

Emigration of Swiss industries [continued]

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Objekttyp: **Article**

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

Band (Jahr): **- (1938)**

Heft 842

PDF erstellt am: **02.05.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-686010>

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Instead of giving an account of the book of our own, the reader of the Swiss Observer will be more interested in what the English critics have said about this new Swiss literary work.

Dr. E.

Sir E. Denison Ross writes in the "Sunday Times":

This book is Mlle. Maillart's own account of the now famous journey she made overland from Peking to India with Peter Fleming. Many English readers are familiar with "News from Tartary," but although the journey and the travellers are the same in both books, to have read and enjoyed Peter Fleming in no way spoils one's pleasure in reading Ella Maillart: on the contrary, the latter serves as a delightful complement to the former — it may indeed be fitly described as the Companion Volume.

The two accounts have obviously been written quite independently — there has been no collusion between the writers, and it is a tribute to their powers of observation and their good memories that there are no inconsistencies.

We have revealed to us two individuals who by birth and education are as far apart as two Europeans could well be — who have certain rare gifts and characteristics in common. Chief among these are iron constitutions, indomitable courage, and a positive love of discomfort. As one reads of the risks they took to satisfy their hunger and thirst one realises the amount of trouble involved once we begin to take precautions. These young travellers remind one rather of the famous adventures of a dog who, it was claimed, "would eat anything." And they had not a topee between them! But their outlook on life was fundamentally different, and one imagines that they emerged from their great adventure mentally exactly as they had started. As she herself writes:—

Peter thought me too serious, and I did not understand British humour; I had the bad taste to lay down the law about the art of living. Peter was bored by my craving to understand the thousands of diverse lives that make up humanity, and bored too by my need to relate my own life to life in general. ... Peter was troubled by none of these things. In his imperturbable wisdom he looked on human beings as characters in a comedy. As to his deeper feelings his timidity usually made him hide them beneath a facetious dignity. Except at rare intervals, he seemed persuaded that his concerns were of no interest to anybody.

Hardship and Danger.

Peter Fleming, as we know, cares little for archaeology or past history — he is engrossed in the present and in the shape of the future: Ella Maillart, we feel, has some hankering after the past, and would have made as good a companion to an explorer as she did to this traveller. When she is passing through the sites uncovered by Stein, such as Keriya, Niya, and Endere, one can fancy her casting a longing glance and wishing she could do some digging herself. But in the land of rebellious Tungans our two travellers were far too busy in providing food and safety for themselves to worry about silk routes or Kharosthi tablets.

In a journey involving every kind of hardship and danger nothing can have been more trying than the medical attendance which was demanded of Mlle. Maillart by the helpless and credulous inhabitants of out-of-the-way places, who could not be induced to believe she was not a doctor, and the wonder is that her medicine chest should have lasted out. Her duties as a veterinary surgeon were often arduous and sometimes most disagreeable, but usually successful.

Special attention must be called to chapter nine, in which Mlle. Maillart has temporarily abandoned her personal narrative to give us a most illuminating sketch of the history of Sin Kiang, with special reference to the events of the last five years. The Tungans, Chinese Muslims, who are a constant trouble to the Chinese Government, have recently been again figuring in the news, and many will be grateful to the writer for this digression, which explains one of the most confusing features of Central Asian politics.

The translation by Thomas McGreevy is wholly admirable, and the photographs are excellent. Perhaps the best picture is that of the two travellers which bears the caption "Delhi: The Expedition Breaks Up." This offers a most striking likeness of Ella Maillart and Peter Fleming, who look as if they had just returned from a quiet holiday by the seaside.

The accomplishment of this journey is enough to place Ella Maillart among the great travellers of the world, and her delightful book should have a secure place in the literature of travel.

EMIGRATION OF SWISS INDUSTRIES.

By OSCAR WETZEL.

(Continuation).

After the war, we find, naturally, the country of Vorarlberg in a position to work very much cheaper owing to the depreciated value of its currency, and this at certain periods was so bad that serious disturbances happened at the frontier. This especially so when big firms of St. Gall moved their entire installations over the frontier.

In the 19th century Swiss manufacturers had already penetrated further into the country, and we find establishments in the Tyrol and Bohemia.

At the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, as well as in the years after the War, there was continuous emigration of the St. Gall Embroidery industry to the north. Firms were established in the Black Forest, and Swiss went to Plauen where a big industry was started and later on developed into a serious competitor of Switzerland. We find the same industry emigrating to Prussia, Saxony, etc.

Also to the west we find developments of Swiss firms, and a number of Swiss companies settled in St. Quentin to work for the French market.

Up to the beginning of the 20th century the United States of America were some of our very best clients, but from this time onwards they produced their own requirements on a successively bigger and bigger scale.

Switzerland exported a large number of machines, and Swiss interests were distributed all over the American Continent in newly erected factories.

In spite of the fact that undoubtedly the participations of Swiss firms in establishments of the Embroidery industry abroad have brought about a great reduction in exports from Switzerland, it must be said that right up to the War, the St. Gall industry played a still very important, if not leading part, in the world production. The crisis that hit our country so severely, especially during 1921, is recognised not only by the fact that factories have been established abroad, but to a very great extent due to the requirements of the "mode" and also to the depreciation of currency in a great many countries.

It is interesting to note that not only the Swiss Embroidery industry has hit very badly, but in the same way the secondary centres in Germany, France, America, etc., were dragged into this crisis.

4) KNITTING INDUSTRY.

This industry is naturally much younger, and still follow the track of the silk industry.

SHOE MANUFACTURERS.

The greatest Swiss enterprise in the Shoe industry — the firm of Bally — has followed the example of so many other more undertakings by starting abroad, in support of their sales organisations, subsidiary companies for the manufacture of their products.

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Bally, Paris.
Bally Camsat, Lyons.
Bally, Brussels.
Bally, London.
Cuthbert & Co., Cape Town.
Bally Shoe Factory, Cape Town.
Bally, New York.
Bally, Buenos Aires.

What has been said in connection with other trades is repeated in the Shoe industry. We find in this particular case a big firm which has worked up a good business and a good name with its clients, so to say, all over the world. For various reasons it gets more and more difficult for them to sell their goods in competition with local manufacturers, although they are well known and appreciated by their customers who are willing to pay a certain extra price for their products. But there comes a point when even gold is too expensive, and these firms are faced with the problem of either losing their long established markets or trying to produce in the country of destination.

(To be continued.)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS.

Tuesday, January 4th — City Swiss Club — Monthly Meeting — (preceded by dinner at 7.15 sharp) at Pagan's Restaurant, Great Portland Street, W.

Wednesday, January 5th, at 8 p.m. — Swiss Mercantile Society — Meeting of the Philatelic Group, at "Swiss House," Fitzroy Square, W.

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Dimanche, 2 janvier : Culte du Nouvel-An 11h. et 6h.30 : Mr. Emery.

(L'école du Dimanche est supprimée).

SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutschsprachige Gemeinde).

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.
(near General Post Office.)

Sonntag, den 2. Januar 1938.

11 Uhr morgens, Neujahrsgottesdienst.

7 Uhr abends, Neujahrsgottesdienst und Feier des Heiligen Abendmahls.

Dienstag, den 4. Januar 1938.

3 Uhr nachm., Nähverein im "Foyer Suisse."

TAUFEN.

Am 25. Dezember, Christtag, wurden getauft:

John Ralph Meier, geb. am 20. September 1937; Sohn des Fritz Meier von Diessenhofen (Thurgau) und der Margrit geb. Stadelmann von Frasnacht (Thurgau).

Erich Wilhelm Wagner, geb. am 23. November 1937; Sohn des Wilhelm Karl Wagner von Basel (Stadt) und der Susanna Angelina Inez geb. Valleraut von Sorriso, Provincia di Novara (Italien).

VERDANKUNG.

Die Kirchenpflege und der Pfarrer danken allen freundlichen Gebern, die mitgeholfen haben in den vergangenen Tagen Freude zu bereiten, recht herzlich. Die gütigen Geber können des Dankes auch der Empfänger versichert sein.

Printed for the Proprietors, by THE FREDERICK PRINTING CO., LTD., at 23, Leonard Street, London, E.C.2.