

The image of Switzerland abroad

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THE IMAGE OF SWITZERLAND ABROAD

The theme of the Assembly of the Swiss Abroad at Solothurn at the end of August, will be "La présence de la Suisse à l'étranger". This is a difficult term to translate. It could mean image or representation, or a number of similar terms. A questionnaire has been sent to societies, and it is hoped that the answers will give the right picture and bring forth suggestions which should help to improve Swiss representation abroad and the image of Switzerland in foreign countries.

In a paper on "The State of the Swiss Colony in the U.K. in 1964", Monsieur l'Ambassadeur de Fischer presented a survey to members of the Swiss community on 11th February, as was reported at the time. Today, as a first step it may be interesting to consider some of the figures regarding the Colony in G.B.

At the end of 1964, the Swiss community in Great Britain numbered 13,462 of whom 11,682 were living in the consular district of London (including 7,945 in the capital itself) and 1,780 in the consular district of Manchester. Of these, 13,462, more than two-fifths (5,226) were dual nationals, a constantly increasing figure.

Approximately one-third of our Colony is made up of those young people who traditionally come to the United Kingdom for a short time to study the language or to work in families. Because of its transitory nature, this group cannot be reckoned as part of our established Colony. Since the end of the last war, it seems that the Colony has diminished by some 12%.

Numerically, the Swiss Colonies in Britain and Canada tie for fifth place among our communities in various parts of the world, coming after the Swiss communities in France, Italy, Germany and the United States. Among foreign colonies in Great Britain, the Swiss Colony is the Sixth largest, coming after the Italian (68,145), the German (42,305), the American (30,938), the Spanish (17,064) and the French Colony (14,545). Per head of her population, Switzerland has one of the biggest foreign communities in the United Kingdom.

The average age of the members of our Colony is 37. In 1964, 3,119 men were liable for military service, of whom 1,482 were subject to military tax. This brought in about 150,000 francs. The 865 persons who were entitled to pensions under the old-age and survivors' insurance scheme received a total of 1,667,092 francs from the Confederation.

A large number of our compatriots are employed in industry, commerce, banking and insurance, but nearly as many work in the hotel and catering trades. Some 180 hold senior positions in business. 129 are scientists, engin-

eers or technicians. Many have posts in British branches or subsidiaries of Swiss firms. Very few are in the professions or the arts.

As in other years, between 4,000 and 5,000 working permits were granted to Swiss nationals. Swiss students also have the opportunity of obtaining short-term holiday permits allowing them to work in hotels, mainly in seaside resorts.

(More facts and figures related to the subject will be given in subsequent issues.)

DIE SCHWEIZ — HEUTE

A new book for young Swiss in and out of Switzerland

The Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad of the New Helvetic Society has published a new book in German of great interest to the young Swiss living outside their homeland. It contains articles by experts, covering history and geography, present conditions in all spheres of life and important problems of the future. It has been edited by Leonhard Röösl, a competent young man in charge of youth questions at the Secretariat. Karl Mannhart is responsible for the lay-out. The volume of 240 pages is attractively got up in red linen (21 x 21 cm.), illustrated with 69 photos, 4 colour plates, 23 drawings and charts. It is published by Sauerländer, Aarau and costs only Fr.10.—.

There will be a reduction for ten copies: Fr.9.— per copy, 30 copies Fr.8.— per copy and 50 copies Fr.7.— per copy.

The reader is fascinated by the bright and forthright way in which old and familiar matter has been presented, and impressed by the intelligent manner in which every aspect of our country has been dealt with.

Prominent Swiss have contributed, such as Dr. phil. H. Bernard on the Country and its People, Dr. phil. U. Im Hof on Switzerland in the Past, Prof. Dr. oec. publ. I. Niehans on National Economy, Dr. iur. Alice Lüscher on legal questions and Divisional Commander Dr. iur. A. Ernst on defence. There are articles on Swiss art, language, literature, drama, film and contemporary music. (A Swiss abroad, Dr. phil. A. Briner wrote the latter.) Two members of the Secretariat are responsible for articles, the editor of the book wrote on Swiss politics and the Director of the Secretariat, Dr. iur. H. J. Halbheer, on the Swiss abroad.

The book is excellent value and may be warmly recommended to young and old people alike. An edition in French is being prepared.

Please apply to Secretariat of the Swiss Abroad, Alpenstrasse 26, Berne.

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