

# Notes and gleanings

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ponne tant qu'il peut, le bateau va juste où il voulait. Il alla vers une pierre plate; alors tout d'un coup il lâche les rames et saute sur la pierre en donnant un bon coup de pied au bateau et dit: Maintenant, zut, je me fiche de vous.

Alors il regarda le bateau qui dansait sur l'eau et il se tordait les côtes de rire. Mais le bateau nalla pas au fond du lac, il alla au bord. Guillaume Tell se dit: On va voir, faut que je l'aie. Il court se caché derrière un sapin pour voir passé Kessler, quand il le voit venir il ne peut pas tenir, la rage le prend, il lève son fusil et lui envoie un prunceau dans le cœur.

Après cela il a filé en Hollande pour pas être pris par les gendarmes. Là sa femme est morte, mais il s'est tout de suite remarié avec une autre plus jeune. (Courrier de la Glâne.)

**Un volontaire étranger.**— Sous ce titre "La Bulgarie," organe paraissant à Sofia public l'amusant entrefilet suivant:

Dans les premiers jours de la révolte, un voyageur suisse, de passage dans le pays, se voyait subitement forcé à descendre du train sur la route Constantinople-Sofia. Il y avait déraillement, occasionné par les communistes ameutés. Il faisait nuit noire: des balles sifflaient d'ici de là sur les wagons. Les voyageurs prirent vite la fuite. Hans Hulmann, le voyageur étranger, fit comme les autres et put arriver dans la plus proche ville, à Tchirpan, où la patrouille militaire aux aguets l'arrêta, puis constatant son identité, le laissa libre.

Tres ennuyé, furieux de sa mésaventure, le voyageur suisse demanda à se venger des communistes. Il offrit aux autorités militaires de s'enrôler comme volontaire dans les rangs des miliciens bulgares. On refusa ses services.

— Vous êtes étranger, lui répondit-on. Si l'on vous tuait dans le combat, c'est le gouvernement bulgare qui serait responsable de votre mort devant le gouvernement suisse.

— Qu'à cela ne tiennent! répliqua Hans Hulmann.

Et il donna une déclaration écrite certifiant que c'est sur sa demande expresse qu'il fut autorisé à aller combattre les communistes. On l'agréa, enfin; et il se battit avec les autres, en uniforme de soldat bulgare. Quand sa compagnie fut de retour à Tchirpan, il trouva un accueil enthousiaste de la part de la population qui lui ménagea plus tard un départ solennel. Hans Hulmann a été proposé, en outre, pour la médaille militaire qui, nous l'espérons bien, lui sera accordée.

Ainsi, voilà la République helvétique mêlée à la répression anticommuniste dans notre pays, d'une façon indirecte, par la faute d'un voyageur suisse. Elle fut sans le savoir notre alliée de quelques jours. En dévoilant ce fait, demeuré ignoré de la presse voisine, nous craignons fort de susciter par là un incident diplomatique. Nous craignons de susciter à la République des difficultés de la part des commissaires de Moscou qui, en leur qualité de protecteurs des communistes en général, peuvent lui demander des explications sur le cas et recourir même à des représailles. (Gazette de Lausanne.)

## NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By "KYBURG."

**The World Crisis, 1915 (Winston S. Churchill, p. 18).**

"To the convulsions of the struggle must succeed the impotent turmoil of the aftermath. Noble hopes, high comradeship and glorious daring were in every nation to lead only to disappointment, disillusion and prostration. The sufferings and impoverishment of peoples might arrest their warfare, the collapse of the defeated might still the cannonade, but their hatreds continue unappeased, and their quarrels are still unsettled. The most complete victory ever gained in arms has failed to solve the European problem or remove the dangers which produced the war."

I could hardly have found a better paragraph with which to start this week's Notes and Gleanings. Beautiful in style, and, as it seems to me, overwhelmingly sinister in effect on any thinking European mind, the famous author, although that probably was not uppermost in his mind when he penned the above lines; comes out as a most important "crown-witness" for the League of Nations.

How well I also remember Viscount Grey's famous speech on the occasion of the opening meeting of the League of Nations Union at the Albert Hall some years ago, when he stated, as he has done several times since, that the dark forces, which are for ever fishing in the troubled waters of secret diplomacy, are at work again, busily plotting new wars!

Meanwhile it becomes daily more and more evident that Europe's and with it the world's salvation can only come through the League of Nations. It becomes more and more evident, too, that the League and Christianity must stand or fall together. It is, indeed, unthinkable that Christianity would survive another war of the magnitude of the last one. It is also unthinkable that the League of Nations could become a vital international force without the ardent help of all true Christians, by which I do not only mean those who go regularly to Church or Chapel, but all those, be they labelled Christians, Buddhists, or anything else, who believe that the future of the human race can only be assured by the application in practice of the

brotherly love taught by Christ and other great Leaders.

Love will have to rule the world, and mere materialistic creeds, à la Mr. H. G. Wells, who, like the Kaiser, Trotsky, and the present Ruler of France, believes in Force alone, will have to disappear. Political *faits accomplis*, as the one which has been sprung upon our country by its physically great neighbour, should and must have no existence in future dealings between peoples. I still hope that a solution, agreeable to both countries, may be found, without its being necessary for Switzerland to invoke the aid of the League. I am glad, however, to find that our Government is evidently not weakening, and is prepared to go to the League, if France persists in her present mode of procedure. I quote from the *Manchester Guardian* (Oct. 27):—

Great surprise is expressed that M. Poincaré's answer to Switzerland on the "free zones" dispute contains no reference to Switzerland's proposal to submit the juridical question to the Court of International Justice. Some people in Switzerland are inclined to regard this French silence as a sign that M. Poincaré hesitates to give a definite refusal, but well-informed quarters do not share this optimism. M. Poincaré, who previously received the Swiss Minister, categorically refused any idea of arbitration. Therefore, well-informed quarters believe M. Poincaré only remains silent on this point because he is afraid to raise too much opposition amongst the French themselves should he openly refuse to submit the dispute to the Hague Court.

The Swiss Federal Council will determine the definite text of the answer to France, but Bern reports are unanimous that the Government will remain firm and repeat its refusal to enter into negotiations, unless M. Poincaré will suspend the execution of the one-sided decision to suppress the "free zones" until negotiations are concluded. Most probably, too, the Federal Council will insist again on submission of the juridical dispute to the Court of International Justice, and demand a definite "Yes" or "No" from France.

If France refuses, the Swiss Government will probably convoke an extraordinary session of Parliament and demand its approval to submit the dispute to the League Council. Such a decision might be of immense importance in regard to the relations between the League and Switzerland. If the Council should refuse to deal with the dispute—as France possibly will propose—it is almost certain that the Swiss opponents of the League will initiate a movement to withdraw, and the result of such initiative might be disastrous.

A valued reader is kind enough to send me an article from *La Croix de la Haute Savoie* on the question of whether Switzerland was against the "hospitalisation des blessés Français en Savoie." The writer of the article has a truly funny notion of the duties and rights of a Neutral State in war time, and my reader friend will surely agree with me that it would be too much honour for the paper in question if "Kyburg" replied seriously and at length. I can only say that, assuming the writer is correct in stating that Switzerland stipulated that French wounded, sent to hospitals in Savoie, should be treated as if they were interned in Swiss hospitals, the Swiss authorities were so obviously in their right and doing their duty as a Neutral State that any comment seems superfluous. People who will not understand such duties are beyond the gentle persuasive force of mere argument! Thanks all the same, Father O. I hope you will agree with my view of the matter.

It always gives me a sweet pleasure to read something about the natural beauties, often overlooked, of our Alpine flora. What could be more wonderful, really, than the wealth of tiny, multi-coloured flowers, wonderfully scented very often, maintaining a precarious existence quite close to some mighty glacier? On the Eiger-Gletscher, some years ago, I had one foot on the ice, and the other on a soft carpet made by a multitude of such beautiful plants. I find the following in the *Leyton Express* (Oct. 27th):—

### Flowers and Vegetation in Switzerland.

The mountainous country of the Grisons in Switzerland is overspread with a carpet of vegetation of unusual richness and variety. This is particularly so around Klosters, a charming centre from which a splendid view of the Silvretta glacier is obtainable. Owing to the wide difference in altitude, growth, not unnaturally, is shaped defined according to height above sea level, and may, in fact, be divided into four distinct classes—the cultural, the forest, the alpine and that of the snow regions.

While in the valleys the chestnut, the beech and the pine flourish luxuriantly amidst anemones and the golden flowers of the broom, in the Praigau one may behold the Alpine forest in its wild native state and at its maximum development. Here smooth-trunked giant spruce of the unexampled height of 200 feet grow to the number of 350 to the acre. The stone pine, a Siberian mountain tree, and the larch approach nearest to the snow line. Their summits are battered and torn by wind and snow pressure, frost and lightning, and they stretch out their skeleton branches plaintively to the heavens.

Amid the floral splendour of the Alpine region are to be found the crocus, the golden-haired anemone with its redish bells, deep blue gentianellas, long-spurred pansies and numerous other blooms with fern-like foliage. Aromatic clover scents the air, and campanulas thrive in profusion—a truly wonderful wealth of flowers.

Beyond the snow-line no less than 224 species of plants have been enumerated. Nine of them occur above a height of 10,800 feet and two at an altitude of even 11,480 feet.

Our Geneva compatriots will be pleased, political arguments notwithstanding, to read the following (*Daily Express*, 30th Oct.):—

### Hindu Millionaire's Observatory on a Mountain.

An observatory, which will be the largest in the world, is to be constructed on Mont Salève, a peak 4,430 feet high, above Geneva.

The observatory is the long-prepared work of a Hindu millionaire, engineer and scientist, Mr. Assan Dina, and his American wife, formerly Miss Mary Wallace-Shillito, of Cincinnati, and it will be their gift to the French nation. The building, the instruments and installations will cost £1,250,000.

The Salève has been chosen as the future site of the observatory because it is an isolated peak with an extremely clear and pure atmosphere, permitting observations of the sky during the greater part of the year. The Mont Blanc range on the east and the Jura Alps on the west attract the clouds and air currents from the North Pole, leaving the Salève "untouched."

Further, the Salève is comparatively central, being eleven hours from Paris, four from Lyons, and one hour from Annecy or Geneva by railway. A new funicular line is planned to shorten these distances, while a road from Annecy and Cruseille to the summit is now under construction to permit access to the observatory all the year round.

If this road is under snow, a caterpillar motor-car will be employed, while an aeroplane will assure the daily service of information. A powerful wireless station will be erected, which will be in constant touch with similar stations throughout the world, to report atmospheric conditions and changes.

The most important installation, however, will be the enormous telescope, which has a diameter of 105 inches—five inches more than that of Mount Wilson, U.S.A.—and several smaller telescopes of from twenty to sixty inches in diameter.

Mr. Dina, who is personally supervising every detail of the work, hopes to complete this grandiose scheme within five years, or even less. Mr. and Mrs. Dina, who are great travellers and have made tours of the world several times, live in a beautiful château at Cruseille.

And I would add, the whole civilised world will be grateful to this Indian gentleman and his American wife for the wonderful imagination which led them to conceive of such a gift to France. We know far too little of the Universe, and any help given to the study of the heavenly bodies is more than welcome. I always think that, if we thought a little bit more of the tremendous Universe and thereby remembered our own insignificance a little more, too, we would be more amenable to sweet reason, we would be more inclined to love each other, instead of mistrusting and hating each other! We would feel more than we do that our life on Earth must necessarily only be a wee tiny stage in the evolution of the spirit or soul towards an end which we cannot conceive, but which must be in accordance with the wonderfully well regulated scheme by which the whole Universe seems to proceed towards its appointed goal. I do not believe for a moment that the veil will be lifted to any great extent by human, i.e., earthly beings, but I also am convinced that it is our duty to probe, to try, to study and to seek the Truth, even if its attainment finally means Death, which, I believe, is equivalent with "waking up." Therefore, congratulations for the splendid gift, not to France alone, but to all mankind!

And now let us come down to very "earthly" considerations again, and read in the *Westminster Gazette* (27th Oct.):—

### Training for Domestic Life.

A Bill has been drafted in Switzerland to make domestic training compulsory amongst all classes of girlhood under twenty years of age. It is a bold suggestion that each girl, no matter what her station in life, should have to complete a year's domestic training before she reaches womanhood.

The Swiss authorities believe that this Bill will solve the domestic inefficiency problem, and fit girls to be good wives and mothers, and if they should remain unmarried, they will be more useful members of society.

This compulsory training will not begin until the girl has completed her elementary education, and then she must go regularly to a public housewifery school, as a daily pupil if her parents can afford to keep her at home, and if they are too poor to do this, she must live in the school and as far as possible pay for her board and lodging by helping, out of school hours, with the domestic work of the institution.

Housewifery in all its many branches will be taught by experts. Old methods are to be scrapped, and the way to manage homes efficiently, economically and with artistic pride is the aim of the promoters of the proposed Bill. No branch of successful home-making is neglected.

Apart from the elementary side of home management there will be lessons in how to buy domestic necessities economically and according to their food values, how to make the best use of berries and herbs, in preserves and jams, and how to cater for the tiniest needs of every class of individual, from the merest babe to the strongest navy.

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