

Notes and gleanings

Objektyp: **Group**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1930)**

Heft 446

PDF erstellt am: **11.07.2024**

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NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

By KYBURG.

Matters Political.

It goes without saying that most of us Swiss in England and probably not a few of our Compatriots at home have followed the West Fulham Parliamentary Election with friendly interest and are, perchance, rather pleased with the result. Those of us who favour Protection and those of us who don't! My personal views on the matter are known to many of my friends and I think I can fairly claim that I do not let personal advantages or perspective of losses influence my views to any appreciable extent, but that I try to look at this vexed question from a wider point of view, a long-view one.

Although I know full well that it is as easy to convince a Protectionist or a Free Trader of the wrongs of his views, as it is to make synthetic gold, I think that a few well authenticated facts are always welcome to the earnest student. From an article in the *Star* of 6th May a.c. written by Lt. Commander the Hon. J. M. Kenworthy, R.N., M.P., I call the following:

"I liken Safeguarding for a particular industry to the case of a man at a football match standing on a brick. He is able to see over the heads of the crowd. But if everyone stands on bricks he has no advantage."

Rather good that one, I think! Now for a few facts, given in the same article by the Right Hon. and Gallant Gentleman.

"Taking the purchasing value of the average wages paid in London as 100, comparable figures in Berlin are 67, Paris 57, Brussels 42, Warsaw 41 and Prague 49 (Vide Hansard 15.7.27, Col. 998.)."

"On the first of this month one of our tariff high priests, Mr. A. M. Samuel, M.P., drew attention on the floor of the House to the International Labour Office figures of the hours worked in the United States Steel industry. The Furnace men work 14 hours a shift. The crane-men work 14 hours on night shift and 10 hours on day shift for 7 days a week, while the labourers actually work 16 hours a shift. Mr. Samuel was seeking ammunition to shoot at the Eight-Hour Day Bill now before Parliament, but he unconsciously provided a lesson for those who point to American conditions as an argument for tariffs as a means of improving labour conditions.

"As for Tariffs as a cure for unemployment, we are badly hit in this Country in all conscience, but in Germany there are over 3,000,000 unemployed, while the American Ministry of Labour admits to 4,000,000 out-of-works, and Mr. Green, the President of the American Federation of Labour, puts the figure at 7,000,000!"

I think that for anyone who takes a long view of things and considers whether Tariffs or Free Trade benefit the country in the long run, the above information ought to be illuminating.

America's higher tariffs call to mind the world-old truth that palliatives produce vicious circles. Switzerland is protesting energetically against this new imposition and the Swiss President, according to the *Financial Times* of 5th May, has cabled personally to President Hoover:

"The application of the Customs tariff now before the United States Congress would inevitably have such unfortunate results for the economic position of our country that I consider it to be my duty to draw your attention to certain facts. The new tariff would seriously injure the manufacture of certain articles that are exclusive Swiss specialties, such as clocks and watches and embroidery. In several important districts in Switzerland these two industries have become national industries."

While the extent to which Swiss public opinion is dealing with this matter, can be seen from the following, taken from the *Manchester Guardian*, 3rd May:

A considerable agitation has been provoked in Switzerland by the proposed increases in the United States tariff, which would seriously affect Swiss industries, especially the watch-making and cotton trades. Meetings of protest have been held by the Geneva and other chambers of commerce, and the Swiss Federal Government yesterday discussed the situation and decided to instruct the Swiss Minister at Washington to lodge a protest. There is a general demand for concerted action on the part of European Powers if the new American tariff becomes law.

The watch and clock industry would be seriously injured by the proposed duties, which would be equivalent to an embargo. One-sixth part of the entire watchmaking output of Switzerland is exported to the United States at present. The other things which would be principally affected are cheese, wool and silk goods, embroideries, leather and shoes, and chemicals. The duty on embroidered goods under the new tariff would be increased from 75 per cent. to 93 per cent. of their value. Swiss

exports to the United States amount at present to about £8,000,000 sterling, while the imports amount to £11,500,000 sterling.

A leading article in the "Journal de Genève" deprecates the suggestion that a campaign of retaliation should be undertaken, but it advocates action in common with other European nations. Everyone is beginning to examine the origin of the United States Tariff Bill. It originated, of course, in President Hoover's promises to the farmers, which, paradoxically, provided big business "lobbyists" with their opportunity.

There is a violent reaction against American goods, of which British and other manufacturers may be expected to take advantage. On the other hand, the only serious benefit which may arise out of the situation is that the endeavours of the League to organise concerted limitation and reduction of tariffs are beginning to be taken more seriously now that the results of irresponsible and selfish Protectionism threaten to become forcibly felt.

In connection with above, it is interesting to remember that the imports into Switzerland of American goods are considerably higher than the exports of Swiss goods to America. I daresay the figure given above does not include the dollars left behind by American Tourists, but I doubt very much whether American Tourists are guided by any such thoughts when visiting our Country for their pleasure and benefit and only incidentally for ours!

Swiss Hotel Statistics.

If anyone asked you pointedly for the number of Hotels in Switzerland, you would probably answer, "oh, thousands," whereas the total number is 3,600 all told, according to the *Oxford Mail* of 30th April:

Switzerland, which of late years has abandoned her title of "The playground of Europe" in favour of the higher claim to be "The Playground of the World," has a busy time, says a British United Press message from Geneva, in keeping the number of her hotels up to the requirements of her ever-increasing numbers of guests.

The latest hotel census shows that there are a total of 3,600. Many of these are of the most modern construction and equipment. Capital invested in the industry amounts to 1,500,000,000 frs. (£60,000,000 approx.), and the number of permanent employees is 61,000.

In other words, the number of employees connected with our Hotel Industry amounts to just over 1½ per cent. of the population.

I confess, this is very much less than I should have thought and is very interesting information.

Bear Steak and Chips.

If you wish to enjoy a really Lucullian repast, go to Zurich towards the end of this month! For, according to the *Birmingham Daily Mail*, 29th April:

Visitors to Zurich between the end of May and the end of June will have the opportunity of tasting the national dishes of 20 countries, and of deciding whether bear steak and chips is a more satisfying dish than a succulent Alpine goat kid stuffed with aromatic mountain herbs.

Nearly 100 chefs, representing the cuisines of every country in Europe, and of America, and further afield, will meet at Zurich to compete in the international cookery exhibition, to be held there from May 31 to June 30.

The bear steak expert is a Bulgarian, who has cooked in this medium for crowned heads from a recipe that is a secret of the secretive Balkans. British representatives will reveal the art of our roast beef and of veal and stuffing in its most superbly traditional form. Some of the best chefs of Italy will show how macaroni can be used in an almost limitless number of ways. But information is negative whether Scotland is going to reveal the mystery of haggis.

In addition to the actual cooking contests, there will be an exhibition, with tasting facilities, of numerous national delicacies.

I bet the various efforts of these culinary High Priests will not include "Chnoepfi & Kaes mit Schwartewurst" such as I get when on holiday, nor "Oepfelchuechli" sizzling hot from the frying pan, such as Mother alone is capable of producing!

An Anti-Fog Machine

An invention which ought to interest London Visitors to the Basle Fair is referred to in the following from the *Burton Evening Gazette*, 30th April:

A remarkable invention for the dispersal of fog is being exhibited at the fourteenth annual Swiss Industries Fair, which opened at Basle on Saturday (writes a correspondent).

The machine, which works on the principal of a huge ventilator fan, is described in the official catalogue as a "Fog Removing Apparatus." At present its use is being confined to

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factories where, by a force-and-suction system, it clears the atmosphere of steam, dust, or of local fogginess due to a damp and misty geographical situation.

But the possibilities of future developments in the machine for use, if only a limited use, in the open air are obvious. At some not distant date it may be possible by the use of such a machine to eliminate fog, under favourable wind conditions, from streets or from outside theatres or railway stations where fog is hampering street traffic.

This year's Basle Fair is the most comprehensive of the series that has yet been held. Since 1923 the number of entrance cards issued has risen from 32,000 to 70,000. The Fair is of particular interest to British exporters in view of the vast import necessities of Switzerland for her rapidly increasing manufactures.

And still another one, not quite Swiss, seeing it comes from our one and only "Protectorate" is mentioned in the *Revue* of 4th May:

The little mountainous Principality of Liechtenstein, which, with its romantic hill-top castles and unique political independence, has been the basis of many a "Ruritanian" novel since the "Prisoner of Zenda" was first published, is exhibiting a remarkable building device at the Swiss Industries Fair, which is now being held at Basle and closes on Tuesday next.

By means of walls made of pressed wood shavings complete isolation from changes of temperature is obtained for a house. Rooms remain warm in winter and cool in summer. By a process, now patented over most of the world, the shavings are pressed to such a hardness as to take a stucco or rough cast interior covering where desired.

Swiss Buses.

The interesting development of Diesel Engines in Motor Cars is illustrated by the following from the *Commercial Motor*, 29th April and incidentally shows how up-to-date our friends at Berne are:

We learn from Berne, Switzerland, that the municipal authorities of that city have decided to add 10 vehicles to their fleet of motor-buses. Two of the vehicles are to be supplied by F. B. Broznovic and Co., of Wetzikon—one being a six-wheeler—whilst eight are to be supplied by the Saurer Co., of Arbon, a feature of the Saurer vehicles being that they will have Diesel engines.

Writing of Motoring, I take it that some of our friends of the Colony here may venture to visit the Alps with their cars and the following from "Stock Exchange Gazette" 2nd May, may interest them:

In a circular letter to the Cantonal Governments the Federal Council publish the new road traffic regulations to be observed in Switzerland.

As well over a hundred thousand foreign motor-cars pass the Swiss frontiers during every travelling season, special care was taken to make the road signs as simple and as intelligible to foreign tourists as possible.

All red signs mean that roads are totally or partially blocked, whilst the best roads are indicated with blue signs. No more boards with inscriptions are to be used, as many foreigners would not understand them, and a commonly accepted international terminology does not yet exist.

Entrances and exits of villages and hamlets where reduced speed is required will be marked with boards bearing the names of the localities. Sign posts will be known by their white tops, and bear only the name of the nearest larger place with the distance given in kilometres. In the cities blue boards mean "parking allowed," and blue boards with a red edge "no parking."

Dangerous curves and crossings will still be marked as such, but other sorts of danger will not be specialised, but simply indicated by an exclamation mark, meaning "Look out!" In order to prevent misunderstandings no advertisements will be allowed to make use of the forms and colours of road signs.

THE SWISS PAVILION AT THE LIEGE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION 1930.

The visitor who enters the exhibition grounds at Liège at the present time can already see the complete timber framework of the Swiss Pavilion standing in front of the Palais de l'Electricité on the main artery of the "Mustache."

The builder of the pavilion is the architect Hofmann who had previously achieved great success in his arrangement of the Swiss sections at the International Exhibition of the Press at Cologne and also very particularly at the International Exhibition in Barcelona.

A large part of the outside wall of the pavilion being of glass, the visitor is enabled to gain some idea of the interesting contents of the building from outside.

A photo frieze, 120 m. long, visible from outside, gives an insight into Switzerland's productive capacities. The frieze, is composed of views of waterworks, railways, bridges, tunnels, factories, electric works and power stations, workshops, engine rooms, etc., and forms a valuable supplement to the exhibits in the Pavilion.

The visitor to the Pavilion first enters a large hall. His attention is at once arrested by the large diorama exhibited by the various Swiss companies, railways, etc. interested in the promotion of tourist traffic. This Diorama is 50 m. long, and 5 m. high, and gives a grand conception of the scenic beauties of Switzerland. On entering the interior of the Pavilion, we see the "Bureau de renseignements" immediately to the right, where experts in the different branches, who have been carefully selected for the purpose, give visitors detailed information concerning the various Swiss exhibitors. Special conference rooms are at the disposal of visitors wishing to discuss the question of commercial connexion with Switzerland. Further on we find the Exhibition of the Federal Polytechnic at Zurich. Special sections for engineering, overground and underground building, architecture, chemistry, agriculture and forestry show the aims of the studies in the different divisions of the school by means of clear schedules and illustrations. Models of electric power stations, of the geological formation of the Swiss Alps, etc. complete the show. Opposite the Polytechnic Exhibition is the section for time-pieces and textile goods. There is a dim light in the room, and 6 bright horizontal glass show-cases attract the visitor's gaze. They contain the richest treasures of the Swiss watch-making trade. To the right and the left of this case there are horizontal show-cases, 15 m. long each, containing products of Swiss textile industries. About 10 firms take part in the textile exhibition, and 30 in the exhibition of time-pieces.

The remainder of the Pavilion is occupied by the engine-room which measures over 500 sq. metres. Machine-engines of the most varied kinds are systematically placed, such as machinery for mills, electric apparatus, a Diesel motor and a compressor, and, in the section for metal industries, fittings, files, precision instruments, etc. Here too, the room is not divided into separate stands and therefore represents Swiss machine-building as a whole. S.I.T.

ECONOMIC NOTES.

FOREIGN TRADE.

The figures for foreign trade for the month of February show a slight rise, not only compared with the month before but also in comparison with the corresponding month of 1929. In fact, for February 1930 the total for imports and exports reached 362 millions as against 355 millions in January, and 351 millions in February 1929. For this last-mentioned month, however, it is necessary to bear in mind the unusually cold winter of 1929 which proved a great obstacle to imports.

Imports show a total of 205 millions (208 spread over the following different groups of products. (The figure in brackets refers to the month of January 1930):

Foodstuffs, beverages and tobaccos: 38 millions (39). Agricultural raw material: 10.5 millions (11). Fuel: 14 millions (17). Raw material for industries: 49 millions (51.5). Manufactured articles: 48.5 millions (47). Other Goods: 45 millions (43.5).

Exports, the total for which in February was 157 millions (146.6) may be split up into following chief categories of products:

Foodstuffs: 11.1 millions (12.3). Textiles: 57.4 millions (51.3). Machinery and metallurgical products: 39.1 millions (11.6). Chemical products and colouring matter: 13.7 (13).

The increase makes itself felt particularly in clock-making and textiles. The figures for these two groups, however, show a certain backward movement as compared with the month of February 1929.

Allotted to different countries, the export-figures are as follows:

Germany: 27.4 millions (24.8). France: 15.9 millions (16). Italy: 10.2 millions (9.7). England: 20.4 millions (20.3). United States: 13.6 millions (10.4).

The increase may be said to be general for the most important countries, except in the case of exports to France, which have fallen off, though only to an insignificant extent.

THE HOME MARKET.

The condition of the home market has hardly undergone any change from one month to the other. The labour market shows, so to speak, only weak signs of change. In most districts its condition may be regarded as being satisfactory, and in nearly all skilled trades, except that of textile products and certain branches of the machine-building trade. Demands for employment have decreased in number, from 14,800 to 13,400 whereas offers of employment have risen from 3,600 to 3,900.

The *Hotel Industry*, during February, has continued to have a relatively favorable season, 46.9 per cent. of the beds in the census having been occupied up till the middle of February, in the roughly, 1,200 establishments submitted to regular enquiry; the proportion falling to 38.7 at the end of the same month, a rate which we may consider satisfactory. Indeed the latter includes not only the resorts most sought after during the winter months, and whose coefficient of occupation by visitors has even been known to exceed 90 per cent., but besides these, also the places which at this time of the year slow down in their work. Generally speaking, the month of February has been particularly favorable to localities situated at an altitude exceeding 1,000 metres and which in mid-February showed an average percentage of 61.9, and at the end of February, one of 43.6.

SOCIAL LEGISLATION.

The work of social insurance schemes is gradually making headway in Switzerland, after its constitutional principle having been accepted by popular vote on December 6th, 1925. A scheme of legislation is at this moment under examination by the Federal Department of Public Economy, limiting this insurance to old age. The system will probably cost up to 190 millions per annum, half of which will be defrayed by the State.

The part payable by the State will be found by means of taxation, notably of alcohol and tobacco. S.I.T.

ANCIENT CEMETERY IN SWITZERLAND.

An important archaeological find has been made in Canton Zurich, near Oerlikon, not far from the industrial town of Winterthur. A cemetery dating from the seventh or eighth century A.D. has been discovered, and 53 tombs have been investigated, 38 of which contained funerary equipment.

The tombs have been plundered—a most uncommon circumstance in this part of the world—which accounts for the absence of valuable articles and jewels, and for the fact that the bones are either missing or tossed about. The violation apparently took place during the ninth or tenth century, as one of the plundered tombs lies at a depth of 10-in. below another tomb, of a more recent date, which has not been violated. The cemetery is that of some early Germanic tribe and appears to have been plundered by another tribe of the same race.

Several finds were made in one tomb which escaped the plunderers. In it were found a skeleton whose head and feet are surrounded by flat stones; a necklace of 125 small glass beads, some green, others brown, white, or red; and an iron belt buckle and a bone comb, as well as a curious bronze disk surrounded by a tubular bronze ring. The disk—which was undoubtedly an ornament—had been broken, and was repaired by means of four iron rivets. It is adorned with concentric engraved circles and with the engraving of an animal repeated four times on the centre part. The feet of the skeleton still wore a well-preserved pair of leather sandal fastenings. Many Roman tiles and pieces of charcoal have been recovered from most of these tombs.

In a vineyard at Monthey, Canton Valais, a lead coffin was recently dug up containing a well-preserved skeleton of a man lying on oak leaves. The leaves are in excellent condition but their colour has completely faded. The coffin is similar to those discovered some years ago in the same region, and it is supposed to be the sepulture of a Burgundian chief of the sixth century.

The Times.

RETURN JOURNEY TO THE MOON.

In the 'Vaterland' for April 19th we read the following story of heroic deeds which, however, have conveniently been postponed until the next century.

"Hundert Jahre nach Fritz Lang wird es auch den übrigen Sterblichen vergönnt sein, eine Spazierfahrt nach dem Mond zu machen. Der Professor für Astronomie an der Universität Princetown, John Y. Steward, hat es dieser Tage im Institut für Künste und Wissenschaften in Brooklyn verkündet. Der Reisende wird in einer Rakete Platz nehmen, die mit Telephon, Radio und den allerneuesten Erfindungen des 21. Jahrhunderts ausgerüstet sein wird. 40 Meter

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