

Notes & gleanings

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NOTES & GLEANINGS.

A happy thought of the inhabitants of Château d'Oeux led to the placing at the Cenotaph in Whitehall of a wreath of alpine flowers. The flowers—narcissi—were collected on Monday, the 22nd of May, on the mountain slopes by people of this famous little village, which during and after the war had housed so many British officers and men, and were sent as a tribute to the heroism of those who had died in captivity. The flowers were despatched by aeroplane to Paris and thence to London, and the wreath was deposited at its destination on Thursday, May 25th, by the Swiss Minister and Madame Paravicini. The incident has naturally not escaped the press photographers, and the following snapshot will doubtless interest and delight our readers.



* * *

With reference to the recently inaugurated Wireless Service between Berne and this country (see *S.O.* Apr. 15) it will come as a surprise to gather from a statement made last week by the Postmaster-General in the House of Commons that this new aerial link between the two countries is subject to the conclusion of a "suitable agreement" between the British Government and the Marconi Company, in the absence of which the temporary permission is likely to be withdrawn.

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Most interesting articles on the development of engineering and electricity in Switzerland appear in the *Engineer* (May 19th) and *Engineering* (May 19th); the latter journal also refers to some of the salient points in Dr. William Waldvogel's book.

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According to the *Civilian* (May 20th) the Society of Civil Servants—

"is about to arrange a visit to Switzerland in September with the purpose of inspecting Government Departments similar in character to those it visited in Paris in 1920 and at The Hague in 1922. The delegation will probably leave London

on the 1st September and return on the 17th September. Both Berne and Geneva will be visited. At the first-named city the Swiss Federal Offices will be visited and the International Bureau of Posts and Telegraphs. At Geneva it is hoped to participate in the Conference of the League of Nations and to inspect the International Labour Bureau. The business part of the programme concluded, arrangements will be made to spend a few days in Grindelwald and Montreux. The precise details as to expense, etc., are yet to be completed, but it is expected they will soon be announced. All members of the Society are eligible to form part of the delegation, and they may be accompanied by their wives or friends who are not members of the Society."

* * *

The *Daily Express* (May 26th) gives a word of warning and advice to those who travel to Switzerland in search of health, but it seems to us that the "bone of contention" is to be looked for in this country, and that the Swiss chemist can hardly be expected to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the antiquated method of prescribing medicine:—

"Most of these health-seekers carry a doctor's prescription with them, but what is it worth when a foreign chemist or his dispenser cannot read it accurately? Custom or fetish has decreed for hundreds of years that the medicine man must still be the mystery man, and he writes the simplest instructions in a form which suggest the abracadabra of the East, an impenetrable symbol to all save the initiated.

The British chemist understands. He knows that "acq" represents water, and that the dotted symbols represent measures.

Here comes the danger abroad. Our British conservatism has steadily turned its back on metric measures. The Continental chemist knows no others. Take the simplest prescription written in British figures to an ignorant or unscrupulous foreign chemist—and he will make a guess at the various proportions.

The result to the traveller may well be an introduction to the cemetery at the worst, or a very unsatisfactory health holiday at the best. Many people occupy permanent flats in foreign cemeteries owing to chemists having made up prescriptions they could not read.

What is the safe course? If you know you are going abroad, get your doctor to write his prescription as clearly as he can, and in metric measure if possible. If he cannot do the latter, go to one of the great firms of chemists in London and get them to do it for you. Failing this—only go to a British chemist abroad. They can be found in all the capitals and great cities in the world. If you cannot find one, it is better to go without your medicine. Better dispense with it than give it to an unreliable dispenser."

* * *

Another article by Violet Markham appears in the *Westminster Gazette* (May 23rd) and is headed "The Woman's Vote in Switzerland," but it contains only a few lines *en passant* about this subject, and reiterates her former notions about the costliness of our Government institutions. All the same, she has a high regard for our country, and she seems to regret some unkind remarks, for she admits that "the Swiss, presumably, know their 'own business best in this matter, and it is not for the 'foreigner to criticise."

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