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It is little likely that that conception of the League will ever be revived, though an echo of it

survives in certain French proposals to be discussed this month regarding definition of the actual assistance which members are bound to give under Article XVI. That Article binds them "mutually to support one another in resisting any special measures aimed at one of their number by a Covenant-breaking State." Some members, rejecting altogether the executive and punitive qualifications of the League, go to the other extreme, and regard it only as a debating Chamber. Signor Mussolini is widely regarded as contemptuous of the League. It is probably truer that he is vigorously opposed to the conception of it as a super-State. The attitude of the chief Italian representative at Geneva, Signor Scialoja, is determined in part by the fact that he contributed actively to the drafting of the original Covenant—deviations from which he manifestly dislikes on his own account, independently of the instructions which he receives from Rome. But, however widely views may differ as to the effective power of the League to impose penalties upon recalcitrants, there is not really much doubt anywhere as to its moral influence.

As regards the other side, I believe most of the adverse articles are prompted by the fact that it is difficult to find a place to lay one's head at Geneva (to quote the *Evening Standard*), local hotels of second rate are stated to charge £2 a day for a room with a bath, when three months ago, in June, 20 francs was paid for the same accommodation. I will not shock the susceptibilities of my colleague "Kyburg" by quoting the *Morning Post*, whose outpourings in this connection take an easy first, but the *Daily Express* does not lag far behind, as will be seen from the following culled from their issue of September 4th:—

The League of Nations, which is now meeting at Geneva, proves day by day that it is merely an empty shell. Events show that the League is subject to every form of threat and intimidation. The sham of it has been exposed before, but not until Mussolini seized Corfu in open defiance, was its emptiness completely displayed. Now comes Spain. Whereas Mussolini flouted the League, Spain blackmails it, and to neither has the League an effective reply. It retains its entity merely because (1) there are many people in it eager to save their places; (2) it affords opportunity for oratory to certain statesmen who cannot find listeners in their own countries. There is no reason for the further existence of this innocuous League, which can never achieve the objects for which it was originally designed. This being so Great Britain should not waste further time or money on it. She should withdraw from it, and devote herself, with her Dominions, to the strengthening and development of the only League of Nations in which we should be interested, namely, the British Empire.

World Power Conference.

Whilst at Geneva, existing political power is to be diluted by substituting right and common sense, at Basle water is commandeered for creating power in an industrial sense. The recent conference was attended by nearly 700 engineers and technical experts from all countries and the main object was to reach some international understanding in regard to the production, transport and use of energy. As far as railway electrification is concerned, the following report was published in *The Times*, September 4th:—

The principal subject, on the agenda of the World Power Conference at Basle for the sessions of September 2nd and 3rd was that of railway electrification, on which reports were presented from most European countries, the United States, and Japan.

Colonel E. O'Brien, the reporter for Great Britain, dealt with the broad economic aspects of railway electrification. His report stated that even in countries where coal was cheap electrification could effect economies in cost of locomotive operation and maintenance of from 10 to 25 per cent, and that a 50 per cent. increase of speed could be effected without proportionate increase in cost. Other economic advantages referred to, were reduction in cost of track and station maintenance, generally improved conditions of operation, and supplies of cheap current for light and power. An important problem which has not yet been solved is whether the electric locomotive requires one or two men to operate it, and it is suggested that if this question could be satisfactorily settled, railway electrification would receive a great stimulus.

The presence of two men on the electric locomotive is partly a survival of steam railway practice, partly due to trade union prejudices, and partly to the extreme conservatism of government officials responsible for railway regulations. If the services of the second man could be dispensed with a reduction of about 16 per cent. in locomotive operating costs could be effected.

Mr. William S. Murray, the reporter for the United States, gave a broad review of the situation. His main contention was that the use of electric energy for railway operation has fallen far behind the use made of electricity for general requirements. The reform of the transport system has not kept pace with industrial production. About 80 per cent. of the electric energy produced is

absorbed by industry, the railway demand being exceedingly small. The need of the times is for the acceptance of a standard type of power for railway electrification in place of the variety of systems which represent practice at the present time. What has been done hitherto is considered to be a mere experiment, as upon the electrified lines of the United States only 5 per cent. of the total traffic tonnage is carried. The opinion was expressed that in future the standard system of railway operation should be high voltage direct current and that the railway companies should procure power from public sources.

Other reports described some existing installations, including those of the French, Dutch, German, Swiss and Swedish railways. The report on the electrification of the Stockholm-Gothenburg section of the Swedish State Railways deal with a particularly interesting installation.

Prison for Infidelity.

Some drastic measures may be looked for in the new Swiss Penal Code now under preparation, if the *Daily Express* (September 8th) has been correctly reported.

A legal commission appointed to consider the revision of the Swiss penal code recommends that marital infidelity should be punished by imprisonment of the guilty parties for one year, in addition to divorce.

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Flats in Switzerland.

The *Manchester Guardian* (August 31st) contains the following complimentary notes on the housing problem in the western part of Switzerland:

Housing has been a difficulty in Switzerland since the war owing to the universal stoppage of building for the four years, to the subsequent high prices, and to the number of people who settled there, leaving the big hotels empty. In Geneva, as is natural, it is almost as difficult as in Paris to find an unfurnished flat. Elsewhere large numbers of new villas and blocks of flats are springing up, especially round the lakes, where an increasing number of foreigners are congregating. Owing to the high exchange foreigners are confined chiefly to English and Americans, who live in Switzerland, not because life is cheap there, but because they find that they need spend less money. The houses are smaller, more convenient, and while the servant problem is acute, yet daily life can be carried on, with much less help than at home. The new Swiss flats are very desirable under the regime of self-help. Both large and small flats are built, well fitted with electric light, with plenty of windows shuttered against both heat and cold, with balconies, and with gas for cooking and baths. In places along the Lake of Geneva, other than Geneva itself, charming little four-roomed flats may be obtained unfurnished for about sixty pounds a year. The floors are mostly of parquet, the bathroom and kitchen floors being of mosaic and red tiles respectively. All can be very easily kept in order, and with a minimum of rugs and carpets. As far as heating goes, the Swiss have something to learn from the Americans. In the small flats heating is generally managed by means of a central and ugly stove. In the larger flats there are several stoves. Central heating and central hot water have made less progress than might be expected. The chief charm about the Swiss flat is the light and air caused by the excellent arrangement of the windows and balconies and the ease with which all the household work can be done.

Hotel Guests by Selection.

If I had not read it elsewhere, I would take the following article, reprinted from the *Morning Post* (September 1st), as a joke:—

The Swiss, who have already brought hotel management to the intellectual level of a fine art, have evolved a scheme whereby the social status of visitors to continental holiday resorts can be determined at a glance by reception clerks.

The scheme has, apparently, been adopted by the leading hotels on the Continent. Each hotel has a peculiar stamp of its own, which is approved by a central committee. When a traveller pays his bill at an hotel, he is presented with a "travel stamp" album, in which that of the establishment is placed. At every hotel he visits thereafter the traveller will be required to produce his album for inspection before admission. A new stamp will be affixed to it before he leaves.

M. R. M. Pick, Zurich, the inventor of the scheme, pointed out its inner significance in an interview.

Supposing a visitor asks admission to one of the great hotels of the Engadin or at St. Moritz (he said) the reception clerk might see at once from his "travel stamp" album that he had previously been staying in the less exclusive Bernese Oberland, and that he was not a desirable type of customer. The system is infallible, because the stamps will only be given to people of importance when they pay their bills, and will not be hawked in the streets like the luggage labels of the leading hotels.

Mr. Pick added that the scheme had been devised for the benefit of foreign visitors of distinction in general, and particularly titled English people, who, he said, are regarded as the most desirable of customers.

Some Swiss hotel proprietors seem to have a farcical notion of the mentality of their English visitors; they have evidently heard that the youngsters in this country display a craze for collecting cigarette and 'bus tickets and conclude that this is characteristic of the English nation. Just imagine Lord or Lady So-and-So licking hotel stamps into an album which is to be a sort of social passport merely to satisfy the curiosity of the reception clerk. One of the fascinations of hotel life is the fact that *volens volens* you are thrown into the company of absolute strangers which cannot fail to be of benefit to your general outlook; if, however, the *milieu* should not prove congenial, we have the gift of making this discovery ourselves (and quickly get suited elsewhere), and refuse to be publicly classified like the animals in a zoological garden. Some people cannot leave well alone. The proposal is on a par with the recent tipping innovation, whereby the hotel proprietors simply snatch the sum total of the tips because they do not choose to foot the bill by paying their staff decently. Anyone who paid a second visit to a hotel, and has previously omitted "to tickle the expectant palms" of his bodyguard, will know the difference. Tipping is one of the daily irritations of life, and no fatherly precepts, even if they were disinterested, can separate them from such callings as porters, waiters, barbers and taxi-drivers.

Swiss Football.

To celebrate the 21st year of their existence, the Middlesex Wanderers' Football Club had arranged to tour Switzerland, where they played a number of matches, and this is what the *Evening Standard* (September 4th) says about Swiss Skill and Sportsmanship:—

The members of the party have returned home with a very high opinion of the skill of the Swiss footballer and of his sportsmanship both on and off the field.

The record of the tour bears eloquent testimony to the standard of the game in Switzerland, for the Wanderers—quite a strong combination—won only one game, losing two and drawing the other. Football was, of course, not easy in blazing sunshine and midsummer temperature, but after allowing for the unfamiliar conditions that the Wanderers had to contend with, the Swiss played exceedingly well.

A full report of the matches played is contained in the *Islington Daily Gazette* (September 8th) and the *Muswell Hill Record* (September 3rd). Altogether four matches were played: the first one in Zurich against the Young Fellows (Score 4—4); the second against the F.C. Biel in the evening, two huge electric lights with large reflectors illuminating the ground, when the visitors, thanks to the skill of the home goalkeeper, were beaten by two to one; the third game at Fribourg resulted in a win for the Wanderers of four goals to nil, but in the last game in Berne against the Young Boys F.C. they lost with three to nil.

LETTRE FEDERALE.

"Le propre de l'homme est de n'être jamais d'accord avec soi-même," disait un facétieux conteur du 18ème siècle. Nous en faisons actuellement la preuve d'éclatante façon dans nos hautes sphères fédérales. Et ces quelques lignes pourraient aussi bien s'intituler "de l'influence des puissances politiques sur notre caméléon gouvernemental."

Entrons sur notre terrain d'études et en observateur impartial essayons de ne pas perdre en route le brin d'ironie qui nous caractérise.

Il s'agit en l'espèce de la trop fameuse question du blé. Il y a deux ans le Conseil Fédéral, après en avoir longuement et gravement délibéré, se décidait à mettre fin au monopole de ce si précieux et si nécessaire produit. Au point où en sont les choses aujourd'hui on peut se demander si ce n'est pas par pure crainte de l'opinion publique que notre si distingué Monsieur Schulthess agit alors. Toujours est-il que dans son message, ce Maître des sciences économiques nous disait: "Par les temps qui courent, l'étatisme n'est pas en faveur auprès des grandes masses. Nous assistons à une réaction assez naturelle contre les interventions des pouvoirs publics qui furent nécessaires pendant et après la guerre." Vive dès lors la solution libérale et la pleine liberté d'action dans ce domaine!

Mais Monsieur Laur et son "Paysan Suisse" veillent. Notre Eminence Grise pas plus que son Journal ne semblent au début s'opposer à la solution—parfaitement normale—que l'on semblait avoir découverte. Puis le temps aidant, les conciliabules, les entretiens, les menaces voilées, on vit se retourner le char. Et voici soudain Monsieur Schulthess clamer partout que le monopole est la seule forme non seulement raisonnable, mais possible, pour terminer définitivement cette question. L'Union des paysans triomphait et elle se chargeait de plus d'imposer son point de vue aux différents partis politiques. Là aussi M. Laur fit des prodiges. Hors deux qui lui obéissent déjà aveuglement aux Chambres Fédérales, notre Docteur a laissé dans tous les autres partis bon nombre de paysans qui n'en reçoivent pas moins de lui et de lui seul leur mot d'ordre. Ces Messieurs déclarèrent donc qu'ils quitteraient leurs partis, si, sur cette question, on n'acceptait pas leur façon de voir. Conservateurs, catholiques et radicaux prirent peur et pour ne pas diminuer les rangs du groupe, adhérèrent au monopole! L'affaire était dans le sac et le "Paysan suisse" qui tire dans nos trois langues à près de 200,000, remportait une éclatante victoire. Elle se confirma par les votes de nos deux Conseils qui à grande majorité ratifièrent le projet.

C'est alors que certains Confédérés conscients de leurs droits et peut-être aussi de leurs... devoirs lancèrent l'initiative contre le monopole du blé.

Ce fut un tollé général. Bravement le "Paysan suisse" y voit l'intervention de l'étranger dévastateur, c'est une invasion économique de nos verdoyants coteaux. Voyez plutôt: "Cette campagne n'est rien d'autre qu'une première et puissante tentative de milieux étrangers..." Et sauvagement on se prépare à la lutte. Il faut quelque chose de grand, d'imposant, de "Kolossal." On réussit à grouper 190 beaux Messieurs tous considérables, tous influents, et tous ardents défenseurs de l'idée du monopole. 123 parmi eux appartiennent aux Chambres Fédérales. Toutes les couleurs politiques, à l'exception des socialistes sont largement représentées. De plus ne nous tracassons pas pour ces Messieurs d'Amsterdam ou d'ailleurs, ils forment de leur côté une action similaire qui, si elle n'est pas commune, n'en est pas moins identique. Enfin, qui appelle-t-on à la présidence de cet important groupement, dont les directives doivent invariablement guider les pas de tous les "bons" suisses? M. le Conseiller National

Baumberger, que fut en son temps, vice-président du Comité d'action contre le monopole! En vérité la chose est comique si l'on pense que cette conversion sensationnelle accroîtra le nombre des "bonnes" brebis! Mais là ne se borne pas notre cause de joie. Comme, malgré tout ces Messieurs savent très bien au fond d'eux-mêmes que l'idée étatiste du monopole, n'est pas plus sympathique au peuple suisse aujourd'hui qu'autrefois. Ils essayent d'arriver à leurs fins sous le manteau de l'agneau. Partisans du monopole? que non point répondent-ils, notre comité s'intitule "Comité d'action en faveur de l'approvisionnement en blé." Oh! la jolie trouvaille et comme viola bien l'électeur rassuré! "Approvisionnement" vous dis-je, et non point "monopole!" Ce que donnera cette lutte, qui s'annonce très partagée nous n'en savons rien, mais il était nécessaire de relever tous ces petits faits pour éclairer, même à l'étranger, la lanterne de bien des Suisses. La lutte est désormais engagée entre les théories étatistes du socialisme, soutenu par les intérêts particuliers des paysans, et les anciennes doctrines libérales, qui ont jusqu'ici conduit notre barque fédérale à bon port.

"UN OURS DE LA FOSSE."

EIDGENÖSSISCHE GLOSSEN.

Zwangswirtschaft.

Man rühmt der freien Privatwirtschaft nach, dass sie besser und wirtschaftlicher arbeite als eine unter einem gewissen Zwang des Staates stehende Planwirtschaft. Die Entwicklung unserer Landwirtschaft seit Kriegsende beweist das Gegenteil. Man darf getrost behaupten, dass unsere Landwirtschaft heute freier und selbständiger dastünde, wenn man den Zwang der Kriegsjahre beibehalten hätte. Wir hatten ein beträchtliches Getreideareal, solange der Anbauzwang bestand; mit dem Tage, da der Zwang wegfiel, ging auch die Getreidefläche zurück. Die Privatwirtschaft beschritt den Weg, der bequemer war und erst noch guten Gewinn versprach, die Kühe nahmen zu und die Garben nahmen ab, und so stehen wir heute vor dem Ergebnis, dass vor lauter freier ungehemmter Privatwirtschaft (die sogar noch das Kraftfutter aus dem Ausland holte, um unsere Schwäche zu vermehren) unsere Landwirtschaft sehr unfrei dasteht. Wenn im Kanton Thurgau die Getreidefläche seit 1919 beinahe um die Hälfte abgenommen hat, so ist damit nur angedeutet, was an einer von der Natur ganz besonders begünstigten Lage geschah. Kein Wunder, dass heute dieser und jener Bauer wieder vom Zwange spricht. Auch der "Freie Schweizer" muss gelegentlich wieder einsehen, dass ein erleuchteter Zwang besser wäre als eine sehr wenig erleuchtete Freiheit. Um nur ein Beispiel zu nennen: Die dringend nötige Güterzusammenlegung wird wahrscheinlich erst dann zur allgemeinen, segensreichen Durchführung kommen, wenn man die Bauern dazu zwingt. Es wäre nicht das erstmal, dass ein Mensch gezwungen werden muss, etwas zu tun, was in seinem eigenen Vorteil liegt.

Techniker.

Es gab eine Zeit, wo die Menschenkraft frei von Land zu Land fließen konnte. Heute, in der Zeit der grossen internationalen Kongresse ist es mit dieser ungehemmt strömenden Weltkraft vorbei. Die Schweiz konnte sich früher etwas darauf zugute tun, dass sie nicht nur Maschinen, Seidenstoffe und Stickereien exportierte, sondern auch Menschen, studierte, wohlqualifizierte, fachmännisch ausgebildete Menschen. Damit ist es vorbei. Alle Grenzen sind geschlossen. Die Folge ist die bekannte Ueberproduktion auf dem Gebiete der technischen und wissenschaftlichen Arbeiter. Immer noch kommen 400 stellensuchende Techniker auf 100 Stellenangebote. An unseren technischen Hochschulen und Techniken studieren 3000 junge Schweizer. Kein Mensch weiss, was man mit ihnen anfangen soll, wenn sie ihre Examen bestanden haben. Doch man hemmt den Zustrom nicht. Man will nicht merken, dass etwas anders geworden ist auf der Welt. Und wenn uns dafür auf anderen lebenswichtigen Gebieten die Arbeitskräfte ausgehen, so gibt es ja glücklicherweise immer noch Ausländer genug, die gerne bereit sind, jene Arbeit zu tun, die wir selber nicht mehr gern tun.

Bubikopf.

Dass der Bubikopf eine höchst gefährliche Angelegenheit ist, weiss man schon längst. Den neuesten Beweis schenkt uns die Kreischulpflege von Veltheim-Winterthur. Sie findet, eine Erziehlerin mit Bubikopf gehöre nicht in einen Kindergarten. Wer also Kindergartenler werden will, soll sich um Himmelswillen nicht die Haare kurz schneiden. Die Kinder könnten daran Anstoss nehmen. Wer aber schon einen Bubikopf trägt, wird gut daran tun, während der Probelektion mit falschen Zöpfen zu erscheinen, um das väterliche Wohlwollen der Herren von der Kreischulpflege nicht schon auf den ersten Blick zu verschmerzen. Man hat zwar bis jetzt nicht gewusst, dass bei einer Kindergartenlerin die Haare das wichtigste sind, doch von nun an weiss man es—wenigstens in Veltheim.

Tessin.

Der Kanton Tessin hat früher eine blühende Hausindustrie gehabt. Man hat gesponnen und gewoben. Noch zeigen uns Prachtstücke in Leinen und Wolle, was man gekonnt hat, wenn auch die