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News from "THE SWISS OBSERVER" London,
a contemporary publication of the Swiss
Colony of Great Britain.

A report from the Geneva correspondent of "The Times", August 24th, seems to herald hard times in the coming winter:-

" In consequence of the economic situation, the Swiss Government have decided to impose new restrictions, principally with the object of reducing imports. The petrol ration is to be discontinued from next month for two classes of private motor-cars, involving about 4,000 vehicles.

Next winter, owing to the scarcity of fuel, shops will be allowed to open only from 8.30 a.m. until 7 p.m., and all cafes and restaurants are to close at 11 p.m. In all factories, offices, and schools heating will be stopped for 48 hours on Saturday and Sunday. From yesterday, the sale of certain food-stuffs is prohibited until October 13th., so as to save some of the stocks on which the country is now living, and to compel the public to use fresh vegetables and fruit. "

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The "Manchester Evening News", August 20th, sounds a very encouraging note about the effectiveness of our air-force. If, as stated, our Government has paid as much as £13,000 for aircraft, there are still some good war profiteers about, considering that the best English machines cost barely half that amount:

Switzerland's Air Force could give a good fighting account if the country was attacked from the air.

Switzerland is prepared. Its army is ready, and for a tiny country, ringed with the Alps as fortresses, it has a formidable air force.

The country has realised the need of air power as it has seen its powerful neighbour, Germany, annex adjoining countries.

Millions of pounds have been spent on enlarging and improving the Swiss Air Force.

In November, 1938, the Swiss Federal Government ordered from Germany a number of machines of the fighter type. These, now in use, are fitted with 1,100 h.p. engines and have a speed of 334 m.p.h., and can reach a ceiling of 15,000 feet in less than five minutes.

Each machine cost £13,000.

Since then the Swiss air force has been enlarged and a number of training machines were purchased both from this country and America.

Promotion in the Swiss army and air force is rapid. In the former any recruit can rise from the ranks to become a battalion commander.

Aeroplane manufacture has become an important armament industry in Switzerland.

In February last year the Federal Government decided to build an aeroplane factory at Zurich. Here, military and civil machines have been made.

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The Swiss radio announces that rumours that coffee, tea and soap were to be rationed in Switzerland resulted in provision shops being practically bought out and for a time there was panic buying of these commodities.

The Ministry of Food has issued a reassuring statement in which it is pointed out that action of the kind described is unnecessary and that the hoarding of certain products like coffee is a punishable offence.

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100 Swiss Officers participating in an instruction course recently ascended the Great Aletschhorn (4195m.). Starting from the Jungfraujoch they descended to Oberaletsch and thence to Brig. This is the first time that the Aletschhorn has been climbed by a big military formation.

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After a rainy summer, August brought rather better weather for climbing expeditions in the Swiss Alps. Appenzell especially, was a favourite with excursionists at the beginning of this month. On one Sunday alone as many as 2,500 people travelled by funicular railway or on foot. The Hohenkasten had 1,000 visitors on the same Sunday and the Schaeffler 500. Over the week-end August 3rd and 4th, the Appenzeller railway transported 6-7,000 passengers; St. Gallen Gais Appenzell the same number, whilst one electric line from Appenzell to Weissbad Wasserauen carried between 5-6,000 visitors. Apart from these, at least 3,000 cyclists toured the canton and all the innkeepers agreed that they had not seen such an influx for many years.

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OBITUARY.

Once again it falls to our lot to record the death of a prominent and highly respected compatriot, Mr. JOSEPH ARNET of Springdale, Waitoa. The deceased was born at Inglewood in 1890. At the age of 7 he was taken to Switzerland, from whence he returned 12 years later. For the first two years he took up contracting work in the Taranaki district, where he married Miss Marie Meier, a new arrival from Switzerland. After several years of farming in the Taranaki province he moved to the Waikato where he settled on a block 119 acres of unimproved land on Alexander Rd., Hungahunga. This land he turned into a highly productive farm. Even a less inviting prospect greeted him when he took up 270 acres at Springdale, the greatest part of this block being swamp land. With sheer hard work, perseverance and foresight, he turned this rather dismal swamp land into a first class dairy farm.

A man of exceptional energy and integrity, Mr. Arnet found time to interest himself in the advancement of the district, as well as in the welfare of the Springdale Sports Club.

Having lost his first wife 3½ years ago, he married Mrs. L. Steiner last April. Besides his wife and daughter (Mrs. C. Nicholson), two sons, Joseph and John, two sisters (Mesdames Benziger and Huber of Taranaki) and a brother in Australia mourn the loss.

On behalf of the Society we wish to extend to his family and relatives our expressions of deepest sympathy and regret.

NEWS IN BRIEF.

Amongst the recipients of home nursing certificates, which were presented by Mrs. A.R. Bates at a social and dance organised by the Kaponga branch of the Red Cross Society, was our member, Miss Ida Bernold of Kaponga. In presenting the certificates, Mrs. Bates referred to the fact that Miss Bernold was of Swiss nationality and therefore a compatriot of the founder of the International Red Cross Society.

Miss H. Schicker of Maungatoki has also obtained certificates for home nursing and hygiene.

We congratulate the recipients most heartily on their success.

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Christmas cheers have once more been forwarded to two unfortunate compatriots who are inmates of Mental Hospitals.

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SWISS SOLDIERS FUND.

We are pleased to publish further contributions recently received from: Messrs. F. Gisler, Turua, and W.B. Frank, Normanby. The generosity of these friends is greatly appreciated.

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