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Yes, we believe we have friends and we trust to have forever the friendship and appreciation of this great country notwithstanding temporary disturbances of economic relations and the many discussions which arise therefrom.

You, my compatriots, have always shown a still more devoted interest to the homeland as the physical difficulties of communication have become greater. Your willingness to help where you can, and in particular to encourage our humanitarian task, have been a comfort. We know that we can count on you always and you know that Switzerland never could or would expect from you anything which would interfere with your loyalty to this country.

But for one fight I make now an appeal to you and all our friends. Let us fight together against misunderstanding and misrepresentation, foes of all good things and all good relations.

What about the future? I think that in the adversities of these times our strength and our decision are growing as grows our love for our country.

I think Switzerland can look ahead with confidence if we Swiss remain united, sure of our rights, firm in our decision. God helping, we can hope for a happier time, when the ideas which our homeland now keeps alive within her narrow frontiers will spread, a time when the ideals of human solidarity, which inspire our beloved and venerable Confederation can thrive, when in a peaceful world Switzerland will flourish. "

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SWISS MILITARY OATH.

Officers, N.C.O's and soldiers swear, or vow, to be faithful to the Swiss Confederation, to give their life for the defence of their Fatherland and its Constitution, never to desert the flag, to observe faithfully the military laws; to obey strictly and immediately the orders of their superiors, to observe strict discipline and do everything possible that is necessary for the honour and freedom of their Fatherland.

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SUNDRY NEWS.

December 17th was the great day in Switzerland when the two Houses of Parliament sat in joint session to elect the high magistrates to whom the guidance and destinies of our country are entrusted for the next twelve months. The main results are of course a foregone conclusion as the elections follow a time-honoured rota and practice.

Dr. Enrico Celio (Ticino) was elected president of the Confederation; a member of the Federal Council of only three years' standing he was fortunate to reach the highest office in an exceptionally short time due to three intervening changes. Though elected at the time as successor to our Foreign Minister, the late Federal Councillor Motta, Dr. Celio is in charge of the Post and Railway department. He is 54 years old, a writer and an accomplished organist.

Dr. Celio's place as Vice-President is taken by Dr. Walter Stampfli (Solothurn); he joined the Federal Council six months after Dr. Celio (replacing Federal Councillor Obrecht) and is the head of the Home Office (Volkswirtschaft). He was born in 1884 and is a leading personality in his canton being closely associated amongst others with the von Rollschene Eisenwerke in Gerlafingen and the Solothurner Kantonalbank.

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The emoluments of the members of the Federal Council have been fixed at Frs. 40,000 p.a. (Frs. 32,000 so far) with an extra Frs. 3,000 for the President. The scale remains in force for the next five years. The attendance compensation (Taggeld) of National Councillors is Frs. 35 per day.

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It has been officially announced that the economic negotiations conducted in London since spring 1942 with an Anglo-American delegation have been interrupted in order to allow the Swiss delegation composed of M. Sulzer, former Minister Plenipotentiary in Washington, and M. Keller, delegate for trade agreements, to return to Switzerland for the end of the year and to report to the Federal Council. Discussions will be resumed after New Year. Certain arrangements have been made provisionally.

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The commercial relations between Germany and our country seem to have come to a standstill. The settlement agreement which expired on December 31st last was extended to January 15th in the hope that the economic talks then pro-

ceeding would lead to a mutually satisfactory new agreement. On January 17th it was announced that the negotiations had broken down. As a big volume of trade vital for many of our industries is regulated by the settlement agreement a serious position will arise if no solution is found in the near future.

The Swiss Radio broadcast on January 20th that the mail service between our two countries (Switzerland and Britain) has been resumed; for the present the post will pass through Basle. Contrary to general belief isolated letters and even newspapers with a Swiss December postmark have been occasionally delivered in this country.

The "Journal de Geneve" of the 8th inst., reports that 200 Italian customs officials who arrived at Annemasse left for Saint Gingolph to replace the Germans as far as Chancy; the latter have taken up positions along the Jura.

It has been announced that a Swiss Delegation has arrived in Madrid to negotiate with the Spanish Government the opening up of a direct Swiss Air Route to Spain.

Bernard Shaw's play "Pygmalion" has been performed in Basel in classical "Baseldutsch" and has secured a great success.

Severe sentences for espionage and disclosing army dispositions have been pronounced by the eight military tribunal. A business man in Kreuzlingen Ramon Bergada, was sentenced to life-long penal servitude; a commercial agent of the same place, Ferdinand Högger, to five years penal servitude. A contractor in Altnau, Julius Böchli, received eight years, whilst the electro-mechanic Huldreich Germann from Gelfingen (Lucerne) earned a life-sentence.

Slight damage was caused during the night of December 11/12th when British aircraft flew over Swiss territory. In Sins (Aargau) incendiary bombs were dropped resulting in the destruction of a few barns and damage to the signalling installation of the local railway station. Between Brig and Raron (Valais) incendiaries set a local wood on fire. Nobody was hurt.

These repeated violations of our neutrality are causing consternation throughout the country as our central authorities at Berne are placed in a most delicate position which is as perplexed as it is inextricable; the only course open to our Government is to continue protesting. A naive comment on these chronic protests appears in the "Regime Fascista" of December 13th when it is suggested that the Confederation should lodge an ultimatum in London threatening to cede some of our airfields to Italian A.A. units adding that our own defence batteries do not or will not shoot straight. The irony of the situation is illustrated in a cartoon of December 5th in the Italian comic paper "Marc Aurelio" where the Swiss Minister in London is depicted wagging his finger at Mr. Eden and exclaiming "biricchini, biricchini" (Naughty! naughty!).

The relaxing waters of the Lake of Geneva are likely to assume a war-like appearance. On the French side near Amphion, at the mouth of the river Drance, slipways, sheds and workshops are being constructed for the reception of three large German flying-boats which are to be moved from their present vulnerable hiding-place at Marignane near Marseille.

Lieutenant Reimann and Kulli and Driver Phillip - whose appeals against the death sentence for espionage were rejected by the Swiss Parliament on Wednesday, were executed the following day, on the 21st inst.

Owing to the high rate of exchange (100 French francs - 2 Swiss francs) French railwaymen working into Swiss territory in the Geneva district are unable to buy any food. After representations had been made to the Swiss Federal Railways by the Swiss Railwaymen's Union, an agreement has been reached between the French National Railways and the Swiss Railways whereby French railwaymen who work into Swiss territory in Geneva are issued with coupons at the Swiss stationmaster's office and are being served a meal in the station buffet against surrendering these coupons. The same arrangement applies to French postal workers whose work takes them in the Geneva district.

"The Times", January 15th, publishes the following telegraphic report: "The Federal authorities announce some relaxations in the restrictions on the consumption of electricity, which have been made possible by the putting into service last week of the Innertkirchen power plant.

This is the biggest water-power plant in Europe. After the formation in 1932 of an artificial lake on the Grimsel Pass at a height of 6,155 ft., containing 300,000,000 cubic feet of water, and the building of the Handeck power plant two years later and of the Boden plant in 1937, the last stage of the scheme was reached in 1942, when the Innertkirchen plant was completed. The three plants, situated at various levels, are using water coming from the same sources, and altogether they yield over 290,000 h.p.

The opening of the Innertkirchen plant adds 120,000,000 kilowatt hours to Swiss winter production. The new plant will be completely immune from any air bombardment, as it is housed in chambers hewn from the solid rock."

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An epoch-making discovery has been reported from Berne by two scientists; one is Dr. Walter Minder, the 37 year-old director of the Radium Institute in that town, and the other Mrs. Alice Leigh-Smith, D.Sc., the wife of the Charge d'Affaires at the British Legation in Berne. This is what the correspondent of "The Times" January 7th, reports: - "A new chemical element with the periodic number 85, the last to be identified of a radio-active group of 10, has been discovered and isolated jointly by two physicists working at the Radium Institute in Berne, a British doctor, Mrs. Alice Leigh-Smith, and a Swiss professor, Dr. Walter Minder. The discoverers propose to name the element "anglo-helvetium", to denote the collaboration of scientists of the two countries.

In July, 1940, Dr. Minder announced the discovery, among the disintegration products of radio active actinium, of extremely minute quantities of helvetium, periodic number 85, having properties allied to chlorine, bromine, and iodine. The discovery was reported in the British periodical "Nature", but competent scientists refused to acknowledge that it had been established, expressing doubt whether the element No. 85 existed at all on earth in nature. Subsequently, Dr. Leigh-Smith, who was engaged in cancer research in Berne, observed in the behaviour of radioactive reagents unaccountable irregularities which suggested the presence of some hitherto unidentified element generated by atomic disintegration. Proof of the discovery required 18 months of laborious research, the investigators photographing the tracks of radiated ions and finally isolating the element itself.

This success crowns an era of discovery beginning in 1898, when salts of radium, periodic number 88, were prepared by M. and Mme. Curie, of whom Dr. Leigh-Smith was a pupil. The wife of a British diplomat, she was the first woman in England to be awarded the degree of D.Sc. in nuclear physics, and she conducted medical research under the auspices of the British Empire Cancer Campaign from 1936 until the outbreak of war, initiating a new method of treating cancer. Professor Minder, director of the Radium Institute in Berne, is well-known for a standard text-book on radio-therapy."

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"Kumm go asse" describes the purpose of a novel movement which has been initiated at Basle. It asks families to allow a hungry and deserving child to share in their chief meal at least once a week. The action which started with about a thousand pledges is to last during the winter till the beginning of April when every hungry child will have enjoyed a hearty meal at least once a week.

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A deserving compliment is paid to Dr. Paravicini - a brother of our former Minister in London - in a report published by the "Daily Dispatch", January 5th; here it is: "Release by Japan of the names of thousands of war prisoners shows a complete change of policy, probably largely effected by the International Red Cross representative at Yokohama, Dr. Paravicini, Swiss medical man there for over 30 years. In the first tide of Japanese occupation in East Asia, many military prisoners were taken and civilians interned.

Inquiries were forwarded through the protecting powers to Dr. Paravicini, their sole Red Cross representative for the whole war area. He had been in retirement for years and was without official funds or staff, but he immediately began calls on the Tokio War Office.

The Japanese said they were too busy with the war to list names - but Dr. Paravicini continued his polite pressure. He was told that Japan could not be expected to be party to a one-sided bargain. Japan had thousands of British, American and Dutch prisoners, whereas the United

Nations had virtually no Japanese as prisoners. Reason, spurred by increasing numbers of Japanese captured on the Australian-American front, dictated acceptance of international procedure.

Name-reporting began and the doctor faced the task of compilation assisted at first only by his daughter, Nari.

Since then the splendid organisation of the Swiss Government has aided Dr. Paravicini, whose principal assistant is now a Swiss, Max Pestalozzi, whose Yokohama business has been interrupted by the war."

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WEDDING EPIDEMIC. It is reported from reliable sources that the wedding epidemic which broke out in the Swiss communities of Taranaki and Waikato some time ago, is on the increase. The affliction is especially ravaging the young bachelor immigrants who landed in New Zealand only a few years ago. The authorities point out that there are so many lovely, marriageable girls of Swiss and other parentage in these districts, that the epidemic is expected to spread to the last man. Our sincere congratulations to all the brides and bridegrooms-to-be!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS OF DEATHS & MARRIAGES. Some members have complained, with good reason, that "Helvetia" fails to report equitably on the deaths and weddings which occur from time to time in the Swiss community in New Zealand. We wish to point out that such information will, at all times, receive our immediate and careful attention, but we are entirely dependent on our members for sending immediate notification to the Secretary.

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AUCKLAND: CARD EVENING, JASS. A card evening will be held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Moosberger, 129 Crummer Road, Grey Lynn, on Saturday, the 1st of May, at 7 o'clock sharp. All welcome.

Visiting country members take this opportunity to meet your compatriots. Take Grey Lynn, Zoo or Pt. Chevalier car to Northland Street, 2 Sections.

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A D V E R T I S E M E N T S.

Sharemilker wanted (preferable two single men, Swiss) for good herd of 65-70 cows --- 1/3 share and 1/2 calves and pigs --- good conditions, cream supply. Start June or July.

Please apply F. Graedel, Orini R.D., Taupiri.

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F A R M - M A N A G E R.

WANTED working Manager, married, for Dairy Farm, North Auckland; approx. 55 cows; fine land. Good house with 3 bedrooms, all electric. Wages with share in profit. Communicate with: E. Merz, Box 85, Auckland, C.1.

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SUBSCRIPTION 1942-1943: Your annual subscription fee of sh.10/- for the year 1942/43 was due on October 1st, and you are asked to forward payment to the Secretary - Mr. Herman Schlatter, 2nd Floor, T. & G. Building, Wellington. Auckland members we wish to remind of the arrangement made with Mr. A. Peyer, 48 Moa Road, Auckland, or Mr. W. Ungemuth, Clarence Road, Northcote, Auckland. Bay of Plenty members may pay to Mr. C. Gebert, C/- Post Office, Opotiki. Kindly help to make the Committee's task easier by remitting early and your prompt attention in this respect will be greatly appreciated.

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A D V E R T I S E M E N T S.

MR. P. CATTIN, Te Kauwhata: "Scintilla" Wine and Fruit.

MR. JOHN BUTLER, Butcher, Tariki: Varieties of Swiss Sausages.

MR. TONY KCOMMINTOH, Wellington: Visit his new "Lido Tea Rooms", 118 Courtenay Place, Wellington.

MR. L. LEUTHARD, New Plymouth: Visit his "Hygienic Dining Rooms".

MR. G. KERLER, 477 Karangahape Rd., Auckland: Prams, Wickerwork, Toys, etc.

MR. AL. ZUERCHER, 303 Market Street S., Hastings: Apple Cider, 5 sh. per gallon in two gallon lots - samples free of charge. Send your empty jars or barrels. "Moscht müends, aim ghä!"

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C O R R E S P O N D E N C E.

Please address to the Secretary - Mr. Herman Schlatter, 2nd Floor, T. & G. Building, WELLINGTON C.1.