

# The Editor's Post-Bag

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nations' finances. It is designed to be a servant, not a master.

#### St. Andrew's—Swiss Invitation:

##### EXCHANGE OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS.

When I read the first head-line, printed in heavier type, I naturally thought of St. Andrews, the home of the Royal and Ancient Game of Golf!

I wondered whether the Swiss wished to learn more about the Steel-Shift Question? However, as you will read, I was wrong:

The University Court of St. Andrews have approved of an arrangement for exchange of professors with the University of Basel, Switzerland.

Under the arrangement it is proposed that, on the invitation of the University of Basel, Professor Alexander M'Kenzie, of the department of chemistry in University College, Dundee, should give a short course of lectures in the University of Basel, and on the invitation of the University of St. Andrews, Professor Rupe, professor of organic chemistry in the University of Basel, should deliver a short course of lectures in St. Andrews University. *The Observer.*

#### 'Swiss' Pictures made in Alaska.

The Swiss do not seem to appreciate being filmed. A few years ago a big film on "William Tell" was unanimously disapproved of, and last spring the "Conquest of the Matterhorn" was violently criticised. Now it is "The King of the Bernina" that brings indignant protests from all parts of the country. The film is based on a novel by the Swiss author, J. C. Heer, who died a few years ago, and was produced by a Hollywood studio. The right to film the story was given against the will of two of the author's daughters, who are now taking legal steps. The film was made in Alaska, and bears no resemblance to local scenery or Swiss characteristics, the makers having evidently reckoned on the ignorance of the audience.

When the film was produced at Zurich a crowd of students demonstrated in front of the building, and finally invaded it and stopped the performance. They afterwards marched through the city singing patriotic songs.

And I think the young chaps were quite right. After all, why should such films be shown in Switzerland or, for that matter, anywhere else, seeing that they give a distorted and wrong idea of our country and its inhabitants. How would the Americans like a Film featuring "lil ole Noo-Yarrk" made by Studios situated at Toess! or Grandson? or Airolo? And, fancy, risking showing such a film, based on a pirated story by J. C. Heer? Heer, a native of Toess, whose simple grave, high up on the Bruehlberg at Winterthur overlooks his paternal home and who is held in great affection by his countrymen and women. Yea, I regret I was not among those students and, by Jove, I think we should have created somewhat of a disturbance! But here, I call myself off, tick myself off, for exceeding the speed-limit allowed to a contributor of the *Swiss Observer* and, chastened by the Editorial and well-merited reproof, I sink away . . . still mumbling darkly!

But let's forget that unpleasant episode and let us have some fresh Alpine air and read the following from the *Spectator*, 30th Nov.

#### A Valley in the Alps

The cattle with their picturesque armillars or herds have all come down from the high summer pastures amid shouting and clanging of their many toned bells: they will graze now on the rich meadowlands about the village till the snow comes when they are led to warm stalls beneath the great hay barns for winter. Trees are almost bare, but the larch groves, valiant like spear heads, orange, golden, fox-coloured and amber, are still in flame on the slopes and here and there other patches of vivid autumn linger on the tawny hillsides. Snow has fallen down to timber line and these patches of the coloured dying season, beneath fields of glittering snow, and all against a solid sky of blue, make an effect that only the all-the-year-round residents of Switzerland are privileged to enjoy. For, in fact, Switzerland has more strange and lovely contrasts of landscapes in early spring and late autumn, when few visitors are about, than at any other time.

In another three weeks, perhaps before, all earth colours will be gone. We shall be knee deep in snow, in a strange and delightful winter world, till March comes with daffodil, crocus and gentian. Naturally we think of winter, but without apprehension, indeed, with pleasurable anticipation. We know from experience that it will not be a winter of our discontent, not a winter damp and grey and desolate, full of harsh east winds and fog, as were the winters of our earliest memories, but rather a time of radiant days and happy cloudless skies, of still air, so keen and alive with frost, yet warmed and baked with sun, when, quite apart from the interest and excitement of winter sports, to be alive at all will be a joy to the senses.

#### Christian Socialism:

One might write a whole article on these two words! However, I find in the *Christian World*, 28th Nov.:

Various "religious-socialist" groups in England, Germany, Switzerland, Holland and Austria sent delegates to an international conference held on the Continent recently, at which an organising committee was set up, under the presidency of Dr. Ragaz, of Zurich.

It is noteworthy, comments *Das Evangelische Deutschland*, that Catholic Socialists are represented in this movement, notwithstanding religious differences.

#### THE EDITOR'S POST-BAG.

*The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by Correspondents and cannot publish anonymous articles, unless accompanied by the writer's name and address, as evidence of good faith*

To the Editor of *The Swiss Observer*.

Dear Sir,—I have been hoping that some other correspondents would express their views on the question of speeches on ladies nights, but as no one seems to wish to do so, may I be allowed to reply to those letters which have appeared recently on this subject in the *Swiss Observer*.

I am still of the opinion that ladies do not care for speeches, but prefer, when dinner is over, to proceed without further ado with the main business of the evening, namely dancing.

I should like to reassure Miss Notari that she loses nothing by not hearing the speeches made by the now inferior sex when alone, for as a rule these speeches are just as dull as when ladies are present. I must, however, respectfully decline to have anything to do with psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis spells Freud and we know what that means. The Editor would be obliged to borrow all Mary's blue pencils. Personally I dare not go a step beyond Pelmanism.

Now let me say a few words about the sins of ek. When reading the letter from one who signed himself Bufo, I wondered if the printer had not made a mistake and forgotten to complete his signature, but on referring to my dictionary I discovered that Bufo is the latin for toad.

Mr. Bufo, did you therefore mean to imply that you wished to dip your pen in "fiel" and like the toad to overwhelm me with the bitterness of your venom. If so, when next you wish to make use of invective, permit me to refer you to the Restoration poets. You will not beat them and I will quote for your benefit a few lines of Lord Rochester with reference to someone who had displeased him.

"'Twere labour lost, or else I would advise;  
But thy half wit will ne'er let thee be wise.  
Half witty, and half mad, and scarce half  
brave,

Half honest (which is very much a knave)  
Made up of all these halves, thou canst not pass  
For anything entirely, but an ass.

And now we come to Mary. I have read her letter several times, but I fail to understand her grievance. Why she should take Kyburg to task passes my feeble comprehension. Kyburg, who of all persons, I have always considered to be the quintessence of Respectability. Never has the idea crossed my mind that his writings could be considered anything approaching vulgar.

I am, however, deeply grateful, Mary, that you do not consider my articles vulgar. Others have used the words 'subtle wit' but let us avoid exaggerations. I should like you to think that I have no evil intentions. I was born of sober, honest and industrious parents and was carefully nurtured on Mrs. Markham, Sandford and Merton, Max and Moritz, and in my early days attempted to warble such innocent songs as "Tannenbaum" until I learnt that it is now the "Red Flag."

I should really like to know what Mary does want. Tot homines, tot sententiae. Most of the people I know seem to complain that the S.O. is too serious and there is not the faintest chance of it ever becoming "comic." If only I knew what to do. Would Mary like me to write about the binomial theorem or Relativity about which I know absolutely nothing or about the heresies in the early church.

Alas, Mr. Editor, I am afraid I am unrepentant and I do not regret any word that I have written and therefore

I have the honour to be  
Your humble, most devoted  
and most obedient Servant, ek.

#### Our Weaker Brethren.

At the banquet of the Rifle Association we heard the following new version of the old joke about a certain Argovian weakness: A Bernois, a Zurichois and an Argovian fell in love with the same lady. They agreed to give her a spoon each as a present and let her on the strength of the inscriptions choose between the lovers. The Bernois' inscription was "Forget me not," the Zurichois' "I love you," and the Argovian's—"Bahnhof- Buffet Often." The shrewd lady's choice fell, of course, on the most economical prospective husband. An eminent son of that calumniated canton, on hearing the joke, replied: "I am no longer practicing."—Dr. E.

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A word of advice to the Kiddies: Father Christmas is a busy man these days and liable to overlook things. Remind him in your letters not to forget the ideal Christmas Gift

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