

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 16 (1951)
Heft: [10]

Rubrik: Notices

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farmhouses of the Emmental region. In Eastern Switzerland, stone houses were adopted at an early epoch. In the north-east of the country, many fine half-timbered houses have been preserved to this day. In western Switzerland, the three-division house was affected by the Celtic-Romanic architecture, and the Burgundian type chimney may still occasionally be found there.

In the modern buildings erected by the building office of the Swiss Farmers' Union allowance is made to an increasing extent for labour-saving installations. This is revealed by the very location of the buildings, particularly by the gateway, by the mechanical unloading devices, the storage of stocks and fodder-crops and so on. In the stablehouse, improved lying-down places for livestock, better mangers, liquid waste drains and improved ventilation ducts have been adopted to an increasing extent. Particular attention has been paid to alleviating the farmer's wife by means of rational kitchen installations and by decreasing the distance of the garden, the wash-house and the modern poultry-houses, etc. Cheap building is no longer possible, but it is possible to make building costs less burdensome by rational plants and equipment. It must not be forgotten either that the house, in addition to being part of the working equipment of the farm, is also the background for the happiness, ease and purpose of life of the family on the farm.

Machines and Implements.—The expanding activities on the farms and the shortage of agricultural labour caused the Swiss farmer to an increasing extent to ease and improve their work by the use of machines. The rainy climate had been an early incentive to the adoption of hay-harvesting machines, particularly with a view to shortening the duration of the hay-making. The machine which has generally been first introduced on a large scale in arable land districts is the threshing machine, often hired out by co-operatives or contractors. The revival of arable farming during the war caused interest in the tractor to increase, in the first instance in those farms where it proved impossible to find full employment for two horses. The Swiss industry is able to supply good types of tractors. The tractor owners try to make fuller use of their machines by placing them at the disposal of their neighbours. First-class mouldboard ploughs have also been available in Switzerland since several decades.

The use of cereal harvesting machines and binders is somewhat restricted owing to the smallness of farms. The adoption of electrically-operated liquid manure pumps in conjunction with hose systems also meant a notable progress. Their use results in a considerable saving of labour, and in much higher yields in grass farming and fruit-growing. Atomisers to combat pests and diseases are, in the main, used on a co-operative basis. The same holds true in respect of cereal cleansing plants, while winnowing machines have been in general use in farm-houses since an early epoch. Plants for the processing of fruit and grapes have reached a high level of development. Up-to-date plants for the treatment of consumer milk and for the production of butter and cheese are in use in all co-operative factories. A Swiss invention, the CO₂ butter machine, has met with intense interest all over the world.

NOTICES

In 1947, the Swiss people voted the introduction of a general Old-Age, Widows' and Orphans' Insurance ("Alters- und Hinterlassenenversicherung"). This insurance, which is compulsory for the inhabitants of Switzerland, is also available to Swiss living abroad who wish to participate.

A maximum age limit of 30 years is set for admission. However, exception was made for the first year after the Act came into force, when persons up to 65 years of age could enrol. That date limit for joining the social insurance for these Swiss citizens (also for "dual nations" or "Doppelbuerger") residing abroad who

were born between July 1st, 1883, and December 31st, 1920, and who have at no previous time been insured, has recently been extended to the end of 1951. After December 31st, 1951, no applications from persons born on or before December 31st, 1921, can be taken into consideration. This affords a unique opportunity, particularly to elderly people not born prior to July 1st, 1883, to participate in the Swiss social security scheme. A stipulation for admission is that the registration of the citizen with the Consulate is in order.

The annual premiums, which are payable until the age of 65 years, are to be assessed and paid with retrospective effect from January 1st, 1948. Persons gainfully occupied are liable to contribute 4 per cent. of their income in cash and in kind. The contributions of persons not gainfully occupied are levied according to the fortune and income from life annuities.

Single old-age pensions are paid out to single, widowed or divorced men and women from the first day of the calendar half-year following completion of their 65th year of age. Furthermore, single old-age pensions are paid to husbands who have themselves completed the 65th year of age though their wives have not yet completed their 60th year of age. Insured husbands have a claim to a married couple's pension when they have completed the 65th and their wives the 60th year of age. Persons who have reached the age of 65 years, between July 1st, 1948, and June 30th, 1951, may now request the old-age pension. Moreover, the Consulate may receive pension applications from registered survivors of Swiss nationals who died meanwhile. In both cases the contributions due will be deducted from the pension. The amount of the pension depends on the sum total of the contributions paid and on the number of years for which contributions have been made. Only those who have been contributing for at least 20 years will receive the full pension, which will vary according to payments effected, from Sfr.480 to Sfr.1500 annually for single persons, and Sfr.770 to Sfr.2400 for married couples. The minimum pension is paid whenever the average contribution is Sfr.30 or less annually; the maximum pension whenever the average contribution is Sfr.300 or more annually. The amount of the single orphan's pension varies from Sfr.145 to Sfr. 360 a year, and the pension of an orphan who lost both parents varies from Sfr.215 to Sfr. 540 per annum. The amount of a widow's pension depends on various factors.

In the event that you are interested in joining the insurance and desire further information, please contact the Consulate of Switzerland, P.O. Box 386, Wellington, the sooner the better.

PESTALOZZI CALENDARS

"Helvetia" subscribers are informed that they may order Pestalozzi Calendars, 1952 (in French or German) at the price of 6/- each. Orders should be sent to the Swiss Consulate, P.O. Box 386, Wellington, not later than December 31st.

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Printed by McKenzie, Thornton, Cooper Ltd., 126 Cuba St., Wellington, for the Swiss Benevolent Society in New Zealand (Inc.).