

News from Switzerland

Objektyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **16 (1951)**

Heft [5]

PDF erstellt am: **13.09.2024**

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Inhalten der Zeitschriften. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern.

Die auf der Plattform e-periodica veröffentlichten Dokumente stehen für nicht-kommerzielle Zwecke in Lehre und Forschung sowie für die private Nutzung frei zur Verfügung. Einzelne Dateien oder Ausdrucke aus diesem Angebot können zusammen mit diesen Nutzungsbedingungen und den korrekten Herkunftsbezeichnungen weitergegeben werden.

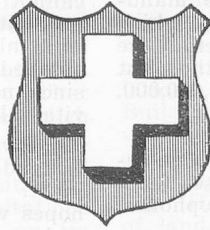
Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Die systematische Speicherung von Teilen des elektronischen Angebots auf anderen Servern bedarf ebenfalls des schriftlichen Einverständnisses der Rechteinhaber.

Haftungsausschluss

Alle Angaben erfolgen ohne Gewähr für Vollständigkeit oder Richtigkeit. Es wird keine Haftung übernommen für Schäden durch die Verwendung von Informationen aus diesem Online-Angebot oder durch das Fehlen von Informationen. Dies gilt auch für Inhalte Dritter, die über dieses Angebot zugänglich sind.

HELVETIA

MONTHLY
PUBLICATION
OF THE



SWISS BENEVOLENT
SOCIETY IN
NEW ZEALAND (INC.)

GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

16th YEAR.

JUNE, 1951.

AUCKLAND.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

Before introducing television in Switzerland, many questions must be cleared. They cover the composition of the programmes, and also the field of the intellectual as well as the spiritual life. A commission has to be set up. It should comprise representatives of the church, political parties, artistic and cultural groups, the Press, as well as associations for the protection of the family.

The Production of Fruits.—Thanks to the intensive campaign against disease, and to the selection of the trees, the production increased from 46,000 to 80,000 railway car loads per year. In 1949, 3600 car loads, most of them pears for cider, were exported, but the exportation completely ceased in 1950, due to import restrictions in other countries. Fifty per cent. of the fruit for cider has been transformed into drinks. Out of the 12,000 remaining car loads, 5000 were made into concentrated fruit juice, and 7000 were distilled for fuel alcohol.

According to a recent survey, Swiss spending is divided as follows:—

	%
Food and drink	23
Clothes	9
Rents	18
Home articles and materials	4
Doctors and medicines	4
Lighting and heating	5
Recreation, travel, etc.	13
Insurance	9
Taxes and sundry	4

The firm Kern and Co., in Aarau, have created new binoculars with internal focus. Up to date, binoculars have had a tubular form. These new ones with mirror lenses enlarge 50 times, and are extremely compact.

A Swiss dairy enterprise has declared a new method of pasteurising milk. It permits, in one process, the sterilisation of milk without harming the vitamins and their biological value.

Motor Vehicles in Switzerland.

One could have expected that the Swiss market had become saturated with motor vehicles. It is therefore all the more noteworthy to register an increase of over 20 per cent. within a year. Here are the figures at

the end of September, 1950 (the corresponding figures for the year before are given in parentheses:—

Motor-cars for private use	146,998	(123,009)
Commercial vehicles	41,514	(38,512)
Motor-cycles, scooters	75,975	(57,513)

War in Korea does not appear to have boosted the market. In fact, lower-priced motor-cars and motor-cycles have induced many people of medium income to buy vehicles. For that reason, the United States, which supply large cars, occupy the third instead of the first place among the exporting countries, after Germany and Great Britain. The latter country is to some respect in the same position as the United States where motor vehicles are concerned; the cheap scooters from Italy providing dangerous competitors for the dearer British types.

The town of Zurich alone accounts for 10 per cent. of the total of 264,487 motor vehicles. The canton of Geneva, on the other hand, has by far the largest number of vehicles per head of the population.

The Chef, Walter Harr, in New York, of Zurich origin, takes part regularly in television in the U.S.A. He presents Swiss specialities. The programme has brought 1200 enquiries and the station had to send out that number of recipes, which proves that the Swiss cooking appeals in the U.S.A. Our compatriot is also a purveyor to the Swissair.

The construction of the new capital of the Punjab has been entrusted to the Swiss architect, Le Corbusier, as well as the civic centres in Bogota. Two Swiss architects of the Canton of Vaud, Mr. Ch. Pavid, and Mr. W. Barbey, have been called upon to construct a model city at Cognac, France.

The firm Hasler, in Bern, is building a new instrument for anti-aircraft with a radius of action of 17 km. It permits of shooting at supersonic planes.

By arrangement with the central Government of the Chinese People's Republic, a Red Cross mission left Geneva by air for Peking. It consists of Dr. Paul Ruegger, President of the International Committee, Mme. Ruegger, Mr. Alfred Escher, the President's personal adviser, and two medical delegates. Dr. Ruegger will confer with Mr. Chou En-lai, the Chinese Prime Minister, and with Mme. Li Teh-chuan.

No reply has yet been received from the North Korean Government to Dr. Ruegger's suggestion in January that he should travel to North Korea for discussions on prisoners of war.

The exportation of cheese and the importation of butter. Due to too high an increase of milk delivery, Switzerland has been compelled to augment the manufacture of butter and to suspend its importation, which came mainly not from Denmark, but from Sweden. The exportation of cheese has been limited during the first quarter of this year and amounted only to Sfr.13,000,000.

Telephones in Switzerland. The number of telephone subscriptions is still increasing and rose from 368,000 in 1950, to 574,500. There are 896,000 telephones, which means 51,000 more than last year.

SWITZERLAND & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

By PIERRE BEGUIN.

There is no need for me to repeat that Switzerland is in the fullest sense of the word a peace-loving country. Before the sixteenth century she was a great military power, but in the sixteenth century she adopted the policy of neutrality in order to safeguard her own internal peace. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, she proclaimed her neutrality to the world at large, and got it respected, not only to save herself but also to constitute an element of peace in the middle of Europe.

It is enough to recall these historical truths in order to make it clear that Switzerland did not wait for the so-called "partisans of peace" before she joined in, whole-heartedly, with every movement to safeguard peace. In the interval between the two wars she did her utmost to develop, in her relations with other countries, peaceful methods of settling international differences, that is, arbitration, mediation and conciliation. At the end of the Second World War it was in accordance with Swiss traditions that we hoped that now that the East and the West had become comrades in arms they had become reconciled with each other and that their wartime collaboration would continue, so that the Communist world and the liberal and Christian world, would grow to be more closely united even than during the war. Observers of international events, political thinkers and journalists in Switzerland even reached the stage of believing, in 1945, that a sort of synthesis between Marxism and liberalism was possible—a harmonious conciliation of mankind's two fundamental needs, liberty and security.

These hopes have vanished. Instead of the synthesis we hoped for we have seen the gulf grow wider, and the differences more alarming, between the two ideologies. We are farther than ever from peace. In fact there has never been any real end to the war, in spite of the temporary suspension of hostilities in those countries nearest our frontiers. At the other side of the world a localised war is raging, and people are wondering whether it will not develop into a general war, the third in a single generation.

In the old days we should have thought that a war going on in some little peninsula in Asia was no concern of ours, and we should have been pretty well indifferent to it. That is not our attitude to the Korean war. This is in no sense of the word a colonial war, it is one aspect of the conflict between East and West, and is perhaps the forerunner of upheavals which will take place in the more or less distant future near the frontiers of Switzerland.

But it can hardly be said that Switzerland is living under a cloud of pessimism and anguished apprehension. We are peace lovers, and even peace worshippers, to such an extent that we really cannot believe that such a frightful catastrophe as another world war will take place. Our minds refuse to consider that it is possible. Generally speaking, although the Swiss does

not live in a cloud of wishful thinking or in ignorance of what is going on in the outside world, they really cannot believe that there exist people mad enough to precipitate another world war in which there would certainly be no distinction between victors and vanquished; and in which there would be frightful casualties, since none of the belligerents could deal his enemies a vital blow and occupy his territory.

Switzerland realises how serious the present situation is, and knows perfectly well what dangers are latent in it. But she cannot resign herself to give up the hopes which she has placed in the maintenance of peace, and even in the establishment of a durable peace on a more satisfactory basis than before, in the more or less distant future. She remembers from her own national history that it took centuries to set up the present equilibrium which she at present enjoys. She hopes fervently that long-term efforts will allow the establishment of a world equilibrium, reproducing her own but on a larger scale. And at the same time she realises that this can only be attained on condition that there is no falling off in goodwill, and that none of the parties yields to the temptation of seeking a solution by force, for example by using weapons of mass massacre.

In other words, we are incurable optimists. But not blind ones. Switzerland will continue, as she always has done, to do whatever she can for the continuance of peace. Being a realistic nation, she knows that she may be disappointed in her hopes, and accordingly she is neglecting no precaution which might ensure her own security if another war were to break out. For it has been said that humanity will work out its salvation, if it can resist the evil counsel of Fear.

SWISS FARMING

Its Natural Structure.—Of Switzerland's area totaling 10,250,000 acres, three-fifths account for the mountains and valleys of the Alps. A considerable share of the unproductive area (25 per cent.) is mainly accounted for by the altitude, although the lakes, too, and the increasing extent of towns and villages and the multiplication of communications and barrage lakes, contribute to diminish the country's agricultural and forest area. The following figures illustrate the comparative smallness of the country's area suitable for intense agriculture:—

	Acres.
Unproductive area	2,300,000
Alpine grazing	2,500,000
Woodland	2,500,000
Strictly excellent agricultural land ...	3,000,000

Forest trees are to be found up to about 6000 feet, while grazing resist up to about 8000 feet. Regions higher up belong to the unproductive area.

Climate.—The farmer recognises and judges the climate, in the first place, after the vegetation. The climate is the outcome of latitude and altitude, of the inclination of the soil and of the position of the slopes in respect of the sun. Furthermore, of the rate of humidity of the air and of the soil, as well as of the precipitations (rainfall).

The most important factors are the altitude and the supply of masses of damp air, alternatively rain and snow, from the west. The ordinary cycle of meteorological conditions is apt to be disturbed by early and late frosts, by hail, as well as by abnormal drought or precipitations.

The position of the slopes in respect of the sun has considerable influence on the effect of the altitude. This is particularly apparent in the Alpine regions, where in many cases meadows and arable land, reach high up on the sunny sides, while on the shady sides the firs