

Notes and gleanings

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aussi aux personnes en train de faire leur correspondance de se souvenir qu'elles habitent dans un pays de vignobles réputés.

UNE RESOLUTION DES SOUS-OFFICIERS GENEVOIS.—Le comité de la section de Genève de l'Association suisse des sous-officiers, ayant eu connaissance de l'interdiction de la manifestation communiste de Bâle, pour le dimanche de Raméaux; réprouvant toute ingérence de l'étranger chez nous; sachant que, dans le parti communiste, rien ne se fait que sur l'ordre de Moscou; attachant, dans l'intérêt de la paix, un grand prix à la tranquillité intérieure de la Suisse et aux bonnes relations qu'elle entretient avec tous ses voisins:

Félicité le Conseil fédéral de sa décision énergique et invite les citoyens à s'unir pour tenir haute et ferme, en toutes circonstances, le drapeau de la patrie.

VAUD.—La statistique agricole faite par le secrétariat de la Chambre vaudoise d'agriculture, avec la collaboration du Département vaudois de l'agriculture, donne, pour le rendement brut de l'agriculture vaudoise en 1928, un total de Frs. 132,615,000, soit 14 millions environ de plus qu'en 1926. Le lait et les produits laitiers représentent 49,5 millions, la viticulture 23 millions, l'engraissement du bétail bovin 18 millions, etc.

400 OUVRIERS EN GREVE.—Le personnel de la fabrique "Bulowa Watch & Co." s'est mis en grève lundi matin. La fabrique Bulowa Watch compte plusieurs succursales, en particulier à La Chaux-de-Fonds et au Locle. Le personnel des succursales est également en grève. Le nombre des grévistes est d'environ 400. Les motifs de cette grève sont dans une question de salaires et de revendication de vacances.

MANIFESTATION ARTISTIQUE.—L'Ecole de Musique de Lausanne dirigée par Miles J. Cavalli et C. Mégard, a donné au théâtre de Lausanne le "Jeu du feu" de E. Jacques-Dalcroze, pièce que l'on dit extrêmement intéressante, pleine de fraîche poésie et de parfums printaniers. D'après un critique musical lausannois, il ne saurait être nécessaire d'insister sur les qualités de charme, de fraîcheur et de grâce juvénile de ce premier poème de E. Jacques-Dalcroze à la gloire du printemps, de la jeunesse et de la joie. Cette fête du Renouveau nous et renoue son cortège sur des rythmes populaires. C'est, dit-on, une fête des yeux, de l'oreille et du cœur. A quand sa présentation à Londres?

A Fribourg, Mlle Jeanne Canton, 31 ans, a tué M. Adolphe Hertling, architecte, qui avait décidé d'abandonner son amie pour se fiancer à une demoiselle russe habitant Genève. La jeune Canton s'est suicidée. M. Hertling appartenait à une famille bien connue du chef-lieu fribourgeois.

UNE DRAME AU JARDIN ZOOLOGIQUE CHAUX-DE-FONNIER.—Le Bois du Petit-Château, dans lequel on a récemment tenté d'acclimater sur un grand rocher-refuge une famille de chamois fribourgeois, et qui possède, en outre, toutes espèces d'animaux petits ou grands, vient d'être pour la seconde fois le théâtre d'une véritable tuerie. Il y a deux mois environ, un grand daim avait été égorgé par des chiens errants, après une défense héroïque qui permit aux autres habitants du parc de se mettre en lieu sûr. Hier, la tragédie s'est renouvelée et une jeune daine en a été victime. Cruellement mordue par deux chiens qui s'étaient introduits on ne sait comment dans l'enceinte grillagée, la malheureuse bête succomba aux affreuses blessures qu'elle portait à la tête et au cou. Le gardien du parc accouru, put tuer un des chiens d'un coup de fourche, alors que son compagnon s'enfuyait dans un effort désespéré.

Heureusement que les chamois qui, cette fois, semblent bien acclimatés, n'ont pas été molestés par les bêtes meurtrières. Il est d'ailleurs à présumer qu'ils leur eussent opposé une énergie et efficace résistance. Comme on risque d'accuser du méfait l'espèce dite "chien-loup," précisons que le chien tué est un roquet baptisé du vulgaire nom de "spitz" et d'une taille qui ne dépasse pas 40 centimètres.

UN IMMEUBLE S'ECROULE.—L'immeuble attenant à la maison Cotting, à Fribourg, qui, le 2 février dernier, s'était effondré dans la nuit, s'est également écroulé dans la soirée de lundi. Toute la façade dominant la Sarine a été précipitée dans le ravin.

L'immeuble avait été évacué sur ordre de la frêfecture de police le jour même de la première catastrophe, aussi n'y a-t-il eu aujourd'hui aucun accident de personne.

VEVEY.—On apprend le décès de M. Edouard Liauson, un Vevésan qui professa longtemps à Tiflis et qui occupait des lors une chaire à Tirana (Albanie). Le défunt était fils de feu Charles Liauson qui fut pendant de longues années maître d'arithmétique et de mathématiques au Collège de Vevey.

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NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KIBURG.

One need not be a Fascist—no Swiss worthy of his birthright can be—while yet admiring the foresight of the Basle authorities in not only banning the Anti-Fascist demonstration last Sunday, but in asking the Federal Government to send a regiment or so of soldiers with a view to giving that ban effective power. To-day (Monday) I am pleased to read in the British Press that the demonstration was successfully prevented, and I am sure this pleasure must be shared by all those who do not mistake the freedom enjoyed by democratically ruled sovereign peoples for the "licentiousness of the swine," to quote Goethe (or was it another?)

When the British Home Secretary put into words what ought to be clear to any intelligent modern human being, namely, that the time is past when an individual can do as he pleases, he got into the bad books of quite a lot of people, even among his own party. However, in Switzerland, the country of well-regulated freedom, new laws are continually coming into existence and abrogating the free action of individuals to do as they think fit. According to the *Observer* (March 17th),

Swiss Laws Against Duelling.

Under the new laws, severe punishments are to be imposed in the case of students' duels, which are, happily, a declining custom in Switzerland. Though the head of the Department of Justice, himself an old "Corpsbruder" with a number of cuts, pleaded for taking a more sporting view of these encounters and for inflicting fines only, the Nationalrat decided for imprisonment. Probably this will deal the final blow to the Corps, who can barely get members enough to carry on under present conditions.

O alte Burschen Herrlichkeit! The other day I listened in to a quartet at Munich singing old students' songs and, although to my horror I found I had forgotten the words of quite a few of them, the old tunes were sufficient to make me feel quite "heiwelich." The emotional side of one's character, alas, often runs contrary to one's reasoning, and, however much one can admire the "alte Burschen Herrlichkeit" surely one must admit, in 1929 and 11 years after the termination of the great war, that duelling and beer-swilling, even though they both had their origin in worthy motives, are better dispensed with. For one thing, they are apt to bring out that rather bullish trait in some characters and for another they look silly. Alas! *Et nos in illis mutamus!*

We are often struck by the obvious fact that English friends of ours know their own country much less than some of the Continental countries, notably Switzerland. We are inclined to think that funny at times, and to reflect how well we know our own little fatherland. But do we?

Whenever I glance through the press cuttings sent me for these Notes, I am struck by the wealth of information about Switzerland which they contain, and by the great number of things about which I knew nothing or very little. And yet in my youth I travelled nearly all over Switzerland, by train, on my pedal-cycle, on foot and by steamer, and I fondly thought nobody could teach me much more about it. And I ask myself, how many of you, dear readers, who possibly cherish the same illusions as I did about your profound knowledge of Switzerland, know anything about the following, culled from the *Liverpool Echo* (March 16th):—

Newly Married Pay in Switzerland.

A queer little fête takes place in Switzerland once a year, and the newly-married couples of the neighbourhood are those who pay its costs—by no means heavy, fortunately.

Towards the end of the afternoon of the first Sunday in Lent, the children of the villages round about Geneva, and in Savoy, assemble and prepare to visit all the newly-married people in the neighbourhood. Wildly excited, they rush through the streets of the hamlets, shouting the old, old refrain in patois which has been handed down for generations, and ending up with the time-honoured cry, "Aux Alouilles! Les Alouilles!" which they repeat in chorus before each house that they visit.

No sooner is the well-known cry heard than the young wife hastens to the door or window and showers down upon the expectant little

crowd the sweets, nuts, bonbons, biscuits and caramels that she has prepared, knowing full well that she would have small people to see her to-day. An unwritten law exists that each child must catch his or her share of the sweets thrown, so there is a good deal of hustling to get a good place near the giver, and frequently wails from the smaller members of the party mingle with the traditional singing, though their tears are soon dried when special attention is paid to their lamentable position on the outskirts of the noisy throng. Very often friends and relatives of the newly-married pair come and pass the afternoon and evening of "Les Alouilles" with them, and then the children are sure of a rich harvest of goodies.

The origin of this quaint custom, and the reason for it, dates from heathen times, when in Switzerland the first settlers celebrated this time of year by visits to their scanty fields and orchards, carrying with them axes and torches, and threatening the trees and seeds with them if they did not yield plenty of fruit and a good harvest. Later on, the lads of the villages made a sort of annual festival of this custom, and went through the fields round the hamlets carrying "faillies," or torches made of straw, with which they burnt out the nests of caterpillars and scorched the grubs menacing the fruit-trees. In some parts of the country the festival is still called the "Faillies," and everywhere on that particular Sunday evening fires are lit on the heights above.

And tradition goes that if the newly-married people do not welcome the visit of the children with their cry of "Les Alouilles! Les Alouilles!" (term meaning flash of lightning and a corruption of the old French word "éclat," and therefore fire of sorts), they will not be blessed with healthy children: or, if they have children who are reasonably strong, these will turn out good-for-nothings in the moral sense.

Wherefore, whether they believe the tradition or not, these young Swiss couples take care to lay in a good store of sweets for the fête of the children on the occasion of "Les Alouilles! Les Alouilles!"

By the way, why not institute this happy custom here in our Colony? Would it not be nice if once a year we all travelled to see those who had got married during the past twelve months and invited ourselves to have tea with them? We might even, to make the idea practicable, split up the neighbourhood of London into residential sections. Of course, over there only the children shout "les alouilles," but over here grown-ups might be permitted to show the way.

500,000 Swiss See Films Weekly.

From *The Times* (March 19th):—

While the Swiss people take little interest in the film producing industry, they are favourable to the creation of moving picture halls, of which there are 265, with a total of 96,000 seats. It is estimated that the average weekly attendance at the Swiss picture-halls is 500,000, or one-eighth of the population.

The films shown in Switzerland are generally American, German and French, but a few British naval films met with great success during recent years, and there should certainly be a good opening for British films in this country. Foreign films, which pay a very small Customs tax, are imported into Switzerland through special offices at Zurich, Basel, Geneva, Berne, Lausanne and Lucerne, which distribute them all over the country.

Switzerland is rich in natural beauties of every description, which might afford an opportunity for making some most interesting films. Several attempts have already been made to film mountain climbs, as well as scenes in the Alpine valleys. Some scenes of *La neige sur les pas* were filmed either at the Grand St. Bernard or in the Moiry Valley, and several scenes of *Madame Récamier* were filmed at the Château de Coppet, near Geneva. Dramas have also been filmed in the Alps, but these films were not successful outside Switzerland. A valuable contribution to the documentary cinema has been made by the Geneva section of the Swiss Alpine Club, which, during the last three years, filmed the ascents of Aiguille du Moine, Aiguilles Dorées and Allalin Horn, but such films appeal only to experts in the art of mountaineering. All these attempts were made by amateurs, and it would

be interesting to see what cinema experts could do with the beautiful scenery of Switzerland.

Vatican Swiss Guard.

Writing about the Ticino and hearing Italian in my ears, as it were—but, unfortunately, not in reality—brings me, quite naturally, to the problem of the Swiss Guard at the Vatican. The following is from the *Dundee Evening Telegraph and Post* (March 19th):—

Now that the Vatican has become an independent State, a question has arisen concerning the Pope's Swiss guard.

This picturesque corps, numbering about one hundred officers and men, has been for centuries recruited in the German and French speaking cantons of Switzerland, its chief duty being to guard the body of the Pope. There is an article in the present Swiss Constitution, however, prohibiting Swiss subjects from accepting service in the army of any foreign Power. Hitherto the Vatican could not strictly be termed a foreign Power, but now the Swiss Guard will come under the ban contained in the Swiss Constitution.

The Guard has a record distinguished for loyalty to the Holy See. It was founded in 1505 by Pope Julius II., who recruited 2,000 men, of whom 250 followed him to Rome. They were butchered almost to a man in St. Peter's, where they barricaded themselves during the sack of Rome in 1527.

I don't think for a moment that the question is important enough to call for an alteration in the Swiss Constitution.

Dr. Albert Reverdin, M.D.

The *Lancet* of March 9th publishes the following necrology:—

Dr. Albert Reverdin, who died on January 29th at the age of 48, was one of the most renowned and popular medical men in Switzerland. He was the son of one well-known surgeon, Auguste Reverdin, and the pupil of another, having been chief assistant to César Roux, in Lausanne for many years. In 1912, being greatly interested in the work of the Red Cross, Reverdin went to the Balkan war to assume the direction of the "Vaud-Genève" ambulances. He proved to be an efficient organiser as well as a distinguished surgeon, and received honours from Serbian and from Greece. He returned from Geneva in 1913, and began to build a big, up-to-date clinic. Then the Great War broke out. Reverdin at once offered his services to the French Government, and was entrusted with the charge of the large War Hospital in Bourg, being appointed also surgeon-in-chief and inspector-general of the VIIth region. For his war services he was made an officer of the Legion of Honour. In 1919 he was able to return to Geneva to open his new clinic, which was equipped with X-ray plant as well as fine operating theatres, consulting rooms and research laboratories. Besides his clinical work, Reverdin for some years held the post of chief of a surgical department at the Hôpital Cantonal de Genève. As a vice-president of the International Red Cross Committee he brought about a great number of useful reforms, and he devoted much of his time to this work. The brandard he invented is now used widely in armies.

Dr. Robert Duby, of Geneva, writes: Those who saw Reverdin operate were struck by his great dexterity and rapidity of action. As an inventor he distinguishes himself in many directions. In surgery we have Reverdin's needles, Reverdin's pincers, etc. We owe him also Nitro-cellulose, a malleable substance, which in many cases can take the place of plaster. With his technical skill was associated excellent judgment. Severe with himself, he was severe with others, and there was military discipline in his operating-room as well as in the whole clinic. But he was interested in his patients from the moment they entered the clinic, and he never forgot them. To him the operation was an important part in the treatment of their illness, but not the only thing that counted. He avoided operating when he could. Because he was a master of surgery and yet was never mastered by it his name will be remembered as a great clinician, and his early death will be deplored by the increasing circle of practitioners who relied on him for sound advice.

QUOTATIONS from the SWISS STOCK EXCHANGES

BONDS.		Mar. 18	Mar. 25	
Confederation 3% 1903	...	82.75	83.60	
5% 1917, VIII Mob. Ln	...	101.50	101.05	
Federal Railways 3½% A—K	...	88.05	87.10	
" " 1924 IV Elect. Ln.	...	102.25	102.00	
SHARES.		Nom.	Mar. 18	Mar. 25
		Fr.	Fr.	Fr.
Swiss Bank Corporation	...	500	813	813
Crédit Suisse	...	500	950	941
Union de Banques Suisses	...	500	710	707
Société pour l'Industrie Chimique	...	1000	3475	3440
Fabrique Chimique ci-dev. Sandoz	...	1000	4750	4680
Soc. Ind. pour la Schappe	...	1000	4355	4310
S.A. Brown Boveri	...	350	572	560
C. F. Bally	...	1000	1400	1405
Nestlé & Anglo-Swiss Cond. Mk. Co.	...	200	866	842
Entreprises Suisses S.A.	...	1000	1255	1260
Comp. de Nav. n. sur le Lac Léman	...	500	505	517
Linoleum A.G. Giubiasco	...	100	325	338
Maschinenfabrik Oerlikon	...	500	860	845

THE SKI DANCE.

When modern measures grow flat and stale
And the jaded dancing crowd
Recoil from the Charleston and the Yale
And voice their complaints aloud,
The terpsichorean kings devise
Some new and intricate prance
Which the foxtrot fans with the weary eyes
Will simply refuse to dance!

The latest step from the frozen Alps—
The Ski Dance frenzied and free—
Will arouse some apprehensive palps
In people who cannot ski!
They'll ask with terror, Will skis be bound
To the light fantastic toe
To bring the dancer down to the ground—
A ground that's harder than snow?

Will plunging skis bore a deadly track
Through dancers stabbed unaware?
Will the last position be on the back
With feet stuck up in the air?
Will jazz bands yodel?—Oh, dancers, dear,
Take heart, for your fears are false!
You know you'll dance for the rest of the year
To the foxtrot and the waltz!

—From the *Daily Mirror*.

"OUR GLORIOUS PAST."

(Translated from the *Almanacco Ticinese*.)

It was already known that the villages of the Ticino have been real seed-beds of renowned artists, especially during the period of the Renaissance. To confirm this there were, however, not many definite proofs which could withstand the criticisms of modern historical research.

However, thanks to the studies nearly always made by eminent foreigners, enthusiastic about our culture and the glories of our past, documents and publications come to light from day to day which prove once again how a modest and small population of about 20,000 inhabitants, grouped together in about a score of villages, in the valleys and around the lake of Lugano, with the borough of Lugano itself at the head, especially in the 17th century, was able to produce a veritable "stream of men" learned in all the branches of human knowledge and admired for their indomitable energy and daring. They spread our religious, artistic and scientific culture in Germany, Poland and nearly the whole of Northern Europe, occupying prominent positions in Abbeys, Church, Universities, Army and political affairs, and everywhere they left such a mark that the scholars are compelled to bow to the memory of those great citizens of ours.

The following is a literal translation of what Dr. Alexander Hajdeki wrote on this point in the "Berichte und Mitteilungen des Altertums-Vereines zu Wien," viz.:—

"It is really one of the most notable enigmas of history—or is it merely a caprice of Mother Earth—that a tiny strip of North-Italian country (comprising the neighbourhood of Lugano and the Val d'Intelvi) should have been able at one time to develop such an over-production of men of outstanding intelligence as to be able to provide and cover "half a Europe," as happened to the German-speaking nations and the Slav countries of the North, which were drawing almost exclusively from there for their needs in professors, politicians, medical men and artists of every description!..."

This short paragraph shows again the extraordinary work that our forefathers accomplished abroad, in those far off days, and the enthusiasm with which foreign writers acknowledge their deeds. It would really be a patriotic action if all the publications concerning our great fellow-citizens were acquired by the State and collected in the Cantonal Library in Lugano, to be available to students. The necessary funds could be raised by public subscription.

Unfortunately, in the Ticino, pages were written in times gone by which did not portray the truth, and our populations were depicted as slumbering for nearly three centuries in inactivity and black ignorance. However, modern historical research comes at last to sweep away all such legends and to place a crown of immortal glory on the head of those great forgotten ones.

To better exemplify what is said above we reproduce here a page of history concerning the family Verda of Gandria, taken from the work of Wastler, "Kunstleben am Hofe zu Graz," viz.:—

"The Verdas from Gandria.—This family, originating from Gandria, a village on the lake of Lugano, gave many outstanding men. Just in his "Review of Prussian Art," second volume, says that five artists from the family Verda went to Spain in 1509, led by a certain Michele Carbone from Scaria, Val d'Intelvi, in order to erect the Royal Castle of Calahorra at Granada. They were Magister and Egidius Verda from Gandria, Peter Verda, who was a sculptor in Genoa, and two other of his relatives, also sculptors, who had to prepare the capitals, arches and all other decorations and work in Carrara marble.

One G. P. Verda (brother of the Chancellor G. B. Verda, 1582-1649) was at the end of the

16th century at the service of the Duke of Brunswick as architect and Court Chamberlain. With him were other members of the same family. His brother Anthony erected in Graz, from 1555 to 1558, the front of the royal palace towards the Mur and worked for the fortifications and the university... For some time he was also at the service of the town of Kaerten. Mark Anthony Verda, a cousin of the above, worked from 1571 to 1591 as sculptor for the Mausoleum of Charles II. at Sekkau, and he and Vincenzo Verda were employed as engineers for the works of fortification of the town of Graz, from 1571 to 1591.

Another member of the family, Dr. G. B. Verda, was, in 1620, elected a member of the Austrian Parliament. Later on he became Geheimrat (Privy Councillor) and was made a Baron, with the title of Verdenberg-Grafenegg. Finally, in 1630, with other honours, he was raised to the position of Chancellor of the Austrian Empire and assumed the title of Count von Verdenberg-Namiest. He died in Vienna in 1649, and a sumptuous monument, rich in bronze figures, was raised to him in the church of St. Michael, where he was buried."

With the means his high position provided him, Verda desired to promote public education and founded popular schools and an academy in Gorizia.

It is strange, however, that at a time when the State was not spending a single farthing for public education our villages were producing men of such genius and culture that any praise is always below what they deserve.

CHOOSING THE MALE.

In a recent issue of the *S.O.* I read what was evidently intended to be some excellent advice to men readers on the subject of choosing a wife.

As a mere female, I should like to offer a few suggestions to those of my sex about to risk the "matrimonial dive."

Try to see him early in the morning when his hair has not undergone the refining influence of a brush, and his chin is reminiscent of a miniature porcupine.

Note his choice in pyjamas. If, for instance, having red hair, he dons a vivid salmon pink, think for a moment what effect this colour scheme will have on you in the early hours of the morning, especially if your digestion tends to be weak.

Have breakfast with him, and observe what chances you have against the newspaper. You will probably find that your main function is merely to replenish the empty cup, while he searches the columns to discover the winner of the 2.30.

Go walking with him, and note how he regards the more favoured of your sex. If his glance lingers in their direction before marriage, the habit will certainly develop with great rapidity afterwards.

Observe him dressing for dinner, and try to accustom your ear to the exotic choice of language when his favourite stud cannot be found or escapes his fingers to roll away and remain hidden. Listen to his polite remarks about the laundry when it has forgotten to return his favourite shirt, although a dozen similar specimens are submitted for his choice.

Be there when he opens a present from the female members of his family. He will be saying just the same about the ties you have spent a morning choosing for him, this time next year, although he is probably wearing an atrocity you have recently inflicted on him. Heroics don't last!

Invite him to dinner. If he pronounces your Charlotte Russe "good, but somewhat dry," suspect alcoholic tendencies and beware!

Play Bridge with him. If he simply smiles when you trump his trick, it is a bad sign. Such passivity will bore you a year hence. If, on the other hand, it takes both your opponents to hold him down, rejoice, for here is the cave man of your dreams.

Finally, introduce him to his prospective mother-in-law, and if he is truly charming to her, accept him, for you really have found the right "long suffering male." By that time, however, he will probably have such visions of matrimonial shackles that not even that "Spring feeling" will make him relinquish his bachelorhood, and you will find you must start your quest all over again!
G.A.N.

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