

General Meeting

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neutrality should be respected. Since the middle ages the Swiss cantons had followed a policy of permanent abstention from foreign quarrels, which proved a blessing not only when religious cleavage threatened to undermine our national cohesion, but also later on, when powerful national States grew up along our frontiers. Neutrality was the protective shield which alone enabled us to preserve the harmony among the members of our Confederation, which, from the beginning, were of different political standing and which, as you know, still belong to different religious beliefs and languages. Neutrality means that, in war and in peace, we abstain from taking sides and from entering into political or military commitments. Our willingness to protect our neutrality and our territory by force of arms, helped to maintain the balance of power on the European Continent; by defending the key position of the alpine massif we protected the flanks of any army operating in the adjacent regions of the Continent. That is the reason why the Act of Paris of 1815, as well as the Treaty of Versailles of 1920, recognised the perpetual neutrality and integrity of Switzerland and admitted that her independence from foreign influence is in the true interest of the whole of Europe. The Swiss people would never have been willing to sacrifice a principle which had guided them so providentially through centuries, if they had not been able to adhere to the League of Nations under a qualified membership, which allowed Switzerland to abstain from military action and only obliged her to participate in collective economic and financial sanctions.

After the failure of collective sanctions against Italy in the Abyssinian conflict, even this differential neutrality was discontinued and Switzerland returned to full neutrality although remaining in the League.

(To be continued).

NOTICE

1st OF AUGUST BADGES

The Consulate has pleasure in announcing that the 1st of August Badges have arrived.

This year, the proceeds from the sale of these badges will be devoted to supporting the activities of Swiss Women's Associations in professional and social fields.

As in the past, they will be sold through the usual channels at 2/- each.

Should anyone not be able to take advantage of the opportunity to purchase them through the kind services of our compatriots who distribute them, the Consulate will be happy to fulfil requests.

GENERAL MEETING

All members are cordially invited to attend the Annual General Meeting, to be held at Mr. Risi's Place, Ngaruawahia (opposite the military camp), on Saturday, the 7th of July, at 2 p.m. At the same time a special general meeting is to be held to vote re the alteration of rules as provided in Art. 12 of the Society's rules. The principal points are to make the scope of the Society more universal, so as to embrace also social and cultural activities, as exposed by the president in previous reports. The rules will have to be changed accordingly. At the same time it is suggested to call the Society "The Swiss Society of New Zealand." It is important that as many members as possible attend this meeting, which will be held at Mr. Risi's place in the Waikato, so as to allow the maximum number of members of southern districts to attend.

NOTICE CONCERNING SWISS CALENDARS FOR 1957

To enable our compatriots to procure a pictorial calendar from Switzerland for 1957, the Consulate is prepared to pass a collective order. Applicants are asked to write to the Swiss Consulate, P.O. Box 386, Wellington, C.1, and to remit at the same time the amount in question. The following calendars are offered:—

- (a) THE ALPINE CALENDAR, 1957 (Stehli); price 12/-.
- (b) SWITZERLAND, 1957 (Novos); price 12/-.

Orders for these calendars will be accepted UNTIL JULY 1st, 1956.

CORRESPONDENCE: Please address to the Secretary,

Mr. E. Gilgen,
P.O. Box 2875, Auckland, C.1.

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