

## CHÂTEAU IS A TREASURE HOUSE

Old tomes with musty bindings, shadowy canvases yellowed by time, frescoes showing hunting scenes with paintings of deer surmounted by actual antlers, a legendary fish-bird-man much like those on the columns supporting the jube of the Luxemburg Cathedral, old coats of arms, Chinese and Moorish cabinets rich with ivory, a fine Adoration of the Magi, and a 1523-altarpiece showing a blacksmith shoeing a horse whose hoof has been removed to the blacksmith's lap several feet away – these are among the treasures guarded by a castle whose lower walls are more than 20 feet thick and whose upper walls are 10.

The electric lights and fans, elevator and telephones do not obtrude; but this old castle, paneled in dull brown, is too somber a dwelling. The lovely women who lived here long ago have left no sign. Silks and satins once swept these halls, but only coats of mail and weapons remain.

Judging from the relics here collected, the Vaduz castle was not an effeminate place. The old château has forgotten the love ballads and roundlays of the knightly minnesingers for martial songs, praising arms and the man. Here vanquished Venus bends the knee to Mars.

The collection embraces the epoch of sword and mail and carries one through the arquebus stage into that of blunderbusses and guns – guns with smooth female figures on their ivory stocks, so that when the owner sighted at doe or foe his cheek pressed such a nude Venus as Paris praised; guns on whose locks hunting scenes are engraved with remarkable detail, or a «Got Mit Uns» suggests an ancient conceit still sometimes held.

One Spanish gun is incased in carved ivory whose intricate workmanship the cleverest artisans of Canton or Kyoto could not surpass. Famous scenes from mythology hide stock and barrel, and along the top runs a Latin inscription meaning, «Better to die in war than see our loved ones harmed.» When that steel-and-ivory treasure was fashioned, the Pilgrims were still depending upon marksmanship for much of their food.

There are Albanian guns with heavy butts. Arab guns with almost none, squat blunderbusses and guns 12 feet long, with a heavy stirrup to support the unwieldy barrel.

When Liechtenstein's last army was demobilized their 80 muskets and fourscore leather helmets were brought to this peaceful war museum belonging to a state too tiny to defend itself.

The first things one sees on entering the outer gate are Maria Theresa cannons. The last memory is of a blunt-pointed executioner's sword with a beheading scene engraved on the now idle blade, and of old halberds bearing the ancient arms of Liechtenstein, free land for centuries.

## SMOKE POTS USED TO WARD OFF «SAVAGE» FLIES

Every Sunday during the summer there is an open-air play outside the castle walls and one of the first voices comes down from a round-tower window high above the heads of all. If the week-day aspect is somewhat spoiled by rude benches and beer booths, the sight of plumed knights and long-gowned ladies in a dramatization of the German type of troubadour at the time of the Guelphs and Ghibelline more than makes up for it.

The northern lowlands are relatively lacking in interest, though savage flies do divert attention. Draft cattle are protected by smoke pots, which are hung from the wagon tongues and optimistically are supposed to keep the flies away. But the luckless cyclist carries no such flyfighting equipment.

It seemed as though my climb to the top of the Schellenberg would never end. Days later, when I looked down upon that mere hummock from the mountain peaks above it, I laughed at the heat and the flies. But my conception of Hades, made vivid by many a Taoist temple scene, has been rendered more dramatic by the thought of having to carry a smoldering smoke pot across a hot, peaty plain, feeling its heat without having it banish the brutal flies. When one gets to the top, there is a delightful view, for the Schellenberg, a mixture of bright-green