

# A unique village

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ant borders of the Bodan, has also other attractions. For instance, this year the great Federal Festival of the Yodellers will take place there from the 11th to the 13th of July.

The yodel in Switzerland belongs to the folklore and the popular culture. It expresses the culture and tradition of the Confederation in the same way as the national costumes do. Yodeling, as well as national costumes, will be used abundantly in a harmonious way at the Federal Festival. Groups of choirs and people in national costumes will be going to St. Gall, even from the most remote corners of Switzerland. The ancient streets of the city will vibrate with sounds and colours and everyone will delight in the melodies and costumes of native tang.

Many foreign visitors will also be present to enjoy the charm of the great festival procession on July 12th and 13th. This parade will evoke all types of national costumes and will also show the different traditional customs as they occur in the course of a year during the various seasons. The foreign spectators will have the rare chance to see in a single glimpse this civilisation of peasants and shepherds as they live in the mountains today.

On July 13th, in the Court of the Abbey of St. Gall, a general performance of all choirs representing several thousand yodellers will be given. In the big festival hall a patriotic play will be staged, consisting of six acts portraying by song and music the homeland of the people.

### A UNIQUE VILLAGE

On the outskirts of Trogen, pleasantly situated among the peaceful, smiling pastures of the Appenzell uplands, stands a pretty red-roofed village. In outward appearance it does not differ greatly from the usual type of Swiss village, except that the houses are all new, but it is unique in one respect: it bears the distinction of being the only village in the world inhabited entirely by children of different nations, under the supervision of a few adults qualified to care for and educate them.

These children, some 200 of them at present, are mostly war orphans from many parts of Europe, from France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, from Great Britain and even far-off Finland. They are housed in modern buildings, each nationality being kept separate, but allowed to mix at work and play and encouraged to fraternise. The British contingent, by the way, occupy two houses christened "Thames House" and "Stepping Stones."

The idea of creating a supra-national settlement for orphaned children from war-stricken countries germinated in the mind of Dr. W. R. Corti, Editor of the Swiss periodical "Du." He launched his first appeal in 1944; the offer of a

suitable site from the community of Trogen converted his dream into a practical proposition; by 1946 it became possible to start building, mostly by volunteer labour and under the direction, generously given, of a well-known architect. In 1947 the village was ready for occupation. It was given the name of Pestalozzi-Dorf and came under the management of the Swiss Pestalozzidorf Gemeinschaft and the British Pestalozzi Children's Village Association.

Finance was, of course, a difficult problem. It was solved through the generosity of the Swiss people. Contributions large and small came pouring in, the wealthy and the poor, and above all the children of Switzerland, gave freely; the "Don Suisse" and the "Pro Juventute" assisted. Gifts in money and kind were also received from abroad.

To alleviate the suffering of innocent war victims is, to the Swiss people, not a new impulse; it lies within their traditions and is made possible by their neutral status. Swiss neutrality, sometimes misunderstood, is by no means a self-centred isolation, and it may not be out of place here to recall the services Switzerland has rendered in 1870-71 to the inhabitants of Strasbourg and to the wretched remnants of the Bourbaki army, to the refugees of the first world war, and to mention that during the last war 200,000 children were taken into Swiss homes for a three months convalescence. Above all, is not the International Red Cross an abiding monument to Swiss initiative in the service of humanity?

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