

"As others see us"

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certain products of general necessity until arrangements could be made for the normal purchasing and selling of these commodities. On the other hand, certain classes of goods can no longer be exported, more particularly war material and articles used in the defense against gas attacks, etc.

But all these restrictive measures would be of no avail if, conjointly, arrangements of a positive order were not taken. Renewal of stocks must be assured by means of importation and direct production. Switzerland has already concluded arrangements, in principle, with all her neighbors, who have declared themselves ready to facilitate her revictualling to the best of their ability. As to national production, concentration must be focussed on home markets, even more than in the past. The cultivation of cereals, sugar-beet, and products of the earth will be increased. As to surplus cattle and the super-production of dairy produce from which Switzerland suffered, these will be absorbed without any difficulty. Here we must praise the foresight of the Swiss Federal authorities who, in advance, organized the war economy services in such a way that they took up their functions without a hitch at the appointed time. Military and civilian mobilization was carried out in perfect order and with calm, and national life has not suffered from international events.

To assure the necessary manual labor for agriculture, industry and public services, a compulsory civil work service has been introduced; thus all persons of both sexes, who are not mobilized and who are without work, will be employed to ensure the more or less normal functioning of the economic life of the country. For Switzerland, even if she must first guarantee her own means of existence, does not intend to neglect her export industries. To this effect, the Federal Council has taken measures for insurance against war-time transport risks. This insurance does not only apply to merchandise indispensable to the food supply of the country, but also to imports which, without being of vital importance, are consumed or undergo a transformation in Switzerland, and also to exports.

Let us add that Switzerland has shown a splendid proof of her will-power and confidence in the future by reopening on September 5 the Swiss National Exhibition at Zurich, which was closed for several days on account of the general mobilization. This decision has strengthened the morale of the nation which, although profoundly moved by the calamity which has overtaken Europe, never allows itself to be discouraged.

Another characteristic sign of Switzerland's spirit today is the fact that the Federal Council has decided that the National Council elections (parliament), which should take place during October, will not be postponed. What better proof could be given of the calm and discipline of the Swiss people.

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" AS OTHERS SEE US. "

We have been very fortunate in getting Mr. A. McBean to write the following article for the "Helvetia", and I am sure that his opinion of our beloved country will be appreciated by our readers. Mr. McBean is an Auckland boy and has been teaching languages in one of the foremost Private Schools in St. Gall for the last four years. He has been here on a visit to his people. During his sojourn in St. Gall, he has even acquired the Swiss dialect, a fact which speaks volumes of his affection for Switzerland :-

"As a New Zealander who for some years has made his home in Switzerland, I have been asked to give to Swiss people who have made their home in New Zealand some impressions of their Fatherland, as a New Zealander sees it.

And first of all, let me say that the Switzerland I love and whose spirit I have tried to know, is not the international Switzerland, fascinating and mondaine though it is, but rather the Switzerland of the country Wirtschaft, of the solid little towns away off the beaten track of the tourist, the Switzerland of hard work and independence.

Much depends on first impressions of a country, and in my case nothing could have been more lovely than St. Gallen one

February evening when I stepped out of my train and found myself in the town which was destined to be my home for the last four years before the storm broke over Europe. Now, St. Gallen is looked on by some people in Switzerland as a rather "stodgy" little place poked away in a corner of East Switzerland. But deep, crisp snow lay on the ground, the gate-posts had their high fantastic white caps on them, the tree-branches hung heavily down to the ground with their snowy load, and from the Rosenberg the white roofs seemed to snuggle closely around the twin towers of the old Stiftskirche. Down the steep streets youngsters in their warm clothes, the lads with their stockings pulled high above their knees, tobogganed daringly and probably in defiance of a Polizeiverbot! I smelt the "wuerzige" aroma of a "Stumpfen" or a "Brissago" as a good citizen, with his black fur cap, passed by, and from the deep valley toned the sound of countless church bells, for it was "Sonnabend".

And so one's love for Switzerland comes from a whole series of impressions, some of them small and almost undefinable, but all of them contributing to a feeling of homeliness and friendliness and varied beauty. The variety of Switzerland is, in fact, one of the greatest charms of the land. Who can imagine a greater difference than that between a mountain slope which we seem to know so well on our skiing trips in the winter, and the same slope in early spring, gay with mountain flowers and watered by a hundred little streams, dashing down from the melting snow-fields above? It is as though a magic wand had transformed everything.

Or who could think that the villages of the Tessin, with their high, picturesquely dilapidated stone houses, the little hamlets of the Ober-Wallis, the timbered houses of the Thurgau, and the low, spreading, many-windowed Bauernhoeefe of Appenzellerland, all belonged to the same tiny country? The same differences are to be found in the types of people to be seen; yet in every corner of Switzerland there is the same intense consciousness of being first and foremost Swiss. And there is everywhere the inner simplicity and kindness which has made Switzerland a name for hospitality and international mercy throughout the world. I do not think for one moment that Switzerland has been for mercenary reasons a haven and refuge through the ages. I think rather that an inborn "Gastfreundlichkeit" has fitted the Swiss, not only for their grateful task of inviting visitors from the whole world to share in the natural beauty of their land, but also for that great work of humanity whose emblem is merely the reversal of the present Swiss flag.

It is my great dream that in a hundred years or perhaps two hundred New Zealand will become another Switzerland. Nature has been as generous to it as to Switzerland. May it be inhabited by a stock which will have the industry to transform every deep mountain valley, every wild tussock plain sweeping up to the mountains, into loveliness as the Swiss people have been able to do. And may New Zealanders remain as kindly and sturdy and liberty-loving as the Swiss people have remained throughout the centuries. I am returning now to Switzerland and I hope that I shall be able to report that that land has suffered little, materially and spiritually, from the conflict that is raging about it. The world could ill bear the loss of all that Switzerland stands for. "

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AN APPEAL :-

It is our intention to prepare Christmas hampers for two unfortunate compatriots who are inmates of Mental hospitals. Swiss reading matter would be very welcome. The Secretary will be pleased to receive parcels of gifts or monetary donations for this purpose, or will on request gladly furnish name and address of the two countrymen.

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