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A ROSE AMONG THORNS.

The Editor of the well-known Christchurch paper "Star Sun" has published in his issue of 20th October, 1945, under the above heading, the following thoughtful and excellent editorial:

"In the picturesque city of Berne, Swiss people recently witnessed the ceremony of their Army's demobilisation. It was a colourful parade of cavalry, infantry and air corps, of regimental banners and national white crosses on fields of red, of civilians in dress suits and top hats and of representatives of foreign Governments. No one, apparently, thought it worth reporting in a cable message, yet a peculiar significance attached to this gathering which really merited more attention at the time. Here, surrounded by the misery and ruins that once were civilised Europe, a little nation of peace and contentment was celebrating the end of another chapter in its century-long history of neutrality; and to the Swiss themselves, as it should have been to the whole world, it was a great moment of thanksgiving. Switzerland stands unique among the neutral nations, for it is the only country concerning which an international agreement has been more honoured in the observance rather than in the breach. The Congress of Paris in 1815 guaranteed the perpetual neutrality of Switzerland "in the interests of the politics of all Europe". True, the altruistic phrasing of that document may not have had much influence upon the aggressors of the twentieth century. Nor, as the Swiss Commander-in-Chief said at Berne, was the nation so presumptuous as to think that because of its merit alone it had been respected by the belligerent armies. The fact is that a neutral Switzerland is a blessing to all warring parties, economically and politically, for its ancient role as the focal crossroad for Europe's traders and travellers has merged into its modern function as the centre of the humanitarian work of the International Red Cross. The Allies in particular have cause to thank the Swiss for serving the cause of freedom in this way, and none would care to say that any greater contribution could have been made by the people whose armed forces have now been "stood-down" from the defence of their frontiers and returned to civilian life."

SOLDIER'S GIFT PARCELS: Most of the boys having been overseas in the past few years, have, or will be returning home. However, a few may be transferred for service in Japan, and we would like parents of these to give us the respective addresses. Please write to the Secretary promptly.

NEW MEMBERS WANTED: Your committee wishes to remind all compatriots to make an effort and endeavour to enrol friends who are not yet members of the Society to join us. For details give your friend the Secretary's address.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T S.

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