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I said a few things about the "Votes for Women" campaign in Switzerland in last week's issue. Meanwhile the question has naturally aroused deep interest in many quarters in England and Mr. John Striving in the *Sunday News*, 10th inst., thinks that the Swiss men's apathy or even antipathy on this question is a proof that "Democracy does not lose its head." Writes he:

Yet Switzerland, whose laws are framed

not by Cabinets or ambitious politicians who forge cheques on the Bank of Confidence, but by the electors themselves who say to a Ministry: "There is your programme; get on with it," does not like woman suffrage and will not have it.

To those of us who believe in woman suffrage or have wearied of opposing it, this decision comes as something of a shock. The Swiss, whose love of liberty is something of which the rest of Europe knows little, actually turned on women canvassers who waged the battle of equal rights on doorsteps.

Apart from the pros and cons of the particular issue, there is a great lesson for all reformers and even revolutionists in this exhibition of apparent intolerance.

It is this: The community which has longest enjoyed real freedom is the least likely to abuse it by panic legislation. True democracy, which means giving the fullest liberty to a people to act as it thinks fit, as distinct from the liberty to act as you or I think it fit for it to act, is the greatest bulwark against ill-considered legislation and, what is worse, government by politicians.

I confess, the last paragraph merits reading and re-reading. And, having read it several times and tried to think it out, I am not sure even now, whether Mr. Striving is right. Quite apart from the fact that some of his ideas on Swiss Government are not quite in accordance with what I believe to be facts.

Children and Cinemas:

Birmingham Post, 9th Nov.

The municipal authorities of St. Gall have just taken a step with regard to children and the "movies" which I think all right-minded people will approve of. Owing to the recent increase in juvenile crime and lawlessness, they have passed a law which prohibits boys and girls under 16 years of age from attending cinemas, even with their parents. Suitable pictures will, however, be shown at private cinemas for children only, at very low prices, as they feel this will be better for them than the sensational and sickly sentimental stuff which is usually shown. And when passing a cinema recently in one of the cheaper parts of the town I saw the number of quite young children waiting outside, as well as the lurid fare offered them inside—which was to be judged from the titles of the films and the posters—I felt that it was quite time our City Fathers—and mothers in particular—took the matter in hand.

In the *Church of Ireland Gazette*, 1st Nov., I find the following, very interesting article:

Four Hundred years ago: 1529

The year 1529 is one of the most interesting years in the history of Europe. If humanity was not on the march, it was, at least, girding itself; if the times were not pentecostal, there were windows in heaven, and the reformation of faith long visionary was becoming a reality.

Suleiman the magnificent besieged Vienna that year, and, with the support of France, seemed likely to overthrow the mediæval Empire, but there were greater things for Europe to reckon with than the advance of Islam along the Danube. Suleiman might harry the Hapsburg lands, but Luther and the Swiss were, in their own spheres, breaking up the unity of the Papal empire; and the spirit of Zurich and Wittenberg is not yet a spent force, while the dominions of the Turk in the West have faded to a shadow.

The Imperial Diet met in February, at Speyer, and its Romanist majority of electors urged the strict enforcement of the Edict of Worms against Lutheranism. Thirteen days later a protest against this was laid before the Emperor on behalf of the princes of Saxony, Hesse, Brandenburg, and the representatives of fourteen of the imperial free cities. From this act the name Protestant was given to the dissenting leaders; so the year 1529 is the birth year of non-Papal Churches in the West, considered apart from their national claims to continuity and autonomy.

In this year, too, Luther took a definite step towards the fulfilment of the vision of Erasmus of the days when the husband-man at the plough and the weaver at his shuttle would have the words of the Gospel on their lips and in their hearts. He had returned in December, 1528, from the visitation of the Saxon churches, and his heart was sore at the degradation of the people and their spiritual ignorance, so he prepared, and published in German, his Longer and Shorter Catechisms as popular manuals of Scriptural truth.

In Switzerland this year saw Erasmus packing his books for a retreat from Basel before the rising tide of reformation. He had lived there eight years, and now found the spirit of the city too intense for his delicate and unheroic constitution; so he retired to Freiburg, and Basel adopted the Reformation. The

humanist, however, complained that Freiburg was damp, and soon returned to Basel, where he died in 1536.

Efforts were made to check the spread of the Swiss Reformation that year. The Forest cantons joined in league with their old enemy, the house of Hapsburg, to maintain Romanism, but after the first Peace of Cappel they consented to allow liberty of conscience in their territories.

Zwingli, the leader of the Zurich reformers, now aimed at a union of German and Swiss Protestants, and 1529 saw the famous Colloquy of Marburg, when he and Luther met. All his efforts failed before Luther's obstinacy over the phrase he chalked on the Council-table, *Hoc est corpus meum*. The Saxon could not say what that perplexing phrase meant, but held that faith in it was the only issue. In vain the Swiss declared that there were no men in the whole world he would rather unite with than the men of Wittenburg; Luther only answered, "You have another spirit than we." Our own formularies range us with Zwingli against Luther; but in 1529 Cranmer was busy collecting a symposium of opinions of the European Universities on the validity of Henry VIII's marriage, and the genuine reformation of the English Church had scarcely begun twenty years later. Zwingli's view of the Lord's Supper, as published in 1531, seems to be practically that of Article XXVIII.

Calvin, who a year later was consulted by the University of Orleans on Henry's marriage, was, in 1529, just twenty, and was studying Greek and Law at Bourges. Reformation ideas had spread in that town, and no doubt the principles upon which the "Institutes" are founded were then being formed in his mind.

All this does not exhaust the significance of 1529, for just then Geneva freed itself from the practical dominance of the Duke of Savoy, and so gained the necessary liberty to become, as time went on, what Knox called "the most perfect school of Christ since the days of the Apostles." In this year, too, a young Westphalian clergyman, Bernhard Rothmann, began to preach the Gospel to the artisans and workers of Münster. Thus began the Christian communism of the Anabaptists, which ended in the tragic siege of the city and the subsequent slaughter.

In the Netherlands the determined campaign against Lutheran ideas began with sentence of death upon all who possessed Protestant books, and, as years passed, the persecution grew more intense until, in 1573, the Duke of Alva left a land which for six years he had deluged in blood.

On the other side of the picture this year saw the settlement at the College Ste. Barbe, in Paris, of a war-worn Spaniard, aged thirty-six, Ignatius Loyola. The previous year he had attended the College Montaigu, and there may have known his young contemporary, Calvin. The one may have talked of his experiences before Pampeluna and shewed the manuscript of the "Spiritual Exercises." The other may have spoken judiciously of the new movements in Germany. We shall never know.

A whole literary tragedy lies on those concluding words "we shall never know," for what could have been more interesting than a conversation between those two great men, both of whom affected the Church so deeply and so differently.

WINTER SEASON IN SWITZERLAND 1929-30.

The Pamphlet "Winter-Season in Switzerland 1929/30" published every year by the Swiss National Tourist Office in English, French and German has just appeared for the season 1929/30. It gives, in its 28 pages, the list of sports and social events in the Swiss Winter-resorts and towns, a list which, without doubt will rouse the interest of all sportsmen planning a Winter holiday on sunny heights. Also all those who are in quest of pleasure ought to consult this booklet, as it gives a full choice of social entertainments, Balls, Theatrical performances, Carnivals on Ice, Gymkhanas, etc. It also contains full information about Direct Train Service between England and Switzerland, about Passports, Customs, Fares, etc. The booklet is supplied free of charge by the Swiss Federal Railways, 11c, Regent Street, S.W.1.

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