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HELVETIA



MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE SWISS SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND (INC)

Group New Zealand of the New Helvetic Society

22nd Year

JANUARY, 1959

Hamilton

NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE

My dear Compatriots,

In 1958, I had for the first time the privilege of taking part in the celebration of our National Day with a large number of you from Wellington to Hamilton, from Taranaki to Auckland. Let me tell you what a refreshing feeling it has been for me to witness the vitality of your developing community, your dignified attachment to the old country, as well as your appreciation for the hospitality which we enjoy in New Zealand: good luck for the tasks ahead!

May 1959 hold much happiness for you all, for your families in Switzerland and in New Zealand, particularly for those in ill health and those who have been bereaved. This is the sincere wish of us all in the Swiss Consulate.

P-H. AUBARET,
Consul-General.

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NOTICE FROM THE CONSULATE

On December 11th, 1958, *Prof. F. T. Wahlen* was elected by the Federal Assembly to succeed the late Dr M. Feldmann as member of the Federal Council. A Bernese citizen and born in the Canton of Bern in 1899, the new Federal Councillor studied at the E.T.H. in Zurich, where he became an Ing. agr. and Dr sc. techn. before going to Canada where he stayed from 1922 to 1929. From 1924 to 1929 he was Head of the Experimental Stations of the Canadian Agricultural Department. From 1929 to 1943, he was in charge of the Federal Agricultural Experimental Station at Zurich-Oerlikon, from 1938 to 1942 of the section for agricultural production and household supplies in the "Eidgenoessische Kriegsernaehrungsamt," from 1924 to 1945 the Federal Council entrusted him with the agricultural development scheme which has been known since as "Plan Wahlen" and proved of decisive importance to the country during the years of the war. In 1943 he became a Professor at the E.T.H. In 1942 Dr Wahlen became a member of the Staenderat (Council of States). In 1949, he was appointed Head of the Agricultural Division of the F.A.O. (in Washington and then in Rome) and he has been Deputy Director-General of the F.A.O. for the last year. Prof. Wahlen, who had received the "Marcel Benoist Prize" in 1942, was made a Dr h.c. of the University of Zurich in 1946.

Prof. Wahlen took the oath as Federal Councillor immediately after the election.

On December 11th, 1958, the Federal Assembly elected Federal Councillor P. Chaudet to be President of the Confederation in 1959, and Federal Councillor G. Lepori Vice-President of the Confederation. Dr Carlo Pometta was appointed President of the Federal Court for 1959, and Federal Judge Schonenberger Vice-President.

The Consulate has been advised that, due to the present economic position, the New Zealand Government has found it necessary to suspend the recruitment of single Swiss migrants under the Assisted Passage Scheme which has been operating for some time. It is the intention of the authorities to deal with all applications that have been received.

CORRECTION TO PICNIC DATE

Please note that the Combined Picnic at Mercer will now be held on 25th January next and not on 31st January as previously advertised in the December issue of *Helvetia*.

NEWS OF THE COLONY

Obituary

Mrs Paul Zimmerman, although of indifferent health for a long time, died unexpectedly in the Calvary Hospital, Hawera, on November 19th last. Formerly nee Johanna Schorno, Mrs Zimmerman hailed from the Paltsflue, Goldau. She came to New Zealand in 1914 with a contingent of Swiss immigrants, mostly from the Canton Unterwalden, of whom one, Paul Zimmerman, was to become her husband in 1922. The marriage was a very happy one, although not blessed with children. Mr Zimmerman died in 1941 and after that Johanna was to become a housekeeper for Catholic Presbyteries in Hastings and Okato and for the last few years for the Maori Mission in Waitara. Her life was full of service to God and mankind. A large number of Swiss people and other friends paid their last tribute to her at the funeral in Hawera. R.I.P. —M.K.

