

Great St. Bernard tunnel

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VARIOUS

The accounts for 1961 of the following Cantons have just been published.

Geneva	credit balance	29,045,000.— frs.
Lucerne	credit balance	430,000.— frs.
Zurich	credit balance	40,500,000.— frs.
Berne	credit balance	4,256,112.— frs.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The collection made for a monument to be erected to General Henri Guisan, commander-in-chief of the Swiss army during the last war, amounts to 1 million francs after deduction of expenses. [A.T.S.]

* * *

The Swiss Colony in Uruguay celebrated its Centenary on 25th April in the town of Nueva Helvecia. The Federal Council was represented at the celebration by M. Enrico Celio, a former Federal Councillor. [A.T.S.]

GREAT ST. BERNARD TUNNEL

On the 5th of this month engineers constructing the Great St. Bernard tunnel blasted the last barrier of rock separating the Italian and Swiss sections.

The last blast was fired in the presence of the directors, the workers, press and television. When the smoke and dust cleared, the workers on either side of the gallery shook hands and were congratulated by the president of the board.

Representatives of the Swiss and Italian automobile clubs and the Swiss and Italian touring clubs who were present offered a dinner to all the workers.

Two workers lost their lives during the construction of the tunnel — through an unexpected explosion.

The tunnel, which will be open to traffic in the autumn, provides a motor road between western Switzerland and northern Italy which will remain open throughout the year. At present the only routes across the Alps in the region are the Great St. Bernard and Simplon passes, which can be used only for about five months a year.

The Great St. Bernard highway will connect with the German *Autobahn* and the Italian *autostrada* systems.

More than 85,000 cars crossed the pass during the months when it was open last year, and during the winter 35,000 vehicles were taken by train through the Simplon tunnel.

The Great St. Bernard tunnel is a private venture; the capital was put up by the Fiat company and the Italian provinces of Turin and Aosta, and on the Swiss side by the canton of Valais and the town of Lausanne. The total cost of boring the gallery, which began in 1959, and building the road approaches is likely to reach £7,500,000.

The tunnel starts at about 6,200 feet at Cantine de Proz on the Swiss side, 25 miles from Martigny, and it emerges near St. Rhémy at about the same height on the Italian side, 14 miles from Aosta. The tunnel is 6,430 yards long and it shortens by six miles the distance between Martigny and Aosta. It is 14 feet high and 23 feet wide, with a double track and a 3-foot footway on each side. Ventilation is by two vertical chimneys, one 600 feet high, the other 1,100 feet.

At each end of the tunnel the road is protected against snow for nearly six miles by means of a concrete roof and concrete sides. Snowploughs will keep the road permanently open.

D.Tel.

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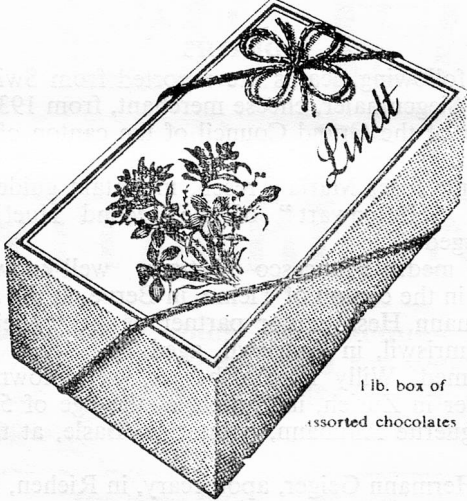
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