

Swiss watchmaking and America

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SWISS WATCHMAKING AND AMERICA.

(“*Swiss Industry and Trade*,” May, 1940.)

Switzerland, the roof of Europe, is surely well known among lands counting as milk, butter and cheese producers. She enjoys a foremost reputation in this connection. But, together with Holland and Belgium, Switzerland also shows the highest figure per head as regards international trade activity (imports and exports). Among the countries being both Switzerland's customers and suppliers, the *United States of America* always ranked within the very first. In 1920, for instance, the United States shipped to Switzerland goods for an amount of nearly a thousand million francs — more than any of the great countries bordering Switzerland.

An old established trade connection is there in existence, which is worth a closer study, as far as watchmaking is concerned.

Watchmaking, a very old Swiss industry (especially in the Jura districts), has always been in close and steady business touch with America, in particular with the United States. During the last years, the United States were, by far, the leaders in the table of Swiss watchmaking exports: in 1938 with 38 million Swiss francs, in 1937 with 50 millions, in 1929 with 64 millions, the figure for 1913 being 72 millions. Since a long time, important Swiss watchmaking firms have many active agents in New York as well as in other big cities in the United States. New York remains, by far, the leading place of delivery and distribution of Swiss watches in the United States.

These old business relations can only be strengthened by the present war. We are referring here not only to Canada and to the United States, but to the whole of peaceful and laborious America, where the need for accurate, strong and lasting watches will more and more be felt. Now working at full capacity, Swiss watchmakers are in a position to supply all American countries with any kind of watch that may be in demand nowadays, from the simple and sturdy current watch to the most expensive chronometer.

It should be noted that between 1929 and 1940, the quality of the Swiss watch has still been improved. While the time-keeping standard was always on the rise, protection was secured against the effects of shocks and falls by means of a special device. The watch was rendered waterproof and dustproof, a feature which is of very great importance for sportsmen, campers and for all the people having to work in the vicinity of water. Lastly, the watch became anti-magnetic, this being of special interest to the producers and to the countless users of electricity, from the chief engineer of the big plant to the housewife busy with her electric range and her vacuum cleaner.

It should be finally emphasised that the great world of Swiss watchmaking, from the big manufacturer to the simplest working girl, is not limiting its business influence to the mere exports of watches. The Swiss people are buying a lot of American products, such as petrol, motor cars, oil, corn from Canada and from the United States, Californian preserves. Switzerland, a very small country, with only 4 million inhabitants, imported during 1938, from the United States only, goods for an amount of 125 million Swiss francs, that is to say much more than the whole of her watch exports to the United States.

Relations between the United States and Switzerland are thus based on a sound principle of exchanges. The products of both countries are mostly complementary. Since they exist, the United States have exported their products to Switzerland — the oldest republic in the world. We can therefore repeat to our American friends the famous and ever true slogan: “Buy from those who are buying from you!”.

AN UNJUSTIFIABLE STATEMENT.

(“*The Nursing Times*,” 22.6.40.)

A rumour has reached us that the *Nursing Times* has been accused of publishing an attack on Miss Dreyer, principal matron-in-charge of the London County Council, on the grounds that she is “a woman of German blood.” The accusation is false and we wish to dissociate ourselves from this attack. The facts of the case have been supplied to us by Miss Dreyer and are as follows:—

I, the undersigned Rosalie Dreyer, spinster, of E 24, DuCane Court, S.W.17, was born at Ranflüh, Berne, Switzerland, on September 3, 1895. My ancestors, definitely so far back as my great-grandparents on both sides, were Swiss born and I have no knowledge of any ancestors being other than Swiss.

I was educated in Switzerland up to the age of 18. I came to England in 1914 with the idea of learning English and remained continuously in England until 1923. Between 1918 and 1922 I received general nursing training at Guy's Hospital, London, and on completion of my training I did some private nursing in England and then went to Switzerland for a holiday, afterwards taking employment there as a nursing sister at the Leysin Clinic. At the request of the matron of Guy's Hospital I returned there as a staff nurse in 1924 and remained there in various capacities including the position of assistant matron to which I was appointed in 1931. I became a naturalised British subject in February, 1934, and commenced duty as matron of the L.C.C. Bethnal Green Hospital on May 1, 1934. In the following year (1935) I was seconded to be a principal matron in the Public Health Department of the L.C.C. and on May 1, 1940, I was appointed principal matron-in-charge of that Department. I have only been in Germany once, travelling with three English companions on a motor tour to Austria. I am

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