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**Autor:** Schmid, Walter

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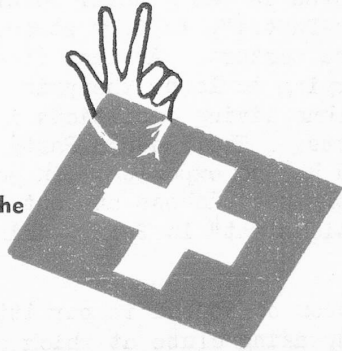
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# HELVETIA

Monthly Publication of the



SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY  
in New Zealand

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Group New Zealand of the N.H.G.

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WELLINGTON  
DECEMBER, 1942.

No. 3, 8th Year.

## NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE FROM THE SWISS CONSUL AT WELLINGTON.

On the threshold of the New Year I should like to extend to all my fellow countrymen in New Zealand, also in the name of my family, best wishes for their future. May they enjoy, as ever, the blessings of good health and the fruits of their daily work and toil.

For all those who are separated from their New Zealand-born sons and other relatives, who are fulfilling sacred duties on far-away battlefields, I hope that the longing for safe return of loved ones may soon be answered. I also know that on the occasion of the forthcoming New Year, the thoughts of all of us will, more than ever, be linked with our people at Home and our Homeland. We all hope that the stars of Good Fortune which have so kindly been reigning over them, will not cease to shine. On the other hand, we have good occasion to admire the courage and the staunch spirit of independence displayed by our own kith and kin in Switzerland in a world fraught with deadly danger. It is, then, the duty of all of us, as their representatives in this country, to be a true mirror of such faith and confidence.

DR. WALTER SCHMID.

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## SWISS PEASANT HOLDS FAST TO FREE HERITAGE.

(Special to 'The Christian Science Monitor', Boston), 3/10/42.

The Swiss peasant to-day thinks he is a little bit different from other peasants of Europe. It is not because he is living in a relatively free country. It is not that he considers himself on a socially higher strata. It is just that Switzerland's farmers have been perhaps more closely associated with the advancement of democracy within their own state. If other states have gained democratic institutions, it has been largely due to the efforts of a different group within the country. In Switzerland, the freedom, individual independence and representative government is the result, primarily, of a peasant movement - of the peasants, by the peasants and for the peasants.

The shepherd on the slopes of the Jungfrau and the smith in the village of Alpnachstad - each has been taught that his is the oldest tradition of national and social independence of any peasantry in Europe. It has been passed down through generations that Switzerland started as a peasant movement towards freedom from the aristocratic system of domination set up by the Habsburgs. And almost any Swiss farmer can relate stories of how in many fierce battles, faced by overwhelming odds of armoured knights, peasants of Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden and Bern gradually fought their way to freedom.

The reason they had advanced so far is found in their democratic principle. Hand in hand with their national independence goes the Swiss peasants' love of self-government. Each small farm community is a political unit, almost a state in itself.