

# Book reviews

Autor(en): **[s.n.]**

Objekttyp: **BookReview**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): **- (1929)**

Heft 427

PDF erstellt am: **27.04.2024**

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## MOTORISTS' COMPLAINT ABOUT SWITZERLAND.

A number of very sharp criticisms of Swiss Motoring conditions have recently been published in the shape of letters to the Editor of "Autocar." Some of the complaints were no doubt inspired by sheer malice, all of them exaggerated and generalised on the basis of one or two unpleasant experiences. Still, it is deplorable that there should have been such experience to impel a number of English visitors to complain bitterly, in particular about bad road-manners in German Switzerland and excessive garage and service charges. We are pleased, however, to find the following fair and common-sense reply by an Englishman in "Autocar" of the 15th Nov.:

"I am of the opinion that 'Ordinary Motorist' is somewhat too bitter in his remarks about the lack of good manners of Swiss motorists.

Much could be said on both sides of the question. I have seen some British motorists in Switzerland behave in a manner that does not at all suggest the 'pukka sahib,' and I have received just as bad (and as good) treatment in Great Britain as I have in Switzerland.

In my long experience of motoring in many countries I find good and bad in each of them, and one has to adapt oneself to the customs of the country in which one is motoring. This, with a little tact and courtesy, will generally carry one through.

Switzerland is not Great Britain, and in many cases the police, and their methods, strike a Britisher as being peculiar, but the motorist must remember that he is in the country as a foreigner. If he cannot conform to the customs of a given country it would be better if he confined his motoring to his native land.

The stone-throwing business seems to me to be rather bad form, and should be left to those who seek trouble."

## BOOK REVIEWS.

*Reminders for Company Secretaries*, by Herbert W. Jordan (Jordan & Sons, Limited, Law Publishers.)

We have received a copy of the 15th edition of the above publication which in its concise form offers a mine of information to Secretaries, and is a very handy companion for anyone who wishes to obtain information pertaining to Private and Public Companies.

The coming into operation on 1st November, 1929, of The Companies Act has necessitated the rewriting of the bulk of the book. The new Act is an elaborate measure consisting of 385 Sections and 12 Schedules. Probably no other Act deals with so large a number of offences or imposes so many penalties for contravention of its provisions. The duties of a Secretary are increased and the holder of the office will in future be liable equally with his Directors for penalties in respect of almost all defaults under the Act.

"Reminders" is intended to be a convenient reference to the busy Secretary; it indicates the duties imposed on him by the Act and the nature of the documents that have to be filed with the Registrar of Companies. It does not aim at enabling the Secretary to be "his own lawyer," but it puts the Secretary "wise," thus protecting him from the danger of offending through ignorance of the Statutory provisions.

## THE REGULATION OF THE RHINE.

The Swiss Parliament was unanimous in its recent ratification of the agreement concluded with Germany to bring about the regulation of the Rhine between Strasburg and Basle and a credit of 40 million francs was voted to carry out the work. River traffic to Basle which was practically non-existent until 1918, reached in 1927, 740,000 tons and 471,000 tons in 1928 (long period of drought).

During the first nine months of 1929 up-stream tonnage amounted to 447,000 tons and down-stream tonnage to 40,000. Nine-tenths of the goods imported to Switzerland consist, in fairly equal proportions, of cereals and fuel, both solid and liquid. Switzerland's principal exports are iron ores from the Gozzen, condensed milk, cement, asphalt, carbide and chemical products. Basle now ranks 10th or 11th among the Rhine ports (ahead of Bingen, Lauterburg, Coblenz and Bonn), and this recent growth is due to the development of the various port facilities of the St. John and Klybeck Quays and Klein-Hüningen.

The present equipment of the three Basle ports includes 2,200 metres wharfage and quays, 12 mobile cranes, 1 stationary crane, 5 travelling cranes and 14.5 kms rail. Three large grain pits are equipped with powerful elevators; the Klybeck Quay tanks hold 38,000 tons of petroleum or benzine. The yearly capacity of discharging and transferring water-borne goods to rail has been estimated at over 1,500,000 tons.

The Publisher will be pleased to forward free specimen copies of "The Swiss Observer" to likely subscribers whose addresses may be supplied by readers.

## "SWITZERLAND III."

Mittelholzer the famous "as national" has started on his second flight to Africa. He left the aerodrome at Dübendorf on Sunday 15th Dec.

The machine, a three-engined Fokker (Sidelux-Lynx motors) is one of the latest models which has already taken our intrepid airman on several long flights over the mountains and the Mediterranean. It is painted in royal blue and bears in large white letters its proud name "Switzerland III."

The purpose of the flight is to serve some Viennese gentlemen who wish to leave Cairo on the 1st of January and reach Nairobi 6 days later. M. René Gouzy, who will be remembered as having given the colony such a vivid lecture of Mittelholzer's first flight to Africa some time ago, is again accompanying him as far as Cairo. The flight to Nairobi and back will mean a distance of about 18,000 km. and, as Mr. Gouzy says in the *Tribune de Genève*: "côte à ces Messieurs cent petits billets de mille francs (suisses)."

## SWISS DOUBLE-KEYBOARD PIANO.

Miss Winifred Christie, at her recent recital at the Wigmore Hall, used the double-keyboard piano invented by Mr. E. Moor, a Swiss musician, and made by Messrs. Bechstein. It has obvious advantages in playing eighteenth century music originally composed for the harpsichord, and Miss Christie was able to bring out the interweaving of the parts in a Bach fugue more clearly than is possible on the normal piano.

The Bechstein-Moor piano for the player who has got used to the superficial complications created by the two keyboards makes smooth a great many of the rough places in the piano music of the romantic school. It offers, too, a wider dynamic range by means of the coupler pedal.

## LESSONS FROM THE SWISS.

Should Lakeland have funicular or toy railways up its mountains to enable the many who cannot climb them, to visit their tops and enjoy the wonderful panoramas and the exhilarating and health-giving air up there?

The provocative suggestion that they should was made by Mr. Nicholas Size, of Buttermere, the Lakeland historian and author of "The Secret Valley," in another of the remarkable lectures he is giving to Lakeland people with a view to trying to rouse them to the possibilities of the district, if thoroughly and rightly developed.

The lecturer said that the Swiss Government encouraged funicular railways and lake steamers, but in England the opposite policy was adopted.

"Here, we say that if people cannot climb mountains on the cheap—by the sweat of their brow—they must stay away. No doubt a funicular railway up Skiddaw would be a Godsend to Keswick; but because a few people call that despoiling the natural beauty of the Lake District, neither the 'rack and pinion' line, like that up the Rigi, or a useful toy railway cheaply operated by water, like that outside Lausanne, is permitted.

"Of course this is a nonsensical attitude. These railways in Switzerland enable thousands to enjoy the scenery and invigorating air of the heights who would otherwise not be able to do so, and would enable thousands to visit the Lakeland Jungles. Nobody in their senses would say that the Jungfrau, Pilatus or Mont Blanc, or any other mountain, was spoiled by the railways."

The lecturer, who has visited Switzerland extensively and regularly, said that Switzerland resembled Lakeland both in its scenery and difficulties, but whereas Switzerland was once very much poorer it was now very much more prosperous than Lakeland.

The tourist business had made Switzerland. The population had greatly increased, new villages and tourist resorts had sprung up everywhere.

How had this come about? Firstly, by State assistance and organised advertising. The Swiss Federal Railways belonged to the Government and everything was done to help the country, not merely to earn dividends. Tourist offices were opened in the great foreign centres like London, and every advice, information and help given to would-be visitors.

Secondly, the Swiss hotels had built up a reputation for cleanliness, cheapness and simplicity. Thirdly, each village laid itself out to im-

prove its footpaths and extend them so that pleasant woodland walks were among the greatest assets of each little tourist resort.

In order to provide money for this they charged each visitor a penny a day, and this fund provided work in the quiet season. Signposts were provided, but, in addition, painted arrows showed the way at each junction or branch of the path, and where a path led to two or three places a different coloured arrow was used for each. The signpost at the beginning of the path indicated which colour led to the place wanted.

In Lakeland visitors often got lost, and returned late and miserable. If a little paint were used in this way they would have a pleasanter and better holiday and come back to Lakeland instead of going to Switzerland next time.

Fourthly, the Swiss made the most of their local history instead of ignoring it as Lakelanders did. The Lakeland history was just as wonderful and thrilling. And the Swiss said nothing about the wetness of Lucerne, whereas the cheap detractors of Lakeland emphasised the rainfall.

## VOM VRENELI IM HINTERGRUND.

Jo, so isch es, wenn ma nit weiss Ziit z'vertriiba goht ma eifach hinters Schriiba.

So gohts au mir! Doch zerscht will i briehta dass i nit grad guat cha dichte.

Aber weils im Chränzli am 1. Advent guat glauba isch in alle Sacha,

han i denkt, do muess i es Gedichtli macha.

Jo, glaube isch würkli viel zu viel doch vo dem ich jetzt nit reda will.

Also am 1. Advent, i bi zwar a bizli spot dazua cho,

zua ner Ziit, wo andri z'Servelat händ schu in d'Finger gnoh,

da han i mi umglaugt, ob es Plätzli isch frii doch alli sind scho "aagwärmet" gsi.

Endli han i doch eis gfunda!

Froh bin i gsi! Aber verschwunda sind scho alli Würstli gsi.

I han mi begnügt mit ner Tasse Tii,

as Stückli vo dem guata Butterbrot,

han nümli denkt, es tuats zur Not!

Do häts zmal a frische Ladig geh,

und i ha dürfe au eis neh!

Nachdem nu alli de Hunger gestillt händ mit Brot,

Wurscht und Thee,

häts schöni Produktiona geh!

Die 4 Advent sind nochanander ina cho mit me

chliina Lichtli

und a jedes hät ufgeit a herzigs Gedichtli.

Zletscht chunts Christkindli mit emene Bäuml in d'Saal

a fürliche Stimmig wird überall.

Nachdem auch sie es Värslü hät vübracht,

händ's mitenander gsunga, "Stille Nacht."

Schö hinterenander sind's usa ganga,

so händ au mir mit dem Singe aanganga.

Doch gar nit lang! 's hät glüet! Und da

chunt ina üser guate Samichlausmaa!

Hät en Sack voll uf em Buckel treit,

a Ruata, so gross hät niemert wit und breit,

Dia hät er am Herr Pfarrer geh und gseit derzua

die isch für die, wo hänt kei Ruah.

Jetzt packt er us! Zerscht Bluama für die

Ehregäst,

nocher eis Päckli ums ander, s'isch gsi es Fäsecht

denn für jedes hät er gewüss es Versli z'macha

wo mer hät müassa drüber lacha.

Zletscht hät's dann no Aepfel und Nüssli geh,

und jedes hät dürfe sich dervo neh.

Wo der Nicklaus hät der Finkestrich gnoh

hät niemert meh öppis übercho.

Nochdem hät Fräulein Galli gseit as Gedicht

dass alli ghört händ mit spannendem Gesicht.

Wo nu alles isch fertig gsi, hämer wieder

gsunge üseri Wienachtslieder.

Gmüetlich zum üeba isch es nit grad gsi

und i muass es säge, offe und frii,

dass keini, seis vo de junge oder alta

niemert isch, wo's Müüli cha halta.

Do wundre i mi über de Herr Pfarrer, s'isch wahr,

dass er nit kriegt hät, graui Hoar.

Doch wenn emol wissi Höörli söttend usegeh,

so hätt ers im Chränzli übercho.

Denn alles Chloffe und malne nützt nüt

es bliben halt alli gschwätzigi Lüt.

Das Best isch gsi am End no gar

nimmts Fräuli Graf uf d'zmol gewahr

dass sie vergessa hät, s'isch nit zum lacha,

z'fröga, wer z'nächst mol der Thee tuat macha.

Sie springt verzweifelt hi und her,

aber s'hät im Sali kei Lütli mehr.

Was hät sie könne weters no afanga?

Sie isch mit de andere heimzue ganga!

Das isch nu gsi, der 1. Advent, bis zum Schluss,

war es für mi a grossa Gnuss.

I säge allen, dia wo Müah sich händ geh

und so viel Arbeit ka händ: "Danke schö."

Mer gsehts halt, der frohi, heiteri Muat

steckt bi üs im Schwiizerbluat.

Später mol wieder! Bliet hübsch gsund,

es grüsset Euch

"z'Vreneli" im Hintergrund.

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