

Sunday August 2nd.

So many people went to church to-day that half of them couldn't get inside the buildings. The churches here are bunched up in one secluded, shady corner of Inter-laken. There is a large Roman Catholic Church on a corner, and just across from this is a long, rambling kind of building which has a church at one end and a police station at the other. It was formerly an Augustinian Monastery, but now the Scotch, English, French, and German Protestant services are held in different parts of the building. You find the particular denomination you are looking for by reading the sign-posts and going the way the fist points. We were looking for the Presbyterian part of the building, and in order to reach it, had to go through a stone archway into a cloistered court, and there, staring at us in letters a foot long, was the sign: "United Free Church of Scotland." There was no mistaking that. But we were too late to get in, at least I was. Aunt Julia managed to squeeze into the back seat, and Uncle Ned sat under the spreading chestnut tree in the court and looked pious and joined in the singing, but I dashed home for my kodak and went back and took some photographs. How surprised those pious old Augustinian monks would be if they knew their former monastery was now the headquarters of protestantism in Interlaken. It seems like one of Time's little jokes.

Monday, August 3rd.

We are "prisoners of war." We could not get away even if we had money enough to buy a ticket, for the frontiers are blocked and the trains from Inter-laken all reserved for the transportation of Swiss troops. We have enough money to pay for a week's board, and that is all. Things are getting tremendously exciting. Everybody is loaded up with checks and letters of credit, but they can't get any money. Everybody is anxious to get away,—but there's no place to go. The banks opened for a few hours this morning, and at the door of each was an excited crowd of people. A few were let in at a time and then the door was closed and locked. As soon as anyone re-appeared he was nabbed by the people outside and bombarded with questions. "How much did you get?" "Will they cash American Express checks?" "Did you get gold or paper?"—And the questioners were elated or depressed, according to the answers they received.

"I've got five francs in my pocket," said one jolly, gray-haired American gentleman who was in the waiting line outside the door, "but they're not for circulation. I put my hand in my pocket and rattle them once in a while, just to make sure I've got them. It makes me feel like a millionaire when I hear them jingle. Say—don't you want to join the 'Don't Worry Club'? Won't cost you a cent. No initiation fees, and no expenses. Say, you know my wife wanted some tooth-powder yesterday, and we went into a drug store and bought twenty centimes worth (2 cents), but my, it gave me an awful pang to part with that coin!"

"I'll tell you what it is," another man was saying, "This war is a popular war. They all want to fight; they all want to cut one another's throats. The Germans hate the French, and the French hate the Germans; the English and the Germans are antagonistic; the Russians would like to smash the Austrians—I say it's a popular war. They all want it. They are all eager to fight."

"I don't agree with you at all," said the next man. "It's not a popular war. No person wants it. They are all trying to avoid it. A war would be the most disastrous calamity that could happen to Europe. And they all know it."

"But what I want to know," whined a tearful American lady, "is how are we going to get home?"

"Oh," said a sanguine elderly dame next to her, "we can go to Naples and they'll send a war ship over for us. Trust the U. S. Government to do the right thing."

"But, my dear woman," said a man who had overheard her, "How many people do you think a war ship would carry? Do you know that there are twenty thousand Americans in Switzerland? Why, the whole United States fleet couldn't take us home."

"But if we can't get home, what are we going to live on? The Swiss can't feed us. They need all they can get for themselves."

A tall, lanky Englishman, who was leaning against the wall smoking a pipe, quite unconcernedly took his pipe from his mouth and drawled out, "Oh! the trouble will all blow over in a few days."

There is nothing to do now but stand on the street and talk. The only thing in circulation is talk. No person will spend a cent if he can help it. Why, a franc looks to me as big as a cart-wheel. Small necessities, like pins and soap, seem to have acquired a fabulous value, and I wonder how I ever could have been so wasteful and extravagant as to discard a venerable hairpin.

Tuesday, August 4th.

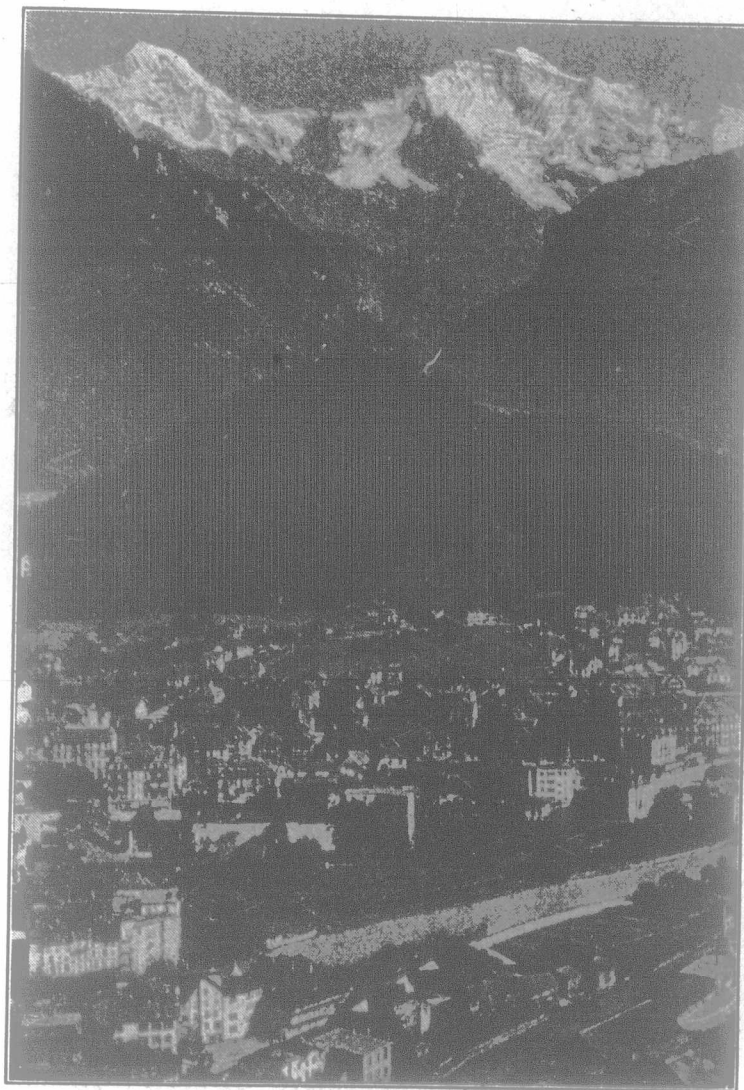
Tourists are still lined up before the banks trying to get money, but only small amounts are issued. The newspapers report that war between France and Germany has begun, and that England is mobilizing. There are no mails,

fluttering over the fields; not a leaf is moving—all is so still and quiet and peaceful, it does not seem believable that a dreadful war is going on so near us.

But there is the ominous beat of the drum again! People are running down the street to hear the latest report.

Wednesday, August 5th.

A meeting of English and Americans was held to-day at the Kurhaus to talk over the situation. There was a tremendous crowd. I had no idea there were so many English-speaking people here. The theater of the Kurhaus was packed with an excited audience. An American gentleman by the heavenly name of Paradise made a most eloquent speech, in which he extolled the virtues of the Swiss people,—their fine hospitality, their remarkable integrity, and high sense of honor. He assured us we were safer in Switzerland than in any other part of Europe, and that the Swiss were doing everything in their power to make us comfortable. We might have to stay here a month; we might have to stay longer—no one could tell, but in the present conditions it was absolutely im-



Interlaken, Showing the Jungfrau.

and no newspapers except Swiss ones—a Berne paper published in Germany, and a Geneva paper published in French.

We got some American Express checks cashed to-day, and feel so wealthy that on the way home we bought a bottle of ink. But it seemed like the wildest extravagance, because one can do without ink. One can do without so many things if they really have to. Butter—for instance—of which we are getting a very short allowance at present. Meals are all considerably cut down. But we get enough. I suppose we have to get used to eating less. Things never tasted quite so good as they do just now—even dry bread has developed a flavor I never noticed before. I suppose if it comes to the worst we can follow the example of that eccentric biblical gentleman who gave up meat and took to grass. I think his name was Nebuchadnezzar.

As I sit here on the balcony I can see our porter digging up potatoes for dinner. We have potatoes for every meal now. They are such good fillers. The day is simply perfect. Cloud shadows are dappling the giant mountains and throwing gray shadows on the snowy peak of the Jungfrau; butterflies are

possible to travel through France or Germany. A committee was formed to look after the interests of the American refugees in Interlaken. A similar committee was formed to look after the British subjects here.

At the end of the meeting the speaker said that the committee would be glad to receive subscriptions for the Red Cross Society. A dead silence followed this announcement, and then—the audience laughed. No person was feeling affluent enough to subscribe to anything.

[A note received from "Helen" since the above was written states: "Women are coming to the fore and doing men's work. The horses have been taken by the army, and so men and women and dogs have to go in harness and pull the loads. We are making things for the Red Cross, and knitting socks for the soldiers. These are stirring times."]

## Women's Institute Conventions.

Hitherto the Women's Institute of Ontario—which is, by the way, by far the

largest women's organization in the province,—has held one large general convention each year in Toronto. This year, partly owing to financial conditions due to the war, and partly because of the phenomenal growth of the organization itself, the Superintendent of the Association, Mr. Geo. A. Putnam, of Toronto, has thought it better to arrange for three conventions instead of one. It is hoped that by this plan many members who have hitherto found it inconvenient to attend the grand annual rally, may be able to be present.

The first, then, covering all the territory east of Hastings and Prince Edward Counties, will be held in Ottawa during October 28th and 29th; the second will be held in the Y.M.C.A. Hall, London, on November 4th and 5th; and the third in Toronto, November 17th, 18th and 19th. Matters dealing with local affairs will be taken up at each, but certain features—Health Problems, Red Cross Society Work, etc.—will be common to all three conventions.

Just here it may be opportune to note that the Chairman of the Red Cross Society, Mr. Noel Marshall, has expressed most hearty appreciation of the splendid work towards relief for the soldiers that is being done by the various branches of the Women's Institute. According to a circular letter sent out by Mr. Putnam, the most urgent need at the present time is for more cash. However, there is still, and will be as long as the war lasts, a continuous need for woollen socks, flannel shirts, and long woollen cuffs (9 inches long) made with a hole for the thumb and large enough to go over a "woman's closed fist." Since soldiers cannot handle rifles with mittens or gloves on, the usefulness of these cuffs will be fully enough in evidence as soon as cold weather sets in.

The Institutes are requested to send in all donations to Mr. Noel Marshall, Secretary of the Red Cross Society, 77 King Street East, Toronto.

To come back, however, to the conventions: A most interesting programme has been prepared and it is hoped that all branches within the territories mentioned will make a point of sending delegates.

## The Western Fair.

If the Canadian National Exhibition were wise as wise could be, it would "swap" dates with the Western. Rain almost invariably ushers in the big fair in Toronto, clearing off usually in time to permit genuinely royal weather for the big crowds of Labor Day. Having exhausted itself in this way to its own satisfaction, it seldom even peeps over the gateway of the "Western," and so blue skies and smiling sunshine beam upon the long lines of people that wend their way to Queen's Park, London, during Fair week, to see what Western Ontario can do by way of echoing the achievements of the "biggest and best annual exhibition in the world."

Very creditable the showing usually is, too, and that of this year has been no exception to the rule. Particularly, perhaps, one might mention the exhibit of flowers, fruit and vegetables in the Horticultural Building, invariably just what might be expected from "the garden-spot of Canada." We were told by one of the men in charge that this year's fruit exhibit was the finest seen at the Western Fair for years—probably owing to the copious rains that have marked the summer of 1914. The collections of pears, for instance, from the immense "Duchess d' Angouleme" to the luscious "Bartlett," were extra fine. Among the novelties were noted a new crabapple and a new apple, both with clear pink skin. It would seem, indeed, that the fashion for "Nell rose" has penetrated even into the realm of pomology. Another novelty was a plate of "Japanese walnuts," shaped somewhat like little torpedoes, as one might expect from a Japanese product.

Much in evidence were fine collections shown by the Middlesex Fruit Growers' and Vegetable Growers' Associations, while a touch of pathos associated itself with the very creditable display of grains, fruits and vegetables from the farm of London's Hospital for the Insane.

Among the flowers were noted as somewhat new a very velvety phlox, almost black in its intensity of crimson, and a collection of "everlastings" in beautiful