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A preliminary international conference took place at Geneva in October 1863, and on August 22 1864, the International Red Cross treaty was signed in a chamber of the City Hall at Geneva, which is now known as the Alabama Room, the Alabama Claims Commission having convened there from December 15, 1871 until September 14, 1872.

As a compliment to Switzerland the Swiss flag in reversed colours, i.e. a red cross on a white field, was adopted as the insignia of everything connected with the Red Cross.

The International Red Cross is observing its 75th anniversary this year. Humanity, again distressed by warfare will need its labour of devotion and sacrifice more than ever.

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#### SWISS AS CHIEF OF GENERAL STAFF IN FINNLAND.

Finnland, the unfortunate country now also involved in war, has a Swiss as leader of the General Staff of the Army. General Karl Lennart Oesch, born in 1892 has a splendid record as a Finnish soldier. In the last war he fought as a volunteer against Russia, and now he has reached one of the highest positions, to again fight the old enemy.

SWISS FLEET. Two ships under the Swiss flag and "Switzerland" freshly painted on each side, loaded a quarter of a million bushel of oats in Philadelphia last November. The surprise of many a visitor along the wharfs can easily be visualised, as we have no ships on the high sea. Official news indicates that Switzerland actually chartered sixteen ships from Greek shipping lines. These ships bring essential food and other cargo from all over the world to Marseilles and Genoa for transit to Switzerland.

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#### NEWS IN BRIEF.

A New Year's broadcast takes place from Switzerland on January 1st at 5.45 p.m. (N.Z. time) on wavelength 20.46 and 26.31

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Our little neighbour in the East the Principality LIECHTENSTEIN has just declared its neutrality. Its Government has, through the Swiss Embassy, taken steps to request the Powers to recognise its neutrality. This little State may be looked upon as a curiosity as it is formally still at war with Prussia since 1866.

Already in September of last year when threatening war clouds began to darken the horizon the Swiss Federal Council instructed all the Embassies in foreign countries to organise a transport system for the Swiss who were desirous of returning to their native land, in case of war. The bulk of this important task fell to the Embassy in Paris inasmuch as it has to assist not only the Swiss in France, but also all comers of our nationality from other countries, who have to travel through France. In all respective states, places have been publicly appointed where the Swiss may assemble.

On September 5th it was reported from Geneva that 40,000 Swiss were expected to arrive there from France by special trains. The population has been preparing to receive these unfortunate victims of evacuation.