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presents they receive on their marriage. As a recompense the contributor will receive a framed note of thanks from the society.

There is only one condition for the fiancée who applies for aid to buy her trousseau. She must send at the same time a medical certificate stating that she is in good health, and in a fit condition to marry.

### A Great International Horse Race at Basle?

*Birmingham Post*, 1st Feb.

Another international horse race in addition to that to be organised in the United States is promised by Switzerland next autumn. The International Equestrian Federation has asked the Swiss organisation, corresponding to the English Jockey Club, to organise a big international race and they have agreed to do so. The race will probably be run on the Basle course.

Kyburg knows but little about horse-racing and less about making money by betting, but he seems to remember that a number of bookies years ago emigrated to Liestal and places in the vicinity. So, I take it, the betting spirit may invade staid old Basle next autumn and the International Bank, perhaps, provide the necessary funds, what?

### SWISS INDUSTRIES FAIR BASLE.

The 14th Swiss Industries Fair will be held at Basle from April 26th to May 6th 1930.

This fair, which is gaining in importance from year to year, is housed in the new and very extensive buildings which represent the last word in such constructions in Europe. The show is thoroughly national in character, all goods being exclusively products of Swiss industries and trades. The number of exhibitors is about one thousand and visitors and buyers come from over 30 different countries.

Special arrangements have been made with various railway companies and visitors to the fair enjoy greatly reduced fares on Swiss and foreign railways. Identification cards are delivered free of charge to foreign buyers by the Management of the Fair in Basle, as well as by all Swiss Consulates.

The old town of Basle has long been famous for its Fairs and their origin can be traced back as far as the 15th century.

### SWISS IMPORT AND EXPORT TRADE IN 1929.

The total import trade in 1929 amounted to the value of 2.7 milliard Swiss francs, which is an increase of 40 million francs on that of 1928. This increase is due to the fact that the big Swiss export industries, especially those of machines and chemical products, purchased large quantities of raw material. The chief purveyors to Switzerland in 1929, ranked as follows: Germany, France, U.S. of America, Italy and Great Britain.

The export trade amounted to the value of 2.1 milliard francs, the principal countries receiving Swiss goods being Germany, Great Britain, U.S. of America, France and Italy.

The total value of the Swiss import and export trade in 1929 amounting to 4,514 milliard francs, corresponds practically to that of 1928.

### THE SKIDDING DANGER.

At one time there were numerous attempts to solve the skidding problem by the introduction of patented, and very often complicated, devices to prevent both rotary and lateral slip between the wheel and the road. None, however, met with either practical or commercial success, and it is now generally realised that the evil can best be reduced, if not entirely eliminated, by the use of non-skid chains.

In support of this statement we cannot do better than refer to an article in the November issue of our associated journal, *Bus and Coach*, contributed by Mr. K. Oftinger, chief of the Swiss postal motor car services. In view of the conditions under which the Swiss postal road services have to be—and are successfully—maintained in winter, Mr. Oftinger can be regarded as one of the greatest authorities on the subject of vehicle operation over snow and ice-bound roads.

He refers to successful results obtained with rubber creeper track and six-wheeled vehicles, but expresses preference for four-wheeled vehicles with twin pneumatic-tyred front wheels and large triple pneumatic-tyred rear wheels, carrying non-skid chains. With such machines he is able to maintain regular services in a satisfactory manner and under conditions which, in view of the gradients and depth of snow encountered in Switzerland, are generally much more exacting than those experienced in this country. Thus it can be accepted that for British users non-skid chains offer the most practical and economical method of travelling over snow-covered or frost-bound roads, particularly in view of their comparatively low cost and the ease and quickness with which they can be fitted when necessity arises.

*Motor Transport.*

### We and Italy.

Following we print an interesting letter from a constant reader of the *Swiss Observer* who has for years been living in Italy. He is gently but firmly reprimanding us for publishing from time to time articles that, he alleges, betray "a rather hostile attitude amongst most of our informants towards Italy." We should deeply regret it if that reproach were deserved. We certainly would never knowingly countenance a hostility towards Italy or its present regime, as it would ill become the organ of a nation that is firmly wedded—both by our own volition and by international guarantee—to a policy of undeviating neutrality, quite apart from the fact that Italy is one of our immediate neighbours with whom we hope to preserve intact the very strong ties of a friendship of old standing, of cultural and economic intercourse.

We think that our friendly critic is confusing just complaints about certain matters of differences—which are bound to arise now and then between any two nations whose political traditions and governmental systems are so vastly different as those of Italy of to-day and our own country—and the general attitude we maintain towards our Southern neighbours no matter how they manage their own affairs. When recently, in common with practically the whole Swiss Press, we emphatically protested against unfounded defamatory allegations in the Italian Press concerning an alleged neglect of our authorities to prevent anti-fascist plots, surely that could not be named an expression of hostility on our part. When our Ticinese friends in the columns of the *Swiss Observer* criticise the Federal Government for unduly interfering as they allege with the constitutional rights of every Swiss to freely express his opinions and to hear lectures from political exiles, all in order to placate a foreign government, that again implies no essential hostility to Italy or its Government as such.

We very gladly publish the friendly article—or extract of such—by Mr. de Stefani so kindly translated for us by our correspondent. It contains a frank acknowledgement of respect for the way our people manage to be prosperous by honest and efficient business enterprise. It also points to the fact that Swiss purchases in Italy have declined since 1925 from 266 to 203 million Swiss francs annually and expresses the hope that this tendency may be reversed before long. Considering the fall of prices that has taken place during the last four years the above figures actually do not represent a falling off in Swiss imports from Italy. We certainly fully reciprocate the desire for an ever more active commercial intercourse between the two countries. Such a desirable development would, we submit, considerably be encouraged if the Italian Government were to relax its stringent regulations owing to which so many Swiss residents in the Kingdom have found themselves compelled to relinquish their posts and leave the country.

THE ED.

To the Editor of *The Swiss Observer*,

Dear Sir,

"*Il Corriere della Sera*," the chief Italian daily, published lately at a few days' interval two highly interesting articles on Switzerland by Mr. Alberto de' Stefani, ex Italian Finance Minister under the present Regime and now closely connected with the vast Government "Land Reclaiming and Irrigation" scheme. These articles, written by such an eminent Statesman and economist following his recent visit to Switzerland, are of special interest to Swiss residing in Italy; however, I venture to suggest that you may possibly welcome, for a change, a gleam of light in the rather gloomy annals of your valued paper as regards this country. I therefore take the liberty of attaching hereto a translation of fragments of Mr. de' Stefani's article "Italy and Switzerland's Possibilities" published in the "*Corriere della Sera*" of February 15th, together with clipping of the whole publication, in case you might be interested.

As a regular subscriber to the *Swiss Observer* since its inception, may I be permitted to state that I have noticed from time to time a rather hostile attitude amongst most of your informants towards this country, and publicity given to cordial articles such as those referred to above, may be appreciated in various quarters and contribute to a furtherance of friendly relationship between the two countries.

Yours very truly,  
M. A. RYSER.

### ITALY AND SWITZERLAND'S POSSIBILITIES.

"*Il Corriere della Sera*" February 15th, 1930.

The purchasing power of Switzerland, according to its import trade statistics, is gradually approaching 3 billion francs, i.e. exceeds 10 billion lire. This small people, formed by a population which is about one-tenth of that of Italy, buys abroad goods to a value which reaches one half of what Italy purchases. In the economy of Switzerland not only is its banking activity of importance, but also, concurrently with the latter, its

## The Fourteenth Swiss Industries Fair

will be held at

**Basle**

April 26 to May 6, 1930

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or to:

THE SWISS BANK CORPORATION,  
99, Gresham Street, E.C.2; or at Basle.

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## MARRIAGE.

The marriage arranged between Mr.  
EDWIN M. WICKS and Miss ELSIE ADRE  
BILLETER will take place on March  
1st at Kinsbury Church, N.W.

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