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NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

The SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS have issued a report on the results of the adoption of electric traction, which no doubt will be eagerly read by railway interests in this country. It is stated that from a technical point of view the use of electric traction has been fully successful and has, in various respects, surpassed expectations. Up to the present 357 kilometres have been electrified, and it is anticipated that by the autumn of 1924 about one-third of the entire system will have been changed over.

A writer in *The Times* (Oct. 7th) seems to have a grudge against the EDELWEISS, which he calls the "impostor" of the Alps. He has nothing good to say for this innocent lonely flower, which by some means has managed to persuade the world that it is beautiful and rare, and only grows in places where it cannot be plucked except at the risk of life. If it were not for this false reputation, the flower would probably be as common as daisies or dandelions:—

"For in fact edelweiss is not difficult to grow; it is not beautiful, at any rate in the lowlands; it is not rare, but often abundant in the Swiss mountains; and it may be found growing in places which can be reached in a bath-chair.

The imposture is profitable to the inhabitants of Switzerland, who cultivate the plant as we grow cabbages, in rows in market gardens, and then sell it to tourists to stick in their hats. It is also profitable, as I have said, to those who wish to get a cheap reputation for horticultural skill. To them I give this advice. Raise it from seed, which can easily be obtained in most years and which germinates no less easily, especially when fresh; and then plant out the seedlings in the choicer parts of your rock garden. Not that it needs a choice place, but that you will so keep up the pretence that it is difficult to grow.

It must be confessed that edelweiss, in the highest places where it grows naturally—it never grows very high—has a certain curious beauty, especially on limestone. There it is a dwarf, has almost white flowers, and makes a pretty mixture with other flowers in the short turf. But in England, without lime and in rich soil, it grows large; and its flowers are, as Mark Twain said, the colour of bad cigar-ash. So, if you would preserve any of its beauty, give it lime and grow it in poor, stony soil. Even then it will disappoint you if you grow it for its own sake; and it may give you away to visitors by coming up in self-sown seedlings all over the place.

The Basle correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian Commercial* does not miss anything that will give English manufacturers an opportunity of opening business relations in Switzerland, but it is to be hoped that the following report published in our contemporary (Oct. 5th) under the heading "FAULTY SWISS CABLES" errs in so far that it generalizes from a particular incident:—

"Anyone who knows Switzerland at all will know that it is the home of the funicular railway. Those who have been hauled up to Mürren or other mountain stations may have had qualms, when confronted for the first time with a 60 per cent. gradient, as to the strength of the wire ropes, but have assumed on reflection that the margin of safety is very liberal.

None the less the Association of Swiss Funiculars has just made a disturbing announcement. The technical committee of that body has discovered that the Swiss-made cables in use on specified funiculars—the Birgenstock and the St. Gall-Mühleck—are defective. Urgent representations have been made accordingly to the Importation Office in favour of obtaining the free importation of funicular cables. Meanwhile all orders to Swiss cable manufacturers have been suspended, and all Swiss cables in use will be rigorously examined. It is further pointed out that British cables received from Sheffield and Newcastle-on-Tyne firms during the period of free importation are of excellent quality, and are no more costly than those made in Switzerland.

If, therefore, the free importation of cables is again sanctioned, it is certain that orders will be placed with British firms."

Several recent technical developments have been prominently referred to in English trade papers. *The Electrician* (Sept. 29th) has a long article with illustrations and diagrams explaining the problem and construction of ELECTRIC BAKING OVENS which are a feature of the firm of Messrs. Oberle Brothers in Baden. *The Electrical Review* (Sept. 29) gives a description of an installation designed by Messrs. Brown, Boveri & Co. and Sulzer Brothers for warming electrically driven trains by using the current from the overhead line for heating steam boilers.

The English journals dealing with the Watch trade have in eulogistic terms referred to the distinction which the ZENITH WATCH has secured from the official testing station at Teddington. At this laboratory watches are subjected to a very severe ordeal as regards their variation of daily rate, change of rate with change of position and temperature compensation, and the success obtained is not only of great credit to one of our national industries but will be specially gratifying to the firm of which our compatriot, Mr. H. F. Roost, is the London manager. This is the first time that Zenith watches have been sent to the British official testing station at the National Physical Laboratory at Teddington, and from the report recently published the four watches submitted have all received Kew Class "A" certificates, one of them being awarded 96.8 marks, which is just one-tenth per cent. below the world's

record, which is held by Mons. Paul Ditisheim, the celebrated Swiss chronometer maker, who on one occasion received 96.9 marks.

It is reported that DR. HENRI SPAHLINGER'S (Geneva) claim of a new cure for tuberculosis is going to be thoroughly tested under scientific supervision by the British Red Cross Society, which will provide the necessary funds for the purpose. It will be remembered that the cure consists in the use of a serum and a vaccine, the exact nature of which is a secret piously guarded by Dr. Spahlinger.

Music-lovers have had plenty of opportunity these last few days to hear Swiss talent. We report in another column on the piano recital of Miss OLGA CARMINE, whose unqualified success was somewhat marred by the absence of her parents, but her new achievement should prove a stimulating message to her father, who is undergoing surgical treatment in Switzerland. — Mr. ROB. HEGET and Melle. HENNY HEGET are newcomers in London, and their violin and pianoforte recital, which included a suite (Op. 82) by Hans Huber, has obtained not altogether favourable reception among the critics, who, moreover, have not taken kindly to Hans Huber. Little was known of this concert in the Swiss Colony—many would not have missed a Huber composition—and it is to be regretted that Mr. Heget omitted to rouse interest amongst his own compatriots. — More appreciative and sympathetic was the welcome tendered to a "Hebrew Rhapsody" for violoncello and orchestra, played for the first time at the Queen's Hall Promenade Concert, and composed by Mr. ERNEST BLOCH, who is residing in the United States, where his art has secured him general recognition. The *Daily News* describes his Rhapsody as "highly emotional, yet very dignified" "music inspired by lofty ideals, and the beautiful" "themes are treated with fine skill."

RUNNING WATER is the name of a British film which is being shown now and which we would recommend our readers not to miss. It displays typical Swiss scenery and dramatic incidents of a love romance of an unusual nature. The story is based on a book by the well-known English novelist, Mr. A. E. W. Mason, a great friend of Switzerland and the president of the Association of British Members of the Swiss Alpine Club.

COMMERCIAL LECTURES IN THE CITY.

An interesting series of lectures are now being given on alternate Mondays at 5.15 p.m. at the City of London College, as follows:

Monday, October 30th, "Yugo-Slavia," by Dr. Subotic, of the Legation for Yugo-Slavia.

Monday, November 13th, "Bulgaria," by Mlle. Stancioff, of the Bulgarian Legation.

Monday, November 27th, "Germany," by Mr. J. Steppat, B.A., Ph.D.

Monday, December 11th, "Roumania," by M. Gregoire Michesco, Commercial Attaché to the Roumanian Legation.

These lectures are free to the public, no ticket being required for admission.

SCHWEIZERDEUTSCHE DIALEKT-DICHTUNG.

Es soll doch auch an dieser Stelle auf den Vortrag hingewiesen werden, den Dr. Paul Lang am 27. Oktober, abends 8 Uhr, in der Central Hall, Westminster, geben wird. Der Vortragende wird in schweizerdeutscher Sprache über die gegenwärtige deutschschweizerische Dialektdichtung sprechen, wird dartin, warum man von einer Renaissance der Dialektdichtung unseres Landes sprechen kann und wie sie beschaffen ist. Selbstverständlich werden mannigfaltige "Kostproben" aus allen Gauen des deutsch-schweizerischen Gebietes in dem Vortrag eingeflochten werden. Die Veranstaltung ist öffentlich und sowohl Schweizern als Engländern zugänglich. Es wird im besondern angenommen, dass die deutsch-schweizerische Kolonie von dieser einzigartigen Gelegenheit, sich über ihre ureigenste Litteratur orientieren zu lassen, in starkem Masse Gebrauch machen wird.

Ztg.

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MISS CARMINE'S CONCERT.

Real music-lovers had a most enjoyable evening on Saturday last at Wigmore Hall, when Miss Olga Carmine rendered a representative programme with distinguished success. Her choice of composers ranged from Liszt to W. O'Donnell, and the delightful interpretation of the former was equalled by the brilliant technique of the latter. Her style has both strength and restraint, and the future of this young pianist seems to be assured in the front rank of interpreters of the classical masters.

The first part of the programme was composed of the very exacting Prelude, Aria and Finale of César Franck, the difficulties of which Miss Carmine overcame with ease, rising notably in the Finale to great beauty of tone and clarity. Among the other items, Glazounow's Theme and Variations, Op. 72, was given a spirited rendering, the Slav atmosphere being brought out with force and charm, as also in Dohnanyi's Rhapsody. An exquisite foil to these livelier compositions was provided in the romantic vein by two of Schumann's short works, interpreted with all the requisite sentiment and spirituality.

Miss Carmine had a most cordial reception, and enthusiastic applause and beautiful floral tributes were not stinted by her appreciative audience.

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