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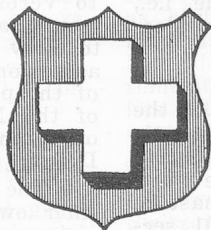
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HELVETIA

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OF THE



SWISS BENEVOLENT
SOCIETY IN
NEW ZEALAND (INC.)

GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

16th YEAR.

APRIL, 1951.

AUCKLAND.

NEWS OF THE COLONY

We are pleased to announce that in the first three months of this year 19 newcomers from Switzerland have arrived in New Zealand. With the exception of two married couples with two children they are all single. They all seem to prefer the North Island, and most of them are working in the country on farms. There are, however, also some in other professions as for instance a baker and pastrycook, a machine designer, and a goldsmith. One Swiss girl arrived to be trained as a nurse in a Wellington Public Hospital. She will be the first Swiss nurse to get her training in New Zealand.

In Wellington, the Swiss men are still meeting every Tuesday at 5.30 p.m. in the bar of the St. George Hotel. Attendance is good; generally about a dozen Swiss come together for a short chat and a beer.

During the last twelve months the ladies residing in Wellington have also been meeting regularly on the last Thursday of the month for afternoon tea. These gatherings have been organized by Mrs. Oesch, wife of the Chancellor of the Swiss Consulate, and are attended on an average by 10 ladies. These reunions have been very much appreciated, especially by the newcomers who find it a help to discuss their various problems of shopping and housekeeping arising in a strange country with whose language they are not yet familiar, and whose customs are rather different from home.

The Swiss colony of Wellington was sorry to lose two of its young members, Mr. Weilenmann and Mr. Brunner, who came to New Zealand a year ago. They both left for Australia, where the prospects for architects and technicians seem to be better—or salaries more lucrative—than in New Zealand.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

Professor Fischer, of the Research Laboratories at the Polytechnical School in Zurich, invented before his death in 1947, a projecting camera for television films to be used on cine screens. An expert from a big American film company came to Switzerland to study this system and declared that this new solution is astonishing; they will use it for colour television. The 20th Century Fox Films will equip all their theatres in the U.S.A. with Professor Fischer's television projectors.

The conductor, Ernest Ansermet, returned to Geneva after a series of concerts which he has given in Philadelphia, New York, Havana, Washington, Montreal, and Chicago, with very great success.

The donations for the victims of the avalanches in Switzerland have already reached Sfr9,000,000.

The University of Strasbourg has given the Chair of Radio and Atomic Chemistry to a lady of the Canton of Vaud, Dr. Marguerite Perey.

In 1950 there was a very high activity in the construction of houses. In spite of the fact that the Government has suppressed the subsidies, the total number of apartments constructed in the various cities amounted to 13,000.

Basle is the harbour where labour is comparatively the most intensive one in the world. Three million tons have been handled during the last year.

The specialist of military matters of the important Italian newspaper "Gazzetta del Popolo" estimates that Switzerland possesses the most powerful army in the world.

The number of immigrants from Switzerland to overseas countries last year amounted to 2,672.

The authorities of the town of Lugano are studying the project of opening an American University in the castle of Trevano, near Lugano. This University would be run with American money, on American lines for American students in Europe. There would be about 200 of them to begin with and this number could be trebled in the future.

The twenty-first International Automobile Show, with more than 600 exhibitors, took place in Geneva on March 8th. Eleven countries displayed their various makes of automobiles. Great Britain had 24 makes, U.S.A. 19, France 11, Germany 10 and Italy 5.

A new institute for physics will shortly be opened in Geneva. The close collaboration of various scientific and industrial organizations have made this possible. This institute will be comprised of two parts: one reserved for university teaching and the other for research work. About thirty laboratories will be at the disposal of the latter, as well as mechanical workshops,

where prototype machines and instruments will be constructed. In the laboratories researches in the three principal domains of modern physics will be made, i.e., nuclear magnetism, nuclear energy, microscopy electronics.

From the 7th to the 8th, and from the 13th to the 16th of July, 1951, the sixty-third Federal Gymnastic Festival will take place this year in Lausanne. The cost of such a festival is, of course, very high. One must not forget that the Federal Society of Gymnastics, which was founded 118 years ago, comprises 2501 sections with a total membership of 220,000. The entry fees, as well as the contributions of the gymnasts, will not cover all the expenses of such a big organization, and the committee would appreciate any donations which could be made by compatriots abroad. The Consulate would be prepared to accept any such donations.

The timetable of the Swiss Shortwave Broadcasting Service from April 1st to August 31st, for Australia and New Zealand will be from 7.15 to 9.45 GMT on the 25.28, 19.60 and 19.84 metre bands.

It is announced from London that the employees of the telephone service have sent a cheque for £9 15s to the address of their colleague in Andermatt, Miss Theuss, as a tribute to her admirable behaviour during the avalanche catastrophe. Miss Theuss remained in service during 10 hours without being relieved. The road and the railway being cut, the telephone remained the only means of communication with the rest of the world. Miss Theuss had to answer hundreds of calls, several of which came from London asking for information about British tourists. At one time the British operators heard a voice announcing to Miss Theuss that her father, her mother, her brother and her sister had been killed by the avalanche. A few seconds later she carried on with the communications in spite of that terrific shock.

The balance of the catastrophe of the avalanche in the Canton of Grisons has just been published. There are 53 people dead, and 215 head of cattle lost. The avalanche has destroyed 473 buildings and damaged 92 others. The masses of snow have destroyed 350 ha. of forest and uprooted 50,000 square miles of timber and spoiled another 15,000. Up to the end of January, soldiers and road menders have cleared 440 kilometres of road which was covered with 3,000,000 metres of snow, trees and rocks. The railway of the Grisons, with the help of 24 snow ploughs, have cleared the tracks which were covered by hundreds of avalanches. They had to replace 1,500 metres of wires, 200 insulators, and 10,500 metres of telephonic cable.

In the Canton of Tessin enormous masses of snow are still piling up on the slopes of the Val Bedretto. For months this valley has been cut off and providing for the population and the cattle is extremely difficult. It has been decided to evacuate the whole valley as more snow threatens to fall.

The Swiss Government has decided to build 150 jet propelled fighters, English type De Havilland. The turbines can also very well be made by Swiss factories. The characteristics of these planes is very great velocity in horizontal flying as well as strong ascension power.

In Saas Fee, the guide Heinrich Zurbriggen has established ski round tours lasting eight weeks, for good, very good and medium skiers. The programme lasts from March 25th until June 9th. The classic "Haute

Route" is planned for three different weeks; the first being from March 25th to March 31st, from Saas Fee to Verbier; the second from April 22nd to April 29th, from Saas Fee to Chamonix; and the third from May 13th to May 22nd, from Saas Fee to Chamonix with the ascension of the Mont Blanc. During the seventh week of the programme (May 27th-June 2nd) only the region of the Monte Rose will be covered, with an ascension of the highest point of Switzerland, that is, the Pointe Dufour (4634 metres) in the massif of the Monte Rose.

The participants on these tours have only to carry their own equipment, the guides are providing all provisions.

The Canton of Fribourg has given an imposing funeral to Joseph Bovet, who died recently, over 80 years old. Over 5000 persons gave the last honour to this great poet and singer, who has done so much for the revival of the Swiss folk songs. The federal Council was represented by M. Philipp Etter, Chief of the Department of Internal Affairs. The delegates of 250 different societies with their flags took part in the long burial procession, together with the leaders of the Federation of the National Costumes and Customs and thousands of voices sang Bovet's famous song "Le Vieux Chalet," on the Place de Notre-Dame at Fribourg.

After a foggy Monday morning, the Carnival of Basle, 1951, had lovely weather. So it was no wonder that tens of thousands of visitors from all parts of Switzerland as well as from abroad came to Basle and crowded the streets to such an extent that the "Cliquenzüge" could hardly circulate. Over 60 funny professions, with lanterns, horses and chariots, and of course accompanied by the famous "Basler Trommler and Pfyffer," made very witty mockeries of last year's events not only in Basle but also in the rest of Switzerland and in international politics. In between there were music bands, and individual masks, afoot and in more than 60 chariots, cars and tractors. Young people and "Buebeziegli," all in most strange and frolicsome disguises and some funny individuals in extravagant costumes amused the spectators and threw oranges and bouquets at them. Finally everybody got involved in the famous "Konfettischlacht" and by the evening people were walking up to their knees in confetti. Such a gay and bright spectacle had seldom been observed in Basle and only towards the evening the spectators dissipated.

The 35th Swiss Industries Fair takes place in Basle from 7th to 17th April, 1951. In its 14 halls it brings together 2200 exhibitors divided into 17 professional groups and thus centralizes the most important economic groups in one well-organized display. Particular emphasis is placed on the outstanding export industries in Switzerland, e.g., the watchmaking industry, precision mechanics, the textile, electric, and machinery industries.

In the artistically decorated Watch Fair in Hall 1 there will be found an almost 100 per cent. display of all the best known Swiss watches, over 150 exhibitors from the entire industry being concentrated in this hall. Industrial clocks, desk clocks, electrically driven clocks, tools, accessories and appliances for the watchmaking industry are accommodated as a sub-group of Precision Mechanics in Hall III/b, amongst exhibits such as mechanically and electrically actuated measuring instruments, optical goods and transmission apparatus.

The textile and Footwear Industries will be found in the spacious Halls II and II/b with their three storeys. The textile display is distinguished by its attractive show of goods, particularly the special exhibit styled "Creation" with its atmosphere of refinement. This display is particularly interesting at the present time seeing that the Swiss textile industry cannot only supply a very wide range of goods but can deliver at relatively short notice.

The products displayed by the Swiss Electrotechnical Industry, with its manifold goods intended for the construction of power stations and electric plant of all kinds, enjoy world renown. The exhibition of motors, generators, transformers, switchgear, etc., is concentrated in Hall V, whilst electric measuring instruments are to be found in Hall III/b and everything connected with illumination in Gallery III.

The exhibit which requires most space of all for itself is the Machinery Display. Metal-working and wood-working machines are to be found in Halls VI and VII and part of Hall XIII, where, in addition, the allied group embracing tools and industrial accessories is also accommodated. Considerable attention is aroused by the much sought after Textile Machines, which have been placed in Hall IX.

Some of the exhibits appeal more to the Swiss home market where interesting novelties, opportunities for comparison and for absorbing new suggestions are provided by the groups covering buildings and dwellings, transport and traffic, office requisites, applied art, domestic science, chemical and foodstuffs industry.

Thus the Swiss Industries Fair in Basle does not only provide excellent opportunities for purchasing goods but, over and above that, it offers valuable insight into the economic life and aspirations of a small nation.

To Commemorate the 600th anniversary of the entry of Zurich into the Swiss Confederation, the Committee of Zurich Guilds has decided to organise a great historical procession on the 22nd April next. Consequently, the Procession arranged for the following Monday and the "Sechselauten" Children's Procession will not take place.

The historical procession will include some 2,800 participants, practically entirely recruited from the Zurich Guilds, and will illustrate the development of Zurich during its 600 years' association with the Confederation. It will recall the Alliance of 1351 of the four original cantons, the participation of Zurich with Hans Waldmann at the Battle of Morat, the great Shooting Matches of 1504, the Reformation led by Ulrich Zwingli and the famous boat journey to Strasbourg with a pot of millet. Other groups will depict the Zurich fortifications of 1640, the perpetual alliance with France under Louis XIV, tableaux of life in, and the campaign of, the 18th century, the aid given to Berne in 1798, and finally the new Federal Constitution with two large groups of banners of the canton and the Guilds.

The Swiss Finance Minister has announced in Parliament that the question of a renewal of gold sales to the public was being considered within the framework of comprehensive measures to combat inflation.

SWITZERLAND AS SEEN BY FOREIGNERS

Throughout the world the press publishes articles about our country. It will certainly interest you to know what it says, and we have translated for you a few extracts:

On January 20th, the Canadian newspaper "Le Devoir" wrote: "Switzerland is an oasis of peace. As soon as you land you feel that this country escaped from the horrors of the war. Everything gives the impression of wellbeing, of quietness, of happiness. The houses are newly painted, people are well dressed, the

food is abundant and the Swiss franc is a solid currency. Switzerland is the only country in Europe which can compare with America. The standard of living is as high as on this side of the Atlantic. The Swiss franc is as much sought after as the dollar. Switzerland devotes herself to peace work. Geneva, as we remember, was the city of the League of Nations. She has retained various international institutions, and has even attracted new ones. Organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross are solely financed by Swiss subsidies. It is the traditional neutrality of the country and its geographical position that allow Switzerland to play such an eminent part in better understanding and international welfare. Neutrality is not necessarily egoistic. It often requires more courage to remain neutral than to start conflict. Past experience has shown that Switzerland has known how to fully utilize her neutrality and at the same time make it serve humanity."

An Italian newspaper proceeds: "All the ladies use the tramcars; even those with baby carriages. The conductor helps them, makes jokes with the baby, enquires about its age, weight and sex. What a nice institution those Zurich tram conductors are! They must possess a rich repertoire of jokes. As soon as they open their mouths all the passengers burst out laughing. But it is difficult for a stranger, even if he knows the language of Goethe, to understand what is said, as the tongue spoken is different. It is why the Swiss are generally very distrustful towards people who are speaking pure German."

Another Italian newspaper, "Nuova Stampa," writes about Berne: "I stopped on the bridge which dominates the Aar, and from there I admired the old town and the modern quarters. My sentiments were shared between admiration and incredulity. So there exists in the world, in Europe, a spectacle such as the one that I can see now: A capital which has the atmosphere of a small town, a small town which has the rhythm of a metropolis, a metropolis cordial as a village of which the inhabitants have the spirit of city men. To young people of twenty years, too young to remember Europe before 1939, but who would like to know her, I would say: 'Go to Berne; walk in the streets and observe. You will see an existence made to fit the human scale. A mysterious mixture of old customs and modernism, of traditions and progress. You will hear the echoes of the life made of wisdom and common sense. The reasons for this existence can be found first of all in the reciprocal tolerance which is the very essence of the Swiss spirit.'"

Mr. Emanuell concludes his article by regretting that Europe had not wanted to live like the Swiss.

An Italian newspaper, "L'Italia," writes on the 20th of January, an article about the "look" of Zurich: "The elegant shop windows of Bahnhofstrasse are dazzling, and foreigners look at them with perplexed admiration. The fashion houses exhibit everything to rave about, but it is seldom that you see 'Zurichoise' who wear these models of perfect taste, and the strangers ask 'Who buys these beautiful frocks and furs? Surely not sympathetic and practical Swiss women.' Here the women do not seem to be very interested in the international fashions which are exhibited in the centre of the town. In Zurich, the good housewife, moreover, has not to go out for shopping. Certain commercial firms have organized mobile shops; customs are called with a bugle. The interior of the Swiss home is most pleasant. The windows are ornamented with beautiful immaculate stretched curtains, the floors are covered with woollen carpets, soft armchairs and lovely furniture grace the rooms, not to speak of a washing machine and all kinds