

Sundry news from Switzerland

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After the cheeses have been loaded on crates, carts and wagons the people enjoy a friendly reunion near the cheese cellars. Refreshments, singing, yodeling, accordion playing, and even a wrestling match or two, are welcome diversions. Finally, in the middle of the afternoon, the entire company starts on its happy homeward march. Immediately behind follow the herds of cattle, with each leading cow proudly wearing a bouquet of flowers on her head.

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SUNDRY NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

Pestalozzi Jubilee in 1946. After the collapse of European culture, there is a deep craving for the revival of human rights and social justice. The 200th anniversary of Henri Pestalozzi's birthday, which will be celebrated on the 12th January, 1946, will be an occasion to recall the outstanding work of this great Swiss educationalist and humanitarian, who was the founder of modern principles of education. An international Congress of men who have dedicated themselves to the study of Pestalozzi's work, and of educationalists from all countries, will take place in Switzerland. Great interest in this event is already being displayed in educational circles in the United States, the British Empire, China, and on the European Continent.

Student Exchange with Anglo-Saxon Countries. Right after VE Day efforts were started to work out exchanges of university students between the United States and Switzerland as well as between Great Britain and Switzerland. An agreement has been made with Britain according to which young Swiss friends of England are offered an opportunity to study in England.

American Students in Switzerland. A plan is under consideration to enable students in the American Forces, who are still in Europe, to study in Switzerland. Some 150 American doctors and nurses will visit Swiss hospitals, sanitoriums and health resorts for one or two weeks. Further, special academy courses, lasting 1-3 months, will be arranged for about 2,500 American students. The Swiss Universities have been approached with similar requests by other countries.

Swiss Model Schools for Germany. It is planned to open in South Germany a number of Swiss model schools and colleges, staffed with Swiss teachers. The plan is supported by the authorities of the French Forces of occupation. To begin with only carefully selected German children and young people will be admitted to these schools. The immediate object is to create exemplary education centres.

Exhibition of Swiss Books in Britain and of British Books in Switzerland. Commencing next Spring it is planned to organise an exhibition of Swiss books in London, which will go to all the English and Scottish University towns. Later on a similar exhibition of British books will be organised to tour the bigger Swiss towns.

Swiss Contributions to the International Red Cross. During the war the Swiss Government has granted to the Committee of the International Red Cross at Geneva, approximately NZ £7,250,000, while other sources in Switzerland have furnished another NZ £8,000,000.

Hospitalisation in Switzerland of war victims suffering from tuberculosis. The Swiss radio on 11th September announced that Switzerland considers it her duty to come to the aid of foreign war victims suffering from tuberculosis, by offering free treatment in her many well-equipped sanitoriums. The organisation "Swiss Aid for War Victims" which has recently been backed by the Swiss Government with 7¼ million £NZ, and is at present raising a similar amount by private collections in Switzerland, is financing these activities. So far, 104 French and 58 Dutch patients are receiving treatment under this scheme, at Arosa, Davos, Montana and Leysin. Only patients with a good chance of recovery are selected, and the period of treatment is 2 years.

Opening in London of a "Swiss Office for the Development of Trade". Arrangements are almost completed for the opening of a London branch of the "Swiss Office for the Development of Trade" at Zurich and Lausanne, to foster trade between Switzerland and the British Empire.

Inauguration of an International Fur and Leather Fair at Basle, Switzerland.

In the Spring of 1946, it is planned to inaugurate an annual International Fur and Leather Fair at Basle, under the patronage of the annual Swiss Industries Fair. The object is to foster international trade in these commodities. It is expected that the New Zealand export trade dealing in skins and hides will take an interest in this.

After negotiations in Madrid on the resumption of air traffic between Switzerland and Spain, the director of the "Swissair" has again returned to Switzerland. He has revealed that the resumption of air traffic between the two countries still depends on France's permit to cross her air space. Swiss and Spanish aircraft are planned to run on this line alternatively three times a week each.

President Truman's personal airplane, a Douglas DC 4, a very big machine, arrived at Cointrin airport near Geneva with a number of important personalities on board. The passengers have come to Geneva on a visit to the offices of the International Red Cross Committee. They left again our country a few hours after their arrival.

On the recent news saying that the resumption of traffic on the Rhine may be expected for September this year, the Office for River Navigation on the Rhine in Basle made the following statement: "The information is incorrect insofar as regular traffic on the Rhine from and to Switzerland will hardly be possible before the beginning of next year. Despite the intensive Swiss co-operation in the clearing works at the destroyed bridges in the region of the Upper Rhine and in the reconstruction of the Koms dam, there is no hope that the waterways to Basle will be cleared before the mentioned time. The Rhine-Rhone canal between Strasbourg and Basle will be re-opened in October at the earliest. Only the stretch from Mulhouse to Basle will become navigable again during the month of August".

From Athens it is reported that an official reception has been organized in honour of the members of the Swiss Red Cross now leaving Greece. Speeches were made by the Minister of Social Welfare, the Mayor of Athens and a member of the Greek Red Cross, all expressing to the Swiss delegation the gratitude of the Greek people. Four silver medals and 36 bronze medals with diplomas were presented to the Swiss delegation.

The 29 trucks with trailers which transported 265 tons of medicine and food stuffs to Norway by the "Swiss Gift", have crossed the Swiss frontier again at Basle after an absence of two weeks.

During the past few days the Swiss Gift for War Victims in co-operation with the worker's aid action sent relief consignments of foodstuffs to the hungry population of Milan. It will thus be possible to offer 2500 children between the age of 3 and 6 years an additional food ration for three months.

Furthermore, the Swiss Caritas Union, a Catholic organization will open a number of canteens in Milan for children under 3 years of age.

On the occasion of the repatriation of many Italian military internees, who have been working for a long time in the region of Kreuzlingen, they sent a message to the authorities, i.e. their employers and to the people of Kreuzlingen, expressing their gratitude for the friendly welcome extended to them. The internees stressed the point that they will ever keep a grateful memory of their stay in Switzerland.

A few days ago, a special train brought 452 Swiss children from various parts of France to Geneva. After a short sanitary inspection, these children proceeded to their foster parents, who will offer them a free holiday until the end of September.

The heat wave which was experienced in Switzerland during the past few days has caused much damage in our agriculture. On July 26 the meteorological central station in Basle registered the highest temperature it has ever measured in July, namely 38.2° Celsius (100.7 F). Since Friday, rain is reported in various regions of the country.

In contrast to the general opinion, the present hot weather is not at all favorable for our cereal crop. Experts are predicting that the crops will yield 15 to 20% less than last year. Particularly during the past few days the plants have greatly suffered from the heat. Therefore, it has become even more important that our country's communication lines to the great seaports should be fully re-established as soon as possible. The hot season has also brought about changes in the snow and ice conditions in our mountains. The Wetterhorn for example is almost completely free of snow. The usually glittering white Eiger and Monch have become two dark giants. The long Schneehorn-crest on the Jungfrau no longer lives up to its name and on the Silverhorn the naked rock is reaching higher and higher towards the peak. Great masses of glacier water are rushing down in the mountain current, but unfortunately they are not watering the dry alpine pasture.

Through the mediation of the American authorities, the Africa Expedition of the Swiss Tropical Institute in Basle headed by Professor Geigy has been able to leave Paris in a military plane for Leopoldville in the Belgian Congo. The enterprise is under the auspices of the Swiss Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross as it will have to prepare the hospitalization in Switzerland of sick people from the tropics. The expedition will take up contact with the Belgian and French colonial authorities and with various scientific institutions in Equatorial Africa. They will also gather material on tropical diseases, which will be used for research work and in lectures at the Tropical Institute in Basle. The expedition will last three or four months and is expected to return to Switzerland in the fall.

The State Council of Zurich submitted to the Grand Council a bill for a law giving the right to vote to women of Swiss origin providing for the same women the right to be elected to a city office. If this bill is adopted, the women will be able to take part in the election of school and church authorities of districts and of communal secondary teachers as well as of church pastors.

The Finance Department of the Canton of Zurich communicates: "According to the latest tax declarations made on new forms, an increase of 10 million francs of tax revenue is expected. The tax rate, however, has remained unchanged. The main reason for this increase is believed to be the amnesty granted for tax defraudation in the past years."

The fourth Swiss pedagogical week organized by the Institute of Education and Sciences opened on July 15 in the Wilson Palace at Geneva under the sponsorship of the Geneva public instruction department. At a time when educational matters seem to be pushing forward to the front lines of postwar preoccupation, the public will hear with interest the number of well qualified lecturers. Some of the subjects will be of help to schools after the war, such as the psychology of abandoned children, arithmetic, and pedagogy, and many other related topics.

During the dangers of war bombing, our works of art were hidden away in safe places. Now the time has come to bring them back again. 12,000 pieces recently found their way back again into the Swiss National Museum. The Zurich Art Museum has been able to put up again a number of its paintings and plastics. The Basle Museum has become not only owner of its Holbein works, those of Witz and many other masters. All these masterpieces will soon be back on exhibition again.

The "Oberländer Tagblatt" announces that two mountain tourists had succeeded for the first time in climbing the western slope of the "Weisse Frau" in the "Blümlisalp Massivo". The ascension is said to have been extremely difficult.