Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand

Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand

Band: 11 (1945-1946)

Heft: 13

Artikel: Presentation of 100 sets of furniture as a gift from the Swiss Colony in Great Britain

Autor: [s.n.]

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-942862

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Mehr erfahren

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. En savoir plus

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. Find out more

Download PDF: 26.10.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, https://www.e-periodica.ch

During July last 28 planes were imported into Switzerland, all, barring one, from the United States, the average value being Frs. 12,000 each. In the same month over a thousand cars, very few from the U.S.A., were delivered from abroad.

About 4,000 typewriters to the value of a million francs were exported in July last: 1,000 went to the U.S.A., 600 to the Argentine, 500 to France, etc. Strange to say, we imported 400 machines from America and 200 from Italy.

Official statistics disclose that the average rise in monthly clerical staff salaries from June 1939 to October 1945 reached 41.5%, while the cost of living index registered an increase of 52%.

The "Auslandschweizer-Tag" brought - according to an official communication - 500 delegates from 170 foreign colonies to the annual meeting which took place at Berne on August 24th. The gathering lacked the enthusiasm and spiritual elevation of pre-war meetings and was practically monopolised by lamentations and aggressive complaints from compatriots living in - or repatriated from - Germany and Austria. The many government representatives present were generally at a loss to reprove the reasonable demands of those who had "carried the baby" during the five years of war. Those from beyond the Rhine resented the impossibility, owing to the continuance of war restrictions, to visit relatives in Switzerland while soldiers from the Allied forces could spend holidays there without hindrance. The different treatment of foreign tourists by the customs and frontier officials when compared to the vexatious formalities reserved for the Swiss was also sharply criticised. An old complaint was voiced again with emphasis, namely that our compatriots were unable to send home their life-long savings and were forced to witness their gradual depreciation and complete evaporation. Our authorities are, of course, helpless in this matter in view of a pre-war economic agreement, sanctioned by the Federal Council, which prohibits capital transfers; we, in this country, are similarly impaired by virtue of the British Finance Act of February 1939. It shows again the impotence of small states when confronted with the requisitions of a large power; an inevitable corollary is the sacrifice of individual interests - in this case of Swiss residing in the respective countries - in favour of unilateral considerations. The French delegates while recognising the easing of the passport and vise regulations, expressed indignation over the ridiculously small amount of Frs. 50 (Frs. 175 for business trips) allowed to be taken out of the country. There were many appeasing perorations from government spokesmen, the last one being Prof. William Rappard, who admonished his audience that the duty of the Swiss at home was to resist all pressure from abroad which threatened a departure from the traditional policy dictated by our history and the duty of the Swiss abroad to generate and disseminate a true appreciation of our peculiar position in the world.

The well-known biography of Winston Churchill by Capt. Ben Tucker in course of translation by Prof. A. Latt, is now being widely advertised in the Swiss press: it is to be sold at Frs. 27.

. . . . . .

PRESENTATION OF 100 SETS OF FURNITURE AS A GIFT FROM THE SWISS COLONY IN GREAT BRITAIN.

In one of the recent numbers of the "Swiss Observer" we informed our readers, that the Swiss Colony, as a contribution towards the efforts to rehabilitate British families, who have severely suffered through the war, had offered a gift of 100 suites of furniture.

These were officially handed over to the Women's Voluntary Service, who had been asked by the Ministry of Health to distribute them, at a ceremony which took place on Friday, May 31st, 1946, at the Ministry of Health, Whitehall, S.W.1.

The Chairman, Mr. Charles Key, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health, in addressing the gathering expressed his regrets for the unavoidable absence of Mr. Aneurin Bevan. In his name, and also on behalf of the Metropolitan Boroughs, he thanked the Swiss Minister for this most generous gift which he said was deeply appreciated as a token of fellowship between the two countries.

The speaker also mentioned the further contributions which will be

forthcoming by our country, such as another 550 sets of furniture, the invitation of some hundreds of English children, ex-Service men and students suffering from tuberculosis, saying that such proofs of friendship will never be forgotten by his countrymen.

Mr. Key then called on the Swiss Minister, Monsieur Paul Ruegger, who addressed the company as follows:

"Let me, first of all, tell you, quite simply but most sincerely, how deeply appreciative I am of the very kind words of Alderman Key, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, and, particularly, of the so friendly feelings towards my country which his words conveyed to us. I am sure that all my compatriots present at this gathering will remember gratefully what he has said with such true and most kindly understanding of Switzerland's endeavours.

The Swiss Legation in Great Britain and myself, as well as the various associations of Swiss in the United Kingdom were extremely happy to hear that the modest offering made on behalf of the Swiss Colony in Great Britain has been found acceptable by the Ministry of Health. And I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to ask Mr. Key to convey also to the Minister, the Rt. Hon. Aneurin Bevan, my sincere thanks for his so valuable advice and personal counsel in helping to realise an earnest desire of the Swiss communities in this great country.

The Swiss in Great Britain have shared, side by side with their English friends, the sorrows and troubles of war-time. Their admiration for the quiet courage, the undaunted steadfastness of the English people, which was always deeply anchored amidst our own people has become, if possible, yet more deeply rooted during the trials of the last war.

It was only too natural, therefore, that the wish sprang up to give a tangible, outward form to their gratitude, and to do this in a way which might, we hoped, prove helpful - even though on a very slight scale - in the efforts of all towards the solution of the housing problem.

The hundred sets of furniture which have been offered on behalf of the Swiss Colony and which you were good enough to accept, are extremly simple and, I am afraid to say, more than in keeping with the austerity of the times. They have been devised, by the sheer necessity of considering the enormous transportation difficulties yet existing on the Continent, so as to take, ingeniously packed, the smallest space. They may, we hope, nevertheless prove useful to one hundred couples in this country.

And may I, here, say how very grateful we are to that admirable organisation, the Women's Voluntary Services, and to its great and able president and to her so experienced assistants. It is thanks to this organisation, ever closely in touch with the needs of the moment, that immediately and without the slightest delay, the method of distribution of this first set of furniture has been so efficiently worked out. Having myself, during some years of the war, had the great privilege of being a Red Cross worker on the International Committee of Geneva, I had the opportunity of witnessing part of the wonderful efforts of the Women's Voluntary Services, and I should like, respectfully, to ask Lady Hillingdon to convey, once again, my sincere gratitude to her president, the Marchioness of Reading.

This small offering on behalf of the Swiss Colony will be followed shortly by another, somewhat larger one, of five-hundred sets of furniture. This latter offering comes from Switzerland herself, or rather from the organisation of the "Don Suisse" which sprung up spontaneously in my country towards the end of the war and which, with the help of our Parliament and the people themselves, readily absorbed about 2% of our national income.

But, as Mr. Key has kindly mentioned, the Swiss people hope to show their feelings of solidarity in other fields and perhaps more usefully. I take it that the already realised scheme of inviting 250 delicate children to the mountain air of Adelboden during six months will be followed by others. From the childrens Section of the Swiss Red Cross, I have received the suggestion that, during the period of say, one year, about two hundred children and more might be taken over in turn, for periods of two months, to be placed with Swiss families; I venture to hope that, thereby, say one thousand English children might, by and by, be invited, as welcome guests, to my country. May I say, in this connection, how grateful I am to the Rt. Hon. Miss Ellen Wilkinson, Minister of Education, for her unfailing help and wise suggestions in helping to realise what corresponds to the sincere wishes not only of the Swiss organisations of the Red Cross and others, but of all classes of the Swiss people. During

recent trips to my country, I was happy to see how spontaneously these feelings spring up everywhere.

As to the help we may have the privilege, in virtue of our climate, to give to the treatment of tubercular diseases, I may mention the decision of the above-named organisation of the "Don Suisse" to offer our hospitality during one year, to one-hundred tubercular invalids. We hope that, thereby, health may be restored to one hundred gallant ex-service men who have made to their country the sacrifice of their physical well-being. Furthermore, we are inviting a score of English students, suffering from tuberculosis, to our "Sanatorium universitaire" at Leysin. In the carrying out of these plans, I am most beholden to the unfailing help of the Rt. Hon. Aneurin Bevan and his able assistants at the Health Ministry.

We full well realise that all these efforts put together are yet on a small scale. And we shall never forget that the efforts of the English people to help others everywhere are proportionally so much greater. All the more do we appreciate your readiness to accept, as a token of our feelings of solidarity, that what we can offer to do. Two feelings are akin, I believe, in your great country and in mine: steadfastness and fundamental loyalties. And, deeply attached as we are to our traditions of liberty and solidarity, we will not forget what the world owes to England.

Madame Ruegger was requested by the Chairman to draw the names from a box, of those who were lucky enough to receive the present.

In conclusion, Lord Latham, Lady Hillingdon, Vice-Chairman, W.V.S., and Dame Beryl Oliver, British Red Cross, expressed their deep gratitude, on behalf of their respective organisations for all the help the Swiss Colony and our country has so generously given.

The simple but impressive ceremony left a deep impression on all those who were privileged to be present, and we feel sure, that the contributions both by the Swiss Colony and by Switzerland have been highly appreciated, and will still further cement the friendship between the two countries.

ST.

. . . . . .

AUCKLAND!!

Annual Meeting:

All present members and any friends wishing to join the committee, are requested to attend this meeting to be held on December 7th at the home of Mrs. Moosberger, 129 Crummer Road, Grey Lynn. (Election of new members for social committee).

. . . . . .

SUBSCRIPTION 1946-1947.

Your annual subscription fee of 10/- (or more if willing and able to donate) has again become due on October 1st and you are asked to forward payment to E. Merz, P.O. Box 85, Auckland, C.1.

The following collection agents are also receiving payments if more convenient to members:-

Waikato:	J.C. Steiner, Eastport Road, Waihou.
Bay of Plenty:	C. Gebert, Post Office, Opotiki.
Wellington:	E. Fretz, P.O. Box 386, Wellington, C.1.
Auckland:	A. Peyer, 48 Moa Road, Auckland, W.3.

Kindly help to make the Committee's task easier by remitting promptly and your attention in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

. . . . . .

ADVERTISEMENTS.

Mr. L. Leuthard, New Plymouth: Visit his "Hygienic Dining Rooms".

Mr. L. Zurcher, 212 Pattison Road, Hastings: 1945 Apple Cider, 5/- per gallon, in two gallon lots, plus freight; samples free of charge, in ordering state dry or sweet. Jars to lend. "Moscht Müends aim ghä."

. . . . . .

CORRESPONDENCE.

Please address to the Secretary, Mr. E. Merz, P.O. Box 85, AUCKLAND.