

Miscellaneous advertisements

Objektyp: **Group**

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

Band (Jahr): - **(1925)**

Heft 219

PDF erstellt am: **21.07.2024**

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instance, Chancy-Pougny (646,800 h.p.) on the Rhone, near Geneva; others, like Davos-Klosters (30,000 h.p.) and Tremorgio (12,000 h.p.) will be ready in a few months. The construction of 14 other big plants has been authorised, and when they are ready—in a year or two—another one million h.p. will be added to the electrical production of Switzerland, so that nearly three million h.p. will be used out of an available total of four million h.p.

The increasing use of water-power is causing a progressive decrease in the consumption of coal, and the consequence is an important reduction in coal imports. In 1913 Switzerland imported 3,387,213 tons of coal of all kinds, 2,141,000 in 1918, 2,783,000 in 1923, and 2,612,000 in 1924. From the quantities imported during the first eight months of 1925 the imports for the present year may be estimated at 2,475,000 tons. Swiss consumption of coal has, therefore, decreased by over 900,000 tons in 12 years, and this decrease will be accentuated during the coming years as new electrical power plants become completed.

The development of water-power has become a national question for Switzerland since the difficult days of the war, when industry, commerce, transport, and private consumption of Switzerland depended on the goodwill of foreign countries. In that respect the development of water-power for the production of electricity will contribute to make Switzerland independent of her neighbours. Moreover, the supply of cheap and abundant power will greatly help Swiss industry, as it will enable industrialists to reduce the now very high cost of production, and therefore to compete with greater success with the industries of other countries possessing coal in abundance and at low prices.

Swiss Engineers seem to be full of grand ideas, as is only natural, considering their wonderful training and the exceptional chances they get of putting their knowledge to the test. I am not surprised, therefore, to read that a project for—

Channel Jetties from England to France

is due to a Swiss engineer, Mr. Jules Jaeger. The *Sunday Chronicle* of Sept. 27th says:—

M. Jules Jaeger, a Swiss engineer, has evolved a £75,000,000 scheme for connecting Great Britain and the Continent by means of road and rail in the open air. His scheme, he claims, is more practicable than the Channel Tunnel, which so far has not found favour with the Committee of Imperial Defence.

Parallel jetties are to be built from Deal to Calais. On each jetty there will be double railway tracks and a roadway for motor-lorries. Near the coasts there will be gaps in the jetties through which shipping can pass up and down Channel. The gaps will be spanned by huge bridges, high enough to allow the passage of the largest liners.

The water space between the two jetties will, of course, be more sheltered than an inland canal, and will be available for barges and light craft. The Thames will be connected to this cross-Channel waterway by means of a canal which will be cut through Herne Bay, and will need but one lock.

The proposals visualise trains running from Basle to Glasgow and Bristol to Nancy, motor-lorries slipping from London to Paris in a day—"charas," too, presumably—and barges making non-stop passages from the Pool of London to, say, Budapest. The guiding principle is to make London the heart of a system of trans-European arteries.

In time of war the rails and roads can be defended by coastal forts and the fleet; the stretch of sheltered water will be the highway along which England's food will be imported, while submarines will find a safe, but handy, shelter. As a last resource, the double jetties can be blown up.

Thus in peace this connecting link will be an economic asset, and in war a valuable defence.

M. Jaeger has placed the scheme before the London Chamber of Commerce, the United Association of Great Britain and France, of which Lord Derby is president, and commercial bodies in France and Switzerland.

Also, it is learned, the engineering and technical questions involved are being considered by French engineers.

Either a tunnel, or these jetties, or both, as long as they do something to do away with the often unpleasant passage one has to make now by boat. Perhaps, once these jetties are built, or the tunnel is in existence, mankind will have emerged also from the barbarian state which still exists as far as the passing of frontiers is concerned—an utterly ridiculous state of affairs, which has prompted a fellow-sufferer to write the following in the *Sunday Chronicle* of Sept. 27th:—

The Scandal of the Customs.

A seasoned traveller, I have passed many frontiers in my time, but I do not remember such scenes as are daily enacted now at Dover at the Customs. The middle-class tourists are swarming home from Switzerland, France, and Italy, bringing their various presents for those at home,

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and an occasional bargain frock and a measure of silk. But a worse passage than that of the Channel awaits them at the barrier of the British *douane*.

Practically every bag and trunk is to be rummaged thoroughly, and you are lucky if you escape being handed over to the searchers, who will inspect what you are wearing. Before the war the worst Customs in the world were those of Russia; just after the Armistice Italy was the worst, with America running a close second. Now there is no question: ours are worse than Russia's were, and I would rather expose my baggage at Alexandrovo than at Dover.

It is a great sight, this tumbling of personal belongings, this questioning of anxious, flustered passengers. There is a large horse-shoe barrier, heaped with the effects of the travellers, and a wild, wedged-in British public on one side, and a number of calm, vigorous Customs officials on the other. Stubby fingers search in many bags and pull up lingerie and smart attire like seaweed lifted by a bathher out of the sea. There is none of the hurried politeness of Frenchmen or Belgians, or the indulgence towards British people you may have encountered in the Balkans. Show your English passport in Serbia, and they do not wish to see your luggage. "Bring in what you like; we trust you!"

But the English Customs is new to the game of tariffs. It did not stir itself during the first impositions of the McKenna taxes; it dallied idly during the Labour Government; but since the reimposition of the thirty-three-and-a-third and the new levy on silk the order has gone forth: "Stop the smugglers!"

We are all potential smugglers. In Paris all articles of personal attire are considerably cheaper. Up come the silk stockings, the silk socks and ties and blouses and shirts and costumes. In foreign countries you can generally pass through your personal attire, even if it be new. But not so in England. A man is wearing a new wrist watch; he must pay £2 on it. An officer finds a couple of white empty boxes in a woman's carry-all. "What was in these?" he asks. "Toy jewellery," is the answer.

"I am not satisfied," the officer remarks after an exhaustive search in reticule, etc. And she is handed over to the searcher.

Detectives stop you as you go away from the Customs. "What have you in the pockets of that cloak?" they ask. "You'll please to step over here."

It is not a civilised Customs examination. It is a hold-up. The stern remarks of the Dover magistrate do not impress me. England's trade may be in a bad way; it may be necessary to curtail imports in order to keep gold to parity. But holiday-makers are small prey. The British lion has gone mousing—and it will keep her lean.

No one wishes the professional smuggler of Paris gowns or Swiss watches to escape detection; but the ordinary traveller ought to be given a little freedom even if he does try to bring home intact the large box of French chocolates presented to him by a friend at the Gare du Nord.

One important result of the severity of the British Customs will be to cause Americans in France to go in greater numbers direct home from Cherbourg, rather than take a farewell trip to London and return by Southampton. They do not care to go through two Customs examinations. In the Paris newspapers there is much comment on the lines imposed on travellers to England, and it will undoubtedly keep some people away who would otherwise come to spend money in this country. Don't kill the goose that lays the golden egg! Don't cook the goose!

Which reminds me of another little reflection which my Tariff Reform friends might think over: Would any of the Swiss cantons prefer the old system of inter-cantonal customs, tolls, etc., to the present state of free trade within the Confederation.

Spahlinger Treatment.

Daily News (28th Sept.):—

Sir Alfred Mond, speaking at Carmarthen, on Sept. 26th, at a meeting in support of the movement to raise a fund for the purchase of the Spahlinger Institute of Geneva for the treatment of tuberculosis, said that he was convinced that Spahlinger, whom he knew personally, was a

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