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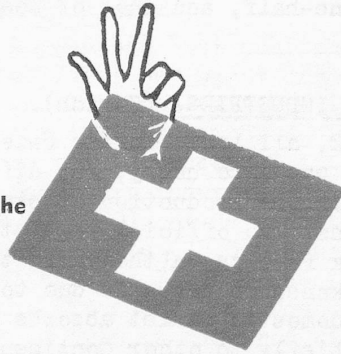
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# HELVETIA



Monthly Publication of the

SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY  
in New Zealand

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Group New Zealand of the N.H.G.

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## NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

### SWISS FOREIGN TRADE IN APRIL 1942. (Berne).

In comparison with the preceding month, Swiss foreign trade in April 1942 shows an increase in imports and a decline in exports. Quantitatively, April 1942 imports amounted to 35,490 10-ton truck loads, or 2,326 loads less than in April 1941. However, the value of these imports amounted to 178.7 million francs, or 35.1 million more than in the corresponding period of last year.

Exports, evaluated at 113.9 million francs, increased by 6.6 millions; quantitatively, however, they amounted to 3,335 truck loads, a decrease of 996 loads, and fell to the lowest level registered in the previous year. Nevertheless, a comparison of foreign trade figures for the first four months of 1942 with those of the corresponding period of 1941, shows that in value, both imports and exports have increased considerably. Imports have risen by 8.2% and exports by 7.5%; they have diminished in quantity, however, by 25.7% and 38.6% respectively.

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### THE SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS. (Berne.)

In 1941 traffic on the Swiss Federal Railways was influenced by prevailing war conditions. The Profit and Loss Account closed with the highest profit ever recorded, 18.5 million francs. However, none of the factors which characterize wartime traffic can be considered as permanent; neither restricted road traffic, nor increased military transport, nor probably the usual goods traffic, which in 1941 was considerable, will prove lasting.

Consequent to widespread domestic economic activity in 1941, an increase in inland traffic was registered. It is possible however that last year will prove a peak year in Swiss Federal Railways wartime traffic. For this reason a considerable deficit (51 million francs) has been anticipated in the 1942 budget.

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### THE SITUATION IN THE MACHINE AND METAL INDUSTRIES DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1942: (Zurich).

As compared with the last quarter of 1942, activity in the machine and metal industries has not essentially varied. Nevertheless, the shortage of raw materials is beginning to make itself felt in shortened working hours or dismissal of staff. The total number of workers employed by firms who are members of the Employers Union has decreased by 1,100. During the first quarter of 1942, 95% of all the employed were working at a rate of 48 hours per week, and 5% at a rate of less than 48 hours, as compared with 97% and 3% respectively during the corresponding period of 1941.

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### SWISS INDUSTRIES STRUGGLE TO CARRY ON: (Lausanne).

During the first quarter of 1942 the cotton industry received only 20% of its normal requirements in raw materials. In view of present importation difficulties and fast diminishing reserves, the amount of fine yarn produced by spinning mills

has been reduced by more than one-half, and that of coarse and medium yarns by 60 to 65%.

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THE SITUATION IN THE SWISS SILK INDUSTRIES. (Zurich).

During the first quarter of 1942, all looms in the Swiss silk spinning industry were working full time. Demand was also heavy, but difficulty in obtaining raw materials is making itself felt. The production of staple fibre fabrics has caused new competitive conditions. No official regulations have been adopted in regard to the production of silk fabrics, although in this group, only a part of the looms are working. Briskness of sales is due to the fact that silk fabrics are not rationed. The domestic market absorbs the greater part of production, but exports, sent chiefly to other Continental countries, are still considerable. The import of foreign goods had already greatly declined.

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THE SWISS EMBROIDERY INDUSTRY. (St.Gall).

In 1941, the value of embroidery exports was almost as high as in pre-war years. Nevertheless, activity was reduced to about a half, although the average value of production was more than doubled. Considering the quantities of goods exported, it would seem that activity in this industry must have regressed still further; restricted output was however compensated by richer embroidery. At least on the Continent, exporters can again satisfy their demand for superior quality goods. This evolution is chiefly due to the weakening of the direct competition of ordinary fabrics owing to the increasing raw material shortage.

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DIFFERENTIAL FOOD RATIONING IN SWITZERLAND. (Lausanne).

As from July 1st 1942, a new system of food rationing, based on physiological requirements, will be introduced in Switzerland. The population will be divided into the following 6 categories: (1) normal or sedentary workers, (2) manual workers, (3) heavy manual workers, (4) very heavy manual workers, (5) adolescents, (6) children.

The category of "normal workers" will be considered as the basis of this graduated scale, and will receive a whole monthly ration card as in the past. In addition to the usual card, the remaining groups - with the exception of children up to 6 years who receive special children's ration cards - will each receive 1 to 4 complementary cards respectively; these will enable them to obtain a certain additional amount of rationed foodstuffs.

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AMALGAMATION OF THE WHOLESALE AND IMPORT TRADES. (Basle).

A new association has been founded in Basle under the name of "Swiss Wholesale Dealers and Importers Union", which has been formed by the amalgamation of the "Swiss Wholesale Dealers Association" and the "Wholesale Dealers and Importers Union". This concentration of the wholesale and import trades has been brought about in view of safeguarding and furthering the interests of the trades. The Union has a membership of over 1,000 wholesale firms. This new Union has also combined with the "Association of Swiss Transport and International Trading Firms". The executive body of the Union has been formed under the name of "Trade Delegation".

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THE MOST POWERFUL PUMP IN THE WORLD. (Zurich).

The most powerful pump in the world is now being built in the Escher Wyss workshops in Zurich. It will be able to pump to a height of 240 metres the enormous mass of 16,000 litres per second. It has a capacity of 61,000 H.P. The well is 10 metres long and has a diameter of 82 centimetres. Messrs. Escher Wyss are also constructing two other pumps capable of pumping 16,700 litres per second to a height of 135 metres. Each of these pumps requires a 37,000 H.P. motor. About 15 years ago, the greatest pump in the world had a capacity of only 10,000 H.P.



CENSUS OF SWISS INDUSTRIES: (Berne).

The Federal Statistics Bureau has just published a first book on the results of the census taken of Swiss firms on August 24th 1939. A certain number of changes have taken place since the last census taken in 1929. The textile industry only employed 81,477 workers in 1939 as compared with 115,200 ten years previously. The watch industries also show a decrease, falling from 64,629 to 51,180. On the other hand, the foodstuff industry registers an increase (84,216 in 1939 as compared with 73,691 in 1929), as do also the chemical industry, (22,428 against 18,644), the graphic arts (32,048 against 25,562), the clothing and equipment trades (81,637 against 71,487) and the machine industry (109,128 against 97,173). In the "Transport and Communications" group, railway staffs have decreased (31,220 in 1939 as compared with 36,610 in 1929), while the number of persons employed in transport has increased (cartage, garages, etc. 15,584 against 13,934). The decrease in the number of employed in the wholesale trade (47,601 in 1929 against 44,006 in 1939) is compensated by an increase in the retail trade (138,380 against 124,275). The number of persons employed in banking, insurance and the stock exchange has risen from 24,969 to 28,072. Auxiliary trade services, agencies and representations register a heavy increase (19,541 against 9,512). The number of hotel employees has risen from 126,234 to 134,318.

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NEW RAILWAY TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS IN SWITZERLAND. (Berne).

The Board of the Swiss Federal Railways has been obliged to restrict passenger train traffic still further. Owing to increasing shortage of fuel and material necessary to the exploitation and upkeep of rolling stock, the winter timetable which came into force in October 1941 showed a reduction of passenger traffic of a little over 10%, involving a daily average mileage of 10,000 kilometers (approximately 6,250 miles). The new reduction involves a daily mileage of 2,500 kilometers (about 1,625 miles). Further, week-end tickets have been suppressed. These measures have been taken especially to reserve lubricating materials and electric power for industrial uses. However, in order to spare the hotel and tourist trades as far as possible, which benefited greatly from the issue of week-end tickets, holiday season tickets will again be issued as from April 1st. As compared with pre-war conditions, Swiss railway traffic has now been reduced by about 20%. Further, owing to the tyre shortage, it is announced that automobile traffic will also be still more restricted.

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ADDRESS OF THE SWISS CONSUL IN NEW ZEALAND, DR. WALTER SCHMID, AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE 651ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION, BY THE LOCAL SWISS GROUP OF AUCKLAND, ON THE 1ST OF AUGUST, 1942:

"Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, Friends!

I assure you it is a great pleasure for my wife and myself to celebrate with you to-night at Auckland the 651st Anniversary of the Swiss Confederation. The pleasure is even greater as it is the first time since our arrival in New Zealand to have this privilege, and I wish to express for both of us, our sincere thanks for your invitation. I should also like to take this opportunity of expressing my renewed appreciation to all those compatriots in Auckland, who, since the foundation of the Swiss Benevolent Society in New Zealand, have performed so much good and faithful work, and who are continuing the good work locally, after the Central Committee recently has been transferred to Wellington. Thanks to these efforts, too, we have the pleasure of being together here to-night, on this third celebration of the Swiss Independence Day during the present war.

The first celebration of the Anniversary of our Homeland during this war was on the 1st August 1940. I shall never forget the dreadful months of anxiety immediately preceding that 1st of August. It was then that the almost unbelievable miracle happened and Switzerland remained untouched by the ravages of war, which had closed in at her boundaries. We had no news from Switzerland at that time for a period beginning with the month of June and