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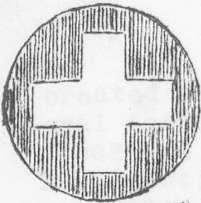
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# HELVETIA

Monthly Publication  
of the Swiss Benevolent Society,  
in New Zealand.

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AUCKLAND, 1st January 1936.

No. 4

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1936

New Year's Day is the opportune day for contemplation. Thinking back, we benefit, for we may realise our weaknesses and committed mistakes. Realising them, gives us the possibility and the strength of avoiding them in future. Looking ahead, gives us hope for the fulfilment of our expectations, realization of our plans for life, achievement of the task towards ourselves, our families and our friends.

Swiss in New Zealand, let us hope that the New Year will bring to all, health and happiness. We extend to you, our very best wishes for a successful year.

### A RED CROSS REMINISCENCE.

Of all noble institutions established for the benefit of suffering humanity, the Red Cross undoubtedly occupies the most exalted rank. Today the very knowledge of its existence has a reassuring effect all over the world, and wherever calamity visits a people it is to the Red Cross to whom they look as their administering angel.

A Red Cross on a white field is the universal insignia of this great humanitarian organization which was born in Switzerland. Thus, the Red Cross flag pays in a reversed arrangement everlasting tribute to the land of its origin.

The actual founder of the Red Cross Society is Jean Henri Dunant, member of a distinguished and pious family of Geneva. On June 14, 1859, he chanced to be present at the battle of Solferino, where the allied forces of the French and Piedmontese met and overthrew the armies of Austria. Horrible conditions prevailed on that battle-field, and Dunant, filled with pity for the thousands of wounded soldiers, resolved that only speedy action could save their lives. Quickly he secured a number of women from the neighbourhood, and with their aid improvised additional ambulance service to the village of Castiglione. Here he rendered personal assistance to the stricken men, who soon began to name him the "Gentleman in White", in allusion to his attire.

The harrowing scenes which he had witnessed left an indelible impression on Dunant's mind, and he conceived the idea of promoting a volunteer corps, drilled and instructed in the handling of stretchers, permanently organized and protected in its work on the battlefield by its absolute neutrality. One of his first acts after returning to Geneva was to write and publish a book "Souvenir of Solferino", in which he described his experiences. The volume