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CONCLUSION OF ALLIED TRADE NEGOTIATIONS WITH SWITZERLAND.

In its broadcast to New Zealand on the 13th March, the Swiss Radio made the following comments on the conclusion of the allied trade negotiations with Switzerland:-

"After 3½ weeks' negotiations with the delegations from U.S.A., Britain and France, the trade talks have come to an end. Only a small part of the agreement can be made public, but on the whole we can say that Switzerland may regard it as a great economic and political success.

We have been accused of acts of which we are not guilty, and the talks with these delegations gave us an opportunity to create a better understanding, and to give them a clearer idea of our economic position and our neutrality.

It was a matter of "give and take", and we only gave way to demands which were in accordance with our neutrality. The direct trade with Germany was already reduced to such a level that it was hardly worth mentioning.

As regards the transport through Switzerland of coal and iron for Italy, we had a good reason for stopping this, as it did not seem logical to allow such transports through our country when these very badly needed raw materials were denied to us.

All German bank accounts in Switzerland were blocked and are being investigated.

We are happy to say that we have been granted a considerable quantity of foodstuffs and, what is even more important, deliveries of industrial raw materials. The Allies will also assist us as much as possible by granting transport facilities through France for our imports and exports."

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THE GREAT SWISS ALPINE TUNNELS. ST. GOTTHARD, SIMPLON & LOETSCHBERG.

In these days, when the strategic value of the St. Gotthard and Simplon tunnels in Switzerland is so often discussed by the international press, a review of the history and features of these great passageways which pierce Nature's mighty ramparts between the North and South may be timely.

The history of the St. Gotthard dates back to the early Middle Ages. Originally there was merely a narrow trail, but in order to facilitate commercial transactions between the cities on either side of the mountain it was gradually widened into a regular path for mules. This was the beginning of its fame.