

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1942)
Heft: 1005

Artikel: Prisoners of war relief measures
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-690966>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 15.01.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

spitze." Now he rests at the foot of his beautiful, beloved mountains.

* * *

Another outstanding personality in the canton Ticino has disappeared with the death of Dr. Arnaldo Bolla, who passed away in a Lugano hospital following an operation. Born in 1885 in Olivone, he studied law and occupied in turn most of the important public offices of his canton. In 1920 he was elected to the National Council as a radical democrat but the following year changed over to the States Council of which, after a long interval, he was a member at the time of his death.

* * *

The creator of the world-renowned Pestalozzi Calendar, Dr. Bruno Kaiser died recently in Berne. He left the publishing rights of this work for the young to the Pro Juventute foundation, together with frs.200,000.— in order that the work may be continued in the same sense as now.

* * *

Dr. Joseph Käppeli, the one time chief of the branch for agriculture at the Federal Department for political economy and director of the war provisioning department, died after a long illness in his 70th year. As chief of the agricultural branch in the war and crisis years 1913 to 1938 he rendered invaluable services to Swiss agriculture, and the results of his labours as director of the war provisioning department for the benefit of the provisioning of the whole community in the years 1919-1922 and again in 1939 until shortly before his death, will never be forgotten by the whole of the Swiss people. With providential care he organised long before the outbreak of war the rationing of the most important victuals in such a thorough manner that it required so to say but the pressing of a button to set the whole organisation into a smooth working motion. His work will continue and is a blessing to the country in a difficult time.

* * *

Col. Guillaume Favre died in Corsier (Geneva) at the age of 67; from 1925 to 1930 he commanded the fourth division. As a cavalryman he took great interest in horse-breeding and often acted as judge at races and other equestrian events.

* * *

Melchior Anderegg, former president and honorary member of the local S.A.Club and son of the renowned "king of guides," died in Meiringen at the age of 82.

SWISS BANK CORPORATION,

(A Company limited by Shares incorporated in Switzerland)

99, GRESHAM STREET, E.C.2.
and 11c, REGENT STREET, S.W. 1.

Capital Paid up s.f. 160,000,000
Reserves - - s.f. 32,000,000
Deposits - - s.f. 1,218,000,000

NEW YORK AGENCY
15 NASSAU STREET.

All Descriptions of Banking and
Foreign Exchange Business Transacted

PRISONERS OF WAR RELIEF MEASURES.

The following is an extract from an address delivered on July 29th to the British Community Council in Buenos Aires by H.M. Ambassador Sir David V. Kelley, K.C.M.G., M.C., who has spent over two years in Switzerland in a similar capacity.

Consignments are divided into sections, each one of which is numbered and addressed to the International Red Cross delegate at Lisbon, Colonel Iselin, who is responsible for checking them on arrival and for their forwarding to Geneva. This is effected on ships controlled by the International Red Cross Committee though chartered by the British Red Cross. There were recently three Portuguese and two Swedish ships and they were assigned to the transport of relief for prisoners of war and civilian internees without distinction of nationality. They make on an average one and a half journeys monthly from Lisbon to Marseilles, and between February, 1941, and last March they had made 54 journeys and carried 30,000 tons of goods. There are at any given time approximately 4,500 tons in stock at Lisbon, so that delays in forwarding must be expected from time to time, though so far, I am glad to say, your Committee know of none in our case. At Marseilles the second International Red Cross Committee delegate checks the goods and forwards them by rail to Switzerland, unloading them direct from ship to railway truck — a job of ever-increasing difficulty on account of the scarcity of rolling stock. They enter Switzerland through either of two duty-free warehouses, one at Geneva and one at Vallorbe.

The headquarters at Geneva is composed of a large group of distinguished Swiss citizens, mostly volunteers, presided over by Monsieur Max Huber, a leading citizen of Geneva, most ably assisted by the Vice-President, Doctor Karl Burckhardt, the well-known Swiss historian and philosopher, who will also be known to you as the former League of Nations High Commissioner at Dantzig. The headquarters, through its sections, arranges the distribution in accordance with the wishes of the donor, the camp's strength (transmitted by the camps themselves), and the requirements of the camps as indicated by the prisoners of war through their own representative. In accordance with the quantities allotted, consignments are sent, sometimes as an entire truck-load for one camp, sometimes a truck-load containing consignments for several camps; very small quantities may even be sent in postal bags. They are addressed to the representatives of each nationality in each camp, chosen by the prisoners themselves from among their own compatriots. This representative corresponds direct with the Committee and personally sends the acknowledgment of receipt for every one of the despatches. He distributes the consignments according to the requirements of the prisoners. Consignments may go to Germany, Italy, occupied or unoccupied France or North Africa, but the procedure in Germany is typical of the rest. There sits at Berlin a commission of responsible Swiss gentlemen, eight in number, representing the International Committee; and these arrange for visits to the camps in such a way that every camp is visited at least once in three months by two of them, of whom one is specially concerned with the distribution of the parcels. On these visits, the International Red Cross

Committee representative interviews the prisoners' elected representative privately, *not* in the presence of any officials; and there is, of course, a further check in the fact that the Swiss Government are the Protecting Power for British interests in the Axis countries, and the camps are, therefore, also visited from time to time by representatives of the Swiss Legation. A complication arose in consequence of numerous prisoners being drafted to work on farms. This difficulty is being got over, first by the appointment, by each of these small groups in the countryside, of similar representatives, and secondly, by strenuous efforts to provide smaller consignments to facilitate distribution to these outlying groups. While this system of supervision ensures that no receipts shall be signed under duress, other possibilities are eliminated by the compilation of reports on the prisoners' representatives' statements and by the forwarding, as much as possible, to the donors of photostatic copies of the receipts. Although this explanation should be, in itself, sufficient, I would add that I had a welcome opportunity of talking to a number of our escaped prisoners of war, who were, of course, also closely examined by my Military or Air Attachés, who sent their reports home. These reports alone were sufficient to establish that 1) the parcels received were absolutely indispensable to the maintenance of the prisoners' health, and 2) that there was no justification in any of the camps in question for the suspicions with which we are dealing.

We are not, it is true, allowed to send individual parcels from here: parcels, that is, addressed to particular prisoners by relatives or friends. This, I must repeat, is because men are often transferred from one camp to another; with consequent loss of time and difficulty in delivering a parcel to the addressee. Moreover, sending to *all* our prisoners and not to one favoured individual is in line with the British tradition of equality in all things and permits no prisoner to feel neglected or friendless. This I know you will understand.

ELECTRICITY AND HAYMAKING.

(*"The Electrician,"* September 25th, 1942.)

Switzerland, neutral but surrounded by belligerent countries, has found that the importing of fodder and fuel has become very difficult. A special cultivation programme has been drawn up, under which it is hoped the country will become as self-supporting as possible.

A part of this plan is devoted to the creation of sufficient fodder to feed the cattle essential to the country's meat and dairy products. Here the most difficult problem is to get sufficient fodder rich in albumen, and which in normal times can be imported. Most countries are hoping to remedy this deficit by drying green fodder at home.

From Switzerland's viewpoint, however, the problem takes a peculiar form. Drying requires heat, and the present meagre imports of fuel hardly cover the requirements of the population for heating and cooking.

Technically speaking, says an article in the "*Brown Boveri Review*," drying grass and generating

heat electrically are compatible processes, because the first is a summer process and the second can be carried out in summer most advantageously on account of the abundance of water power at that season.

The drying of grass by artificial heat seems a simple one, but is too often difficult in practice because the process used must be an economical one.

The water content of grass is very high, a little under 20 per cent. of grass is dry substance, and from 100 kg. of grass 80 kg. or more of water must be drawn off. Tests with this amount of wet grass have shown that to achieve the final 20 kg. of dried grass some 95 kWh. of energy is required.

Not only has this heat to be generated, but it must be transmitted to the fodder without losing too big a proportion of it.

Various means of drying grass had been experimented with prior to the war, but for various reasons none was entirely satisfactory and at the same time economical.

In 1936 Dr. R. Bernstein worked out a project for drying grass combined with heat recuperation.

The idea of using again the heat contained in the steam driven out of the dried product and which would otherwise be lost to atmosphere, by condensing it and thus making it do more drying work, is not a new one, in fact it is almost as old as the technology of drying itself. However, it had almost only been applied in vacuum cookers and apparatus used in manufacturing processes to evaporate solutions.

As the grass handled was in bulk, was very apt to clog openings and was very susceptible to temperature, it was impossible to use containers under vacuum or under pressure. Thus, atmospheric air had practically free ingress to the drying chamber. There thus formed a mixture of steam and air. There was not much difference in temperature between this vapour and the outer air, and the recuperation of the heat of evaporation contained in the vapour did not appear a profitable process and, at the best, the preheating of the incoming fresh air seemed a costly method of reducing the losses. The dimensions and capacity of a dryer depend essentially on the difference of temperature between the source of heat and the material treated. In the case of fuel firing this difference is some 100° C., while in the case of heating by the mixture of steam and air the difference could not be more than a few degrees.

Calculations and tests on the possibilities of heat transmission gave, however, a much more favourable result, in fact so encouraging a one that Colonel Ineichen, President of the Swiss Trieur Institution, imbued by the significance of the idea, and with the progressive support of the Swiss Federal Department of Economics, Section for Agriculture, got the financial backing necessary for an experimental test on the basis of the design laid before him. Thus by systematic tests the basis was laid for designing an apparatus which promised to give satisfactory economic results. Here the matter rested until Brown Boveri took up the work from another angle. Having occasion to plan the electrification of existing grass-drying apparatus, they came to the conclusion that the amount of power it was necessary to expend made the process worthless from the economic point of view. Heat recuperation, on the other hand, offered the possibility of producing