

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 25 (1963)
Heft: [7]

Rubrik: News from Switzerland

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NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND ★ ★ ★

EMIGRATION FROM SWITZERLAND

The "Bundesamt fur Industrie, Gewerbe und Arbeit (BIGA)," the Federal Office for Industry, Trade and Labour, has issued a report that during 1962 the number of Swiss desiring to emigrate has again declined. In the previous year 3,074 persons had applied, and in 1962 this figure had declined to 2,442. The wish to settle abroad, especially in overseas countries where political and economic conditions are often unstable, is no longer very strong amongst the Swiss.

During 1962 159,381 Swiss were registered with Embassies, Legations and Consulates abroad, plus 108,247 dual nationals. Compared with 1961 the number of Swiss abroad has gone down by 1,393, whereas dual nationals have increased by 3,946.

According to the figures available the largest Swiss Colony abroad is that of France at a total of 91,223, even bigger than that of the whole of the American continent with 61,966 Swiss registered. In West Germany there are over 29,000 and in Italy, incidentally the best-organised Colony, 17,806 compatriots. All of Asia accounts for 5,039 registrations, of which the highest are 774 in Israel and 651 in India. In Africa 13,914 Swiss and dual-nationals live, of whom 3,447 are in South Africa. 20,789 Swiss reside in the U.S.A., 12,662 in Canada and 10,195 in Argentina. Australia has a Swiss population of 4,605 and New Zealand and Oceania 1,200. These figures are, of course, not complete, as they represent only registered Swiss. We know from Great Britain, where the figure is put at 13,326 (8,786 Swiss and 4,540 dual nationals), that it does not include a great many young Swiss who find it unnecessary to register with the Swiss Consulates.

There has also been an increase in the number of Swiss who have returned to Switzerland after many years' residence abroad. Help had to be extended to many of them to facilitate their adjustment to Swiss life. Sometimes considerable difficulties are encountered due to lack of funds, advanced age or general estrangement. The Solidarity Fund of the Swiss Abroad is playing an important part in this, and it is a matter of wisdom and common sense to join this Fund when the going is good. Once political upheavals have started it may be too late and the danger of losing one's livelihood due to political strife and economic pressure in the country of one's residence may soon become a reality, as many of our compatriots have experienced in recent years. As the administration of the Solidarity Fund in Berne reports, a total of Fr.1,242,500 have already been paid out to 129 members of the Fund.

(A.T.S. and Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad, Berne.)

BIG INDUSTRIAL MERGER IN SWITZERLAND

A recent general assembly approved the merger of two big Swiss industrial concerns in the light engineering branch. The two firms involved are Paillard Ltd., of Yverdon, well known as manufacturers of Hermes typewriters, Paillard miniature film projectors and Bolex miniature film cameras, and Thorens Ltd., of Sainte-Croix, manufacturers of musical boxes, cigarette lighters, record-players, etc.

The association of the two firms is in keeping with the present trend towards industrial and commercial mergers designed to meet the increasingly keen competition. Counting the personnel of the affiliated or associated companies, the Paillard group today employs a total of some 5,700 persons in Switzerland and abroad.

HOTEL CENTRE AT NATIONAL EXHIBITION

Apart from its special exhibit, the Swiss Hotelkeepers' Association and its Lausanne-Ouchy group will be responsible for a hotel centre in connection with the Swiss National Exhibition, "Expo 64" for short. This project at an estimated cost of two million Swiss Francs is expected in particular to attract the estimated one to four million foreign visitors to come and see the exhibition. At the same time this model hotel will serve as a window of traditional Swiss hospitality.

The building which is to out-live the exhibition as a representative centre of the Association and most suited place for conventions, etc., is to have a large and elegant lobby, a restaurant where 250 guests can be served, a terrace with another 150-200 seats and a bar.

NEW DICTIONARY

A dictionary for gourmets in midget edition has been published by the well-known Swiss gastronomist Harry Schraemli. By means of a very practical system, this "Dictionnaire gastronomique" puts an end to the quandaries of tourists, enabling them to decipher menus and special culinary expressions, be they in English, French, German, Italian or Spanish.

CORRECTION.—In the June issue of "Helvetia" an error occurred in the Auckland Swiss Club's report of their Gala Evening. The address of Misses Rosina and Ann Hiestand, dressmakers, was printed as 9 Great South Road, Grey Lynn, and should have read: 9 Great North Road, Grey Lynn.

SWISS AUTOMOBILES

How many of Switzerland's 700,000 car owners know that before the first world war, this country possessed a well developed automobile industry? In fact, of the 5,000 cars licensed in Switzerland in 1914, approximately one third were of Swiss make. Even today Switzerland possesses three heavy road vehicle factories and 72 per cent of all Swiss motor coaches and buses are made in Switzerland.

With regard however to the private cars formerly made in Switzerland, their memory would soon be lost if a number of models were not preserved at the Swiss Transport House in Lucerne, where visitors can see, in particular, the last surviving model of the famous "Ajax" car built in 1908.

DON'T MISS THE SWISS

In Scandinavia, tourists wishing to meet the people and not only do sightseeing may contact special organisations such as "Meet the Danes," "Sweden at Home," "Find the Finns" and "Know the Norwegians." A similar programme has just been introduced in Switzerland under the heading "Don't Miss the Swiss." Initiator of this "get-together" plan is Mrs Maud Brink, a Swede who during five summers in Stockholm helped make 700 contacts per season of which about 60 per cent developed into friendships for life.

Under the patronage of the Zurich Tourist Office, Mrs Brink has opened her office in the lovely Meise Guildhall where the city Tourist Office is located. Asked about the prospects of her enterprise, she answered in the words of a journalist who had made use of the service offered in Sweden: "The real pearl in the shell of travelling are the people. If you see everything there is to be seen in a city, do everything that can be done but do not come into personal contact with the population you've missed the best . . ."

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