

News from Switzerland

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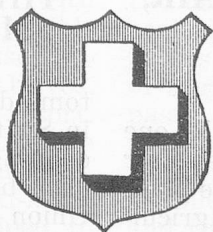
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AUCKLAND.

NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

A Village Celebrates its Eleventh Centenary

The Saint Gallen village of Mosnang, in the Toggenburg, is mentioned for the first time on a parchment document dated February 16th, 854, and bearing the signatures of 52 witnesses. This precious document, which was kept in the Abbey of Saint Gallen, was carried off at the time of the Reform and taken to Bremen. At the end of the Second World War, the Archives of Saint Gallen succeeded in recovering possession of it and the event was commemorated by the inauguration of a fountain and the performance of a play.

Saint Moritz and the 1960 Winter Olympic Games

The Swiss Olympic Games Committee unanimously proposed Saint Moritz as sole candidate for the Winter Olympic Games to be held in 1960. At a meeting of various notabilities of the district it was recently decided to urge the local authorities to persevere in their efforts to have this resort chosen.

The Memory of Richard Wagner Honoured in Zurich

The town of Zurich, represented by its president, Mr. Landolt, and Mr. Widmer, head of the Department of Public Works, inaugurated—in the presence of Mr. Franz Biedler, a nephew of Wagner—a stele erected in the Rietberg Park, in the former Wesendonck estate where he once lived. The great German composer spent two of the most important periods of his life in Switzerland. With but few interruptions, he spent the first at Zurich, from 1849 to 1858, and then lived at Tribschen, near Lucerne, in a charming villa which is now open to the public and full of memories of his genius. In 1857 Otto Wesendonck, a rich merchant from the Rhineland, placed at his disposal a house called "Auf dem grünen Hugel" (On the Green Hill), which now contains the Rietberg museum. It was during this period that Richard Wagner worked on the composition of "Siegfried," "Tristan and Isolde" and "Parsifal."

An Underwater Bar at an Altitude of 3000 Feet

Continuing the work of his father, who died last year and to whom we owe the creation of the resort of Burgenstock perched on a plateau overlooking the Lake of the Four Cantons, Mr. Fritz Frey has just finished building a fine swimming pool of some 5020 square feet in area, which is heated and has an underwater bar, with three portholes looking on to the interior of the pool.

A Memorable Gift

The Winterthur Municipality has informed the Press that in 1951 an "Oscar Reinhart Foundation" was opened in Winterthur. The famous collector, Oscar Reinhart, of that city, wished that part of his collections (incorporating the works of nineteenth century Swiss, German and Austrian painters, and a few eighteenth and twentieth century Swiss paintings) should be open to the general public. Oscar Reinhart has further made it known that, at his death, his mansion "Roemerholz," his library and unique collection of German, Dutch, Spanish and French Old Masters, will revert to the Swiss Confederation. The Reinhart Collection is one of the finest private collections in the world. To quote the "Journal de Geneve": "Its unique character lies both in the intrinsic value of the works it contains and the harmonious unity it derives from the taste with which these works have been selected, one by one, by Mr. Reinhart."

Favre and the Gotthard Tunnel

It was seventy-five years ago, this summer, that the death occurred of Louis Favre, who was the chief artisan of the excavation of the Gotthard and who directed the construction of the railway of the same name. Unfortunately, he was not able to witness the completion of this work as he died suddenly on the construction job, at the age of fifty-three. Favre had spent the greater part of his career abroad, where he had acquired a very great reputation in regard to the building of railroads. His boldness and his dynamism had made him a pioneer in this particular domain.