

Latest news from the Swiss Transport Museum, Lucerne

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tives were brought to the Cantonal authorities asking for a separation of church and state. A debate on thalidomide also took place in the Zurich Parliament, as well as in Berne, where it was stated that the cases of deformed babies due to the drug in Switzerland amounted to five only, possibly six. In the Grand Council of Vaud complaints were raised that legislation did not prevent certain harmful drugs from being sold. A discussion on dangerous drugs also took place in the St. Gall Council.

The retiring age of Councillors of States and other Councillors came under discussion in several parliaments, so in Berne where an age limit was not recommended.

Baselland has proposed separate taxation of the wife's income, and the two Basle announced that they would not follow the other Half-Cantons' example of having combined special days at the National Exhibition, but to hold their Cantonal days in two parts in order to underline the marked difference between the two Half-Cantons. Schwyz decided not to allow Sunday opening of shops in December, and in Thurgau a proposal has been put forward that oil tanks for central heating should be constructed above ground for safer checking.

Bingo, which is known under "Lotto", seems to become more popular, too. Valais and Fribourg have started legislation in order to prevent excesses. As the report from Fribourg puts it, it should be kept as a community game with a "family" character.

Several Cantons accepted applications for naturalisation, e.g. Bern 27, Fribourg 7, St. Gall 32. In the Schaffhausen Parliament the alarming increase of bad posture and spine complaints amongst adolescents was debated, and the Federal authorities were criticised for increasing the bakers' wages which meant that Schaffhausen had the most expensive bread in Switzerland. The Solothurn Commune Council complained about the ugly television and radio aerials which spoil the old town, and in the Upper Valais, where it is not possible to receive the German-Swiss T.V. transmissions, plans for relay stations are being studied. Also from the Valais comes the news that Sierre has more than 10,000 inhabitants now and has thus become a town. In 1900, Sierre had only 1,800 inhabitants.

Land speculation was the subject of two reports. The Baselland Parliament requested the Federal Parliament to take legal steps in order to prevent exploitation. In the Ticino at the celebration of the "Jungbuerger", the young men who have come of age during 1962 were asked not to take up any easy speculative work — especially not dealing in land — but to do honest hard work and to devote themselves to the political life of the Canton. The executive body of Muraltto has rejected two projects for sky-scrapers. And the final news from the South is that there is a new Ticinese party, "Independent Union".

The Cantonal Police force of Schaffhausen is to have six frogmen and a police patrol boat on the Rhine, where boating has been on the increase. The Canton of Neuchâtel has built a bridge to replace the level-crossing at Meudon between the French and the Swiss part of Les Verrières. It is 72 metres long.

Finally, in Berne the Cantonal and Municipal Governments gave a reception to the Diplomatic Corps. Several Federal Councillors and high military officers were amongst the 200 guests at the "Rathaushalle". This reception takes place every four years.

*(Based on News received
by courtesy of A.T.S.)*

LATEST NEWS FROM THE SWISS TRANSPORT MUSEUM, LUCERNE

This is the way your great grandfather travelled

Anyone who can remember that the compartment in the railway cars had petrol lights, a small stove and a hard bench-like seat, must be already quite advanced in age, for those were the rail travel facilities in the years from 1870-1890. To see the development in railway cars on the Swiss railroads, you should visit the Swiss Institute of Transport and Communications in Lucerne, where a whole series of compartment and rail cars shows the improvements and progress in passenger travel on the railroads from the last century to date. In the 1920's electricity provided not only the heat and light, but also the traction for the whole train, and today the Swiss railway cars are provided with all needed facilities, including air conditioning. Indeed, much progress has been made in pleasant and comfortable travel on the railroads.

62,150 miles of Roman Roads

During the last century B.C., the Roman legions penetrated the regions north of the Alps and conquered several tribes which had settled in what is now Switzerland. For military and administrative reasons it soon became necessary to build communicative roads with the capital city Rome and other parts of the great Roman Empire. Even today there are portions of these roads still visible in Switzerland and elsewhere, as on the summit of the Julier Pass (marked by two ancient columns), in the Jura Mountains and the Swiss Midlands, where the Romans had built some communities, fortifications and armed camps for legionnaires. That the Romans were masters in the art of road building was best shown in the way they laid them out through hills and over alpine country, and built a solid road-bed for men and vehicles which lasted for centuries. In the times the Emperor Hadrian, in the 2nd century, the network of all Roman roads of communications had an estimated length of 62,150 miles! The Swiss Institute of Transport and Communications displays in its road traffic section a big map which shows as many of the Roman roads in Switzerland as can historically be traced.

Walter Mittelholzer — Who does not know this Swiss aviation pioneer?

It was at the end of March 1922 that Walter Mittelholzer, the intrepid flyer and hero of many youngsters in Switzerland, was preparing to fly a military pursuit plane from Milan in Italy to the Swiss airport of Dübendorf near Zürich. The flight led straight over the alpine range. Unfortunately, in a thick fog and with counterwind, Mittelholzer penetrated too early into a heavy cloud of fog, north of the Alps. His plane crashed at a height of 8,202 feet, hitting a rocky slope of a mountain in Canton Glarus. The badly hurt flyer was able to reach the village of Matt in the Sernftal and later recovered from his accident. The 120 h.p. Le Rhone rotation motor of Mittelholzer's plane together with other historic plane motors are now displayed in the aviation section of the Swiss Institute of Transport and Communications in Lucerne.