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NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

Some of our older Readers who have only just recovered from the shock they experienced when told that the Swiss Observer was actually celebrating its 20th birthday and that, — horrible thought — they too must have become somewhat less young during that period, may well rub their eyes when seeing the above caption announcing that Kyburg has once more been asked to contribute a few notes to the next few issues.

Our Editor not only needs a holiday, but has richly deserved one and he has taken himself off to our beloved homeland, there to spend a little time among relatives and friends, visiting various spots and, of course, the "Landi" or Swiss National Exhibition at Zurich. I do not know whether he has been officially invited by Dr. Klöti, the Mayor of Zurich, who has invited the Lord Mayor of London and party to visit the Exhibition as his guests at the end of this month, but if I know our Editor, I rather fancy that he will be somewhere in the "entourage" of that August crowd of city fathers.

And so, dear Readers, please put up with me for a few weeks and excuse me if, for want of practice, I do not entertain you as well as you would like to be entertained. — After all, you pay your subs and have a right to obtain the goods and to complain if the latter are not up to standard. Please, therefore, write in and let me hear your grouses and prepare for the ensuing more or less pointed reply.

I do not know whether mine is a unique or general experience. Knowing me to be Swiss, a number of my English friends ask my views on the political situation, as being the views of a benevolent neutral observer! I wish to give those of you who are similarly placed a tip: During the week-end I make it a rule to inform all such questioners that the political situation does not interest me after office hours and during the week-end and that I have no views on it at all during the time devoted to recuperation, Golf and other things, but that I think, there will not be any war in Europe in which Switzerland or England are likely to be involved.

That, generally, settles the question and I am spared listening to a rechauffee of the penny paper headlines and their conflicting news and views and the week-end passes off in a leisurely, tranquil atmosphere of sport and good fellowship, much to my physical and mental advantage.

Looking through the British Press, I find that Switzerland is well represented in the "News" and, fortunately, in the sort of news with which her name is so fittingly coupled, namely activities of Charity, Education, Art and Science.

There is the story in the "Western Mail" of July 14th of the return of twenty-five children from special areas who arrived back in London from a holiday given them by the Mayor and villagers of Adelboden:

25 Special Areas Children Back After Swiss Holiday:

It was, perhaps, fortunate that their parents could not be at Victoria to greet them, for all the 25 confessed they were "sorry to be home."

That this was no idle sentiment was proved in the fact that a number of the girls — and they openly admitted it — spent most of last night crying because their first real holiday was over.

But what would probably have annoyed their parents most was the comment of a policeman at the station Customs barrier, just inside which the children were marshalled. "Are these the refugees?" asked a woman, rushing up. "No, madam," replied the policeman, "they are not dressed smartly enough for refugees."

It must be admitted that his reply was very largely justified, especially in regard to the boys, who sported open-neck shirts and colourful Swiss caps at rakish angles and carried Swiss sticks, while out of the ends of their cases peeped shirts, ties, and other pieces of luggage.

Put On Weight.

That the holiday had done the children good was apparent to anyone who saw the party off a month ago. With one exception they all put on weight. The average increase was 4lb.

Of the South Wales contingent, the biggest increase was registered by Eileen Nash, aged 14, of Duffryn-street, Ferndale, who returned 5lb. 11oz. heavier.

The "exception" was Eluned Barrett Davies, aged 14, of Penygraig-terrace, Llan-hilleth, who weighs 9st. She lost 1lb. 1oz. "Even in her case the holiday has been bene-

ficial," said Mr. W. D. Davies, the Rhondda teacher who accompanied the party, "she really weighed too much, and the fresh air, new diet, and exercise have helped to correct that."

"The blood tests were most remarkable," he added. "The vital capacity of all the children was much bigger at the end of the journey. Their powers of resistance to illness, the doctors assured me, are very much greater, and the holiday should result in permanent benefit to their health."

"Had we just kept these children in the Special Areas and given them the rich and unusual diet which they had in Switzerland many of them would have reacted to the treatment. As it was they all thrived on the food because the mountain air and the exercise combined to make the food palatable and beneficial."

Does not anyone, reading the above, wish that all children of the poorer area of England could have such an experience which, I am sure, will give them a souvenir which nothing will ever efface.

Then we have the exchange of Students, some from England going to Switzerland, some from Switzerland to this country. The "Southend Standard" 13th inst. mentions the

Visit of Swiss Students:

Welcoming the visitors, the Mayor said it was the sixth time that students from Switzerland had visited Southend. Visits of that character were an indication of the goodwill and respect existing between Great Britain and Switzerland. The exchange of school students between different countries was an excellent foundation for bringing about proper understanding and confidence between the nations.

"For the last few years, and at the present time, the world has been passing through a very anxious period," continued the Mayor. "It is hoped that at long last these dark clouds of apprehension will soon be dispersed, and that confidence and goodwill, which lead to the happiness and well-being of the community as a whole, will be restored amongst the nations. Happiness is the aspiration of every man, whatever his nationality, and this can only be attained by kindness and goodwill to our neighbours. This applies as much to nations as to individuals."

The Mayor concluded by expressing the hope that the visit would prove thoroughly enjoyable and profitable in providing a better knowledge of the language, life and customs of the people of this country.

The welcome was translated by Mrs. Alexander, after which Dr. Weber replied, saying that from the first moment they arrived the English people and the country had won their hearts.

"We came here already filled with a deep admiration for all the great things England has given and is still giving to mankind; in arts, science and civilization in general. At the actual moment our feelings towards her are much like those of a helpless child towards a protecting mother."

One of the Swiss boys, Erich Auer, also replied, and hoped that such visits would add to the lasting peace of the world.

A party of thirty students from Southend High School will visit Switzerland from August 14th to September 10th.

I saw a group of these Swiss Students yesterday evening, exploring the garden town of West-cliff-on-Sea and although I did not "butt in" on them, it gave me quite a thrill as, in passing, I heard the familiar sounds of thick Basle dialect reaching my enchanted ears.

"The Swiss do a lot of things without making a lot of fuss about them" a friend of mine said to me the other day. Why? I replied that I thought it was just their idea of living a full life, or trying to put into the pool a wee bit more than they took out of it, so that others might benefit a little bit. I thought the Swiss did that, not because they were especially good, but because they had realised the truth in the old saying that "to give is more blessed than to receive" and that they, perhaps subconsciously, tried to get something of that blessing. The above bit of conversation came back to me when I read the following

Thanks to Switzerland: Christian Science Monitor, 24th June.

Persons who had tramped enthralled through those brilliant galleries knew that what mattered artistically in Madrid, during all the recent months of horror, was the safety of the paintings in the Prado. Such persons were not necessarily unmindful of the loss of human life or of the terrible devastation to property. But those paintings they knew and

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treasured; hence there was felt an almost personal responsibility as to their fate.

And now it is learned that they are safe — the superb Goyas, the El Grecos, the Velasquez and all the rest. Thanks to Switzerland — shelter for political refugees, haven of lost causes, chosen hiding-place for valued possessions — they are safe and will soon be seen again in that proud building in Madrid's tree-shaded park.

Last March, it is revealed, Madrid's invaluable art treasures, 4,000 in number, were removed from the threat of danger and put into the charge of the Secretary General to the League of Nations at Geneva. Recently it has been deemed safe for these treasures of art to be returned to Madrid. And once more Switzerland has merited the gratitude of the nations.

The Swiss National Exhibition, of course, gets plenty of Press notices and in some of the papers, especially the 1/- weeklies, you will find some nice illustrations too. So, for instance, in the *Sphere* of July 15th which has an accompanying article from which I quote the following only:

Several manufacturers of aluminium products were interested in showing their wares. None has done so — that is, none as an individual trader. Instead, the visitor has been given a complete epitome of a great industry, from the mine to the finished article. All the industries of the country and its many-sided rural life have been similarly treated and the result is completely successful.

One might mention as outstanding the Pavilion of the People, for here is brought home in dramatic form that astonishing diversity of the Swiss people — racially, linguistically, and culturally — already referred to. One must refer, too, to the clever solution of what is, perhaps, the greatest drawback to all exhibitions, namely, foot weariness, a problem that defeated even the great Paxton.

When you feel that you have walked enough in the Swiss National Exhibition, you enter a small boat to be wafted along a canal that takes you through flower-scented gardens, beer gardens and even through great halls where at ease you view industrial exhibits. This water-borne way of seeing exhibition sights is not the least of the triumphs of the Swiss engineers.

G. G.

Turning now to the lighter side of life, here is news which may make you ponder or, according to your nature and inclination, which will tickle your imaginative powers:

Puppets in the Window: *Christian Science Monitor*, 22nd June.

An interesting exhibit to be seen at the Swiss National Exhibition in Zurich is a shop-window where mechanical figures draw attention, by appropriate action, to the beauty, or the utility, of the garments they display.

One cannot help thinking that the introduction of this idea would do much to attract the customer into the shop. For immobility allows the immaculate figures in the window salon to retain a superhuman sangfroid, an impervious majesty of deportment, into which the sensitive man in the street may even read a faint disdain of his own aspirations. Great must be his self-confidence if he dares to see himself there as others will see him, or to imagine, for a moment, that he could wear with any credit the mantles of such Olympians. Once let them move, however, and he will but think of the added grace he could bring to their clothes, and be heartened to make his purchase.

Incidentally, one foresees that, with such methods, the shop-window of the future will be the most popular of street entertainments. It may even develop into a true puppet show, and the tailor's Dummy, and the milliner's Model, become characters as famous as Punch and Judy.

On this my first week of writing again in our London Paper, it would hardly do for me to add a lot of my own thoughts to the above.

Returning to the political situation, — from which you will rightly deduce that these lines are written during office hours — just now, Tuesday, 12.55 p.m., some twenty aeroplanes flew over the City and made an imposing spectacle, in spite of the drizzle. They made me feel once again how very unlikely it is that any one country, supposed there was a major war, would risk inviting retaliation from the air by starting air raids. Like our compatriots at home, our motto should be

to be prepared? YES.

to be afraid? NO.

Kyburg.

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A MEMORABLE ALPINE EXPERIENCE.

Most of your readers will remember having seen the picture of the Château de Chillon with the magnificent background of the seven points of the Dent du Midi; and it was at Champery, at the foot of the Dent du Midi, that I arranged to meet Alexander Burgener in the summer of 1904.

After the arrival of Alexander Burgener, we struck bad weather, and our climb of the Dent du Midi was retarded as we were obliged to stay for awhile in the hut of the Alpe Bonaveau.

But eventually, my wife and I, and our guide climbed the Haute Cime of the Dents; the triangular sign at the top was covered with the most extraordinary shapes formed by ice and snow.

The upper part of the peak was slate and the climb to some extent hampered by insecure foothold.

We descended then to Salvan and tramped towards Chamonix by way of Fins Hauts. Upon my arrival there I found that our luggage had been tampered with, but the hotel proprietor was most obliging and made, our loss good.

Then came the principal item of our programme: Mont Blanc. Alexander Burgener was quite prepared to take sole charge, although the French guides do not look favourably upon one guide acting alone.

We started off in good spirits, and at Pierre Pointue we stopped for refreshment. Unfortunately the white wine did not agree with Burgener and for some time he suffered great discomfort but continuing our walk towards Grands Mulets, he soon had completely recovered. We had to shelter for some time under an overhanging rock, as we ran into a storm.

Presently we were joined by a party who had come from Montanvert, and we continued our ascent together, discussing as we climbed, the "Matterhorn." One of the party belittled the Matterhorn from a mountaineering point of view which drew loud protests from Alexander Burgener, who valiantly defended his favourite peak.

We arrived at Grands Mulets in the early evening and were photographed by our companions who turned out to be the brothers Abrahams of Keswick, famous as photographers, as well as mountaineers. They have made splendid climbs in the English Lake district, and taken wonderful photographs, in those days they carried plates. —

After a short night's rest, Alexander and I left the Grands Mulets at 1 a.m. by the light of a lantern. One of the most intriguing sights that it has been my good fortune to see in the Alps was the stretch of street lamps down below, the lights of Chamonix forming a resplendent cross in the darkness.

Presently our lantern was "cached" to be picked up on our return. One ticklish crevasse had to be traversed on all fours and Alexander lost his temper with me, saying that I did not follow his actions closely enough, evidently he was not happy about this particular crevasse. When we reached the Vallot hut we made a good meal and were presently joined by the Abrahams' party, who however, did not continue the climb, as one of them had mountain sickness.

On we trudged towards the top in deep snow which had to be trodden in with each step and which made our task tremendously toilsome, we had not bargained to be sinking for hours up to our knees in snow but we should have been prepared for this by the bad weather conditions. My wife told me after our return, that we had been watched from Chamonix. Nine hours after leaving Grands Mulets, we reached the summit of Mont Blanc; Alexander Burgener, having made a Herculean performance.

Whilst we were slowly mounting the last arête we were photographed by the Abrahams', and I treasure this greatly, as it shows us actually labouring and not merely posing.

The picture is of an immense field of snow with two black specks on it, to wit, Alexander and myself. When we were seen to have reached the summit from Chamonix a cannon was fired, for which I had the privilege of paying Frs.5. Presumably this practice has been now discontinued, as the ascents of Mont Blanc are too numerous to be notable. We returned to Chamonix by the same route, and I was terribly tired, floundering about towards the end but Alexander exhorted me to hold out and I did not disgrace him. After a welcome bath I went into dinner and was promptly pounced upon by an American, who waited to shake hands with a conqueror of Mont Blanc.

A day or two later, we moved up to the Hotel Montanvert at the side of the famous Mer de Glace. Here we again met the Abrahams' and inspected their beautiful Alpine photographs, and a famous English mountaineer Walter Larden, who had been making a special study of the house inscriptions in the Loetschental; he had come over one of the passes and I have seldom seen anyone so deeply tanned.

After a memorable walk up the Mer de Glace to the so-called Jardin at the foot of the Grand Joranes, Alexander and I climbed to the Grand Charmes, a most interesting expedition, with some splendid rock-climbing and a steep snow couloir, which upon our return, we passed down with our faces towards the wall, but one felt absolutely safe with such a guide and a more experienced climber than myself would have made light of such a passage in the snow.

Here again we were photographed by the Abrahams' just on the top of the Charmoz.

To conclude our season, my wife accompanied us up to the Petit Charmoz — an interesting small rock climb, and back then into the Rhone Valley and by degrees to our Lares et Penates in old England!

J. J. EBERLI.

VIÈME GRAND PRIX AUTOMOBILES DE SUISSE.

L'autos-nous on ne l'aurons-nous pas? Durant longtemps il fut douteux que cette grande et passionnante épreuve pût voir le jour cette année, bien des raisons sérieuses militaient contre cette reprise. Mais des milieux influents, parmi lesquels l'hôtellerie et les garages, de même que les autorités bernoises (Ville et Canton) se prononcèrent pour l'affirmative. Ces milieux savent, en effet, ce que cette manifestation internationale désormais célèbre signifie pour la Suisse, en particulier pour la Ville fédérale. Dans ces conditions le comité a décidé de remettre sur pied le Grand Prix de Suisse automobile. Ce sera

le 20 août

soit à la date retenue au calendrier international. Ce jour-là, donc tous se retrouveront sur le circuit idéal — non seulement pour l'agrément des spectateurs mais pour la technique de course — qu'est celui du Bremgarten aux portes de Berne. Les travaux d'organisation devront cette année être parachevés en un minimum de temps. Aussi ont-ils commencé avec ardeur. Comme on sait les organisateurs ont à cœur de ne rien négliger pour faire du Grand Prix de Suisse Automobile, à chacune de ses nouvelles éditions, quelque chose d'encore plus parfait et plus captivant si possible. On peut être sûr que le 20 août, sur la piste bernoise, il y aura bien du nouveau à voir, et du palpitant.