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through the bourgeois Press, of the so-called neutral sources of information.

The left had, of course, 52 and not 32 deputies in the previous council and the exact number of votes recorded in 1925 by the Radicals amounted to 207,696 and not 225,000; with this year's increase the Radicals only polled a total of 220,800.

As an item of interest in this connection we reproduce part of an appeal published in the *Dublin Evening Mail* (Oct. 29th):—

"It is instructive to compare the situation in Switzerland, for example, with the situation in Northern Ireland. In Switzerland there are at least three races—German, French and Italian; there are two religions—Protestant and Catholic. There is no dictatorship; yet the Government of Switzerland is one of the most stable in the world. Why? Because of the traditional regard by the majority for the rights and privileges of the minorities. The Government of Switzerland does not consist of members of one party. It includes members of two religions; it often includes members of three races. The Government is elected by parliament; it is the executive committee of parliament; it works in harmony with parliament; it is stable.

Does the abolition of P.R. without the consent of the minorities represent a higher stage of political development than the principle of fair representation adopted by Switzerland? Switzerland has a population of 4,000,000. This is larger than that of Northern Ireland, but many ignore the lessons which Switzerland can teach on the ground that it is a small country."

The above is written by the secretary of the English "Proportional Representation Society" with the object of informing public opinion in Northern Ireland, where it is intended to abolish the existing law of proportional representation. We very much appreciate the writer's remarks, but it is probably not news to him that the blessings of P.R. are not so universally accepted in Switzerland as he would like his Irish readers to believe.

The Valleys of the Forgotten.

Under this title the *Daily News* (Oct. 29th) gives a pathetic pen picture of the loneliness which with the closing of the passes is to become the lot of those who live in some of the mountain valleys.

"The Alpine passes have been closed till next June. All who are left in the remote fastnesses of the Alps are imprisoned by the snows that choke the precipice-roads for eight months.

I was a passenger in the last coach to cross the Furka and Grimsel Passes. We carried back the "good-byes" of the lone dwellers of the Valleys of the Forgotten, whose prison gates we locked behind us. People may die up there and children be born without succour. Avalanches, more likely than ever after the hot summer, may sweep down upon them, and the chalet that stands up there on the mountainside may have vanished when the snows melt. Yet they smile with the fatalism of tradition and seem content.

After a treacherous trip through the gorges in the mist and over the snowbound road, past the Swiss army drilling in the snows at Andermatt we reached Realp, at the foot of the Furka Pass.

The pass dwellers had come in for provisions, and fathers, mothers and children, laden with necessities, knelt in the snow in the village square receiving the farewell blessing of the brown-smocked, bearded priest standing barefoot save for his sandals. Nearby a St. Bernard strained at his load of flour and potatoes. They rose and gave us a cheer as we passed.

Up the side of the Galenstock, near the summit of the Furka, was a little chalet; a woman was hanging out clothes and a child was playing with a goat. They hailed us and the driver clambered up to bid them good-bye. As they talked they glanced with anxious foreboding at the snow-cap, hanging like a snow drift on the eaves, undermined by the long hot summer. When the heavy snows came to add their weight, who knew...? But they shrugged their shoulders and laughed gaily as they shouted a cheery "au revoir."

We went on through the white desolation to the crest of the Pass, on the saddle of the Furkahorn and Muttenthorn, over 8,000 feet high. In a chalet there an elderly couple were preparing for the long silence. A stockade of firewood had been built between the chalet and the snow slides. Several goats and cows were tethered within the stockade, munching at grass that would soon be finished. In the store casks of oil, tubs of pickled meat, smoked sides, and piles of provisions and fodder were stacked solid.

The old Swiss was hoisting heavy stones on to the roof to hold it down when the blizzards came. I asked him if he was not afraid of the loneliness. He smiled and as answer pulled his flute from his hip pocket and played a few notes on it. Then he took me into his little workshop and showed me his delicate carving tools and his blocks of yellow pine and nuggets of ivory and, rough-hewn, a life-size bear that was growing out of a tree-trunk.

His white-haired wife took me into her parlour, where her little handloom, her lace-block and her sewing machine stood and she showed me her store of yarn and wool.

In a little hut perched, like an eagle's eyrie, in a crevice of the precipice alongside the Rhône glacier, three men will spend the winter keeping watch upon that mighty Niagara of block ice. To anyone but these hardy, mind-cloistered mountaineers an eight months' existence in that desolation of snow and ice would mean slow madness. But they have their chessboard...

All those who could had fled from the little hamlet of Gletsch on the cantonal boundary near the source of the Rhône, to Brigue, farther down the river. A few, however, remained, including the policeman, resplendent in his epaulettes and red cape. Women were in tears here, but the men waved us off with grave composure.

On the road from the summit of the Grimsel Pass (over 7,000 feet high) down to the Hospice in the Bernese Oberland we met a big lorry rushing through with provisions. There was scarcely room to pass and no means of turning back. The lorry was on the precipice side, with a thousand feet drop below. The drivers, white-faced, tried to edge past.

Our coach tore the bushes from the mountainside. Then our wheels locked, and a cry of horror went up as, in trying to wrench free, the lorry was thrust nearer the brink. We backed and tried again. This time the lorry tore our footboard off and, after 20 minutes of "nerves," we were free. We descended to the Hospice. The Grimsel was crossed and another door locked.

At Meiringen the "closing of the passes" ended with sunset, and we looked back to the mountains and the "Valleys of the Forgotten" and marvelled at human constancy."

World's Wealth.

In the course of a very instructive article regarding the effect of the last war on the world's material welfare Sir. D. Drummond Fraser gives an interesting comparison of the capital per head estimated to be held by the different nations; Switzerland comes fourth in the list. The following extract is taken from the *Financial Times* (Oct. 27th):—

"No estimate of present-day national wealth can claim even approximate accuracy, but a fair idea of the relative position of the leading countries of the world can be obtained from a series of statistics put forward a year or two ago by an American authority. A moment's consideration will show that absolute figures are of little use for the purpose.

The aggregate wealth of the Soviet Union is much greater than that of Switzerland, but the standard of living of the individual Swiss citizen is demonstrably higher than that of the dweller in the territories of the former Russian Empire. If, therefore, estimates of total wealth are related to the numbers of the population sharing in the proceeds, we find that the United States heads the list with a figure of £585 per head, Great Britain coming next with about £500.

It will be seen that, despite the pessimistic utterances which are all too numerous regarding the position to-day, Great Britain remains a "wealthy" country, judged by international standards. Next in the list comes Canada, with £486 per head (a figure which has probably registered an appreciable increase since the estimate was first made), and Switzerland with £472.

Australia—a continent of vast material resources shared among a small population—is estimated to have a per capita national wealth of £361. Among the larger States of Europe, France's wealth is put at £273 and Germany at £250 per head, and among the smaller, in addition to Switzerland, mentioned already, Belgium with £288 and Holland with £233 make a good showing, both being countries of intensive economic exploitation.

The Japanese figure is £111. Examples of great countries having relatively low standard of living as a result of a national wealth considerable in the aggregate being divided among an enormous population are furnished by British India, with an estimated national wealth of £29 per head, and China, with no more than £9.

On the whole, it is true to say that, while the world's wealth is steadily increasing year by year, the present rate of progress is slower than that prevailing during the last decade before the war. To some extent this was an inevitable feature. The earlier years of the twentieth century were distinguished throughout the world by a burst of unprecedented economic development, and the pace was probably too hot to last.

For part of the setback since the war the world has itself to blame, as the Geneva Economic Conference agreed. The policy of restricting international trade by the erection of formidable tariff barriers has exercised an appreciable influence in retarding the growth of the world's wealth, and for this reason the efforts now being made to arrest this tendency should be warmly welcomed."

DAYLIGHT SERVICE BETWEEN ENGLAND & SWITZERLAND.

In connection with the Swiss Winter Sports this year arrangements have been made to run the Day Express from London to Basle and vice-versa on the following days:

Outwards.—Tuesdays and Fridays from 18th December to 29th January.

Inwards.—Wednesdays and Saturdays from 19th December to 30th January.

The timetable of this service will be as under:

London (Victoria)	dep. 9.00
Folkestone Hbr.	arr. 10.43
Boulogne Mme.	arr. 12.20
Boulogne Mme.	dep. 13.09
Laon	arr. 16.00
Belfort	arr. 21.26
Mulhouse	arr. 22.14
Basle	arr. 22.45 G.T.
Basle	arr. 23.45 C.E.T.

Basle	dep. 10.25 C.E.T.
Basle	dep. 9.25 G.T.
Mulhouse	dep. 9.56
Belfort	arr. 10.39
Laon	arr. 16.02
Boulogne Mme.	arr. 19.00
Boulogne Mme.	dep. 19.10
Folkestone Hbr.	arr. 20.40
Folkestone Hbr.	dep. 21.10
London (Victoria)	arr. 22.50

It is, of course, understood that this service will *not* run in the outwards direction on Christmas Day, 25th December. It will also *not* run in the inwards direction on Boxing Day, 26th December.

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