## Notes and gleanings

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Che Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

The Swiss Federal Railways, in addition to the abolition of the surtaxes on the goods traffic over the Gothard railway, propose, as from January 1st next, to issue "kilometer" books to the residents of the adjoining valleys in the cantons of Grisons, Ticino and Uri, i.e., the fares will be based on
the distance alone, the existing mountain surtax the distance alo
being dropped.

An unusual accident befell Mr. Häfliger-Fournier from Santodoz (near Montreux) who was caught in a thunderstorm on the outskirts of a wood. He struck by lightning, the latter being evidently attracted by the steel rod of the umbrella as it passed into the earth via the victim's watch chain. His wife, who was on the point of giving him her arm, received severe burns, from which, however, she is expected to recover

A German aeroplane with five passengers on board, in trying to make a forced landing last Wednesday night (July 22nd), was totally wrecked just outside Baden. The pilot, who, owing to flying to Munich. He was caught by a gust of wind, lost his bearings. in the darkness and was driven into Switzerland; when circling round Zurich he imagined he had reached Munich.

Temporarily blinded by the glaring lights of another automobile, M. Clovis Bertrand, the manager of a Lausanne garage, misjudged the width of the
road, with the result that his car fell over the bank road, with the result that his car fell over the bank into a stone quarry, where it overturned. The unfortunate driver was subseguently extricated from his precarigus position and transported to the in-
firmary at Morges, where he died the following day from his injuries.

The large Dough and Paste Factory Spanioli in Martigny (Valais) was completely destroved by fire last week, together with large stores of corn. The fire is said to be due to a short-circuit.

Pour le fer Août. Les insignes de 1925. A l'instar de ce yui a été fait les deux années précédentes, on vendra le 1er août, dans toutes les parties de la Sulse, villes, villages et hameaux,
des insignes de fête. Le produit de la vente et les des insignes de fête. Le produit de la vente et les recettes provenant des. cartes postales du 1er aont
En 1923 et 1924 , les insignes de soie de En 1923 et 1924, les insignes de soie de la Suisse orientale, excellents produits des fabriques de broderies de Saint-Gall, ont trouve un ecouleCette fois, le comité s'est adressé à l'industrie de a Suisse romande. La maison Huguenin frères et Co, aut Locle, chargée de l'exécution de l'insigne, a livré une médaille attachée à un ruban rouge et blanc qui fera certainement la joie de tous les amis et partisans de notre fête nationale. Un vigoureux jeune homme parcourt le pays le baton de voyageur à la main; dans le fond, des lignes délicates esquissent les montagnes où des feux de joie illuminent la crois fédérale vers laquelle s'élève, dans le geste du serment, la main droite du pèlerin. L'image est un symbole touchant de l'amour de la patrie et de l'enthousiasme pour le jour de notre
fête nationale, dont la date est inscrite en trois fête nationale, dont la date est inscrite en trois langues autour de la croix. Nous souhaitons à ce ciers. (Communiques du comité de la jête nationate.)

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By " Kyburg,"

## Switzerland

There is probably a number of Swiss-by-marriage in our Colony here, and they will be much obliged by getting some authentic information of their new (18th July) will fore (18th July) will therefore be of particular interest

This well-known country is in Switzerland The natives are called Swiss, from their habit of swissling people and adding in the date
Switzerland is largely populated by Alps, which is what they call their mountains, becaus hey don't kow holl to spell motntains. There re also large number condensed milk cov ho nestle among the chocolate trees
The principal inhabitants of Switzerland used to be the famous family Robinson, but some years ago they were wrecked on a desert island, ince when they have used no other
The mountains (or Alps) are very high, but you should see the hotel bills, some of which have snow on them all the year round.
Switzerland has no navy to speak of, and that's why I am not going to speak of it.
It is in the snow-covered Alps that the famous St. Bernard dogs are found. These curions creatures carry a barrel of brandy tied round theit necks, which assists them to discover lost tourist, That, at least, is the popular superstition, but the real facts are that the lost tourist smells the brandy and thus tracks down the dog, who then leads him home
The passes through the Alps are inhabited by large quantities of old men and young women The former make a living by advising the tripper to beware the pine tree's withered branch and to keep his eyes skinned for the awful avalanche On the other hand, the young women are in the habit of entreating the traveller to stay and rest his weary head upon their chests. This ealthy competition serves to keep the price down; but the young women generally win.
The highest mountain in Switzerland is Blan mange, or something like that. It is fright fully high, and even the best disinfectant does.t seem to do any good

## Matterhorn on the Move

Eiening Standard (27th July):-
The Matterhorn has begun to move and threat ens to engulf a number of villages and hamlet situated on the Italian side in the Val Tournanche at an altitude of 6,000 feet.
Small avalanches of stones fell in this district about a month ago but no notice was taken of them by the villagers.
When, however, large crevasses appeared on the mountain side, and great boulders began to umble down to the valley, snapping trees in their path like matches, the villagers appealed to the authorifies at Turin for aid.
The inhabitants of Ussin, the largest village in the Alpine valley, and a dozen smaller villages and hamlets directly in the path of the landslide, have been sent down already to Breuil, as the authorities consdiered that their lives were in danger.

There were heartrending scenes when the vil lagers, mostly poor peasants, had to evacuate their homes. They refused to leave them, declaring to die there, and the soldiers were the dange employ force to make them leak the danger zone with their cattle and chattels.
Engineers and a detachment of Alpine troop are now encamped near the threatened spot.
The melting of the winter snows and the recent heavy rains in the Alps are the causes of the landslide. It is the first time in history that the solid frowning Matterhorn, which is 14,775 feet high, has moved.
The above may give some people an unduly alarming picture, and some who may have seen, -and who has not? pictures of the "Cervin may be appalled at the idea of that mighty giant falling or moving to destruction. The facts are of course, that a very disastrous landslide may of an impression on the mountain itself, withou being noticeable even to the casual visitor after wards. However, our sympathies will go out to those unfortunate people whose homes are being threatened, and all Swiss who know something of the tenacity with which mountain people cling
o their homes will understand what terrible sor row such calamities produce.

Funeral March of the Icefelds
The People (12th July):-
Locked in the crawling ice-river of the Glacier de Bossons, six human bodies have for over half a century been making their last journey down Mont Blanc. They are the corpses of expedition which perished in the Alps in 1870. Scientists, measuring the slow progress of the glacier, declare that the ice may be expected
to deliver up its dead this summer. Last week the watchers saw the vague outline of an embedded ice-axe, and almost any day now the last grim discovery may be made. Here is the story of that remote and awful tragedy whose last chapter may at last become known.
All Switzerland is watching the lower end of the famous Glacier de Bossons for the remaining six members of the Corkindale-Bean expeing six members of the Corkindale-Bean expe-
dition, who, for fifty-five years, have been travelling slowly with the vast ice-mass towards the ling slowly with the vast
valley below Mont Blanc.
It is hoped that upon these bodies, which will have, even after the lapse of over half a century, every appearance of life and perfect preservation, will be found the full story of the disaster which overtook the intrepid party on their way back after conquering the giant snow-clad peak.
Something is already known of that catastrophe. The body of Dr. Bean was recovered, and upon it was found a poignant diary describing the coming of death on the blizzard-swept heights above Chamonix.
One entry, addressed to the doctor's wife, ran: September 7, Evening.
My Dear Bessie,-We have been two day upon Mont Blanc in the midst of a terrible tempest of snow. We have lost our way, and we are in a hole dug in the snow at a heigh of 15,000 feet. I have no hope of descending Perhaps this notebook will be found and sent to you. We have nothing to eat. My feet are already frozen, and I am exhausted I have only the power to write a few words. I die in the faith of God and i
love for you.-Yours for ever,
This last communication from a man doomed to spend years frozen in the heart of a glacier is scrawled in a shaky hand-the, hand of a march on the ice fields, Since then the of dead men, has been moving towards the valley of Chamonix at the rate of 500 feet a year.

Whether the five guides and the remaining members of the party are now to be recovered, and whether upon these stiff bodies will be found the story of their end ,may be known within a few days.
Forty years ago the relics of the Hamel Fx pedition were found in the lower end of this
same great ice mass.
Dr. Hamel was a Russian naturalist. He set out in the face of every sort of warning from experienced Swiss guides who foresaw dirty At 600 feet ahove the Grand Creasse the him

At 600 feet above the Grand Crevasse the feet lanche of new snow Climbers started an avaengulfed under 200 feet of snow and swept into crevasse of the glacier.
The bodres of these men and their notebooks were all given up by the glacier.
In 1864 , two Austrian count

In 1864, two Austrian counts, accompanied by Swiss guides, set out to master the peak.
They reached the summit, but on their way They reached the summit, but on their way
down, while crossing an ice bridge over the down, while crossing an ice bridge over the Grand Crevasse, the snow gave way, and they were precipitated into the yawning depths below. For 20 years after this fatality there lived at Chamonix a widow in deepest mourning. She never spoke to any of her fellow-guests in her
hotel. And every day she went to the edge of hotel. And every day she went to the edge of
the village from where she could contemplate the village from where she conld contemplate the majestic peak, which had snatched from her her Tife's happiness.
the unhappy countess lived for one event ice Shery of her husband's body from the task it spent thousands on watchers, whose for signs of the dead man. But he was never found, and now his widow rests in the little cemetery of Chamonix.
No less tragic was the fate of the party which set out in the same year as the ill-fated Corkindale-Bean Expedition. It consisted of a Mr. and Mrs. Marks and a Miss Wilkinson, and a number of guides
The party were nearing the summit when were detailed to recame exhausted. Two guides after the party had separated, wild shiels were heard. Mr. and Mrs. Marks and their guides hurried back. The other party had disappeared through a hole in the snow
through a hole in the snow. They were seen 50 feet below on a ledge of
ice, battered, but alive. But when the ropes ice, battered, but alive. But when the ropes
were lowered to them, thes were found to be just a few feet too short.

Nothing remained to be done but to leave the prisoners and hurry back to Chamonix for a relief party. This was done. But when the relief party returned, there was no sign of the woman or her companions. The ice had en
gulfed them. Reading the above, I was remindled of a novel called, I think, "La Mort Blanche," which I read when at college at Yverdon in my young days and which then made a very deep impression upon me, especially as soon afterwards our holiday trip took us across the $A$ lps right into Italy, via Tosa falls, and in traversing some glaciers, I then gained for the first time some faint iclea of the danger lurking there. Does any reader remember that novel and its author ?
y 11 hor some lighter reading: In Answer (July 11th) I find the following delightful descrip Ambling Among the Alps.

The drawback to Switzerland is that it's too up and down to suit me. I hate walking on
the sides of my feet, because it causes corns and what not.' That's why I think Switzerland and Holland ought to amalgamate and strike an average.

All the same, I didn't have half a bad time in Switzerland.
I loved to go out in the mornings and hear the mountaineers yodelling to one another, though it used to bring tears to my eves when I though of the Shoreditch Empire, where the yodelling was done so much better.
Yodelling is easy-when you know how. Here's the tip. Get four or five dried or parched peas Swallow them, and just as they are getting past the gullet, halt, and unswallow them until they like a man gargling. The result is so
The result is so close to the genume Swis article that the Alpine cows will come hopping hear it, and then get frightfully cross at being hear it, a
deceived.

The glaciers, too, were fine. By the way, did you ever hear of the job of glacier watching ? It's one of the farouric professions in Switzer land. Well, I suppose it's as good an excuse for doing nothing as any other.
I seriously thought of getting

I seriously thought of getting a job watching a glacier, myself. It's not very difficult. A glacier moves so slowly that, even if you took
a week and your eves off, vou'd soon catch up a week and your eyes off, you'd soon catch up

But I found that I was ineligible. The United Society of Glacier Watchers only admit a few
apprentices each vear, and then you have to be apprentices each year, and then you have to be descended from glacier watchers for tho generations on both sides.
I was barred ont. The nearest I could come to this was a second cousin of my aunt, who was a clock-watcher. Still, it's a nice occupation, if rather apt to cause chilblains. It's the sort of job which would help you to grow old gracefully.
I had with as of an interesting intertiev I had with fascination but frightflly aged lady, who said stre a occupied the same
"You'll never guess who I am," said she.
"Tou true," said I. "Who are you?"
"I'm the girl out of 'Excelsior.",
"What pub is that?
"It's not a pub," said she, with a dash of hauteur. "You remember the poem 'Excelsior '?" "A bit of it," said I.
"Well, you remember the maiden who spoke to the young man with the banner and asked him to stay and not to be such a silly ass as to do
mountain climbing on a night like that. I'm the girl."
"Gio on ?
"Yes, indeed. I was awfully sorry for the lad. A handsome fellow, too. Like you."
" Never
"Yes, indeed. And I was a bit of a peacherino myself at the time. But I couldn't get the young man to take good advice. I suppose he was doing it for a bet. I've kept one souvenir of the affair."
She went to an old oak chest and brought out a tiny box containing a little bit of cloth, with the letters 'EXC' on it.
his banner, poor misguided bor !'" said she And the tears flowed like anything. I withdrew softly. Things were getting too damp for $m y$ liking.
Would you believe it? The next day I came across another old girl, who told me the same tale and produced another bit of cloth with "EXC' on it. She also was the maiden in Excelsior." I thought to myself that, if her present.appearance was any guide to what she was like when the young man passed, I could undestand his keeping on. I myself, in the
circumstances, would have scaled Mont Blane circumstances, would have scaled Mont Blame
sooner than stop. That was bad enough, but when three more old dames on different occasions claimed to be

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the self-same heroine, I lost interest and came to the conclusion that the youth was nothing more than a flirt.
Of Fourse, 1 went on a mountain-climbing stunt. Fool that I was!
into my stride with my beauty a was getting awakened by a battering on the door of mv awakened and some basso profundo shouted out that the party was starting.
I jumped out of bed, chucked my clothes on and wandered outside to where a bunch of sleepy, and wandered outside to where a bunch of sleepy,
shivering people were being roped together like shivering peop
a daisy chain.
I was last but one, and after me came a battered-looking guide who claimed to have been present at more fatal accidents in the Alps than looking old bird he was, too looking old bird he was, too
Well, we started of climbing, and went on climbing. Then we continued climbing. After a couple of hours, iust when I had got used to
having all the skin off my knees and elbows, we having all the skin off my kn
stopped to see the sun rise.
stopped to see the sun rise.
It did, without anybody interfering, and we went on and on, and up and up, until we got to the top of the Unik Horn. Only on two occasions was the party in danger, and then I had my
knife ready to cut the rope, so that one at least knife ready to cut the rope, so that one at least might be saved-I mean me.
The view from the summit would have been awe-inspiring only for the fact that you couldn't see anything owing to the clouds. So we came down again, and, after four hours, I arrives! at the hotel, with my spinal column two inches out of true and every bone in my body aching.
Still, I was all right a week later, and, told the landlord, all they need to do is to instal a moring staircase, and 1 tackle Mont Blano itself with one hand tied behind my back.
Next I wanted to go chamois-hunting, because I hadn't a decent pair of yellow gloves; but another resident fold me that there was only one genuine chamois in the country, and he was trained to leap from crag to crag whenever English visitors appeared. He was a sort of a thousand pounds or so for the chap that shot
So I thought I wouldn't, and soon was making tracks for Italy
And, the reading becoming lighter still and more appropriate, perhaps, for the holiday season just read the following from the Manchester Guar dian (9th July):-

The authoritics of an old church in Switzerland decided to make some repairs to its interior furnishings, and employed an artist to touch up a large painting. When the artist presented his bill, the committee refused to pay it unless the details were specified. The next day the bill was presented itemised as follows: -
For correcting the Ten Commandments, Franc
embellishing Pontus P1ate, and put-
ting new ribbons in his hat
Putting tail on rooster of St. Peter and
Repluming and gilding left wing of Washing High Priest's servant
Kashing Tigen heaven, adjusting the
Renewing heaven, adjusting the stars,
and cleaning up the moon .............. Brightening up the flames of Hell, putting new tail on the Devil, mending his hoof, and doing several odd job for the damned
Touching up pargatory and restoring lost souls
Mending the shirt of the Prodigal Son 3

## Francs ......... 52

## A Peak Conquered

## Daily Mail (13th Juls):

A Chamonix telegram says that the Doigt de Letala, which hitherto has resisted all efforts has been scaled by a local gulde, Couttet Champion. The Doigt de Letala is a peak nearly dicular monolith of 150 feet, which overhangs dicular monolith At eight o'clock on Saturday morning a party
led by Couttet Champion and Couttet Moussous
reached the foot of the couloir, where thev left their equipment
From a distance of 50 feet Champion landed a noose over the highest point. Assisted by his companions, Champion reached his goal at four flag before a storm of hail and snow drove the intrepid party to shelter.
I daresay there are lots of peaks to be conquered still in Switzerland. Some are not very
high, but extremely difficult. I have heard it said also that there are some such peaks in England, notably in Cumberland, peaks which have defied the climbers so far.

Meanwhile, our Geneva compatriots seem to have found a way out of the difficulty which arose when the Federal Law concerning gambling rooms (20th July)

## A New Game

A new game is being introduced into Swiss kursaals which may do something to make up gaming tables. As it is a the supprestl it games foll under the new anti-gambling , it does not fang tions. When a section marked with his number passes, a player presses an electric button, letting fall an arrow fixed above. The object is to strike exactly the line of the section. Any player succeeding in doing this receives seven times the amount-oone franc-paid, but success is rare
The rarer the success, the better for the purse! One soon gives it up if one has no luck, but when
initial luck favours (?) the player, then he is apt to lose quite a lot. That, anvhow, is my own experience. Walking into the Interlaken Kursaal last year, on the occasion of the last ball of the season, I put a franc on the 40 chance of one of those funny gambling machines and got the 40 frs. by return. A bottle of fizz took halt or more and more than half again was spent in trying to coax another winner out of that machine! On another occasion, Mrs. 'Kyburg' and self were very lucky one evening at roulette at Montreux, playing on a simple "system" we had discovered ourselves. Even the croupier began to know us! winnings of the preceding night went and as much again of capital! A good lesson, and it would not have been so bad if the first evening's winnings had not meanwhile been invested in a costume for Mrs. 'Kyburg'! Therefore, ye readers and potential gamblers, take it from me: Initial luck is bad for the constitution of one's purse!

How they deal with the Speed-limit Question in Berne. Alotor (14th July)
That it pays better at times to protest against injustice than to lie down to be kicked is strikingly shown in the case of the Canton of Berne, bered, as a result of the constant persecution and prosecution of motorists, the Swiss Automobile Club called a boycott on the canton in an extent that they revised their methods, con-
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