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La mi-été de Bretaye.—On nous écrit de Villars: La fête de la mi-été est l'une des manifestations populaires caractéristiques des Alpes vaudoises. Elle correspond, sans lui ressembler entièrement, aux kermesses des pâtres des Alpes de la Suisse allemande. Elle a lieu l'un des premiers dimanches d'août. On pèse le lait de chaque vache, ce jour-là, et l'on évalue la production de chaque vache, c'est-à-dire la quantité de lait qu'elle est censée donner pendant son estivage. Jusqu'à l'époque où les touristes sont devenus légion, les vachers faisaient volontiers, ainsi à la Berneuse (Leysin), à Perche (Ormonts-Dessus), des distributions de crème, de café au lait, de fromage, de taillé, de gâtelets, bref, de tout ce que le chalet offre de ressources.

Les mi-étés ont donné lieu à une abondante littérature; les principales sont celle de Taveyannaz, qui attirent les curieux par milliers et que Juste Olivier a rendue célèbre; celle d'Anzeindaz, dont le culte fut institué en 1886 par Alfred Cérésolo, d'Al (Berneuse), de l'Alliaz, dont l'institution est récente, de Bretaye ou de Chavannes. On y écoute une prédication en plein air, faite généralement par le pasteur de la paroisse, on y célèbre les beautés de la patrie, on y chante, on y danse, on y pique-nique, on y fait des libations.

La mi-été de Bretaye qui, grâce aux moyens faciles de communication que procurent les chemins de fer Bex-Gryon-Villars et Villars-Bretaye, attire chaque année plus nombreux, dans le coin idyllique des Alpes vaudoises, les touristes et les promeneurs, aura lieu le dimanche 30 juillet, selon le traditionnel programme. Si le temps veut bien s'y prêter, elle retrouvera sa vogue accoutumée. On y viendra à pied et en chemin de fer. ("Feuille d'Avis de Lausanne.")

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L'exploration du Trou du Diable.—La troisième tentative d'exploration du Trou du Diable a eu lieu samedi après-midi: une équipe de sauveteurs venus de Collonges-sous-Salève était composée de MM. Charles Descombes, Lucien Descombes, et Francis Mathieu, tous trois décorés de la médaille de sauvetage de 1re classe le 23 août 1921 pour avoir sauvé en des circonstances déjà relatées par la "Tribune" six Suisses Allemands. Ils firent la descente avec MM. Dunoyer et Maurice Yost. Ils descendirent à 150 mètres, c'est-à-dire un gain de 30 mètres et avancèrent jusqu'à 500 m., c'est-à-dire un gain de 200 m. sur la dernière tentative. L'exploration a duré de 2 h. à 8 h., sans qu'ils purent encore trouver une issue. S'agit-il d'une faille, du travail des eaux ou de l'effet d'un tremblement de terre? Mystère!

Un des explorateurs aurait vu une petite flèche gravée marquant la direction d'Etrembières, à 400 m. de l'entrée, et tout porte à croire qu'il existe un second couloir passant sous le couloir supérieur. L'avant-garde vit également à une hauteur qu'elle évalue à 10-12 m. au-dessus de leur niveau un autre passage dans la direction du sud qu'elle n'eut pas la possibilité d'explorer cette fois-ci, faute sans doute de posséder la lampe d'Alaudin, car la lumière tirait à sa fin et les cordes aussi, force leur fut de rebrousser chemin. ("La Tribune de Genève.")

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Les impôts d'autrefois.—En 1599, LL. EE. de Berne firent rebâtir une partie des murailles du côté de la Thière. Elles imposèrent des corvées, alors appelées "rudes," aux habitants de la ville et du bailliage. Un document de 1684 nous a conservé la liste des gens corvéables. Il y avait trois sortes de corvées, la "rude des bateaux" (14 bateaux), la "rude des chars" (24 chars), et la "rude des bras" (330 personnes).

Le document débute par ce quatrain destiné à faire prendre en patience ces prestations par les gens d'Yverdon:

De tous tems on s'est efforcé
Par des arrêts, par des études,
D'épargner notre corps cassé;
Mais en vain, faut faire les rudes.

Les habitants de la ville étaient divisés en 17 dixains, ayant chacun à sa tête un "dixenier"; il est probable qu'on devait une personne par ménage ou par "feu," suivant l'appellation de l'époque.

Voici, au hasard, la liste des habitants d'un de ces dixains: Dixenier: Mandrot, le cordonnier; la dame Cuhe, David Cuhe, la veuve Boy, Estienne Bourgeois, la veuve Warrier, la veuve Mangon, la veuve Boverly, la fille de Jacqué, le sieur Humbert Duthon, le sieur curial Christin, le sieur Jean-Jacques Paccotton, la dame Christin, monsieur Masset, les demoiselles Pilleuict, monsieur Joseph Doxat, Nicolas Gendroz, les filles ses sœurs, le sieur Rodolph Willemin, Jacques Willauffin, Pierre Graz, les filles de chez Myvellaz. ("Journal d'Yverdon.")

NOTES & GLEANINGS.

The letters appearing in the *Daily Mirror* under the heading "Cheaper Abroad?" reveal now and then individual opinions which can hardly survive a closer examination. On the whole, the general view seems to be in favour of a holiday abroad if the stay is sufficiently extended to distribute the travelling expenses. In comparing the cost of living, it is, of course, misleading to single out the charges at a first-class hotel in Switzerland and then deduce a general statement. We are certainly surprised by the assertion made by a captain in the same paper (Aug. 4th) to the effect that "after having returned from "a nine months' trip in France and Switzerland, he could "not find in either country a decent hotel for less than the "equivalent of 10s. per person per day . . . whilst in "England he had been able to obtain most comfortable "quarters in hotels and boarding-houses for from three to "three-and-a-half guineas a week."

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The Graphic (Aug. 5th) publishes some photographs referring to the many golf competitions which are now being fought out at St. Moritz, whilst *Country Life* (Aug. 5th) has a captivating article dealing with Zermatt, which is "undeniably the Mecca of climbers"; a plea is made for new blood to join the gallant veterans of the Alpine Club, as anyone with the necessary cash will find it hard to obtain a more glorious, refreshing and entertaining or a more sporting occupation.

Speaking of Zermatt, it will be news to most of our readers that this mountain resort is coming to be a 'Mecca' in the literal sense. A religious camp is being held there annually and was this year attended by about 80 pilgrims; the movement has been started by Dr. C. F. Fothergill, a Harley Street specialist.

* * *

Dr. Henri Spahlinger, of Geneva, must be very gratified over the benevolent publicity he is receiving at the hands of the English press, and which seems to lend further truth to the old saying about the prophet and his own country. As a rule the English are somewhat sceptical and reticent about new discoveries and inventions and prefer to postpone appreciation and adoption until their claims and merits are positively established. Of course, the prospect of prolonging life to 150 years must—let us hope—appeal to everyone (not forgetting the *S.O.*). We quote the following from one of our contemporaries the *Daily Express* (July 31st):—

"Accredited scientists and medical men associated with Dr. Spahlinger in his researches confidently hope that injections of the serum ferments which stimulate and revivify the body cells will in time prolong the human span of life to a term of 150 years. If their hopes are fulfilled, monkey glands will be out of date.

So far this second great secret of the serum is known only to Dr. Spahlinger and his closest associates and intimates, who are subjecting themselves to serum ferment injections for the purposes of investigation and research. . . .

"The ferment injections simply make one feel as strong as a lion," said one of his colleagues, briefly. "They give me an abundance of stimulation and a marvellous fund of energy; and I have never yet felt the faintest reaction from the stimulant.

"What is most remarkable," he concluded "is that it gives the look of youth to the face as well as imparting the throb and vigour of youth to the blood and body. Its effect is to smooth out all the lines and creases and wrinkles of age. Death seems ridiculously impossible."

Dr. Henri Spahlinger is a man of mature years, with a remarkably youthful appearance. He has repelled every over-

ture for the commercial exploitation of his wonderful discovery, and aims at nothing less than the manufacture of his two curative agents, serum and vaccine, so that they may be distributed to rich and poor alike all over the world, and at the cost price of manufacture.

The Spahlinger serum takes anything from one to four years to produce, and, at the present stage of the work, seven horses are required for manufacturing one complete treatment.

The bacteriologist's simple explanation of the serum treatment for consumption is that it resembles the anti-toxin treatment for diphtheria. The serum is painlessly prepared from certain animals stabled near the bacteriologist's germ factory in Geneva.

Medical belief in the serum in this country is summed up in the action of the British Red Cross Society, who are negotiating with Dr. Spahlinger for supplies of vaccine and serum to combat consumption here.

M. Spahlinger is understood to have experimented on his own body with the life-prolonging ferment, which may account for his own extraordinary vigour and youthful appearance."

The universal delight will, no doubt, be shared by the monkeys and the goats, who will enjoy again undisturbed possession of their own glands and whose service to humanity the cocktail will continue to commemorate. The new serum should also prove a stimulating acquisition to the "Brighter London" movement.

* * *

Dr. A. Rollier, of Leysin, the well-known authority on consumption and modern heliotherapy, who attended the recent meeting of the British Medical Association at Glasgow, delivered an illustrated lecture on July 28th at Bradford on "The Share of the Sun in the Treatment and Prevention of Tuberculosis."

* * *

The Canton of Grisons has its own ways in matters which elsewhere are dealt with by acknowledged standards; motor cars are still barred, but the official recognition of a herbal doctor in the person of a friar takes us back to the Middle Ages, when both the spiritual and physical welfare of the people were in the hands of the religious orders. The following is from *The Daily Telegraph* (July 31st):—

"Two years ago a certain Friar Künzle arrived in the Canton of the Grisons, where he attended not merely to the spiritual needs of his flock, but to their physical distresses. True, the studies which had occupied his nearly three-score years had been theological, and not medical, but he professed to have found in the Alpine and sub-Alpine flora of the canton many roots and plants from which much virtue might be extracted, and he prescribed freely for all manner of ills.

The medical profession naturally looked askance at him, but did not directly interfere with him. There was but one way for him to become recognised as a healer by herbal remedies, and that was to induce the people of the canton to vote at one of those local referendums which are so frequent in Switzerland a local law authorising the practice of 'healing by non-poisonous herbs' administered by duly authorised practitioners. The people passed the referendum, and now the cantonal authorities have officially recognised Friar Künzle as authorised to practise the art of healing by 'non-poisonous herbs.' Before putting this law into force the Cantonal Fathers appointed a commission of four, all supposed to have knowledge of herbal remedies and herbal treatment. They wanted a duly qualified practising doctor to sit on the commission, but all declined except one, and he was a man no longer in practice.

The long and short of it is that Friar Künzle is practising as a Dr. med. herbarum by the will of the people, endorsed by the Commission of Four."

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An English translation of W. Oechsli's "History of Switzerland 1499—1914" has been published by the Cambridge University Press (Price 20s. net).

HERE AND THERE.

By J. H. Cortesey.

Said the elderly colonel triumphantly: "Did you see that girl smile at me?" "That's nothing to worry about," answered his friend of the Brighton Marine Parade, mistaking the colonel's tone, "why, the first time I saw you I laughed out loud, but I soon got used to your face."

A most ungenerous remark, which, however, shows the way the world looks at things when it tries to be funny. And when does it not? Pessimists gloat over the fulfilment of their gloomy predictions and never feel so happy as when they are in the midst of rank misery—especially if it is not their own. The world is viewed by each from his own standpoint and according to his own standard of intelligence or knowledge.

* * *

While *savants*, like Dr. Spahlinger and Dr. Steinach, are doing their best to eradicate the ills that flesh is heir to and prolong life to the reasonable limit of 150 years, with the alluring vision of a renewal of youth to those who have attained the period of senility—that is youth with *all* its attributes, which is a very important point—to the evident detriment and disappointment of *expectant* heirs, all worthy of deep sympathy, we have, on the other hand, experts in science bent on the search for the cheapest process to obliterate our human existence in the shortest space of time. Thomas Edison, who is in the know, gave his reply to a curious Fleet Street journalist's question "if it were true that London could be destroyed in a day?" "No, not in a day, but in *three hours* not a live being would remain."

There is no doubt that all the savants, scientists and researchers are animated with the best of intentions for one purpose or another, and it rests with each of us to decide which is the most advantageous policy to follow.

Now, if within three hours from the beginning of hostilities, of which *no notice* would be given by any government, or, for the matter of that, by any set of enterprising individuals, we all run the risk of being transferred outside the limits of our present conscious state, is it really worth while thinking of such material things as dinners, rent, rates, taxes, or, in fact, of the possibility of extending our shaky hopes until we reach the good age of 150?

Of course, there is the optimistic way of tackling the question, which is shared, at the present moment at least, by the majority of the population and consists in holiday-making. Despite the uncertainty of the weather, cares have been put aside, and, regardless of cost and comfort, there has been a general exodus from London which exceeds all previous records. But what reveals the state of the pockets is the fact reported from the "health" resorts that people do not *spend* with the same freedom as of yore.

* * *

Holiday-taking forms both a physical and a mental exercise of considerable value. With the change of atmosphere and surroundings comes the change of thoughts. The main idea is to benefit by an exposure of oneself to the Sun.

Not all are favoured with the opportunity of returning from the hills or the seashore sands with a sunburnt skin, or to retain this healthy appearance for long. But do not despair. Science again has come to serve a good cause, for henceforth you may laugh at our big sun's little trick of hiding behind the clouds. London may be plunged in gloom, it may be in the grip of a thick black fog—it does not matter. You can have your own sun at home, with its