

# Arrival in New Zealand of new Swiss Consul Mr. Ernst Theiler

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SWISS TROPICAL INSTITUTE MISSION RETURNS FROM AFRICA.

During the war a Swiss Institute of Tropical Studies was set up in Basle with the end in view, on the one hand, of teaching tropical chemistry, agriculture and medicine to young Swiss citizens desiring to go overseas, thus preparing them for their future work; and, on the other hand it was planned to open hospitals in Switzerland where persons suffering from tropical diseases, of any nationality, would be admitted. Furthermore, the Institute hoped to collect all possible data concerning tropical countries and to publish a periodical under the name of "ACTA TROPICA".

The Institute had a difficult beginning because Switzerland was, at the time, surrounded by the Axis powers. After the collapse of Italy and the liberation of France it at last became possible to procure indispensable scientific material. Whilst the hostilities were still in progress, Professor Geigy organised an expedition with the support and effective assistance of the American, English, French and Belgian authorities: the aim of the mission was clearly humanitarian, since the Institute was to care in Swiss hospitals for patients, especially soldiers, taken ill in tropical countries.

On the 27th June of that same year, the mission including Professor Geigy and his wife, Prof. Fred. Roulet and Dr. H. Gaschen left Switzerland for Paris, from whence they flew to Dakar in an American aeroplane. Scientific apparatus weighing about 500 kilos was also flown in the same way. After making two scientific calls at Dakar and Accra, the mission spent a month at Leopoldville, and another at Brazzaville (French Equatorial Africa).

They studied the habits of the anopheles mosquito and the tse-tse fly, carriers of malaria and of sleeping-sickness, and a large collection of those insects at the various stages of their growth was prepared to be taken to Switzerland. It was not one of the least performances of the mission to take home live specimens of the tse-tse fly. It was found that these insects could only live a very short time without sucking blood, unless the digestion process was prolonged by lowering the temperature. An ice-chest was built for the flies and ice was ordered at each aerodrome where the mission intended to call on the way home. At Paris, it became urgent to feed the flies. Prof. Geigy created a tropical atmosphere in his hotel suite by filling the bath with boiling water and then liberated the flies which pounced on the guinea pigs of the mission. After that breakfast, they continued their trip to Basle in the ice-chest. That is where they now reside in warm cages, having suffered no ill effects from their six thousand kilometer trip: they are the first of the species to have reached our latitudes alive.

The scientific baggage of the mission is considerable and the data has immediately been used for teaching. Regarding the plans for the building of hospitals for sick colonials, hopes for their realisation seem to be very high.

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ARRIVAL IN NEW ZEALAND OF NEW SWISS CONSUL MR. ERNST THEILER.

According to cable advice received at the Swiss Consulate, Wellington, Mr. Ernst Theiler, the new Swiss Consul who is to succeed Dr. Walter Schmid, will arrive in New Zealand towards the end of June or early in July.

Consul Theiler, who is a Luzerner, will be accompanied by his wife and children.

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