domiciliés à l'étranger sont cordialement invités à prendre part à la réunion de Genève.

Invitations et renseignements peuvent être obtenus auprès du Secrétariat des Suisses à l'étranger, Wallgasse 2, Berne.

### AUSLANDSCHWEIZERTAG 1954.

Der diesjährige Auslandschweizertag wird vom 27-29, August in Genf stattfinden.

Herr Bundespräsident Rodolphe Rubattel wird den Tagenden den Gruss des Bundesrates überbringen.

Nur die offiziellen Delegierten der Kolonien können das Wort im Namen des Vereins, den sie vertreten, ergreifen. Jedoch sind alle im Ausland niedergelassenen Schweizer herzlich eingeladen, an der Tagung in Genf teilzunehmen.

Einladungen und Auskünfte können beim Auslandschweizerwerk der NHG, Wallgasse 2, Bern, verlangt werden.

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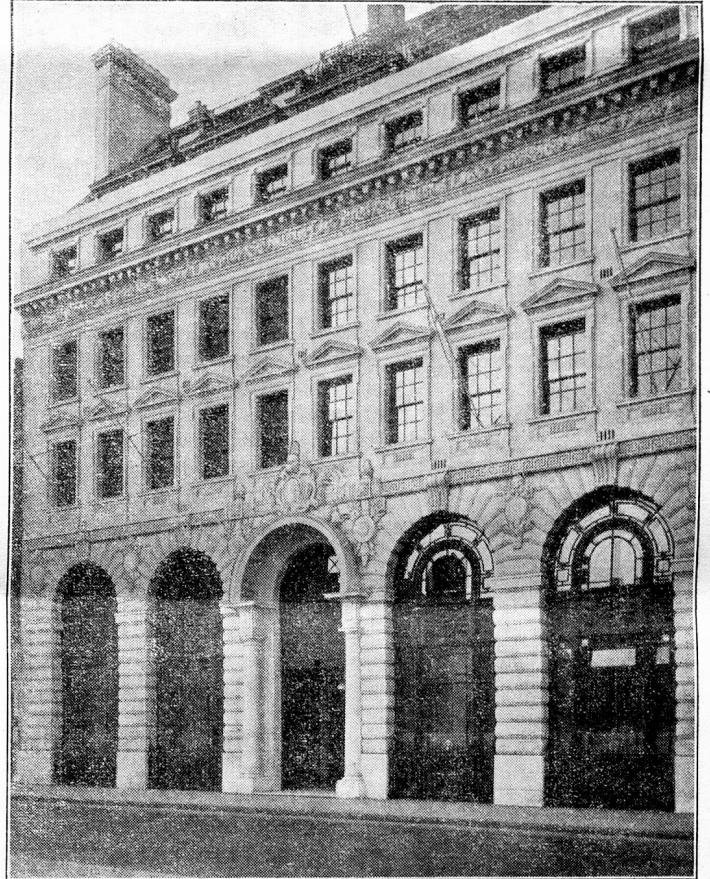


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