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M. Motta a terminé son discours par un salut enthousiaste à la patrie, et par un toast aux tireurs, déclarant notamment que si la Suisse fut sauvée, c'est à son armée qu'elle le doit. Quiconque ne voit pas ça est un aveugle. Une neutralité ne reposant pas sur l'armée serait considérée avec inquiétude par nos voisins, et enlèverait à notre peuple le sentiment de la confiance en soi-même.

By "KYBURG."

It is nearly always a sign of incipient senile decay when one starts lamenting the good old times! In many ways I am considering "younghish," often even "boy-ish" as far as manners are concerned and contents of my pockets, as I am told by Her Who Knows, but all the same I sometimes come across a thing which I consider was done better in our earlier days, and I then am tempted to lament the good old times we had. I refer to the programme for the "Fête Nationale 1926," which has reached me by this morning's post. Remembering the time when under the auspices of the late Minister Monsieur Carlin, we celebrated our Fête Nationale at the Portland Rooms in Baker Street, singing, listening to songs and music, patriotic speeches, and when we could not only smoke if we wanted to, but when we could also obtain claret-cups and other delicious refreshments of the stronger variety during the interval, I feel that things are not the same to-day, when it states even on the programme that "on est prié de ne pas fumer pendant la soirée."

Smoke may, of course, affect the singers and make the air somewhat heavy and unpleasant perhaps for some particularly delicate persons, and I console myself with the reflection that, having had my good old time in years gone by, it is now the turn of the non-smokers and the non-drinkers and, who am I, that I should grudge them their chance?

I suppose they stayed away on former occasions, or were not in existence then, and I am afraid the restriction referred to is quite enough to clash with my ideas of celebrating the Fête Nationale now.

(Oh, yes, I know that licentiousness is not freedom, but —!?)

Now, passons à l'ordre du jour.

Bears Exonerate their Keeper.

Morning Post, July 1st :—

The "Bear Pit of Berne" is historic, not only in Switzerland but all over the world, since tourists of every country have gazed down into the basin of the capital of the Swiss Confederation at the playful bruins which have been kept there for centuries.

But the Bears of Berne have won additional recognition, and incidentally rehabilitated themselves in the good graces of the populace after the recent tragedy which resulted in the death of a child and injury to a youth.

For the first time in the annals of law courts two bears from the Berne pit were recognised as capable witnesses before the Cantonal Courts. One of the assistant keepers had brought charges of cruelty against the head keeper. The case was duly called, and, as part of his defence, the head keeper, to the apprehension of the judge and attendants, appeared for trial followed by two of the bears. The charges were made and the complaining witness described how the animals, even the two brought into the court-room had been mistreated.

The usual emphatic denials were entered by the defence, and after a discourse upon the habits, intelligence and honesty of bears in general, the counsel for the head keeper asked if the court would permit him to introduce, as the only witnesses for his client, the bears themselves.

The Court, unable to find reason as to the incompetence of the bears as witnesses, inasmuch as they were the aggrieved parties, and impressed by the arguments of the counsel, consented, whereupon the two animals were led before the Bench. The complaining witness and several other attendants of the Bear-pit were asked to come down from their places and confront the bears.

Much to the consternation of everyone except the head keeper and his lawyer, one of the bears, showing his dislike for the attendant before him, moved menacingly towards his supposed defender in an effort to administer a savage cuff. The other attendants he paid no attention to whatsoever. The argument proved sufficient and the Judge

dismissed the complaint against the head keeper, who followed by the two shuffling bruins, walked out of the court-room.

and no doubt, the head keeper regaled his brown friends with a choice carrot or two. They had earned some!

Preservation of Swiss Beauty Spot.

The Times, July 14th:—

A successful attempt has been made by a group of Swiss alpinists and nature lovers to preserve the natural beauty of the Fafer-Alp (5,846ft.), the last glen in the Loetschental, in Canton Valais, and to prevent its attractions from being spoiled by the ever-growing hotel industry.

When, in 1914, a scheme was set up for building three big hotels in that remote glen, the group of Swiss alpinists, wishing to keep the Fafer-Alp as a sort of natural reserve, resolved to buy the place. By agreement with the Cantonal Government and Commune, they purchased the existing hotel and the adjacent ground, as well as all rights over water and springs, thus putting an end to any attempt to build huge hotels in the valley. They themselves either contributed or raised the necessary capital for purchasing the place and running the small mountain hotel, which was renewed but will not be enlarged. The first years were difficult, but now things are going on smoothly, and the profits are sufficient to pay the interest on the capital invested. If any surplus profits are made, they will be used for the improvement of the place, as those who undertook the purchase do not intend to make any profit for themselves. If nothing interferes with this interesting experiment the Fafer-Alp will remain a lonely mountain glen, and will not be invaded by ugly modern buildings and shops.

It is just as well to preserve some of our Swiss beauty spots, because one never knows how long they are going to last, seeing that even mountain tops move, glaciers dwindle, and, in short, the whole country will become as flat as an ironing board by and by. (But not in your life-time, my friend, so don't hasten your holiday!) Read what *The Times* said on July 13th.

Glacier Movements in the Alps.

The retreating movement of the Swiss Alpine glaciers, which began in 1922, continued throughout the year 1925. This is made clear by the observations made by Professor P. L. Mercanton, of Lausanne, an expert in glaciology. Snowfalls were abundant during the preceding winter, but they were completely "eaten" by the sun during the subsequent summer.

One example may help to show the size of this movement. The mass of new snow reached a depth of 7ft. on the Orny glacier at the beginning of the summer season; the quantity of snow that melted during the summer months reached a depth of 18ft., so that the surface of the glacier sank by 11ft.

Out of 100 Swiss glaciers observed in 1925, 19 were advancing (23 in 1924), 11 were at a standstill (11 in 1924), and 69 were retreating (66 in 1924). The Saleinaz glacier advanced by 63ft. and the lower Grindelwald glacier by 29ft.; on the other hand, the Aletsch glacier retreated by 30ft., the Allalin glacier by 30ft., the Eiger glacier by 61ft., and the upper Grindelwald glacier by 50ft.

The consequence of this retreating movement is that the glaciers are now in a broken condition, cut by deep crevasses which make them difficult and sometimes dangerous to cross. There is every reason to believe that this is the beginning of a period of general retreat; if this be the case, it will be evidence in favour of the theory that the periodicity of the glacier movements is 35 years. During nearly 35 years ending 1922 there was a general advance of Alpine glaciers. It remains to be seen whether in another 35 years we shall be entering on another period of advance.

In *The Observer* of July 11th, I came across the following "tall" story:

The papers of the week have not had any piece of news quite so exciting as one which I find in *The Observer* of a hundred years ago. It is given as from "a Paris paper," and on the authority of "Dr. James Hotham, of Morpeth, in Northumberland." Dr. Hotham had just come from Switzerland, where he had visited Mt. St. Gothard, and made a startling discovery:—

A league from Alzoli, in the valley of Levantina, at the bottom of a kind of cavern, the body of a man, about thirty years of age, was perceived, under a heap of ice, proceeding from an avalanche. The body seemed to be fresh, as if it had been stifled only half an hour before.

The body, covered with a crust of ice, was taken out and placed in warm water, from which it was transferred to bed and treated in the manner customary with cases of suffocation, "by which means animation was restored":—

What was the astonishment of everybody when the individual, having recovered the use of his faculties, declared that he was Roger Dodsworth, son of the antiquary of the same name, born in 1629, who, returning from Italy in 1660, a year after the death of his father, was buried under an avalanche?

The account goes on to say that "Mr. Dodsworth feels a great stiffness in all his joints," but that "by degrees they will become as flexible as before the accident."

Unfortunately the story (which has a striking similarity to the motive of Mr. Well's "When the Sleeper Wakes") is left without an ending. "If," concludes the Paris narrative, "Mr. Dodsworth fully recovers, and should pass through Lyons to return to his country after 166 years' absence, it may be predicted that he will attract in the highest degree the public curiosity." But whether he did recover, and whether he returned as a Rip van Winkle to England, we do not learn; either then or (so far as I can ascertain) subsequently. We can only presume that if England had a Rip van Winkle in 1826 she would not have buried the secret in so much obscurity.

And, inserting it in these columns, I just wonder how many of my readers will have to read it twice ere seeing that it was originally printed over a century ago?

Italy and Ticino.

Daily Mail, July 12th:—

In reply to the protests in the Swiss Press against the alleged Fascist campaign for the return to Italy of the Swiss canton of Ticino and against the Italian complaints of the Germanisation of the canton, a semi-official statement has been issued at Rome. This communiqué says that in view of the repeated expressions of friendship on the part of the Italian Government the attitude of distrust of certain members of the Swiss Government is entirely unjustified.

Italy, however, maintains her right to keep a vigilant eye on all that passes at her frontiers.

"It is only natural," says the communiqué, "that we should want to know since when have numerous Germans who have bought property on the hills dominating Lake Maggiore acquired Swiss citizenship."

The argument in the last sentence of the above is very curious and a somewhat specious one, but the main thing is that our *Ticinesi* are Swiss at heart and none than they are more loyal to mother Helvetia, as all those who know and love our beautiful Canton south of the Gotthard know full well. I fancy the Italians would have a tough job, if they tried to assimilate the Ticino. Relationship of culture and language is one thing, political relationship is another.

"RIMEMBRANZE."

SERATE DI LUGLIO.

Lunghe serate placide d'estate, non sarete mai più che ricordi cari, sogni deliziosi: memorie di rose sfogliate.

Serate senza luna, ombre d'alberi, di cespugli fioriti, appena delineati nell'oscurità della notte... calma perfetta di natura fresca ed odorosa dopo una giornata d'un sole bruciante... serata oscura, parco fitto di frondami da sembrar fantasmi, fontana famigliare dal zampillo d'acqua fresca e purissima, panchina di sasso ove ci attardavamo di sera, sedute, colla testa riposante contro il muretto di casa, in dolce rapimento, contemplando estatiche, un firmamento di un color turchino meraviglioso, costellato di una miriade di "vive facelle," stelle filanti, via latte che attraversava vaporosa ed inesorabile quell'immensità di una superba bellezza... oh no, non ritornerete giammai!

La vita, tutta un'esistenza mi si apriva... e contemplavo "allora" in voi... tutto un avvenire io studiavo, scrutavo in voi, in quelle serate sublimi, senza luna, calme, placide e belle, seduta sulla panchina di sasso, colla testa reclinata, poggiata al muro di "casa"...

Si beveva a pieni polmoni quell'aria imballata dall'odor delle rose mescolato a quello del gelsomino, del caprifoglio e delle magnolie...

L'occhio vagava e rincorreva le lucertole che ingemmavano il giardino, chiamate dal caldo e dalla fragranza dei fiori; apparenti, parenti; incerte e come stupite d'esistere; lucichio verde oro, un pò stella, un pò fuoco fatuo da sembrar lumicini delle streghe...

Ero giovane allora; ero sicura d'esserlo sempre e bevevo a gran sorsi quella soavità di solitudine piena di un'intima melodia; quelle vibrazioni molteplici di natura notturna che rendono sonoro ciascun atomo del silenzio...

Tanti mai anni son passati dopo quel tempo, e cerco, in una dolce serata estiva di soverchiar l'altre lontane...

Ricordandole, ho nel cervello immagini di luce, infinito moltiplicarsi di stelle nel cielo di luglio, e ciascuna ha un suo modo di guardare, di palpitare, di splendere...

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Federal Railways 3½ A—K	84.05	84.87	
" " 1924 IV Elect. Ln.	102.87	102.87	
SHARES.	Nom.	July 13	July 20
Swiss Bank Corporation	500	729	737
Crédit Suisse.....	500	800	814
Union de Banques Suisses.....	500	650	650
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	2052	2900
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	3437	3475
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe	1000	2950	2900
S.A. Brown Boveri	350	513	514
C. F. Bally	1000	1236	1212
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	481	487
Entreprises Sulzer S.A.	1000	1022	1022
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