

**Zeitschrift:** Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand  
**Band:** 6 (1940-1941)  
**Heft:** 6

**Artikel:** A member of our Society has just received a most interesting and enlightening letter dated 15th November 1940 [...]  
**Autor:** [s.n.]  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-943024>

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Appenzell Ausser Rhoden has accepted an increase in salary of 7% for Cantonal employees. A sum of Frs.Sw.20,000.000 has been voted in order to assist the weavers of this Canton. The money will be furnished partly by the Canton, and interested Boroughs, and partly by the Bonus resulting from the Devaluation of 1936 (Reserve funds kept in the Banque Nationale).

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A member of our Society has just received a most interesting and enlightening letter dated 15th November, 1940. It says:

"The war has now raged for over 12 months and things have not yet changed for better. Still we must call ourselves most fortunate to enjoy good health.

" It is to a great advantage and at the same time a huge saving in coal to the country, that now most of the railways are run electrically. The many restrictions which the state has imposed upon us are a small matter when we compare our conditions with those of the many belligerent countries.

" So far we had our worst experience about last Whitsuntide (Pfingsten) when our country passed through the most critical time. A large number of people lost their heads entirely. The ever staid tranquility of Switzerland was sadly upset, thanks to all sorts of rumours. Evacuations from their homes were common occurrences where all sorts of rumours were rudely accepted as facts, and people of more rational minds had a very hard row to hoe trying to pacify them. The Railway station in Zurich was littered with luggage, bedding material, furniture etc. We Appenzeller kept calm and saved ourselves a lot of unnecessary expense. But nevertheless we were ready for emergencies, as nobody could tell what was going to happen. Day and night evacuees would travel from the Rhine Valley over the "Stoss" into the Appenzellerland. Many rented habitations in Graubunden, Glarus, Western and Central Switzerland. Now the situation has considerably improved. We have still enough to eat and as long as it does not get worse we must not complain. A great deal is now rationed, that is we receive an allotted quantity of certain articles, but the portions are generously large and keep us from going hungry. It was also very good advice on the Government's part to recommend a continuous stock of provisions for two months. Bread is not yet rationed, it is darker than before and can only be sold when 48 hours old. Butter is getting scarce, because of increased manufacture of cheese. Its ration per person for November is 300 grammes. The Government is also issuing cards for clothing. The worst trouble we have are coal and benzine. It seems that this winter we shall feel the cold as the supply of coal has been greatly reduced. Motor cars are practically gone off the road and small trucks have taken the place of large ones. The doctors have to reduce their visitings. A friend of mine, a medical man, has resorted to the old time practice of visiting his patients on horseback.

" The farmers have to do their share by utilizing a certain percentage of their acreage for grain etc., or in higher regions for potatoes. Cattle fodder is at a premium and is very dear. Refuse is carefully collected and it is to be hoped that it will feed thousands of pigs.

" We are a regular island amongst all the world's happenings and we are obliged to rely on the goodwill of our neighbours."

Continuing the letter on 13th December, he writes that clothing and boots are now rationed. No wonder that dire poverty is creeping in gradually, but we shall cheerfully carry on as long as we are left in peace."

This most interesting letter gives us some idea of the sad conditions at home, and that our compatriots in Switzerland are quite cheerfully resigned to bear their heavy load of troubles as long as they are spared the frightfulness of war.

By the way Dr.W.Schmid, our respected Consul is still prepared to accept money for our Swiss soldiers while Mrs.Schmid will be pleased to accept knitting of any kind and clothing for the needy mountain folks at home who are having a very hard time just now.

LET'S GET ON WITH THE GOOD WORK.