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particularly abroad. Today even the biggest firms manufacture several very different products, although most of them devote special attention to some particular branch. The rest of the work serves more or less as a balance to establish an even rate of employment.

Swiss spinning frames and looms, which formed the starting point of the engineering industry in that country, became in time world famous. Exactly in this field, engineering construction and fine mechanics could supplement each other. Clear proofs of this are the automatic looms, winding machines of the rayon industry, different auxiliary apparatus for rendering looms automatic and for mechanising preparatory work. Worthy of appreciation also is the work done by the Swiss engineering industry in connection with traffic means, e.g., steam, diesel-electric and gas-turbine locomotives, marine diesel engines and motor lorries. The big Swiss machines for utilising water power and generating electric energy have a world-wide reputation, as have also the numerous apparatus for the transmission, conversion and application of electric power. Also worthy of mention are big pumps, as well as special machines for metal and wood-working, for the processing of foodstuffs, for agriculture, etc.

The Swiss engineering industry is distributed all over the country, although there are some more important centres of concentration. First of all comes the Canton of Zurich, then the towns of Baden, Aarau, Basle and Geneva. Important in eastern Switzerland are St. Gallen, Uzwil and Arbon; in the neighbourhood of the Lake of Zurich, Horgen and Ruti; in the Jura, central Switzerland and Schaffhausen, particularly foundries and rolling-mills are to be found. Especially in the machine-tool branch, quite a number of important makers are situated in districts away from the bigger industrial centres; they bring special products on the market, which are also highly esteemed abroad.

NEWS OF THE COLONY

The Swiss Colony of Auckland had the privilege recently to meet the new Consul, Mr. H. Blanchard, and his charming wife. About 25 members greeted the new arrivals, and judging by the animated conversation, everyone enjoyed the evening greatly. We Aucklanders trust we have the pleasure of seeing Mr. and Mrs. Blanchard frequently and we wish to extend our cordial good wishes for their welfare.

In September, 1950, issue of the "Helvetia" it was stated that 28 Swiss people had arrived in New Zealand since the beginning of the year. It will interest readers to know that the total number of Swiss nationals, including wives and children, who immigrated to New Zealand from January 1st, 1950, to December 31st, 1950, reached 54. These compatriots are scattered all over the country, mostly, however, on the North Island. Unfortunately this factor makes it difficult, if not impossible, for some of these people to meet other compatriots. It is hoped that all Swiss nationals, and particularly the ones who are not in contact with other compatriots, will subscribe to the "Helvetia," which will become to a certain extent a link between the Swiss in New Zealand. A warm welcome is extended to all new arrivals, and we trust that through their labour and endeavours they finally will meet with success.

Children's Christmas Celebration in Wellington.

A children's Christmas party, sponsored by the Swiss Ladies' Group of Wellington, was held December 19th at the home of Mrs. Brulisauer. Eight children, accompanied by their mothers, were present.

Fortunately it was a grey day, so that the large Christmas tree with the many-coloured candles could brighten the room and the little hearts with some Christmas spirit. As all the children were gathered, Mrs. Oesch read them the Anderson Tale of the first Christmas tree. Afterwards the huge ice-cream cake had to be eaten before it all melted away, so the children had a jolly time sitting around the table and devouring the many tasty cakes and other savouries, which their kind hostess had prepared. Meanwhile Father Christmas had got ready and just came down the stairs as the children were leaving the table. He called one by one and after a little scolding and praising on their behaviour—as Father Christmas must do—he handed each a nice present. Now it was the children's turn to give something. Starting off by singing some Christmas carols, the programme had begun. Each knew something, be it a piece on the piano or on the flute, or a poem or a song. Because there were wonderful, large balloons decorating the lounge and each was given one for good recital they started to outdo one another, for there were still more balloons hanging from the walls. Ronney Schlatter out-talked them all with the many poems he could so well recite. So the afternoon went over only too quickly and after little Michele Brulisauer in her sweet, cheerful way bade everybody "A very merry Christmas to you all," the party broke up with pleasant memories to take home.

A LIGHTNING VISIT FROM THE U.S. TO SWITZERLAND

Miss Phyllis Battelle belongs to the New York "International News Service" team; her speciality is fashions and New York society. It will be interesting to read her comments on the night life of Zurich. Americans are reputed always to be wanting to be "going places and doing things," and Miss Battelle, true to this principle, went with many of her colleagues to see the American National Ballet, which at the time was giving guest performances in Zurich. This was followed by a brief call at a dance club on the way back to the hotel. In Zurich, places of amusement close at midnight, and this regulation had the advantage of leaving the visitors, who are accustomed to being up and about until two or three o'clock in the morning, time to look through the copious literature placed at their disposal by the Swiss National Tourist Office. The zeal for work and the promptness and punctuality of these newspaper people is altogether amazing. When European journalists find themselves swamped with new impressions they try to collect and incorporate them in general reports; their American colleagues cable their impressions home whilst they are still warm and vivid.

As we stood together admiring the sweeping view from the Pilatus, we were not able to tell the well-known columnist Marquis W. Childs anything he did not already know about the history and constitution of Switzerland. One might have thought that his knowledge of Switzerland would be limited to the usual tourist clichés. Nothing of the sort! His impressions of the country are not less closely concerned with the people and institutions of Switzerland. The other prominent columnist from Washington, Frederic Othman, likewise evinced keen interest in the Swiss as living people. It was altogether striking how receptive these Americans were to all the little courtesies that are part of Swiss everyday life, and, in the aggregate, constitute a large sum of satisfaction and inward harmony. The ticket-collector on the train, for instance, who readily joins in a little private conversation in English without on that account neglecting his duty; the waitress who wishes you a "good appetite"; the Horgen stationmaster's

wife decorating with geraniums the otherwise soberly utilitarian station, and so on.

"Flowers in a station! That's something there just wouldn't be time for in the States!" commented J. M. McDonald, of "Collier's Magazine." He had at first thought that the red flowers had some practical purpose, as signals or warning lamps. He works as a prober for his magazine, and takes "soundings" here and there in the world to find out whether some splash feature might not be due.

"We have rocks, too; big ones and plenty of them," said Senator Edwin Johnson in his deep, booming voice, "but a lunch like this, right among them, and as though you were hovering over them, that's something we don't have in Colorado!" And, sitting there on the terrace of the Pilatus-Kulm Hotel, he relaxed comfortably in the sunshine. As Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Trade, the Democratic Senator occupies an important post in Washington.

The excursion to the Pilatus fell on a magnificent day. The autumn sun was almost scorching, and the view in every direction could be enjoyed in all its majesty, notwithstanding a slight haze. Michael W. Flynn, editor of the "Washington Times Herald," must have known what he was talking about when he said that you could get more sunburned in ten minutes up there on the Pilatus than you could in Miami.

The Americans were not only interested in pleasing views and in people, they also had an eye for something that combines both these elements; in a word, for girls. That pretty Lucerne girl, who, with the beautiful radiant smile of a child of Nature, pinned a badge on the lapel of each visitor, did a tremendous publicity job for Switzerland's tourist trade.

The American editors also displayed great interest in figures, and never forget an hotel rate or mountain-railway fare that one chanced to mention in passing.

Although some of them had already heard a great deal about Switzerland—either from their G.I. friends who had spent their leave in Switzerland, or in connection with the birth of Rita Hayworth's daughter at Lausanne, or in Johanna Spyri's children's book "Heidi"—this three-day trip was nevertheless an eye-opener to all of them. Enthusiasm was expressed spontaneously and gracefully, and will now pass across to millions of readers; for this group of editors and columnists must be the most representative that has ever crossed the ocean in one party. Among those we have not as yet mentioned by name were, for instance, Louis Banks, of "Time Magazine," and Malcolm Muir, of "Newsweek Magazine," both representing weekly periodicals with huge circulations not only in the U.S., but throughout Europe as well. Or Nathan Margolin, of the Army paper "Stars and Stripes." The world-famous "New York Herald Tribune" was represented by two of its editors.

HOW SWISS RAILWAYS IMPRESS A FOREIGNER.

That they do so is beyond any doubt. Was there ever a holiday visitor who failed to express his delight at the innumerable facilities afforded by the Swiss railways for discovering the beauties of the country? Who could remain unmoved at seeing the little church of Wassen three times in succession as the St. Gothard Express snakes in sweeping curves along the mountain slopes? Are not the "light expresses" of the Swiss Federal Railways and the comfortable powered coaches of the private railroads extremely popular with all who have used them? And who is there that will not take home with him pleasant memories of travelling in

the cosiness of a dining car enjoying one or other of the countless culinary specialties of Switzerland?

Even more imposing, perhaps, are the mighty viaducts, even more weird the long, dark tunnels, even more impressive the interplay of Nature and technology when one speeds through Switzerland in the driver's cabin of an electric locomotive instead of in an upholstered coach. For what could be more exciting for a journalist from the plains than to tear along for some ten minutes through the inky blackness of the St. Gothard Tunnel and to be introduced to the vineclad slopes and the Lake of Geneva from the Re 4/4 of a light express?

What passenger in the comfortable coaches of the Glacier Express has any idea of the numerous, costly avalanche-traps that ensure the uninterrupted and safe operation of the Furka-Oberalp Railway? Who notices anything of the efficient signal-lights that beam a reassuring "all clear" to the Lotschberg Express as it speeds along high above the Rhone Valley? Who is aware of the incessant vigilance of the engine driver as, on the Rheitan Railway, he hauls his passengers in safety to their destinations through the charming Grisons countryside?

When one once has an opportunity to peep behind the scenes at what makes the railways "tick," one thing becomes very clear; the admiration and appreciation felt by every foreigner for the railways of Switzerland is absolutely justified!

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