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NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

The Season in Switzerland.

It is somewhat surprising that, although weather conditions have been anything but encouraging, the holiday season in Switzerland has been most successful as far as our hotel industry is concerned. A remarkable feature has been the eagerness of men and women for climbing; ascents have been attempted, even without guides, which in ordinary good weather are considered dangerous. A wave of mountain madness seems to have been in the air which the inevitable fatal accidents were unable to stifle. The *Morning Post* (Aug. 27th), in dealing with the season in Switzerland, gives the following interesting *résumé*, which should be a source of satisfaction to all of us:—

In spite of some really shocking weather and the absence of sunshine, the present season is by far the best the country has seen, not only since the war, but within memory. It is, in the main, an American season, but the British and German contingents are not far behind in numbers, while the Dutch are also in considerable force.

The Swiss hoteliers were hit almost harder by the Peace than by the War, and the trade slump and visa troubles during 1920 and 1921 finished off most of the "severely wounded." Thus many hotels closed down, and still more came into the hands of the big banks, who held their mortgages. Now, however, the survivors are beginning to "sit up and take nourishment" in a very literal sense, for the whole country is full from end to end, and I hear of people even sleeping in the big stations, after a room-hunt. By the time these lines appear the crowds will no doubt have thinned out, and as September is perhaps the month of the year here, what I have said need not discourage intending travellers.

There is a good deal of difference between the visitors of to-day and those of yesterday, and one looks almost in vain for well-known names among the lists: Is it, perhaps, that they now travel incognito? On the other hand, the number of different nationalities is extraordinary. One hotel manager told me he had no fewer than twenty-two represented among his guests. They all seem to get on without friction, so far as one can see. The Americans this summer are much more in favour than their predecessors last year, and the same may be said of the British. The German Junker is no longer seen, or heard, and his countrymen are of a humble, but apparently wealthy class, and behave with a becoming modesty. They are unmistakable, but innocuous. Long may it last!

Travelling itself is the acme of comfort. There are plenty of trains, and the times are kept to a minute, except in some of the international expresses, but even these are not so badly overdue as a rule. One of the main changes in post-war travelling conditions is that the majority of tourists now make their arrangements through agencies, even the best rooms being booked in this way, and, consequently, hotels that formerly scorned orders for parties are only too pleased to work hand in hand with the agencies to-day. Certainly this, as well as the conducted tour, facilitates things from everyone's point of view.

It is surprising how bright and simple are the Customs formalities. With memories of the last ten years in mind, one now walks smiling and happily through without more than what seems a cheery word of greeting from the "douanier." Passports, too, are stamped after only a cursory glance at the holder. . . .

The Catholic Congress in Switzerland.

A correspondent writes that our reference under this heading in our last issue was "somewhat vague and not to the point," and was evidently influenced by "the writers natural pride in his native town." We suppose we must plead guilty, but to satisfy our correspondent's hunger for matter-of-fact and unadorned information, we reprint below the report published by the *Univers* and *Catholic Weekly* (Aug. 22nd):—

Huge public demonstrations—the largest ever held by Catholics in Switzerland—characterised the sixth Swiss Catholic Congress, which took place at Basle from August 9th to 12th.

The Congress opened on the Saturday with a meeting of the delegates of the Swiss Catholic Popular Society, an organisation with branches in most of the parishes in the country.

This was followed by a banquet for Catholic journalists at the Congress. Thirty newspapers were represented at the function.

In the evening the first mass meeting was held in the spacious hall of the Mustermesse. Dr. Niederhauser, the first Catholic member of the local Government and chairman of the local committee, welcomed the congressists, and speeches were made by representative Catholics from the French, German, Italian and Romanisch speaking parts of Switzerland.

Sunday was the great day of the Congress. Fourteen special trains from various parts of the country brought thousands of people into the ancient city. Pontifical Masses were celebrated in the four churches, and Low Masses were said in three public schools, which had been specially decorated for the purpose.

The early afternoon saw the massing of great numbers of men congressists for the procession—members of Catholic student's societies in their regalia; the official representatives of the local Governments of the nine Catholic Cantons, preceded by their standard bearers; the guests of honour; the central and local committees; the Catholic men's societies of all the twenty-two Cantons.

Each of the contingents from the rural Cantons was headed by a group of men and women in their picturesque native dress.

In the centre of the procession marched some fifteen hundred Catholics from the State of Baden, together with an equal number of Alsatians.

Altogether more than 20,000 men took part in the pageant. Eighty bands played music during the progress of the procession.

The procession proceeded through the main streets in the centre of the city, which were lined by many thousands of sympathetic onlookers of different creeds.

Two great mass meetings were afterwards held: one for the German-speaking congressists, and the other for the French people. Amongst the principal speakers at the gatherings were M. Giuseppe Motta and M. Jean Masi, both Catholic members of the Swiss Federal Government; Mgr. Robert Buerkler, Bishop of St. Gall, and Mgr. Marius Besson, Bishop of Lausanne and Geneva.

Monday was devoted chiefly to committee meetings of numerous societies, at which home missions, education, abstinence, the Press, art and science, trade unionism and social problems were discussed.

On the following day close on seven thousand men and women made a pilgrimage to Mariastein, which, after Einsiedeln, is the most famous shrine of Our Lady in Southern Europe.

Here, in the beautiful church of the monastery, the Apostolic Nuncio to the Swiss Government, Mgr. Luigi Maglione, celebrated High Mass.

Previous to the service, the Nuncio, the Swiss Bishops and Benedictine Abbots, twelve in all, made a solemn entry into the church. The Nuncio afterwards bestowed the Papal Blessing on the pilgrims.

Two open-air meetings for the French and German congressists were subsequently held in the neighbourhood of the church. They began and ended with the same words, "Gelobt sei Jesus Christus"—"Blessed be the name of Jesus"—said the Chairman. "In Ewigkeit, Amen"—"For ever and ever"—responded the people.

Inter-Parliamentary Union.

What on the face of it would appear as a very important meeting is treated rather scantly in the English press. The Inter-Parliamentary Union was formed some 35 years ago to bring together the M.P.'s from different countries with the object of discussing questions of international politics; the founders had also cherished the lofty wish and hope that disputes between nations should be submitted to the Union for adjudication, thus eliminating recourse to war. The 22nd conference was held last week at Berne in the council chamber of the Nationalrat, when 24 countries were represented, including five English M.P.'s. Amongst the resolutions submitted were:—

That the constitutions of all nations should contain stipulations forbidding secret agreements, and that all treaties and agreements should be communicated to Parliament:

That every country should have a committee on foreign affairs, having the right to demand information concerning any negotiations in progress:

That an annual report should be published on the administration of foreign affairs, and that 'secret funds' should be done away with.

One of the English representatives, Mr. Pethick Lawrence, M.P., stated that the British Government had now promised that "in future all treaties would be laid 21 days on the table of the House of Commons, and that they would not be ratified 'unless the House agreed to this course'!"

Dairying Methods in Tipperary.

The following report of an official visit by Swiss experts on agriculture to an Irish creamery is published in the *Irish Times* (Aug. 27th):—

Recently Professor Keppel, Minister of Agriculture for Switzerland, accompanied by two members of the Swiss Senate, visited the Tipperary Co-operative Creamery. The Swiss Government are anxious to secure first-hand information with regard to Irish dairying and butter-making, and they asked Mr. Hogan, the Free State Minister of Agriculture, to facilitate them in their investigations. The visit to the Tipperary Creamery was the result of that request.

The party, who were accompanied by Mr. Johnson, Chief Inspector of the Department of Agriculture, and Messrs. Toomey and Lyons, were met at the Creamery by Mr. P. L. Ryan, President of the Tipperary Co-operative Society; Mr. Edward O'Dwyer, Mr. T. F. Crowe, and by the manager, Mr. Edward O'Callaghan, who extended to them a cordial welcome. During the visit the Swiss delegation made a close study of the methods of dairying and they were surprised to learn that the yearly output of butter from the Creamery was 700 tons, with a turnover of £120,000. They were particularly struck by what was to them the novel sight of the long line of cars which brought milk to the Creamery, and took photographs of the scene. Professor Keppel also took photographs of the interior and exterior of the Creamery.

Before leaving they warmly thanked Mr. P. L. Ryan and Mr. O'Callaghan for the courtesy extended to them.

The party also visited Ballykeleen Stud Farm, where they were received by Mr. J. W. A. Harris. They were keenly interested in the splendid bloodstock there. They also visited Sir Gilbert Greenhall's prize dairy herd near Kilmallock.

Real Maids of All Work.

Domestic service is one of the callings where "special mentions" are unknown, and it is refreshing—and may even raise delightful hopes for some of us—to read the psalms of praise lavished on the Swiss girl by a correspondent in the *Daily Chronicle* (Aug. 28th). Unfortunately, he does not disclose the name of the Eldorado where these unique qualities are still in evidence. However, unless we are very much mistaken, these Swiss girls have proved to possess a peculiar knack in quickly assimilating the ways and notions of their English prototypes when arriving in this country. This is what their apostle says:—

A comparison of the conditions of Swiss and English domestic service gives results that make the onlooker think: a life that is sheer, concentrated essence of labour is the portion of the former to a remarkable degree. The calm acceptance of this state of affairs, the contented spirit in which duties are performed, and the unruffled demeanour that marks the Swiss maid come as a surprise to the visitor to her country.

Sometimes, not invariably, the Swiss maid "lives in." In either case she is an early riser, and sets about her duties soon after 6 a.m. From this hour she works steadily on, usually until about 10.30 or 11 p.m. When she rests or indulges in recreation is a mystery. A half-day—it is always on the Sabbath—once in every two weeks is the only free time she ever has.

The wages of the Swiss hotel chambermaid are extremely small; until this year one who attended to bed had relied entirely upon the generosity of the visitors, and this particular girl is only one of many who have done likewise. She told us quite naturally, much about herself. The cost of two étagères, comprising at least twenty-four bedrooms, fell to her lot. Ours were always in spotless condition.

The Swiss maid is frequently a well-educated girl; often she is diplomé, speaking two languages fluently. Marriage, in many cases, is not allowed to interfere with her work, and she is as often madame as mademoiselle.

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