

Swiss football now and then

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Bref, le congrès de Lucerne pose un problème d'une extrême gravité, qui dépasse de beaucoup le cadre d'un parti. C'est en réalité l'avenir politique de la Suisse qui est en jeu.

Léon Savary.
(Tribune de Genève).

SWISS FOOTBALL NOW AND THEN.

It was suggested to me that a few remarks about Football in Switzerland of to-day might be of interest to some readers of the S.O. and particularly those who through their exile in foreign lands have not been able to follow the development of the game during the course of years.

This was indeed my foremost reason for the recent tour in Switzerland with an English team of Amateurs and I have taken back with me the definite impression that Swiss Football has made tremendous strides during the last twenty-five years.

I think that I may safely say that in all departments of the game, science, technic, rational training, speed, etc., the game shows great improvement. The only department, where the "old ones" do not appear eclipsed, seems to me in kicking a ball, and particularly in shooting for goal.

Switzerland appears now generally to have adopted the continental short low-passing game, typically described in Austrian dialect as "Scheiberlspiel." This is fundamentally opposed to the English style of "swinging" the ball into the most favourable position and gaining ground in the most direct and quickest way and it was interesting to see the two styles in opposition during the recent tour. The mostly very favourable comments in the Swiss papers on the English game show that there is still a lot to be said in its favour.

In a general way I think one might say that the best Swiss teams are a shade above the leading amateur teams in England, but they certainly do not come up to first Division standard in professional football. In saying this I do not know, whether the conception of amateurs is the same as in England, but I am not prepared to discuss here such a controversial subject, which has been a bone of contention between the F.A. and continental football for many years.

One is apt to judge national football by the result of international games. For years Switzerland has now been unsuccessful, mostly by the odd goal. This suggests in a general sense a good defence but weak attack. The present crisis is ascribed to the fact, that whenever there were weak spots in the national league teams in the past, they were filled with foreign professionals, a practice which was severely felt when the selection committee came to pick the representative team. This has now been remedied by giving more attention to Swiss talent and we hope that the result will be a general improvement in the representative team and the result of the international encounters. The records of past games show Switzerland to be very near to at least some of their opponents and an extra effort should make it possible to turn defeat into success.

The most striking change I found, however, on the Swiss side.

Gone seem the days of the old jolly comradeship. The players leave immediately after the match and the fraternising spirit of olden days seems a thing of the past.

When remembering the recent wonderful times in Switzerland with friends of forty years standing and the wonderful friendship of nearly a quarter of a century extended to me by the Middlesex Wanderers I can only hope that sport and particularly football will give the active and young of this day the same pleasure in later days as I have now in the valuable friendships founded on the football field of my boyhood.

F.M.G.

LIFE IN A SWISS SANATORIUM.

The lung specialist had pronounced his verdict: the base of the right lung attacked, must give up work for some months, rest, mountain air, a dry, sunny climate, nourishing food.

With memories of the rigours of an English winter still in mind, and having read an article by Dr. Saleeby on Leysin, the patient decided to give this Alpine health resort a trial. The journey from Victoria occupies about 17 hours but one can spend a night in Paris, or fly to Lausanne in about five hours. Whatever route is taken the first view of the Lake of Geneva backed by the glistening peaks of the Alps will always live in one's memory.

At Aigle one leaves the Simplon main line and enters one of those quaint little mountain trains which look like a toy, but is nevertheless capable of mounting to a height of 4,500 feet above sea-level in less than an hour. The village of Leysin seemed to occupy an ideal position for a health resort. It faced directly south and was

protected from all northerly and easterly winds by lofty mountain peaks.

The writer must frankly confess that he rather dreaded entering a sanatorium, and expected to find a glorified hospital occupied by pallid consumptives with typical hacking coughs. The dreaded sanatorium turned out to be a very modern hotel with a first-class service, and spotlessly clean. Each bedroom possessed a roofed open air gallery with a very comfortable chaise-louche. The only people with pale faces were the visitors from large towns who descended on us from time to time, and during the whole of this stay the writer never heard a single cough in the dining room which sometimes contained nearly a hundred patients. When one compares this with the usual chorus of coughing heard during an average church service in England one realizes that Swiss mountain air can work marvels.

We were most carefully examined and weighed by the head-doctor on the following day and as he explained the routine to be followed he inspired us with confidence in the possibility of a complete recovery. As this program is of supreme importance we give it here in extenso. A patient who was not running temperatures breakfasted between 8 and 9 and then walked for an hour. On returning he lay down on his private gallery and rested till 12. At 12:30 an appetizing four-course lunch was served in the dining room. There were at least 24 different nationalities in the sanatorium and meals were always very vivacious and amusing interludes. From 2 to 4 perfect silence prevailed on all the cure galleries, and one could either read or sleep, — the writer generally chose the latter form of entertainment. At 4 o'clock the English patients frequently took tea together and a short walk followed. From 5 to 7 we rested again, and at 7:30 dinner was served. All patients were in bed well before 10 o'clock.

Such a life may well seem monotonous to a person in average health, but it must be remembered that fatigue is the worst enemy of the consumptive patient. Most of us were only too pleased to rest and gaze our fill at that wonderful sun-bathed panorama which stretched before us. Three thousand feet below the silver ribbon of the Rhone wound along to its entry into the Lake of Geneva, then the eye travelled upwards over the dark green of the fir forests, the silver green of the glaciers, to the mighty Alpine summits with the giant Mont Blanc towering in the distance.

When strength and energy returned the patient always found plenty of opportunities for passing the time. Many began the study of a foreign language. Those who wished to read had an excellent library of 10,000 volumes at their disposal. Bridge tournaments were frequently arranged and the English patients made full use of the billiard room. A cinema entertainment was also given once a week. During the summer months our walks through the fragrance of the pines and the meadows carpeted with the most wonderful varieties of wild flowers occupied our leisure time. An excellent little orchestra also played once a day in the garden of the sanatorium.

Winter — that dreaded season for the town dweller — brought us cloudless blue skies, dazzling expanses of spotless white, and that marvellous Alpine sunshine which enabled patients suffering from so-called surgical tuberculosis to lie on their balconies almost entirely unclothed taking full advantage of the healing influence of the ultra-violet rays. The skating rink was in full view of our balconies, and, on obtaining the doctor's permission, patients were allowed to join the jolly crowd gliding over the ice. Ski-jumping competitions, toboggan races, ice-hockey matches provided the spectators with ample distractions.

Theatrical companies visited the station from time to time, and it was at Leysin that the writer first had the pleasure of hearing those incomparable artists Cortot and Thibaut. Great French literary men like Paul Reboux, Duhamel, and Claude Farrère delivered most interesting lectures. That eloquent orator Father Pinard de la Boulet gave us his impression on looking down the pulpit of Notre Dame de Paris, and Professor Picard held forth amusingly on life at a still greater altitude.

In one respect the writer was fortunate, for his case required no surgical intervention, but without entering into details as to pneumo-

thorax, oleo-thorax, pleuroscopy, phrenicectomy, and thoracoplastie, it should be stated that all the skill of the world-renowned school of Leysin lung specialists was at the disposal of the patient in a more advanced state of the disease. One repeatedly came into contact with people looking the picture of health who had arrived at Leysin on stretchers. Other expatriates leading a busy and normal life frequently returned to take part in winter sports for two or three weeks.

At last came the day when the doctor pronounced the magic word "cured." If one had arrived with a certain amount of apprehension one assuredly envisaged departure with an equal amount of regret. The memory of many interesting friendships, souvenirs of the gracious peace of life lived in the pure, bracing mountain air: all this comes back to one in the hurly-burly of modern life under the grey skies of industrial England.

C. E. W.

68me FETE SUISSE.

Le jeudi 17 juin prochain, à Central Hall, Westminster, aura lieu dans son éclat habituel et dans un cachet essentiellement suisse, la fête de notre colonie.

Nous qui venons de prendre une vive part aux réjouissances de la nation anglaise n'avons pas oublié notre pays bien-aimé, nous sentons aussi le besoin de l'acclamer, de lui témoigner notre reconnaissance, et il semble que la fête suisse de cette année nous invite tout spécialement pour cela.

Quel beau privilège que ce coin du pays retrouvé au milieu de la foule cosmopolite de la grande cité londonienne. Quel bonheur que de pouvoir chaque année respirer un instant l'air natal et de se retenir au contact de l'esprit familial et de l'amour du pays, de chanter nos chants d'école et de soldat et d'entendre nos airs favoris évoquant les souvenirs du passé.

La fête s'annonce brillante. Aux artistes bien connus et appréciés de notre colonie, de nouveaux compatriotes nous ont assuré leur concours dans un repertoire de choix.

Les efforts des organisateurs ont rencontré d'encourageantes sympathies et nous ne doutons pas que vous montrerez la vôtre en venant nombreux à la fête suisse de 1937.

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