

Sundry news from Switzerland

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1ST AUGUST CELEBRATIONS IN TARANAKI.

(Extract from "The Hawera Star").

To mark the 652nd anniversary of the Confederation of Switzerland, the Swiss community on Monday night entertained at a highly successful dance in the Manaia Town Hall when visitors from all parts of Taranaki and the Swiss Consul for New Zealand, Dr. Schmid and Mrs. Schmid of Wellington, were in attendance. The guests of honour were welcomed by Rev. Father Breen, Mr. J.A.G. Cosgrove, chairman of the Manaia Town Board, the Rev. Father Butler and Mr. F.L. Frost, M.P. The stage and hall were beautifully decorated for the occasion by Mrs. Downey and Miss Downey.

Dr. Schmid thanked the speakers for their welcome and read a cable from the Swiss Minister in London conveying to the Swiss colonists in New Zealand heartiest greetings and appreciation for the work carried on by the Swiss Benevolent Society. Dr. Schmid explained that the society, whose purpose was the furthering of the Swiss colonists' interest, socially and economically, in New Zealand. He spoke of the democratic spirit that was manifested in this country and said it was no wonder that the Swiss people who had come to settle in New Zealand found a place where they not only prospered materially but also found an atmosphere in which they were very much at home. The Swiss people had a lot to be thankful to New Zealand for such an environment and hospitality and on the other hand they had been doing their part in helping to develop the country and its agricultural land. They had raised big families and thereby made valuable contributions to the State. It was a natural aim of the Swiss farmer at home as well as abroad to do his job well because he liked his attachment to the soil and loved animals. If the Swiss in New Zealand preserved and cultivated the democratic spirit and outlook on life which they had inherited from their Swiss ancestry, they could hardly fail to be recognised as a valuable asset to the country.

Dr. Schmid thanked Mrs. A. Engleberger (organiser) and Misses Doreen and Mollie Sattler (secretaries) and helpers for organising the gathering and the Swiss people for their welcome.

Music was supplied by an orchestra and Messrs. F. Schuler, L. Schuler, A. Meier and A. Engleberger. Mr. R. Bishop was M.C.

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SUNDRY NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The report for 1942 (just published) of the Political Department states that last year sixteen Swiss nationals lost their lives due to aerial action, i.e., four in

A new basis for naturalisation has been fixed by the Grosse Rat of the canton Thurgau. In future applicants will have to produce a certificate of health and foreigners are given the right to insist on naturalisation if the conditions now laid down are fulfilled. The local commune will have no say in the matter.

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All local traffic or intercourse along the Franco-Swiss frontier has come to a complete stand-still; practically the whole length is lined with barbed wire. At St. Gingolph, a small village cut in half by the frontier, a funeral cortege was stopped on the common bridge, the fence was opened for the hearse alone and the mourners were turned back.

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It is stated that negotiations are under way between the Italian and Swiss Governments for the construction of a pipe line between Genoa and a Swiss frontier place. Steamers flying the Swiss flag are generally discharging at Genoa and the transport of oil would be facilitated and cheapened by such a pipe line.

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The International Red Cross Committee of Geneva now owns nine cargo ships flying the Red Cross flag. So far they have brought from America 100,000 tons of goods of various kinds for distribution among prisoners of war. The ships have made 151 transatlantic voyages.

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Opposition is growing to the hydro-electric scheme which would involve the demolition of the three villages of Hinterrhein, Nufenen and Medels in order to create an artificial lake. At an open-air meeting the population of the Rheinwald district in the Grisons, north of San Bernardino Pass, unanimously proclaimed their right to remain on their own land and again opposed the scheme.

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The total production of Swiss tobacco amounted in 1942 to 12 million kg. which were manufactured into pipe tobacco and cigarettes. With the small amount of imported tobacco added, the available quantity was sufficient to avoid rationing.

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SWISS BROADCASTS:

According to information received, the Swiss National Broadcasting Station at Schwarzenburg is now transmitting the twice weekly broadcast to Australia and New Zealand on

Wave length: 25.61 m
Time: 7.15 p.m. to 8.45 p.m.
on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

We would be pleased to hear from members what their experiences on the reception of these broadcasts are.