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Pro Patria Stamps 1978

in aid of institutions of and for Swiss abroad

As was announced in the June issue 1978, the proceeds of the sale of National Day badges on 1st August, which go to a different Swiss project every year, will be allotted to the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad this year. In addition to the sale of badges, there is the surtax on the Pro Patria stamps. The more of the four stamps you purchase, the more you support the activities of the institutions which work for you.

So please buy large numbers of these stamps with the castles, which have been attractively created by Anne Oertle from Winterthur.

The Canton of Thurgau

The historian *Dr. phil. Albert Schoop* is a teacher of history, political science and German at the Cantonal School of Thurgau at Frauenfeld. He is the author of several works on the more recent history of the Thurgau and Switzerland, as amongst others «The History of the Thurgau Militia», of the jubilee publication «The Canton of Thurgau from 1803–1953» in the young citizens' book «Our Thurgau», now in its fifth edition. He is the publisher of an «Economic History of the Canton of Thurgau». His monograph in two volumes «Johann Konrad Kern» deserves the special interest of the Swiss abroad (see page 4). Dr. Schoop who was Vice-President of the Foundation «Pro Helvetia», is a member of the Commission of the Swiss Abroad.

«The fertility of the ground almost surpasses the activities of the country people. Cereals, maize, hemp and flax, potatoes, poppies, artificial and natural meadows, all of it one finds together in one spot, and in addition a large number of apple and pear trees which don't hamper in the least the growth of the land crops. The trees grow in such abundance that one might be tempted to believe these fruit varieties were being grown deliberately. Without doubt, the Thurgau is a very beautiful country; it has very well-cultivated fields, attractive farm-houses; the men are tall of figure, the women handsome; moreover, the country lies on one of the most beautiful lakes of Europe.» This is what a German traveller wrote about the Thurgau in 1842, and on the whole it still holds good today. The Canton, situated on the North-Eastern border of Switzerland, belongs to the medium-sized, more quiet and little-known Cantons. Because it had some difficulties, especially in the 'sixties, to keep in step with the richer regions of the Midlands, in the three times seven fat years of Swiss economy its beautiful landscape has largely remained un-

spoilt. More and more Swiss discover the charm of the Thurgau hills and forests, and anyone looking for an ideal part for rambling holidays away from known centres, will make a note of the shore of the romantic Untersee and the large open Lake of Constance which unites three peoples.

Geography

The «*Thurgi*» is small, with its just over 1000 square kilometres only half as big as its Southern neighbour St. Gall. Its area not even covers a 41st part of little Switzerland. It looks almost like an equilateral triangle between Lake of Constance, Untersee and Rhine on one side and the pre-Alpine Hoernli on the other. Up above there is the Weiler Hoell'; that is why the neighbours call the Thurgau people strange: they have Paradise at the lowest point in the Canton (today it is the Iron Library of Georg Fischer AG, Schaffhausen), higher up Horn, a tax haven, and right on top Hell.

The countryside itself is undramatic. Hill ranges prevail, most of them created from moraines of the prehistoric Rhine Glacier, and they run from East to West. Shady, loosely scattered woods enliven them; altogether there are over 20000 hectares of forest or one-fifth of the productive area. The river Thur which gives the Canton its name, runs through the green plain in the middle, and everywhere, in valleys and on hillsides, villages and hamlets are situated. The Thurgau is a Canton without an urban centre; its capital Frauenfeld lies on the Western border; the rising village in the geographical middle, the marketplace of Weinfelden in the Thur valley, has never considered itself