

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 11 (1945-1946)
Heft: 5

Artikel: Swiss production and exports of stoves and ranges
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-942811>

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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.

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.

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 5,905 in 1916, of which not more than 470 are actually fit for