

Random notes

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excellent work done in Government and administration for generations by such cantons as the tri-lingual Grisons and the bi-lingual Valais and Fribourg. And just as the linguistic borders do not lie along cantonal frontiers, they do not coincide with denominational differences. If they did, the whole problem would be much more acute. It goes without saying that all four languages are represented in the press, while the generous recognition of linguistic minorities also extends to the radio; there are three German-speaking, two French-speaking and one Italian-speaking stations. It is to be hoped that their work may prove something of a mission to the world. This small, neutral country has proved that, given good will, understanding, welfare and loyalty are not only possible among people speaking different languages, but that those languages themselves mean an enrichment of life. Of that, Switzerland is a living example.

RANDOM NOTES

Strange rules and regulations

In the Canton of Wallis there still exists a regulation that men's underwear is not allowed to be hung on the same clothes-line as female garments, out of decency, of course. But this is harmless compared to a rule in Maryland in the Southern States of the U.S.A., where, when a young man pays six visits to the same girl he has to marry her; so he needs to watch his steps. Then, in Waterloo there exists a rule whereby hairdressers are not permitted to eat or chew garlic between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. (quite rightly so, too!). But in Chicago there is a rule making it compulsory that all cats have a bell around their necks so that birds do not cross their paths.

Women are Getting Stronger

Women are getting stronger, not in muscular strength, but in number. One hundred years ago Switzerland counted per thousand inhabitants 494 male and 506 female. After the last census it is approximated that there are 482 men to 528 women. The reason for this difference may lie in the fact that at present many female labourers have come from neighbouring countries, whereas a foreign male labourer finds it harder to enter Switzerland. The talk about the "weaker sex" is not always right, this time the women have the "upper hand."

Who Talks the Fastest?

It belongs to the good manners of the Basler and the Zuercher to tease one another about their fast talking. In the recently celebrated friendship week between the two cantons they must have had plenty of occasions to outdo one another. Yet it is proved that neither the Basler nor the

Zuercher are the fastest talkers. An investigation has shown that the French out-talk most of the other people. They manage 350 syllables per minute, then follow the Japanese with 310, the Germans with 250 and the English, who prefer to chat more at ease with 220 syllables. That even this is yet fast talking shows if you compare it with the speech of the Polynesians, who are satisfied with 50 syllables. This, however, does not absolutely mean a disadvantage if you consider how far we in Europe got with our fast talk.

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