

Tracking American Industries Through the Alps



VIEW OF LUCERNE SHOWING AMERICAN DRUG STORE SIGN.



ALPINE SALOON, WHERE AMERICAN WHISKY IS SOLD.

(Copyright, 1902, by Frank G. Carpenter.)
GENEVA, Dec. 11.—(Special Correspondence of the Bee.)—I am now through with my travels in Switzerland along the track of our commercial invasion. The trail is fresh and it has been easily followed. I have visited all the large Swiss cities and find American goods everywhere sold; but there is no place where in both variety and quantity their sales might not be increased many fold. As it is now our goods are making headway chiefly by their excellency. They are the best of their kind and their very exhibition makes a sale. The trouble with many articles is that the Swiss do not see them. Their only knowledge of them comes from pictures in the English catalogues sent out from the United States. Many of the merchants can't read English and only the fewest will buy from catalogues.

The Swiss are thrifty and cautious in letting go of their money. Their acquisitive sense is as strongly developed as that of any people of the world. It was of a Geneva woman that this story is told. She was drowned in the lake here and when taken out was apparently lifeless. A mirror was put to her lips, but there was no sign of vapor upon it. Her flesh was cold, her pulse seemed dead. They were about to put her in a coffin when a French drummer who had been doing business in the city and had come in contact with the close-fisted methods of the Swiss merchants, said:

"Wait a moment. I can bring her to life." He thereupon took out a 5-franc piece and laid it in her palm. The fingers convulsively grasped the silver and the woman sat up and put it in her pocket.

I do not vouch for the truth of this story, but there is no doubt that the Swiss under-

stands the value of the dollar and that he will not give it up without he is sure he is going to get more than an equivalent in return. He will not buy sight unseen, and if American warehouses or sample rooms could be established in the different cities of Switzerland they would undoubtedly lead to a rapid increase of our trade. Such rooms should be in the charge of men who understand the goods and who can speak at least French and German and, if possible, Italian.

Our people underestimate this market. They look upon Switzerland as little more than a big pimple on the face of Europe. They do not realize that the Alps embrace some of the liveliest industrial communities of the continent and some of the very best spenders. Where will you get people who compare with them? They are only a little over 3,000,000 in number, but they have a foreign trade which annually amounts to more than \$400,000,000, and of this more than \$220,000,000 are imports. That is, these 3,000,000 odd people buy \$220,000,000 worth of goods every year from outsiders. They spend more than \$60 for every man, woman and child in the country or more than \$300 per family. This is their annual contribution to the rest of mankind.

We talk about the Chinese trade. The wants of one Swiss are more than those of a hundred Chinese and the Swiss trade is right at our doors. The people have the same wants that we have and every class of goods we make for ourselves ought to be sold to them. At present the bulk of our trade is in cereals, raw cotton, petroleum and machinery, but we ought to send the Swiss everything under the sun. As it is, some of our goods are gradually creeping in. I have written letters here on American desks, have bought ink ribbons of American typewriter stores and I re-

plenished my camera with American films. I found a drug store in Lucerne which prided itself on its American patent medicines, and last, but not least, I warmed my chilled bones with a jigger of American whisky in a hut saloon on the very top of the Alps.

In order to get the trade, however, we must understand the country. We must send our drummers here and let them study the people. I had a chat last night with Mr. Alfred Georg, the secretary of the Geneva Chamber of commerce. Mr. Georg was at one time connected with the Swiss legation at Washington, so that he understands the United States, and he has at the same time a thorough knowledge of Switzerland and its commercial relations. Said he:

"The United States is now annually selling about \$15,000,000 worth of goods to Switzerland. It could sell more were it not for the new regulations which your government has lately instituted as to our trade. By the treaty of 1850, under which we have been working for half a century, Switzerland was put under the favored nation clause. All concessions that were granted to other nations was granted to it and as a result we exacted of American imports our minimum tariff. Then the United States began to grant to other countries concessions which it refused to Switzerland. We protested that this was contrary to the treaty and you gave us notice that you would change the treaty, and did so. The result was that we put American goods on the general tariff and your imports have not gained. What we need is a rearrangement of our trade relations and the establishment of something like reciprocity."

"But will this increase our Swiss trade?"
 "It will. We have to import many things

and our yearly imports run high into the millions. In 1900 we imported \$220,000,000 worth of foreign goods and this importation must go on from year to year. Much of what we want is raised or made in the United States. We cannot feed ourselves and we must have raw materials. Altogether we now buy from other countries 40 per cent of all we consume and our imports are, in fact, from \$30,000,000 to \$40,000,000 more than our exports every year."

"If that is so," said I, "you seem to be doing a large losing business. If you import \$220,000,000 a year and only sell \$150,000,000 your country must be falling away behind every year. Is it not so?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Georg.

"And this has been going on for years," said I. "According to the statistics Switzerland ought to be bankrupt."

"Yes," replied the Swiss, "it ought to be if figures tell the truth, but they do not always tell all the truth. According to them our aggregate deficiencies within ten years have been something like \$500,000,000, and nevertheless Switzerland was never richer than it is today. The reason is that we have sources of income that do not appear in the statistics. Our people have investments in other countries which bring in a great deal of money. They are noted for their business ability and are not afraid of large undertakings. Another source is the tourists who drop into our laps \$30,000,000 every year. There are other items, but these two will more than make up the apparent deficit."

The Swiss have many industries peculiar to the country, which are more or less related to America. American tourists spend millions here every year, not only in hotel and traveling expenses, but also in purchases. Not long ago a Geneva milliner in speaking of her business said:

"God bless the Americans! It seems that

they are really sent from heaven to keep up our business!"

Many of our tourists buy watches here to take back to the United States and not a few get pearls and furs. Geneva is a famous pearl market, and it deals largely in jewels and precious stones. It makes many pearl necklaces and sales of necklaces worth \$1,000 and upward to American tourists are not uncommon. It used to be that many of our women got their furs here and especially their sealskin sacques, but the new law which prohibits the bringing of seal into the United States has broken up this trade, and now, not fifty seal sacques are sold in a summer. The customs regulations prohibiting any traveler to bring in more than \$100 worth of goods have also affected Switzerland. The merchants say they would have sold three times as much to tourists had it not been for this law, and that a number of possible purchasers of pearl necklaces and costly furs had told them that they now had to buy in New York. At the same time more or less goods are sold to tourists who hope to get them through the customs house without declaration.

The Swiss are making fortunes out of the condensed milk manufacture. They exported more than 62,000,000 pounds of such goods last year, and their sales of condensed milk to Great Britain alone amount to more than \$2,000,000 annually. This business was founded by an American, a United States consul, who opened a factory here in 1865. He organized a company with a paid-up capital of \$12,000, and in the first year condensed only about 23,000 cans. His friends put more money into the business. It steadily grew and by 1880 it had increased to \$2,000,000, and it was turning out cans by the millions. Branch offices were estab-

(Continued on Thirteenth Page.)

WESTERN HEADQUARTERS FOR

EDISON PHONOGRAPHS

And VICTOR TALKING MACHINES

And Phonograph Records. Why not buy where you can have the largest selection. EDISON DECEMBER RECORDS NOW IN.

\$10.00 TO \$75.00 FOR CASH Or \$5.00 Down and \$1.50 per Week.

WE WANT A DEALER IN EVERY TOWN

Trade the old sewing machine off and get your wife one of our celebrated

WHEELER & WILSON

BALL-BEARING MACHINES for an Xmas Present. We sell for Cash or on Easy Payments.

Second hand Sewing Machines from \$1.00 to \$10.00.

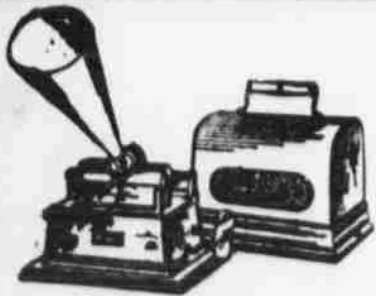
Free Sewing School every Thursday.

We rent machines of any make for 75c per week, or \$2.00 per month. We sell needles and attachments for and repair any machine manufactured.

Bicycles Cheap to Close Out our Immense Stock.

NEBRASKA CYCLE CO.

'Phone 1663. **GEO. E. MICKEL, Manager,** Cor. 15th and Harney Sts.
 334 Broadway, Council Bluffs. 512 N. 24th St., So. Omaha.
 'Phone B618. 'Phone 4365.



Bellamy & Hornung.....

**Fine Plumbing, Gas Fitting,
 Steam and Hot Water.
 Complete line of Plumbing Goods.**

Telephone 1051

....1624 Capitol Avenue, Omaha

\$1,000.00 IN GOLD FREE!



THE PARROT HAS ESCAPED FROM THE CAGE—TRY TO FIND HIM

Boys and girls over twelve years of age who will cut out this picture and mark plainly with pencil or pen the missing bird (if they can find it) **SHALL SHARE IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF \$1,000.00 WHICH WE ARE GIVING AWAY IN FIVE MONTHLY PREMIUMS** for doing a little work for us. This is a contest where both brains and energy count. We are determined to make the name of our charming monthly magazine a household word, and we take this novel plan of advertising. This and other most liberal offers are made to introduce one of the most entertaining New York magazines into every home of the United States and Canada. **WE DO NOT WANT ONE CENT OF YOUR MONEY.** There is only one condition, which should take less than one hour of your time, which we will write you as soon as your answer is received. After you have found the missing parrot, send it to us at once. It may take an entire evening, but it will pay you to **STICK TO IT AND TRY TO GET YOUR SHARE OF THE \$1,000.00.** A sample copy of our MAGAZINE WILL BE SENT FREE to everyone answering this advertisement. Try to solve this puzzle. Do not delay. Send your answer in immediately. We positively guarantee that this Missing Parrot can be found. Of course, like all problems, it will require some thought, patience and time. But the reward is well worth striving for, especially when we do not ask you to send us any money with your answer. The golden prizes of life are being gained by brains and energy nowadays. Lazy people and the drones and idlers are always complaining of bad luck. Now here is a **GOLDEN CHANCE** for anyone who will strive hard, and the pleasing part of it is that it does not cost you one cent outside of the letter you send us. Our magazine will please you. It delights us to please our readers. We are continually giving away large sums of money in different contests, as we find it is the very best kind of advertising. **Win.** If you find the parrot and send the slip with it marked thereon to us at once, we'll honor what you will get the gold? Anyway, we do not want any money from you, and a puzzle like this is very interesting. As soon as we receive your answer we will at once write you and you will hear from us by return mail. We hope you will try for it, as we shall give the \$1,000.00 away anyway. Do not delay. Write at once. Address **THE ROBINSON PUB. CO., 52 NORTH WILLIAM ST., NEW YORK CITY.**