

Motor in a tiepin

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heavily wounded prisoners who are to be released from captivity. These soldiers will either be taken home via Switzerland or interned in Swiss camps under most comfortable conditions.

Some of the delegates of the International Red Cross are already abroad. As Germany took numerous prisoners during her campaign against Poland, two Swiss doctors are now visiting camps for prisoners of war and civilian internees within the German border; this commission will go on to Poland and Norway from there. Another delegation has been sent to France, while the delegate to Great Britain, Dr. Haccius, has left England only a day or two ago.

Another task of the Genevan Institution, which has rapidly increased owing to Hitler's latest invasions, consists in establishing the fate and whereabouts of civilians. For this purpose the central enquiry bureau for prisoners of war at Geneva has opened a special branch department for enquiries and correspondence about civilians, where queries concerning Dutch, Belgian or Luxemburg citizens should now be sent. There have been in existence since the outbreak of hostilities special sections dealing with enquiries about British, French, German, Polish, Danish, Norwegian and Egyptian nationals.

It is obvious that the departments for enquiries about prisoners of war are run on a similar system of the various national sections; here, too, new departments had to be opened for the Belgians and Dutchmen, while the buffer state Luxemburg could not boast of an army and therefore now has no prisoners of war to claim. The German authorities already two weeks ago have disclosed the names of all their Dutch and Belgian prisoners; however, owing to the latest developments most of these unfortunates may have been released and sent home.

Whether you wish to inquire about an internee of the *Graf Spee* at Buenos Aires, a Norwegian prisoner of war or a more recent victim from the Western Front, whether you wish to send a postcard or a huge parcel containing everything from the socks up, in every case the Institution in Geneva will be helpful, as the many letters of thanks prove that are pouring in from all over the world.

MOTOR IN A TIEPIN.

(“*Tit-Bits*,” 13.7.40.)

Most ingenious of all the marvels at the recent Swiss National Exhibition was a perfect little electric motor — or, rather motorette — weighing only about one-sixth of a gramme. (And remember, there are sixteen grammes to one ounce!) It was made by M. Huguenin, a watchmaker in the Vevey district of Switzerland.

Now M. Huguenin has beaten his own record by producing a midget masterpiece. Using powerful magnifying glasses, he has constructed a machine weighing less than 1-500th of an ounce. It runs perfectly, on current supplied by a dry battery. And it is so small that he has placed it in a pearl, cut in two, and mounted the pearl in a tiepin.

SWITZERLAND, A LIVING MIRACLE.

The following is reproduced from the May number of our contemporary “Der Schweizer” published in New York, U.S.A.

Way back in 1803 the great Napoleon Bonaparte declared: “Nature destined Switzerland to become a League of States; no wise man would attempt to conquer it.” This pronouncement seems fully justified when one considers that of the country's 4,068,000 inhabitants, 2.9 million speak German, 830,000 French, 242,000 Italian and 44,000 Romansch. Until 1937 only German, French and Italian figured as Switzerland's official languages. In that year, however, Romansch was recognized by the government as the nation's fourth language. Federal decrees have since then been issued in four, instead of only three tongues.

Romansch formed itself in the course of the centuries from the every-day Latin of the Roman soldiers and settlers in the Grisons mountain valleys of the rivers Rhine and Inn, and from the Celtic language, which was the mother tongue of the original conquered population. Formerly Romansch was spoken by many more people and over a much wider territory. It was the language of the Davos valley; for example, the Romansch name of Davos being “Tavau.”

In literature the very musical Romansch language began to appear in the 16th century only. In recent decades, however, thanks to the tireless efforts of the “Rateo Romansch Society,” it has definitely asserted itself. The Romansch press is spreading and Switzerland is no longer just a trilingual country.

The Swiss people, according to the author Hans Rudolf Schmid, are a fusion of numerous Bronze Age elements comprising Rhaetian, Gallic, Celtic, Roman, Ligurian, Illyrian and Teutonic components which, in the course of time, gave birth to a mixture that is unique. Thus Swiss are also entitled to include among their ancestors some 110,000 Helvetians, who after their honourable defeat at Bibracte by Julius Caesar in 58 B.C., were compelled to return to their settlements in Switzerland which they had abandoned in their desire to migrate westward, away from constantly threatening invaders from the North. — Only 16% of Switzerland's population are of the fair-haired, blue-eyed type, while this percentage rises to 64 just beyond the northern frontier.

Switzerland has an area of 15,737 square miles. Three of its four languages are of Latin derivation. This lingual diversity of the nation occasions cultural problems of various kinds, which are not to be solved merely by the publication of official Federal decrees in the four languages. The very fact that the lingual elements live side by side in the one State makes it necessary for the individual citizen to learn at least one other language. Thus, in German speaking Switzerland, the school children are taught French from the Junior-High stage on, and in the French and Romansch speaking sections they learn German instead. In the Italian speaking portion of the country German or French will be the second tongue they are taught and in intermediary schools and higher institutions of learning throughout Switzerland it is customary for students to embark upon the study of a third language, the same being Italian or in many