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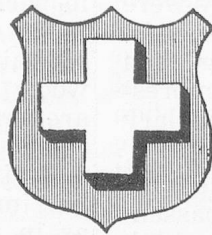
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HELVETIA

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SWISS BENEVOLENT
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GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

18th YEAR.

MAY, 1954.

AUCKLAND.

NEWS OF THE COLONY

Taranaki News

Approximately sixty compatriots were present at a card evening at Normanby on Easter Monday. (These "Jass" evenings are always enthusiastically supported.) The winners for the night were:

- 1st: Miss J. Bernold.
- 2nd: Mrs. J. Kaiser.
- 3rd: Mr. J. Dettling.

The next card evening will be held at Kaponga (Town Hall) on the 4th of May with another function to follow in the same Hall on May 18th, when the Swiss Social Club will show their appreciation to Mr. and Mrs. Risi, who are shortly leaving Taranaki.

A. Sch.

Obituary

With the death of Mr. A. Moosberger, which occurred on March 26th, the Swiss Benevolent Society loses one of its most popular members and a loyal personality. When in need of some help or service one could always rely on Moosberger; it was not even necessary to ask. This natural trait describes the character of our compatriot.

Mr. Moosberger was one of the foundation members when our Society was formed in 1935. During many years he served as Executive member in the Committee, and for one year held the busy post of Secretary. His untiring help and his interest towards the S.B.S. was exemplary and the Society has indeed lost one of their pillars.

Mr. Moosberger arrived in New Zealand with his wife and son in 1921 and resided for some time in Stratford. After a visit to Switzerland in 1925 he returned to this country and ever since that time was a resident of Auckland.

To his widow and family, the Committee as well as the many friends extend their deepest sympathies.

Card Evening at Kaponga

The second of the series of card parties was held recently in Kaponga. Some of our friends travel from 20 to 30 miles to attend these popular evenings and it seems to us the reason is twofold: firstly they all enjoy the game of Jass and secondly they meet old acquaintances, and furthermore there is always the chance to make new friends.

This time our congratulations go to A. Kuriger; M. Steiner, sen., and P. Amstalden, who obtained first, second and third prizes respectively. Mrs. M. Steiner received a special prize. Strangely enough, all the top pointers in the Jass competition were men, but we will wait and see what our ladies can do next time.

The euchre champion was Miss M. Hay, while another little competition resulted in Ted Napflin winning the bottle; or was it his many friends?

A. Sch.

The Swiss Mercantile Fleet

Most of our readers are probably aware that, for a number of years Switzerland is running a handsome mercantile fleet of about 200,000 tons. These ships appear in most harbours of the world, to maintain a lively import and export trade all over the globe.

A few of these vessels have called at various times at ports in New Zealand in recent years. Last December the Swiss Colony of Auckland was delighted to see the "Allobrogia" at anchor for several weeks. This cargo and passenger boat, although not large, presented an attractive picture along Princess Wharf. Recently constructed, the ship has a very modern appearance, is spotlessly clean and efficiently run. Her captain, a Dutchman, commands a rather cosmopolitan crew of Swiss, Dutch, Belgians, Danes and even a man from Lichtenstein.

Some of our compatriots occupied important positions on the ship, for example: Chief engineer, radiologist, first steward, chief cook, etc.

Many Swiss from the Auckland Colony entertained our compatriots from the boat. They were taken on sight-seeing trips, to different socials, or to homes, and wherever these young men appeared they certainly left an excellent impression with their good behaviour and exemplary conduct.

Early in January the "Allobrogia" sailed for Timaru and later to Napier, where the passengers for the Continent went aboard. In both these ports the ship's crew had also a pleasant welcome from local Swiss, or such people who have contact with Switzerland. The trip back to Europe via Panama was quite smooth and pleasant, but crossing the English Channel in heavy fog the "Allobrogia" (according to air-mail advice received from home) collided with another ship. Fortunately little damage was caused and the vessel arrived safely in Antwerp, her home port.

H. GILGEN.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

Fruitgrowing

Switzerland possesses more fruit trees than any other country in Europe. This fact has been confirmed by a recent enquiry, the results of which have just been published. These show that there exist as many as 20.8 millions of such trees in this country, that is to say, more than four trees per inhabitant.

The Value of Swiss Salaries

The value of Swiss salaries in certain industries has gone up by about a third since 1939. Detailed figures show that the incomes of factory, transport and building employees have increased by 117 per cent., but the effective rise is 28.7 per cent. when the increased cost of living is taken into account. These figures were announced recently by the Swiss Federal Office for Industry, Trade and Labour after an enquiry made into the incomes of 35,000 workers. The increases vary according to the trades, and unskilled labourers and women workers have benefited most from them.

Swiss Woollen Products on Foreign Markets

Exports of Swiss woollen products (exclusive of ready-to-wear garments and knitted wear) in 1953 amounted in value to 65 millions Swiss francs, in round figures. This sum is considerably higher than that for 1952. Exports of woven fabrics constituted the major portion, these having doubled since 1951, and being several times greater than in the last year before the war.

Next in order of importance come woollen yarns, in particular combed woollen yarns, intended for industrial utilisation, i.e., for the manufacture of knitted and woven goods, as also knitting wools prepared for retail sale. Woollen yarns are traditional articles of export and, already prior to the war, Switzerland exported large quantities of this commodity. Nevertheless, she has improved her position in this branch as well as in that of woollen carpets.

The woollen industry plays an important role in Swiss economy. On the international plane, it is only a small industry when measured in accordance with the volume of its manufacture, but it may be considered as being important in consequence of the quality of its products. It has developed considerably during the last few decades. Swiss woollen manufacturers have brought all their efforts to bear on the constant modernisation of their production plant, rather than on its extension. As a result, there has been a progressive increase in capacity of production. As a matter of fact, this increase corresponds more or less to the rise in the figure for the population, that is to say, to the extension which has taken place in the domestic market. However, exportation is of vital importance to a certain number of undertakings. The increase in exports is all the more noteworthy as Swiss manufacturers are running up against a great many difficulties on the foreign markets. But, they are inured to this, as they are constantly obliged to meet foreign competition on their home market, and they can count on the quality of their products to work for them.

98.2 per cent. of all Telephonic Connections are Automatic

During the last year, the number of automatic telephone stations in Switzerland has increased still more. Thus, 98.2 per cent. of all telephonic connections are now automatic. A semi-automatic service has been established, to a large extent, with France, also.

Swiss National Exhibition of Agriculture

Work is advancing rapidly on the site, in Lucerne, where the 11th Swiss National Exhibition of Agriculture, sylviculture and horticulture, is to be held from the 16th of September to the 11th of October, next. Forty thousand square metres, out of a total superficial area of 200,000 square metres, have been reserved for the putting up of various buildings. In addition to the exhibition buildings, there will also be a large space, surrounded by stands, from which the various demonstrations can be watched easily by 9000 spectators.