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"Will Monsieur turn a little to the left? I must have your hair." He turns a little to the left. "Head a little up—I must have Monsieur's charming eyes! . . . Bien!" And presently—

"Has Mademoiselle really finished? C'est merveilleux!"

To-morrow Mademoiselle will be back again in the Lobby with M. Paul Boncour for sale for two guineas (if a hard American is there it may be ten guineas) and on the look-out for yet another "catch."

During the first Assemblies of the League, sketching in the Lobby was confined to men, but as the news has spread to the art schools of the possibilities which the League Lobby provides, the fair sex has entered into keen and winning competition. For it must be admitted that whilst men had some difficulty in capturing "subjects," the Members of the Assembly capable of withstanding the wiles of these fair artists, are very few—indeed, if the truth were told, they seem to like it!

But there is one thing nobody can understand—these lady artists evince no desire to sketch the women Members of the Assembly! I wonder why?

#### Electricity Supply.

The interchange of electric energy between countries was one of the interesting questions discussed at the recent international conference in Basle. I suppose before the idea is developed much further, we shall see this energy taking its place in the customs tariff! The following summary is published in the *Electrician* (Sept. 17th):—

Six papers on the "Exchange of Electrical Energy between Countries," were presented at the World Power Conference at Basle. These are dealt with in a report presented by Prof. Landry, of Lausanne, which we summarise below.

In this report, it is pointed out that the exchange of electrical energy between countries is still in the earliest stages of its development, and with the exception of the most recent efforts, is restricted almost entirely to countries with superfluous water power who supply other countries with no water power, or in which the production of energy is restricted to expensive hydro-electric schemes owing to the lack of suitable fuel. The more recent schemes are particularly commendable, because they have the effect of giving the international exchange of electrical energy a wider basis, and a much greater range than it has hitherto possessed, so that there is a combined utilisation of the various sources of electricity regardless of the limits imposed by political boundaries.

Switzerland is a country possessing superfluous water power in spite of the fact that it is very highly electrified, so that it is undoubtedly an exporting country. During 1925, in fact, it exported about 650 million kWh, or approximately 20% of the total energy produced. Of this, about 46% was taken by France.

Canada has supplied altogether about 14.2 thousand million kWh to the United States during the period 1911—1926, or about 35% of the total energy produced by the exporting companies.

Though the statistical data concerning the international exchange of energy is very scanty, it appears that Canada with a population of 9,000,000, exports annually about 155 kWh per head, as compared with 900 kWh consumed, while Switzerland, with a population of 4,000,000, exports about 166 kWh out of every 700 produced.

Dealing with the advantages of and necessity for exchange, Prof. Landry remarks that it is certainly no longer necessary to point out the advantages of interconnection of power stations and supply systems in one and the same country, and that to make it possible to embrace all the sources of energy in any one country, care must be taken that the natural auxiliary resources are distributed in such a way that a steady production of energy is ensured.

As it is in the interests of every individual country to utilise the resources within its boundary as completely and rationally as possible, it is equally in the interests of every country to pay attention to economy, and this leads to the second necessary step of international interconnection being taken in order that there may be exchange in both directions. For these reasons, it seems certain that the number of international connecting lines will be increased as the need arises, and it is to be hoped that the many difficulties in the way on international exchange which are not economical in character will gradually disappear.

The fact remains that there are at present numerous difficulties in the way of energy exchange, both small and great. Some of these are due to the laws governing international trade which have been analysed and discussed by Dr. Trümpy. Another difficulty is that relating to price, and comparisons are often made between the prices for energy in exporting countries, and those which the foreign purchaser has to pay. These comparisons appear to take no

account of the fact that there can be no fixed price per kWh, as this varies with the season, day, hour, method of production and utilisation, superfluity or the reverse of the power resources, possibility of equalisation, security of supply, natural or legal obstacles preventing the conclusion of agreements, the position of power stations, local demand, importance of the supply, and others.

Prof. Landry also reviews the legislation which at present exists in the various countries with regard to the export of power. This exhibits on the one hand broad-mindedness, and on the other hand, growing conservatism or even open enmity. Considering the matter broadly, the hope is expressed that the former policy will obtain the upper hand, and it is hoped that the World Power Conference will take its share in attaining this end.

Whilst dealing with modern technical achievements, here is a description of the **120-ton Travelling Crane**, which has been recently installed in the shops of the Swiss Federal Railways at Yverdon, to facilitate the repair of electric locomotives; it is taken from the *Mechanical World* (Sept. 17):—

Its principal dimensions are as follows:—Span span, 25 m. (82 ft.); height of lift for locomotives, 7 m. (23 ft.), and for single loads, 10 m. 32.8 ft.); load carried by the two main winches jointly, 120 tonnes (118 tons), and by auxiliary winches, 8 tonnes (7.87 tons); speed of lifting, up to 15 tonnes (14½ tons), 3 m. (9.8 ft.) per min., and 15-60 tonnes (14½ to 59 tons), 2 m. (6.56 ft.) per min.; speed of travel of main winches, 15 m. (49 ft.) per min., and of auxiliary winches, 30 m. (98 ft.) per min.; travelling speed of crane with light loads, 52.5 m. (172 ft.) per min., and with heavy loads, 35 m. (115 ft.) per min. The crane bridge consists of two main lattice girders carrying the main winches with two outer girders, the auxiliary winches being carried between the outer and main girders. Each of the two main winches consists of two 30-ton units mounted on a steel carriage. The principal feature of the electrical equipment is the use of the Ward Leonard system of control; each motor or group of motors is supplied by a separate generator, and a very wide range of speed is obtainable with the minimum loss of power.

#### The Cost of Surgery.

The best comparative article that I have come across for a long time on a matter that concerns us all sooner or later, appears under this title in the *New Statesman* (Sept. 18th). I think those of my compatriots—and I know a good few—who can talk from experience will underline every word; I make no excuse, therefore, for reproducing this correspondence in *extenso*:—

An interesting correspondence in a contemporary some time ago dealt with the comparative costs of surgical operations in England and Switzerland. The evidence appeared to show that in Switzerland such operations, with the incidentals requisite, are obtainable at far less cost than in England, without deterioration of quality. It may be useful to describe a recent experience, and to discuss the meaning of the facts. That they were in no way exceptional I am assured by many witnesses.

During a holiday in the part of Switzerland where I write, a member of my party was attacked by appendicular pains, and consulted a surgeon, who is a man of about forty, holding a high though not the most senior position in the large University city where he practises. He was not anxious to operate, but was urgently asked to do so by the patient and myself. She went into a nursing home, where she found herself in the greatest peace and comfort. The place is perfectly equipped, absolutely clean, as one expects in Switzerland, quiet, with double doors to the rooms, and a pleasant outlook. The nurse was not exceptional, but simply chosen because she could speak English. The patient has been in several nursing homes in London, this being her seventh experience of the kind. She distinctly affirms that she has never been really nursed before. The nurse slept in a bed beside her—when she slept, but in fact cared for her assiduously night and day. In every way she would have adorned the record of the country which gave Florence Nightingale and modern nursing to the world, but she was Swiss.

Amongst the worst features of the nursing homes in London, most of which are a disgrace to the medical profession and to everyone connected with them, is the diet. In this Swiss home the patient was not only fed pleasantly, but suitably to the case. The nurse went downstairs and chose from the menu what her patient could safely take after an appendicectomy. There is so much more to say about the feeding in all our institutions in Britain, and the contrast between it and the pioneer researches of our physiologists that I must refrain from further pursuit of this part of the subject.

But here are the actual charges: Room and board, 16 francs per day; board of the nurse, 8 francs per day; service in the operation theatre,

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