Notes and gleanings

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NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

I am almost tempted to inscribe this week's Notes and Gleanings " La Suisse a Travers les Ages " or words to that effect. We start with

Bronze Age Relics.

Belfast News-Letter, 2nd July :

The recent discovery of a finely preserved Bronze Age tomb on the shores of the Lake of Geneva, near Morges, creates another link in the research of the prehistoric lake settlements of Switzerland.

For a period covering many centuries in prehistoric times the Swiss lakes were centres of a well-developed culture. With weapons of bone, stone and wood the people hunted in the forests fringing the lakes. They cultivated the lake banks with crops, and kept such domestic animals as sheep, goats, horses, and dogs. Their dwellings they constructed at a considerable distance from shore, built on piles driven far down into the mud bottom of the lake. This gave them comparative safety from marauders, and assured them a regular supply of fish. Each hut, it has been discovered, had a trap in the floor through which lines and nets were lowered into the water.

About 140 of these settlements have now been revealed and explored,notably near Zurich, where an important settlement that was probably a sort of capital has been located. Here the floors of the huts were covered with the earliest known form of concrete, a crude mixture of hard pressed clay, lake mud and small gravel. Walls were of leaves and twigs plastered with mud, and, in some superior dwellings, of stretched hides.

One of the most interesting articles recovered from the mud below this settlement is a crude stone calendar, which shows clearly the lengthening days of summer. Most of the Swiss lake settlements date to considerably before the Bronze Age, which began about 2,500 B.C. They remained populous centres of the human race until well after the advent of the Iron Age, which had its commencement towards 800 B.C.

Then, from 800 B.C. we make rather a great jump over a number of centuries and come to the time of the Reformation. I find a very interesting article on the Augsburg Confession by Prof. James MacKinnon of Edinburgh University in the *Glasgow Herald*, of 2nd July, which is, unfortunately, too long to quote here.

Another long jump and we reach Modern Times. Here we find

Holidays for Swiss Workers.

Midland Daily Tribune, 4th July :

A Bill to provide for holidays with pay was submitted to the Grand Council recently by the Council of State of the Swiss Canton of Bâle Ville. The measure seeks to enact that any person who works without interruption for the same employer shall be entitled to an annual holiday of six days after one year of service and of twelve days after ten years. Apprentices and young persons under 18 shall be entitled to a holiday of twelve days every year. The Bill does not apply to Federal public servants, or to workers whose conditions of labour are governed by the Federal Factory Act. The Council of State of the canton took the opinion of several legal experts on the question whether the cantons had power to require the grant of annual holidays with pay. All the experts agreed that so long as there was no Federal Act dealing with this question the cantons had the right to compel employers to grant holidays. On the other hand, their opinions differed on the question whether the payment of wages during holidays could be made compulsory. The Federal Department of Justice and the Federal Judge, on being consulted, acknowledged in principle that the cantons had such powers.

And I hope that that law will work wonders!

Talking of laws, we know a number of so-called laws which fail because they are too futile to be observed. According to the *Irish Times* of 5th July, the Canton of Uri has just made the discovery that it is one thing to pass a law and quite another thing to have it observed.

Why a Law Failed.

A year ago the deputies of the small Swiss Canton of Uri put a tax of sixpence on every woman who bobbed her hair. It was a great experiment, but, like many other noble experiments, it did not turn out as its proposer expected. Recently the deputies of the Canton met at their capital, Altdorf, and among other questions discussed was the grave question of repealing the above tax. All agreed that the tax was a disappointment from the point of view of revenue. The women, said one deputy, laughed at the law, and would neither pay the tax nor grow long hair.

The only possible comment is " of course!"

And now, if space still permits, to a lively exhortation by that excellent friend of Switzerland, Lt.-Colonel G. S. Hutchinson, D.S.O., M.C., S.A.C., called

Switzerland the Land of Adventure.

English Review, July :

In a land in whose crowded cities it is difficult to see God for chimney pots, the urge to realize the limitless expanse of the heavens will increasingly exercise a rare fascination. Industrial Britain provides little opportunity; but with the development of transport facilities, the Playground of Europe is always nearer to an English doorstep.

Those who have never beheld the glory of the Alps have yet to realize the grandest prospect in Europe; while, for those thousands of British folk who each year throw off the gloom of our city civilization and wander among the Alps, visiting its beautiful old-world towns, tarrying beside rushing streams and torrents or gigantic waterfalls, penetrating deep into the fastnesses of pine forests or far up rugged valleys; or holidaying on the banks of serene lakes, encompassed by verdant pastures, quaint mountain chalets and towering snow-capped peaks, there is always relaxation, high adventure, rest and recreation. For the old, Switzerland offers change and repose, comfort and rare hospitality. For the young, and for those who still feel young, there is the adventure of crossing the high passes, or the more arduous and exhilarating excitement of an ascent.

In a world of commercialized sport climbing remains the one recreation which offers no rewards other than those of spiritual and emotional elevation, for there are no prizes, no championships.

It is noteworthy that English men and women continue to lead in novelty of accomplishment, in hazard and daring. The British are the pioneers of Alpine sport; but, with the exception of the Scouts at Kandersteg, young English men and women are strangely absent in the higher regions. Young Swiss, Germans, Austrians and Americans always increase their numbers, a fact to which the entries in the Swiss Alpine Club Hotel log-books are eloquent testimony; but the English, who pioneered all the historic peaks, will leave their names as legends in the Alpine valleys, if younger folk do not follow in the trail which they have blazed.

A mountaineering holiday produces good health and good fellowship. After two or three days of a tour, no special attention is necessary to health, and air and exercise take complete medical charge, provided that the weak points, namely the feet and the stomach, have received the care and attention which they merit. New or ill-fitting boots may ruin a complete programme; while revolutionary hours of sleep, unaccustomed food and exercise with changing atmospheric pressures, may upset the internal economy, with disaster for the whole tour. But simple precautions only are necessary.

One wonders sometimes if the British are wearying of leadership, content with having given top-hats, English clothes, and the British Sabbath to a waiting world. There seems to be an unwillingness to gird the loins of mind and body, if only as a personal test of health,

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efficiency, endurance and capacity to overcome difficulty and danger. But when I challenged Youth in the past, I found him always quite willing for the adventure of the Alps; and I incline to the view, therefore, that it may be that he is ignorant of the thrilling adventure calling to him, or perhaps that, resulting from war-time anxiety, parents prefer to keep their young within the pleasant and very safe confines of an English pleasure resort.

But if there is a sign of the stuff which made England great, assuredly it is to be found among those who, without reward, seek adventure among the rocky peaks, and who cross the great snowfields and glaciers which lead to the summits of the mountains.

Edward Whymper, the conqueror of the Matterhorn, once wrote: "If I could blot out every reminiscence, if I could erase every memory, still I should say my climbing in the Alps has repaid me, for it has given me two of the best things a man can possess—health and friends."

Curiously enough, the development of city life eliminates friendship. When we go to the Alps, we certainly become rejuvenated and return in better health, and, whatever else we do, we certainly make friends. I know of no sport or recreation which so cements the bonds of good fellowship as climbing. There are the long days together, demanding mutual help, sustenance, the strong supporting the weak, a sharing of the burden. There are moments of difficulty, even of danger, in which co-operation and sacrifice are the essentials; there are marvellous nights, spent in the refuge huts ten thousand feet above civilization, when, with tired bodies, minds stimulated by danger over and conquest achieved, and the whole spirit elevated, friendship rises high above the sordid considerations of commercial and social advantage, and man can commune with fellow-man without the restraint of convention. Friendship and all that friendship really means gain immeasurably from human contact in such circumstances.

There is nothing essentially difficult about mountain climbing. True it is that a good head is necessary, but a tendency to giddiness may be overcome by the will. And it is true, too, that strong limbs, a sound heart and good lungs are essential. But even the more frail, after two or three days of careful going, will discover that they have latent powers far in excess of what they often imagine. A lifetime in climbing may not, perhaps, equip the mountaineer with the whole technique of the craft; but the veriest novice, who does not aspire, for his first ascent, to the conquest of the Matterhorn, may derive immense pleasure and much good practice from scaling some of the lesser peaks. Excellent centres for climbing, or indeed for major excursions across the higher snowfields and passes, are to be found, for instance, at Zermatt, Kandersteg, Saas Fee, Chamonix, Grindelwald or Andermatt, and in all these places small hotels may be found, catering for the most modest pockets, so that groups of friends may make these their headquarters and journey over the passes, or from one hut to another, at an inclusive cost of only a few shillings a day. Switzerland provides not only all its natural physical attractions, but also an atmosphere of expectancy, perhaps for the reason that it is a land without conventions. British, Swiss, Germans, Austrians, Italians all come together upon common ground, with common experience and endeavour. The best of national habit, by common consent, becomes the custom of all. In consequence, without restraint, in this pleasant land, man may really have a very happy holiday.

For those who are past the age of adventure, the Swiss Postal Services have devised a system of motor-coach tours, which several times daily traverse the winding roads leading over the mountain passes. Thus all the glory of the Alps may be seen in comfort. But for those who have youth and vigour I commend a mountaineering holiday.

A Swiss Crosses the Channel in a Canoe.

Our readers have no doubt read in the daily press, that one of our compatriots, Max Vogt from Aarau, age 23, who is a student at the Swiss Mercantile School, has been successful in crossing the Channel in a rubber canoe. Mr. Vogt has been good enough to give us an account of his daring venture, which we have much pleasure in reproducing for the benefit of our readers in abridged form. He relates:

Arriving at Folkestone I got in touch with the Rowing Club and the authorities and discussed the matter of my venture very carefully from every point of view.

I made a minute examination of my boat, making sure that everything was in good order, and fixed my compass in such a position as to enable me to change my bearings should circumstances require it. After that I communicated with the Customs Officers with regard to my return and also asked for telegraphic information regarding weather conditions in Mid-Channel from the Meteorological Office in London. I was quite aware of the danger which a crossing in such small craft entailed and I left nothing to chance; feeling that for my parent's sake and also for that of sport, I should minimise the risk of the undertaking as much as possible.

The departure was fixed for 10 a.m.; everything was ready with the exception that no news as to weather conditions in the Channel was forthcoming. The sea was rough, but the sky, apart from some rather heavy and dark clouds looked not too unfavourable. As I did not wish to delay the start any longer, an arrangement with the Harbour Master was made that should, after my departure, a favourable report from the Meteorological Office arrive, this would be signalled to me by hoisting a flag, but should weather conditions be unfavourable a motor boat was to fetch me back.

The start was quite successful and in record time I accomplished five miles, when I had to come to a decision, as still no signals were made to me from the shore, the omission of which was most awkward and I could not account for it. As I saw some blue sky behind heavy clouds, and also passed several cross channel boats in the near vicinity, which could have picked me up in case of danger, I decided, in spite of the increasing roughness of the sea to "carry on." After I had accomplished the sixth mile, I encountered a heavy storm and in order to avoid disaster I was forced to alter my bearings entirely. I had to fight desperately against a strong head wind and considerable waves. Fortunately after a time the storm quietened down, but the wind still prevented me from making any real progress, and I was unable to benefit by the strong tide which would have helped me considerably to reach Boulogne. In the distance I could see some cliffs but was not able to make out if there were the cliffs of Cap Grisnez. I redoubled my efforts and soon I was able to detect the Lighthouse and the Monument at Cap Grisnez.

Further away in the distance I could see Calais in a mist, and spurned by the thought that I was within reach of my goal I made a further strenuous effort to reach the French coast. In the meantime the sky became very threatening again, and I had to slow down very considerably in order to reserve enough strength to face and endure another storm. Although things looked none too bright I was all the same in the best of spirits and started to sing and whistle defying the wind and waves which were combining to rob me of my success.

Nearer and nearer came the coast, and I had now to come to a decision as to where the landing would have to take place. The landing above Wissant was both difficult and risky and at low tide the reefs were laid bare causing a great danger to shipping. A landing at Wissant was impossible, as according to the chart of the Admiralty no less than eight wrecks are marked in this area.

At 5 p.m. after exactly seven hours hard work I was near the coast, and although I had now for some time sighted land I kept my steering strictly to my compass. I had now the worst part of my crossing before me as I was racing against the turning of the tide. All the seven hours I paddled without a break with cross paddle, which accounts for the relatively short time in which I accomplished the journey in spite of the adverse weather conditions. The landing eventually took place near Wissant.

So far all was plain sailing; I expected, after stepping out of my boat, to get in telephonic touch with Folkestone in order to inform the authorities there of my safe landing on the "other side." Unfortunately the French Customs Officials treated me in a very unsportmanlike manner and I was prevented from any immediate communication. In the meantime the Rowing Club at Folkestone had sent out an S.O.S. to Dover, Calais and Boulogne, as well as to all boats crossing the channel to keep a look out for me. I endeavoured to send off a wire from Cap Grisnez which was quite close, but was told by the French authorities that this was not possible; so it was only on Saturday morning that I could send news to England, that I had landed safely in France. The weather now took a distinct turn for the worse and I decided to make the return journey by channel boat. I had to do the journey to Calais in the company of a French customs official, who after seeing me safely on boardship returned to me my passport and camera. . .

We tender our compatriot our heartiest congratulations and feel sure that all our readers will join us in this expression. The "Swiss Navy" has decidedly scored in spite of all the ridicule which this expression usually brings forth. We are also very pleased to report that the Folkestone Rowing Club has nominated Mr. Vogt an Honorary Member and the Royal Canoe Club has also honoured our compatriot in a similar way.

Doings in Our Colony.

SWISS RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

It was in the best of spirits that early in the morning of Friday last, the two chosen teams of the S.R.A. accompanied by some other members and friends, left for that splendid and so well organised British shooting ground called Bisley, there to measure our skill once more on the 100 yards range with our British friends. Our President, Mr. Senn, however, to the great regret of all, was prevented because of business reasons from coming with us, and thus we were deprived of his usual cheery company.

Unfortunately we arrived at our destination somewhat late, and therefore some of us could not indulge in the usual "Jass" as a preliminary to the shooting contest, which was sadly regretted by one or two equally as keen contestants on that "field of sport."

Immediately after lunch our shooting started in dead earnest, and it is a source of real satisfaction for the reporter to put on record that the results obtained this time compare very favourably with the best realised by us on previous occasions, and this in spite of the fact that the conditions under which we shot last Friday were anything but good on account of the continually changing light, which all those familiar with shooting know to be the worst enemy of the sport. On the other hand two members of our team (Messrs. J. Haesler and J. Wetter) produced two splendid individual results of 97 points each (out of a possible 100), which we had never before succeeded in registering in the competition proper.

As on previous occasions, we were again fortunate to be accompanied by various lady "mascots" who, needless to say, always serve as a great moral support to us, taking the keenest interest in our proceedings throughout the day. This, however, has its disadvantage, insomuchas they do not always seem to accept without question the excuses, genuine or otherwise, which we choose to put forward to them when obtaining results not exactly creditable to us. Whilst they are generous enough to give us the impression that we have their sympathy in such cases, we cannot, on the other hand, help having a certain feeling at the back of our minds that unless we succeed in doing better next time we shall utterly and hopelessly fall into disgrace with them! This, it goes without saying, never fails to spur us on to the accomplishment of higher things, and undoubtedly goes to prove that their even stronger attendance on future similar occasions is greatly to be welcomed!

So, Ladies, please take note!

In the afternoon we were all invited by our Member, Mr. Arthur Traies, to an enjoyable tea-party at the North London Rifle Club Pavilion, and this gentleman once more gave us ample proof of the great interest he takes in the welfare of our Association, by assuring us that he will endeavour to enable us to enter in future also for some other competitions at Bisley, more particularly on the longer ranges, where we would decidedly be in a better position to properly show our worth as shots.

Our outing found its happy termination in an extremely jolly supper party at Mr. Alfred Schmid's Hotel in Glendower Place, South Kensington, during which a few short and partly witty speeches were made, more particularly by Messrs. De Bourg and Senn (the latter having now joined us), who both exhorted us to continue persevering in our efforts to secure a higher rank at some future contests in Bisley. E.R.H.

SWISS MERCANTILE SOCIETY

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

In connection with the scholastic programme the following lectures were given by the students during the past fortnight:—

Mrs. A, Graf, Davos: "Deep Thoughts," "Davos." Mr. A. Holliger, Basle: "Importance of Chemical Works." Mr. E. Thomann, Geneva: "Measurement of Mental Capacity." Mr. A. Staub, Basle: "Thinking Capacity." Miss H. Zollinger, Feldmeilen: "Some Impressions of Florence." Mr. F. Lehmann, Zurich: "The Stock Exchange in Zurich." Miss F. Kuhn, Speicher: "My Grandfather." Miss H. Heim, Berne: "Something about Plymouth." Miss S. Merz, Basle: "Modern Periods of Opera." Miss E. Maag, Zurich: "Some thoughts of Modern Education." Mr. W. Jenny, Liestal: "Travellers' facilities." Miss H. Neeser, Berne: "International Language." Mrs. A. Graf, Davos: "Impressions of Davos." Miss R. Krähenbuehl, Basle: "Impressions of London." Mr. R. Arbenz, "Has the Cinema a good or a bad influence?" Miss Y. Merz, Messrs. A. Kummler, A. Bondolfi, "Have inventions made life more agreeable?" Mr. R. Ferretti, Cauvet: "The Amateur Photographer." Mr. R. Kägi, Zurich: "Electrification of the Railway." Mr. H. Alder, Berne: "International regulation of working hours for Commercial Employees." Mr. R. Ringger, Zurich: "Swiss Broadcasting now and in the future." Miss I. Hinder, St. Gallen: "Whose fault is it if children do not get