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NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG."

"Rimembranze."

There must be a few of us, soldiers of the Depot Battalion sent to guard the Upper Tessin in the autumn of that fateful year 1914. They all will be grateful to Signora Lunghi-Rezzonico for her charming letter which we published in our issue of the 20th inst. May other compatriots, natives of that wonderful canton south of the Gottardo, follow and warm our hearts with letters and articles written in the "lingua di Dante," and, perhaps, tell us something of their native land, make us remember some of those unforgettable days when we, Northerners, were able to renew our acquaintance with the patriotic people of our Italian valleys—Italian in everything except cleanliness and love for Mother Helvetia! Well, I will not again let myself go. Once I start thinking of the Ticino I never finish, and I have often thought that several sojourns down there have perhaps left some of that ardent feeling of the Ticinese in me! But do write again to *The Swiss Observer*! Let us see more than ever of your beautiful language, and instead of returning home and forgetting all about it, as a previous correspondent told us, do sit down when you get home and spend half-an-hour or so in writing to the Editor, so that we readers may have something of you too, fratelli Ticinesi!

Swiss Motoring Conditions.

My readers will remember our Notes on the subject of motoring in the Grisons last year. The *Autocar* of Feb. 12th now publishes the following:

Referring to the paragraph on p. 178 of "The *Autocar*" of Jan. 29th, Mr. C. Demmer, president of the Grisons section of the Swiss Automobile Club, informs us that the Cantonal Government has recently taken action as follows:

(1) The Department of Justice has been requested to prepare clear regulations for motor traffic in this canton, and to transmit such regulations to the responsible head of each commune.
(2) A member of the cantonal police force has been sent to Zurich to be instructed in all matters relating to the regulation of motor-car traffic.
(3) There must be uniform action throughout the communes of the canton in regard to charges of excessive speed and other infringements of the regulations. Only the properly appointed officials will in future be entitled to hold up motorists, and the above-mentioned special constable will act as control officer for the canton.

He also points out that since January 1st the Grisons section of the Swiss Automobile Club has opened an office at Coire, to which Dr. Anton Meuli, a well-known cantonal lawyer, is attached for the purpose of giving legal advice and assistance to motorists who apply to him in cases of doubt or difficulty. Address: Bahnhofplatz, Coire. Telephone 129.

And, in order to show that by and by it may be possible for us to motor "home" from London, i.e., to steer our cars across the very English Channel, I append the following from the *Liverpool Daily Courier* of the same day:—

The recent revival of the proposal to build a tunnel under the English Channel connecting Britain and France, though it made little headway because of the prohibitive cost of the work at present, gave rise to a scheme which the Calais Chamber of Commerce has under consideration.

This is a bridge across the Straits of Dover from Calais to Deal, a distance of 25 miles, and inasmuch as its cost—£60,000,000—is within the limits of modern finance, there is a chance that such a project could be executed.

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The idea originated from Jules Jaeger, a Swiss engineer, and its main attraction is that it eliminates the principal objection to the tunnel—the danger of asphyxiation and fire from motor fumes which could have no escapes except at the tunnel mouths.

M. Jaeger's idea is to build a double bridge across the Channel, sinking a foundation of rocks on which would be placed great cement anchors of 400 tons each. On top of these would be constructed the support of the bridges, and on top of that, well above the sea, a covered double-track railway, the roof of which would provide a 30-foot vehicular highway with a pavement for pedestrians.

The space between the two bridges, about 100 yards, would provide a canal with still water, in which barges and small boats could cross in absolute safety, and, carrying the canal on to London, those vessels would save much time and money in transportation.

Liners might use the canal, especially during stormy weather and fog. In mid-Channel the bridges would rise with great arches, under which vessels bound up or down the Channel would pass. Here, too, the terrible currents of the narrow Straits would find an outlet, for in other places they would dash their strength against the breakwater bridge.

The Channel is only 150 feet deep at its deepest point, close to the English shore, and as proof of the sense of his idea, the Swiss engineer points to the breakwaters in the Pacific which have been built at a depth of 180 feet.

All the same, a lot of water will flow up and down Channel before the above dream comes true.

The Prosperity of Lichtenstein.

The Times (12th Feb.):—

After the war, the tiny Principality of Lichtenstein—which lies in a mountainous district between Austria and Switzerland—was faced with serious economic and financial difficulties, which it did its best to overcome. The Principality has an area of about 62 square miles and a population of 12,000. The inhabitants are mostly engaged in agriculture, a few only being employed in textile works. There has been no military force since 1886, and the inhabitants are no longer liable for military service.

In 1919 the Principality asked the Swiss Federal Council for assistance in the protection of its economic interest. Switzerland agreed to help, and in 1920 took over the working of the postal, telephone and telegraph services in Lichtenstein. In March, 1923, a Treaty was concluded incorporating the Principality in the Swiss Customs territory. The results of this incorporation have been gratifying, and Switzerland is justly proud of the work accomplished. In 1922 the Budget of the Principality showed a deficit of 440,000 frs. (£17,600), which was generously paid off by the Prince of Lichtenstein; in 1923 there was a surplus of 179,000 frs. (£7,160); and in 1924 a surplus of 13,000 frs. (£520), in spite of heavy expenditure incurred in the reorganization of the Customs.

In 1920, when the Austrian financial situation was at its worst, the Lichtenstein people adopted Swiss currency, an unofficial action which was endorsed by a new monetary law in 1924. Incorporation in the Swiss Customs system has opened the whole of Switzerland to the exports of Lichtenstein, which benefits by all trade facilities derived from commercial treaties concluded by Switzerland with other countries. Lichtenstein had two Legations in 1923, one in Vienna and the other in Berne; that at Vienna was suppressed later, with the agreement of the Austrian Government, and the Principality is represented abroad by the Swiss Legations.

The inhabitants of Lichtenstein seem to be fully satisfied with the new régime. They enjoy economic and financial prosperity and retain full liberty, as Switzerland refrains from interference in Lichtenstein's internal affairs, and takes the greatest care not to do anything that might even appear to encroach upon the Principality's independence and autonomy.

The last sentence in the above article might well be taken to heart by some of our Great Powers, whose colonising methods might with advantage be reorganised!

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES.

BONDS.	Feb. 16	Feb. 23	
Confederation 3% 1903 ...	80.75	81.12	
5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln ...	101.82	101.90	
Federal Railways 3½% A—K ...	83.55	83.62	
" " 1924 IV Elect. Ln. ...	101.87	101.87	
SHARES.	Nom.	Feb. 16	Feb. 23
Swiss Bank Corporation ...	Frs. 500	Frs. 729	Frs. 730
Crédit Suisse ...	500	792	770
Union de Banques Suisses... ..	500	624	627
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	1000	1947	1959
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	1000	3380	3345
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe ...	1000	3305	3367
S.A. Brown Boveri ...	350	411	421
C. F. Bally ...	1000	1287	1292
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	200	328	328
Entreprises Sulzer S.A. ...	1000	987	987
Comp. de Navig'n sur le Lac Léman	500	555	555
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco ...	100	87	87
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon ...	500	688	690

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Swiss Electric Railways.

A long and well-illustrated article on the Brugg Sub-station of the Swiss Federal Railways appears in the *Engineer* of 12th Feb. and can be had on application to Kyburg before 5th March.

Engelberg and the Olympic Games of 1928.

Daily Chronicle (8th Feb.):—

The Olympic Games of 1928 are to be held on ground very familiar to English tourists, and there should be no lack of public support both from this country and from America at Engelberg. Engelberg lies at the foot of the Tiflis, about 14 miles from Lucerne, and has some interesting monuments of the past. For the Benedictine Abbey was originally founded in 1120, and there is a large and valuable library. But Engelberg's fame is chiefly as a tourist resort with a summer and winter season, and it has long been a favourite place with English visitors.

Now, boys, train, train, train!

To Switzerland by Boat.

Liverpool Daily Courier (8th Feb.):—

A service of Rhine boats on a cross-Channel trade route between Switzerland and this country will be started as soon as the new Rhine port of Basle is opened up in July.

A notable feature of the development which has taken place during recent years in Rhine shipping has been the persistency with which traffic has penetrated further and further up stream.

Several years ago Mannheim was the terminus of shipping on the river, but goods traffic has extended nearer and nearer to the source, with the result that Basle, with its up-to-date harbour and facilities for the transhipment of goods, has become a port of no mean importance.

It is anticipated that when the projected regularisation of the Rhine takes place—a project which includes plans for further harbour extensions under construction at Basle—a much greater and more rapid advance will be recorded.

It will not be long before the whole passage up to Lake Constance becomes navigable for river traffic, and the proposed canal from the Rhine to the Danube invests the Rhine with still more importance as a great commercial artery.

It was hoped that the new "seaport" would be open in time for the great Swiss Industries Fair to be held in April, when traders from all parts of Europe are expected to visit Basle.

The service, however, will be inaugurated in time for the International Exhibition of Inland Navigation and Utilisation of Hydraulic Power, which will take place from July to September.

This, perhaps, may come true sooner than the above-mentioned bridge across the Channel, but ordinary business visits will for some time to come be quicker by rail—or aeroplane.

You know, dear readers, "Kyburg" feels a wee bit tired after the great efforts he had to make to celebrate the anniversary of one of our leading Swiss Houses of International Trade—to show you why he does not think that public opinion in the French part of Switzerland is properly influenced anent the Swiss-Russo quarrel—and this week, with the warm sort of weather we have been having, and the faint but distinctly audible calling of Spring—why, there are quite a number of song-birds in full blast already—"Kyburg" begins thinking of some nice spot where he might try to improve his golf during the next few weeks. So please prepare for a very sad announcement next week—a sad one as far as you will be concerned, but a less sad one, perhaps, or, at all events, a necessary one as far as I am in question.

UN MOT DE CHEZ NOUS.

Monsieur Motta vient de se couvrir de gloire et ses détracteurs qui espéraient par cet "affaire de Russie" lui porter un coup décisif, ont vu toute "l'affaire" tourner à leur propre confusion et à l'avantage de notre distingué Ministre des Affaires Etrangères. Cette joute aurait pu être dangereuse pour notre National "Giuseppe" que beaucoup de ceux qui l'approchent à Genève n'estiment plus à sa juste valeur. Au cours de son admirable carrière notre Chef du Département Politique s'est fait quelques ennemis et je dois reconnaître que certains parmi eux sont tenaces. Le piège était semblé-il admirablement préparé cette fois, car la pièce à jouer était difficile; reconnaissons que le premier protagoniste s'en est tiré tout à son honneur et à la plus grande confusion de ses adversaires. Ceci dit, reconnaissons aussi que notre sympathique Parlement n'avait pas jusqu'à ce jour, vécu des heures aussi passionnantes que celles de cette grande séance Russo-Suisse. Bien avant l'ouverture des arènes, les tribunes réservées aux Diplomates et aux Invités étaient comblées. Bientôt, la salle s'emplit, l'atmosphère est celle des grands jours; tous nos députés se donnent les airs les plus calmes, mais ce trop grand calme même, est la preuve d'un énervement "rentré." Enfin le sympathique président Hoffmann, secoue dans un sourire sa sonnette, et voilà le tournoi ouvert à la joute des orateurs.

Le reste vous le savez aussi bien que moi, les journaux vous l'ont appris et je ne veux pas y revenir, mais ceux qui ont eu le privilège de cette journée en garderont longtemps le souvenir.

...Et pendant que les grands ténors politiques donnaient la preuve de tous leurs talents, d'autres ténors, dans un genre tout différent, mais peut être plus exact, manquaient être privés du cadre nécessaire à leurs évolutions. Je veux dire aujourd'hui quelques mots de la grande pitié du théâtre de Genève. La crise des théâtres n'est pas une chose nouvelle en Suisse. Zurich et Bâle l'ont connue, mais dans ces deux villes de généreux mélomanes ont permis de rétablir la situation et des hommes capables et réellement connaisseurs ont su trouver le chemin qui ramène les foules aux grands spectacles. Berne a eu déjà beaucoup plus de mal à trouver la solution; Genève ne trouve pas de solution du tout. L'étude de cette complexe question mérite qu'on s'y arrête un instant et que l'on remonte aux sources du mal. Le Grand Théâtre ne marche plus. C'est un fait indéniable. "Commercialement il ne rapporte rien et coûte même fort cher à l'homme qui en assume la direction, ainsi qu'au contribuable Genevois. Artistiquement Genève, qui jusqu'à la guerre passait à juste titre pour la meilleure scène lyrique de langue française après Paris, est tombé maintenant à ce qu'on appelle en "style théâtral" un Troisième dessous. Il est incontestable qu'une scène comme Dijon est actuellement supérieure à la nôtre et ce simple exemple en dit long.

A ce grand mal il y a deux causes dont on oublie beaucoup trop volontiers la première. La voici: Au moment de sa plus haute prospérité de la période d'avant guerre, notre théâtre était dirigé par une personnalité admirable de capacité et de dévouement. Cet homme avait voué le meilleur de lui-même à faire de notre scène ce qu'elle était. Tout le public, connaisseurs aussi bien qu'amateurs, rendait hommage à sa probité et à ses initiatives. Malheureusement pour lui, cet homme n'était pas un "politicien" ni même un politicien. Les intrigues se nouèrent, et comme c'est presque toujours le cas chez nous on bascula l'encombrant au grand avantage de certains ambitieux. Pour une fois l'on avait compté sans l'opinion publique qui logique avec elle-même, fit grise mine au successeur qu'elle réprouvait. Comme avec les années, le successeur se maintenait, la foule petit à petit perdit l'habitude du chemin qui mène à l'établissement de la Place Neuve et perdit aussi le goût des spectacles qu'on y donnait. Lorsqu'après plus de dix années de débauches antiartistiques, on se décida enfin à rappeler l'homme qu'on avait si injustement exclu, le mal était irréparable et le public resta indifférent. Voilà pour Genève la véritable raison de l'échec de cette saison théâtrale.

La seconde cause est commune à toutes les entreprises théâtrales. Le grand public continental a radicalement changé de goût depuis la guerre. Il n'affectionne plus le spectacle lyrique, il veut l'action, le rire la danse... même ultra-moderne et le Jass-band. Si nos autorités veulent sauver notre grand théâtre il faut envisager non seulement d'y jouer la Comédie et l'Opérette ultra-légère, mais aussi tous ce qui fait florès dans des établissements d'abord beaucoup moins selectes, mais où l'on rencontre le monde le plus chic.

De tout ceci tirens une conclusion. Des gens qui se croyaient très malins en chassant un homme ont tué un genre, et remarquons enfin qu'il est inutile de lutter contre la volonté de ceux qui paient. Si vous voulez sauver le théâtre, donnez à ceux qui le fréquentent les spectacles qu'ils aiment!

"UN SUISSE QUELCONQUE."

RIMEMBRANZE.

L'ideale di riconoscenza, di noi donne ticinesi a Londra, era realizzato... e ne ero soddisfatta; ed in quella sera del 14 febbraio 1924, contemplando il nostro nuovo sfiorante vessillo, ero, più che mai, fiera di saperne svizzera e sentirmi ticinese; mi aggravo, come in un sogno, in quelle sale bellissime e spaziose che accoglieva l'elegante e distinta adunanza. I fiori, la luce, la musica, il suono del nostro linguaggio... tutto, tutto intorno a me era poesia affascinante...

Eravamo là come una numerosa famiglia, riuniti per una serata a parlare, a brindare una data memorabile, a protestare il nostro attaccamento alla Patria lontana.

I brindisi si succedevano ed i discorsi si ascoltavano in religioso silenzio...

"...j'en atteste la révélation que fut pour moi "le Tessin quand, en 1890, la révolution m'a "appelé, le brassard fédéral au bras..."

...chiusi gli occhi!...1890?...la rivoluzione?...ah il mio sogno continuava! ma non mi trovavo più in Londra... ero trasportata là, nel nostro Capoluogo, a casa mia! oh quanti anni son passati da quel giorno indimenticabile! e come tutto ricordo, come m'appare vivido e completo il quadro!

Al tocco di quel giorno di settembre, ecco s'ode uno scampanio inusitato... la campana a martello chiamava al soccorso co' suoi accenti strazianti!... ci si alza da tavola spaventati... che cos'è?... fuoco? inondazione?...si corre alla finestra... ma un ordine perentorio, datoci da qualcuno dalla

strada disotto, di chiudere le imposte perchè c'è rivoluzione, ci fa retrocedere...

...rivoluzione? cosa vuol dire?... si passano ore agitate, ignari degli avvenimenti, rinchiusi in casa; quando si potrà uscire? come finirà?...

Dalle imposte socchiuse si fa capolino, perchè la curiosità vince la paura... si vedono ombre aggirarsi sotto le piante, nel giardino davanti al Governo... tutte le case chiuse, silenzio ovunque. Poi la truppa è mobilitata per tenere l'ordine... passati i primi giorni febbrili di curiosità e timori, cominciò un periodo di festa per me...

Anche la "rivoluzione" era ben venuta alla mia età giovanile e inconscia ancora della serietà della vita, ordinariamente calma, ordinata e studiosa.

Il Governo di Berna, proprio come una mamma che dà una tiratina d'orecchi al bimbo caparbio, ci mandò un Commissario federale con pieni poteri... una specie di mite, portatore di consolanti promesse...

Ogni mattina la musica militare dava un concerto davanti al palazzo del Governo, quando cambiavano la guardia; e quelle note melodiose ed allegre, che salivano e si ripercuotevano nella cittadina merlata, calmavano lo spirito agitato e stanco. Quel via-vai militare e brillante, aveva uno fascino speciale per me, era qualcosa di nuovo, mai visto prima... persino i "Dragoni" li vedevo per la prima volta!

...Poi l'esimio oratore, dal dire così elegante e pur così espressivo e semplice, si tacque; aprii gli occhi... l'incanto era rotto! ah quanti anni io vissi mai in quell'istante...

Poche parole erano bastate per farmi dimenticare la realtà del momento, per trasportarmi là in quella terra benedetta, "culla de' miei sogni belli" che sempre m'appare fulgida e grande nella sua piccolezza... grande per lo splendore e la gloria del nostro carattere etnico ticinese e per la meravigliosa unità nazionale!

Si sgombrarono le mense... cominciarono le danze... che senso di gioia intensa, per noi esuli e sperduti in questa vastissima città, che ci accoglie benigna, questo avvicinarci, questo scambio "d'amorosi sensi" che ci lascia nell'animo come un desiderio inesprimibile, un intimo sospiro d'infinita armonia

"Che intender non può

Chi non lo prova."

T. LUNGI-REZZONICO.

Geneva and the Russian Negotiations.

In deference to the wishes of several correspondents that we should publish the text of the petition signed by influential citizens in Geneva, and addressed to the President of the Confederation, we are reprinting below an extract which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* and which contains the most salient passages of this petition:—

The Swiss people is not merely sensitive to the national honour. It clings with equal strength to the principles which are to be found at the root of any civilisation worthy of that description. It could not contemplate without the deepest repugnance the re-establishment of any relations whatever with a régime every effort of which is directed to the destruction of domestic ties, to spoliation, to the suppression alike of religion and of morality, and to the persecution of all social classes, not excepting the working classes.

Our community should beware of dealing with a Government which from its inception has never ceased to trample under foot the principles of the most elementary loyalty in its relations with other countries. For it is assuredly no secret to anyone that the Soviets are making an extensive and unscrupulous use of their diplomatic representatives abroad in order to foster throughout the world a shameless system of subversive propaganda, delation, espionage, and corruption. The consequences of this system, as more or less openly practised, are being felt in most States of the various Continents.

The hideous spectacle now being presented by the Soviet régime has been rightly described in the following terms:

"Bolshevism has made of man a soulless, Godless, thankless, and loveless machine."

The Swiss people is far too enlightened to decline to accept, when it is necessary, any sacrifices dictated by the national honour and the feeling of duty. It is sufficiently patriotic to be unable to envisage without poignant grief the humiliation which would be inflicted upon its Chief Magistrate on the day he was called upon to place his loyal hand in that of the representative of a gang of brigands and assassins. We maintain that no such affront should be inflicted upon the Swiss people.

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