

SWITZERLAND'S WORK IN THE WAR

It Served the Cause of the Allied Belligerents

Also Cost Much Cash—Many Stricken Soldiers Helped By What the People Pay Taxes For.

Following is a copy of a letter addressed by Beny R. Iseli, Swiss consul-general in Montreal, to W. F. Cocksbutt, member of parliament for Brantford, Ottawa:

Montreal, Sept. 13, 1919. Sir,—I have taken cognizance through various newspapers and also through the official report of the House of Commons debates, of Sept. 10, 1919, of your speech in the house regarding the seat of the League of Nations and in particular what you had to say regarding Switzerland and Geneva.

As the official representative of Switzerland in the Dominion of Canada, I feel it to be my imperative duty to enlighten you with the following statement, as I am of the firm belief that, if you had been better aware of the conditions prevailing in my country and the sufferings of Switzerland, you would probably have found ways and means of turning your debate concerning the seat of the League of Nations, in words of another nature.

What you have deemed expedient to remark is for me conclusive proof of how little you are aware of the affairs of my country and, therefore, for the sake of truth and fair play, which we doubtless both equally cherish, you will allow me to give you my reply, in such respect, address your distinguished audience with matters of fact. I do not think that the League of

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There are despairing men and women by the thousands in this city, whose stomachs keep them in constant misery that can be quickly restored to vigorous health by Dr. Hamilton's Pills.

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There is an extraordinary power in Dr. Hamilton's Pills that searches out the weak spots, that braces up the delicate glands and complex workings of the stomach and bowels.

There are invigorating, stimulating tonic ingredients in Dr. Hamilton's Pills which are derived from powerful juices taken from rare herbs and roots, and these are scientifically combined with other medicinal products so as to assist in a harmonious and proper working of the entire system.

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Seekers of the better health can not do better than invest 25c in this health-bringing family medicine.

Nations should have been housed at Geneva. Why do I say that? Geneva is the capital of Switzerland, a country which, during the war, never sent a man to fight a country which was busy lining its pockets with the gold of its struggling neighbors.

Permit me to firmly remark that Berne is the capital of Switzerland and that Geneva is only the head seat of the small canton bearing the same name.

As to your statement that Switzerland during the war never sent a man to fight, I could really not do any better than quoting here what our minister



In Rome, G. Wagniere, has uttered once about Swiss neutrality:

"Since 1815, Swiss neutrality has been recognized and guaranteed by Great Britain, France, Prussia, Russia, Portugal and Austria. That recognition has been considered as binding upon the Swiss as well as upon the great European powers, so that in any conflict of our neighbors we feel bound to remain neutral as long as our neutrality is respected. Thus in addition to the historical reason, there is a moral reason. We are neutral because we are true to our word. To ask us why we are neutral is to ask us why our word of honor is worth more than a scrap of paper."

This gives you clearly the standpoint of my government, well known and well recognized everywhere. If I were to establish for you a list of my countrymen who have been fighting, out of their own free will, for the cause for which you speak, you would undoubtedly be astonished to hear of their great number. And, even at Ottawa at the department of militia and defence, you may find information and how many Swiss have enlisted in the Canadian forces.

You have been discussing peace and you have hurt my patriotic feelings. Whilst the peace of the seat of the League of Nations in itself will surely not be the basis of everlasting peace we all desire, but only and exclusively the good-will of all its members, I can here assure you that Switzerland never expected to be the basis of everlasting peace now being the case, she will live up to her new duty. The best versed men in world politics have made this choice and I unhesitatingly admit that, after all, my little country deserves it well for all she has done during the war for the cause of humanity.

In spite of all difficulties, economic and political, imposed upon the country through the war, the spirit of unity and neutrality had grown stronger. Patriotism has given way to a most noble work of humanity in behalf of all victims of the war regardless of nationality.

Switzerland had become a great clearing house for the exchange of communication and material relief between prisoners and persons living in conquered areas in all the belligerent countries and their families. Prisoners interned in Switzerland had been received and succored with a generosity that should earn undying gratitude for the little republic. In spite of her modest role in international politics, Switzerland had been a recognized leader in many earlier works of mercy and in other organizations of world-wide influence.

At the Geneva Convention in 1864, the Red Cross was founded and the administrative offices of the international committee of that society have been located ever since in that city. As a gracious tribute to the Swiss, it chose as its emblem their national flag with colors reversed.

A great deal more could be said about Switzerland's actions during the war. I, however, refrain from doing so, as what she has done is well known everywhere and the testimony of many a returned soldier, who has come to life

again through Swiss charity and kindness, forms a better document for history than all I could indicate to you.

You said that Switzerland never spent a dollar to help save civilization. This utterance of yours is equally astounding as unjust, you attack unjustly my country, which deserves no provocation; you inflict harm to the good old name of a nation, which has never provoked you. I am glad to know that the number of people in this country is great who have a better knowledge of facts and who cannot agree with you.

Allow me finally, and I will try to be as short as possible, to speak to you about the effect of the war on Swiss finances in order to show you also in this respect that your assertions that Switzerland has been busy lining its pockets with the gold of its struggling neighbors, do not correspond with actual facts and are just contrary to what might have been stated.

Prior to the outbreak of the European war the financial system of the Swiss Confederation seemed to be attaining satisfactory results. Counting in railroads and forest lands monopoly, the Swiss government spent in 1910, all together, the relatively large amount of three hundred million francs. All of this, however, except ninety millions was returned by the ordinary receipts of the business undertakings in which the state was engaged, and the profits of these further reduced the burden of taxes by four and a half million.

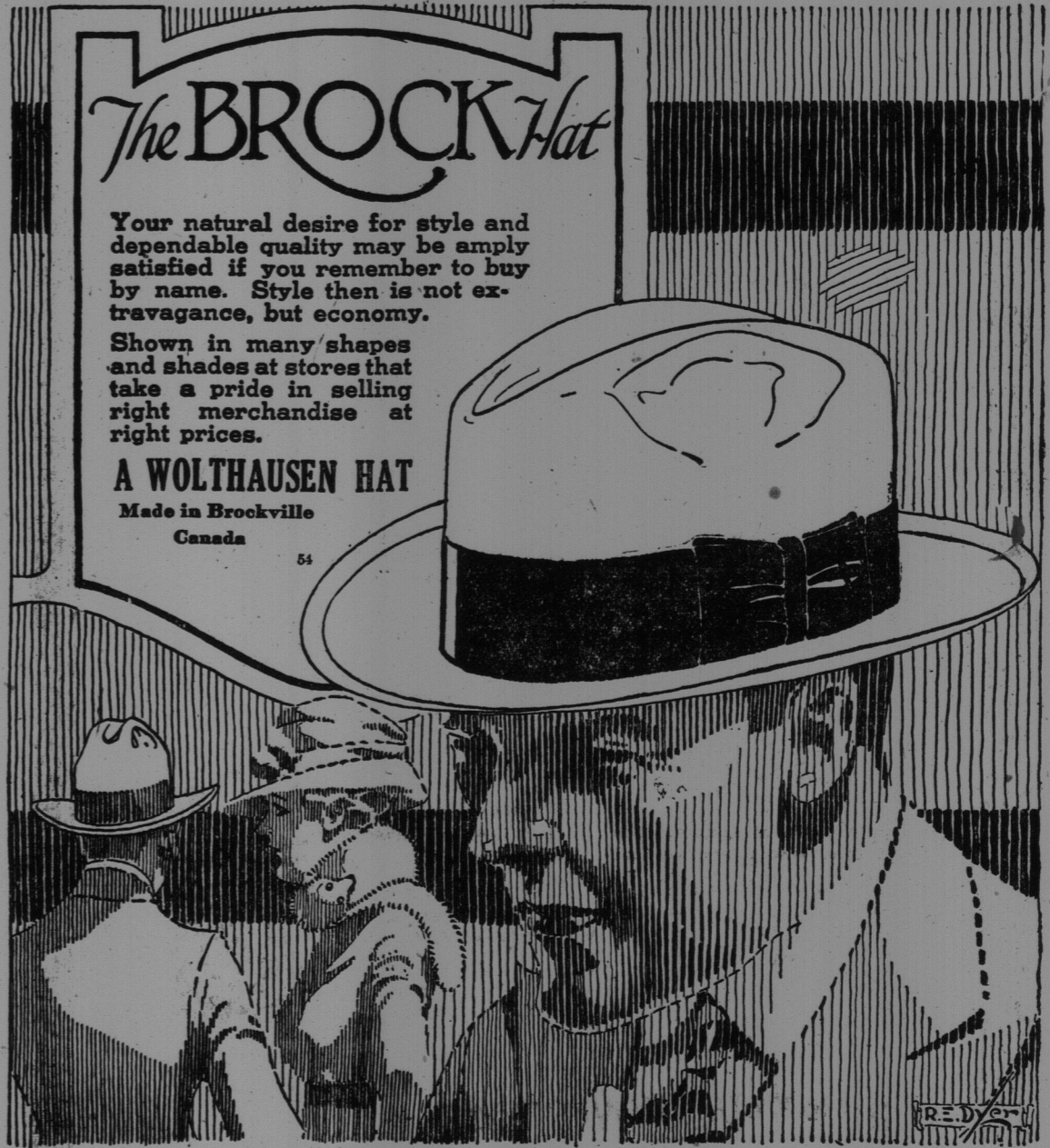
There was no complaint of extravagance or corruption on any part of the administration. The national debt was moderate, amounting to 124,430,000 francs in 1910 (per capita 33.25 francs or \$6.42).

On the other hand, the "Petraire reform" or state property, was valued the same year at 236,582,750 francs. This does not include special funds and foundations for beneficent purposes in the hands of the Confederation, amounting to 110,075,250 francs. Relying, as the central government did, largely upon customs duties, the people scarcely felt the burden of its support. "The earlier flourishing finances of the confederation," as former President Schulthess said in a speech, "were the secret of its popularity." There was, however, one very serious defect in the system; namely, its reliance to an extreme degree upon the revenue from customs. Even in time of peace, far-sighted statesmen had frequently pointed out the necessity of widening the tax base of the federal government in order that it might further expand and particularly that it might meet the obligations of a progressive policy of reforms. Against them, however, were constitutional texts, traditional maxims, and a characteristically democratic aversion to new tax burdens. It was a fiscal system that was just keeping its nose above water upon which the war broke in 1914.

On the left, the country and railroads, and with them, of course, the revenue from customs, industry was crippled. Tourists left the country and railroads, posts and telegraphs suffered in sympathy. Some recovery there has been, but not enough to offset materially the increase in the certain unavoidable items of federal expenditure. Chief among these is the cost of mobilizing a large part of the army for the protection of the boundaries and the maintenance of neutrality.

To the end of May, 1917, the debt on this score alone amounted to 276,000,000 francs, and this enormous total was increasing by fifteen million francs a month. Deficits from the ordinary operations of the government, for the war years 1914 to 1917 inclusive, amount to 125,000,000 francs, and this amount does not include the deficits from the operation of the federal railroads, for instance. Interest and sinking fund charges to retire this new debt, totalling seven hundred millions, within forty years would require forty-five million francs annually. As a result of this mountain of debt, which the war was heaping ever higher, the systematic reform of federal finances has become the paramount issue of Swiss politics.

Some partial steps have already been taken to this end. In all government services economies have been undertaken except as regards high-prices-increments. The war-exemption tax has been doubled. Fees for export privileges and profits on the various state monopolies have also contributed something. Small returns have been secured from the new war-time food monopolies, although these, of course, are operated



primarily not for profit, but to keep prices down and to assure a sufficient supply to the masses of the people. The problems of Swiss federal finance are, therefore, by no means solved at the present time. They are very serious problems, but there seems to be no doubt of the ability of the country to provide the necessary resources. On the whole, the leadership of the Federal Council has been admirable. After more than four years of war, however, it is manifest that reform must begin at once, regardless of the size of the burden ultimately to be shouldered. The present problem is largely that of educating the people to meet the situation promptly and adequately.

In concluding my reply to your remarks, which have made it necessary for me to bring to your knowledge what I have said before, may I be permitted to mention that Switzerland's services to civilization are well known to all the great Allied powers, which have at all times, lent us a helping hand in our days of trouble, and that the Swiss people know what gratitude means.

God has blessed by country with isolation in a sense, and isolation is indeed a blessing in these turbulent times. Switzerland is and has been as a nurse, silent, courageous, never tiring in watching over the ill, but convalescing form of liberty. But when the time comes that she can do a service to the world, and to mankind, Switzerland will never be found wanting. I have written you the above in the spirit of a better-understanding and I shall consider myself happy if my opinion is received in the spirit it is written. I have the honor to be, sir, Your obedient servant, BENY R. ISELI, Swiss Consul-General. Mothers of some school children at Clifton, N. J., who struck because Principal Pfeiffer was transferred, were teachers before they were married, and announce unless he is re-instated they will open a private school with him as principal and mothers as teachers.

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Advertisement for Maxwell Post-War Maxwell car, featuring an image of the car and text: "Be Among the First to Drive this Astonishing Post-War Maxwell. If you're buying a car this year, why not have the most recent thing offered? Here we have a Post-War Maxwell, developed during the war years, and given to you now, not only a far greater Maxwell, but more advanced even than many cars that twice exceed its price. It's an engineering treat to look it over; and an event that will linger in your memory to ride 5 miles behind the wheel. For a new Elliott type front axle gives you a casting effect in steering that will surprise you. A heavy rear axle, new, makes you hug any kind of a road. New full oval fenders express the rhythm of motion, and two new types of brakes bring you to a halt in a very decisive way. The 'emergency' is up at the transmission, as in so many foreign cars. The 'service' is equipped with equalizers, and thus any tendency to skid is prevented. Many louvers in the bonnet, a large tank in the rear—the number of fine developments seems endless! Also equipped with Hot Spot and Ram's-horn. But it's the same basic chassis as the 300,000 Maxwells that preceded this post-war car. How well the public has regarded these is expressed in the sum of \$200,000,000—the price paid by the public for the previous ones. This Post-War Maxwell is a greater car. \$1,395 f. o. b. Windsor. MAXWELL MOTOR CO. of Canada, Ltd., WINDSOR, ONT. MOTOR CAR & EQUIPMENT CO., LIMITED Showrooms: Cor. Duke and Charlotte Sts. Garage: 108 to 112 Princess St. St. John, N. B."