

# Notes & gleanings

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## NOTES &amp; GLEANINGS.

In the course of some unbiassed reflections entitled "Travel Notes" appearing in the *Queen* (March 4th) reference is made to the outlook of our hotel industry and the change which has taken place during the last few years in the character of its clientèle:—

"For many years before the war the Swiss, in their desire for numbers of tourists, made their country one of the cheapest in the world. In a sense they did not improve it, except probably financially. They handed it over to the multitude as a 'playground,' and throngs arrived from every part of Europe, if not from every part of the world, to see the wonders of the Alps. And they arrived in such numbers that all Switzerland was delighted; but Switzerland was not fashionable, with the exception of a few places here and there. Circumstances have changed since those days, and one hears a kind of lament that Switzerland has not nearly so many visitors now as in the years before the war. The prosperity of the country was judged by numbers in those days. To-day the numbers are absent, but there is no doubt whatever that certain resorts in the Alps have in the last two or three years put themselves on a level with the most fashionable resorts on the Continent, and there is every prospect that the Swiss resorts will appeal to many who formerly objected to them as being places for excursionists—cheap excursionists, too—and not for people who wished to take a holiday amid congenial social surroundings. The rate of exchange, of course, is bringing this condition about, because so many people think that Switzerland is out of the question for a holiday when they can only get 21fr. 80c. for 20s. in Switzerland, whereas they can get 52fr. in France. They do not realise that the 21fr. 80c. in Switzerland is practically the same as 52fr. in France. However, I do not think Switzerland is going to suffer in the long run through any misunderstandings about the rate of exchange. I rather think that Switzerland will be the gainer, and that more people of the well-to-do classes will be attracted there, not only for the winter sports season and for summer but for spring and autumn, for Switzerland is a country for the whole year, provided the right districts are chosen. If the Swiss will make a point of acting fairly and squarely—as they have always had the reputation of doing—they need not fear for the future. No doubt the present conditions are difficult but they are conditions which are making Switzerland a better country in many respects, not only for the visitor, but for the Swiss. Rumours of high prices have not done any harm to hôteliers in Monte Carlo; "excessive" charges have never ruined Deauville, and it is certain that the charges at the hotels de luxe in Switzerland will not have by any means a bad influence on the sort of clientèle that the Swiss like. Everybody, of course, knows that there are other than hotels de luxe."

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The recent appeal made by Sir Martin Conway for the re-establishment of a British Sanatorium in Switzerland has brought forth some criticism, which, however, must be read in the light of the fact that the writer is interested in a sanatorium in Scotland. Both the *Lancet* (Feb. 25th) and the *British Medical Journal* (March 4th) publish a communication from a medical man who maintains that "the alpine resorts for the treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis are very much over-rated and that patients would 'do just as well under treatment in a sanatorium in this 'country.'" He remembers two cases which, after having been returned from Davos as hopeless, were ostensibly cured in this country. We did not know that Davos offered an infallible cure, and the writer might just as well have stated that occasionally people insist on dying even at that place.

The progress made in Switzerland in fighting this scourge of the white race is freely admitted in the English press, articles appearing at more or less regular intervals, the most recent one dealing with the treatment of tuberculosis by heliotherapy. The *Medical Press* (Feb. 22nd) records the successful results obtained by Dr. Rollier, of

Leysin, who has established a farm colony in order to provide for the after-care of patients whose disease has been arrested, until health is properly consolidated.

\* \* \*

One of the novel ruses resorted to in consequence of trade restrictions is illustrated by the following little paragraph from *The Times Trade Supplement* (Feb. 25th):—

"As the Swiss import tariff is calculated on the gross weight, goods which are well packed—e.g., those goods coming from more distant countries such as Britain—have to pay more duty than goods from neighbouring countries such as Germany and France.

In view of the recent increase in Swiss import duties, German, French, and Italian importers find it profitable to have their merchandise sent to forwarding agents or branches in frontier towns on the other side of the Swiss boundary, and to import them practically unpacked. Under this system the Swiss importer who buys c.i.f. to his station has to pay less import duty than the Swiss importer who buys f.o.r. from the supplier's station."

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Questions were recently asked in the British Parliament with reference to the methods employed by the Dyestuffs Advisory Licensing Committee, and the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Stanley Baldwin) is reported as having stated that the reason for advising applicants for German dyes to apply to Swiss agents is in consequence of the assistance rendered by Swiss dye makers to the English textile industries during the war.

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