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NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG."

The Times (7th Dec.) states that "the Swiss National Council voted yesterday in favour of the abolition of the Sunday postal delivery." I can imagine the acrimonious remarks which have, no doubt, been made by a great number of our compatriots at home, when they heard that it would be useless in future to expect letters to be delivered to them on Sunday morning. Too many, especially among the commercial class at home, are still imbued with the, to my mind, obsolete idea that business will suffer, unless it is being attended to every day of the week. The elder ones among us will remember the very mixed feelings with which we used to turn up for a desultory Sunday morning's work when serving our apprenticeship. We also know from experience gained in London that non-delivery of business and other letters on a Sunday is a real boon. I do not know what arrangements the *Press* has made, because not getting any news on a Sunday is, of course, a slightly different matter.

Once again the British art-loving public has an opportunity of seeing some Swiss stained-glass panels. The *Morning Post* (6th Dec.) says:—

The Swiss Minister, M. C. R. Paravicini, has lent to the Victoria and Albert Museum seven panels of early stained glass, which are now exhibited on the stairway leading from Room 131 to Room 112 on the first floor. Three of the panels, originally in the Cathedral Passau, belong to the Salzburg School, and are dated 1494. The remainder are rare early Swiss works—two representing the Virgin and St. John the Evangelist, of either the Constance or the Zurich School of about 1430; and two are heraldic panels of the School of either Constance or St. Gall, dating from about 1440.

Russia and Switzerland.

The *Daily Express* (8th Dec.) has the following:—

Despite the fact that the Soviet Government have boycotted Switzerland, ruined thousands of Swiss citizens in Russia, and sacked the Swiss Legation in Petrograd, the Swiss Federal Government made a noble gesture yesterday by voting the surplus from this year's postal receipts, amounting to £100,000, to pay the expenses of the Russian prisoners of war who were interned in Germany and Austria.

This sum should have been paid by the Soviets after the revolution, but they refused to pay.

Several of my readers have written me recently, asking me to say something in these Notes concerning the, in their opinion, mistaken attitude our Government has hitherto pursued towards Russia. When last in Switzerland in September, I discussed this matter with various well-informed people, and found that among the leading manufacturers belief in the possibility of doing straightforward business with Soviet Russia was very small. On the other hand, students of national economy seemed to agree that the commercial and industrial welfare of our country would suffer as long as the Russian situation had not been cleared up. I have for years been of the opinion that the Soviet Republic of Russia ought to have been recognised by the Swiss Government. I am aware of the horrors which have accompanied the political and economic upheaval in Russia, but I am not surprised at them. It goes without saying that I hold no brief for the perpetrators of atrocities in any country, or from any cause. On the other hand, I think that any student of history and human nature will easily understand how such deeds were possible, or rather almost inevitable, and, as understanding leads if not to forgiveness—because there are things which no mortal can forgive—it should at least lead to a milder judgment. It seems to me that each and every move by Soviet Russia which shows a return to better feelings, or which proves that a more reasonable frame of mind is gradually getting the upper hand there, ought to be supported by all who can support it, and therefore certainly by the Swiss Government. In this connection it has, of course, to be remembered that the Bolsheviks made a tremendous error of judgment when they tried to preach their doctrines in the same crude manner—which might, and which, as a matter of fact, did prove efficient in their own country—in Switzerland, where education and the standard of living are, of course, incomparably higher than they were, and still are, in Russia, and the fierce resentment produced by this foolish movement in Switzerland makes it, perhaps, rather difficult for our Federal Government to adopt a policy which would be more conciliatory and, to my mind, more in the interests of our country. The article quoted above shows, perhaps, that views more in accordance with Switzerland's interests are getting a hearing.

The Cocaine Scandal.

to which I have, unfortunately, had to refer once or twice already, is still worrying our Government, as you will see from the following paragraph:—

M. Schneider, the Socialist deputy for Basle, brought forward an interpellation in the National Council, asking the Federal Council "whether it has any knowledge of the export under false declarations of great quantities of opium, cocaine and morphia, especially from Basle, and what it intends to do to stop these scandalous proceedings, which are detrimental to the reputation of Switzerland throughout the world."

M. Motta, head of the Political Department of the Federal Council (equivalent to Ministry for Foreign

Affairs), said in reply that he had listened with pain at Geneva to the criticisms of Switzerland by Great Britain, Canada, Italy, and Norway.

He announced that a measure for the ratification of the 1912 Convention would be laid before Parliament in the spring at the latest.

Winter Sports.

It is difficult in these times to open an English newspaper without coming across an article on this subject, and still more difficult to glance through the pictorial press without having one's eyes arrested by photos of familiar winter sports sights and episodes. As my readers know, I have made up my mind not to read any of these articles, because I was afraid I might succumb to the temptation, take the next train, and, instead of writing these Notes, spend a few glorious hours amongst the happy crowds of our rinks and snow-fields. But then, I thought that running away from temptation was really no proof of virtue, and also that one or other of my readers, who perhaps might miss reading articles on the matter in the daily press, would be glad of a few useful hints to guide him or her on their forthcoming winter holiday. A very useful article appeared on Dec. 13th in *The Field*:—

The sports programmes of the Bernese Oberland winter resorts for the coming season are as interesting and varied as ever. Each of these places excels in one way or another, most of them having their favourite grand events or their own individual specialties in bob or ski runs, skating and curling rinks, or in social entertainments.

At Adelboden (4,450 ft.) the British Ski Championship meeting will take place, January 4th to 8th. This will be followed by the curling bonspiel for the Worsley Cup, ski-jumping competitions on the Lohner Schanze, the Heinrichsberg jump, and the Halbenmoos, a rifle match, ice hockey events and toboggan races. During the season there will be four successive ski instruction courses for visitors, and various tests as approved by the Federation of British Ski Clubs. The Visitors' Ski Club "Lohner" is very active, under the guidance of its experienced secretary, Captain Marriott.

Beatenberg (3,773 ft.), which opens again this winter, offers all the ski and ice sports, such as skating, curling, ice hockey, tobogganing. The snow fields on the heights above the village make excellent ski runs, and the view from the ice rink upon the blue lake beneath and the mighty peaks opposite is unparalleled. The hotels are fairly well booked up already.

Grindelwald (3,460 ft.) the famous old sports centre, has its curling events, its bob and bobtail races on the splendid Brandegg run, also the Notteck Cup ski and luge races, ski-jumping on the modern Mittenberg ski jump, skijöring and toboggan-cycle races, skating competitions, etc. The great ski fields and perfect ice rinks of this resort are well known. Griesalp (4,950 ft.) and Grindelwald (4,130 ft.) will have their special attractions for those who prefer a sedentary spot, far up in the mountain wilds, which is still within easy reach by steigh or motor-car. Wonderful skiing, plenty of curling and skating, occasional tobogganing, rifle matches, etc., figure among the advantages of these winter stations. Staffelalp (3,250 ft.) and Goldiwy (3,000 ft.), above Thun, are favourite resorts of Swiss sportsmen, whilst Einigen (1,850 ft.), near Thun, is the site of an ideal nine-hole golf course of the Thun Golf and Country Club.

Gstaad (3,450 ft.) has a rich programme, as usual. On December 19th an ice hockey match will be played by a Cambridge University team v. Rosey Club. Similar events will be the tourney for the Old Rosey Cup, the Dolfus Cup, and the Swiss ice hockey championship finals. On January 6th the new Nevada Run will be opened. There will be the ski races of the Visitors' Ski Club and the ski-jumping competition for the Earl Beatty Challenge Cup. On February 3rd the annual horse show on snow, which always attracts a great number of visitors, will come off. Bob races for the Marcuard and Tanneck Cups and the Palace Shield, as well as Nevada sled races, an important curling tourney, a fencing competition and clay pigeon shooting are among the attractions of this first-class resort. One of the best of Swiss skiing centres is Simmenpüser (7,400 ft.), on the Montreux-Oberland Line, whilst Lenk is known for its beautiful winter landscapes and its facilities for long ski expeditions to the Wildstrubel, Wildhorn, etc. On January 20th the races of the Ski Club Association of the Sänten and Simmen valleys will take place at Lenk (3,620 ft.). Skating, curling and skijöring are also in evidence at this resort.

Kandersteg (3,830 ft.), situated on the international Lütschberg Line, is reached within two hours from Berne. This resort opens up again for the winter season with a fine sports programme. Between December 20th and mid-January there are bob and toboggan races, a curling match, an ice hockey event, and a ski-jumping competition for the Blümliwald Challenge Cup. The Vt. Oberland Ski Meet follows with skijöring, a curling match for the Kennedy Challenge Cup and other events, such as a shooting competition, etc. This is a great centre for ski expeditions.

Müren (5,400 ft.), the highest winter resort in the Bernese Alps, has a number of contests for challenge cups in every kind of winter sport. To enumerate some of the chief events, we mention the Oxford v. Cambridge ice hockey match of December 22nd, the ski races for the Roberts of Kandahar (January 2nd), Ambrunenij, Wyndham, Strang Watkins, Shotton and Alpine Ski Challenge Cups. Further, the bob races for the Kurhaus, Palace and Jungfrau Challenge Cups, the curling events for the Young, Lady Muriel Watkins and Bernese Oberland Cups, the Lytton Cup for international figure skating (February 4th) and the ski-jumping for the Kurhaus Challenge Cup. There are instruction courses for Alpine skiing and ski-jumping, as well as a great round of entertainments.

Finally, Wengen (4,180 ft.) may justly pride itself on the Golden Skate competition for figure skating, and a Golden Ski race for visitors, its curling bonspiel for the Anglo-Swiss Shield, Cook's Ski Cup, as well as its perfect ski-jump, Jungfrau Schanze. At Wengen are the winter quarters of the Oxford University ski team, and the goal-finish of important downhill races from the Lauberhorn and the Eiger Glacier. Toboggan and horn-sledge races from Wengernalp, obstacle races, a skijöring race for the Trümmelbach Trophy, a speed skating race, as well as instruction courses in cross-country skiing and in ski-jumping go to enrich the programme of this sunny sports centre.

The local inquiry offices of these resorts will send

their sports programmes, with all the dates and details, to any address, free of charge.

Now, having read the above article, it ought to be easy for you, dear reader, to make up your mind! But I should not advise you, even if you go to Switzerland, to indulge in the latest thrill, as per *Daily Mirror* (Dec. 13th):—

A new Alpine sport is to be introduced at Gstaad, in Switzerland, this winter, and I gather that it should prove more than usually exciting. There are to be two separate runs, crossing and recrossing each other by bridges and tunnels, and toboggans will start simultaneously on each. After various jumps and curves the two runs join and the toboggans dash into a spiral. The object is to arrive first at the finish, and it is claimed that the sport needs a cool head and a steady eye. We can well believe it.

Postage Stamps for the Children.

The approach of the festive season, hailed with delight by the children of all ages, makes us realise the truth of the old saying that "To give is more blessed than to receive." You have only got to watch parents when they give presents to their youngsters, and to see the covert glances passing from father to mother, and the delight and happiness which shines from their eyes. It has been left to Switzerland to turn this century-old willingness of people to give at this time of the year to a charitable purpose in an original and unique manner. I am referring, of course, to the issue of "Pro Juventute" postage stamps, which is also mentioned by the *Daily Telegraph* (Dec. 13) as follows:—

For ten years past the Swiss Post Office has made a special small issue of postage stamps at Christmas to raise funds for child welfare. They are called "Pro Juventute" stamps, and are issued in association with the "Pro Juventute" foundation of the Société Suisse d'utilité publique. They are always of the small values in chief demand for ordinary postal use, but they sell for a sou or two sous over their postal value, and of this surcharge one-tenth is reserved for the benefit of a Swiss postal employees' fund, in recognition of the services rendered in securing widespread distribution of the stamps, and the balance of nine-tenths goes to the children's fund. Up to last Christmas the "Pro Juventute" foundation had received approximately 2,000,000 Swiss francs from this source.

The interesting character of the stamps has had much to do with their popularity, as evidenced in the annually increasing sales. Five millions one hundred and thirty-three thousand nine hundred and thirty-one were sold in 1921, and 6,134,142 were sold last Christmas. The surtax on the issue of last December amounted to Swiss francs 338,625.70, divided in the proportions stated between the two funds. Each year's revenue from this source is allocated to some special feature of child welfare, e.g., combating the ravages of tuberculosis among the young, the protection of the young from moral dangers, the care and nourishment of the mother, holiday centres for children, the protection of youth of school age and of the after-school age, etc.

The successive annual issues have a continuity of theme depicting in true heraldic colours the arms of the cantons and so illustrating the history of the Swiss Confederation. The well-known Bernese heraldic artist, M. Rudolf Münz, has been responsible for most of the designs, and has produced the four new ones, issued in time for the approaching Christmas season.

By the time these lines appear before you in print, I hope you will have completed your Christmas purchases and posted your Christmas letters. I shall be on the look-out for them! I wish you A Very Happy Christmas, plenty of good cheer, dry and wet, and trust that it will not be necessary for any of you to call in the doctor on Boxing Day. Cheerio!

STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

	Boys.	Dec. 11	Dec. 18
Swiss Confederation 3% 1903	... 74.60%	75.10%	
Swiss Confed. 9th Mbr. Loan 5%	100.35%	100.45%	
Federal Railways A-K 3 1/2%	78.32%	79.83%	
Canton Basle-Stadt 5 1/2% 1921	101.87%	101.83%	
Canton Fribourg 3% 1892	65.50%	69.62%	
SHARES.	Nom.	Dec. 11	Dec. 18
	Fr.	Fr.	Fr.
Swiss Bank Corporation	... 500	658	656
Credit Suisse	... 500	686	685
Union de Banques Suisses	... 500	553	557
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	3367	3360
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	2362	2401
C. F. Bally S.A.	1000	1082	1080
Fabrique de Machines Oerlikon	500	630	630
Entreprises Sulzer	1000	605	597
S.A. Brown Boveri (new)	500	271	265
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mlk. Co.	200	177	185
Choc. Suisses Peter-Cauer-Kohler	100	107	106
Comp. de Navire sur le Lac Leman	500	472	470

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