

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK
Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom
Band: - (1934)
Heft: 672

Rubrik: Notes and gleanings

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 13.08.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

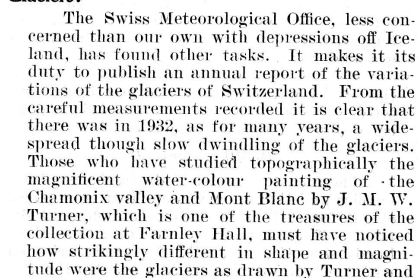
FOUNDED BY MR. P. F. BOEHRINGER.

EDITED WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF MEMBERS OF THE LONDON COLONY.

Telegrams : FREPRINCO, LONDON.

PRICE 3d.

(Swiss subscriptions may be paid into Postscheck-Konto
Basle V 5718).



the same revealed to the tourist of to-day. The glacier constituting the Mer de Glace, for instance, when the painter saw it, was pushing down the valley and uprooting trees: to-day, even at the spring maximum, it hardly reaches the brink of the lower slopes of the valley, and other glaciers show an equal diminution of glory. The annual lessening of length and volume nowadays, however, is small compared with the ancient tracks of the glaciers, the polished and grooved hill sides, and the ground and rounded rocks — called by the geologists "sheep backs" — which mark the course where ancient glaciers have ploughed their way. But it is not only in Central Europe that the same dwindling of ancient glaciers can be traced. Yorkshire, our own country, contains evidences, less majestic perhaps, but not less significant.

Doubtless the ancient glaciers of the Yorkshire Dales in the Glacial Period were of a different order from those of Switzerland, being such as would form in a country of flatter gradient with highlands as a feeding centre; and so like the glaciers of Greenland rather than those of the Alps. In recent years much work has been done by North-country geologists in correlating the glacial evidences in the Yorkshire valleys with the intention of deriving from them a picture of the progress of the advance and disappearance of the ice on the site of Yorkshire in the Great Ice Age. Some of this is of peculiar importance. York, for instance, is known to have had a site provided for it by a succession of movements of the ice — first a southward advance, then dwindling away, then a push forward, ploughing the moraine debris into a great heap across the valley, and eventually a final retreat.

Writing of Glaciers, — what a job for a poor scribe living in England at a time when his thoughts wander over the lofty pastures of Switzerland and when his one wish is to drink his fill of Alpine scenery — and drowsing among the glut of Gleanings with which I have been provided this week, but which are mostly very uninteresting, I come across the following:

Monks and Dogs of St. Bernard:

the report of a paper read at a Rotary Luncheon at Lincoln and reported by the "Lincolnshire Echo" on Aug. 27th.

Impressions of the famous Alpine Hospice of St. Bernard were given to members of the Lincoln Rotary Club at their luncheon by the Rev. G. Cloudesley Shovel, of Lincoln.

Mr. Shovel, who deputised for the Rev. N. H. A. Baker, described the thrilling journey which had to be made to reach the hospice from Montreux.

Two charabancs were loaded up at 7 o'clock in the morning, the heavier passengers being placed in the front of the vehicles, which were specially built and in charge of specially trained drivers.

The first part of the journey was along a lovely portion of the Rhone Valley and after the vehicles had climbed to a considerable height there was a short rest at a chalet.

On Edge of Precipice.

The next part of the journey was far more exciting, and for a solid hour they travelled over a road cut out of the rock on the face of the mountain.

At places the gradient was one in four, the charabanc went round hairpin bends and the passengers could look down over the edge of the precipice.

At one point, they stopped to allow a vehicle travelling down to pass them. The driver stopped as near the edge as possible, said Mr. Shovel, and on getting out he found that they were only about 18 inches from the precipice.

Snowballing in July.

Describing the hospice, he said that it was founded in 962 by St. Bernard, who had heard accounts of many pilgrims who tried to go over the pass being attacked by brigands in the mountains. The hospice is 8,100 feet above sea level and although it had been warm when the party left Montreux, on arrival at the hospice they were glad to restore their warmth by snowballing and this was in the month of July.

There were now few days in the year when they did not experience frost or snow, and temperatures were sometimes as low as 30 degrees below zero.

The two blocks of buildings which formed the hospice were joined by a covered bridge and often the roadway below this bridge was covered with snow to a depth of 20 to 30 feet.

Health Impaired.

There were 15 or 16 monks in charge of the hospice and they were chosen from volunteers, chiefly for their high standard of physical fitness. They were all young men, but their hands showed how badly they were crippled with rheumatism, and they were also the vic-

tics of heart trouble. No man lived at St. Bernard's for more than 15 years, and at the end of their period of service they were usually given livings in the warmer lower valleys.

There was sleeping accommodation for about 400 people and the monks had known what it was to entertain 500 people at a time.

It was expected that ordinary tourists who visited the hospice would pay rates equivalent to those obtaining in the hotels, but to the regret of the monks they had found it necessary to build a separate block for the use of tourists and equip it with an hotel staff.

Seven Years Training.

Mr. Shovel also described the famous dogs used by the monks in carrying out rescue work, these magnificent animals being the result of years of careful breeding. It took seven years to complete the training of a dog and their average life was only 10 years. They also fell victims of rheumatism and heart trouble.

Before the hospice was linked up by telephone, the monks had to conduct their rescue searches "on spec" but now they were telephoned when parties were going over the pass and a rescue patrol went out if the party did not reach the hospice in the usual time.

As many as 20,000 people were entertained in a season and the pass was snowed up for about nine months of the year.

I do not know whether those coloured books for children are still "en vogue" in Switzerland to-day, the books I mean which told us about the St. Bernard Dogs and their life-saving activities. Those books used to be beautifully, if somewhat crudely illustrated, and the doggies were always represented pulling a man out of the deep snow, while a Monk was standing by ready to revive the unfortunate victim with the Brandy from the barrel on the dog's back. In those days, brandy was unknown to me by taste, but I always felt a great thrill when I saw that picture. And was it accident or a tribute to those heroic dogs, that all St. Bernard Dogs I ever knew, and I have known a good many in my time, always were called "Barry."

From St. Bernard's Monks and Dogs it is easy to continue writing of other humanitarian and even godly endeavours. I am not quite sure whether the Oxford Movement has actually made a big stir in Switzerland, but the fact that our Swiss President evidently is keenly interested in it, rather points that way. I read in "The Morning Post" Aug. 27th:

Oxford Group Movement:

An announcement was made at Oxford by the Oxford Group that the President of the Swiss Republic had written expressing his support of the Oxford Group Movement, and commending the work which it was doing throughout Switzerland.

He asked that a bound copy of the special newspaper issued at the recent International House party at Oxford should be sent to each member of the Swiss Cabinet.

The Continental countries were represented strongly at the Oxford House party which was under the leadership of Professor Theophilus Spoerri, Dean of the Faculty of the University of Zurich, and among those taking part were Professor Emil Brunner, the distinguished theologian; Dr. Alphonse Maeder, the well-known psychologist, and Professor Max Huber, a former President of the International Law Court at The Hague, and President of the World's Committee of the Red Cross.

The famous Benedictine Abbey of Einsiedeln in the Canton of Schwyz celebrates its 100th Anniversary this year and a good number of our Readers may be interested in the following description taken from "Universe" Aug. 4th:

Prof. BUSER'S Alpine Boarding School for Girls **TEUFEN** via St. Gall. and the Branch College **CHEXBRES** above VEVEY in prominent position at

are situated in fine health-resorts. They are sunny retreats with shady nooks, and extensive modern playing-fields for the physical culture of the girls. The airy classrooms and residential quarters in the various houses are light and sunny, affording in all weather every possibility for a happy social life with comfort both at work and play. So every facility is at hand for health and physical development, especially as at both schools pupils enjoy every kind of outdoor sport. At Teufen we find perfect conditions for winter sports on the own sunny grounds and within the adjacent neighbourhood. — Throughout all supervision there exists a happy, friendly spirit between heads, staff and students. —

References of parents in England.

Papal Legate Crowns Our Lady At Thousand Year-Old Swiss Monastery:

The celebrations of the Feast of the Assumption and of the 1,000th anniversary of the foundation of Einsiedeln's Benedictine Abbey came to a glorious climax when, to the ringing of church bells and the amplified music of the organ of the Abbey church, Cardinal Schuster, O.S.B., Papal Legate, solemnly crowned the statue of Our Lady of Einsiedeln — the famous Black Madonna — in the presence of a great assembly in the open air.

Five Bishops, four Abbots, and representatives of the Swiss Federal Council and many of the Cantons joined in the ceremony on the broad amphitheatre that slopes down from the abbey.

Monks and Soldiers.

The Cardinal Legate came from the Abbey Church in a long procession.

At the head walked scores of little girls in white, carrying bunches of flowers. Behind them came two long files of sombrely-clad monks.

Soldiers followed them, and then came the Bishops and Abbots wearing copes and mitres.

The statue was borne shoulder high by monks in vestments.

Immediately behind came the Papal Legate, with an escort of Swiss Guards in multi-coloured medieval uniforms. The civic authorities followed them.

Statue Enthroned.

The procession walked along one half of the semi-circle that bounds the Abbey side of the great open space, and up the centre to an altar near the Abbey's main door.

Here the Cardinal Legate placed the crown on the statue, and the statue was enthroned on the altar.

After the coronation, the procession returned to the church along the other half of the semi-circle. Looking down from the Abbey windows one could see the procession slowly winding its way through the crowd.

The entire mass of people was dwarfed by the great bulk of the neighbouring pine-clad hills.

Half way down the steep slope, the returning procession came to a halt, because of a mishap to the statue. When they saw what had happened, the crowd uttered a chorus of dismay.

Without much delay the procession resumed. In the church, the *Te Deum* was then intoned by the Cardinal Legate.

Swiss soldiers in grey, with helmets and with bayonets fixed on their rifles, acted as marshals in the church and during the procession.

Town Illuminated.

In the morning the Cardinal Legate celebrated Pontifical High Mass in the church, the Federal and Canton representatives occupying a place of honour in the sanctuary.

Nearly every place in the spacious church was filled; the massive white pillars stood out from a sea of people. The Cardinal's voice coming thinly down the church was answered by a powerful choir of more than 200 voices.

At night Einsiedeln was transformed by the illumination of myriads of flickering lights. Near the Abbey every window-sill bore a row of these little wax lights in glass globes. A solitary cross of light shone from the dark hill-side. The Abbey, flood-lit, stood out in pale prominence.

Next morning the Cardinal Legate celebrated Mass in the marble chapel of Our Lady of Einsiedeln, surrounded by the scores of Italian pilgrims who had accompanied him from Milan. The church echoed as they sang Italian hymns to Our Lady.

Soon after, the Cardinal terminated this, his first visit, and drove to the station. Many white-dressed children and a band, besides great numbers of other people, went to see him off. The Cardinal's special saloon coach and the coaches carrying the Italian pilgrims steamed out of the gaily-draped station, amid shouting and applause.

Famous Pilgrimage Centre.

The millenary celebrations began on May 6th last, and will conclude on October 14th.

Einsiedeln houses a community of about 180 Benedictine priests, lay-brothers, clerks and novices. The present building was constructed between 1704-70. Six or seven previous buildings were destroyed by fire.

Before the war, Einsiedeln was visited by nearly 200,000 pilgrims every year, from all parts of Europe. Inside the door hang crutches left behind following cures at the shrine.

The founder of the Abbey was St. Eberhard, who built the first Abbey on the site of the cell of St. Meinrad, a hermit who in 861 was murdered by robbers.

When at the beginning of the 16th century the last monk went over to Zwilling, the "Reformer," who was parish priest of Ein-

siedeln from 1516-18, the people of Schwyz brought a new Abbot from St. Gall, which had received the Faith hundreds of years before from Irish missionaries.

Being a "beaver" myself, I well remember the great fun I had when the "beaver-craze" was at its height shortly after the Great War. I never dreamt, however, that a beard might be the subject of legal action, but at Geneva the other day, — but listen to this:

Bearded Men's Rights:

"Morning Post," 25th Aug.

A Geneva eccentric who believes, among other things, that men have as much right to grow their hair long as women have to cut theirs short, has vindicated the honour of all hairy beings by creating a valuable precedent in Swiss law.

Charged with causing a grave scandal by wearing a beard some eighteen inches long with hair to match, and thus contravening Article 233b, paragraph 3 of the regulations for the control of locomotives and the maintenance of public security, the gentleman concerned defended himself with vigour before the Bench, who discharged him without a stain on his character.

Undeterred by the dictates of fashion and the jeers of his neighbours, the old gentleman has for years cultivated a magnificent flowing growth. Not satisfied with the full effect of this, he took to wearing a voluminous blue blouse, wellington boots, and a sweeping black sombrero.

The ensemble was so startling that when he took a stroll to the railway station recently, he was surrounded by a large crowd consisting largely of unbearded youths. Not the slightest bit worried, the old gentleman continued his dignified way, but officialdom in the form of an over-zealous stationmaster intervened.

"Causing a Scandal."

"You are causing a scandal within the meaning of the Act, and thus menacing the security of my trains," declared the official, "and I order you to leave the station premises."

MY FLIGHT.

By ST.

To set the minds of my readers at rest at once, I hasten to say, that the above title does not mean to convey, that I have rushed away in a wild stampede from my editorial chair, either from fear of some pressing creditors or to seek protection from my too ardent admirers. —

No, it simply means that I have "gone up," not in anybody's estimation, (I am too modest to believe in such a possibility), but actually in the Air, or you may call it into the ether, it sounds better. — Yes, I have actually left mother earth, and travelled above the passing clouds, heavenwards, towards the stars which, of course, were invisible, it being broad daylight, but nevertheless I knew they were somewhere in the vicinity. Stars always make me feel romantic, with the exception of those, which are caused when one comes into unexpected contact with some firmer object.

As this is my first experience of having left terra firma for any length of time, I am anxious to tell my readers, who have never yet gone into the higher regions, how I felt, and what miserable little beings they look from the heights above. This is not meant to be an insult, but never before in my life have I experienced such an elated feeling, as when I looked down on the millions of my fellow men who were still earthbound. They looked like ants scurrying out of a big ants nest, whilst I was passing over in the majestic glory of a beautiful summer morn.

The first act of this drama, — if I may call it thus, considering that to many of us mortals an air journey still contains certain fears and risks, perhaps an eternal parting from home and family, — was set at the offices of the Air Union, at Haymarket, where I was promptly put on a scale, which reminded me of a time some forty odd years ago, when I came out of the doctors bag. This time however, the scale was a little larger, and the weight put upon it rather heavier. A label was handed to me by some obliging member of the staff, which rather put me into a quandary, as I was not quite sure whether I had to put same round my neck, as a sort of identification disc, but a glance around revealed to me that it was simply a luggage label; a sigh of relief left my manly bosom. I already had visions that perhaps in some lonely spot somewhere in France this label would be dug out of a heap of débris, to tell the world that the remains of ST. were perhaps mouldering underneath, a victim of modern science, a flower nipped in the bud. I had hardly time to wipe away a tear, when we were ushered into a comfortable motor coach to

But the hirsute gentleman was a believer in personal as well as civil rights.

"The station is State property and I have just as much right to be here as you," he retorted with considerable dignity. "What is more, I have a perfect right to grow my hair as I like, and in any case it is not hurting your railway."

So the stationmaster called a policeman and the King of Beavers was arrested.

Whether it was because they admired his beard or his courage, or whether it was because he had committed no offence against the Swiss State railways, the magistrates acquitted the old gentleman, and he left the court amid the cheers of the assembled populace, a justifiably proud upholder of the rights of man.

And that's that.

PELERINAGE A FARNBOROUGH.

Faites l'expérience. Posez à une vingtaine d'Anglais moyens la question de savoir ce qu'il y a de spécial à Farnborough, si un souverain étranger y repose? la réponse sera négative. Et quand vous parlerez de Napoléon III, on croira que vous vous moquez; on ira même jusqu'à prétendre que Napoléon III n'existe que dans votre imagination. L'insulaire ne se souvient que de celui qui l'a attaqué.

Et pourtant, la famille de St.-Cloud est réunie à nouveau, là, en terre étrangère, ignorée, au milieu de l'indifférence. Tous trois dans des tombeaux identiques, immenses, du même marbre poli. En sortant de Guilford, en plein Surrey, la route traverse la campagne semée de villas, de cottages, éclatante dans sa monotonie. A chaque croisement de routes, des écriteaux dirigent les automobiles vers le fameux Tattou, cette grande manifestation historique et militaire, au camp d'Aldershot, qui réunit chaque année en juin, toute la société. L'approche du camp est signalée par de la troupe, des cavaliers. Et voici Farnborough. Mais il s'agit de trouver l'église, la crypte. Même dans ce village qui s'étend, il faut interroger pour savoir où repose l'empereur. Enfin, à droite, au bord de la route, une modeste plaque indique l'abbaye. On enfonce dans un

fouillis de grands arbres qui isolent complètement l'église du reste du monde. Brusquement, on atteint l'église gothique, l'abbaye de St.-Michel, trop grande presque pour ce refuge. Elle est desservie par des Bénédictins français, venus de Solesmes. On pénètre, croyant apercevoir le but du pèlerinage. Mais ce n'est pas là. Il faut tourner et c'est derrière que l'on pénètre dans la froide chapelle. A gauche, le fils. Sur le sépulchre aucune inscription. On n'a pas osé inscrire Napoléon IV. Au-dessus, une seule palme de fer, de son officier d'ordonnance. A droite, Napoléon III s'inscrit en lettres d'or. Le guide bafouille quelques explications: l'empereur a son grand uniforme, ses décorations, etc. Sur le tombeau, une couronne d'une association italienne de Solferino. Mais ici, ni au mur, rien de la France. Seule l'Italie s'est souvenue et ce souvenir émeut. Enfin, au-dessus de l'autel, dans un tombeau de même pierre, de mêmes dimensions, logée trop haut, Eugénie. De dessous le tombeau du prince, le guide indiscret tire et montre un souvenir naïf d'une princesse anglaise qui fut amoureuse de la jeune victime des Zoulous. Et dire qu'à chaque visite cette profanation se renouvelle!

C'est Eugénie qui a organisé, arrangé cette crypte, qui y a préparé sa place. On évoque ces trois funérailles, ces cortèges de Chiselhurst, de l'Afrique australe, de Madrid. De la petite gare voisine, que de rares trains desservent, le dernier cercueil, espagnol, est venu, reçu en 1920 par une garde de souverains étrangers. Ceux d'Angleterre étaient là.

Pendant plus de 50 ans, la souveraine déchue descendait de Farnborough Hill, sa résidence, près de là, pour se recueillir auprès de ceux que Dieu lui enleva, comme elle écrivait en 1880 "un par un... en lui laissant l'amertume des regrets comme seul compagnon de route." Que tout cela est mort, et que cette oasis de verdure, ce refuge catholique français — sans la France — au milieu de cette campagne anglaise si violemment différente, apparaît historiquement classé.

Napoléon II à Vienne, les deux derniers en plein Hampshire, Charles X à Goritz, et tant d'autres, jetés au vent ou autre part. La France n'est décidément pas généreuse pour ceux qu'elle a, un jour, enthousiaste, acclamés et à qui elle a permis de porter son nom.

be taken to London's great Air Port, Croydon. The door was closed with a bang, the engine started, the journey into the great unknown began. I do not know if any of my readers ever noticed how many cemeteries there are on the way to Croydon. I seem to have counted scores, or was it pure imagination? I felt quite relieved when we arrived at the Air Port, there on the vast field one could see dozens of those large silver birds intending to take their precious loads miles up, towards heaven.—

We pass now the passport officers, a glance at the papers, a nod to the policeman at the door, that the bearer is safe to depart, we enter on to the track, right in front of us stands motionless the "Golden Clipper," the machine which is to take us to the "La ville Lumière."

The luggage is now brought along on a little trolley and stored away, one sharp glance reveals to me that my bag, bearing the famous label, has been taken aboard, steps are wheeled to the entrance door at the side, and the passengers are invited to take their seats. The captain arrives, a dapper clean-shaven Frenchman accompanied by the wireless operator, they shake hands with some officials on the field, "Bon voyage" is wished to them. The pilot and his companion have now taken their seats at the wheels, first one engine begins to turn, then the second and then a third; a deafening noise, the whole machine seems to be alive with vibration. I am handed some cotton wool by the steward, who is shouting to me at the top of his voice, I cannot hear a word, but by his signs and gesticulations I presume that he wishes me to put it into my ears; judging from the quantity which is handed to me, he must consider my ears are pretty large, but I do my best. Through the little window which separates the pilot's cabin from that of the passengers, I can see the captain raising his hand, it is the signal for the departure. A bump which makes me grip the side of my comfortable armchair, makes me realize that we are moving, I watch the huge wheels running over the field, we are now taxied to the spot where we are to take off; after a few moments of rather heavy jolting which makes me wish that my breakfast had been less substantial, we arrive at the starting point, the engines begin to roar at top speed, we are off. The wheels still slightly skim the ground, houses, trees, masts, etc., are passing by at a tremendous speed, a glance down at the side reveals to me that we have left the ground; we are now circling over the large aerodrome, slowly gaining altitude. In the distance I can see the Crystal Palace with its brilliant glass roofs reflecting in the sun; for miles and miles around nothing but a huge sea of houses, the monotony of which is broken here

and there by some open spaces, presumably Parks. Higher and higher we climb, the houses are getting smaller and smaller, the people are beginning to look like tiny pin heads, we are now leaving the millions of little chimney stacks, which, like warning fingers are pointing heavenwards. We are flying over the beautiful countryside, deep below, little villages, silvery streams and winding country lanes are passing by. Fields, woods and small lakes appear and disappear, it is an unforgettable sight. In the distance heavy clouds make their appearance, they look like a huge forbidding wall, as if they wish to delay us from going any further. We encounter now the vanguard of the clouds, they pass us with tremendous speed (we are travelling at about 150 miles per hour), nearer and nearer comes the huge wall then a little jolt, I glance at my neighbour with an anxious look, but he seems undisturbed, we are climbing still higher. Small clouds are temporarily obscuring the view, we strike one heavy cloud, it looks like a thick mist, and for a moment even the large wings of the machine disappear; a most uncanny feeling overtakes me, and for a moment I begin to reflect what on earth ever made me leave mother earth. I pass over at a quick glance my earthly pilgrimage, I seem to remember the early days of my boyhood, Fata Morgana like I see the house where I was born and brought up, I see my parents, I seem to remember faces long forgotten since, and a feeling of immense sorrow for any moment of sorrow and discomfort I have brought upon myself gets hold of me. I make a silent vow that hitherto I will bring nothing but joy to my fellow men. Then suddenly the veil is lifted, the sun in all its golden glory is greeting us anew, the grey earth has disappeared, and with it that heavy feeling; as far as the eye reaches, there is one great sea of silvery white clouds, it looks like one vast unending glacier, furrowed with deep crevasses. Forgotten are all the worries, here is freedom from all the earthly fetters, the yearning after liberty is fulfilled, and with awe we admire the work of the creator. Like a huge eagle we are floating through the ether. The shadow of the machine reflects on the clouds and follows us like a faithful companion, the only companion in this immense vastness, — no, — there in the distance is another machine coming from the opposite side, deep down from the heart we are sending greetings to our fellow men, who like ourselves are speeding through the air, no doubt animated by the same feelings. I am glad that the noise of the engines makes any conversation with one's fellow passengers almost impossible, the awe-inspiring view calls for quiet meditation.

(Conclusion in our next issue.)