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# The Swiss Observer

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

The Federal Council has appointed Monsieur Christoph de Tschudi to the post of Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to Morocco, with residence at Rabat.

Minister de Tschudi was born in 1894, and is a citizen of Glarus. He entered the service of the Federal Political Department (Swiss Foreign Office) in 1920, and successively occupied posts at The Hague and Cologne. In 1925 he left the diplomatic service, but he re-entered it in 1940. Five years later (1945) Monsieur de Tschudi joined the Swiss Consulate in Besançon, and the following year was transferred to the Swiss Consulate at Casablanca. This Consulate was in 1948 transferred to Rabat, and M. de Tschudi was promoted to the rank of Consul General.

Colonel Hans Bachhofner (Brienz), Instructor, has been nominated Deputy to the Head of the Swiss Delegation of the International Commission for the exchange of prisoners of war in Korea. He is succeeding Colonel Arthur Grunholzer.

The Brazilian Finance Minister, Dr. José Maria Alkmin, was received by Federal-Councillor Dr. Th. Hohenstein, Chief of the Federal Economic Department, to discuss the matter of a loan by Swiss Banks to his country.

The President of the West African Republic of Liberia, Monsieur William S. Tubman, arrived on Monday, October 29th, on a three days official visit to the Swiss Confederation. He was welcomed at the Palais Fédéral in Berne by Dr. Marcus Feldmann, President of the Swiss Confederation, and members of the Federal Council. A Banquet was held at the Schweizerhof in honour of the distinguished visitor.

Switzerland's Cairo Legation will look after British and French interests in Egypt following the Allies' breach of diplomatic relations.

### Cantonal

The Municipal Council of Zurich has proposed to substitute a new bridge for the old "Walchebrücke" in order to abolish traffic congestion; total costs will be 2,141,000.— frs. [A.T.S.]

The "Werkzeugmaschinenfabrik Oerlikon Buehrle & Co." has celebrated the 50th anniversary of its foundation. Chairman of the Board is Mr. E. G. Buehrle. The works employ 3,500 persons. [A.T.S.]

The District Court of Hinwil (Ct. Zurich) has sentenced a motorist, who drove a car when under the influence of alcohol, to six months' imprisonment. [A.T.S.]

The commission for the furtherance of literature in the canton of Berne has made the following awards: 2,000.— frs. to Hans Albrecht Moser for his novel "Vineta"; 750.— frs. to Marguerite Janson for her novel "Auburn und des Tal"; 500.— frs. to Walter Adrian for his book "Weg nach Bibrakte"; 500.— frs. to Jacques René Fichter for his collection of poems, and 300 frs. to Alexandre Voisard for his book "Vert Paradis". [A.T.S.]

The "Burgdorfer Tagblatt" has, on the occasion of its 125th Jubilee, issued a "Jubilee Number." [A.T.S.]

All five members of the Government of the canton of Schaffhausen were recently re-elected. They are: Franz Fischer (BGB) 9,611 votes; G. Leu (Socialist) 7,272 votes; Ernst Lieb (BGB) 8,169 votes; Robert Schaerer (Liberal) 7,209 votes and Th. Wanner (Socialist) 7,860 votes. [A.T.S.]

## Xmas Greetings

Following former years' practice we propose to publish again in our December issue a collective greeting.

The high costs of Xmas cards, should induce many of our subscribers to make use of this facility to extend to their friends the compliments of the season.

Those of our readers and friends wishing to be included should forward name and address to our office not later than Friday, November 23rd, 1956, together with remittance for 7/6.

The new municipal theatre at Schaffhausen was inaugurated on October 13th; it took 2½ years to build at a cost of three million francs. [A.T.S.]

The "OLMA" exhibition at St. Gall, after eleven days, closed its doors on the 21st of October. 290,000 persons went through the turnstiles, or 7,000 more than the previous year. [A.T.S.]

Dr. med. Martin Allgoewer, formerly head-surgeon at the University Clinic, Basle, has been elected head surgeon at the Cantonal Hospital, Chur, in succession to the late Professor Becker. [A.T.S.]

A lorry collided with an aeroplane landing at the airport of Samedan (Ct. Grisons). The co-driver of the lorry, Edwin Egli of Wangen nr. Duebendorf was killed. Both the lorry and the aeroplane were badly damaged. [A.T.S.]

Erika Burkart of Kapf (Ct. Aargau), the well-known authoress, was awarded a prize amounting to 1,000.— frs. by the International Lions Club in recognition of her work. [A.T.S.]

Whilst manipulating an old type revolver, Mr. Alfons Birrer of Tegerfelden (24) was killed instantaneously. [A.T.S.]

The Swiss Bankers Association held its Annual Meeting in Montreux under the Presidency of Mr. Otto Wuergler, Manager of the "Berner Kantonalbank". [A.T.S.]

The West-German Minister in Berne, Dr. F. Holzappel, has paid an official visit to the Government of the canton of Ticino in Bellinzona. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Henri Schenkel, Radical (La Chaux-de-Fonds), has been elected a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Neuchâtel, in succession to Mr. Louis Huguenin. [A.T.S.]

The President of the French republic has made M. Albert Picot, a former States Councillor and President of the Government of the canton of Geneva, an officer of the "Légion d'Honneur". [A.T.S.]

An Italian smashed the window of a Jeweller's establishment at the Rue du Monblanc in Geneva and

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decamped with a number of watches. He was later detained by the police. [A.T.S.]

#### DEATHS.

The following deaths have occurred in Switzerland:

Dr. med. Eugen Bircher, in Aarau at the age of 75.

The deceased was born in Aarau and studied medicine at the Universities of Basle and Heidelberg; he successively became first assistant, second assistant and then surgeon-in-chief at the Cantonal Hospital, Aarau. For many years he held the post of Director of the hospital and President of the Medical Association. Dr. Bircher enjoyed a reputation as one of Switzerland's most famous surgeons.

In 1927 he was appointed commander of the Infantry Brigade, 12, and seven years later (1934) he was put in command of the 4th, and later of the 5th division. He retired from the army in 1942. From 1942-1955 he was a member of the National Council.

Guido Essig, a member of the Board of the firm "Courvoisier, S.A." and the paper "l'Impartial", in La Chaux-de-Fonds", aged 59.

Mme. Christiane Sallet-Rieder, the oldest inhabitant of Moudon, in Moudon, at the age of 99.

Mme. J. Walpert-Kundert in Schlieren (Ct. Zurich), aged 103.

Armand Cali, Journalist, in Fribourg, at the age of 63.

Charles Duboule, a member of the Government of the canton of Geneva, in Geneva, aged 61.



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Leonz Kaeppli, co-partner in the firm "Gebrüder Kaeppli", Building-contractors, Cham, and from 1951-1955 a member of the "Kantonsrat". Lucerne, in Cham at the age of 51.

Marc d'Espine, Manager of the "Comptoir Industriel", Geneva, and from 1927-1930 a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Geneva, in Geneva, aged 63.

Dr. med. Robert Vogel, a well-known medical practitioner, in Basle at the age of 88. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

**ANNIVERSARIES.**

Arthur Steiner (60), of Berne, President of the "Schweiz. Gewerkschaftsbundes", and since 1947 a member of the National Council. In 1954 he was elected President of the "Schweiz. Metall-und Uhrenarbeiterverbandes."

Léon Bollag (80), of Zurich, proprietor of the "Gallerie Bollag", Zurich. He is also well known as a painter. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

**ARMY.**

Brigade-Colonel Hans Bracher has been appointed "Fürsorgechef" of the Swiss army, in succession to Colonel Jakob Joho, who has vacated his post on reaching retiring age.

Lieut.-General C. A. Ehrensvaerd, Head of the Swedish army, has been the guest of the Federal Military Department. He was received by Federal-Councillor Chaudet, Chief of the Federal Military Department. During his visit he has attended manoeuvres and visited a number of military establishments.

**LEGACIES AND DONATIONS.**

The late Mme. Rosa Bircher-Steiner, of Brugg, has left an amount of 30,000.— frs., the interest to be used to help scholars and artists of the town of Brugg. In addition she has left her house (valued at 100,000.— frs.) to the Urech children's hospital.

The recently deceased Samuel Hunziker-Hochuli, of Reitnau (Ct. Aargau), has left the sum of 83,000.— frs. to charitable institutions. Amongst the beneficiaries are: 49,000.— frs. towards the cost of a new school building, 24,000.— frs. to the church community of Reitnau.

Mr. F. Schnorf, Manager of the "Aluminium, A.G.", Lausanne, has made a donation amounting to 50,000.— frs. to the town of Lausanne for charit-

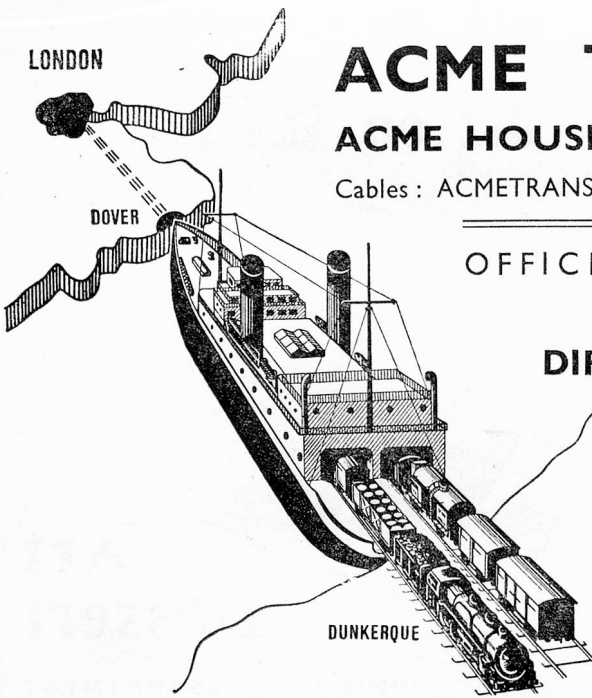
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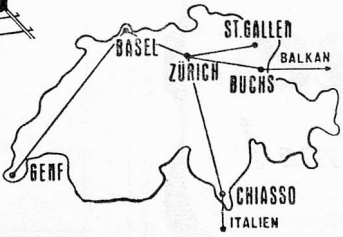
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able purposes, on the occasion of the transfer of their Lausanne office to Zurich. [A.T.S.]

**DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES.**

Mr. & Mrs. F. Schuermann-Wyler of Affoltern a.A., Mr. & Mrs. M. Schiesser-Voegeli of Linthal (Ct. Glarus), Mr. & Mrs. F. Gallati-Beni of Naefels.

**VARIOUS.**

Fifteen Swiss Chefs, amongst Chefs of other nationalities, are in charge of the catering at the Olympic Games in Melbourne.

Up to October 17th, 1956, the 100,000th motor vehicle passed through the Gotthard tunnel. This figure has never before been attained in one year.

The reconstruction of the Schiltgrat skilift at Murren (which is being extended at both ends, and will have an increased capacity of 400 passengers per hour) is in progress. Here is some technical data: Altitude at starting-point in the valley: 1,600 metres (5,248 ft. a.s.l.), altitude at the summit: 2,150 m. (7,152 ft.), length: 1,500 m. (4,920 ft.), difference in altitude: 550 m. (1,804 ft.), transport capacity: 400 passengers per hour.

One of the most popular sights in Zurich is the miniature railway located near the Zoological Gardens in a specially designed building. It has attracted thousands of foreign visitors this past summer. Not only a miniature railway is displayed but there is in addition an accurate replica of the imposing Bernese Alps with all their large and small railways and funiculars. Some of the boldly constructed bridges of the Berne-Loetschberg-Simplon line are exact copies on a 1.50 scale, and the whole transportation network consists of 462 yards of rail, 32 switches, 5 intersections, 33 signals, and 320 electric cable poles. The electric locomotives are equipped with two engines each and are miniature replicas of the real engines of the Swiss Federal Railways, the Berne-Loetschberg-Simplon and the Bernese Oberland lines. Up to fifteen trains can circulate simultaneously in this "Alpine Wonderland" which is 24 yards long and 15 yards wide, and shows 42 well-known mountain peaks. The sky, by the way, like the entire system of stations, illuminated villages and tramways, is connected to a control board by a total of 22 miles of wires and a special lighting device produces effects of all shades of daylight from dawn to

sunset. This electrical "Alpine glow" is almost life-like and in the "afternoons" small motor boats ply the Lake of Brienz at the foot of the giant mountains. It is the most expensive and largest miniature railway in the world.

Switzerland's second-largest city, with almost 200,000 inhabitants, is preparing for a number of festivities to celebrate its 2,000th anniversary. From the middle of August 1957 until the autumn this unique historical event will be commemorated by a colourful programme of activities, in which the neighbouring Rhine communities, Augst and Kaiser-augst, will also participate. In the vicinity of these two villages lies the nucleus of the modern Rhine city of Basel, which has risen in the course of the centuries to be one of Europe's most important railway junctions, and the Roman town of Augusta Rauracorum, founded in the 1st century B.C., whose imposing ruins are still a main attraction to-day. Basel itself grew out of the Celtic settlement of Robur and was incorporated to the ancient Augusta Rauracorum by the Roman Emperor Valentinian I.

In spite of its history dating back to pre-Christian pre-Roman times, and its preservation of the medieval character evident in to-day's old town rich in monuments, Basel is an extremely progressive city known for her interest in art and modern architecture. In this connection it should be mentioned that, in the jubilee year, four new hotels (among them the ultra-modern "International" with more than 100 rooms, all with baths) will open their doors in time for next year's Swiss Industries Fair (April 27th to May 7th, 1957). The reopening of the completely re-

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novated and enlarged Hotel Victoria-National has been scheduled for the autumn of 1957. These modern constructions will add a total of 500 beds to Basel's hotel accommodation.

\* \* \*

Switzerland's population has surpassed the 5 million mark this year. The Canton of Zurich with its 849,000 inhabitants has become the most populous canton, replacing the Canton of Berne, hitherto ranked first.

\* \* \*

The Melchsee-Frutt Aerial Railway in Central Switzerland which has been in service for over 20 years and can no longer cope with to-day's traffic demand will be entirely reconstructed. The inauguration of the new aerial cableway has been scheduled for the beginning of the 1957 summer season, while the old aerial cableway will continue to run during the winter season of 1956/57.

\* \* \*

Bad Ragaz, the world-renowned spa, rightly named the fountain of youth, is itself undergoing a rejuvenation cure this autumn and winter, and will present next spring an entirely new appearance. An extensive programme of rebuilding and redecoration is being carried out in the thermal establishments and hotels. The Spa House and adjoining Medical Institute are being pulled down and a modern spa, with an up-to-date medical department, erected. Redecoration is also proceeding at the Hotel Quellenhof, whose reputation once spread well beyond the frontiers of Switzerland. Furthermore, a new golf course is nearly completed, the Kursaal is undergoing renovation, and the parks and public gardens are being modernised and almost doubled in extent. All the work is to be completed by the beginning of next year's season, so that Ragaz Spa can welcome 1957 visitors in an entirely new setting.

\* \* \*

M. Jacques Piccard, son of the Swiss deep-sea and stratosphere explorer, Professor Auguste Piccard, on October 17th, achieved the deepest dive ever made in the bathyscaphe Trieste, built to the specifications of his father. It touched the sea bottom at a depth of about 12,500ft. off the island of Ponza, north of Naples. Professor Pollini, an Italian geologist, was with him.

They began the dive at noon G.M.T. and finished at 6.15 p.m. when the bathyscaphe surfaced between two Italian Navy tugs, with which telephonic contact had been maintained. The Navy has assisted exploration by the Piccards from the start in 1953.

Both M. Piccard and Professor Pollini came up in excellent condition, although disappointed that they had failed to beat the record of 13,200ft. set up by two French naval officers early in 1954 in a bathyscaphe of their own construction.

M. Piccard said it would take several days to complete records of their observations and to sort out the specimens they obtained from the sea bed.

\* \* \*

Three Swiss have been sentenced in Berne to prison terms ranging from three to seven months for joining the French Foreign Legion.

Service with the armed forces of a foreign nation is subject to severe penalties under the Swiss military code.

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