

Swiss foreign trade last year

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EASTER, 1934.

By KYBURG.

In countless churches and other religious assembly places, all over the Christian world, fervid voices will, on Easter Sunday, testify to the relief which, once again, fills our hearts when we remember the resurrection of our Lord.

Easter, the blessed festival of *Spring*, is once again with us. Gone is the winter, gone are the cold blasts of winter's storms, gone are the long, dreary nights, gone the dark, chilly mornings, and before us opens up a period of bright, sunny, warm days, scented evenings and nights, in short, we are about to live again.

This resurrection, this miracle of Easter, fills us every year with new wonder, fresh awe and, although we can explain the phenomenon quite easily and even scientifically, deep down in our hearts we feel that there is indeed something miraculous involved in this Easter or resurrection, something which touches not only our physical well-being, but makes our pulse beat faster, just because of its mysteriousness.

Easter renews our faith. It is far easier to believe in the goodness of mankind when life is sunny, than it is during the dark, unhealthy days of winter. It is far easier to have faith in the ultimate destination of mankind when indulging in one's favourite philosophical thoughts while ambling leisurely beneath the luscious green of trees in the proud panoply of their first foliage, than when the same thoughts assail us while we are struggling hard, backs bent, eyes snarling with the driven rain, ears aching with the fury of unwanted wind-pressure, across the barren heath or under leafless, storm-twisted trees. In other words, creature comfort or otherwise determines to some extent our outlook on life, our philosophy, unless, indeed, we are ascetics.

In these times of general depression it must make us think sometimes when we reflect that even now, after 1934 years since the time of the first *Easter*, Christian humanity has made but little advance towards fulfilling the commands of the founder of our religion. Take that root-exhortation, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."

It is a command which might well be taken as the basis of Christian, and probably also of several other religions.

As far as I can discern, a small beginning towards its fulfilment has been made, inasmuch as we are being taught when young to act accordingly. We learn later in life, that it is a maxim "which pays," and, therefore, a good maxim to follow in business. We have learnt, too, to base our political institutions on the same command, but only as far as each country is concerned. We have not yet learnt to adopt this command in our dealings with our foreign brethren, whom, because we still consider them to be foreign, we will not admit into our charmed circle. We still think that in dealing with foreigners, we must adopt other methods. Why? Nobody seems to be able to explain satisfactorily, and the results achieved are hardly such as to denote wisdom on the part of those who persist in believing that foreigners must be dealt with otherwise than what is considered and proved by experience, right, fit and proper when dealing with our own folk.

And so, because the World at large still persists in its refusal to acknowledge the common brotherhood of mankind, the world at large has to pass through untold miseries, so that it may learn the lesson.

The "economic blizzard" of which we hear so much nowadays, is, of course, directly attributable to the stupid disunion which separates peoples economically and politically.

The consequent miseries suffered in all countries at the present time cannot be explained away by anything else.

And yet, have we not learnt at school that Union Makes for Strength? United we stand, disunited we fall, etc.

We know what is wrong, but we cannot alter it, or then only very slowly, one tiny little step forward at the time, for fear that we stumble. Would it not be a thousand times better to stumble on the way to progress and sanity, than to stand erect and still in the damp, unwholesome, loathsome spot in which humanity has stood for thousands of years, and in which the air has almost given out, and where suffocation seems the natural outcome of all the horrible mess.

It is seemingly evident that humanity has not reached its *Easter* yet. We are still in deep winter. We begin to understand slowly and painfully that there is a *Solidarity* which chains the various members of the human family together in iron chains, chains which are unbreakable, the chains of hunger, want, despair, of acute suffering and misery.

It may well be that poor humanity, so slow to learn from experience, must be made to feel, if it won't heed!

It may be, too, that after some time of misery, pain and trouble, Humanity will really begin to wonder why this *Solidarity* should not be made into a *Solidarity* of peaceful enjoyment?

If there is *Solidarity*—and who lives there to-day who could still be blind to the fact that if one member of the human family suffers, all the others suffer, too?—Why then, in Heaven's name, all this economical and political separation, why all this stupid Nationalism, why all these jealousies from one Nation to the other, from one country to the other?

Why endure *Solidarity*, instead of enjoying it?

That is my Easter-Query. Ask yourself the question and try to answer it, fearlessly and honestly, and in doing so, you will not only come nearer towards understanding the command of our Lord, "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise," but you may help, each in its place, a little bit towards preparing the way towards the desired goal.

SWISS FOREIGN TRADE LAST YEAR.

Considerable satisfaction is being expressed in Switzerland at the successful policy of the authorities which has resulted in a reduction of over 200,000,000 francs in the adverse balance of Swiss foreign trade, the figures being 741,700,000 francs, as compared with 961,700,000 francs in 1932. This decline of 21 per cent. is attributed mainly to the introduction of quotas by which the Swiss have tried to make it clear that certain countries cannot increase or even retain their export trade with Switzerland without being obliged in return to purchase a larger quantity of Swiss products.

The subjoined table illustrates the fluctuations in the balance of Swiss foreign trade during the last five years:—

(In million francs.)

Year.	Imports.	Exports.	Adverse B'lance.	Exports Imp'ts. % of
1928	2,719	2,133	586	78.4
1929	2,731	2,098	633	76.8
1931	2,251	1,349	902	59.9
1932	1,763	801	962	45.4
1933	1,594	853	742	53.5

In weight, imports last year amounted to 8,175,603 tons, as against 8,598,869 tons in the preceding twelve months, and 8,955,363 tons in 1931. Exports rose slightly in both weight and value. As, however, since January 1, 1933, the figures for transit and finishing trade have been incorporated with the general trade figures, it is necessary to deduct these before achieving a really true comparison with the preceding years. Thus, after subtracting the figures in question, the net total for imports shows a decrease, since 1932, of 250,200,000 francs (14.2 per cent.), and amounts to 1,512,500,000 francs, and exports a decrease of 48,100,000 francs (6.1 per cent.). The changes in respect of weight are less notable, imports having fallen by 440,000 tons (— 5.1 per cent.), and exports having risen by 20,000 tons (+ 3.9 per cent.). There was a decrease in both imports and exports of the three principal categories of goods—viz., foodstuffs, raw materials and manufactures, as compared with the two preceding years.

MOVEMENT OF BULLION.

Imports of bullion fell from 823,800,000 frs. in 1932 (933,800,000 frs. in 1931) to 634,400,000 francs in the year under review. Exports, on the other hand, showed a marked increase and totalled 846,700,000 frs., as against 106,100,000 frs. in 1932 and only 14,100,000 frs. in 1931. France sent bullion to the value of 517,100,000 frs. (79,800,000 francs in 1932), and purchased Swiss gold to the value of 708,600,000 frs. (82,400,000 frs. in 1932). The next best customer for Swiss gold was Great Britain with 125,300,000 frs. (nil in 1932). The greater portion of both imported and exported bullion was for banking transactions, and as such was not included in the general statistics.

There was an increase in comparison with 1932 in imports of certain raw materials for industrial purposes—e.g., raw cotton and silk, hides and skins, pig iron, copper and aluminium, while a decrease took place in imports of cereals, animal foodstuffs, timber, minerals, raw wool, rubber goods, instruments and apparatus and chemicals. There was an increase in quantity and a decline in value in imports of motor vehicles, technical fats, machinery, tobacco, vegetables and fruits.

There was a considerable increase in the number of motor-cars imported (+ 656 cars), more vehicles being obtained from Germany and from Great Britain, and fewer from the United States.

The following table gives the values of some of the chief categories of Swiss exports for the last three years. It will be seen that a great many items show a retrogressive movement in comparison not only with the relatively favourable year of 1931, but also with 1932, and this in spite of the inclusion of the figures for transit and finishing trade:—

(In millions of francs.)

	1933	1932	1931
Textiles (total) ...	195.1	153.2	329.0
including:—			
Silk fabrics ...	43.9	28.1	89.3
Embroideries ...	22.3	23.9	52.4
Cotton goods ...	65.0	38.7	61.1
Cotton yarns ...	14.6	11.6	24.3
Rayon ...	26.4	23.1	38.3
Hosiery and knitted goods ...	5.7	6.5	17.5
Silk ribbons ...	5.9	7.0	11.3
Machinery and metals (total) ...	222.6	207.8	362.5
including:—			
Watches ...	96.0	86.3	143.6
Machinery ...	90.2	86.9	150.4
Instruments and apparatus ...	29.4	29.3	50.1
Foodstuffs (total) ...	54.3	64.1	119.4
including:—			
Cheese ...	44.0	48.9	73.0
Condensed milk ...	8.7	12.8	28.0
Chocolate ...	1.6	2.4	18.4
Chemicals ...	98.5	91.0	116.4
Plaited braids for hats ...	20.5	24.4	36.9
Footwear ...	13.4	12.9	29.6

With regard to the direction of Swiss foreign trade, an improvement is to be observed in her habitual adverse trade balance with Germany, France, Italy, the United States, Belgium, Holland, Spain, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Canada, and the Argentine Republic. The most notable change in the direction of her trade is that with Great Britain, where the considerable balance of many years' duration in favour of Switzerland, has now been transformed into a slightly adverse balance. Four years ago Switzerland was still exporting about 122,000,000 frs. worth more of goods to Great Britain than she purchased from her; three years ago there was still a balance of 30,000,000 frs. in her favour; in 1932 this favourable balance fell to only 7,900,000 frs., while in 1933 imports of British goods exceeded Swiss exports to Great Britain by 3,000,000 frs. The change in the direction of Swiss foreign trade will be seen from the following table, showing her five principal customers:—

(In million francs.)

Country.	Imports from		Exports to	
	1932	1933	1932	1933
Germany ...	499.5	460.7	111.4	138.8
France ...	272.3	243.7	123.0	142.3
Italy ...	143.1	133.8	81.8	80.1
Great Britain ...	78.4	90.7	186.4	87.6
United States ...	115.0	90.3	55.1	57.6

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LONDON SWISS RIFLE TEAM.

"Everything was lovely in the garden" might be applied to last Sunday. Anyhow, as far as shooting practice at Bisley was concerned, conditions were perfect. Shooting on the two targets reserved went on merrily and without interruption. The attendance was good and the results excellent.

The best score of the meeting was secured by A. Deubelbeiss with a series of 53. His average of 44.4 was, however, not so good, though 25 per cent. better than on the previous Sunday. The three best averages were: Alf. Schmid 47, P. Hilfiker 46.2, and J. Haesler 45.5.

Laurels (Krantz) were shot by A. Deubelbeiss, Alf. Schmid, P. Hilfiker and J. Haesler.

Final arrangements will have to be made after Easter for selecting the members of the team to compete at Fribourg. We are told that there are several crack shots in our Colony, and a hearty invitation is extended to them to join the team, and give an exhibition of their skill on Sunday, April 8th, when the next practice will take place at Bisley. Rifles and ammunition will be provided.

SWISS YODLER CONCERT.

A cheque for £20.10.0 has been forwarded to the Committee of the Fonds de Secours pour les Suisses pauvres, as the result of the concert given by the Swiss Federal Railway Yodlers on Friday, March 9th, at the Union Helvetia Club.

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