

Notice to intending travellers

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Europe with Milan and Rome. One of the most interesting and rewarding tours can be made from Brig through the beautiful Loetschental. Every Easter Monday a famous religious festival is held at Ferden, which is visited by the inhabitants of all the other villages in the valley and where, according to an old custom, everyone receives his share of bread and cheese. The Loetschental is filled with beautiful flowers and is an ideal place for the real lover of nature.

A description of the Canton of Valais should never omit the Hospice of the great St. Bernard and of the Abbey at St. Maurice. The Hospice is a plain structure near the summit of the pass where a temple to Jupiter stood in Roman times. The Hospice accommodates 300 people and the monks belong to the Order of St. Augustine. No charge is made for food and lodging and the hospitality of the monks is still genuine as in olden days. As many as 30,000 travellers have been sheltered in some years, and in days gone by, many lives have been saved by the famous St. Bernard dogs trained to rescue travellers caught in storms or avalanches. These dogs are world famous and probably share, with William Tell and the Lion of Lucerne, first place in the imagination of such foreigners who have heard just a few things about Switzerland.

At St. Maurice is the oldest cloister in Switzerland. Though at first sight disappointing, its sacristy contains a world-famous collection of very rare and valuable goldsmith's work, some dating back to the eighth century. This most ancient of all monasteries traces its foundations back to the Burgundian King Sigismund in 517 A.D. The church as it exists today knew ten preceding building periods.

The Canton of Valais is full of interest, but unfortunately not sufficiently known even by the Swiss in general. Rewarding vacations can be spent there almost every season, and although a mecca for all advanced mountaineers, there are numerous towns and villages with lovely walks in larch and pine forests and the hiker in particular will find endless pleasure. The Valaisans themselves are as picturesque as the beautiful scenery. For instance in Sion on market days when the peasants come in from the surrounding countryside, it looks as if the clock had been turned back at least a hundred years. The women, with their weather-beaten faces and their black stockings, reflect the difficult life and the sturdy tradition of these mountain folk. Even the younger women who have been to the large cities to work, when they return to their families or marry their childhood sweethearts, adopt again the habits and dress of their ancestors. The Valaisans cling with passionate devotion to this land of theirs, and to anyone who has seen this region and fallen under its charm, this devotion is easily understood.

In conclusion a few lines about the famous Walliser Wine. This Canton possesses every advantage for good wine growing—no fog, little rainfall and plenty of sun and heat extending far into the autumn months. The quality of the wines produced between Brig and Martigny can easily hold its own with that of almost any country. Immense plantations extend along the right bank of the river Rhone and with the elaborate system of artificial irrigation, they are still further enlarged every year. The excellent climate, however, is not sufficient to produce such excellent quality wine. The winegrowers have given endless years of hard work removing stones from the soil and building carefully graduated terraces so that the vines might have every protection. The best known Wallisers are the white "Fendant" and the red "Dole," the latter similar to the Burgundy wines of France.

E.M.

NOTICE TO INTENDING TRAVELLERS

Due to the difficulties experienced in the past by Swiss nationals who have travelled away from New Zealand, and who subsequently have wished to return, it is thought desirable to draw the attention of all intending travellers to the fact that before leaving New Zealand they should make application to a Collector of Customs for a Certificate of Registration authorising their readmission to New Zealand. The procedure is for the travellers to produce their passport with two photographs of passport size and complete a written application. The period of validity of the certificate granted is shown on the face of the certificate, and the holder is permitted to return to New Zealand provided that on arrival back at a New Zealand port they establish their identity and the certificate is still valid.

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CORRESPONDENCE: Please address to the Secretary,

MR. E. MERZ,
P.O. Box 85, Auckland.

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