Swiss National Exhibition

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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

TRADE OF SWITZERLAND.

Swiss economic conditions improved during the first quarter of the year, when exports showed a rise of nearly 8 per cent. over 1938. Imports reached a value of 398,315,000f., against 399,920,000f. the previous year, and exports totalled 329,818,000f., compared with 306,259,000f. in 1938. There was a rise in the imports of raw materials resulting from increased activity in industry, and of foodstuffs, coal, and petrol owing to the political situation, which induced the Government and traders to accumulate stocks. Nearly all categories of exports showed an increase, but the rise was particularly noticeable in regard to machines, vehicles, aluminium, chemicals, aniline dyes, and certain classes of textiles.

Commercial exchanges with Great Britain were satisfactory and are likely to be fostered by the new trade agreement which is now being negotiated in London. Imports from Britain totalled 25,051,020f., compared with 22,518,315f. in 1938, and exports to her reacher 43,950,815f., against 34,214,101f. the previous year. There was in March an important rise in exports of aluminium and aniline dyes to England. Trade with the British Empire totalled roughly 40,000,000f. in regard to imports, or about 8 per cent. of Swiss imports, and 56,000,000f. as regards exports, that is, nearly 17 per cent. of the total Swiss exports.

SWISS ACHIEVEMENT.

Professor Gilbert Murray and Senor Salvador de Madariaga both pay tribute to Switzerland in an attractively written and illustrated brochure which has been brought out for the Swiss National Fair, which opened at Zurich yesterday.

The Professor writes:

" I remember the great historical achievement of Switzerland in teaching men to live together in concord. Only here do French, German and Italian co-operate as free men, rejoicing in a common citizenship and service to society, finding their bond of union not in aggressive nationalism or dreams of military ambition, but in building up by united effort " a good life for man."

Senor de Madariaga concludes:

" And since it is evident that the specific feature of Western civilisation is precisely that it seeks to achieve clear aims by the operation of the human will, it follows that Switzerland is the prototype of our Western civilisation and the masterpiece thereof."

LEGACIES.

The community of Uster (Zurich) has received an anonymous donation amounting to 40,000 frs. for the " Bürgerheim." The late Adolf Schraner-Schwitter, Manufacturer in Oberurnen (Glarus) has left an amount of 50,000 frs. to charitable institutions. Dr. Fritz Funk, late Manager of the Engineering Works Brown, Boveri & Co., Ltd., has bequeathed the sum of 100,000 frs. to various institutions in the canton of Aargau. The late Karl Maeder-Schorno in Zollikon has bequeathed nearly 20,000 frs. to be distributed amongst various charitable institutions.

" LANDSGEMEINDEN."

All the members of the cantonal government of Appenzell A. Rh. were confirmed in their offices at the "Landsgemeinde" in Hundwil. M. Walter Ackermann was elected as " Landammann."

M. Christen, was elected " Landammann " at the " Landsgemeinde " which took place at Stans. (Ct. Nidwalden).

The " Landsgemeinde " of the canton of Obwalden, which took place in Sarnen elected M. Walter Amstalden, States Councillor, as " Landammann."

On the occasion of the " Landsgemeinde " of the canton of Appenzell J. Rh. which took place in Appenzell, M. Armin Locher, States Councillor, was elected " Landammann."

The " Landsgemeinde " of the canton of Glarus was postponed to the 14th of this month owing to bad weather.

DEFENCE OF SWISS LIBERTIES.

Big public demonstrations at which Switzerland's determination to maintain and defend her democratic institutions, her liberty, and the independence of her State was unmistakably shown, were held this week. In spite of the bad weather four *landsgemeinden* took place. In some of the German-speaking cantons the male population assembles, according to ancient tradition, once a year in an open place to decide upon certain laws and to elect their administrators and judges. These assemblies of voters are the *Landsgemeinden*.

At the annual assembly of the Radical Democratic Party two members of the Federal Council urged the necessity of reinforcing national defence and of establishing a union of all classes.

M. Obrecht, head of the Department of Public Economy, in his speech, explained what Switzerland had done and would do to reinforce national defence. He stated that an extraordinary Budget had been created for national defence and that the country had spent in the last few years altogether 1,000,000,000f. (£50,000,000), of which 400,000,000f. was on the defence of the frontiers, 340,000,000f. on aircraft, 180,000,000f. on fortifications, and 80,000,000f. on the construction of barracks.

The Minister of Finance, M. Wetter, declared that party politics were less important to-day than the struggle between the democracies and the totalitarian countries. Justice and law no longer played any part; only force counted . All the small countries had therefore to protect themselves. That was what Switzerland was doing. They still hoped for the triumph of reason, but if it had to be done every Swiss citizen would do his duty.

HEAVY SNOW FALLS IN SWITZERLAND.

Snow has fallen in abundance on the mountains down to the 2,000ft. level in Switzerland. There are over 3ft. of fresh snow on the Simplon Pass, and the road will not be open to vehicles.

MORE RAPIDES FOR SWITZERLAND.

Alpar Schweizerische Luftverkehrs A.G., the Swiss internal air traffic company, has just taken delivery of two Dragon Rapides from Hatfield.

In ten years of operation the company has been flying internally in Switzerland, and for the past six years working a line from Zürich to Berne, Lausanne and Geneva. It runs three or four times daily during the Summer to connect with international services.

Alpar also runs a special connection between Berne and La Chaux-de-Fonds, and twice daily in the Summer between Berne and Basle to connect with Swissair and Imperials. The Rapides are for the last-named route and they will also be used for Alpine pleasure flights which are the basis upon which the company grew up.

SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS A.R.P.

The extraordinary credits voted by the Swiss Government for defence measures include an item of about £80,000 for protection of the railways in an emergency. It is understood that materials for various structures and improvement works will be ordered immediately.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

The management of the Swiss National Exhibition gave a dinner to the 3,000 workmen who were engaged in the erection of the exhibition. Dr. Meili, on behalf of the exhibition authorities thanked the guests for the work and the efforts they made to get the Exhibition ready in good time.

BERNE.

The death has ocurred in Berne of Dr. Otto Schulthess, from 1907-1932 Professor of classical philology at the University of Berne.

SWISS NATIONAL EXHIBITION 1939 ZURICH.

Opened Friday, May 5th.

A small state with great activities.

On the map of the world Switzerland is but a tiny spot, on that of Europe an insignificant plot of land. Although her geographical situation gives her a not inconsiderable importance, she cannot, as a small neutral state, play any important part in international politics. But, as one of her great writers has said, she possesses one great factor which " idealistically and completely outweighs the tremendous advantages of a Great Power, viz., real and actual liberty," for " a small state exists so that there may be one spot in the world where the majority of its inhabitants are citizens in the full sense of the word." (J. Burckhardt " Considerations on Universal History "). This greatness is not borne by the heroic figures that determine the fate of great nations and in whom the longings and volition of the masses are incorporated, but by the " citizen in the full sense of the word." This citizen is characterised by his attachment to his native soil and the manners and customs of his environment, but at the same time he possesses world-awareness and a gift of comprehension and creation which lifts him far above the merely provincial.

The structure of the Swiss State and the fact that this small country, with its French, German and Italian-speaking districts shares in three European cultures, are a happy augury that this ideal can also become that of large numbers of other people.

Communal autonomy is the political school in which the citizen gets his first practical elementary instruction in democratic rights and liberties. The organisation of a commune is that of the state *in petto*. What is learnt there enables the citizen himself to judge the problems to be solved by each Canton and the Federation. The elementary school, of which the spiritual founder was the great Swiss pedagogue Heinrich Pestalozzi, is in Switzerland devoted to a high degree to the formation of personality and character. On its broad and comprehensive foundations a highly differentiated system of higher education has been built up. There are excellent public and private middle and vocational schools, and these are not only to be found in the big towns but everywhere up and down the country. Switzerland, whose population does not exceed that of a big continental metropolis, has no fewer than seven universities. Those who have attended these middle schools and colleges, but often, indeed, those whose knowledge has been acquired in the elementary school and by experience, are the men and women who form the aspiring *élite* in the state, the community and the family, who watches over politics, science, art and economy and the preservation of liberty. At the same time Switzerland remains faithful to her ideal of world-citizenship and is in constant mental and spiritual contact with her friendly neighbours.

From May 6th to October 29th, the Swiss National Exhibition is held in Zurich. One of the objects of this thematic display is to give visitors a comprehensive picture of the history of Swiss civilization, the means of development offered to her citizens by this small state with its many divisions, and the manifold creations in all directions in which so many minds have co-operated.

Two shores — two worlds.

The Swiss National Exhibition at Zurich, which opened its doors yesterday, is established on both shores of the Lake of Zurich. On the right shore are the Swiss village, the festival hall and the comprehensive agricultural display; on the left the exhibits of industry, tourism and the great cultural institutions of the country. The neat wooden buildings, the regional wine lodges, the hunting and fishing huts and the halls for livestock, the country products of field, forest, vineyard, orchard and kitchen garden, the farms and houses of cottage workers are pleasantly scattered in the shade of a magnificent park on the one side, and on the other one huge hall after another rears its head full of machinery at work, with the endless diversity of a highly developed industrial state, the exhibits of the universities, schools and churches, the state and the army, art and trade, hotel-keeping and traffic.

This dividing up on the two opposite shores will be particularly stimulating to the visitor. Many who were under the impression that Switzerland was chiefly an Alpine farmland will be amazed at the eminent importance of her industry; and those who have always connected Switzerland in the first instance with the idea of high grade industrial products will obtain informative insight into the life of the Swiss peasantry from whose stock and unused forces all the other sections of the population are replenished.

A suspension railway soaring over the lake, boats connecting one shore with the other, and a well organised tramway network around the bay will easily connect the two parts of the Exhibition and enable the visitor passing from one shore to the other to obtain a complete view of Switzerland and her activities.

UNE OPINION SUISSE.

Neutralité n'est pas abandon d'idéal et de doctrine. Certes, la S.d.N. n'a pas réalisé nos espoirs de 1920. Elle a joué de malheur.

Toutefois, l'idée de la solidarité des intérêts internationaux reste une idée juste et la Suisse, dans sa politique étrangère, se refuse à l'abandonner.

Notre neutralité politique n'est pas une neutralité morale.

Et nous dirons ici, en plein sangfroid et sans passion :

La doctrine de collaboration des peuples, c'est à dire d'entente, d'accord, de respect des individualités propres de chaque nation est une doctrine vraie, génératrice de paix, de vie économique saine et de prospérité pour tous.

La doctrine du nationalisme totalitaire intégral qui n'envisage plus que l'intérêt exclusif du groupe est une doctrine fausse qui n'amène que peu à peu la ruine des peuples vainqueurs, comme des peuples vaincus.

La mainmise du Reich sur la Tchéco-Slovaquie procède de cette seconde doctrine et, nous, Suisses, condamnons tous cet acte de force et tous nous envoyons aux Tchèques dans le deuil et la prostration, l'hommage de notre profonde sympathie.

Et que si l'on nous rappelle les devoirs d'une neutralité, mal comprise, nous répondrons tous par le mot qu'a crié à Worms le plus grand homme de l'histoire d'Allemagne : " Nous ne pouvons dire autrement."

Et nous ajoutons ceci en pesant nos mots :

Si jamais une nation voisine voulait nous faire passer de la neutralité politique à la neutralité morale, nous devrions nous y opposer par tous les moyens, même par la force. Car la neutralité politique, formule pratique de notre politique étrangère, est un moyen parmi d'autres de maintenir notre indépendance. Admettre, en revanche, que le citoyen n'a pas le droit d'exprimer son opinion, de s'associer à une œuvre de collaboration des peuples, de proclamer son idéal moral et politique, c'est nier notre indépendance, but suprême de notre effort national et humain.

La Confédération suisse, fondée sur le fédéralisme régional, le droit du citoyen et la liberté de la personne, est naturellement en opposition avec le communisme et avec le totalitarisme.

Dans le communisme, le peuple suisse reconnait une doctrine de division des classes sociales, dans le totalitarisme, un nationalisme intégral contraire à la collaboration des peuples et son éloignement de ces doctrines augmente encore.

Aujourd'hui, en 1939, notre situation en face de ces doctrines étrangères mérite d'être analysée.

En 1914, l'opinion publique en Suisse allemande était très influencée par le prestige de l'Allemagne impériale et, lors du début de la guerre mondiale, les sympathies de la Suisse allemande pour l'Allemagne, celles de la Suisse romande pour les Alliés, ont failli diviser le pays où chaque culture exerçait une influence centrifuge. Il a fallu toute l'action de la N. S. H. et du Conseil fédéral pour ramener les esprits à la compréhension des intérêts nationaux suisses.

En 1939, ce danger n'existe pas. La Suisse allemande, hostile aux tendances totalitaires et racistes, est en posture défensive contre l'influence allemande. La Suisse romande, qui a vu tous les périls du communisme et avec l'expérience française, est très prévenue contre la tendance du front populaire. Il n'y a donc aucun fossé comme en 1914, mais bien plutôt des forces de concentration qui augmentent la cohésion nationale.

A cet égard-là, nous pouvons donc préférer un certain optimisme et dire que l'opinion suisse est mieux préparée qu'en 1914 à subir un choc.

Mais, il y a autre chose qui est moins agréable.

Les Etats totalitaires communiste et hitlérien ont tous deux créé de puissantes centrales de propagande et leur action s'exerce partout sous les formes les plus diverses et les plus dissimulées. La principale habileté de ces propagandes est d'utiliser en sa faveur la répulsion que crée l'autre propagande.

Nous, qui ne voulons ni Moscou, ni Berlin, nous devons être sur nos gardes.

Constamment, le communisme fait entendre sa voix de sirène et nous devons bien préciser ici :

Si l'Italie et l'Allemagne ont dû se jeter dans les bras d'un dictateur, c'est en grande partie à cause de la décomposition amenée par le marxisme.

Si les Etats libéraux n'ont pu parler plus fort en faveur des petits peuples auxquels ils avaient promis secours, c'est à cause de la politique d'extrême-gauche qui a paralysé l'industrie et l'économie nationale. L'occupation des usines n'a pas profité aux ouvriers, mais bien aux dictateurs étrangers.

Si la S.D.N. a été paralysée, c'est en grande partie à cause de la méfiance générale créée par l'entrée de l'U.R.S.S.

Les peuples ne défendront pas leur indépendance en se livrant aux idées totalitaires de gauche, mais bien plutôt en luttant contre elles, comme contre les idées totalitaires de droit au nom de leur idéal propre.

Et ceci me conduit à ma conclusion. Nous ne devons pas, pour échapper à Charybde, nous jeter sur Scylla.

Et nous devons chercher notre encouragement ailleurs. Le peuple suisse n'a pas à se cantonner dans une attitude négative en face de ces monstrueuses idéologies étrangères.

Il a beaucoup plus et beaucoup mieux : la claire vision de notre idéal national propre, cet idéal de collaboration heureuse, dans la diversité, des cantons latins et germains, des confessions différentes, des races différentes, cet idéal d'une nation attachée à l'idée de liberté, à celle des droits individuels, à celle de la dignité humaine, cet idéal d'une nation qui veut réaliser une œuvre commune, non pas contre une race ou une nation, mais pour le bien de tous ses enfants.

Albert Picot,
Conseiller d'Etat et Conseiller national.

SWISS WOMEN UNITE TO HALT EXTENSION OF NAZI INFLUENCE.

" Women and Democracy " is the name of an organization newly launched by the women of Switzerland, and inspired by a desire to combat any spread of National Socialism.

The women of Switzerland are not in possession of the parliamentary franchise, although certain of them have demanded enfranchisement for the past 5 years or more. Nor are they, as a general rule, particularly eager to enter the political field. Recent events in Europe, and especially recent events in Switzerland itself have, however, stirred them to a sudden realization that, even if voteless, they yet have an important part to play in the destinies of their country.

The doctrine of the Third Reich preaches that all Aryan people of the German tongue should be united under one government. In line with this doctrine, three-fifths of Swiss territory might be claimed by Germany, while the southern Italian-speaking part of the country might be claimed by Italy. National Socialist propaganda is heard on all hands. National Socialist students are making their way in large numbers into the Swiss universities. It is said that already 200,000 Germans have settled in Switzerland with the main object of spreading National Socialist ideas and opinions.

The invasion has caused no little alarm among Swiss women. They protest that the German language spoken in their country is not really German at all, but a patois which is heard in many varieties and which actually possesses a literature of its own.

All over the country, public meetings consider and carry a resolution drawn up by women. " We women of Switzerland," it runs, " conscious that we share the responsibility for the maintenance of our fatherland, declare that we are willing to co-operate in the spiritual and economic defence of our country. We are willing to develop in a special way the Swiss ideology in our homes, to educate our children as good Swiss citizens, to help toward the overcoming of differences of opinion among Swiss people, to bridge over contrasts, and to render social service to all who are in need."

The women of Switzerland continue to express a desire for political enfranchisement. They want, they say, the liberty of citizenship. In the meantime, however, there is a wider, more vital liberty to be upheld. It is a liberty represnted by a Confederation based upon democracy. That liberty, loyally supported, they say, must surely bring full citizenship rights to women in the near future.

(*C. Sc. M.*)



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