

650th Anniversary of the Swiss Confederation

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through the Social Work Organisation of the Army a package of underwear of a value of sfrs.28.--. This is a beautiful gift and I am particularly satisfied. I can see from that, that our fellow-countrymen abroad are thinking of their necessitous soldiers. That is very nice. I am married and my military pay goes for the taking care of my wife and 6 minor children. The two elder are apprentices. So you can see that your well-meaning has found a true echo. I have had 278 days of military service since the beginning of this war. Thanking you again from the bottom of my heart for your goodness, I am, with kind regards, yours S.C.Armand Gillieron. (Civilian address: Grande Rue 6, Le Locle, Ct.Neuchatel); from a Mrs. O. Schlaefli, Pflanzschulstr. 79, Zuerich 4 (dated 14th August 1941): "I have received with great thankfulness your kind donation for necessitous families of soldiers. It makes me feel good to know that even abroad people are thinking of us. May God reward you (Vergelts Gott), for I am expecting my 4th child in the near future. Sending you all kind greetings from beautiful Zuerich and from the whole of Switzerland."; from Madame Marie Pugin-Mercier, Vaudereng, Fribourg (dated 19th August 1941): "I wish to express to you with these few lines my most sincere thanks for the package of clothes which I have received from you. Everything fits very well. With kind regards, a thankful mother, Marie Pugin-Mercier."

It is indeed nice to have received these first tokens of appreciation. Members who would like to get in touch with these people in writing, are, of course, welcome to do so.

650TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION.

Members of our Society will remember from the September issue of "HELVETIA" that on the occasion of the 650th Swiss Anniversary a message of felicitation was despatched to the President of the Swiss Confederation, Mr. Ernest Wetter, in time to reach him at Schwyz on the 1st of August. The Chief of the Swiss Foreign Office, Minister Pierre Bonna, at Berne, in the name of the President, has now sent the following letter of thanks to the Swiss people in New Zealand through the intermediary of the Swiss Consulate at Wellington: "With a cable of the 26th July the members of the Swiss Benevolent Society in New Zealand have been kind enough to express to the President of the Swiss Confederation, through your intermediary, their attachment to the Swiss Fatherland, on the occasion of the Swiss Anniversary, which was of particular significance this year. The President of the Confederation has been deeply moved by this message and he would appreciate if you would be the interpreter of his expression of profound gratitude to the Swiss people in New Zealand, for their patriotic manifestation, and also to convey to them his best wishes in these difficult times."

TRIBUTE TO MERIT.

It would be sheer ingratitude, if we did not extend a warm word of special thanks to the men, who for a good while now, have been in charge of the management of our Swiss Benevolent Society: - Messrs. Merz and Ungemuth. The Chairman, Mr. Merz, has taken a keen interest in the life and progress of the Society and there was no reason for him to retire, had it not been for Mr. Ungemuth's ill-health and the war conditions, necessitating the transfer of the Committee closer to the Consulate. However, every organisation always places its main burden upon the Secretary, and Mr. Ungemuth had a full share of it for the past six years. Thanks to his untiring efforts the Society not only remained alive - compared with earlier starts of a similar nature - but grew and became a strong body. Constantly many difficulties had to be mastered: he did it. Whenever there was work to do for the Society or individual countrymen, or plans to be put into action, there was Mr. Ungemuth in the front line, giving things the necessary "kick". Just imagine the enormous amount of work caused by the monthly compilation of the "HELVETIA", and especially the difficulties in war time, when news from home is coming in so sparingly. Think, too, of the work occasioned by the correspondence, the Committee meetings, arrangement of celebrations and socials etc. In spite of often failing health, weeks in hospital, months of convalescence, there never appeared to be any interruption in the Secretary's activities; letters were answered promptly, the monthly paper came forward regularly. Neither is