

New member

Objektyp: **Index**

Zeitschrift: **Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand**

Band (Jahr): **11 (1945-1946)**

Heft 11

PDF erstellt am: **29.05.2024**

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contingent extended to three and even four (Messrs. Ador, Decoppet, Calonder and Motta). Since 1944 the political minority too, i.e. the Labour party, has its own representative in the federal executive.

How neatly the sentiment of respect for the other is developed becomes evident in the linguistic sphere. Every letter addressed to the federal administration in French is answered in French, those written in German receive a reply in this idiom. Travelling by train, say, from Zurich to Geneva, up to the limit line of the two languages - somewhere between Berne and Fribourg, - tickets are called for in German and in French, "Alle Billette gefälligt" first and then "Tous les billets s'il vous plait" afterwards; a regulation that is generally accepted as a matter of course.

Not every country has been equally fortunate in settling its language problems. Whereas the Czechs were suppressed while part of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, they in turn prescribed the use of German after Czecho-Slovakia had become a country of her own. At a bathing establishment in Prague, the Czecho-Slovakian capital with a German-speaking minority, a notice could be seen which made German-speaking an offence. Also, a German-speaking judge in the Sudets had to write to a German-speaking colleague in Czech, this being the official language.

Time and again a spirit of mutual understanding and tolerance manifests itself among the political parties despite the vehemence of their discussions. Though in important political debates, as is only natural, opinions may clash, quiet committee work behind closed doors will always bring these politicians together again. They may be seen, afterwards, socialists, liberals and conservatives all together, enjoying a drink at the "Bear" (a pub in the neighbourhood of the parliament building). This helps them, on meeting again underneath the federal cupola in Berne, to recognize in their opponents not merely an agent of an irritating adverse ideology, but the man and citizen who also has a respectable point of view; then they are less apt to talk past one another. "Let's talk it out" has become the democratic formula.

Sometimes it is a patriotic society, e.g. the "New Helvetic Society" or, more recently, the "Gotthard Federation", that unites the antagonists on occasions of political dissent, and prepares the ground for a free discussion of pros and cons, so that in the end the citizen may shape his own ideas.

"Our whole nature" a psychiatrist, trying to get to the bottom of the Swiss character, recently wrote, "is pervaded by a strain of mutual understanding and, at the same time, by an equally natural ability to retain our peculiarity". All these traits, based upon our character, our tradition or our constitution and statute, which manifest themselves in everyday life, make the Swiss pith, that unites us in spite of all variety. To paraphrase this in a few words would be difficult. Yet it is a reality, as inconspicuous and yet as true as the enlivening glorious feeling of liberty that moves the soul of every one on our mountains, and as real as the fresh air sweeping over them, a gift from heaven.

PROPOSED "ROLL OF HONOUR".

Further to our publication in the August issue, we again appeal to all those compatriots whose sons, or themselves, served overseas to forward names and the respective units. The Secretary received only a small proportion of these names, but we know there are quite a considerable number of others who should submit their names. The following have communicated with us so far: J.D. Beusher, Sergeant Air-gunner; A. Respinger, 34th Anti Tank Reg. & British Intelligence; E.A. Schicker; Aleis Schicker; Edwin P. Ungemuth, Sub-Lieut., H.M.N.Z.S. "Kiwi" & "Scarba"; Walter J. Ungemuth, Signalmann, 2nd Div., N.Z.E.F. 6th Inf. Brigade; Werner G. Ungemuth, Signalmann, 2nd Div., N.Z.E.F. 20th Arm. Regt.

We wish to point out that those parents or relations, whose sons paid the supreme sacrifice, are asked in particular to forward the respective names.

NEW MEMBER.

We have pleasure to announce the enrolment of Mr. Emil Schicker, 22 Vogel Street, Hawera.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

Mr. L. Leuthard, New Plymouth: Visit his "Hygienic Dining Rooms".

Mr. L. Zurcher, 212 Pattison Road, Hastings: 1945 Apple Cider, 5/- per gallon, in two gallon lots, plus freight; samples free of charge, in ordering state dry or sweet. Jars to lend. "Moscht Mtends aim ghä."

CORRESPONDENCE: Please address to the Secretary, Mr. E. Merz, P.O. Box 85, AUCKLAND.