

Swiss Red Cross : Heiden - 8th May, 1948

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objektyp: **Article**

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

Band (Jahr): **13 (1948)**

Heft 7

PDF erstellt am: **28.05.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-942545>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Inhalten der Zeitschriften. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern.

Die auf der Plattform e-periodica veröffentlichten Dokumente stehen für nicht-kommerzielle Zwecke in Lehre und Forschung sowie für die private Nutzung frei zur Verfügung. Einzelne Dateien oder Ausdrucke aus diesem Angebot können zusammen mit diesen Nutzungsbedingungen und den korrekten Herkunftsbezeichnungen weitergegeben werden.

Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. Die systematische Speicherung von Teilen des elektronischen Angebots auf anderen Servern bedarf ebenfalls des schriftlichen Einverständnisses der Rechteinhaber.

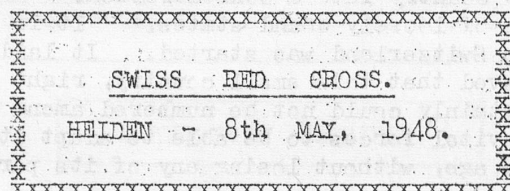
Haftungsausschluss

Alle Angaben erfolgen ohne Gewähr für Vollständigkeit oder Richtigkeit. Es wird keine Haftung übernommen für Schäden durch die Verwendung von Informationen aus diesem Online-Angebot oder durch das Fehlen von Informationen. Dies gilt auch für Inhalte Dritter, die über dieses Angebot zugänglich sind.

still in their infancy, particularly the machine industry. The latter was unable to develop so long as the requisite raw materials, which had to be obtained from abroad, were subject to such high cost of transport and to the complicated conditions, which hindered free trade within the country itself. It took a long time for the railway to be adopted in Switzerland; the first railway line was laid down in 1847 between Zurich and Baden. Postal Revenue came within the competence of each individual Canton, so that there were a number of different postal administrations. All attempts to simplify the economic life of the country, to do away with excise duties and bridge tolls, and to introduce the unification of Swiss currency, proved a long and arduous business. The inhabitants of the central Cantons were far less susceptible to these difficulties, than were the more enterprising Swiss from the Eastern Cantons, as a result of which there was a considerable difference in opinion on these matters.

In comparison with other countries, Switzerland was, already then, from the social point of view, a well-to-do and well balanced country. Compared with her present situation, however, she was a much poorer country. Her soil was too sterile to provide food for her population, which was on the increase. Thousands of her children emigrated to overseas lands. Moreover, at that time, young men could still join foreign Armies in the capacity of mercenaries.

The King of Naples had several Swiss regiments in his service and young men who were unable to make good in their home-land, were only too glad to serve in them for a few years. There were beggars and poverty, and when the harvest failed there would be famine in many a village, up in the mountains, or down in the valley. The people were poorer than they are today, but, all the same, they were full of vital forces and intellectually alert. They were able to cope with the difficulties of that period and to make the best of it.



Today, the 8th of May 1948, marks the 120th anniversary of Henry Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross. On this same day, three years ago hostilities of the second world war came to an end in Europe. On this memorable day the

SWISS RED CROSS

sends a call to meditation upon the spiritual forces which have imbued the work of the Red Cross since the battle of Solferino, to all the Red Cross, Red Crescent and Red Lion and Sun Societies, and through them, to men, women and children of all nations, as well as to their governments. Today, the spirit and work of the Red Cross are more than ever in danger. The sinister aspect of this peril lies in the fact that until today the foundations of a veritable peace, so sadly needed by humanity, has not yet been laid.

The spiritual force, of which the Red Cross was born, is the feeling of kinship of all men; in our fellow-man we see ourselves, our value and dignity, our longing for justice and love, but also our weaknesses and shortcomings. The feeling of kinship of all mankind is the feeling of common origin and destiny, of common task and fate.

When we face suffering and death, our pride vanishes and racial, religious and social discrimination loses all importance. In its place there comes into focus the community of mankind, the responsibility of man towards man, irrespective of his position in life.

The Red Cross was created in order to alleviate suffering inflicted upon men

through sickness and neglect caused by war. Red Cross aid means aid to all, a practical application of man's responsibility toward man. The Red Cross breaks down walls which are blinding people to the reality of their mutual bonds. In the final analysis it means love for each individual who suffers, even for the enemy. The Red Cross has the task of finding, in the darkness of hate and destruction, the human being in need, to be truly charitable to the neighbour, whoever he may be.

We all owe allegiance to the history and to the requirements of the state to which we belong. It is not always easy to carry out impartially the Red Cross mandate of being one's brother's keeper. This is particularly true with regard to those who, in the pursuit of their enemies, have cast aside all human feeling. However, in what other way can we manifest our 'own' humanitarianism, than in the attempt to free our fellow-men from the bonds and guilt which darken their existence? We must look upon them, as did Henri Dunant, as being all brothers. The Red Cross must first of all be the servant and helper of the individual, before it can be the servant and helper of peoples, states and armies.

Responsibility towards the individual and neighbour is not limited to the battlefield, to suffering and death; it enters into human relations as a whole.

It is not enough to assist the weak and helpless; the strong and independent, too, must learn to bridge the gaps which divide men, to break down barriers, to overcome suspicion and strife. For the millions everywhere, who believe in the spirit and work of the Red Cross, it must be a sacred duty to foster unity among men, to enhance the spirit of understanding, to strive for the suppression of brute force. It must become our avowed task to serve humanity not only in time of war, after all semblance of order has broken down, but to work with all their might for the prevention of war.

The spirit of the Red Cross is the spirit of peace. Therefore the plea goes out to everyone. Let us take this spirit into our hearts and carry it into our families, schools, professions, parliaments, governments and into the relations between States.

Looking back over the past tragic years of world history, it is to be hoped that many will become inspired - like Dunant on the battlefield of Solferino - to help free mankind from fear and misery and to spare no sacrifice to help create a human and peaceful world.

SUNDRY NEWS.

TEMPEST IN THE REGION OF HAUTEVILLE.

While the inhabitants of Hauteville took part in some religious service, a water hose of extraordinary violence devastated the region; rivers and torrents grew in an instant and broke their embankments. The waters covered the countryside and inundated many farms. The damage is estimated at several hundred thousand Swiss francs.

GENEVA GETS A NEW HOTEL.

The Council of State has proposed to the Grand Council of Geneva the subscription of the amount of one million francs to the capital of the Building Society that is going to build the "Hotel du Rhone" and to grant to that same society a second mortgage in the amount of five million francs.

ANOTHER WOLF IN THE WALLIS.

The region near Tourtemagne is again being plagued by a wolf. Hunters are trying to track the animal down.