

Swiss embroidery industry needs aid

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On March 11, 12 and 13 Basle, the stately Swiss city on the Rhine, will be the scene of Carnival festivities, parades and balls. The Basle Carnival is known throughout Europe for its art and wit. In preparation for this gay event groups are formed and costumes fashioned with the greatest secrecy. Clever illuminated posters make allusions to events and personalities of the day and leading citizens need a good sense of humor, for they are never spared.

The festivities start at four o'clock in the morning, when all lights in the centre of the town are turned out. Then, to the sound of drums, groups arrive from everywhere on the market place, while piccolo players start to furnish a befitting accompaniment. Huge painted lanterns provide the only illumination, just as they did in the days when this ancient custom was born. Drum concerts are a speciality of Basle and school boys receive early training in this form of musical expression in regular drummers' schools. As a consequence drum playing in the Swiss Rhine city has been developed into a real art and achieves inspiring effects.

Inns and restaurants are duly prepared to receive the early paraders and delicious soup of roasted flour, as well as open-face onion pie, are obligatory delicacies served everywhere. After 7 a.m. the merrymakers usually proceeded to their respective daily tasks but at 2 p.m. the real festivities begin. A magnificent parade is first on the program, with balls and other gaieties following at night and on the next two days.

The second day of the Carnival belongs more to the children. They, too, have their masquerade parade.

Marie Widmer.

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SWISS PRODUCTION AND EXPORTS OF STOVES AND RANGES.

Several large factories in Switzerland are engaged in the manufacture of all types of cooking stoves and ranges. These factories produce only the top grades of stoves, and, despite the difficulties in securing raw materials, they have been relatively successful in maintaining the usual standard of quality. During the war, the shortage of raw materials caused a substantial decline in the volume of production and sales.

Stoves using gas or coal as fuel continue to be the most popular types in Switzerland. Electric stoves and ranges are produced to some extent, and those using oil as fuel are few. Combination stoves employing more than one kind of fuel are reported to be increasingly popular, gas and coal being the favorite combination.

Although moderate quantities of stoves and ranges were exported during the pre-war years, such trade has not been possible during the past few years. Swiss manufacturers, however, are looking forward to resuming this exportation.

In normal years the Swiss industry can satisfy the entire domestic demand for stoves. The production capacity of household gas cooking stoves for instance, is estimated at 15,000 units annually, whereas sales average only 8,000 units. The present shortage is due chiefly to lack of raw materials.

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SWISS EMBROIDERY INDUSTRY NEEDS AID.

Switzerland's embroidery industry faces extinction unless given financial backing, according to Swiss press reports. There are only about 800 hand embroidery machines compared with 16,988 in 1890; and only 794 shuttle and pantograph machines compared with 5,906 in 1916, of which not more than 470 are actually fit for

commercial use. Almost all these machines are in private homes and are operated by elderly persons who have trained no successors. No Swiss machinery manufacturer has included embroidery machinery in his postwar production plans.

The Association of Swiss Embroidery Exporters fears competition from the Austrian Vorarlberg, where it appears that all machines are intact and ready to start production as soon as raw materials are available. The association claims that money must be found to finance the rehabilitation of this traditional Swiss industry, and that time should not be lost, since it takes from 6 to 10 years to train skilled designers and embroiderers. It has been suggested that the necessary capital should be obtained by creating a special fund to which members of the Embroidery Co-operative Trusteeship and other interested parties could contribute, by organising a special corporation to handle the matter and by appealing to the Government for a loan.

(Foreign Commerce Weekly)

SUBSCRIPTION TO ILLUSTRATED SWISS NEWSPAPERS.

The well known publishers of the "SCHWEIZER ILLUSTRIRTE ZEITUNG" and the "L'ILLUSTRE" in Switzerland, are inviting our Compatriots to subscribe to their papers. These publications are known the world over and chiefly depict current illustrations of important happenings. Most of you have no doubt seen the papers.

The annual subscription of one publication is approximately £2 and we would undertake to forward the remittance in bulk to Switzerland, provided the number of interested parties is large enough. Will you please notify the Secretary within 4 weeks, whether you would be willing to subscribe either to the "ILLUSTRIERTE" or to the publication "L'ILLUSTRE" in French.

In addition the publishers for the following papers also solicit your patronage:

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We are not able to state the subscription-fees for these papers, but shall make enquiries for any member interested. The Secretary has been promised a number of free copies by Messrs. Verlag G.Meyer's Erben Zurich, and when these are available they may be borrowed by members for perusal.

VII FEDERAL YODELING FESTIVAL TO BE HELD AT LUCERNE DURING JULY.

On July 13, 14 and 15 lovely Lucerne in Switzerland will be hostess to the VII Federal Yodeling Festival. The event is to be held in the city's modern Kunsthhaus.

Yodeling dates back to the earliest days when the dwellers in Swiss Alpine regions made up their own melodies and songs. Thus