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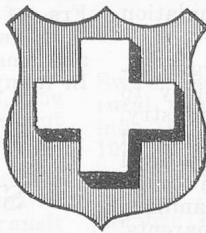
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SWISS BENEVOLENT
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GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

16th YEAR.

AUGUST, 1951.

AUCKLAND.

1st OF AUGUST

Our Consul and Mrs. H. Blanchard gave a Reception at their home for the members of the New Zealand Government and the Diplomats. At 8 o'clock the Swiss Colony of Wellington was also received.

There were about 40 people to enjoy good Neuchatel wine of the 1947 vintage. Social games were played and everybody was in a happy mood.

At the same time the Swiss of the Taranaki District had gathered in Kaponga, and danced all night. There were about 200 of them and as many New Zealand friends. The Consulate was represented by the Chancellor, who conveyed the good wishes of the Federal Council. The celebration was a real success, thanks to Mr. Walter Risi and his Committee, who organised the function. The Rev. Father Green had very kind words for the Swiss farmers of his congregation, assuring that they were fine, hard-working people, and a real asset to the country. It was a great satisfaction to hear such flattering comments from a clergyman who knows his Swiss friends better than anybody else. The Rev. Father Butler also added some very complimentary remarks about the Swiss in Taranaki, where he has lived for over 40 years.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

The Prime Minister of Newfoundland has drafted a law to permit a Swiss company to exploit a large forest covering a territory of about 1500 km² near Lake Melville. The Swiss company will erect two small towns for their employees. It is contemplated to employ about 1500 men in this new industry.

The 63rd Gymnastic Festival, which took place in Lausanne, on July 14th attracted more than 100,000 spectators. There were 35,000 gymnasts taking part. The special trains organised by the Swiss Federal Railways ran every eight minutes; they resembled more the Metropolitan Railway of London than the ordinary trains. In the presence of the President of the Confederation, the mass exercises comprised 25,000 men.

The new Cantonal Hospital in Zurich has been inaugurated. It has cost Sfr.95 million and consists of 1500 beds. The technical installations are most modern. The ventilation of the building is assured by 79 machines. Over each bed there are four plugs. The kitchen can provide up to 3400 meals at every serving. The meals are brought on small electric trains. The hospital has also a clinic, and research laboratories for the university.

The Government of Newfoundland has recently concluded an agreement with a Swiss firm for the construction of a factory for making machines; it will cost 5,000,000 dollars and will occupy 500 workers, of whom there will be 100 technicians.

During the war many Swiss abroad returned to their own country, and the Swiss colonies have, therefore, diminished. This is especially the case in European countries and in Africa. However, the colonies are developing again, particularly in the South Africa Union, and in North and West Africa. In Asia large Swiss industrial and commercial firms are keeping Swiss staff. There are still many Swiss showing interest in immigration to Australia and New Zealand. The quota for the U.S.A. of 1700 per annum is being filled each year. Many farmers are establishing themselves in Canada. In South America, the Swiss, by choice, are going to Venezuela, Peru, Chile and Brazil. At the end of 1949 there were 205,000 Swiss living abroad; in 1940, there were 270,000, and in 1930, 340,000. These figures do not include the double nationals. A great number of Swiss living abroad are assimilated and lost for Switzerland; but, on the other hand, many Swiss, even of the second or third generation, have still kept the Swiss spirit in spite of the fact that they have adapted themselves to the way of living of their country of residence. They act as unofficial representatives of their homeland and are a very important cog in the economical machinery.

SWISS FARMING

(Continued.)

Labour in Agriculture.

Members of his own family form, principally, the farmer's labour. The skill and proficiency of the farmer's family are, to a large extent, responsible for the success of the farm. In the family farms, the wife of the farmer works both in the house and yard. In addition to attending to the poultry and pigs and the vegetable land she assists also in the work on the fields and meadows, and gives a helping hand in harvesting. In a general way, milking is the man's business in Switzerland. On the other hand, a large share in the vineyard work is handled by women. In many cases the women are overworked. In recent times, the trend has been to ease the work of the womenfolk by convenient installations, machines and implements.

The success of the small-sized and medium-sized holdings is largely based on the co-operation of the sons and daughters. Family and farm form a unit, and

rare are the cases in which sons and daughters earn fixed wage in cash. Generally receipts are pooled in common funds. This forms the basis of the economic force of the farmer's class and of the accumulation of savings even though the profit be low.

A peculiar phenomenon in the working organisation of agriculture in Switzerland is the availability to agricultural smallholders of labour working in industry. Particularly the textile industry has always employed home workers attending at home to a small agricultural holding. The engineering industry too, has a large number of workers being members of farmers' families, who return to their own family or to their parents' family in the evening in order to assist in agricultural work. This side developed increasingly during the industrial boom of the post-war epoch, proving a great drain on agriculture, depriving the latter of necessary and even indispensable workers. The profitable additional income from industry is very welcome in the farmhouse, though complaints concerning the shortage of agricultural workers are multiplying. The preservation of homework in these small holdings is not only an aid to the farmer's family but constitutes also a helpful reserve for industry in its economic ups and downs.

Ownership of Farms.

Fifty per cent. of all agricultural holdings in Switzerland consists of farmers as own landlords, the balance is held under various types of leases. Leasehold farms are in high demand and more often than not it proves impossible to find any.

A large number of agricultural farms change hands by way of heritage. In addition to enabling the heirs to take over a holding undivided the Swiss civil law allows them also the goodwill. When buying on a voluntary basis the farmer is generally bound to pay a much higher price, i.e., the commercial price. During the Second World War and the post-war period State approval had to be compulsorily obtained for the purchase of an agricultural holding. The price was not allowed to exceed the revenue value by more than 30 per cent.

The prices of agricultural holdings are exceedingly different. There are no reliable statistics as to the prices. On the other hand, the accountancy returns of the Swiss Farmers' Association give details in respect to the capital a farmer has invested in his holdings. On the whole, the following average book values covering farms as such (i.e., inclusive buildings and wood but exclusive livestock, implements and machines) in respect of farms surveyed between 1936 and 1945, have been established:—

Holdings measuring hectares.	Value in Sw.Frs. per hectare (2.47 acre).
3-5	9281
5-10	6604
10-15	5809
15-30	5430
Over 30	4795

Prices obtained at voluntary sales, however, exceed the above quotations to a very great extent. High prices originate both from the farmers' own competition and from purchases by non-agriculturists. In many cases buyers of small holdings and individual allotments are industrial workers living in the country and earning good wages, while capitalists living in the towns give preference, generally, to larger-sized holdings.

In a general way, rents are a burden to the tenants less heavy than interest, depreciation and repairs are in respect to the capital sunk in the real estate by its owner. In respect to agricultural farms, rents vary between 70 and 320 Frs. per hectare.

The average indebtedness of the Swiss farmers amounts to about 50 per cent. of the capital sunk into agriculture. Mortgage loans account for 4850 million Frs. of the debts. Credit is granted, in the main, by the Cantonal Bank; in addition, numerous savings banks and small banks in the country grant loans on mortgage. In many cases they take over second mortgages as well.

SWITZERLAND'S HELP TO WAR-DAMAGED COUNTRIES

By Prof. Dr. Carl Ludwig, President of the
"Schweizer Europahilfe."

(Continued.)

Immediately after the war the majority of refugees consisted of people of whom some had only had to leave their homes during the war: Jews driven out by the Germans, workers compulsorily transferred to Germany, and so on. These displaced persons were originally looked after by the Inter-governmental Committee for Refugees, and then by UNRRA. Later the IRO took them on. Today some 420,000 such refugees are enjoying the material support of the last-mentioned organisation.

As you will have been able to see from the press, the IRO was originally to have been wound up on 30th June, 1950. The 18 member states have, however, since decided that the work of the organisation is to be continued for another six to nine months. It is hoped that it will by then have been possible to resettle 220,000 more persons and to do a great deal to render tolerable the lot of the remainder of the refugees for whom the organisation is responsible—mostly old and sick people who are not fit for further wanderings.

At the present time, however, far greater importance than that of the displaced persons attached, from the point of view of numbers alone, to the second category of refugees, known as the "Ostvertriebenen" (those driven from the East); that is to say, the members of German ethnic groups who had to leave their homes in Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania and Yugoslavia as a result of the Potsdam Agreement of 2nd August, 1945, and the German nationals who were expelled or fled from the regions east of the Neisse and the Oder. At first there was talk of 7½ million "Ostvertriebene" who—as an answer to the national-socialist racial policy and the German annihilation camps—were to be transferred to the west. In reality, however, there are 12½ million of them. At present 4½ million are living in Eastern Germany, and half a million in Austria. The remaining 7½ million are in Western Germany, mostly in the Bizonal, and are extremely unevenly distributed among the various Lander. In Bavaria the refugees form 20 per cent. of the population, and in Schleswig-Holstein as much as 34 per cent. Fourteen point eight per cent. of the total population of Western Germany, including the French Zone, are refugees.

The meaning of these figures will at once become clear to us if we imagine the conditions which would prevail in our country—which has been spared the war!—if we were suddenly forced to support an increase in the population of from one to one and a half million persons.

Furthermore, in addition to the 7½ million persons of German race expelled and German nationals driven out, Western Germany has to shelter a million refugees from the Eastern Zone. As the Bavarian Ministry of the Interior announced a few days ago, 76,390 Germans fled from the Eastern Zone to Bavaria alone during the first ten months of the year.