

Notes and gleanings

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NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

Sweet Sorrow.

There are many experiences and sensations which we are allowed to taste during our earthly pilgrimage, but there is hardly another so sweet and at the same time so bitter as that exquisite pain one feels when parting from one's beloved! And that sweet sorrow, that exquisitely fine and delicate pain, that tugging at one's heart-strings, that last wistful look, all that is one of the most wonderful emotions a man can experience, and that experience has once again been the lot of Kyburg, when, after an all too short stay in Switzerland, he bade "au revoir" to all that, to him, is "D'Schwyz."

It was somewhat of a "coming down to earth" again when, on my return back to the office, I found the weekly *Swiss Observer* task waiting for me and it is quite a different thing to write about Switzerland, from being there!

However, we will proceed and see what the British Press has discovered meanwhile. I find, in the "*Glasgow Evening Times*" 15th inst., an article entitled

The Swiss Movement

and, although it deals more with Germany than with Switzerland, I publish it here, because some of our readers of the male sex may be reminded of their own "Kegel-Club" tours in times gone by!

Prior to journeying to Switzerland I wrote to the offices of the Youth Movement in that country, the address of which is Bund Schweizerischer, Jugendherbergen, Geschäftsstelle, Zurich, Seilergraben 1, Switzerland.

The reply I received reads as follows:—

"We are pleased to send you with the same post our list of the Jugendherbergen in Switzerland (Schweizer Jugendherbergenverzeichnis), where you will find every detail about the movement and about every lodging.

"You are allowed to visit our hostels and lodgings, if you are not more than 25 years old or if you are travelling with a group of boys and serve them as their chief.

"In order to use our hostels you and your companions have to book one of our cards of identity. We would be pleased to make them out for you. You only have to give us the name, address, birth date, and profession of every person participating in the party."

Accompanying the letter were two booklets, a map, and a list of walking tours. The year book (Jugendherbergen Verzeichnis) contains particulars of all the hostels that exist in Switzerland.

Each hostel is numbered in the book and corresponds with the number given on the map and so facilitating finding the required particulars. There are not less than 170 hostels spread throughout the three cantons covering all the popular routes.

The particulars given under each hostel include such items as number of bed places for boys and girls, whether beds or pallets are stuffed with straw provided, and particulars of rooms for cooking and dining and washing.

The map is particularly valuable, as by its aid you can work out your complete tour. It is not necessary to read German to understand the map, and, having worked out your route, you can then call upon the aid of some German-speaking friend to help you out.

If you are a member of the German-speaking rambling club in the city you will have no difficulty here.

The list of organised walking tours is very attractive and helpful. On the list sent to me there are details of 16 tours, and in each case the names of the places visited are given. Thus from the list you can trace out your route on the map and then, with the aid of literature from the Swiss Federal Railway office in London you can obtain an impression of the scenery.

In each case it gives the number of days required for the tour and the cost. Two examples are picked at random from the list:—

1.—Flüelen (head of Lake Lucerne)—Surenepass, Engelberg, Titlis, Innerkirchen, Big and Little Scheidegg, Mürren, Seftan, Furggel, Kiental, Osschenensee, Kandersteg, (approximately £1).

2.—Schwander, Elm, Panixerpass, Valsertal, Feorasa, Aners, Porcellina, Maloja, St. Moritz, Filisur, Davos, Chur. Time, 11 days. Cost, 25 francs.

Coming from Czechoslovakia to Switzerland my original intention was to visit the head office of the Swiss Youth Movement, but the information given in the literature sent me appeared so complete that I decided to cut out my visit to Zurich and get on with my tramping.

En route I had called at Stuttgart—the New York of Europe—and there I became mixed up with a skittle club.

At our hotel over dinner I noticed rather a jolly crowd dining together. They seemed to me at first to be a party of old school chums gathered for a reunion. I was wrong in this

assumption, however, as I learnt that they were a skittle club from Emmerich in Westfalen. Later on in the evening I adjourned to a café for my evening coffee to find my skittle friends already installed. At this early hour of the night (10 p.m.) they had only emptied about six litre bottles of Rhein wine, but when I left a little before midnight they had ordered 15 litre bottles.

During this time they had amused themselves between drinks with dancing and singing. In this latter capacity the band assisted (or shall I say abetted) by playing Westfalen folk songs that seemed to rouse the skittlers tremendously. Each and every one as soon as the band struck up struggled to an upright position and stood on the chair.

Then came the song, which finished with a glorious crescendo of sound something like a shell exploding. And, of course, the grand finale came with numerous "Hochs" and drinking of more wine.

As I say, I went back to my hotel a little before midnight, and in the middle of the night was awakened by the revellers' return. I looked at my watch—2.30 a.m.—and calculated how many empty bottles they had left behind. If they emptied 15 bottles between 10 and 12 midnight how many went between 12 midnight and 2.30 a.m.?

They came home with an accordion player giving them that sentimental song beloved of Germans, "Muss i Denn" (something like our Auld Lang Syne).

They blundered upstairs, and so to bed—and peace fell upon the house. Next morning each of the revellers pulled himself up to the first landing by the aid of the door handle.

The following day we were shown around the town by one of our German friends, and at night, over dinner, we enjoyed watching him order and eat his dinner.

We were content with omelette, but he ordered something more elaborate. When the dish came it contained two white liver sausages, one big fat blob of a black pudding, saurkraut, and potatoes.

The first act was to cut open and disembowel each sausage and to mix up the whole lot together. Sausage, saurkraut and spuds. Oh, what a mixture and what a mess! But he enjoyed it, and that was the main thing.

Stuttgart is a town of wonderful buildings, but the story of this must wait until I have taken you over the St. Gotthard pass—a grand experience.

Switzerland's Electric Railways.

One of the wonders of Switzerland at the present time is the electrically driven railways, and the "*Christian Science Monitor*" of 30th August writes as follows:

The tourists who are flocking to the thousand beauty spots of Switzerland this summer are finding arrangements perfect for their comfort and pleasure. The train service is better than ever this summer and electrification is found now on all the important lines and many of the branch routes.

The powerful motors which draw the international trains through Switzerland are manufactured by the famed Schweizerische Lokomotiv und Maschinenfabrik Aktiengesellschaft of Winterthur, whose products are now to be found in every part of the world, and they are considered to mark the highest point of efficiency yet achieved in electrical locomotives. Their capacity is amazing. No matter how heavy the trains, sometimes of 15 large carriages laden with tourists bound to and from all of Europe, the long and steep grades are negotiated with perfect ease, and after a station tarry the train is under full way again in a few seconds as contrasted to the laborious getting up speed of the steam locomotive.

Two carriages or 20, it is all the same to these masterpieces of machine construction. Moreover, the elimination of all dust and cinders permits open windows at all times and the passage of the Simplon and Gotthard tunnels in summer is no longer an ordeal. Immaculate cleanliness in all things is, of course, a synonym of the very word "Swiss," and this extends to all trains and railway stations, even to the very railway line itself, always rock ballasted and often lined with flower beds.

Travel in glorious Switzerland is more reasonable than in most other countries—it might reasonably be said to be worth a great deal more. Second class by train, giving practically the same degree of comfort as the English first class or the American Pullman, costs about the equivalent of the ordinary day coach tariff in the United States. Third class, having hard seats but clean airy cars, never overcrowded, is much cheaper. As in Germany, overcrowding is not permitted, and there is always plenty of room in each class. There is no jolting and since the road bed is like those in Germany and in England, the well-built carriages ride with absolute smoothness.

An unrivalled experience in Switzerland is a trip by "post-auto" over the Furka and

Grimsel passes, or perhaps the St. Bernard. These great motors, Swiss constructed, are of the finest type yet contrived. They carry 17 passengers, and there is a wide, deeply upholstered armchair for each. They are open at the top, so that an unobstructed view may be obtained of the magnificent scenery. A glass windshield runs all the way around the car and it is possible to spread a top in case of rain. The character of the mountain passes mentioned requires high power in a car, immediate response to the demand on its machinery and absolute dependability, to say nothing of the highest skill in the driver. All these are provided on the Swiss mountain routes, which mount to more than 8,000 feet in several cases. The Furka-Grimsel trip may now be made without change at Gletsch, as formerly, requiring less than five hours with its tarry at the stupendous Rhone Glacier, five hours of such mountain scenery as, with anything like the same degree of accessibility, cannot be matched the world over.

Switzerland, of course, is leading among the various countries as regards electric traction and "*The Star*" of Sept. 16th, writes:

Switzerland now has the greatest mileage of electrified railway lines on the European continent, the mileage in operation extending for 1,040 miles, which will be raised to 1,340 miles when present schemes are completed, says the British United Press. Italy comes second with 1,015 miles of electrified line.

Electrification was given a considerable impetus by the experience of Italy and Switzerland during the war, when it was realised that countries with no local coal supply were in danger of having their railway systems paralysed by lack of coal.

Water power generates electricity for both Swiss and Italian electrified systems. Germany occupies third place on the list with 973 miles of electrified line. Austria has 365 miles, France 305 miles, and Norway 75 miles.

The Southern Railway operates the biggest mileage of electrified line in Britain, the system being 800 miles long.

Alpine Research Station.

The Observer, 14th inst.:

Work is going on well at the Alpine Research Station on the Jungfrauoch, and the building will be opened next spring.

The first idea of founding the institute came from the late Herr Guyer-Zeller, the builder of the Jungfrau Railway. He also provided the first contribution to the building fund, which was later on increased by his son, Herr Gebhart A. Guyer. The great scientific societies of various European countries also contributed to the fund.

The representatives of these organisations have just met at Berne to celebrate the official foundation of the institute, which is to be conducted as an international foundation open to scientists of every nationality. Other nations will be invited to become members and to pay



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an entrance fee of £2,000. The Swiss Government has offered a yearly contribution of £400 for the upkeep of the building, instruments, etc., the Canton of Berne grants exemption from taxes, and the Jungfrau Railway will grant a number of facilities.

The purpose of the institute is research work on conditions in the upper reaches of the atmosphere. One of the chief lines will be meteorology, for which it is admirably situated, being high up in the clouds and yet in immediate touch with all the lowland meteorological stations. The Swiss Alpine Club has offered a special donation for this branch, which will be lodged in a pavilion of its own on the top of the so-called Sphinx Rock. There will be other laboratories for astronomy, which will greatly profit from the clearness of the air prevailing at those altitudes, and for physics, optics, zoology, and botany.

At the banquet after the formal act of foundation, the British Ambassador, Mr. Claude Russell, made a speech in which he emphasised the old and intimate collaboration between England and Switzerland in "alpinism," and to the large amount of pioneering work done by Englishmen.

Alpine Hut Re-opened.

While it is easy travelling up mountains by railway, it is still much better, for those who can do so, to walk and climb up them and for those who go in for mountaineering in earnest the Alpine Huts are, as we all know, a great boon. Every year new ones are being built, old ones re-built, in short, the Alpine Clubs are doing their utmost to ensure safe and comfortable lodgings for those who have to spend their nights in high and lonely altitudes. "The Times" 17th Sept.:

The Betemps Hut, above Zermatt, which has been rebuilt and slightly enlarged, was yesterday officially reopened.

The hut, which holds about 45 persons, stands at a height of 9,190ft., at the foot of Monte Rosa. The old wooden hut has been completely surrounded with a stone wall, and the interior has been improved and fitted with stoves so that the hut may now be used in winter by skiers. Yesterday morning, in the presence of members of the Swiss Alpine Club, Canon Marietan of the St. Bernard Order, said Mass in front of the hut, and the building was then blessed.

It is, perhaps, fitting that the above little bit of information should be accompanied by the following, from the "People's Journal" of 13th inst., called:

The Wonders of the World.

I have just been reading the account of the latest disaster in tropical lands—the hurricane which has devastated Santo Domingo.

I have never been there, but I have heard wonderful accounts of its beauty from those who have visited its glowing, sunlit shores.

But apparently it is not so safe as our own grey little island, against whose climate we are perpetually girding.

Perhaps it is that we get more news, and that it comes to hand now with lightning rapidity, but it does seem to me sometimes that there are a great many strange things happening all over the world—vagaries of climate, thunders and lightnings, floods, earthquakes, and cyclones—the kind of thing which makes a man feel his own helplessness, and against which even the most wonderful devices of ever-advancing science cannot safeguard him.

And even in cold latitudes, where the eternal beauty and silence of the snow lingers and reigns supreme, there is also danger. This was illustrated in a striking manner by the finding of the skeletons of the Andree expedition to the North Pole after a search and oblivion of over thirty years.

In Switzerland and other countries, where there is mountain-climbing of the most testing and difficult kind, danger walks hand in hand with beauty. Yet there never is any lack of people ready and willing to face these dangers, and who seem to feel that the peril of the adventure adds to its charm. Human nature has great courage—I came to that conclusion long ago. So far as physical courage is concerned, it was brought home to me many years ago when I visited Vesuvius just after a great outbreak of its hidden forces which had wrought havoc for miles around its base.

The peasants were coming back quietly and patiently to the ruins of their homes to start all over again, planting their olives and their grapes on the scarred and devastated slopes of the mountain.

I felt a deep admiration for them then, and I often feel it now when I think of them. No doubt the inhabitants of Santo Domingo, as soon as they have been succoured and relieved of the immediate hardship which must follow in the track of this upheaval, will start at once reconstructing their homes. It gives one a strange thrill to read of hundreds of houses just being lifted bodily and carried off on the wings of the storm, so to speak. A fearsome and awesome experience, which once more

brings home to us the superior power of the natural forces, which, out of control, can so disturb and destroy.

Yes, there is a lot of courage in human nature, both in the material and the spiritual world.

When I read the story of Santo Domingo I recalled the bad thunderstorms we had not so long ago, and the amount of talk and grumbling there was about it. Why, in comparison with the things which happen in other parts of the world, and which the newspapers faithfully record to us every day, our little war in the air was just nothing at all.

Of course, there is a good deal in familiarity with danger. It takes the edge away from fear, so to speak. Sometimes we are advised to live dangerously, though I never quite know what that phrase means. Perhaps it means that it is better to face things, and never seek to evade or escape them lest we get too soft and supine.

Those who live very sheltered lives and are safeguarded from most of the hazards of life are not, as a rule, strong characters. They lose grit and go about looking for and expecting shelter. And they get it, too. But the big jobs of the world are not done by people of that kind. It is those who are willing to take risks who are the pioneers, the discoverers, and achievers in this wonderful world of ours.

It is a wonderful world. The older I grow the more I am made aware of it. Very few of us see many of its wonders, about which books are written and sometimes pictures made.

Yet there is room for wonder all around us. Even the simplest, most shut-in life can't escape it. We have lessons to learn from the beast and bird creation if we will only take a little time to study them.

They are so wise they seldom make the stupid mistakes made by man—presumably the more intelligent animal. About danger they are uncannily wise; they know when it is coming and take certain precautions. I was much interested in our swallows the other morning; the ones who came in the spring in a large family circle, requiring three or four homes in our caves, and who have been with us all the summer.

The windows badly needed cleaning, and after some deliberation we decided that, in spite of the swallows, they must be cleaned. It was amusing to watch the consternation. The old ones immediately left the nest and took shelter in a tree nearby, from which they watched the proceedings in the most agitated way.

Sometimes they would emerge, swooping and circling in the air, to see what was actually being done at their homes. They chirped a little also, no doubt criticising and blaming the large monsters equipped with broom and pail to menace their property.

But at last, when the operation was finished, they dashed back into their nests, and there was the greatest amount of noise you could imagine. It sounded as if they were all talking at once, as no doubt they were.

In the life around us, in all the comings and goings of folk, and our friends in the lower scale of creation, there is room for wonder. And when the sense of wonder has gone there is very little left!

THE SWISS SUN CURE.

As the essential part of the sun cure at Leysin is the exposure of the whole body to the rays of the sun, all arrangements are made to facilitate this. All the beds have large wheels, about four inches in diameter, so that they are quite easily pulled in and out of the bedrooms, or moved along the galleries, which all, in this clinic, face due south. Sunning starts in winter about 10 a.m. and in summer as early as 7 a.m. or 7.30 a.m., and lasts not more than three to three and a half hours, during which time the patient lies completely naked except for an exiguous loin-cloth. A longer period is not advised, for not only is the heat too fatiguing, particularly in summer, but also actually harmful reactions may follow too prolonged exposure.

For this reason complete uncovering is not allowed at the beginning—the first time only the feet are exposed for three separate periods of five minutes each, the next time it is carried as far as the knees, while the feet have three ten minute periods, and so on, until the whole body is pigmented and inured to the radiation. Patients whose internal organs are affected, such as have had previous lung trouble, or have tubercular kidneys, for example, take little or no sun on the part concerned; similarly, it is found that in the case of a bad mixed infection, with an abscess which is discharging freely, local exposure causes rise of temperature, and is to be avoided. In such cases the general effect of the sun upon the healthy parts of the body is utilised to increase the resistance to the disease, and so promote a cure.

King Albert in the Oberland

For years Albert I, King of the Belgians, has paid regular visits to our Alps where he is extremely popular amongst the guides and local population. M. René Gonzy has contributed to the *Tribune de Genève* a delightful article about the latest visit of the Belgian Monarch from which we reprint the following:

Albert Ier, le roi des Belges, est un fervent alpiniste, on le sait. Il compte à son actif les escalades les plus difficiles de nos Alpes et du Mont-Blanc; chaque année, pour ainsi dire, voit revenir chez nous, en été ou en hiver — car le roi est aussi un excellent skieur! — cet hôte bienvenu. La montagne, pour lui, est un délassement. Loin des vanités du monde, il s'y sent à l'aise et sa cordiale bonhomie, son allure démocratique ont bientôt fait de lui gagner tous les cœurs.

Ces jours derniers, précisément, le "roi soldat" était venu passer de courtes "vacances" dans nos montagnes. Sans suite aucune, sans appareil, comme le plus modeste des touristes, il a séjourné entre autres à Meiringen, où chacun connaît bien la haute silhouette du souverain et son bon sourire; là, le roi a mis le beau temps à profit pour accomplir toute une série de jolies varappes dans les Engelhörner. Seuls des grimpeurs de classe peuvent se risquer là-haut; le roi des Belges a pour ainsi dire gravi toutes ces pointes.

Albert Ier, donc, débarque, un beau matin, à Meiringen, tout seul. Sa valise à la main, son piolet sous le bras, un grand foulard au cou, il gagna pédestrement l'hôtel où, tout de suite, il fut reconnu. L'on se confondait en excuses. Mais le roi coupa court. Il voulait être là en simple touriste et l'on tint compte de son vœu. Un peu plus tard, Albert Ier se rendait chez Victor Anderegg — un digne rejeton de l'illustre famille qui a fourni des guides aux Tyndall, aux Coolidge et aux Stephen — pour l'engager. Victor, un jeune homme, point encore pourvu du diplôme, a déjà accompagné le roi au cours de plusieurs ascensions et il a su se faire hautement apprécier de son "client." Albert Ier, d'ailleurs, est au mieux avec toute la famille et quand il part, avec Victor, pour une ascension, c'est chez la bonne vieille maman de son guide qu'il laisse de préférence son portefeuille, ses bagues et autres "impedimenta." Et souvent, il a félicité Mme. Anderegg de la façon dont elle avait élevé son fils.

En qualité de porteur occasionnel, "l'équipe" s'était adjoint un jeune commis de banque, grimpeur de première force et qui, comme Anderegg, éprouve pour le roi la plus respectueuse amitié. Lorsqu'il faut passer la nuit dans une cabane, la soirée se passe à causer montagne, dans la fumée des pipes; Anderegg déclare que, tout guide qu'il est, ses entretiens avec le roi lui ont fait apprendre mainte chose.

Sobre et frugal, Albert Ier ne s'embarrasse pas de beaucoup de provisions. Il adore, paraît-il, le café au lait dans lequel il émiette son pain. Dans l'Oberland, on appelle ça des "Bröckli." Et l'on conçoit la stupéfaction des deux gars lorsqu'ils virent, pour la première fois, leur client préparer, en connaisseur, ses "Bröckli." Ils ne purent s'empêcher de sourire. Ce que voyant, le roi leur dit: "Chez moi, à Bruxelles, je fais ça tous les matins. Mais cela ne plait pas à ma femme. Elle m'autorise cependant à "bröckeler" quand on est en famille. Une fois que nous étions en visite à Londres, par contre, je m'oubliai, au "breakfast," et me mis en devoir d'émietter mon pain. Mais je m'arrêtai bien vite, sur un regard sévère de la reine... Ici, je fais ce que je veux..." Et, avec un sourire malicieux, le roi, d'un léger gourmand, se mit à déguster ses "Bröckli."

Lorsqu'on redescend, il arrive que l'équipe en corps envahisse une petite "pinte" pour éteindre une soif aiguë par des heures de varappe sur le rocher cuit par le soleil. Albert Ier a un faible pour la limonade. Mais il lui arrive d'être distrait, paraît-il. Ainsi, un beau jour, il quitta la place sans payer. La jeune sommelière, qui l'avait reconnu (car le roi est populaire dans toute la contrée) n'osa pas insister. Mais, courant après la petite troupe, elle happa la manche d'Anderegg, en lui soufflant: "Los, Viktor, der Herr König hat vergesse z'zähle..." (Dis donc, Victor, Monsieur le Roi a oublié de payer!).

Anderegg répara bien vite l'oubli: il ne manqua pas de conter l'histoire à "Monsieur le Roi" qui rit de bon cœur et tapina, à ce propos, la jeune Oberlandaise, lors de son prochain passage.

Albert Ier répond, avec un large sourire, aux "Grüss Gott" respectueux que lui adressent — comme c'est encore l'usage dans ce bon vieux pays! — les indigènes avec lesquels il cause volontiers. Bref, il est adoré partout. "S'il était d'ici, on l'enverrait au Conseil national!", déclarait même, avec le plus grand sérieux, un bon vieux "Schnitzler" ou sculpteur sur bois.

Reste à savoir si le roi, qui n'aime pas les bavards, serait d'accord!