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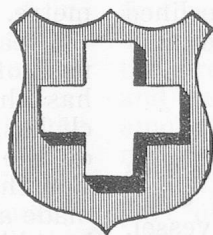
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HELVETIA

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SWISS BENEVOLENT
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GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

19th YEAR.

JULY, 1955.

AUCKLAND.

NEWS OF THE COLONY

WEDDING BELLS

Fleming—Kalin

A charming wedding took place at Okato, when Margaret Victoria, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. Kalin, was married to Bernard Daniel, youngest son of Mr. and Mrs. R. Fleming. A very large number of guests attended a delightful reception at the Kaweroa Park Bungalow. Items, which included some very original Swiss music, proved very popular.

Kuchler—Jones

Recently at Hawera, Mary Noeline Kate, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. A. Jones, of Taupo, was married to Joseph Robert, younger son of Mrs. M. Kuchler and the late John Kuchler. A unique feature of the lovely reception was the international variety of items, finishing with dancing to the strains of Swiss harmonicas.

Swiss Club

With the long winter evenings approaching, the Swiss Social Club has again become very active and is holding its fortnightly "Yass" evenings, which are being very well attended and the new set-up in registering wins have been favourably commented on. Winners at the opening night were:—

Second Evening:—

Ladies: Mrs. M. Steiner 1st, C. Riddick 2nd, J. Kaiser and J. Schmid (equal) 3rd.

Men: D. Luond 1st, F. Gwerder 2nd, L. Roemer 3rd.

—A.S.

OBITUARY NOTICES

Readers will be sad to learn that Miss Germaine Kropf, a young Swiss architect from Zurich, who, during a world working tour, stayed in New Zealand during 1950-51, died on April 9th, 1955, as a result of a fatal accident in the mountains in Switzerland.

It is with very much regret that we have to announce the death of Mr. Frederick Schlup, one of the older members of the Colony. Mr. Schlup passed away on June 14th, 1955, at his residence, Glenbrook, Waiuku. We extend our sincere sympathy to his widow and family.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

New Customs Agreement between Switzerland and the U.S.A.

Following upon the increase in Customs duties on watches imported into the United States, negotiations took place in Geneva, from the 28th April to the 8th June, 1955, between Swiss and American delegations. These resulted in a Customs agreement being signed, in accordance with which Switzerland will be granted compensation for the increase in the duty on watches, through reductions in the duties of a number of Swiss export products, such as auxiliary products for textiles, photogrammetric instruments, horal interrupters, cotton underwear, braids for hat-making, embroideries, embroidered handkerchiefs and surveying apparatuses. This agreement, which represents only a partial compensation for the losses incurred by Swiss exporters of watches to the United States, has been accepted provisionally by Switzerland, who has in no way renounced from her intention of obtaining a lowering of the Customs levied on Swiss watches.

Cattle-breeding in Switzerland

Cattle-breeding plays a capital role in Swiss agriculture. Nearly 70 per cent. of the gross yield from agriculture comes from cattle and poultry farming. In 1954, there were more than 200,000 owners of cattle and about 100,000 households that went in for poultry-farming or bee-keeping.

The proportion of cattle owners is very high in certain parts of the country, especially in the Valais, where one family out of two possesses domestic animals. This widespread repartition of domestic animals is due principally to the efforts made in that direction, in accordance

with the war economy plan. Although, since then, the number of cattle owners has declined the number of domestic animals in this country has increased.

The Swiss Mercantile Marine Grows.

A new trading motorship, the first of a series of three ships of more than 10,000 tons each, has just been launched at Fiume. This vessel, christened "Silvretta," is the first to have been built in Yugoslavia for a foreign country. This ship, which is to swell the number of vessels belonging to the fleet of the Swiss Maritime Society "Oceania" is equipped with "Sulzer" engines, produced in Switzerland and possessing a capacity of 4900 h.p.

Shoe-making Industry

Another Swiss industry which has grown considerably in the past few years is the manufacture of shoes. At present the Swiss shoe-making industry employs more than ten thousand workers. The industry's activities for last year are reported as favourable, production having slightly gone up to an annual production of 11,000,000 pairs of shoes. Swiss shoe exports were up too, and increased from under 30,000,000 to more than 34,000,000 francs; pre-war figures, however, have still not been attained. Production for the home market regressed slightly. The reason for the setback is thought to be imports from other countries, which rose slightly last year to over one and a half million pairs.

Fiftieth Jubilee of an Important Swiss Industry

The Ticino is mostly known to foreign tourists for the beauty of its landscape but is not greatly developed from the industrial point of view. It is the seat, however, of an industry, unique in Switzerland and relatively rare in Europe, namely that of linoleum. This Swiss linoleum factory, which is established in Giubiasco and which gives employment to three hundred workers, has just celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. More than one-third of present-day houses in Switzerland have their floors covered with linoleum, as a result of which production has developed considerably, attaining, as it did, more than a million and a half square metres in 1954.

New Sky Advertising Gadget

A Swiss engineer has just completed a new apparatus which will make it possible to project publicity clichés over a long distance. This projector, which is mobile and can be transported from town to town, has proved its efficacy as, during the course of various manifestations, perfectly clear clichés could be reproduced either at relatively short distances, against the flank of a mountain, for example, or on clouds at an altitude of more than 5000 metres. The pictures

thus obtained had a diameter of nearly one kilometre.

Greatly interested in this new stunt in the field of publicity, a Swiss watchmaking factory has already arranged to have a whole series of clichés, some of which comprise the showing of the exact time, reproduced in this fashion. For the moment, these projections can only be made at night, when it is dark, and they can only be white, but projection in colours is now being studied.

The Winegrowers Festival Seen Through the Eyes of the Author of "The Last of the Mohicans"

Fenimore Cooper, the famous writer of Red Indian stories, so popular with children all over the world, described the journey he made through Switzerland at the beginning of the nineteenth century in a book called "Excursion in Switzerland," and in a short story entitled "The Headsman of Berne" he gives a vivid description of the Winegrowers Festival that took place in 1819. In his tale, Fenimore Cooper describes the big Market Place at Vevey, where thousands of people were assembled to see the ceremony, and he ends his description of the Festival with these words: "As the strains of the choir rose to the skies, they were taken up by the crowd, who repeated the wild notes, and at the shout of Liauba! Liauba! thousands of voices were raised in unison as if to address to the mountains the prayers of their children. The last lines were lost in a general wave of enthusiasm. . . ." The Winegrowers Festival has been celebrated six times since 1819. The traditional setting has always been respected but each festival has succeeded in surpassing those that came before. Nothing has been spared to ensure that this year's Festival, which will be held at Vevey from August 1st to 14th, will be worthy of its predecessors and even surpass them in its turn.

Television in Switzerland

Every evening some 60,000 people in Switzerland sit down to watch television, declared Mr. E. Weber, Postmaster-General, at a meeting of Swiss writers who had asked him to speak on the subject "Writers and Television." Thus although TV was introduced into Switzerland only recently, it has become quite widespread. But television does not consist of pictures alone; ideas and words play their part too; therefore it needs writers. That is what made Swiss Television decide to organise a big competition this autumn for TV plays by Swiss writers.

The Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy

The International Conference on the Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy will be held in Geneva from August 8th to 20th; 84 countries have

announced their intention to take part and various technical exhibits, which are mainly of interest to the scientific delegations, will be on view in the United Nations Palace, where space, however, will be somewhat restricted. The different national exhibitions intended to initiate the general public into some of the mysteries of the atom, and the trade exhibits brought to Geneva by industrial firms working with atomic energy, are expected to be housed in the Exhibition Palace, which has a total floor space of some 130,000 square feet.

An Important Exhibition in Lausanne

This summer, from June 24th to September 26th, the Cantonal Museum of Fine Arts at Lausanne will be presenting a very important exhibition which will in a way be a continuation of the exhibition "Rhythms and Colours" held in 1952. Its title "Movement in Contemporary Art" indicates its aim: to show the attitude adopted by certain young artists to the phenomenon of movement and speed which is such a feature of life today. The first to be concerned with this problem, about the year 1911, were mainly the Futurists, and the exhibition will open with works by Severini, Balla, Carra, Russolo, Boccioni, etc. Then will come the artists who carried on the movement in France: Delaunay, Jacques Villon, Marcel Duchamp, Leger, Dufy, and Picasso. The next group will be composed of four artists whose fame is still growing, Kandinsky, Klee, Miro and Wols. Last will come some twenty artists from Paris and five or six from Switzerland—all painters of the avant-garde.

The exhibition will consist of a hundred or so paintings and about ten works of sculpture. It is expected to be of great interest, as it will be the first time that an exhibition has been held with "movement" as its theme.

A Swiss Watchmaker Honoured in the U.S.A.

The medal of merit for 1955, awarded by the United Horological Association of America, was won for the first time by a Swiss, Mr. Georges Albert Berner, who was for 25 years the Director of the Bienne Technical Institute and the Horological School of that town, and from 1930 to 1933, President of the Swiss Chronometrical Society. He is the author of numerous technical publications and was at one time technical adviser to the Swiss Government for questions concerning the watchmaking industry.

Insurance Business in Switzerland

Switzerland constitutes one of the greatest insurance centres in the world and the excellent reputation of her insurance and re-insurance companies is well established. Even if, in consequence of the smallness of the national market,

an important share of their activities is directed to foreign countries, this in no way means that the Swiss population is not well insured. In 1953, the premiums and subscriptions paid to private and public insurance companies in Switzerland amounted to nearly two thousand eight hundred million francs, a considerable sum for a country of less than five million inhabitants. The major part of these premiums were paid in for non-obligatory insurances, life, accident and sickness insurance being at the head. Although this satisfactory development in insurance stimulates both individual and collective saving, it nevertheless raises the problem of the investment of such an enormous mass of capital. Here again, the Swiss market often reveals itself as being too small and it is necessary to proceed with the regular exportation of capital.

LETTER FROM SWITZERLAND

SWITZERLAND AND THE PROBLEM OF SOCIAL ALLOWANCES ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

(Continued)

In Switzerland, social benefits as they result from international statistics appear small in comparison with those of other countries, and yet the standard of living compares very favourably with that in other European countries. As the Director-General of the I.L.O. pointed out in his report, it would not be sufficient to equalize the total benefits conferred on wage-earners, for there are many factors to be taken into consideration, such as the number of working hours per week and length of holidays, as well as other factors favouring or handicapping production as the case may be. The I.L.O. has reached the conclusion that, in spite of all the efforts made, it will never be possible to arrive at a statistical result that gives a true picture of the situation.

The solution seems to lie elsewhere than in the equalization of the social conditions of wage-earners. The notion of "productivity" would appear to be decisive for the establishment of an effective comparison of the productions of different countries. If a comparison is made of the total amounts paid out to wage-earners (basic wages plus social benefits), it is obvious that Swiss industry has higher costs of production than the industries of other countries. In 1953 the Swiss cost of living index showed a real wage level of 115 per cent. as compared with 1938. The high basic wages found in Switzer-