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HELVETIA

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GROUP NEW ZEALAND OF THE NEW HELVETIC SOCIETY

23rd Year

DECEMBER 1960

Hamilton

IMPRESSIONS OF SWITZERLAND

(By John Steiner)

SWITZERLAND is a beautiful country. I have been here for the last four months, I have travelled from one end of the country to the other and have found the people very sociable and friendly and who would do

anything for you. The towns and cities are very clean and tidy.

The first thing which impressed me was that there is no waste land alongside the railways and roads, every foot of land is utilised for growing grass and crops.

I have found the railways very good for travelling fast and clean and the roads are very good, especially the autobahn roads.

The lakes and mountains are a wonderful sight, I haven't seen anything better in Europe. It is an eye-opener for any New Zealander to see. The mountains are marvellous and especially the hotels for the food and drinks—you could not wish for anything better.

The people work longer hours and seem to be contented. They are well clothed.

Switzerland is an industrialised country and has a big name in making watches and precision machinery, a credit to the nation which does not produce its own raw materials. There is a large amount of building going on in commercial areas, mainly big flats of five or six storeys. These are well built of brick or concrete blocks and are equipped with the latest hand-saving machines such as dish washers, dryers, etc, and also central heating.

The country has an ideal system of Government but women have no vote. I think this is not right. Farm-wives work very hard in the fields helping with the harvests. What impressed me also was the amount of flat country they have here; I was always led to believe that Switzerland was all mountains. It is a wonderful sight to see the nicely laid out strips of crops and also the large amount of grapes grown, especially in the Zurich, Vallis and Graubunden areas.

The farmers are more up-to-date here and one sees a lot of tractors and hardly any horses. The odd places still use cows to do farm work. They have more improved methods with liquid manure.

Switzerland grows a lot of timber, particularly hard woods, and has an endless supply for all types of building.

In closing I wish all Swiss in New Zealand a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

The President's Message

CHRISTMAS 1960

UPON the approach of the Festive Season, I take the opportunity, on behalf of the Committee, of extending to you and your families the Compliments of the Season. May you all enjoy to the utmost the good things of life that are associated with Christmas, and may you all find solace in the hope that one day the glorious philosophy of Christmas will come about, and there shall be peace on earth and goodwill towards all men.

Many people see in the Christmas Festival a traditional setting for good fellowship, gifts, luscious foods and things that can be afforded once a year. A crowded home, a full table, the reunion with absent ones and the pleasure of a few days spent together again. Then there are others who surround the occasion with warm sentiment, and whose feelings are aroused by the very word, Christmas. Each approach has a full and enduring value and a slight restriction on to much of the earthly things might help us to take a little time off for meditation and embark upon some, if only small, act of goodwill towards our fellow men.

In conclusion, I once again say to you all: A Happy Christmas and a Bright and Prosperous New Year.

Yours very sincerely,

WALTER RISI,
President.