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merchant fleet can be judged by the number of boats passing up the Rhine flying the Swiss flag. Speaking of boats, no visitor should fail to take a trip on one of the little ferry boats which ply between Klein Basle and the landing-stage below the Münsterplatz. These tiny craft are propelled entirely by the current and travel, in mid-stream, at a remarkable speed.

The people of Basle are friendly and gay but where local rivalries are concerned they can become supremely conscious of their status as *Bâlois*. The greatest rival, needless to say, is the neighbouring city of Zürich.

No one, however, can really understand the true *stimmung* of Basle who has not witnessed the Fastnacht Carnival, which takes place at Shrovetide on the middle Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of February. The most important members of the carnival are the drummers and for weeks before Fastnacht the sound of drumming can be heard all over the city. The festivities continue for three days with balls, masquerades, and lantern processions over the Rhine bridges and around the town. And then, as suddenly as it began, the deafening revelry ceases and the *Bâlois* continue on their peaceful, prosperous ways for another year.

[The train and sea journey from London to Basle takes about 15 hours and costs £22 10s. (first return), or £15 2s. (second return). The air journey costs £37 16s. return, or £30 5s. (tourist return).]

The Times.

N.S.H. ANNUAL FILM SHOW.

The Nouvelle Société Helvétique organisers of the Annual Film Show could not have picked on a worse day. It was remarkable that anyone ventured out to Westminster to look at films on such a day. Yet the attendance must be called fair. It is true that a large proportion consisted of the younger strata of the Colony.

When welcoming the members and friends present, the President, Mr. Renz, had to inform us that the "high spot" of the advertised programme could not be shown — the film, "Sentés et roc", was still on its way. It appeared that someone at home had, to express it mildly, not given the matter of despatch the necessary attention.

However, the organisers did their best, and with the help of the National Tourist Office were able to fill the gap with a propaganda film about winter tourism in Switzerland. The film, "Passport", features Richard Dimbleby finding out just what one did in and around Grindelwald in winter — and what it costs. There is also a shot with Lord Montgomery as one of the visitors of long standing. Dick Dimbleby did cheat a bit; we would have enjoyed it immensely had he shown us skiing in action instead of merely talking about the sport with a film instructor. However, one cannot have everything! Let me add that "Passport" is an excellent bit of propaganda.

As usual in this annual event, "La vie du pays" brought us some interesting shots about happenings in Switzerland during the past year. For the young folk there were three short, rather fantastic, fantasias in colour: "Jack and the Beanstalk", "Mary's Little Lamb" and "Aladdin's Lamp".

J.H.B.