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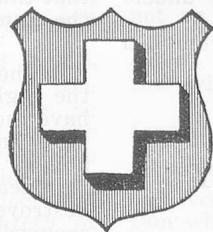
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HELVETIA

MONTHLY
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OF THE



SWISS BENEVOLENT
SOCIETY IN
NEW ZEALAND (INC.)

GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

16th YEAR.

MAY, 1951.

AUCKLAND.

NEWS OF THE COLONY

On April 25th, Anzac Day, the Swiss Consul, Mr. H. Blanchard, laid a wreath on the Citizens' War Memorial in Wellington, on behalf of the Swiss Confederation.

It has just been learned that there is to be a Swiss dance at Manaia on May 3rd. We hope that this function is a great success and that everyone has an enjoyable time.

We are happy to extend a warm welcome to Mr. Kaegi, Dr. sc. tech. and agricultural engineer, and to his family. Mr. Kaegi arrived in Wellington by the "Rangitane" on April 22nd, accompanied by his wife and three children. Mrs. Kaegi is a qualified dairy bacteriologist. Mr. Kaegi was with the Swiss Federal Research Station before coming to New Zealand. We wish them all every success in New Zealand.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

The Swiss national income in 1950 reached the total figure of Sfrs.17,400 millions. The revenue from work reached Sfrs.10,200 millions; revenue from sources other than salary or wages, Sfrs. 3,800 millions, and the revenue from invested capital, profits from Swiss firms abroad, etc., Sfrs.3,400 millions.

This summer the Swiss railways will organise cruising trains which will visit various countries.

After long research it has been succeeded in Switzerland to put on the market thin aluminium foils which replace the ordinary paper in photography. The pictures reproduced on the aluminium foils are very resistant to abrasion and climatic conditions. The pictures so reproduced are absolutely unalterable. These aluminium foils permit the most fine reproductions, even microscopic ones.

Professor Dr. Emile Staiger, of the Zurich University, has been called to Columbia University of New York. He will be the only European professor to teach in that school since the end of the war.

One of the largest spinning manufacturers in Australia has installed a new factory at Newcastle, equipped with Swiss machinery. This firm declares that their mill is one of the best in the world.

Two architects of Le Locle are building in Casablanca (French Morocco) 21 blocks of 1600 modern flats.

This new quarter will bear the name of the Swiss town of Le Locle. The contractors are from Lausanne.

The Swiss industries are investigating the possibility of producing tanks of the Centurion type on a large scale.

Switzerland is exclusively Continental and is nowhere bordered by the sea, from which she is separated by foreign lands. She possesses, nevertheless, a Merchant Navy which, at the present time, is celebrating its 10th anniversary. It was in 1941 that Switzerland thought it appropriate to constitute a fleet of ships to obviate the difficulties of provisioning during the war. At present the Fleet is composed of 19 ships totalling 160,000 tons. They all belong to private enterprises.

SWISS INDUSTRIES FAIR, BASLE.

The success which accompanied the 35th Swiss Industries Fair, held in Basle from 7th to 17th April, 1951, was such as to exceed even the most optimistic expectations that could reasonably be entertained in view of the general economic boom conditions.

The available exhibition space of some 1,000,000 square feet was booked up to the last inch by the 2200 exhibitors, the leading Swiss export industries being prominent amongst them. It is intended to erect new exhibition halls in the next few years in order to provide space for the increasing number of applicants who apply for stands or to accommodate the existing exhibitors who demand more space.

This year more than 670,000 entrance tickets were issued and this exceeds all the records for previous fairs.

It can be assumed that more than 20,000 foreign visitors turned up in Basle, seeing that some 11,000 interested visitors from 67 countries were registered at the Foreign Visitors' Office, and there was an impression that these visitors represent an effectively larger foreign interest in Swiss goods than in the previous years when international trade was handicapped all round.

Taken generally, things were quite satisfactory both as regards home and foreign business. There was considerable foreign demand for watches, machine tools and accessories, and textile machinery. Fairly big orders were placed during the Fair in these lines, and, in addition, numerous other contacts were made for business at a later date.

Numerous Press reports from foreign countries confirmed that this year's Swiss Industries Fair, by acting

as a demonstration of Swiss industry in all the various aspects of its high-class production, achieved a general propaganda effect which should certainly not be underestimated.

The next Industries Fair will take place from 3rd to 13th May, 1952.

SWITZERLAND AS SEEN BY FOREIGNERS

A German newspaper, "Schwaebische Landeszeitung," publishes a long article in which it says that small Switzerland, for the last year, has been working very hard for the reorganisation of her army. New plans have been made to defend the country, not only the alps but the entire territory, and it is why a special effort is made to develop the mechanisation of the army, as well as to reinforce the artillery, the fighting planes and anti-tank weapons. Switzerland realises that the best arms against tanks are the tanks themselves, but they find it difficult to import them, as delivery delays are as much as 24 months. It is why they will start to produce them themselves, in spite of the cost being tremendously high.

Switzerland has never left the slightest doubt that she will defend her neutrality and her independence under any circumstances. Nature and civil engineering have made out of the country a single fortification, which, even with the modern armaments, would be nearly impregnable. But if an enemy could penetrate into the country, its efforts would be useless, as all the bridges, roads, tunnels, railways and alpine passes are thoroughly mined and would be out of commission. Even the plains are well protected by all kinds of forts. Attacking Switzerland would not be a military promenade.

An American newspaper writes: "While the largest part of the world, inclusive of the United States of America, is sailing towards Socialism, one could cite a small European country as a striking example of democratic government, private economy, and individual initiative. A study of the world economy shows that no country is in such a strong position as Switzerland. She is the only one in the world that has her currency covered by 100 per cent. of gold. Indeed, the gold reserve per head is three times as much as in the U.S.A. Switzerland has no governmental programme for free trade. She is really a republic as 600 years ago, and keeps her frontiers open for imports and exports. She is the only capital exporting country in Europe. How was it possible, one would ask, for Switzerland to remain neutral, surrounded as she was by belligerents, whereas the U.S.A., which is more than 3000 miles away, was dragged into two European wars, and possibly soon in the third one? Switzerland works under a free private economical system, while her Socialist competitors are ruled by regulations, ordinance, import and export control plans and programmes. The U.S.A. would do well to study the Swiss case as an enlightening example."

The German paper "Weserkurier" of the 14th of February, makes a survey of the agriculture, architecture, folklore and tourist trade of the Canton of Tessin, and stresses the contrast between the South of Switzerland and the country north of the Gotthard. It concludes: "Happy Switzerland, where one can enjoy in the same day, winter in the high mountains and summer round the blue, warm lakes."

The "Welt am Sonntag" paper, published in Hambourg on February 25th, calls Zurich the town of the pacifists. The Swiss metropolis is advantageously situated and is a meeting place of Europe, where one

can find modern architecture side by side with colourful narrow streets of the middle age. It is a real consolation that this jewel of the European crown still exists amongst the numerous destructions caused by the war.

The Dutch newspaper "De Gelderlander" explains the high standard of living in Switzerland: "The Swiss have acquired prosperity through the confidence they have in their own power. This, a foreigner cannot always understand. Since the last war nearly all the European countries had to go through inflation, which destroyed the people's confidence in money. The consequence is that most people are now living above their income and do not see why they should make economies. But in Switzerland the mentality has remained the same as it used to be in the Netherlands before the war. The Swiss are now perhaps the only thrifty nation in Europe. Even the simplest worker, who is, however, protected by various social laws and is entitled to the old age pension, is bringing each week part of his salary to the savings bank. Workers of other countries will be of the opinion that perhaps the Swiss worker economises too much and makes too many sacrifices. But in doing this the Swiss saves, in the long run, capital in the hope that his children will have the benefit of it. This attitude favours the will to remain neutral. Neutrality is not only a principle of the Government, but also an unshakeable conviction of the people. In any case the past has shown that Switzerland is right. Even Hitler was afraid to attack the well-trained Swiss Army consisting of 850,000 men. Forty per cent. of the Swiss Budget is spent on military defence, and last year one and a half million Swiss francs were voted for armament. This is the insurance policy that the country has to pay to secure its neutrality and independence. The Swiss know what they want and are conscious of their strength. This is an example for other European countries."

The Austrian newspaper "Die Presse," of February 24th, speaks about the Swiss five-year plan of re-armament, and says: "The monstrous programme which represents a heavy burden even for rich Switzerland, proves how earnestly the Swiss are willing to defend their country. The distribution of this heavy burden amongst the various groups of taxpayers caused some debates, but everyone is conscious that there is no sacrifice too big for freedom. One realises that Switzerland might be surrounded, as was the case in the last war, by one single Power, but the Swiss have decided to defend their fortified country with all their means and against any menace, to the last man."

The French newspaper "L'Aurore" regrets that Switzerland remains neutral, and says: "We think only favourably of Switzerland. We have praised her with pleasure many times. How could we not admire that democracy which functions almost ideally? How could we not applaud when she sacrifices 45 per cent. of her Budget for national defence? How could we not laud Federal Councillor Kobelt, who is making a peerless army amongst those of the other European States? We profess an absolute confidence in the resistance of the Helvetians. The actual President of the Confederation would show himself just as firm against an invader as did Numa Droz before Bismark in the time of the Wohlgemuth affair, and if it should be so, the mobilisation would be effected with perfection as in 1914, under General Wille, or in 1939, under General Guisan. Our courageous neighbours, well trained, well disciplined, would fight with the same spirit as their valiant ancestors several centuries ago in Morgarten or in Morat. But only the result counts. Today the danger is deadlier than in the time of Leopold of Austria, and of Charles le Temeraire. The other day at the Parliament, one extremist reproached the Federal Council for intensifying the military effort in order to make Switzerland an advanced position post of the Atlantic Army. Please the