

Here and there

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Dealing with the preservation of wood, S. E. Winbolt, in the *Teachers' World* (Aug. 9th) depicts antiquities, such as chariot wheels, pan pipes, mortised posts, etc., over 2,000 years old, which are being exhibited at the museums at Windisch and Neuchâtel.

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At a lecture delivered last week at the Rotary Club in Dublin it was stated that the electricity generated in Great Britain amounted to 60 units per head, whilst in Switzerland the figure reached 1,000 units per head.

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The Scotsman (Aug. 15th), in reporting on the International Prison Commission, whose first meeting since the war was held last month at Berne, gives a full and appreciative description of the Penitentiary Sanatorium of Witzwil, a large penal farm colony near the Lake of Neuchâtel:

"It began in a small way with the reclamation of peat land, which was formerly under water. Now they have about 2,500 acres of land reclaimed entirely by labour of the prisoners and vagrants in the colony, who now number about 350. The whole extent of ground has been equipped with excellent farm buildings, and roads have been made throughout; electric power is installed from one end to another, and at the time of our visit the land presented all the appearance of being highly cultivated, and was yielding rich crops. Very heavy grain crops were being harvested, and we saw groups of inmates working all over the estate, while others were employed at the farm, where the crops were being brought in in four-wheeled waggons, and threshed in a large barn by electric power.

A stock of over 200 milk cows is kept, besides a large number of young cattle. The whole expenses, including the expense of the buildings and maintenance, have been met by the profits derived from the sale of the agricultural produce.

The majority of the inmates are kept in separate cells or rooms, not unlike those in our own police stations, in which they spend the night and also have their meals. The new building now in course of erection is in many respects very similar to the new prison now being erected at Edinburgh. There are no walls outside the prison blocks, though at the present time a small wall enclosure is being built, with a new block within it for dangerous prisoners sentenced to closer confinement. Notwithstanding the fact that prisoners are employed all over this wide area of ground, the number of escapes is not large. Last year ten escaped, of whom seven were brought back. There is a system of telephones to the houses of the staff which are placed round the outside of the land, and this facilitates capture if an inmate runs away from his work-party. No escapes have taken place from the buildings. Certain selected inmates live in association in detached blocks, in some cases at a distance, under the care of officers living in the same building. These inmates are those who are personally selected by the Superintendent, and who are chosen to look after horses, cattle, etc., and whose hours are in consequence different and who are given greater freedom.

There are large workshops thoroughly equipped with up-to-date machinery. At the time of our visit a single man was operating a sawmill and handling very large timber, which in this country would have required several men. The smith's shop is fitted with power-driven hammers and other machinery; there is also a large leather shop, where boots and shoes are made, and also the saddlery required on the farm. Practically everything needed for the institution is made in the shops, and this employs a considerable number of inmates, but the larger proportion are employed on the farm, particularly during the summer months. During the winter more time is given to the education of the inmates.

The staff is in a proportion of one to every 5 or 6 inmates, but they are not limited to an eight-hour day, and consequently in summer work is carried on in the fields for long hours. In the winter prisoners are employed in draining the land, making roads, and other work of that kind.

This institution belongs to the Canton of Berne, for in Switzerland prisons are managed separately in each Canton, but by an arrangement prisoners are received at Witzwil from other Cantons. The Swiss are so satisfied with the working of this institution, which is under the management of M. Kellerhals, that a similar one has been started in another Canton.

This visit afforded members of the Commission an interesting opportunity to see the practical application of what has been attempted in other countries, particularly in America, for

the employment of prisoners upon the land. To the older members of the Commission it also afforded a very pleasant opportunity of meeting the former general secretary of the Commission, the Venerable Dr. Guillaume, of Geneva, now in his 91st year, who came over to help to entertain the members at the place, with the starting of which he had so much to do."

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The absence of possible Swiss masters at the International Chess Congress at the Central Hall is hardly a matter for regret, for their chances against the "Big Four" were negligible. Senor Capablanca was an easy first and left his English competitors far behind, the running-up being done by foreign talent. We believe there are a good many chess amateurs amongst our compatriots, and those engaged in the City will rejoice that the English Ladies' Chess Championship has been won by Miss Price, the genial and popular manageress of the "Gambit," Ltd., 3, Budge Row, E.C.4, who received a rousing ovation on returning to the chess rooms last Monday.

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We referred in our last issue to Mr. John Knittel's play, which will be produced on September 12th at the Apollo Theatre, with Maurice Moscovitch in the leading rôle. The scene of the play, which is named "The Torch" (not "Arnold von Winkelried," as we previously stated) is laid in Sempach, and the action centres in a modern and imaginary family of Winkelried.

HERE AND THERE.

By J. H. Corthesy.

The stranger who stopped, struck with admiration, before the two sentries in front of the Horse Guards in Whitehall, and later asked a passing boy if they "belonged to a circus," provides one example of the comical conclusions often drawn by the uninitiated foreigner, and it is a wonder the stranger did not want to know if they were "for sale." Rich American citizens are always ready to lay out their dollars for anything of an ancient origin or a rare nature. Mark Twain's compatriots possess also remarkable ways of expressing themselves. The Grimsby fish merchant who received a letter from the U.S.A. with the stamp fixed with a pin and the flat of the envelope similarly attached, got the explanation: "This country is so dry, I can't wet the gum!" But young America is, above all, out for "thrills" and novel sensations. "Your country looked like one big, beautiful garden dotted with snowballs, which must have been sheep. We have nothing like it in the U.S.A." This from a party of thirty-two Dakota college girls who crossed the "herring pond" on an educational tour through Europe and landed at Croydon. The girls had only one complaint, that "there were not more thrills and shakes" during their air trip from Le Bourget aerodrome, Paris.

Not much more than four years ago things might have been different, and perhaps the idea that the air-route is not far from the zone where the world's most terrific orgy of blood was raging so recently, fired the young imaginations with thoughts of the "thrills" that were. Of sudden "shakes" there were none. The whizzing sound of a passing projectile came not to tell them they had just escaped instant death or being crippled for life. For are we not "at peace"?

* * *

The American girls are not alone in wanting "thrills and shakes"; the remaining part of the world is of a very like mental disposition. The whole world cries for peace, but it seems at the same time to revel in the element of

danger. This element is ever present. Its causes are to be found at every turn of the road. A most distinct assertion of coming troubles is heard from Sofia. The Bulgarian Premier, M. Stamboliski, informs us of a "general 'mix-up' before long. Russia is persistently preparing it." "The Soviets," he says, "will not abandon us. We shall plunge into the mix-up too, and something is sure to come out of it!"

On this side of Europe, happily, the situation appears to present a more reassuring aspect. Some newspapers go so far as to predict a brighter financial outlook for Great Britain, as the rich markets of the Empire are thrown open to the motherland, and slump losses are made good.

It is to be hoped that nothing untoward will come in the way to hinder progress towards recovery, and that all danger rumours will prove baseless.

One thing, we know, is that all the roads of this world are paved with good intentions.

* * *

The best intentions are like the rays of light striking a prism. As they do so they get decomposed, diverted and changed into all the prismatic colours. Thus the best intentions or thoughts are broken up on meeting some material object.

The real difficulty lies in producing the contrary effect, that is, to unite the diverse thoughts for the accomplishment of one single purpose, and when that purpose aims at reaching a solid basis for a universal peace, one can only wish the problem to reach a practical solution.

This difficulty was realized the other day by the Prime Ministers who met in London to settle the conditions for Germany's moratorium, and who had to abandon their task of producing the ray of light that was to help Europe to see its own way through the darkness.

"Man always desires to help his fellow man, and is always helping his fellow man, passing on God's ideas which give him joy and happiness," says Mr. F. L. Rawson in the *exposé* of his new monthly *The Bulletin*, which is about to be published.

A fine thought applied as an antidote to, or a neutralization of, mental waves for evil. Were all men imbued with such intentions, all worldly troubles would soon vanish. It is like M. Coué's "We are getting better and better," the mental effect of which cannot be denied.

When Mr. Rawson says, "there is no mortal mind," he is telling a great truth, because the mind, in order to create the potentiality of the force of "our existence," must be of the very opposite nature and properties of matter. Therefore, if matter be possessed of the property of being transformed from one state into another, mind must be, on the contrary, unalterable. Is it not obvious that, if there were no mind, there would be no thinking men, and that the mind must be the primary cause of man's existence, and that in man mind erected its own demonstrative agent? Likewise may one ask: "Which one was made to fit the conditions of the other—the electric motor, or electricity?"

* * *

Never mind if one part of the people of the world agonises so long as some other people can shine—no doubt with the best of intentions. Really, the "shiners" are more entitled to pity than blame. They cannot even attend to themselves. There is a grand concentration of them this week—*la grande semaine*—at Deauville. Deauville used to be a small seaside resort and has become the most fashionable meeting place, because Deauville caters for every pleasure, and, says the *Weekly Dispatch*:—

"It is a place for freak fashions: The writer has seen staid old men walking with Persian cats on a lead along the

promenade. Women never wear stockings either on the beach or in the casino. They bathe in the sea clad in striped yellow and black costumes, looking like so many zebras; most of the women wear hand-embroidered bathing caps of vivid colours. Bathers come down to the beach in huge cars; sometimes they ride to the dressing-rooms on horseback.

"Most parties are accompanied by Alsatian wolfhounds—the great vogue of the Continent just now—while a well-known leader of society has taught her pet monkey to ride on the back of one of her hounds as she goes to the beach for her morning bathe.

"Wealth shouts at you on every hand. It seems parsimonious to question bills. The writer once saw a rich American drop five 100-franc "chips" (£10) to the floor. It is expressly forbidden to stoop to retrieve fallen money yourself, and a velvet-coated valet rushed forward for the five blue pieces. He tendered them on a salver, but the American refused to take them.

"Another rich young ruler used to buy a Corona cigar worth 12 francs with a 100-franc "chip" every evening and direct the bar tender to keep the change."

But Deauville is not the spot where millionaires and others display before the eyes of the world the evidence of their opulence:—

"Jewelled gowns introduced to London by the wives of American millionaires are the envy and talk of all the English-women who have seen them. Their cost and beauty are subjects of discussion everywhere," says the "Daily Express."

"An unjewelled costume by a Parisian dictator of women's fashions may easily cost £1,000, but add to that a wealth of real jewels as part of the dress ornamentation, and the cost of the gown runs into staggering figures.

"A statuesque blonde had diamonds and platinum massed on her costume of white, with centre stones several carats in weight, and another woman wore a pearl-decorated gown. Both women, in addition, wore priceless necklaces, bracelets and rings.

"If the jewels are real," said a woman dress expert, "those costumes must represent £100,000."

"I can assure you," said the husband of one of the women, "that the jewels are not only real; but of the finest quality."

But are these rich people really happy? They may believe so, but I don't think so. One would have to read *les dessous* to know the truth. The man—rich or poor—who has done a hard day's work alone can feel what *real* happiness is.

THE EDITOR'S LETTER BAG.

B. H.—We are obliged for P.O. Your previous subscription lapsed with No. 60 (29th July) and your present remittance will carry you to No. 86 (six months).

L. S.—Sorry to hear that Dame Fortune has temporarily deserted you; we will keep your name on the mailing list for the next six months and hope that better times are in store for you.

AGENT wanted by large Swiss Exporters of Gruyère cheese; must be fully conversant with the English market; firm's representative will be in London early in September.—Reply to "Gruyère," c/o. *Swiss Observer*, 21, Garlick Hill, E.C. 4. 64-5.

REQUIRED, well-educated Englishwoman, with knowledge of French and German, for translating into English, to assist in editorial work.—Apply, by letter, with full particulars, to "Publisher," *Swiss Observer*, 21, Garlick Hill, E.C. 4.

MRS. JOHN BRENTINI requires the services of a reliable COOK-HOUSEKEEPER with good references.—Apply personally at 201, Willesden Lane, N.W. 6, after-noon about 5 p.m.

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