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where they are waiting for us, the little blobs of the pine tree tops, the curve of the road . . .

"Sadie, will you marry me? From the first moment I saw your new woolly I kind of felt that we were . . . and when I found the little tip of your cap on the snow—like a cherry that has dropped from heaven; well, I . . .

"Oh, sure!"

Then, of course, I have to pull myself together and remember:

- (a) I am still married, and can't she.
(b) I don't really know whether I can ski.
Which is, of course, frightfully annoying.

High Prices in Swiss Resorts?

A propos, we hear a lot concerning the high prices charged by Swiss hoteliers in fashionable centres. The following article from the *Evening News* (7th Jan.) throws some light on this question, while also containing one of the *si non e vero bene trovato* sort of Kronprinzen stories:—

The English and the Americans are usually held responsible for making places on the Continent expensive. An M.P. who goes to St. Moritz every year was telling me that really it is the French who since the war have kept St. Moritz a resort de luxe.

"I know Switzerland very well," he said, "and I have always found that as a whole English people, the moneyed people, prefer the simple life when they are out for the winter sports. They look on it as a health-seeking holiday, and don't want ostentation or exotic luxury. But the rich French people, particularly the women, want their Swiss holiday to be like a holiday on the Riviera, with all the resources of Paris and Riviera hotels at their command. It is they who cause the St. Moritz hotels to compete with each other in luxuriousness."

Before the war Russians and Germans helped to send up the charges. When the Crown Prince spent that holiday at St. Moritz he made it a Mecca for German social "climbers." The influence lasted right up to the war.

The M.P. whom I have mentioned told me a story of the Crown Prince during that visit.

The Crown Prince had a liking for being regarded as a "sport" of the English kind. One day he announced that he intended to give a cup for a Cresta Run competition. A notice was put up at the Kulm hotel, and names began to be entered. Among the names written down appeared those of the late Danny Maher and some other jockeys. St. Moritz always had a number of celebrated jockeys among its visitors.

One day the Crown Prince looked over the list of competitors for this trophy. He noted the names of the jockeys. He took out a pencil and crossed out their names, saying, "My cup is to be competed for by gentlemen, not by professionals."

There was a great silence among those who stood round the notice board.

Then an Englishman, a blood aristocrat, let it be said, stepped forward, bowed slightly to the Crown Prince, and then quietly crossed out his own name.

"When we are here," he said calmly, "it doesn't matter what we are as long as we are sportsmen. And I have never heard it said that any of these jockeys are not sportsmen in the best sense."

And, it seems to me that, in spite of my endeavours, I shall not be able to get away from Winter Sports ideas this week: if my readers could watch me now, looking out over the Thames Estuary, or rather in that direction, and looking into white, thick, impenetrable fog, reminding me of one of those glorious days high up in the Alps when one is cloud-bound and the clouds won't lift for days, and one has got absolutely tired of "Zuger" and other pastimes—well, I daresay, they could understand why it is so very difficult for me to keep off Winter Sports articles. The following (*Morning Post*, 2nd Jan.) is rather nice, although my readers will please understand that I do not subscribe to all that appears in our esteemed contemporary. It tickles me rather to refer thusly to the M.P., and I hope somebody at Kingsway will be good enough to acquaint the M.P. of it.

Swiss Christmas Dinner Customs.

Swiss hotel meals are nowadays little different from those served in every great cosmopolitan hostelry. Yet there still exist some Swiss houses in the less fashionable resorts where Christmas dinner has some of its former characteristics. Twenty years ago the occasion used to be celebrated in homely style. The proprietor and his family would dine with his guests. The entire staff would come in and sing Christmas carols round the tree that stood in every hotel dining-room.

Towards the close the senior visitor, an habitué of the house for many years, would rise to propose "The King," and this might be followed by "The President of the Swiss Republic"—to the mystification of the Swiss, for what Swiss is there who thinks much of, or even cares for, that high functionary? To him the symbolism of country takes another form, whilst his canton stands far higher in his thoughts than that colourless figurehead of the Confederation which he does not like to speak of as a "Republic."

Here and there these fashions survive, though sadly altered. We were fortunate, since the hostelry of our choice was one of the older type, even though it could for this season, and for the first time, boast of a newly imported jazz band. The tree had been set up in the centre of the room. The servants came in and sang the old carols, while the orchestra, abandoning the hackneyed foxtrot and two-step, embarked on some unwonted melodies. The "cellist, with wrinkled brow, was trying to preserve a more sober rhythm, while the pianist's sardonic smile showed how great was his condescension in consenting to play such commonplace tunes. The proprietor, clad in a new morning coat radiant in its Parisian glory, moved slowly from table to table, deigning to stop by a privileged guest now and again to make an inquiry as to the quality of the menu.

The lights were turned down. The orchestra suddenly struck up "God Save the King." Hardly knowing what was to come we stood up—and there entered a line of flaming plum-puddings. With that climax the character of the ceremony changed. It was as though the crest of the mountain were reached; there remained nothing but the descent over the open snow ahead. The singers had departed, and the musicians, now casting all restraint to the winds, struck up a tune. With a shout of laughter it was soon recognised as the threadbare jangle of "No Bananas." Made merry

by the strains of the old refrain, young and old joined in with the words. Next there appeared a superb vanilla ice amid a yell of approbation from the children. The dinner ended with crackers and paper caps.

Three-quarters of an hour interval, and the Christmas ball began in the same room, now cleared of chairs and tables. It was all great fun—even for the more elderly.

The War all over again!

The *Yorkshire Evening Post* (2nd Jan.) states: People just back from Grindelwald, in the Bernese Oberland, say there has been serious friction this Christmas between British and German visitors to the principal hotels. The Germans are almost all of the prosperous manufacturing class. Their manners are not always of the best, and the chief "winter sport" seems to be beer-drinking.

In one hotel a number of young British officers objected to the German men bringing bottles of beer on to the dance floor where ladies were dancing, and their objection ended in a free fight. An English girl of 18 ran through the snow in her dancing shoes to fetch reinforcements from another hotel, where more English people were staying, and the male British population arrived in time to enjoy itself thoroughly before the proprietor turned out all the lights in the hotel.

Of course, I myself think that beer and dancing ladies do not go well together. But then, there is really nothing to be offended at if people will drink beer from finely shaped glasses; and "gentlemen" who make a row on such slender provocation are, to my mind, only gentlemen in their own belief. However, it seems to me that both parties were out for a scrap, and if so, who are we to dispute their ideas of how to amuse oneself?

The late Prof. Dr. E. Hedinger

is the subject of the following obituary in the *Lancet* (3rd Jan.):—

Medical science in Switzerland has to record a great loss. On Christmas Eve died at Zurich, after a short illness, Dr. Ernst Hedinger, University professor of pathological anatomy and histology. Born in 1876 at Schaffhausen, and educated in Berne, Hedinger studied medicine at the universities of Berne, Munich, and Berlin, graduating in Berne. He then became a succession clinical assistant under such great teachers and research workers as Kocher (surgery), Sahli (internal medicine), and Jadassohn (dermatology). Having thus gained a wide clinical knowledge and experience, he went to his favoured branch, pathological anatomy, becoming assistant to Prof. Langhans at the Pathological Institute at Berne. He was only 30 years old when he was appointed Professor of Pathological Anatomy at the University of Basle, a post which he held till 1922, when he returned to Berne to succeed his late master. Hedinger was an indefatigable worker, the author of numerous dissertations, chiefly on morphological subjects. His diagnostic skill was highly appreciated by all his clinical colleagues. In 1914 he undertook a special mission to South Africa on the invitation of the Union Government to investigate trypanosomiasis in cattle. This journey brought him into contact with General Botha and other South African statesmen, an experience which gave him a sympathetic understanding of the British Commonwealth at the beginning of the great conflict. Soon after his appointment to Basle Hedinger joined the editorial staff of the "Correspondenz-Blatt für Schweizerärzte," the leading Swiss medical paper, which under his guidance was transformed into the "Schweizerische Medizinische Wochenschrift" of enlarged size and raised scientific standard. Whether by mouth or by pen, Hedinger had a natural gift for lucid exposition, and the present generation of Swiss medical men owes its working knowledge of pathology largely to his teaching.

Ice Hockey.

Alas, some 21 years have gone by since 'Kyburg' played ice-hockey between Yverdon and Yvonand. London and its surroundings are not particularly excellent spots in which a young man could keep up and practise this particular form of sport. But all who have ever seen it or played it will agree that it is one of the finest games one can play and one of the fastest. Dangerous? Yes, but not more than other games if one takes the precaution of learning first the rudiments. The following article from the *Evening News*' special correspondent at Davos made me quite long to be over there in order to watch, but, alas, my enrolments as contributor to the *S.O.* have not yet reached the princely figure necessary to enable me to attend Davos winter sports. [They are not likely to start even.—Ed.]

It is to Alexander Spengler, the doctor who persuaded people with weak lungs to spend the winter in Davos, that we owe the origin of the Alpine "boom." For his patients became so well and vigorous that they made a skating rink for exercise; then they invented toboggan racing; and finally people who were cured kept returning to Davos, not because they must, but because they wanted to. The result was that Davos is now as much a pleasure resort as a health resort.

And Davos, still the largest of the resorts, is the father of a huge family, including the brilliant St. Moritz, Mürren, the Mecca of public school men, Grindelwald, Adelboden, Engelberg, Villars, and many others.

Alexander Spengler himself probably never foresaw that he would be the indirect cause of a vast influx of money to Switzerland, and that skis and skates would confer as much health and happiness on people with good lungs as the air and sun confer on people with bad ones.

His distinguished son, Carl Spengler, a genius of bacteriology, finds time to take an interest in sport as well as in microbes, and is one of the chief patrons of ice-hockey here. The Spengler Cup is competed for by teams from all over the Continent. This coveted prize, and others, have brought no fewer than fifteen ice-hockey teams to Davos, and for the past week the rink has been the scene of four matches daily.

Teams have come from Oxford, Cambridge, and London. Prague has sent its Olympic team. There are teams from Madrid, Milan, Berlin, Vienna, and Zurich. No one centre has ever before seen so much ice-hockey talent concentrated.

Now, ice-hockey may seem to be an altogether minor item in the grand pageant of winter sports. It certainly is of less consequence to the average visitor than skiing, because hockey requires an almost superhuman agility on skates, whereas anyone can learn to ski. But I have mentioned the vogue for ice-hockey, inasmuch as strangers may imagine that life here, because it began as a health resort, must be rather subdued.

The ice-hockey mania, now sweeping through this little town like a joyous fever, is itself an answer to that. Ice-hockey is perhaps the most violent game known to man, is unquestionably the fastest, and (according to connoisseurs of gore) is one of the most dangerous.

The onlookers of ice-hockey are at least as apt to lose their heads as the onlookers of football. This is especially true here, where the crowd is cosmopolitan. The English may remain calm (though not always), but nothing can restrain the paroxysms of excitement of the Italians, the Spaniards, and the more temperamental Helvetians.

Generally I gather the impression that half the hockey players will finish the day in hospital, and that none of the spectators will ever be on speaking terms with each other again. But, by the evening, all differences of opinion seem to have been settled over aperitifs; and when dancing starts, after dinner, behold! the members of the teams are quite capable of foxtrotting till midnight.

In the ballroom, it may be added, the "English" teams can hold their own as well as on the rink. You will divine the reason if you hearken to their accents. Those accents are not Oxford, nor Cambridge, nor London—but Transatlantic. These merry young athletes, in fact, learnt their hockey at their homes in Canada—where also they learnt their style in dancing.

They are off to St. Moritz and Mürren—and I am sure they will carry all before them as successfully there as they have done here. Their scores on the ice you will have read before these lines are in print. Their scores as personal propagandists for the British Empire are less easily definable, but no less valid.

And their presence here in Switzerland is a quaint but pleasant testimonial to that other propaganda done sixty years ago by Alexander Spengler—the man who first induced "foreigners" to winter in the Alps.

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