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under the vault of blue; the still, shadowed splendour of a towering pine-forest, the exquisite, swooning perfume of mountain lilac; and, above all crowning beauty of the Alps, the tender sunset rose that sometimes floods the peaks, till, looking at them outlined against the lovely greenish-yellow of the sky, you hold your breath in wonderment.

You can wander in cool pine-forests, where chequered sunlight filters through on to the yielding carpet of brown pine needles, or you can fish for trout in the Plessur racing over its rocky bed, or you can have a wonderful gallop on the roof of Europe, or you can play tennis in immaculate flannels, and take tea with pretty girls on a terrace overlooking a primitive valley.

Contrast is a charm of the Alps. You can go to the Kursaal, or up a rocky mountain path to the everlasting roar of a great waterfall plunging down a barren cliff. It seems as if nothing on earth could stop that spume-white column, hurling itself through its titanic clefts, but winter has only to breathe on it, and it is not.

The cream mountain paths look like ribbons on the slopes. To climb in the terrific light of a summer day is to know crude heat. But it has its charm. There is something unfamiliar and fascinating about the stunning force of the sun that drives sweat out of every pore, and scorches the heather and Alpenrösli—rhododendrons a foot high—on the heathy mountain side where no meadow grass will grow. And all the time the Alpine breeze trickles freshly over the slopes—an elixir that banishes fatigue.

Still farther up the hot path comes an Alp. An Alp is a grazing ground high in the mountains where the dun-coloured Swiss cows stay throughout the summer. There is stabling for them in the sudden savage storms, and in the Alp huts girls make the famous Swiss cheeses. An Alp is a little world of its own: nobody leaves it till the cows go down in autumn, and communication with the village below is by messengers.

Looking downwards, cupped in its sheltered valley, one sees Arosa—the Swiss call it The Little Jewel of the Alps—and perhaps the instantaneous wink of a tiny white sail on the lake that looks like a green sapphire. Pebbly streams are there, shady forests, and the fecund meadows with their flower symphony singing to the blue sky.

And then, beyond the hut, looking upwards, is the contrast: the heights of the mountain, naked and grim and hot under the inflexible sun. No more trees, no more grass, no more of anything but desolation and rock like the bare girders of the world, with here and there eternal snow—the Alps in summer.

#### Swiss Hawks Electrocuted.

*The Journal of Commerce* (1st May):—

After various experiments the Swiss Railways have now found a means of preventing hawks from interrupting the electric train service in the canton of Valais. The practice of the hawk was to perch on top of the high insulator poles, from which point of vantage he kept a lookout for his prey. At a favourable moment he swooped to attack his victim. If his wings came in contact with the wires he created a short-circuit, causing a temporary cessation of railway operations, and his own electrocution. Successful results have now been achieved by equipping the insulators with special protecting wires.

Future generations of Swiss hawks have arranged to be born with proper insulating apparatus, to prevent further accidents and to render costly installations, as mentioned in the above article, unnecessary.

#### Berne's Naughty Bear.

*Shields Daily News* (29th April):—

I referred to the Hungarian bear which has been given to Berne in recognition of the adoption by Switzerland of nearly ten thousand starving Hungarian children since the war. Well, somebody seems to have omitted to treat Master Bear kindly, or to give him Mothersill Pills against train sickness. Anyhow, this is what the above-cited newspaper knows about Master Bear's adventures so far:—

"Master Nicholas," the bear cub which the Children's League of Hungary is presenting to Berne in recognition of the adoption by Switzerland of nearly ten thousand starving Hungarian children since the war, is at present in custody at the Budapest Zoo. On his journey to Budapest, travelling as an "express packet," the cub became sullen and intractable, and his aversion to train travel proved so great that it was decided to take him to the Zoo there for friendly association with other bears before resuming his journey by train to the Swiss capital.

#### Harbour Extensions in Switzerland.

*The Journal of Commerce* on 29th April says as follows:—

The following information, regarding harbour extensions in Switzerland, is supplied by the Department of Overseas Trade:—

Work on harbour extensions was carried out in

1925 in accordance with the programme prepared some years ago by the Basle Cantonal Shipping Board. The second stage of those extensions is nearing completion, and the new harbour works at Klein Hueningen will be inaugurated at the opening of the International Exhibition of Inland Navigation and Water Power Development at Basle next June. The bulk of the work done in 1925 consisted in the erection of the concrete walls along the South and West Quays of the Klein Hueningen harbour, and in the dredging of its entrance and basin.

Moreover, the erection of two steel bridges over the river Wiese, which are to carry tracks according to the West Quay and to the station of the Badische Bahn, as well as the laying of the wire and cable system in connection with the power equipment of the harbour, were taken in hand. Several cranes were added to those already in use at Klein Hueningen. The various shipping concerns established in the harbour area have erected a number of warehouses, workshops and administrative buildings. The "Société suisse de remorquage" completed the construction of a wheat silo of a total capacity of 10,000 tons, at a cost of 1.8 million francs.

The projected works of extension of the North Quay are being held back until the question of the creation of a second harbour basin at Klein Hueningen has been settled. In the St. Johann harbour, various minor improvements have been made, which tend towards a smoother working of its installations. The Klybeck Quay, alongside the Rhine, which will offer mooring accommodation for vessels unable to enter the Klein Hueningen harbour, is practically finished.

The bed of the river along the quay has been dredged, while the quay itself has been made ready to receive a travelling crane. The laying of the railway track for the harbour station is proceeding satisfactorily, although some months will yet elapse before the installations are completed. A newspaper cutting with views of the Basle harbour may be consulted at the Shipping and Transport Section of the Department of Overseas Trade.

A rumour to the effect that a well-known firm of Indian merchants has bought up the Schützenwiese at Winterthur, with a view to starting dredging operations in the Eulach to provide the necessary anchorage and dock facilities for steamers running from Winterthur direct to Bombay and a few other Indian suburbs of Winterthur, is not to be credited. "Kyburg" has been informed by the Football Club Winterthur that they were not prepared to sacrifice their famous ground and especially their comparatively new grand stand for such merely commercial and therefore not really uplifting ventures. Wow-wow. "Uplifting" is rather good, however. They seem to be keen on "headplay" in my old club.

#### Verzeichnis Schweizerischer Bühnenwerke in Hochdeutscher Sprache.

*The Times* (29th April):—

Herausgegeben von der Gesellschaft schweizerischer Dramatiker. (Zürich: Orell Füssli.)—Great efforts are being put forward by Swiss writers to impress on the world that their country has a distinct literature, and more especially a drama, of its own, although it is written in German. Dr. Paul Lang's book, "Bühne und Drama der deutschen Schweiz im 19. Jahrhundert," which was reviewed in these columns last year, was one of the most interesting examples of this literary patriotism, and to that volume this little pamphlet may be recommended as a useful appendix. It is published by the leading society of Swiss dramatists, with the strictly practical object of providing Swiss theatre managers with a convenient annotated list of all the contemporary German-Swiss plays that are available for the stage. Over forty Swiss playwrights are mentioned, and under each name is given a short biographical notice, the title of each play, with date of publication, synopsis of plot, length of action and similar particulars. This does not provide any criterion of the literary value of the dramas, but those who have met with a name that particularly interested them in any account of the modern Swiss stage will now be enabled to obtain a fuller account of the individual writers than has hitherto been available.

Politics are on holiday this week, as far as the S.O. is concerned. It would ill become us, who enjoy the generous hospitality of Great Britain, to remark on anything bearing on the present crisis while this crisis lasts.

On the other hand, it gives me pleasure to be able to refer to the following appreciation, by an English student of politics, of an eminent Swiss whose worth needs no words of commendation from me. *Foreign Affairs* (May) states:—

#### A Swiss Publicist on the Assembly.

Miss C. E. Playne, who heard Mr. William Martin (known by his initials to readers of the "Journal de Genève") lecture on the Extraordinary Assembly in Geneva, writes as follows: It was the closest analysis of a tangled situation I have ever heard. Coming just after the March

Extraordinary Assembly, its opening declarations, "We are not here to bury a corpse," was arresting. The general cause of the grave situation was discussed and traced to the circumstances of the birth of the League of Nations. Founded by statesmen who did not want it, as a concession to the cry "Never again" wrung from humanity by the sufferings of the Great War, it was not meant to be successful. Governments, not believing in the League, thought it could not be *trop méchant*, and fortunately left it alone during the earlier years of its existence. It was able to develop well, so well, indeed, that now statesmen come back to it and try to lay hands on it. Hence the present crisis.

Particular causes were entered into. Of these, the League's diplomacy, due greatly to the original sin in which it was conceived, is one. Instead of the open diplomacy Wilson dreamed of, its diplomacy is largely effected in secret. The chief actors feel themselves driven to seek shelter, sometimes round private tea-tables. A seat on the Council carries the privilege of a seat at these tea-tables, therefore the sudden urgency of various nations in clamouring for a permanent seat.

The result of this restricted "open" diplomacy is that many nations feel left outside. Then they exaggerate the mechanism of the Council. The fault of the work of the Council lies in the fact that it is too often improvised; there is not proper preparation, and therefore it does not succeed. The work of the permanent administration is carefully prepared and carried through; it is more often successful. Diplomats jealous of this success have tried to invade the secretariat. But statesmen do not possess the necessary collective quality for international administration. Their decisions are taken too often in Ministers' private rooms and are conceived in the spirit of capital cities. The general welfare of States associated together does not count. This is not the spirit of Geneva.

In other words, and as we Swiss know only too well, the spirit of capital cities, the "Kantönligeist," does not and cannot work for good, neither in our own Federal affairs, nor in the much larger and more important affairs of the League of Nations.

And so we will say, with Mr. Baldwin, "Give us Peace in our time, O Lord!"

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