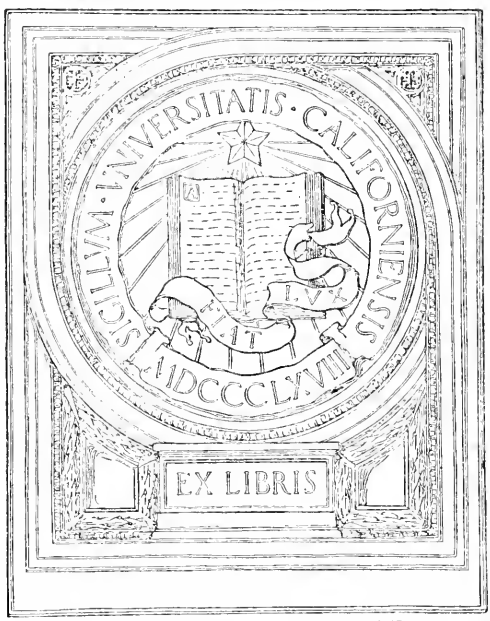

THE BRITISH INTERNED IN SWITZERLAND

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BY

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1919

TO

MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER

PREFACE

IN giving the following pages to the public, I do so in the hope that a plain statement of the life and activities of British soldiers whilst interned in Switzerland may prove of interest to those at home who have shown in so many and diverse ways their concern for the welfare of their countrymen whilst Prisoners of War in Germany, and, later, during the period of their internment in Switzerland. I have specially dwelt upon the fruitful initiative taken by the Swiss Government in the negotiations which preceded the acceptance by the belligerent States of the principle of internment. I have also endeavoured to show—I fear very inadequately—with what whole-heartedness the Prisoners of War were welcomed in their midst by all classes of the population; and with what devotion the Medical Department of the Swiss Army, to whose officers the organization of the camps and the care of the sick were delegated, set about its task.

With regard to the status of Prisoners of War in Switzerland, it should be borne in mind

that the Interned were under the guardianship of the Swiss Government, who undertook all responsibility for their care, discipline, and medical treatment. A special officer, or diplomat, (as in the case of France and Germany), nominated by each of the belligerent States, was attached to his Embassy or Legation with a view to his collaboration with the Swiss political and military authorities in respect of all matters affecting the welfare of his interned countrymen, the more delicate international questions arising out of the internment being dealt with by the Chiefs of the Diplomatic Missions accredited to Switzerland.

I have said elsewhere, and perhaps I may be permitted a repetition, that the sense of a possible all-world-brotherhood had one of its happiest demonstrations in the attitude of the Swiss people towards the unfortunate sufferers of the war.

In conclusion, I beg to express my indebtedness and thanks to Lady Grant Duff for many of the details connected with Chapters IV. and V., as also to my wife and daughter for those of Chapter XIV. on the social life of Berne from 1914 to 1918.

H. PICOT.

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

B.L.R.C.O. British Legation Red Cross Organization.
C.P. of W.C. Central Prisoners of War Committee.
B.R.C.S. British Red Cross Society, London.
S.B.O. Senior British Officer of the Camp.
D.M.O. Directing Medical Officer.
P. of W. Prisoners of War.
A.S.A. "Armée Sanitäts Anstalt." Military Hospital at Seebourg.
T.I.M. "Travail d'Internés Militaires." Workshop for French Interned at Vevey.
B.I.T.S. British Interned Technical School at Vevey.
C.C.C. Society. The Colonial and Continental Church Society.
Y.M.C.A. Young Men's Christian Association.
B.I.M. British Interned, Mürren.
C.B. Confinement to Barracks.
Ps. of W.H.C. Prisoners of War Help Committee.
G.H.Q. General Head Quarters.
Q.M.G. Quarter-Master General.
V.A.D. Voluntary Aid Detachment.

THE BRITISH INTERNED IN SWITZERLAND

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

DRIVING off with my daughter and just a couple of portmanteaux to the London Chatham and Dover Railway, on July 16, 1914, *en route* for Thoune, our usual headquarters when contemplating a few weeks' wandering in Switzerland, I little thought of the events the Fates were weaving, and which, I suppose, have not left unaffected any individual destiny either in Europe or in the whole world. It was a bright and sunny morning, with a light cool breeze, upon which we congratulated ourselves in view of the crossing of that narrow but often uncomfortable strip of sea isolating us from the great continent at hand. Nothing, so far, to warn us of any impending upheaval. The sea was blissfully asleep, enveloped in a

golden haze; and Paris as gay, nonchalant, and unsuspecting of any approaching danger, as a child at play.

The papers which reached me, however, on arrival at Thoune, interfered somewhat with the first enjoyment of mountain and lake. I remember watching, one afternoon on the lake, the gathering of a storm over the Interlaken valley, the mists sweeping up the lower slopes of the mountains to unite with the gloomy, threatening clouds above, the whole rent by sudden forked flashes and resonating peals. Was it a counterpart of what was happening in the politically surcharged atmosphere of Europe?

I knew the German Government had long since planned war to hasten and to crown their country's hitherto peaceful economic penetration abroad. Her military writers had treated us to an exposition of the ways and means by which world dominion could be secured; and her diplomats and intellectuals had been at much pains to secretly enlighten their own people as to the meaning of the "Welt-politik" they were so fond of proclaiming. In England, individual lucubrations such as these would, in the natural order of things, be set aside as of no special import; but in Germany, where every class was drilled and schooled to the idea of "Deutschland über alles," did they not

foreshadow a national, even racial impulse, gathering force as it developed ?

Personally, I had all the less reason for anticipating any sudden upheaval, as I had just assisted in London (February–March, 1914) at a Conference between representatives of British navigation interests and German delegates of the Bagdad Railway Company and the Deutsche Bank, with the object of establishing the relative positions of our respective interests, in so far as the navigation of the Mesopotamian rivers was concerned. Daily, even twice daily, sittings were solemnly carried on, with but one interruption of a week to allow the German delegates to refer to Berlin for further instructions. About the end of February a final understanding was actually reached, and embodied in an Agreement duly initialed previous to ratification. These meetings received a good deal of publicity at the time, and I only refer to them in view of certain features which appear of psychohistorical value, as further revealing German character and mentality.

The members taking part in the proceedings (presided over by a member of the Foreign Office) represented the several interests involved, and in addition Herr v. Kühlmann, then Counsellor of the German Embassy in London, attended as representative of German diplomacy. It

was the first time I had met Herr v. Kühlmann, and I had no experience, therefore, of his outlook or mentality. His attitude was curiously interesting and ambiguous. He intervened but seldom in the debates, though, when he did, it was to throw oil on troubled waters and expedite the business on hand, whilst his remarks showed a certain grasp of the questions at issue, which were mostly of a very detailed nature. The general impression he made upon me, however, was one of supreme boredom on his part. His attitude may be described as one of supercilious tolerance and indifference, which puzzled me at the time, but which, in the light of subsequent events, becomes perfectly clear and natural. As an official in the confidence of the German Foreign Office, he was doubtless aware of the intentions of his Government with regard to coming events.

It is now known as an established fact that, at the Imperial Conference summoned at Potsdam, on July 5, 1914, at which representatives of German Diplomacy, the Army and Navy, the great Banks, and well-known captains of industry took part, a final decision was taken in favour of war. Mr. Morgenthau, the American Ambassador at Constantinople, gives an account of this Conference as related to him by Baron Wangenheim, his German colleague; and on

the subject of the question of responsibility for the war, writes as follows: "My conclusions as to the 'responsibility' are not based on suspicion or belief or the study of circumstantial data. I do not have to reason or argue about the matter. I know. The conspiracy that caused this greatest of human tragedies was hatched by the Kaiser and his Imperial crew at this Potsdam Conference, on July 5, 1914." Every leader and captain of industry evidently had his orders to be in readiness for war, as the result of the decision of the 5th of July. That Herr v. Kühlmann, like others, had confidential information of what was maturing, admits, I believe, of little doubt; and the negotiations at the Foreign Office for the regulation of so small an affair as the navigation of the Mesopotamian rivers, when compared with the issues of peace and war, must indeed have appeared to him as farcical and particularly boring, given his knowledge of their probable aim and purpose. Just as the departure of the Kaiser on his yacht for Norway after the Potsdam Conference was calculated to give the Chancellories of Europe a feeling of confidence, so the meetings in London must have been calculated to lull our Foreign Office into a sense of security.

The general tension during the last few days of July brought to my mind a conversation

I had had with Colonel Trench, our former Military Attaché in Berlin, in the summer of 1912, the memory of which did not serve to minimize my growing uneasiness. I had, at the time, just read works by Bernhardi and Naumann, in which the question of Germany's future is argued in the frankest possible manner; in so frank a manner, indeed, and with so little attempt at concealment, that both authors had been classed by outside critics as hot-heads and fire-brands, in the belief that they, like others of similar tendencies, were unsupported by the more level-headed and responsible leaders of German policy. Some colour was lent to this view by articles appearing simultaneously in the German Press, specially written, as the sequel revealed, for foreign consumption, setting forth that this militant school was led by extremists who should not be taken seriously. Now, Colonel Trench had had unusual opportunities of weighing in the balance the value of the influence exercised by these so-called "extremists." His linguistic accomplishments and attractive personality had made him a *persona grata* at the German Court, and had given him ample facilities for approaching men of every cast of thought. He had, moreover, seen service in South Africa with the German Expeditionary Force during the Herero campaign, and

had thus obtained a near view of the German military machine and German methods of thought.

I, therefore, seized the opportunity of sounding him on the subject of Bernhardi and similar authors, and asked whether they represented in his opinion an extremist, or general, view of thought in Germany. He replied that the views they held were now the common property of all the thinking portion of the community, and even of the great majority of their countrymen, whether articulate or inarticulate. Their very bluntness had led to their being discounted abroad, but none the less Germany practically throughout had been inoculated with the microbe of world-dominion madness and stood solid behind the Military Party. He then added what, at the time, seemed a very bold statement. He said: "You will see that we shall be at war with Germany not later than September, 1914. The Germans have fixed on that date as the most favourable for their purposes. By then their final preparations will be completed, and they cannot or will not wait, for were they to do so they would be giving time to Russia to complete the strategic railways she has in contemplation, and they are determined to forestall her railway programme."

I met Colonel Trench again in the summer

of 1913, and referring to our conversation of 1912, adduced arguments then popular in England showing what enormous risks, dynastic as well as economic, the Kaiser would be taking by casting German prosperity into the melting-pot of war; whereas, if left to proceed steadily on her present path, she might achieve world dominion in an economic sense. He brushed aside these arguments on the ground that the German ideal was not based on economic dominion alone, and that such dominion would not satisfy the War Party, who counted on a military success redounding to their credit and that of the Army. He added that every nerve was being strained in anticipation of the "Great Day," and repeated the statement he made in 1912, "that we should be at war with Germany in September, 1914." Was this prophecy to prove correct? It certainly looked like it to any one endeavouring to read between the lines of the news pouring in.

I decided to wire to my wife, who was with Russian relatives, taking the cure at Contréxeville, to hurry on to Switzerland direct. She had just written to say that they proposed making a détour to Switzerland via Colmar and the Black Forest, by automobile. Indeed, as it appeared later, they were about to engage a car, and had actually made all necessary arrange-

ments to that end. Fortunately, my wire arrived just in time, else I fear to face the thought of what might have been the consequences had they been caught in Germany when war was declared about a week later. As it was, my wife and her party arrived safely at Thoune, escaping the French mobilization by a day or two.

On England's declaration of war, I decided to return home at once, and went to Berne to secure passports and, if needful, letters of recommendation. To my great pleasure, I found Sir (then Mr.) Evelyn Grant Duff in charge of the British Legation as H.M.'s Minister to the Swiss Confederation. We had been colleagues many years before (1893–1895), he as Secretary, I as Military Attaché, at the British Legation in Teheran, Persia, where we had worked, and spent several most enjoyable years together. Mr. Grant Duff informed me of his urgent need of a Military Attaché, Colonel Granet, appointed in that capacity to both Italy and Switzerland, being detained in Rome, and so not available at the time at Berne. Mr. Grant Duff proposed wiring, therefore, to ask for my appointment, even if only provisionally. With the glad feeling that I might once more be of service to my country, I accepted his kind offer with the greatest alacrity. The

answer to Mr. Grant Duff's telegram arriving a few days later in an affirmative sense, I proceeded to Berne, on August 11, 1914, accompanied by my wife and daughter, to take up my new duties.

When establishing ourselves at the Bernerhof Hotel, I had little idea it would prove our residence for four consecutive years!

CHAPTER II

CONDITIONS IN SWITZERLAND ON THE OUTBREAK OF WAR—THE SWISS ARMY

ON my arrival in Berne, I found an unusual state of affairs. The Minister and members of his Staff were being besieged by thousands of British visitors in Switzerland clamouring to return to England, every one of whom had to be provided with a special permit or passport. The same thing was happening in a minor degree at the American Legation, where the American Minister and his Staff, like ourselves, had to face the question of difficulty of transport through France and across the Channel.

There were some eight thousand British subjects derelict in Switzerland, many of whom, besides, had momentarily exhausted their financial resources. Mobilization was taking place both in France and Switzerland, and the amount of rolling-stock available for through transit was extremely limited, so that it was clear that many of these visitors would have

to remain in Switzerland for a certain length of time.

At this juncture, the Swiss hotel proprietors behaved in a very public-spirited manner. The Swiss banks, owing to the financial crisis temporarily supervening, were unable to cash cheques on England, with the result that visitors, willing as they might be, could not, in many cases, settle their hotel accounts before departure. Realizing the situation, the hotel proprietors not only declared their readiness to accept deferred payment, but further offered their British clientèle the use of their hotels for as long as necessary. This attitude on the part of the proprietors at a moment of extreme difficulty not only reflects credit on themselves, but is one on which our national pride may dwell with pleasure, since it makes clear the confidence inspired by the British visitor abroad.

The financial situation was further complicated by the fact that ready money was practically unobtainable, H.M.'s Minister himself being only allowed by his own bank to draw frs. 50 per week. A solution, however, was soon happily found in a provision in the regulations of the Swiss National Bank to the effect "that if gold be deposited at an authorized centre, the Bank might issue notes against such gold." At the request of the Minister, H.M.'s Govern-

ment desposited £25,000 at the Swiss Bankverein in London, upon which the Swiss National Bank opened an equivalent credit in notes in favour of the Minister at Berne. Mr. Grant Duff was thus enabled to issue cash in exchange for cheques, and so facilitate the return of stranded British visitors.

Mr. G. P. Skipworth, the representative in Berne of the Westinghouse Brake Company, volunteered to undertake the detailed work in connection with this transportation, which, as a matter of fact, lasted over two months. It suffices to say that it was no light matter to assemble parties of three to four hundred visitors scattered all over Switzerland, and to see them safely off to their satisfaction, if not comfort, whenever through conveyance could be placed at their disposal by the Swiss and French authorities.

Mr. Skipworth was, later on, appointed Assistant Commercial Attaché to the British Legation in Switzerland, a post he still happily occupies.

On taking up my duties in Berne, I made the acquaintance of the heads of the Military and Political Departments, of my Allied colleagues, and also of the Commander-in-Chief of the Swiss Army—General Ulrich Wille—and his Staff.

Based on the territorial system, the Swiss Army, in times of peace, possesses no officer of the rank of General; but on occasions of emergency, the appointment of a General as Commander-in-Chief is at once proceeded with. His choice finally rests with the Federal Assembly. The powers vested in him are of a very comprehensive nature; so comprehensive indeed during this war as to cause no little alarm among some sections of the community. In the emergency created by the declarations of war in August, 1914, the choice of a General Commander-in-Chief lay between Colonel Ulrich Wille, a citizen of the Canton of Zürich, married to a member of the Bismarck family, and Colonel Sprecher v. Bernegg, a citizen of the Canton of the Grisons, married to a member of the family of Von Bülow; and it was some time before the Government finally declared itself in favour of the former, appointing Colonel Sprecher v. Bernegg as his Chief of Staff.

With my Allied colleagues, Colonels Pageot, Gourko, and Golovane, the French and Russian Military Attachés, I maintained the most pleasant relations, and our mutual frank co-operation under sympathetic conditions will ever remain one of my most cherished memories. Colonel Gourko is the son of the Field Marshal Gourko (later Governor-General of Poland), of Shipka

Pass fame. He had seen much active service, and is said to have received more wounds than any other officer in the Russian Army. Ever anxious to find himself in the trenches, he succeeded in returning to Russia in 1915, where he fought on several fronts until disabled by wounds, from which I am glad to know he again made a good recovery. Since the Revolution in Russia, he, like so many others, has given no sign of himself, and I have heard nothing further of him. Colonel Pageot returned to the Western Front in 1916, in command of a regiment, and greatly distinguished himself, receiving the "Croix de Guerre avec Palmes," a distinction which gave much pleasure to his former colleagues in Berne.

Prior to my departure from Thoune, I had been witness to the mobilization of the Swiss Army, and was much impressed by the smoothness with which that operation was conducted. There is nothing which touches more profoundly the life of each individual citizen than the exigencies of the defence of his country. Obligatory service has always been at the basis of the life of the Swiss people from the early dawn of their national history. The primitive cantons, even before 1290, were persuaded of the importance of a preparation for war, a persuasion which succeeding centuries have done much to

develop and strengthen. The very first cantonal pacts laid stress on the dispositions regarding military organization, and as early as 1476, the Confederates placed contingents in the field numbering 50,000 fighting men.

The principle of universal service as adapted to present day requirements finds a willing acceptance amongst a people whose instincts, though ultra-democratic, make them realize that their independence rests on the attitude of the Confederation vis-à-vis of her powerful, and sometimes aggressive, neighbours. I have never in my experience of Switzerland heard a word of complaint of the burden borne by the State owing to the obligation entailed by universal service, though anger is deeply felt for the sacrifices imposed upon the country due to the ambitions of those responsible for the Great War.

On the outbreak of war the Confederation manifested their determination to maintain neutrality as against all comers, and, by the mobilization of some 300,000 men, made clear to the belligerents their strength of purpose.

The following table[1] gives a résumé of the gradual evolution of the military organization

[1] From *L'Armée Suisse*, by Colonel C. H. Egli, Colonel d'Etat-Major Général, 1913.

from the point of view of numbers legislated for at different periods :—

Year.	Elite.	Reserve.	Landwehr.	Landsturm and Complementary Services.	Total Effectives.
1640	—	—	—	—	36,000
1782	—	—	—	—	63,697
1817	33,758	33,748	—	—	67,506
1850	69,569	34,785	—	—	104,354
1874	105,368	—	97,012	—	202,380
1899	148,435	—	87,290	275,596	511,321
1911	142,054	—	69,513	275,284	486,851

The Army is now composed of the whole of the fit male population between the ages of 20 to 48 ; the Elite being drawn from men of the ages of 20 to 32 years, the Landwehr from 33 to 40 years, the Landsturm from 41 to 48 years. The effectives increase from year to year with the increase of population. As regard instruction, the training of the infantry recruit lasts 65 days, of the cavalry 90 days, of the artillery 75 days, per annum. Repetition courses for the trained soldier take place annually, and vary, according to the branch of the service, from eleven to fourteen days. The Landwehr has a "repetition course" once every four

years. The Landsturm is only occasionally called up for a few days at a time at long intervals.

According to Colonel Egli, the expenditure for military purposes for the year 1911 amounted in all to frs. 44,777,894, being 25·9 per cent. of the revenue of the country. The fact that Switzerland is able to maintain a force of nearly half a million men at an expenditure of less than £2,000,000 sterling speaks for itself. The war has, of course, added greatly to the annual Budget. The additional expenditure from 1914 to 1918, owing to mobilization, extra material, higher rates of pay and living, etc., form no small part of the accumulated deficit of the country, which cannot be far short of £40,000,000 sterling, and is steadily increasing.

The Military Regulations are so framed as to interfere in the least possible degree with the civil life of the soldier, and yet, despite the shortness of training, a very fair state of efficiency is reached and maintained.

The Corps of Officers is highly educated, and embraces in its ranks all the best brains of the country. It receives its military instruction at special military schools.

A valuable adjunct to the training of the rank and file is supplied by the Shooting Clubs, of which thousands exist, and as shooting is

the one national sport, this important branch of instruction receives special attention.

The disorganization which immediately resulted in the economic and industrial life of Switzerland on the outbreak of war, became a matter of great concern to the Government, who, under their first impression of the World War, feared that economic ruin might become inevitable. It looked as though the business of the hotels, in which enormous capital has been invested, would cease to exist, whilst the future of hundreds of thousands of skilled artisans and mechanics would be imperilled. Foreign markets would certainly find their purchasing power greatly reduced, and there was every likelihood of a shortage in the half-finished products received from Germany and Austria, which finally reached foreign markets after receiving at the hands of the Swiss workmen that finish which gave them so great a part of their value. The future was painted in the blackest of colours, but the outcome has differed greatly from the first crude picture.

Never in the history of the peasant have such large profits been made as during the last four years. The hotel industry has no doubt been crippled, but it has been kept alive by the not inconsiderable influx of wealthy refugees from Central Europe and neutral countries,

and the hospitalization of some 30,000 French, British, Belgian, and German Interned prisoners of war. The watch and clock, automobile, electric, and other mechanical industries, have made good by devoting their attention to the manufacture of munitions or other war requisites, in which the exceptional skill of the Swiss artisan has proved of inestimable worth. The dye industry has been developed to such an extent, that Switzerland may confidently expect to retain a portion of this trade in competition with Germany in the future.

The war will, I would fain believe and hope, have given to Swiss economics an elasticity and adaptability of which they stood in need, and from many points of view will not have proved that unmixed evil foreseen by her pessimists under the influence of their first fears.

German industrial circles have watched this development with misgivings, and are busily taking precautionary measures to turn it to their advantage by the loan of capital, by the infiltration of expert management into all those concerns in which they foresee rivalry, and often by the purchase outright of commercial undertakings likely to be useful in supplementing the work of the Fatherland in the economic struggle it will have to face after the war.

It is a matter of common knowledge that sympathies in Switzerland were divided at the outbreak of hostilities, the French and Italian speaking cantons having a decided bias in favour of the Allies, and the German cantons one in favour of the other side. After the early successes of the Germans, the opinion was generally held that Germany would press the war to a conclusion so rapidly, that England would not be able to make her weight felt in time to avert a calamity. Swiss military circles, however, did not wholly share this view, as the following account of a conversation, which in August, 1914, I had with a well-known Swiss officer of standing shows. This conversation appeared to me at the time all the more interesting as my informant was a Professor of Military History, and, judging by his name, might have been expected to have his views coloured by German sympathies. He spoke in the following sense :—

"Now that England has thrown in her lot with France and Russia, the combination will probably be too great for Germany and her Allies, but the struggle will be a bitter one. Remember the Seven Years' War, and what Prussia was capable of in opposition to a host of enemies. You will have many surprises; Switzerland, however, will welcome the weakening of Germany, provided she is not completely crushed. A

weakening of Germany would be useful to us Swiss, for we see a great danger to ourselves in the economic dominance she is obtaining in our country. Any relaxation in that respect will be to our advantage."

The events of the last four years have done much to change feeling in the German-speaking cantons, inasmuch as the invasion of Belgium, the employment of poison gas, the sinking of the *Lusitania*, the brutality of the submarine campaign, the destruction of Serbia, the harshness shown to Roumania, have made an unfavourable impression on all classes of the population. German propaganda has also thoroughly awakened the country to the danger it was incurring from the stranglehold which German financiers and industrials were establishing upon her economic life.

The revolutionary fiasco in Russia also, in no small degree, affected public opinion. As a republican nation possessed with the ideal of the rights of smaller nations to dispose of themselves, they feared and abhorred the Russian form of government as represented by Czarism; and this, no doubt, had a good deal to do with the way in which they regarded Germany as a protector and a bulwark against the submergence of Europe by a Slav wave. That danger now removed, they probably feel

Germany's support may be more easily dispensed with; and with a weakened Germany they foresee the possibility of re-organizing their economic life free from the trammels of an overbearing neighbour. The crushing of Germany, however, would, they think, mean economic ruin to them; and at this they draw the line.

CHAPTER III

PRELIMINARY NEGOTIATIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE REPATRIATION AND INTERNMENT OF PRISONERS OF WAR

IN the early autumn of 1915 I came to London in connection with certain details of work in Switzerland. During this visit I had the pleasure of meeting Lord Kitchener for the first and, alas ! for the last time. I had received orders to report myself to him at the War Office, and at the appointed hour, punctual to the minute, a member of his Staff informed me that he was ready to see me. Lord Kitchener received me very cordially, and plunging into business at once, said he wished to hear my views concerning certain matters dealing with the prospective internment of British prisoners of war in Switzerland, regarding which there was some uncertainty at Headquarters. He then proceeded to give me his own views with some emphasis and at considerable length. After hearing, in answer, what I had to say, he remarked :— "What you tell me is most interesting. You

have treated the question at an entirely different angle; I had no idea of the Swiss point of view, and am glad to know that it confirms my own. I will get you in a shorthand clerk, to whom you can dictate what you have just told me. It can then be signed before you leave. I shall be seeing the Cabinet this afternoon, and will present your statement to them." On my suggesting he would have a more carefully compiled statement if I could quietly prepare it, he said: "No, I want it at once; the sooner I get it the better." In an hour's time the statement was in his hands. I know not whether the method adopted by Lord Kitchener in this interview was characteristic of him, but from that standpoint it may be worth recording. My general impression was that of an imposing personality and a great driving force, full of vitality and youth. His manner was altogether charming, and I can well imagine him to have inspired enthusiasm amongst those brought into close contact with him.

Whether this interview had anything at all to do with my later appointment is problematic; but at the end of December, 1915, after a tenure of eighteen months of the Military Attachéship, I was relieved by Colonel Wyndham, 60th Rifles, who had seen service and been wounded in France, and on May 14, 1916, I was appointed

"Officer in charge of the arrangements for the British Interned in Switzerland."

The first idea of internment of prisoners of war in a neutral country appears to have been suggested by Monsieur Louis de Tscharner in the Swiss Press nearly a year before the outbreak of war. In an article dated September, 1913, the writer suggested, curiously enough, the conclusion of a Convention between Switzerland and the neighbouring States relative to internment, though why or how the idea happened to occur to him does not appear. He proposed that these States should engage themselves to respect Swiss neutrality, and to provision her during the period of war, whilst Switzerland should, in exchange, take charge of the wounded, and, upon their return to health, restore them to their countries of origin. This new and interesting suggestion became the subject of numerous articles and was much discussed at the time, but the conclusion of a bargain, with a view to obtaining respect for Swiss neutrality in exchange for services rendered, was not agreeable to Swiss national pride, and the subject was allowed to drop.

The following preliminary negotiations embrace two distinct questions: Direct Repatriation and Internment in Switzerland, which, in the process, intersect each other. I give them, therefore, in chronological order.

Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, the question of the direct repatriation of prisoners of war was brought forward by the Swiss Federal Council at the instance of the International Committee of the Swiss Red Cross, and the French and German Governments were addressed with a view to a direct exchange of such wounded prisoners as could no longer be made available for military service ("grands blessés"). A similar proposal also emanated from the Holy See which did much to promote an understanding between these Governments, and an agreement was reached in February, 1915, as a result of which between March, 1915, and November, 1916, 2,343 German and 8,668 French "grands blessés" were transported through Switzerland to their own countries.

No sooner had this repatriation of the "grands blessés" commenced, than the idea of internment in Switzerland was revived, and in January, 1915, Monsieur Ador, the venerable President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, approached Monsieur Millerand, the French Minister of War, on the subject. He suggested the advisability of hospitalizing in Switzerland prisoners "petits blessés," wounded or suffering in a less degree than the "grands blessés"; all those, in short, who might benefit by the care they would receive at the hands

of his Government. His suggestion was favourably received, and conversations at once ensued between the Federal Council and the French and German diplomatic representatives at Berne, with more special reference to men suffering from tuberculosis.

These conversations had originally in view the internment of Officers and N.C.Os. only. It was not till May, 1915, that the men came also into question. At that date, le Comte Charles Santucci, Envoy of the Holy See, submitted a project to the Federal Council at Berne suggesting that the scope of the internment should be broadened, so as to include all ranks, whether Officers, N.C.Os., or men; and not only the tuberculous, but numerous other categories of sick and wounded. He had in view always an equal number of either side.

The Council declared its readiness to devote itself to the realization of this enlarged programme, and thereupon opened negotiations with the interested Governments. These were both long and delicate. The first difficulty which presented itself concerned the guardianship of the Interned. The Council were averse to the immobilization of a part of their forces for that purpose, and asked what guarantee the captor State would have that its prisoners would not seek an early opportunity for escape.

This difficulty was settled by the Council, who made the proposal that the belligerent States should agree to return to Switzerland all prisoners of war who might escape to their own countries, and a settlement was agreed upon in this sense.

The next point for decision was as to the numbers of the Interned; on what basis was this to be established? Should it be on the principle of rank for rank and head for head, or be based on categories of disablement without regard to equality of number? France showed itself favourable to the latter principle, Germany to the former. It was only in the month of October, 1915, that Germany declared itself in accord with the project for internment, but refused to admit the principle of categories, and maintained its view as regards the equality of numbers.

In November, Mgr. Marchetti, Delegate of the Holy See, with a view to inspiring confidence in Germany in the principle of the categories, intervened with the proposal that neutral Commissions of medical officers should proceed to the camps and be made responsible for the selection of the prisoners for internment. At last, in December, an agreement was reached between Switzerland, France, and Germany, whereby the principle of categories without

regard to equality of numbers was accepted. The establishment of neutral Commissions of medical officers was also agreed upon.

At the end of December, Monsieur Hoffmann, then President of the Swiss Confederation, posed the question of the internment of civilians, and made a proposition in this sense which was favourably received.

In January, 1916, the Chief of the Swiss Political Department was able to announce to the Federal Council that the negotiations on the subject of the "petits blessés" had reached a practical result, and the Department made a proposal for the immediate internment of 1,000 Germans and 1,000 French by way of trial. The tuberculous were to come first, but if these numbers were not reached, then the balance was to be made up with the sick of other categories. The organization and direction of the internment was placed in the hands of Colonel Hauser, principal medical officer of the Swiss Army, and on the 12th of January, 1916, that officer was able to announce the creation of a special branch of the sanitary service, with a central office at Berne, for internment purposes.

Already, by February 14, 883 French, including 104 officers, and 364 Germans, including 7 officers, had reached Switzerland, and had

been located in the regions of Montana, Leysin, and the Quatre-Cantons, etc. These first arrivals had been designated by doctors of the captor States, and after a further examination at Lyons and Constance by a Control Commission, had been definitely nominated and passed on to Switzerland.

Although in agreement on the principle of Internment, two points of capital importance yet remained to be fixed:—

1. The list of disabilities on which the internment was to be based.

2. The organization of the Itinerant Commissions of Swiss doctors, whose duty it was to visit France and Germany and designate candidates for internment.

With regard to 1, the first list of 12 categories drawn up in January, 1916, was increased to 20 categories in February. In June and July, 1916, the list was again the subject of discussion by an International Conference at Berne, and the categories were then finally fixed at 18.

With regard to 2, the proposals made by the Council for the appointment of ten Sanitary Commissions for each country, composed of two Swiss doctors reinforced by a third, an officer of the captor States, who should have the place of President, with power to examine and designate prisoners for despatch to Lyons

or Constance, as the case might be, for a final inspection by a Board of Control, was accepted by the French and German diplomatic representatives at Berne, in February, 1916. On the 21st of February the Political Department announced the approaching departure of the Itinerant Commissions.

On the termination of these negotiations, the Swiss Government invited Great Britain and Germany to become parties thereto, offering to give the same hospitality to their prisoners of war as to those of France and Germany. This offer was accepted, and in May, 1916, the agreement, as drawn up between France and Germany, was also made applicable to Great Britain and Germany.

No time was lost in carrying out the intentions foreshadowed. Already, in March, 1916, the first Itinerant Swiss Commissions set out on their visit to the camps in France and Germany, and during March, April, and May, were busily engaged in examining such prisoners as were said to be suffering from the disabilities set forth in the various categories.

By the time I reached Berne on the 14th of May, 1916, to take up my duties as "Officer in charge of British Interned in Switzerland," the work of these Commissions was drawing to a close, and Colonel Hauser (Chief Medical Officer,

Swiss Army) informed me of the concentration at Lyons and Constance of French, German, and Belgian prisoners of war who had been designated by the Itinerant Commissions for further examination by the Boards of Control at those places. Amongst these were several hundred British officers and men, and he suggested that he might effect their transfer from Constance to Switzerland within a fortnight, if it were possible for me to be in readiness for them; otherwise they must await their turn, which would not come until a month later. The alternative decided me to close with the offer, and to make what arrangements I could in the few days at my disposal.

The three most important questions to be dealt with prior to the arrival of the men were equipment, medical comforts, and choice of localities.

As regards the equipment of the men, I had already taken steps to ensure the despatch from British Headquarters in France of everything necessary, but owing to pressure on the French railways, no positive assurances could be given me as to the exact date of delivery. Judging by the condition of those French and Belgian prisoners who had already arrived in Switzerland, I knew that the state of our men would be equally deplorable, and I was anxious

that they should be able to exchange their worn-out and probably vermin-infested garments without any delay. It was only too likely, also, that the first arrivals would consist of the badly wounded and tuberculous, men who would be in urgent need of sick and home comforts—not that the Swiss would not have all essential medicines and comforts at their disposal, but they could not have in any abundance the comforts and requisites familiar to our soldiers.

Such being the conditions, I addressed myself to the "British Legation Red Cross Organization," and was much relieved to find that Mrs. Grant Duff had not only laid in stocks of medical comforts, but had prepared her staff for any sudden call I might make upon her for underclothing or hospital garments. The various groups in Switzerland forming part of her organization were set to work, and within the fortnight sufficient underclothing was made up to meet the requirements of 500 men, and hospital garments for 200 sick. As it turned out, the regulation kit was delivered just in time to have it ready for issue, so that the men were outfitted from head to foot on arrival, the fullest use being made of the Red Cross clothing.

I had in the interval visited the camps at

Château d'Oex and Leysin. I was met at Château d'Oex by the Swiss military and civil authorities, great pleasure being manifested by both at the prospect of entertaining British troops. This health resort is too well known to need any description. It suffices to say that it is situated at an altitude of 1,066 metres in one of the most beautiful valleys of Switzerland, and has a reputation as a sports centre second only to that of Gstaad, a few hundred feet higher in the same valley. The near proximity to the Lake of Geneva, with which it is in touch by means of a mountain railway, makes it a favourite resort of Swiss and foreign visitors. Excellent accommodation had already been bespoken by Captain Dr. de la Chaux (Swiss Army), who had been appointed to take charge of the camp, all the smaller hotels and pensions being reserved for our officers and men. Unfortunately, no hotel sufficiently large to accommodate all the officers under one roof was available, as the two main hotels, the "Grand" and the "Rosat," had expressed their inability to lodge officers at the regulation price of frs. 6 per diem. Their managers very naturally preferred to cater for the better paying visitor. Apart from this, no exception could be taken to the class of accommodation provided.

Having satisfied myself of the suitability of

Château d'Oex, with its outlying villages of Rougemont and Rossinières, as a camping place for the Interned, I now passed on to Leysin via Montreux and the Rhone Valley, and mounting up by its electric railway, reached the beautiful plateau of meadow lands, on which so many hotels and châlets have been built expressly for the treatment of consumptives. A medical staff of distinguished specialists is maintained there in association with the hotels, the organization as a whole being that of a combined huge hospital. In peace time it is crowded with patients from all quarters of the globe, but at the time of my visit very few civilians remained, and the doctors were busily engaged in adapting its resources to the use of its new military clientèle. The doctors had donned their uniforms as officers of the Swiss Army, and the place was rapidly assuming the aspect of a small garrison town. Many of the hotels were already occupied by French and Belgian soldiers, of whom, sad to say, there were already 1,200 in hospital. Swiss soldiers were also in evidence, and I here became aware for the first time of the fact that the Swiss as a people are far from being immune to tuberculosis.

Arrangements were already being made for the accommodation of 200 British officers and men, Colonel Hauser having calculated that

about that number of consumptives would be likely to arrive with the first party of British. No one could pass through Leysin without being impressed, as I was, by the beauty of the surroundings, the detailed perfection of its organization, and the purposeful construction of its hotels and châlets built so as to receive every ray of sunshine. Nothing struck me so much as the optimistic spirit which appeared to prevail amongst all classes of the sick alike; every one seemed easily moved to joy and laughter, ready to amuse and be amused, and I left with the feeling that of all people none were so brave as the patients of Leysin. Where this spirit prevailed, our men could not help but thrive, and any anxiety I may have had on their account was completely dispelled by my first visit to this sanatorium.

CHAPTER IV

RED CROSS ORGANIZATIONS IN SWITZERLAND —THE BRITISH LEGATION RED CROSS ORGANIZATION

ON the outbreak of war, the attention of various Swiss charitable societies was at once concentrated on work connected with the provision of comforts, clothing, and necessaries for the large body of Swiss citizens who were withdrawn from civil employment to take their place in the Army. Amongst the best known of these societies were:—"La Croix Rouge," "La Société Suisse le Bien du Soldat," "Les Unions Chrétiennes des Jeunes Gens de la Suisse," "La Ligue Pro-Captivis," "La Société Suisse des Aumôniers," "La Société du Mogen David Rouge."

Around these societies local branches rallied all over the country; and, as the war progressed, and the needs of the belligerent nations gradually came to light, they extended their field of interest so as to embrace the pressing needs of French civilians from the occupied regions of Northern

France, interned prisoners of war, and hospitals in France and Germany. The work of the "International Red Cross Society of Geneva" is too well known to need more than a passing reference here. It would require a volume to describe the immensity and importance of its labours.

As many British visitors, delayed at Berne owing to difficulties of transport, were anxious to show their appreciation of the courtesy extended to them by the Swiss during their enforced residence in the country, Lady Grant Duff (then Mrs. Grant Duff), the wife of H.M.'s Minister, assembled working parties at the Legation for the purpose of assisting the Swiss Red Cross, and the results of the first series of these working parties were forwarded to Madame Hoffmann, the wife of the then President of the Swiss Confederation. It was not long, however, before rumours of the dire straits of the French wounded reached Switzerland. The hospitals, it was said, were full to overflowing, and the nurses were at their wits' end to find the simplest requisites for these first victims of the war. The needs of the Allies had, therefore, to be given first consideration, and Lady Grant Duff sent out an invitation to her countrymen in Switzerland to co-operate with her in the provision of clothing and requi-

sites for these hospitals. The response was immediate, and showed that every British man, woman, and girl in the country was ready to come to her assistance.

To give effect to this intention, the "British Legation Red Cross Organization" was founded by Lady Grant Duff at Berne, and around it twelve groups, representing the chief centres of British life, were affiliated. The Organization was placed under the management of Lady Grant Duff, with my daughter as her assistant. The groups were left to their own devices as regards their formation and character, and were presided over by H.M.'s Consuls. Decentralization was carried to its extreme limit, each centre undertaking responsibility as regards local finance and administration, whilst Berne reserved to itself the right of determining the pattern and quality of the article required from any one centre, at any given moment, a system which tended to co-ordination, and the specialization of each group in the class of work for which it was fitted, by its relation to the sources of supply and the aptitude of its workers. The general output was forwarded to Headquarters at Berne for examination, storage, and final despatch to hospitals, both French and British. There was a good deal of friendly rivalry between the groups, and I

remember Lady Grant Duff telling me that she one day paid a surprise visit to a working party and was met with the remark: "Is it true that . . . makes better shirts than we do?" The answer given was: "Yes, perfectly true; but then you make much better pyjamas."

Berne, in short, acted as a clearing-house, and was thus well equipped for meeting demands requiring immediate attention. On one occasion a traveller arrived unexpectedly from Boulogne and notified at 6 p.m. that he would take a consignment to France, provided it could be ready for despatch by the 8.30 p.m. train of the same day. The articles were packed and deposited at the railway station by Lady Grant Duff on her way out to dinner. Amongst the many hospitals to which help was sent were the "Hôpitaux Militaires" of Besançon, Pontarlier, Nancy, Aix-les-Bains, Nice, and others in the Vosges. Bales of underclothing were also consigned to the Canteen at Lyons for distribution to the wounded; to the Cardinal of Rheims for distribution to that martyred city; and to the "Œuvre des Éclopés" at Paris. An interesting and important work was the complete outfitting in underwear, dressing-gowns and slippers of the "Urgency Case Hospital," a movable ambulance created and organized

by Miss Evelyn Eden, which commenced operations at Bar-le-Duc in 1915. Regular despatches of hospital clothing and requisites were also made to British hospitals at Boulogne, Calais, and elsewhere. Another consignment was sent at the special request of Lady Wemyss to a hospital ship in the Mediterranean. As regards British requirements in France, it was found advisable to send bales to Paris, where they were distributed by the late Sir Henry Austin Lee, who gave himself infinite trouble in arranging for their transit to the most needy hospitals.

As regards finance, the groups made it a point of honour to collect funds to meet all local expenses, and it was only on rare occasions that help was demanded of Berne. The usual machinery, such as bazaars, subscriptions, etc., was set in motion at each centre with satisfactory results, and in the main the funds so collected sufficed for all needs, a fact which speaks well for the generosity of the public, both British and Swiss.

Lady Rumbold took over the Presidency from Lady Grant Duff in September, 1916, and assumed direction for the duration of the war. Both ladies would, I believe, like me to place on record the names of the Group Presidents, on whom the success of the enter-

prise so much depended. Their wives in most cases undertook the work of management:—

Berne		Monsieur de Muralt (Central Group).
Montreux		Mr. and Mrs. Marcel Cuenod.
Vevey		Lieut.-Colonel and Mrs. Gillespie.
Lausanne		Mr. and Mrs. Galland.
Geneva		Monsieur and Madame de Candolle.
Zürich	(1914)	Sir Henry Angst.
	(1915–17)	Sir Cecil Hertzlett.
	(1917–18)	Mr. and Mrs. Beak; Miss Mackie, Hon. Secretary.
Lucerne		Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Stronge, Mrs. Hauser.
Lugano	(1914)	Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton.
	(1916)	Colonel and Mrs. Boileau.
Bâle	(1914)	Mr. Hamblock.
	(1915–17)	Mr. and Mrs. Beak.
	(1917)	Mr. and Mrs. Mathews.
St. Gall		Mr. Hurdwyn Gastrell.
Neuchâtel	(1914)	Monsieur et Madame Chable.
	(1916)	Monsieur Favre; Miss Wright, Hon. Secretary.
Davos		Mr. and Mrs. Lockett.
St. Moritz		Dr. and Mrs. Holland.

I should also like to add the names of my wife, who, as Hon. Treasurer, organized the Financial Department at Berne as well as the Supply Depôt for the Interned; Comtesse de Montigny, in charge of the Clothing Department, 1915–1917, and succeeded, later, by the late Mrs. Cook Daniels and Lady Beatrix Wilkinson; Viscountess St. Cyres, in charge of the

"orders" Department, 1917–1918; and my daughter, who was Hon. Secretary, 1916–1918, until her departure.

A "Special Branch," as an adjunct to the "B.L.R.C.O.," was founded in May, 1916, to deal with the requirements of officers and men about to be interned in Switzerland, the original Committee being composed of Lady Grant Duff, The Lady Acton, Mrs. Picot (Hon. Treasurer), Mrs. Wyndham, Mrs. Barton, Mrs. Trench, Mrs. Harran, Miss R. Picot (Hon. Secretary), and myself as President.

The first contingent of British prisoners of war from Germany was expected in May, 1916, and arrangements were at once made to prepare warm underclothing for the men, as there was some doubt as to the clothing from G.H.Q. in France arriving in time to meet the demand. The work carried out by the Consular Groups made it possible to have in readiness complete outfits of shirts, vests, pants, socks, pyjamas, handkerchiefs, and linen wash-bags for 500 men, all of which were issued when the troops arrived. Dressing-gowns, bed-jackets, ward slippers, and handkerchiefs, were also made up and issued to the hospitals. The contingents which arrived in August and December of 1916, and on subsequent dates, were supplied with the regulation clothing by Government, though

hospital requisites still continued to be provided by the "B.L.R.C.O.," with the assistance of the British Red Cross Society, London. That Society generously came to our assistance with medicines, and supplies of a fortifying nature, and such extra articles of food as were required were purchased locally by the Swiss medical officers at the camps, money grants, which were renewed as required, being made to these officers.

The "B.L.R.C.O." also fitted up an operating theatre in the Soldanelle Hospital at Château d'Oex, known as the Kitchener Theatre, at a cost of frs. 3,500, the funds being supplied by a Swiss gentleman who wished to remain anonymous.

Thanks to the kind offices of Lord Northcliffe, the B.R.C.S., London, also sent out a parcel of 750 lb. of tea every month, a gift of the greatest value, as tea was unprocurable in Switzerland. It was thus made possible to make a free issue to all hospitals, and to men on detachment, and also to provide tea, on payment, to all Red Cross and Y.M.C.A. huts.

The expenditure incurred for British Interned for Red Cross purposes from May to December, 1916, amounting to frs. 113,000, was entirely met by the "B.L.R.C.O." After that date, the "Central Prisoners of War Committee," London, came to our assistance with a grant

of frs. 10,000 per mensem. This grant in aid enabled the Committee to deal more liberally with a branch of work which they, together with myself, had much at heart, viz.: the technical and educational training of the men during their detention in Switzerland. So far, funds had only admitted of the establishment of workshops of the regimental type, such as Tailors, Bootmakers, Carpenters, in addition to schools for Telegraphy, Bookbinding, Typing, Shorthand, Motor Instruction, and classes for education up to the standard required for Army certificates. With the grant in aid the Committee found itself in a position to continue and develop the technical training, until it was taken over by the Central Prisoners of War Committee, under a scheme prepared by Dr. Garnett. Of this scheme I have written at length in Chapter XI.

Another detail undertaken by the "B.L.R.C.O." was that of the entertainment of the wives and mothers of the Interned sent out from England by the "C.P. of W.C." on fortnightly visits. This took the form of luncheons, dinners, and teas, as these visitors passed to and from the camps. They also provided meals at Berne to all prisoners of war *en route* to Switzerland from Germany, or to England on repatriation. The Consular Groups forming part of the Organi-

zation did similar work, and, as a rule, met the expenditure from their own resources.

In January, 1918, on the appointment of a Commissioner by the "B.R.C.S.," London, to supervise and co-ordinate Red Cross work in Switzerland, the "B.L.R.C.O." transferred to that gentleman the special branch of their work affecting interned prisoners, and all expenses in that connection were thenceforth met by the "B.R.C.S," London. The average monthly expenditure thus incurred amounted to frs. 22,000, the chief items of which were: frs. 6,300 for medical comforts, frs. 10,000 for technical training, and the balance for miscellanea.

I have at the opening of this chapter referred to the labours of the Swiss Red Cross and other Swiss Societies, *vis-à-vis* of French civilians and other victims of the war. Little appears to be known in England of the extent and importance of the work of these Societies. Perhaps I can best give an idea of its scope and character by recounting some of my personal experiences.

On one occasion, at Zürich, I met a train conveying French "grands blessés" released from Germany. It was composed of third-class carriages converted for Red Cross purposes into a hospital train, and was staffed by military

doctors, nurses, and orderlies, of Swiss nationality, assisted by ladies from the French Embassy at Berne. These Swiss Red Cross trains cannot be compared with the luxurious conveyances maintained by us in France. At the same time, they were thoroughly practical, and appeared to meet all the requirements of the sick. The men no doubt must have regarded them as "trains de luxe," after their experience of railway travel in Germany. What a picture these wounded presented! In one carriage there were twenty-seven men with only three legs between them, but they were cheery, full of joy at their escape from captivity, and very disinclined to speak of their past experiences. These they evidently sought to forget. One man, whom I questioned as to some detail of German camp life, replied that, on crossing the frontier, he had turned over the page of his prison life, and all memory of the past had left him—the present was good enough, and was all he cared to think about. Altogether they were quite irrepressible, and the conclusion I came to was, that the average French soldier has to be very ill—even unto death—before his spirits succumb to his physical condition. He has fortunately the faculty of imparting his cheeriness and philosophy to those around, so that a visit under what might have been depressing circum-

stances proved, on the contrary, exhilarating. There were several cases of men in the last stages of consumption, whose one anxiety was to see the soil of their beloved France once more before the end came. About these men the French ladies were greatly concerned, and they could only hope that this supreme consolation might not be withheld from their dying compatriots.

Such attentions as these were by no means confined to the French. Similar scenes occurred whenever Allied or enemy prisoners were repatriated via Swiss territory. The services of the Swiss Red Cross were more particularly brought home to me when a party of 70 British and Indian soldiers, and 250 Serbian officers, arrived from Austria. Our own men came under the category of "grands blessés"; the Serbians were being exchanged, and were in good condition. They were met by Sir Horace and Lady Rumbold, my wife and daughter, and other members of the Legation, who accompanied the train from Olten to Bienne. We found the Swiss Red Cross very much in evidence. A military doctor was in charge of the train, with a staff of Swiss nurses, and everything was being done to make the men feel they were amongst their own friends again. The "B.L.R.C.O." had provided a sufficiency of underclothing to give every British soldier a complete outfit, and

when these had been distributed, I think the happiness of our countrymen was at its zenith. They were wearing Turkish fatigue uniforms, but of their other garments, the least said the better. The sole British officer was clothed in a parody of a civilian overcoat. He, likewise, was only too glad to accept an outfit, as he had absolutely nothing with him but the garments in which he stood.

On visiting the cot cases, I came across two Indian soldiers, one of whom, a man of low caste, who had served as a transport driver, appeared to be very cheery, and to all outward appearance in good health. I spoke to him in his own language, and asked why he was in bed. In reply, he turned aside the bed covers, disclosing the stumps of both legs amputated high above the knee. I was much taken aback, and could only ejaculate, "You have done well by the Sirkar," a remark which met with the response, "Oh, that is of no consequence, I would have done better if I could." The other, a high caste man of the Zemindar class, seemed to be ill at heart rather than of body. I tried to cheer him by speaking of his early return to India, and of the sunshine of his own country, but nothing I could say gave him any comfort. I found it difficult to account for the extraordinary contrast in the mentality

of the two men, and can only surmise that the indignities put upon the Zemindar, when a prisoner of war in Turkey, had lowered his morale to such a degree that, from the caste point of view, he had already ceased to exist. He had, in his own eyes, lost standing, and, consequently, all that made life worth living. The transport driver, on the other hand, had been inured from birth to a want of consideration, and was quite regardless of any ill treatment or indignity at the hands of the foreigner and enemy. He had, therefore, retained his morale, and gloried in the fact that he had done his duty by the "Sirkar," and would become the object of its solicitude in the future.

I had also the privilege of being present at Schaffhausen when some 500 French civilians were repatriated from Germany. The convoy consisted of aged men and women, young women and children, with a sprinkling of men of military age suffering from tuberculosis—as decrepit and woe-begone a crowd as could well be imagined! On arrival at the railway station, they were taken in hand by representatives of the Municipality, local doctors, and ladies of the French and Swiss Red Cross. The sick were quickly sorted out and driven to hospitals in the town, where they were destined to remain until either the end came,

or they were sufficiently restored to continue their journey. Many, I fear, never set eyes on beautiful France again. The rest were marshalled in batches, and then led off through the town to hostels, whence, after receiving a bath, and being re-clothed in more seemly garments, they were re-assembled in a large hall for a much needed meal. The difference in the spirits and appearance of these poor people, after receiving this first attention at the hands of the Swiss and their own compatriots, was indeed good to see. Their dazed and tired look had been replaced by one of smiling content. They had even found their tongues, and at the end of the first meal they had really enjoyed since their captivity they responded enthusiastically to the speeches of welcome addressed to them by their Swiss hosts and by a well-known French Deputy, Monsieur Arago, who had travelled from Paris to convey a message of welcome from the French Government. The proceedings ended with the singing of the "Marseillaise," which, coming from this sorely tried company, was overwhelming, and brought tears to the eyes of many. Cheered and encouraged, clothed and warmed, they were then marched through streets full of the townspeople, who showed every sign of goodwill and sympathy.

What such receptions must have meant to this convoy, and to those which followed on practically every day of the week for months, can only be known to the beneficiaries themselves; but that they served to cement a feeling of brotherhood as between race and race is, I believe, undeniable, and is all to the good. It must always be remembered that the difference of race and language of the Swiss people did not connote any difference of feeling or action towards the prisoners of war or interned civilians, and, to my mind, the sense of a possible all-world-brotherhood had one of its happiest demonstrations in the dealings of the Swiss towards these unfortunate sufferers of the war.

CHAPTER V

THE FOUNDATION AND ORGANIZATION OF THE "BRITISH SECTION" OF THE "BUREAU DE SECOURS AUX PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE" AT BERNE

DURING the winter of 1914–15, Allied and Swiss organizations were created at Berne for the despatch of food and clothing to prisoners of war in the Central Empires, the most important of which were the "Bureau de Secours aux Prisonniers de Guerre," and the "Comité Bernois." The former was founded by Monsieur Poinsard and Madame Pageot (wife of the French Military Attaché), in the interests of French prisoners; the latter by Madame Valentin (a Swiss lady), under the ægis of the Swiss Red Cross Society, in the interests of Belgian prisoners.

About this time, Lady Grant Duff, after consulting the Minister and myself, decided to organize a small depôt at the Legation, for the despatch of parcels of food to individual prisoners of war in Germany whose names had

been brought to her notice, either directly by personal letters of appeal, or by the French Bureau, who were in touch with some of the camps in Bavaria and Baden through their Swiss Delegates. It was mainly owing to these Delegates that the needs of necessitous British prisoners came to light. The funds for this purpose were raised at Berne from amongst a small group of British residents, Mrs. Carfrae making us the first gift, in the shape of a £5 note.

I can recall an occasion, in the autumn of 1914, when Lady Grant Duff invited me to inspect one of the first consignments awaiting despatch. It consisted of fifteen small parcels weighing about 8 lb. each, displayed with great pride by about as many ladies; but it was a matter of much satisfaction to all of us that a move had been made in the right direction. This modest beginning was the precursor of an organization that was finally to provide 100,000 men with bread, and to bring hope and comfort to so many of our suffering compatriots in Germany. Some doubts had been expressed as to whether the Camp Commandants or the authorities in Berlin would not demur to Switzerland being made a base of supply to our men; but when, after a reasonable lapse of time, the addressees returned their

acknowledgment cards duly receipted, apprehensions on this score were set at rest.

For the sake of co-ordination and obtaining immediate recognition by the Swiss Government, Lady Grant Duff decided to join hands with the French, and accept the warm invitation extended to her in this sense by Monsieur Poinsard. A "British Section" was accordingly formed, and affiliated to the French "Bureau de Secours," in April, 1915, Lady Grant Duff and myself being appointed members of the Central Committee. The British and French Sections were thus able to unite for the advancement of their general interests, whilst still retaining absolute administrative and financial independence.

At a much later date, a Russian Section was also affiliated to the "Bureau de Secours," and Italian and Roumanian Sections to the "Comité Bernois" when Italy and Roumania entered the war.

A Committee was now formed for the "British Section," consisting of :—

Lady Grant Duff	*President.*
Lieut.-Colonel Picot (Military Attaché)	*Member.*
Mr. Paul d'Hauteville	*Hon. Secretary.*
Mr. J. R. Clarke	*Hon. Secretary.*
Mr. L. Buchmann (late H.M.'s Consul-General at Munich)	*Hon. Treasurer.*

Concurrently with these transactions, correspondence had taken place with the Foreign Office and the "Prisoners of War Help Committee" in London, informing them of the measures adopted or proposed at Berne, so that any clash of interest or of effort might be avoided. The necessity for close co-operation with London became all the more imperative when the conditions of life in Germany had been fully realized. Letters from the prisoners showed that bread was the great essential need, for, as supplied in the camps, it was lacking in both quantity and quality, and, in so far as the German authorities were concerned, there was no hope of any improvement in either respect. The "Ps. of W.H.C.," as well as regimental and private societies, were, it is true, doing all in their power to cope with the situation, but, for reasons beyond their control, they were not in a position to meet the demand from England alone. Switzerland, owing to its geographical position, seemed clearly indicated as the nearest and quickest channel of communication; added thereto were the facilities offered by the Swiss Government for the rapid transport of food between Berne and Frankfort. These considerations led Lady Grant Duff to the decision that the British Section should devote itself for the future almost exclusively

to the provision of bread, and steps were accordingly taken to give effect to this new departure. A discussion of ways and means ensued with the Political Department at Berne, and Lady Grant Duff was happily assured of the fullest support of that Department by its Chief. Her attention was, however, drawn to the shortage of wheat in Switzerland,—a matter of grave concern at the time,—and it was suggested that all requirements of the "British Section" of the "Bureau" should be met by direct importation from abroad. Arrangements were accordingly made with H.M.'s Consul-General at Marseilles for the purchase and transport of regular consignments of flour from that place. Incidentally it may be mentioned that this flour proved of a far higher quality than that locally procurable. As time went on, it deteriorated in colour and quality, but always remained superior to the Swiss admixture of flour and potato.

Pending the arrival of the first consignment of flour from Marseilles, the Berne authorities were good enough to meet all requirements. They also generously placed railway wagons at the disposal of the Committee for the transport of the bread free of all charge. These wagons, after being loaded by our own employees, were sealed for direct and uninterrupted transit to Frankfort, where they were opened, the contents

being there sorted before despatch by rail to the camps in Germany. This system was of immense advantage, as the ordinary delay at Bâle for Customs examination was thereby eliminated, and a clear gain of twenty-four hours obtained on the railway journey.

The new scheme, making bread the chief article of supply, took definite shape about May, 1915, and the public at home and abroad were made aware of the establishment of the "Bureau" with its widened sphere of activity. The response was immediate, and for a time overwhelming. Thousands of applications, with requests for the despatch of bread to individual soldiers, poured in from all quarters. To keep abreast of this demand was no easy matter, but the original organization showed signs of considerable adaptability, and its development became phenomenal.

Hitherto, the accommodation so kindly placed at the disposal of the Committee by H.M.'s Minister at the Legation had sufficed for all purposes. Now fresh quarters had to be sought for, and a range of eight shops in Helvetia Strasse, together with a large music-hall, lying idle owing to curtailment of business, were rented and equipped for the executive work. The administrative offices remained at the Legation until November, 1915, when a large flat was

secured in the same neighbourhood, and to this the various departments were transferred. Eventually, the whole house, with its three sets of apartments, was secured, and the Legation at last resumed its normal aspect, much, I imagine, to the relief of the Minister.

The "Bureau" as a whole had now taken shape. The administrative branch, organized and managed personally by Lady Grant Duff, dealt with the following subjects in its eight departments :—

1. Secretarial.
2, 3. Correspondence with Regimental Committees.
4, 5. Correspondence with private subscribers.
6. Card Indexing.
7. Files.
8. Finance and supply.

The Executive concerned itself with the receipt and despatch of food and clothing, and was organized and conducted by my daughter until the autumn of 1915, when her services were transferred by Lady Grant Duff to the administration. Mr. and Mrs. Jebb Scott succeeded her on the executive. The personnel of each department consisted of a Lady Superintendent, assisted by British and Swiss ladies and paid workers. Several Swiss gentlemen,

including an officer of high rank, also gave voluntary service.

The work, during 1915, was chiefly concerned with meeting the demands of Regimental Committees and other similar institutions, as well as those of private subscribers. The system of transacting business with private subscribers proved cumbersome from the point of view of the "Bureau," and unsatisfactory from that of the prisoners themselves. It entailed, during the course of every month, the receipt and acknowledgment of thousands of letters with their accompanying postal orders, and gave rise to a congestion with which it was not easy to deal. Associated with this question was the uncertainty as to the renewal of the original order, and the possibility of the beneficiary being removed from the "Bureau" lists for want of the necessary remittances from his friends at home. There was little probability of this happening with men borne on the rolls of Regimental Committees, but it was not of infrequent occurrence in the case of private subscribers.

Another difficulty was encountered in meeting the requirements of men recently captured, many of whom made appeals to Berne as soon as they had reached their camps in Germany. This was overcome by bringing all such men

on to the Berne lists, and by supplying them with bread for a period of six weeks. Meanwhile, their names were sent home to be dealt with by their Regimental Committees, or by private subscribers, in the usual way.

A consideration of these obstacles to efficiency induced Lady Grant Duff, in 1915, to suggest to the "Ps. of W.H.C." that an organization might be created in England with power to deal directly with Regimental or other Committees, thus centralizing effort, and eliminating the private subscriber. This organization would, it was expected, have the further advantage of putting an end to overlapping, which was much accentuated by minor associations carrying on work as independent sources of supply. I am referring more especially to Switzerland. The danger inherent in these associations was forcibly brought to the notice of the Committee in Berne when a letter was received by Lady Grant Duff from one of the Commandants in Germany, informing her of the arrival of a parcel containing literature of an abusive nature. A warning was added that any repetition of the offence would lead to the closure of the camp in so far as supplies of bread were concerned. As neither the addressee nor the camp were on the Berne lists, the matter was regulated without trouble, but

the incident showed the danger to which the "Bureau" at Berne was subjected.

It was not till October, 1916, when the "Central Prisoners of War Committee" came on the scene, and was made responsible for the co-ordination of all effort in connection with the provision of food or other supplies for prisoners, whether at home or abroad, that the wishes of Lady Grant Duff were realized. Radical changes ensued. Berne doffed its independence, and became affiliated to the "C.P. of W.C.," following on which many of the minor associations in Switzerland, to which I have referred, discontinued work. Copenhagen was opened as a supplementary "Bureau of Supply," and the regimental system of registration was adopted, the private subscriber being no longer permitted to deal directly with the "Bureaux" in Switzerland or in Denmark.

The following figures will give an idea of the work of the "Bureau" at Berne, from the date of its foundation, in April, 1915, to October, 1916, when the fusion with the "C.P. of W.C." took place:—

In July, 1915, 13,000 Ps. of W. were in the receipt of weekly parcels of bread; in January, 1916, 19,200; in September, 1916, 30,000.

A few words as to the quality of the bread, and its manufacture, will not be out of place.

The flour imported from Marseilles in 1915 and 1916 was of the standard fixed by the French Government for consumption in France, and proved of very good quality. Then a falling off was noticed, the bread keeping less well in consequence. In 1917 the "C.P. of W.C." arranged for the despatch of Canadian flour to Berne, via Havre, so that a high standard of bread was again attained. Its manufacture was entrusted to Swiss bakers, as many as forty different establishments being employed for the purpose in Berne alone. The loaf was baked for twenty minutes longer than was customary in Switzerland, and was calculated to remain in sweet condition from four to six weeks, the period varying according to the season and the quality of the flour. Failures were inevitable, but these did not exceed 2 per cent. in 1915 and 1916, and 8 per cent. in 1917. At the end of 1917, with the advent of Canadian flour, the former excellent record was re-established.

The question may be asked as to the method of checking these figures. The answer is that failures were brought to light and tabulated from the records furnished by the prisoners themselves when duly acknowledging the receipt of their parcels.

Continental baking did not always meet with the approval of "Tommy Atkins," for

the Berne loaf contained too much crust for his taste, and often for his teeth, but as lasting properties were of the first importance, other considerations had to be sacrificed. It is interesting to note, however, that when the French Government seriously occupied itself with the supply of its prisoners, and experimental work was initiated, the loaf turned out by Swiss bakers was selected as by far the most satisfactory. In 1918 a biscuit, which, I understand, was greatly liked by the men, was evolved to take the place of bread. With the addition of water, it could be made as soft and palatable as fresh bread, whilst it had the further advantage of keeping fresh for an indefinite period.

Much of the success which attended the "Bureau" was due to the fact that bread was despatched to each individual soldier in a separate package. An alternative method adopted by the French Section was that of sending consignments in bulk for distribution in the camps. This had not proved satisfactory, as there was nothing to show that the consignment reached the prisoners in its entirety, and both Monsieur Poinsard and Madame Pageot were dissatisfied with results, though they did not see their way to any change of method. The Camp Commandants would, they believed, be averse to any change in favour

of individual packages. Lady Grant Duff decided, however, to put this latter system to the test, as we were very anxious, for a variety of reasons, to get into touch with the men individually, and a beginning was made by the despatch of a small number of individual parcels. Letters were also addressed to the Commandants, asking for lists of the men borne on their rolls. In both cases the results were found promising, for receipts came back from the men at intervals averaging about a month, and 50 per cent. of replies were received from the Commandants. The system of dealing separately with every prisoner was thereupon definitely adopted for good and all, and continued without any serious hitch during practically the whole period of the war, or, to be more correct, until the declaration of the Armistice.

Receipted acknowledgments showed that during the first eighteen months 98 per cent. of parcels reached their destination, a fact very creditable to all concerned. Losses may in part be accounted for by miscarriage owing to transfers of soldiers from one part of Germany to another. It should also be stated that undelivered parcels were returned to Berne from Germany almost daily with the inscription "Addressee not traceable."

The organization at Berne was, I venture

to state, conducted on right lines from the beginning, and well deserved the confidence reposed in it by the public. Special attention was bestowed on the business side of the enterprise, and no department was more carefully scrutinized than that of Finance and Supply. Sir Arthur Lawley, who reported on the "British Section of the Bureau" in May, 1916, on behalf of the B.R.C.S., writes as follows:—

"The system of accounting, too, is elaborate and extensive. All subscriptions have to be paid in advance. The 'Bureau' has no general fund on which to draw for any monies which may be wanting. Subscriptions are received from Regimental Committees, numbering about one hundred, and from a vast number of private subscribers, many of whom send the smallest sums receivable, viz., 4s. for a month's supply. If private subscribers would be content to contribute through the Committee or Association of the regiment to which the particular beneficiary belonged, it would be an excellent thing. It would reduce the inconvenience which arises from the fact that there is a tendency on the part of donors to subscribe for short periods only, or to be intermittent in forwarding the money which is required to ensure a constant supply. . . . I consider myself fortunate indeed to have had an opportunity of thoroughly

examining every branch of the excellent work which is being carried on in the 'Bureau de Secours aux Prisonniers de Guerre,' Berne, by Mrs. Grant Duff and her band of zealous and devoted helpers. The record achieved is one of which they may well be proud. It could certainly never have been attained without an incessant and generous devotion of time, trouble, and sagacity. I should like to offer them my hearty congratulations on the fruit of their labours."

I may be permitted here to record the names of some of those to whom I feel a special tribute is due :—

Mr. Paul d'Hauteville, formerly a member of the American Diplomatic Corps, who gave the whole of his time to the service of a nation not his own, first as Hon. Secretary, then as Director, of the "Bureau." When America threw in her lot with the Allies, he resigned to take a prominent position in the Red Cross in France under the flag of his own country. He was, with the approval of His Majesty, appointed a Knight of Grace of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in England. My wife, who organized and managed the Department of Finance and Supply until her departure

from Berne in December, 1915. Miss Nesta Sawyer, who replaced my daughter in the administration in December, 1915, and later took the place of Mr. Paul d'Hauteville as Honorary Secretary. Her charming personality and ability are well known. Mr. and Mrs. Jebb Scott, whose able management added to the efficiency of the executive branch, and enabled it to keep abreast of the ever-expanding work. Mr. Bernstiel, who took over the management of the Department of Finance and Supply, and successfully expanded it to meet the ever-increasing demands, and Miss Keightley, who was in charge of an important department of the administration throughout.

Others who gave valuable service were:—

The late Mrs. Carfrae, Mrs. Barton, the Lady Acton, the late Hon. Anne Dalby Acton, Mrs. Wyndham, Mrs. Sawyer, Mrs. Skipworth, Mme. de Muralt, Mrs. Clarke, Miss Mary Clarke, Mrs. d'Hauteville, Mme. de Watteville-Pourtalés, Mr. Guy Louymer, Mme. Louymer, Mme. Courvoisier, Mlle. Courvoisier, Colonel Courvoisier, Mme. de Segesser, Mme. Spoerry, Mme. Raoul de Wurstemberger, Mlle. Claire de Wurstem-

berger, Mrs. Broderick de Pitard, Miss Binney, the young ladies of Miss Gray's School at Berne, Mr. and Mrs. Esdaile, Miss Dalgairns, Miss Grace Phillips, the late Miss Alice Hanford Flood, whose end was hastened by over-strain, Mr. and Mrs. Todhunter, Mr. Horridge, Mrs. Bradley, Miss Chaplyn, Mrs. Macey, and Miss Swainston.

I have naturally written at length of that period of the early life and development of the "Bureau" which is best known to me, but I think I have shown that progress was steady and continuous. Between September, 1916, and November, 1918, the numbers of prisoners of war supplied from Berne rose from 30,000 to 100,000, and as early as 1917 the business had become of such importance that the "B.R.C.S.," London, found it desirable to appoint a Commissioner to direct the operations of the "Bureau," the successive occupants of the post being, Mr. A. Mayne, Major-General Sir Richard Ewart, K.C.M.G., and Major H. R. Charley (Assistant Commissioner).

Viewed from afar, and looking back on the undertaking as a whole, it appears to me very remarkable that a handful of people, few of whom had any previous business experience, should have initiated and elaborated with so

much success a scheme of such great significance. It demanded both courage and imagination, and happily in Lady Grant Duff a leader was found who possessed these qualities in a high degree, and furthermore united with them a faculty for organization and a tact which were never at fault. It is not to be wondered at that she was so ably seconded by her many friends, whose unselfishness, enthusiasm, and untiring labours, had my unbounded admiration. Lady Rumbold, who succeeded her as President in September, 1916, identified herself with the work in a whole-hearted manner, and devoted to it a large part of her time and energy. It was during her Presidency that the affiliation with the "C.P. of W.C." took place, carrying with it an immense increase of work.

These ladies have their reward in the affectionate regard of that large army of prisoners who were fed and comforted by them during the many months and years of their wearisome captivity. Theirs was a good work nobly done.

CHAPTER VI

ARRIVAL IN SWITZERLAND OF THE FIRST CONTINGENT OF BRITISH PRISONERS OF WAR FROM GERMANY

THE first contingent of British prisoners of war was timed to arrive across the German frontier into Switzerland, at Constance, on May 28, 1916. The transport arrangements, as in the case of all movements connected with Repatriation or Internment in Switzerland, were, in the case of these officers and men, controlled by Colonel Dr. Bohny, Chief of the Swiss Military Red Cross Department, who, together with his able and noble-minded wife, frequently journeyed on the trains and gave personal supervision to the more serious cases.

Aware of the great interest in Great Britain in the question of the Internment, and in order to ensure the fullest and most reliable reports of the condition of the men and their reception in Switzerland reaching the British public without delay, I suggested to Colonel Hauser the

advisability of issuing permits to the special correspondents of *The Times* and *Morning Post* (who had made representations to me on the subject), to enable them to board the train at Zürich, or at some place near the frontier, if they so desired, and accompany it to its destination. Colonel Hauser at first demurred to the proposal on the plea that he had hitherto refused all permits to the Press, fearing the introduction of a new precedent, but on my representing to him my hopes and anticipations of a warm reception for our men on the part of the population, and that it seemed eminently desirable to give the outside public the benefit of reports by properly qualified press correspondents, more especially as German Switzerland had been somewhat prejudiced in the minds of that public by being credited with very pronounced pro-German proclivities, he saw the point, and, withdrawing all objections, agreed to the issue of the permits. Shortly afterwards Colonel Bohny laughingly mentioned to me that his life had been made a burden to him by applications from the Bernese for passes of admittance to the railway station. "Special arrangements would," he said, "have to be made at the station to prevent confusion." Never in his experience had so many applications been made to meet a troop train; the good

Bernese seemed to have entirely lost their heads over the British!

On the morning of the 28th of May I left Berne for Zürich, where at 8 p.m. on the same day I went to the station to meet the troop train arriving at 8.30 from Constance. The sight which presented itself to my astonished gaze was an extraordinary one, and I believe unique in the whole history of the transport of prisoners of war to Switzerland. The approaches to the station were alive with a struggling mass of townspeople, all anxious to find standing-room on the platform, which was ringed round by a compact line of Swiss troops. It was with the greatest difficulty that I and my party forced our way through this seething mass to the line of soldiers, and thus gained admittance to the platform, and it was entirely due to the forbearance of the townspeople, who recognized my uniform, that we were enabled to do so. There we met Sir Cecil Hertslet, H.M.'s Consul-General, the members of his Staff, and the whole of the British community of Zürich.

The arrival of the train was heralded by distant cheers, which were taken up by the assembled crowd, and, finally, there came the answering cheers of our men, whose lungs, whatever otherwise was their bodily condition, did not appear to have suffered from their long

captivity in Germany. Thus was removed all question as to the feelings of the German-speaking Swiss towards British soldiers. Never for a moment had I had any doubt of their being well received, but that the reception should have attained such proportions and fervour was quite another matter, and went far beyond anything which I could have possibly foreseen.

There is no doubt that the achievements of the first hundred thousand of our men in France and Belgium had made a strong appeal to a people whose history is a long story of heroic struggle against great odds. It is true that the prestige of the British had suffered in Swiss eyes in the past. The suffrage of the whole population during the South African War declared itself in favour of the Boers, who were thought to be the victims of the ambition of the stronger Power. Like themselves, the Boers were a small people in contact with more powerful and autocratic neighbours, and instinctively Swiss sympathies went out to them. But we had redeemed ourselves in their eyes since the war, and, as I read the meaning of the manner in which they met our men, these same Swiss wished to offer a tribute to the British people, as represented by the survivors of that first heroic army.

Both officers and men were full of appreciation of the goodwill shown to them from the moment of reaching the Swiss frontier. The fact that they had at last left Germany seemed to them almost too good to be true. They had refrained from giving way to any signs of demonstration on leaving Constance, for fear of being turned back, and as they had no means of knowing when they had quitted German territory, perfect silence was maintained until they saw men waving to them and cheering from the fields, by which they realized they were amongst friends, and had cast off the dust of captivity. Then, at last, they felt able to give rein to their pent-up feelings. So it had been all the way to Zürich, every village along the route turning out to greet them as they passed by. I could see that this outburst of emotion after the suppression and antagonism of the years of captivity was having a very trying effect, for all ranks looked dazed, and appeared only half conscious of what was taking place around them. I mentally registered the fact that, to all outward appearance, there could be but little difference between shell shock and the emotional shock of pleasurable impressions so suddenly experienced.

Similar scenes were enacted at Berne, though the hour was past midnight, where again thou-

sands of the townspeople had assembled. The Commandant of the station had, fortunately, applied for a body of Swiss troops to maintain order, and it was as well he had done so, for without them we should have had trouble in getting the men to the refreshment rooms, where a supper had been prepared through the thoughtful care of the "B.L.R.C.O." Here they were met, in the absence of the Minister and Lady Grant Duff, who had gone on to await their arrival at Château d'Oex, by Lord and Lady Acton and the other members of our Legation, the Chiefs of the Allied Missions with their Staffs, Colonel Hauser, Colonel Bohny, and many Swiss officers. After supper and a rest, the weary-looking, but refreshed and happy party, loaded with gifts, was re-entrained at about 3 a.m.

At this juncture I commenced to have misgivings as to how the men would stand the long night journey still in front of them, and orders were given for all blinds to be drawn, but sleep, as it proved, was out of the question. At Fribourg (one hour's run) thousands had collected, who were in a very enthusiastic mood, and made the most of the few minutes at their disposal. During the longer run to Lausanne silence prevailed in the carriages, but outside every station we could hear the cheers of

hundreds who had been waiting during the night just to see the train as it ran past.

Some hope was expressed of a quiet time at Lausanne, where we were timed to remain a quarter of an hour; but the Lausannois, and the large British colony there, had no such thought in their minds, and a crowd of some 8,000 testified to the feelings awakened. The presents with which every one had provided themselves had to be passed over the heads of the closely packed crowd to those fortunate enough to be nearest to the carriages, for it was impossible for any except those near the train to reach the men. Mr. Galland, H.M.'s Consul, met the train here, and accompanied it to Château d'Oex.

At Montreux, which was reached at 7 a.m., the British and Swiss communities had made admirable arrangements for the entertainment of officers and men at the Hôtel Suisse, adjoining the railway station. We were met on the platform by large numbers of Red Cross bearers and boy scouts, who carried or assisted the cot cases from the train to the hotel, while those able to walk marched through serried ranks of sightseers, who broke through the cordon of gendarmes to load them with flowers and gifts, rejoicing when allowed to give a hand or help the men. The scene which presented

itself was one likely to make a life-long impression, for the terrace where the tables were spread bordered the lake, disclosing the beautiful stretch of water from the Dent-du-Midi along the mountains of Savoy towards Geneva—a view perhaps unparalleled in Europe.

An eloquent and stirring address in French was given by the Prefect, the sincerity of whose words, if not their meaning, went home to the men, who cheered him to the echo. Mr. Cuenod, H.M.'s Consul, in a few and simple words, made it clear to all that, in a country where every able-bodied man had the privilege of bearing arms, the inhabitants would know how to express, and to make felt, that sympathy which every brave man should feel for another.

During the journey officers and men had asked me repeatedly whether there was any truth in a report which had reached them, that as soon as they were restored to health, they would be returned to Germany as prisoners of war. When replying to the speech of the Prefect, I made it quite clear to our men that they had seen the last of Germany. The next move, when the time came, would be homewards, and all they had to do or think about meanwhile was of getting well again, towards which end they would be assisted by the advice and treatment of a skilled Swiss Medical Staff. The

painful attention with which all concerned listened to my words, and the immense relief to which they gave rise, brought home to me the heaviness which had been weighing on their spirits owing to the uncertainty of their future. How the malicious rumour arose no one at the time appeared to know, but it came out later that, in some of the camps in Germany, the men had been informed by their guards that they would return again to captivity as soon as they were fit. Some of the men had argued that as Switzerland could only take a limited number of prisoners of war, their places would be required by their other sick comrades in Germany as soon as they themselves were well enough to return. This they thought only fair, but the fact, nevertheless, weighed heavily upon them.

Immediately after breakfast, the men for Leysin, all of whom were supposed to be tuberculous, and amongst whom were some serious cases, were despatched to that destination in charge of Swiss doctors; the rest, for Château d'Oex, were divided into groups, and sent up in a succession of trains by the mountain railway.

The hills were covered by mist during the first part of the run, but this gradually cleared as the train mounted higher and higher, and the last stage was made in an atmosphere of

light and sun, which showed up the spring-like aspect of the valleys in all their beauty. The men were now in the best of spirits at nearing their destination, and vociferously returned the greetings of the peasants and others who had collected at the small stations *en route*, amongst whom were many French officers and soldiers quartered at Les Avants and elsewhere in the valley. I was particularly pleased at seeing the latter, as rumours had spread about Switzerland that French and British Ps. of W., owing to ill-feeling, would have to be kept at a distance from each other. These rumours emanated from a German source, and were evidently circulated with the intention of creating friction. The story may be ranked as one of the usual fabrications set rolling by our enemies, with a view to discrediting the Allies in the eyes of the Swiss. In the sequel it was entirely falsified, as French and British soldiers were often quartered together to the entire satisfaction of both, whilst the relations of the officers towards each other were often of a very intimate character.

A sound of great cheering, accompanied by the strains of "God save the King," arose as the train steamed into the station at Château d'Oex, which was profusely decorated with

branches of fir and flowers. Grouped on the platform were H.M.'s Minister and Lady Grant Duff, my wife and daughter, the Swiss Municipal Council, the Rev. E. Dudley Lampen, and the leading members of the British and Swiss community. A delightful touch of old-world life and colour was imparted to the scene by hundreds of school-children who, dressed in their national costumes, lined the road near by, and distributed bunches of wild flowers to their new friends. The removal of many battered remnants of humanity, as they were lifted from the carriages, struck a pathetic note in the midst of much that was otherwise joyous and exhilarating.

During the collation that followed, Sir Evelyn Grant Duff addressed the men in very happily chosen words, and read a message from His Majesty, which was received with cheers, and appreciated by both officers and men. Tired out, though contented, the men were finally led off by Swiss boy and girl scouts, and the sick were carried on stretchers or conveyed by carriages to their hotels and châlets, where most of them turned in to a well-earned sleep, to awake later to the life of routine and rest they were to live for the next eighteen months.

CHAPTER VII

THE SWISS SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION AND DISCIPLINE RELATIVE TO THE INTERNED PRISONERS OF WAR

IN determining the system of administration and discipline for Ps. of W. interned in Switzerland, the Swiss authorities had no precedent to follow beyond the experience gained in 1871, when a French army under General Bourbaki, in seeking an asylum on Swiss territory, was disarmed and interned on crossing the frontier. The conditions under which the internment was effected during the Great War of 1914–1918 were, however, wholly different; for whereas in 1871 the internment was imposed on Switzerland as a neutral State, in accordance with the rulings of international law, in 1915 it was voluntarily offered by the Swiss Government, and was accepted by the belligerent States in accordance with the terms of a Convention to which Switzerland, France, England, and Germany had given their adherence. There was also a further and important difference, viz., whereas in 1871

the Swiss Government was called upon to exercise authority over an armed body of fit men, in 1916 they were given the guardianship of Ps. of W., composed exclusively of the sick and wounded.

For the regulation of the system of internment, two alternatives presented themselves, both of which had their ardent partisans. In the one case, it was proposed that the interned Ps. of W. should be dealt with in the same way as any ordinary unit of the Swiss Army, i.e., they should be administered and controlled by the General Headquarter Staff at Berne; in the other, that they should be placed under the control of the Sanitary Service of the Army, a branch of that Service being specially created for that purpose. Those in favour of the former procedure pointed out that discipline would be difficult of maintenance, if left to the medical officer alone, and that the adoption of an entirely novel procedure, for which there was no precedent, would give rise to trouble; the argument adduced in favour of the latter method was, that as the Interned were either sick, wounded, or convalescent, they could only be dealt with satisfactorily by the Swiss Sanitary Service.

After much deliberation, the Swiss Government declared itself in favour of the creation

of a special branch of the Sanitary Service, to which should be delegated the administrative, medical, and disciplinary control of the Interned, and orders to give effect to this decision were issued. This special branch was made independent of the G.H.Q. Staff, and was placed under the ægis of the Political Department of the Government, with Colonel Hauser as Chief Medical Officer of the Army (Médecin d'Armée), in control.

The organization of the new Service took the following form: a central administrative office, under Colonel Hauser, at Berne, divided into three sections to correspond to the three branches of the Interned—the Franco-Belgian, British, and German. Each section had its personnel, with a senior medical officer in charge, who was responsible for the administration and direction of his branch of Interned. The accounts were dealt with by officers detached from the Quartermaster-General's Department of the Army. Directly emanating from, and subordinate to, Colonel Hauser's Headquarters Service at Berne came the regional service of the Interned, with a "Directing Medical Officer," who was responsible for all the camps located within his region. The camps were staffed by medical officers, with the senior in command. As a rule, all these medical officers were of army

rank; in some few cases civilian doctors were also employed, though in exceptional circumstances only.

Discipline in the camps was entrusted to the senior Swiss Medical Officer, the senior interned officer being made responsible to him for all officers, and the senior interned N.C.O. for all N.C.Os. and men. As regards discipline in general, the Interned were placed under the same rules and regulations as soldiers of the Swiss Army.

The system, as elaborated for Ps. of W., was calculated to maintain a complete severance between interned officers and men, the former being given no responsibility whatever in a disciplinary sense as regards the latter, i.e., they were not entrusted with any executive authority or any power of punishment. This system had many drawbacks, though possibly it might have proved workable if the officers had been quartered, as in Germany, quite apart from the men. In Switzerland this was not the case, for not only were all ranks located in the same place, but in many instances they were even quartered in the same hotels. Expedience, it might be thought, would have dictated the employment of the interned officer and the delegation to him of a modicum of authority, in order that he might collaborate

with the responsible Swiss authorities. Yet, at the outset, nothing of the kind was contemplated, the Swiss preferring to deal with officers and men as distinct and separate entities, without connection one with the other. The motive underlying this policy may, I believe, be found in the fear entertained in Swiss military circles of the delegation of powers to interned officers of certain nationalities, whose arrogance had become a bye-word in Europe, and of whom these circles entertained lively misgivings. Any display of arrogance or harshness would have been extremely repugnant and particularly misplaced when applied to sick men, all of whom were either weakened by suffering or broken in body and nerve. Whatever disadvantages had been envisaged by the practical elimination of the interned officer as a coadjutor of the local Swiss Staff, compensation, it was believed, would be found in the freedom given to the Swiss Medical Officer in his dealings with the men, whose state of health formed so decisive a factor, whether regarded from the medical or the disciplinary point of view.

This system had already been applied to the French and Belgian Interned, of whom a considerable number were already in the country when the first contingent of British arrived in May, 1916. I had not had time to ascertain

whether it was working well or otherwise, but I quickly realized that, whatever the result may have been as regards our Allies, it would never have any success with our officers or men, neither of whom would willingly accept a divorce in their relations, now that they had once again been happily reunited after the long interval of separation as Ps. of W. in Germany.

Moreover, there were difficulties inherent to the situation, which no amount of goodwill on the part of the Swiss would enable them to overcome unaided. The mentality of the British soldier, who, in the absence of his own officers, would probably prove refractory to the enforcement of a discipline to which he was unaccustomed, was a factor to which the Swiss had not given enough consideration. The language difficulty, too, although not insuperable —for the Staff were fairly well conversant with English—was still an obstacle to understanding, and there were many matters connected with the daily life of the British soldier, his customs and habits, which were outside the ken of the Swiss, and for which light and leading could only come from their own officers.

The preliminary experience gained in the treatment of our Allied comrades, the French and Belgians, would doubtless prove of value,

but that value had to be discounted, for in their case the language difficulty was entirely eliminated, French being the language both of themselves and of their hosts. In thought, customs and habits, likewise, there was no marked difference between our Allies and the inhabitants of that part of Switzerland in which they were located. The same applies to the Germans, for they also were located amongst a population speaking their own language.

I seized the earliest opportunity of talking over these matters with Major Dr. Mercanton, the Directing Medical Officer of the region in which Château d'Oex was situated, and pointed out that a strict adherence to the letter of the regulations affecting the position of the British officer in his relations to the men would inevitably add to the perplexities of his Swiss colleagues. Further, that the men would not readily give their adherence to a system which subordinated them entirely to the Swiss, and prevented them from addressing themselves to their own officers when in difficulty.

I suggested that the junior British officers should be given specific duties in the camp in connection with its interior economy, and that the senior British officer should be given a position more befitting his rank and standing. He gave his assent to the former proposition,

but the actual application of this concession was made in a very cautious manner, the position and duties of these officers remaining very vague and undefined, whilst those of the "S.B.O." were not immediately changed in any material fashion. The thin edge of the wedge had, however, been inserted, which I felt would finally open the doors to a fuller understanding.

On returning from Château d'Oex to my headquarters at Berne, I called on Colonel Hauser, and urged upon him the necessity of amplifying, if possible, the concession made in favour of the junior officers, which I characterized as much too vague to be of permanent value, though useful as a basis for future developments. He seemed at first to regard with some dismay the line I had taken, and demurred to the creation of a precedent which might have far-reaching consequences. He pointed out that any change in the status of British officers would inevitably lead to a change in that of all interned officers, whether French, Belgian, or German, and he was not prepared to proceed far along that line. He added that he had every confidence in the good sense of the British officer, and was persuaded he would not abuse any privilege conceded to him, but he had to regard the internment as a whole, and not as affecting one special section.

Finally, he asked me to be satisfied for the present, and to await results.

To this I assented with the best possible grace, realizing that radical changes could only be effected in the light of experience, and that time alone would show whether my views as regards the necessity for closer co-operation between Swiss and British officers in the camps was essential or otherwise.

In August, 1916, a second large contingent of British Ps. of W. arrived in Switzerland, the well-known mountain resort of Mürren being assigned to them as an interned centre. Mürren lies in the Bernese Oberland, and is situated in one of the German-speaking cantons. The conditions regulating the internment at this spot were in many respects more favourable than at Château d'Oex, for the whole camp was very compact, with a front of about one kilometre in length as against the ten kilometres of Château d'Oex. The officers had the further advantage of being housed in a first-class hotel, the accommodation of which could hardly have been bettered, and the fact of their all being lodged under one roof under the direct supervision of the "S.B.O." proved of inestimable value to all concerned.

Lt.-Colonel F. H. Neish, Gordon Highlanders, and Captain Dr. Llopart, the directing Swiss

Medical Officer, quickly reached an understanding by which all such details as clothing, pay, institutes, workshops, Red Cross and Y.M.C.A. work, religious instruction, etc., were to be dealt with as purely British matters by the "S.B.O." and his officers, without interference on the part of the Swiss authorities, whilst the administration and discipline of the camp were to be reserved, as of right, to Captain Llopart and his Staff. This arrangement also admitted of some co-operation between the Swiss and British officers for disciplinary purposes. This sub-division of duties gave scope to the long dormant energies of our officers, and proved of incalculable benefit in reviving in them a feeling of responsibility, which the conditions of their captivity in Germany had partially atrophied.

As soon as the camp had had sufficient time to settle down, Colonel Hauser paid it a visit of inspection, and I was much gratified on his return to Berne when he expressed to me his keen satisfaction at the spirit prevailing, and his astonishment at the rapidity with which all ranks had adapted themselves to the novel conditions of their internment. Mürren, to use his own words, "showed signs of becoming the model camp of Switzerland."

I now pointed out to him that we should,

in all probability, obtain equally good results at other centres where progress had not been so marked, if the system evolved at Mürren, which, of course, was in no small degree the result of the experience gained elsewhere during the preceding three months, was made applicable to all British camps throughout Switzerland. I was not unmindful, in doing so, of our previous conversation on the subject of Château d'Oex, when he had asked me not to attempt to proceed too fast at that place, and to await the results of the small concessions I had obtained for the improvement of the position of the "S.B.O." and other officers, in so far as their relation to the men and to his own Medical Staff was in question.

The Colonel met me more than half-way, and it was evident that his inspection had convinced him of the necessity for that closer co-operation between Swiss and British which I had urged upon him previously. He now, at my request, sent out orders convening a meeting at Berne of the "D.M.Os." and the "S.B.Os." of Château d'Oex, Mürren, and Leysin, with a view to the co-ordination of the diverse systems in operation in these camps. This meeting, at which I was present, took place under the presidency of Major de la Harpe, Staff Officer of the British Section

at Headquarters, and resulted in the elaboration of the procedure evolved at Mürren, and the subsequent promulgation of orders to all British camps alike, whereby the delicate questions of the position and duties of our officers were, at last, finally set at rest.

The principles laid down at this meeting had far-reaching consequences, for they were made applicable at a much later date, and in a modified form, to the Franco-Belgian and German sections of the Interned. I was always led to understand, however, that the relations between our officers and the Swiss Camp Staff, as also between the former and their men, were of a more intimate nature than those of our Allies or of the Germans in a corresponding sense.

Another reform was effected by the appointment of an officer of the Swiss Army as Camp Commandant, assistant to the "D.M.O.," who relieved the latter of the greater part of the purely disciplinary work. The title of "Commandant" was somewhat of a misnomer, as this officer was subordinate to the "D.M.O."; but the change proved of a beneficent nature, as it enabled the medical officers to devote themselves more particularly to the medical and administrative side of their task, and transferred the matter of discipline to officers accustomed

to the handling of men. Most of these Commandants had had experience of business life abroad, and were, therefore, qualified by their linguistic and cosmopolitan education to understand the outlook of the British soldier. They found no difficulty in adapting themselves to the mentality of the Interned, and became useful members of the camps' organization.

These reforms did not connote any change in the status or duties of the "D.M.O.," who remained, as before, the administrator and disciplinary chief of the region. Under the new conditions, the Commandant was assisted by orderly officers chosen from the junior ranks of the Interned, who were allocated duties in connection with the interior economy of the camp, and with the maintenance of discipline. The right of punishment for military offences was reserved to the Commandant alone, but in all cases the preliminary investigation was made by the orderly officer, who carried on the case to the Commandant for punishment or otherwise. This procedure gave great satisfaction to the men, who were thereby assured of a careful hearing by their own officers before the final hearing by the Swiss Commandant.

Minor offences were dealt with by the Commandant or the "D.M.O.," their respective powers being limited to ten and twenty days' cells.

More serious offences were referred to the consideration of the "Médecin d'Armée" at Berne, whose powers extended to thirty days' cells. Cases for court martial were reported to the Judge Advocate-General for decision. If orders for trial by court martial ensued, the matter was dealt with by an "Itinerant Court Martial," composed of Swiss officers, the defence of the accused being delegated to an officer of the Swiss Bar possessing a knowledge of the language of the accused. The composition of the court martial was in every way satisfactory, great regard being shown to the interests of the accused with the aid of Counsel. The area covered, however, was so great, extending, as it did, from one end of Switzerland to the other, that it was impossible for the Itinerant Court to keep abreast of the work. Accused were, in consequence, not infrequently incarcerated for considerable periods whilst awaiting trial. It would sometimes happen that at the end of this delay the accused would be declared "not guilty," and be released after a detention lasting from four to twelve weeks. If declared "guilty," the period of detention was deducted from the award; if "not guilty," a compensation in money might or might not be paid, as the circumstances of the case dictated. The fact of this prolonged detention before trial was

the only unsatisfactory feature of the system, but as the procedure was common to both Interned and the Swiss Army alike, and was, moreover, in accordance with the tenets of Swiss Military Law, protests were unavailing.

Taken as a whole, the severity of punishments for military offences was no greater than in the British Army, though the difference was marked as regards the offence and its antidote. It was at first a matter of much amusement to our men to be sent to bed for three days for a minor offence which would have been awarded three days' " C.B. " (confinement to barracks) by a British officer. This form of punishment is quite common to the Swiss soldier, and is evidently much disliked by him ; but to our men it appeared more in the light of a joke. Here we have one small instance of the divergence in custom and mentality between the Swiss and ourselves.

CHAPTER VIII

MEDICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE TREATMENT OF THE SICK AND WOUNDED—THE PROVISION OF HOSPITALS AND CLINICS

AS already stated in a previous chapter, in the first stages of the negotiations of 1915 for the internment of Ps. of W. attention had been directed solely to the hospitalization in Switzerland of one category of prisoners, viz., that of the tuberculous; but very shortly, under the pressure of public opinion, further attention had been drawn to the advisability of extending the principle to other categories, with a view to the inclusion of disabilities of a very varying nature. The discussions were continued during 1915, with a view to the realization of an enlarged programme, and in January, 1916, a first list, comprising twelve categories of disabilities or wounds, had been prepared and agreed upon, including that of tuberculosis, and the first essays of internment were made on the 26th of January, 1916, commencing with 200 tuberculous cases. By the

14th of February 1,247 French and German Ps. of W. had been interned in the regions of Montana, Montreux, Leysin, the Bernese Oberland, the Quatre Cantons, and Davos, comprised of men of the aforesaid categories.

By the 16th of February the list had been increased to twenty categories, to be afterwards reduced in June and July, 1916, to eighteen. These lists formed the basis of the work done by the so-called "Itinerant Commissions of Swiss Medical officers," who were authorized to proceed to Germany, France, and England for the examination and selection for internment in Switzerland of all those prisoners found to be suffering from the diseases or wounds mentioned in the aforesaid eighteen categories.

The "Médecin d'Armée" was thus suddenly faced with the problem of the internment and treatment of a number of Ps. of W. largely in excess of those originally in view, and the whole of his programme had to be re-cast to meet the needs of a body of Interned, not less than the strength of an Army Corps. The serious nature of the demands made on the medical organization of the country may be realized from the fact that every one of the 30,000 men about to reach Switzerland was suffering from one or other form of disability, requiring medical attention at the hands of

a Sanitary Service manned and equipped for the ordinary requirements of the small Swiss Army.

To meet the additional requirements of the medical personnel, medical officers in civil employ, liable for further service, were mobilized, and many civilian doctors, not so liable, were called upon for a term of duty.

As regards the housing of those prisoners whose treatment was not of a pressing nature, and who formed the majority of the Interned, accommodation was found in the hotels and châlets with which Switzerland is so richly endowed. In this respect no difficulty was experienced ; but for those requiring that care and treatment which could only be given in a hospital, the solution was not so easy, as the necessary accommodation for the large numbers of sick, with which the country was being flooded, was lacking.

It is true that many of the private clinics which form so marked a feature of the modern life of Switzerland had been vacated by their foreign clients on the outbreak of war ; but, as an off-set to this relief, the mobilization of the Swiss Army threw a strain on the Sanitary Service and the available accommodation which, perhaps, more than counter-balanced the relief afforded by the withdrawal of the foreign element. The " Médecin d'Armée " did not, at the outset,

therefore, find much relief from the release of the private clinics, and a good deal of improvization had to take place before the difficulty was satisfactorily overcome.

Military and civil hospitals, already in being in the different regions, were set apart or partially utilized for the Interned, whilst other suitable buildings were commandeered, and were installed as hospitals or convalescent homes.

As to the treatment in the camps, the methods adopted were of a varying nature. At Château d'Oex, the men were, in the first instance, distributed amongst the hotels and châlets, without much regard to the nature of their physical condition, but as soon as the doctors could get to work, the worst cases were weeded out and sent to the local hospital, the "Soldanelle." Less serious cases, and those awaiting their time and turn for surgical treatment, were dealt with in their own establishments. The "Soldanelle" contained about eighty beds, and had in pre-war days been equipped solely for the use of visitors requiring rest cures, or electric or light treatments. The equipment included electric and X-ray installations, but was deficient on the surgical side. This defect was made good by the "B.L.R.C.O." at Berne, who presented the hospital with the complete equipment for an operating theatre.

A question in connection with this operating theatre was raised at the time by the "Médecin d'Armée," which is of some interest as illustrating the point of view of the Swiss Medical Staff in respect to the surgical treatment of serious cases. When I first suggested to Colonel Hauser the desirability of bringing this hospital up to date by the addition of an operating theatre, he threw cold water on the scheme, on the ground that Château d'Oex had never been intended as an operating centre, and its equipment as such might and would, probably, lead to the performance of operations by local surgeons, when such operations had best be left to the specialist. There was no gainsaying this argument, and for a time the matter was left in abeyance; but when an immediate operation had to be conducted at Château d'Oex, in a hastily improvised room, as the only means of saving the life of an officer suffering from acute appendicitis, the need for a suitable operating theatre again came prominently to notice, and Colonel Hauser gave his consent for its installation.

In the course of the first twelve months some 400 minor operations were carried out in this theatre by Dr. Brustlein, who fully justified his reputation as a rising young surgeon. Occasionally operations of a serious character

were also performed there, with the assistance of specialists who were called in for the occasion, Dr. Arndt, of Berne, amongst others. The hospital thus served an excellent purpose in relieving the specialized institutions of minor cases, for which the accommodation would have proved insufficient.

The nursing personnel consisted of orderlies, both Swiss and British. The latter were untrained, but acquired in the course of time a certain skill and readiness in their duties. As regards women nurses, the doctors at Château d'Oex were firmly opposed to their employment, as being contrary to the usual custom of Swiss military hospitals, and it was only at my repeated instance, after considerable opposition, that an offer to supply Swiss nursing sisters at the expense of the "B.L.R.C.O." was accepted.

Another difficulty, and one for which no immediate remedy could be found, was experienced in the lack of properly qualified masseurs. In this respect the Sanitary Service was faced with a very real difficulty. Most of the trained masseurs of the Swedish type had left the country on the outbreak of war, and the number available from all sources for the use of the Interned was totally inadequate. Training schools were at once opened, but it

was not until the end of 1916 that the deficiency was made good.

Meanwhile the Sanitary Service was subjected to much severe and exaggerated criticism, owing to the refusal of the authorities to accept assistance from outside. The attitude of the " Médecin d'Armée " *vis-à-vis* of the aid offered by the Red Cross organizations of the Allies with regard to the supply of nurses, masseurs, etc., was influenced in no small measure by the decisive stand taken by Swiss Trade Unions, who were jealously opposed to the employment of foreign labour to the detriment of the Swiss worker. He was obliged to give due consideration to popular opinion on the subject, and to follow the lead of his Government, so that in many cases the acceptance or non-acceptance of the assistance offered was determined *for* him, and not *by* him. I may safely assert that his decisions were never inspired by personal prejudice, or based on a narrow or jealous view.

As regards Mürren, no local hospital being available, cases requiring any special treatment were sent to the District Hospital at Interlaken, or to the hospitals at Berne, Lucerne, and Fribourg. Two small wards were set aside in one of the hotels for patients suffering from ordinary ailments, and a good deal of medical work was carried out in the hotels, sun cures

being much in favour for the treatment of open wounds, etc. For massage and orthopædic exercises a gymnasium was installed, with apparatus of a useful kind. We were indebted to the generosity of a Swiss friend for certain of the more delicate and costly pieces for vibratory exercises. The equipment consisted of twenty-five apparatuses for "mécanothérapie," two for "faradization," and one for "galvanization." During 1916 above 253 cases were treated, of which 96 were by massage, 45 by "électrothérapie," and 112 by "mécanothérapie"; 180 men were subjected to sun cures.

A description of the District Hospital of Interlaken, where so much work was done for us, will serve to illustrate the general type of civil hospitals placed at the disposal of the general public all over Switzerland. This hospital is divided into wards of five to ten beds, affording accommodation for some 150 patients. The personnel consists of a resident surgeon with a staff of doctors capable of dealing with all the ordinary work of the district. The surgeon in charge had served his novitiate under Professor Kocher, of Berne, and was well known throughout the length and breadth of the Bernese Oberland as a very skilful operator.

I may here call attention to a marked feature

of the civil work in Switzerland, in that many of the most promising young surgeons and practitioners of the country, after their early years of study and association with such masters of their art as Professors Kocher and Roux, take up their life-work in the smaller towns, where they build up a reputation in their turn, second only to that of their erstwhile masters. The peasants and the general public have, therefore, at their very doors, up and down the country side, specialists of a high order of professional skill. Perhaps in no country in the world are there specialists so widely distributed as in Switzerland, much to the advantage and well-being of the people. These doctors live hard and frugal lives, and give their services for fees which in our country would be considered derisory; but they lend lustre to a Sanitary Service which is held in high esteem by their countrymen, and which is the admiration of the foreigner within their gates.

Before concluding this account of the sanitary organization of Mürren, I must add a word regarding an important branch of that work inaugurated at the "Manor Farm." This châlet, the property of an English lady, Miss Simpkin, served in pre-war days as a pension for British and American visitors. It was

beautifully situated, two kilometres from Interlaken, on the shore of the Lake of Thoune, and Miss Simpkin conceived the happy thought of offering it to the medical authorities as a convalescent home for soldiers suffering from neurasthenia, shell shock, heart, etc. The offer was gladly accepted. Twenty officers and men were in constant residence there, and it would be difficult to exaggerate the care and kindness lavished on them by this devoted lady.

Apart from the treatment afforded by the ordinary camp organizations, with their associated hospitals as already described, the principle was adopted of utilizing, so far as practicable, the services of specialists in such centres as Berne, Fribourg, Lausanne, Montreux, Geneva, etc. We thus find many of the best-known professors and doctors of Switzerland, some of whom have a world-wide reputation, actively engaged in their own hospitals in the service of the Interned.

At Berne: Professors Kocher, Capt. Dr. Matti, Dr. Arndt, Dr. Kocher.
At Lausanne: Professor Roux, Dr. Dufour.
At Montreux: Dr. Chessex.
At Geneva: Dr. Julliard, Dr. Machard.
At Fribourg: Dr. Clement.

A special Sanitary Establishment was also created by the " Médecin d'Armée " at Lucerne,

in June, 1916, with 190 beds and a staff of eleven doctors, known as the "Armée-Sanitäts-Anstalt," destined for the common use of the Interned of all nations for operative work in connection with bone-grafting, tendon-transplantation, brain and nerve surgery, and complicated plastic movements. The beds were distributed as follows: 6 to officers, and 78 to French, 22 to British, and 84 to German N.C.Os. and men, the different nationalities being accommodated in different wards. This hospital was well equipped from a scientific point of view, and was supplemented by annexes to which the convalescents were transferred. The annexe set aside for the British was the congeries of châlets at Seebourg, four kilometres from Lucerne, owned by the London Polytechnic Society. This was kindly placed at my disposal by the Society, and was further utilized for the accommodation of men attending the classes for technical instruction established under the auspices of the B.R.C.S., London. The "A.S.A.," however, proving unequal to the ever-increasing strain, had to be supplemented on September 8, 1916, by the addition at the "Clinique Générale," Geneva, under the direction of Dr. Julliard, of a *service* for the treatment of lesions of the jaw and face. Another *service* was also opened by Dr. Machard, at Geneva,

and a third by Dr. Matti, at the Salem Hospital, at Berne, also for lesions of the face and jaw.

The specialization demanded was in this way gradually placed at the service of the Interned, but its creation was not the outcome of a day. The year 1916 was a transition period of trial and evolution, during which many mistakes were made, but which ended in the development of an efficient organization capable of meeting all demands. That the Swiss Sanitary Service, both in its military and civil branches, should have met so readily demands of so unprecedented a nature, shows a remarkable spirit of originality and adaptability, which is deserving of record and acknowledgment.

One other special establishment, set apart in 1917 for the use of the Allies, was that of the Fribourg Hospital. Early in that year I received a visit from the Comtesse de Zürich de Reynolds, informing me of a scheme initiated by herself and the Baronne de Montenach, both residents of Fribourg, for the equipment of a large hospital on the outskirts of the town, built originally by the municipality as a Maternity Hospital, but which for financial reasons had never been opened as such. The municipal authorities had expressed their willingness to hand over the building as a Military Hospital dedicated to the use of the Allies for the period

of the war, and funds were being collected with the intention of transferring it, after equipment, to the "Médecin d'Armée." The hospital was calculated to provide beds for about 120 officers and men, at a cost originally estimated at frs. 100,000. Of this sum, frs. 75,000 had already been promised, by French Red Cross sources, to Mme. de Montenach, who was devoting herself more especially to the Franco-Belgian side of the question.

An examination of the building showed me that it was eminently suited for the purpose, and a visit to Fribourg made it clear that the medical faculty of the town, as well as the authorities, were deeply interested in the scheme. The "Médecin d'Armée" also adopted it with warm approval, but told me that the funds allocated to him by the Allies would not admit of the capital expenditure involved. As we were at that time awaiting the arrival of a fresh British contingent from Germany, for whom further hospital accommodation was most desirable, the scheme made a strong appeal to me, and I felt no hesitation in placing it before the British Red Cross Society in London, with a request for a donation of frs. 30,000. This sum was immediately placed at my disposal, and in a very short time the ladies at Fribourg had the satisfaction of transferring to the

"Médecin d'Armée" a hospital equipped from top to bottom, the total expenditure being about frs. 150,000 in all.

Here some forty of our soldiers lay side by side with the French and Belgians, and benefited greatly by the highly skilled work of Captain Dr. Clement and his able assistants. Mme. de Zürich de Reynolds was untiring in her interest in and kindness to our men, as well as their Allied comrades. I am happy to be able to cite this as one amongst the many instances of kindness and practical sympathy of our Swiss friends.

It gives me pleasure to record the fact that the Swiss surgeons often spoke to me of the cheeriness of our men whilst under treatment, their quiet acceptance of operative work, and their powers of endurance. One surgeon, when commenting on these temperamental qualities, accounted for them by the love of the British for the open air life, their addiction to sport, and the quality of their diet.

In preparing a comparative return of mortality in Switzerland during the years 1916 and 1917, I found, to my surprise, that the percentage of loss by death of Interned French and Belgians more than doubled that of the British. I understood from my French colleague, Comte de Manneville, that his figures by no means

represented the total losses of his countrymen, as so many of them had, on arrival in Switzerland, been repatriated as "grands blessés." How many of them had died in France he could not tell, but doubtless a considerable number, as the majority were in the last stages of tuberculosis. That fell disease appears to have been more common to the French than to the British whilst in captivity in Germany.

The mortality amongst the British in Switzerland from all causes during the years 1916 and 1917, out of an average of about 2,000 men, amounted to fourteen only, most of whom died of tuberculosis, pneumonia, or accident—a gratifying record as far as Swiss surgeons are concerned, when the sum total of their surgical work is taken into account.

Many of the Leysin patients had been sent out of Germany by the Itinerant Commissions on the mere suspicion of tuberculosis, and these men failed to understand that their condition could be in any way dangerous. The restrictions imposed as regards smoking, drinking, and exercise, the lying out in the open in a recumbent attitude, exposed to sun and air for six to eight hours per diem, and the general want of freedom thereby involved, proved extremely trying to them, and they were, I am afraid, often a thorn in the side of the medical officers. On one

occasion they persuaded the doctors to give them permission to play a friendly game of football with other enthusiasts of the camp, with results disastrous to certain of their number, who realized, perhaps for the first time, that unusual strain could only lead to hemorrhage or other evils of a cognate nature.

A large proportion of the sick were drafted to Château d'Oex, or Mürren, as completely cured, after a residence at Leysin from six months to a year. The percentage of incurables was small, and there is no doubt in my mind that the treatment, as practised in the Swiss Sanatoria, is of immense advantage to those not far advanced in the disease.

As regards an important branch of treatment, viz., that of dentistry, provision was made by the "Médecin d'Armée" as part of the ordinary medical work. This, however, owing to the strain imposed by the mobilization of the Swiss Army, proved totally inadequate, and it was a great relief to me when, in June, 1916, I received a letter from Mr. Joseph A. Woods, M.D.S., L.D.S., offering me his personal service in Switzerland. He wrote to me as follows :—

"My proposition would be to go to some suitable centre for, say, one month. I would take all necessary instruments and supplies and

would attend to any Interned who would care and need to have such treatment. The whole service would be entirely gratuitous, whether to officers or men, and, as far as possible, I would, in addition to operative treatment, fit artificial dentures or make splints or other appliances in any cases of jaw injuries. I would be personally responsible for the expenses. I should, of course, accept any regulations or conditions which may be in force and would loyally fall in with them."

This generous proposition naturally commended itself to me, and with the approval of the "Médecin d'Armée," and the sanction of the War Office, Mr. Woods was appointed Head Dental Surgeon to the British Interned. He immediately closed down his private practice at Liverpool, and exactly three weeks later reached Berne, bringing with him a large stock of instruments and general dental supplies. It was a good thing he did so, for all such stocks had run very low in Switzerland, and the problem of supply has since then become increasingly difficult. Mr. Woods, at my request, made Mürren his centre, and within a few days most of the officers and 200 men were on his register as prospective patients. His original offer to remain one month was extended to three, and then as the work increased, owing to fresh

arrivals from Germany, he decided, on my representations, to remain for a much longer period, and in fact only left the country when the camps were closed down on the repatriation of all Ps. of W. in the autumn of 1918, having thus completed two years and four months voluntary service with British troops in Switzerland. The camps at Interlaken (where he fitted up an additional surgery), Gunten, Meiringen, Seebourg, Leysin and Château d'Oex, also came within his purview at one time or another. Leysin and Château d'Oex were subsequently, in August, 1917, placed in dental charge of Mr. W. I. Law, L.D.S., where the work was almost as heavy as at Mürren. Mr. Law's expenses were defrayed by the North-Midland Branch of the British Dental Association, supplemented by a donation from the B.R.C.S., London. The services of Mr. Woods were entirely honorary: all expenses, both professional and personal, were met by him, and no fees or charges of any sort were accepted under any circumstances.

The following summary will give some idea of the magnitude of his work:—

Total number of patients treated ..	1,229
Visits	6,033
Operations..	9,725
Restorations (dentures), etc.	673

Mr. Woods laid himself out to give as full dental treatment as though he were in his own private consulting-room at home, and to avoid the suggestion or appearance of merely giving the bare essentials of dental treatment. The fact that 99 per cent. of the officers, and about 80 per cent. of the men, consulted him, shows how entirely he obtained the confidence of all ranks, and how necessary a dental service was. He was able, by a series of lectures and demonstrations, to impress upon all his patients the extreme importance of dental hygiene.

Writing on the subject of his work, he mentions that, like all other members of his profession, he had been anxious since the outbreak of the war to be of service to his fellow-countrymen, and when he saw that Ps. of W. were being transferred to Switzerland, he felt an overpowering desire to offer a dental service to them. That this loving desire has received a wonderful fulfilment, the foregoing record amply shows, a fulfilment towards which he was so well assisted by Mrs. Woods, who gave up all her time and strength in the furtherance of her husband's task. It is a pleasure to add that Mr. Woods received the heartiest support of Captain Dr. Llopart, the Directing Medical Officer at Mürren, and of the Swiss Dental Service.

As regards the provision of artificial limbs,

it is casting no slur on the Swiss medical authorities and Swiss artisans to say that they were unable to meet the demands of the Interned. In Switzerland, as in other countries, trained artisans skilled in this class of work were lacking, and the type of limb in use was in no wise suitable for the demands of modern life; in short, good artificial limbs were unprocurable in the country, and though some of the men were fitted out locally, the majority preferred to wait in the hope that a more suitably-designed limb would have been evolved before their return to England. A few officers were supplied with artificial legs by a Lyons firm, with which they were satisfied at the time, but whether these compared favourably with the home product I have not heard. Lady Dorothy Dalrymple did useful service at Château d'Oex in supplying peg-legs, which proved most useful.

A few words here as to the expenses caused by the administration and the medical care of the Interned will not be out of place. The foreign Governments concerned engaged to pay to the Swiss Government, in liquidation of these expenses, 50 centimes per diem for every officer and man interned, with an additional sum of 50 centimes for those under treatment for tuberculosis. This payment covered charges for the pay and allowances of all Swiss officers

and men engaged in the service of the Interned; hospital expenses of every kind and nature except food; hire of offices and expenses of installation; allowances to Interned men working in the administrative offices of the Interned, or employed as masseurs, etc.; also the laundry of officers and men.

It was only by the exercise of a careful economy that the expenditure was maintained within the limits agreed upon, but I understand that, as the Internment developed, the funds placed at the disposal of the Swiss Government were found sufficient for the purpose.

CHAPTER IX

MEDICAL AND SURGICAL TREATMENT OF THE INTERNED—INSPECTION BY LIEUT.-COLONEL SIR R. JONES, R.A.M.C.

OUR men had not long been settled at Château d'Oex when they were inspected by Colonel Hauser, who mentioned to me his surprise at finding an unusually high percentage in need of surgical treatment, the percentage being much higher than in the case of the French, Belgian, or German Interned. He appeared to be satisfied at the time with the adequacy of the medical and surgical arrangements at our disposal, but expressed some concern at a feeling, common to both officers and men, that their surgical treatment was being unduly delayed. He said that the same feeling had prevailed amongst the French and Belgians at an earlier date of the Internment, but that this was based upon a totally erroneous impression. Patients, in their anxiety for an early restoration to health and activity, often failed to realize the danger of premature operative work, and he had been

forced to direct his surgeons to exercise due caution. Recrudescent purulent outbreaks had already occurred amongst the French, with fatal consequences, as the result of premature work, and he was determined that his surgeons should not in the future be led away by any signs of impatience on the part of the Interned. He begged me to believe that his officers were acting in the interests of each individual officer and man, and that if operations were deferred, there was good reason for the decision taken. He had evidently warned Major Mercanton, the "Chef de Région," of the necessity for caution in certain classes of surgical work, for, whilst accompanying the first train conveying the men from Montreux to Château d'Oex, I was present when a conversation on this subject took place between the latter and Captain de la Chaux, the D.M.O. of the camp. Major Mercanton warned his subordinates of the advisability of proceeding slowly in the first instance. Apart from the necessity of dealing with urgent cases as they might arise, he recommended a rest of at least a month, in order that the effect of good food and change of climate might be watched before any operative work was undertaken. He also dwelt at length on the danger of blood-poisoning due to the foci of bacteria. I felt at the time that whatever

minor evils might result from excessive caution, the greater evil of premature surgery would, within the limits of human judgment, be avoided.

It was a matter of interest to me to learn from Colonel Hauser that, as in the case of the French and Belgian Interned, his officers were already being criticized as a result of this cautious attitude, and that the criticism amounted to a suspicion of neglect. This suspicion may have been aggravated to some extent by a feeling amongst certain of the officers that reasonable facilities were not being granted them for treatment by private Specialists. The regulations affecting this question gave the officer the right of consultation with, and treatment by, a Specialist, but with the proviso that the charges incurred should be debited to the Sanitary Department only, when the necessity for calling in the Specialist had been allowed by the responsible camp doctor. In the case of his non-approval, the charge had to be met from the private purse of the officer. The D.M.Os. took the point of view that, in the majority of cases, treatment could be as well conducted in the camp by the regular Medical Staff as by the Specialist, and as trustees for the proper expenditure of the funds placed at their disposal by our Government, they did not feel themselves

justified in employing the Specialist in other than exceptional cases. The charges involved by this latter procedure would, of course, have proved heavier than in the former, and though they did not attach undue importance to the financial side of the question, they did not feel inclined to ignore it altogether. On the one hand, the medical officers complained of the capricious nature of the demands made by our officers for specialized treatment, when the ordinary camp treatment would have amply sufficed, and held the opinion that the latter had no regard whatever for the financial interests of our Government. On the other hand, our officers cast doubts on the quality of the professional skill available in the camp, and criticized the cheese-paring policy of the medical officers.

The one view was directly opposed to the other, and it looked as though it would be difficult to arrive at an understanding on the question. The conclusion which, after conversations with both sides, I personally came to was, that the camp doctors (I am only speaking of Château d'Oex, for the same difficulty was not experienced elsewhere) were disposed to adhere too closely to the letter of their instructions, and were not sufficiently flexible in their dealings with either officers or men. They were too inclined to treat our

soldiers as they would their own Swiss compatriots; a great mistake, as, in doing so, they made no allowance for the weaknesses and suspicions of men who had been subjected to hardships of a trying nature during a period of long confinement, and whose nerves were vibrating and sensitive to a degree. Moreover, the mentalities of the Swiss and British soldier were very different, and to judge of one soldier by the other could only lead to error and misunderstanding.

I discussed this question with Colonel Hauser, who spoke to me on the subject with the utmost frankness. It was apparently all the more easy for him to do so, as he had already been through the same phase of doubt and dissatisfaction with the Interned of our Allies, and had succeeded in proving to their satisfaction that all was well with their medical treatment. He pointed out that the conditions under which our men were being treated were, when compared with those of the Swiss soldier, exceptionally favourable, and this I believe to have been the case. It was true, he said, that in respect of food, nursing, etc., no comparison could be drawn, as either the circumstances differed, or the system adopted varied in our respective countries in a greater or less degree, but we could not expect the Swiss Government to adapt

itself to the idiosyncracies of the soldiers of any one nationality; we must be prepared to judge by results. He could only deplore the lack of confidence displayed towards his Staff at Château d'Oex, and thought that our officers were over critical.

I, in reply, stated that I was at a disadvantage in having no qualified British doctor to assist me, and suggested that a visit of inspection by a distinguished British surgeon would, in all probability, serve to allay suspicion on the part of the Interned, and bring about a better feeling between his Staff and our men. He met the suggestion with enthusiasm, and said that both he and his Staff would welcome such a visit. Any officer nominated by the War Office for the purpose would be warmly received, and be given every facility to make himself acquainted with the conditions which determine the care and treatment of our Interned, and the attitude of the Swiss Sanitary Service towards them. He would be more especially pleased to see a medical expert of international reputation, as his doctors would have much to gain from an expert of wide experience.

Thereupon, I lost no time in making the situation clear to the Authorities at home, and asked that a surgeon of standing should be sent to inspect and report on the medical treat-

ment, and to advise me as to the sufficiency or otherwise of the care bestowed upon our officers and men. Some delay took place before the right man could be found, but at last Lieut.-Colonel Robert Jones, R.A.M.C. (now Sir Robert Jones), the distinguished inspector of Military Orthopædics in Great Britain, was nominated for the purpose by Sir Alfred Keogh, K.C.B., Director-General A.M.S., and arrived in Berne on December 22, 1916.

He commenced his inspection at once, and in due course visited the camps at Mürren, Château d'Oex, Leysin, and the hospitals affiliated to these camps at Interlaken, Berne, and Lucerne. Shortly before his arrival, a contingent of Ps. of W. had reached Switzerland from Germany, and he therefore had an opportunity in each of the camps of comparing the conditions of these newly-arrived men with those who had been in residence in Switzerland for some time, a matter, to my mind, of great importance, as Colonel Hauser had contended that the true test of the efficiency of his Sanitary Service could best be demonstrated by results, the methods by which those results were achieved being of secondary importance. In principle, I agreed with this view, and looked upon it as a very happy circumstance that the arrival of this contingent had coincided with that of

Colonel Jones, who would be able to apply this test when making his examinations.

As regards the medicine and surgery practised in the camps, Colonel Jones found the doctors to be well-informed young practitioners, who had undergone a sound modern training. Assisting at an emergency operation, conducted by Captain Dr. Brustlein, at Château d'Oex, he writes:

> The technique was good, and the theatre staff compared quite favourably with many more ambitious theatres at home. This experience gave me confidence with regard to the conduct of emergency operations in this camp. Neither at Mürren nor at Leysin is there an operating theatre *in* the camp. This is as it should be, as at neither place is there a surgeon qualified for serious surgical emergencies. Should such emergencies arise, an operating surgeon would be telephoned for from Interlaken or from Montreux. The character of the cases is very similar to those which we find in the ordinary British Military Hospital. . . .
>
> I was much pleased to find that the Swiss doctors were conservative, and did not show an undue haste to operate. They were beginning to learn of the dangers of recrudescent purulent outbreaks in those instances where operations were performed too early. This delay, in one of the camps, has given rise to suspicion of neglect, a suspicion which I took pains to dissipate. . . .
>
> The treatment of the Swiss doctors was quite equal to that which we find in a well-conducted auxiliary hospital at home, and the facilities offered the men to consult specialists were even greater than we often find to be the case at home.
>
> Our soldiers are very well situated in all the camps, from the point of view of access to specialists. Berne, Lucerne, Montreux, and Lausanne contain most dis-

tinguished surgeons—many of them of international reputation. Careful inquiry proved to my satisfaction that whenever really necessary a consultation was allowed. These consultations, as long as recommended by the Directing Medical Officer, were never charged to British officers or men. I questioned the medical officers as to the specialists recommended, and was satisfied they were well-known men. If officers desired to consult any special man other than the person recommended by the D.M.O. no objection is taken to it, and so long as the D.M.O. thinks the consultation necessary, no charge is made for it. Occasions sometimes arise when an officer visits a specialist without consulting the D.M.O. and in that case he pays his own expenses. It is always advisable that the officer should consult the D.M.O. before seeking the advice of the specialist, as it sometimes happens that the officer chooses a surgeon with a brilliant abdominal reputation, when he should have consulted a specialist versed in bones. I had a long talk with the officers on this subject, and explained to them that they were as well off in the matter of expert opinion as if they lived in London.

The nursing was mostly of a comparatively unskilled type. Women nurses were not encouraged, and the duties were performed by orderlies who had undergone instruction. The disadvantage of this was largely counteracted by the fact that the surgeons themselves dressed their cases.

There are too few masseurs. I spoke of this, and I learn that the shortage is to be remedied. The Swiss authorities are to start a School of Massage, which several of our men will attend. This may easily prove to be a vocation of advantage to them after the war.

I visited several of the hospitals where the more serious cases had been removed for operation. I found the surgeons keen and very interested in their patients, and the hospital accommodation quite good. The food was excellent, and I could hear no complaints. In these various hospitals every type of operative work is done, such as bone-grafting,

tendon-transplantation, brain and nerve surgery, and complicated plastic operations. I had long conversations with the staffs, and am now well aware of their views and methods of procedure. They seemed thoughtful, conscientious and careful men, and I feel our wounded are safe in their hands.

I found the British officers wanted encouragement, and I trust I was able to cheer many of them by truthfully assuring them of their recovery after the war. I endeavoured to instil into them a spirit of confidence in the doctors with whom they had to deal. In certain more complicated cases I suggested that the final operation should be performed upon them on their return. I think I examined every officer.

In respect of the general condition of the men, Colonel Jones writes:—

The newly arrived seemed indifferently nourished, many of them dazed, and some apprehensive of those in authority. After a very short time, so I am informed, these conditions are overcome, and the men become cheerful and trustful. The condition of those who had been in camp in Switzerland for longer periods was very satisfactory. They looked well and felt happy, and I had opportunities of examining their charts, and noted that they soon began to fatten after arriving in camp. Indeed, they represented generally a well-conditioned body of men. Many spoke well of their treatment by the Swiss officials, and seemed to fraternize with the villagers, with whom they were in general accord.

The three camps (Mürren, Château d'Oex, and Leysin) are admirably chosen . . . and the residential establishments for the men comprise most of the well-known hotels of the district. It would be difficult to conceive of more appropriate or delightful surroundings for men who have returned from German prisons.

Summarizing his experience of the camps, Colonel Jones stated that:—

> The sanitation and housing were excellent; the feeding good in quality and plentiful; the Swiss doctors in charge well trained and attentive, and quite competent; the specialists extremely good, and every reasonable facility afforded for consulting them; the General Hospitals for serious cases were staffed by competent and often distinguished surgeons.

This visit of Colonel Jones, and the satisfactory nature of the report, once and for all set my mind at rest as to the general efficiency of the service and the skill of the medical officers, and certainly had a tranquillizing effect on the majority of our own officers and men. The contrast between the condition of the recent arrivals and those who had been in residence for some time was most marked, and furnished a proof of the almost miraculous change effected by the climate, the freedom from anxiety, and the good work of the doctors. In every camp the two classes of men were paraded for inspection side by side, and the difference in their mental outlook and physical condition was of a marked nature.

Further confirmation of the activities of the Swiss doctors reached me about this time from another quarter. Having regard to the great mass of Ps. of W. arriving in Switzerland, the

majority of whom had received insufficient treatment in Germany, the "Médecin d'Armée" found it necessary to call for an objective and uniform examination of all wounded men, with a view to obtaining detailed indications for the treatment of their wounds, and in September, 1916, Dr. Matti, a distinguished specialist of Berne, was charged with the duty of visiting the "regions," and of examining every case where surgical and orthopædic treatment was in question. In December this order was modified, the "regions" being divided into four zones, for each of which a Specialist was nominated. The result of these examinations was communicated to me in due course, supplementing, and, I am glad to say, confirming, the conclusions drawn, quite independently, by Colonel Jones.

CHAPTER X

SWISS ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF THE INTERNED—DIVISION INTO CATEGORIES TO CORRESPOND TO DEGREE OF VALIDITY—TECHNICAL AND EDUCATIONAL INSTRUCTION—WORKSHOPS AND FACTORIES

THE employment of the Interned became at an early date the object of much solicitude on the part of the Swiss Government and the Swiss public, and it was soon recognized that the best tonic for repairing the ravages caused by sickness, wounds, and a long captivity, was to be found in the restoration of the soldier to a state of activity approximating to the normal, by bringing him into touch with the ordinary conditions of civil life. For this purpose it was necessary to find work, study, or occupation for all those whose physical and mental conditions were still adapted for that purpose.

Instructions were issued by Colonel Hauser in April, 1916, by which the D.M.O.s. were made responsible for the occupation of the Interned in a manner appropriate to the state

of their health, and it was laid down as a principle that the work assigned was no longer to be treated as voluntary, but was to be made obligatory. Any refusal to work was to be severely punished. Nothing was said as to the method of procuring such occupation or of its organization. These instructions, therefore, proved of little practical value, beyond focussing the attention of the responsible Swiss officers on the subject. It was soon realized that many of the wounded and sick had been utterly and permanently broken down by their sufferings, whilst others were quickly recovering their physical, moral, and intellectual stamina.

To meet these varying conditions, an order was published on July 8, 1916, with the approval of the Political Department, classifying the Interned into six categories :—

1. Those incapable of all work.

2. Those partially capable, and fit for employment in the residential establishments as postal orderlies, waiters, etc.

3. Those partially capable, and fit for a few hours' work in the camps and workshops.

4. Those capable of a full day's work, and employable as labourers or mechanics.

5. Young apprentices who, owing to invalidity, are forced to learn a new trade.

6. Students wishing to continue their studies at the universities or schools of Switzerland.

The employment of categories 2, 3, and 5 was deputed to the D.M.O.s; category 4 to special commissions set up in regional centres; category 6 to a University Committee. The "D.M.Os." were invited to place themselves in touch with a Society known as "Pro Captivis," with a view to the employment of men of category 3.

The "Pro Captivis" was originally founded at Berne at the commencement of 1915 by Monsieur Jean Bernouilli, as a complement to the International Committee of the Red Cross at Geneva, whose work under the direction of Monsieur Ador is so well known. Later, it occupied itself for a time as a "Bureau de Secours" for the despatch of parcels to German and Austrian Ps. of W. It then changed its complexion by becoming an exclusively Swiss neutral Society, under the direction of Mme. de Sprecher (wife of the Chief of the General Staff), who offered its assistance to the "Médecin d'Armée" for the organization of the work entailed by the washing and repairs of the linen of the Interned. This offer was accepted, and, in co-operation with Swiss women of all classes, an efficient service was created for the purpose. It then turned its attention to the employment

of the Interned, and opened workshops at Brunnen for the making of shoes, and at Meiringen for tannery. It also organized classes for the instruction of apprentices. These enterprises received official support, and were subsidized by the Swiss Q.M.G. Department.

By the end of 1916, the "Pro Captivis" had in hand fifty workshops, of which thirty were in German, and twenty in French, Switzerland, giving occupation to about 1,140 men.

Other enterprises of a similar kind were created by private initiative. Colonel Luthard, of the French Red Cross, for instance, founded several ateliers at Leysin and elsewhere for the benefit of the French Interned. Some of them joined up with the "Pro Captivis," others retained their autonomy. A model institution of the latter class was that founded in August, 1916, at Vevey, and known as "T.I.M." (Travail Internés Militaires). It was installed in an unused building of Messrs. Peter Cailler and Kohler. Here toys, furniture, and fancy articles were manufactured. Commencing with ten workmen, work was finally found for fifty-seven.

All these workshops were organized on the same principle, with an interned officer or N.C.O. in charge. Raw materials were procured by the Managing Committees, the output in finished articles being disposed of in Switzerland by the

Management for the benefit of their societies. The men were employed, as a rule, for four to five hours per diem, at an average remuneration of fr. 1 for the day's work.

In December, 1916, it was seen that the business of the "Pro Captivis" was being run at a loss, and it was decided to detach this work from the Society and transfer it to the Central Administration of the "Médecin d'Armée" at Berne. This reform was duly effected, the existing deficit being made good by the Q.M.G. Department, which was henceforth made responsible for the administration of the numerous existing "Pro Captivis" workshops, the services of Madame von Sprecher being still retained as Lady Director. The aforementioned organization was intended almost exclusively for the employment and instruction of categories 3 and 5.

Those coming under category 4 were not being neglected, and factories were set up in January, 1917, for the manufacture of goods intended for sale abroad. These factories were established under the patronage of the officers in charge of the Interned, under the title of national workshops ("ateliers nationaux"), those of the French being controlled by Count de Manneville, who occupied the same position towards his interned compatriots as I did towards

the British. This enterprise more especially affected French and German Ps. of W., as they alone had their markets near at hand, and, consequently, were not faced with any special difficulty either as regards the import of raw materials, or the export of the manufactured product. The Political Department gave its consent to the creation of these so-called national workshops for category 4 men, on the understanding that a market for their output should be found abroad, in order that Swiss industry and Swiss workers should not suffer from competition.

In due course factories for German Interned were installed for :—

(*a*) Carpentry and woodwork, at Saint-Gall.
(*b*) Leather goods and orthopædic apparatus, at Stansstad.
(*c*) Toys, at Vitznau.
(*d*) Metal work, at Rorschach.

Other developments followed.

Some of the French workshops were financed and directed as matters of national concern, the French Red Cross taking a leading part in the matter; others were set up by French industrials as a business speculation, machinery and tools being imported from France. The manufacture of furniture and huts received special encouragement from the French Govern-

ment, as these articles were required in large quantities for the restoration of the provinces occupied by the enemy in Northern France. Clogs and metal work also found a ready outlet, facilities for import into France being accorded by the French Government. The men employed in the factories were, as a rule, those who had been employed in similar work in France and Belgium in pre-war days.

I am indebted to Dr. Garnett, my technical adviser, for some details of the work done by the French, from which I extract the following :—

It has to be borne in mind that the British Army of August, 1914, consisted almost exclusively of professional soldiers, while the French Army consisted largely of tradesmen.

Wherever the French were located, nearly every available workshop, especially if provided with electric power, was secured by them, and turned to more or less profitable purposes. The most remarkable example was at Spiez, where the workshops used by the contractor for the electrification of the Lotschberg Railway had been equipped by a French firm. Fifty men were employed in two relays, working eight hours each, and they turned out 2,000 pairs of sabots daily, using about three tons of sawn birch timber every day. The sabots were sent at once to France. The men were paid 50 centimes an hour (about frs. 24 a week). I could not avoid the conclusion that the French employer was to some extent exploiting prisoners' labour. At the same time, it was much better that the men should be employed than that they should be idle.

At Champéry the French had leased a sawmill and a joiner's shop with machine tools, and were making huts

for re-housing the people in the devastated regions of north-east France. This work was under the auspices of the French Red Cross. The huts were built in panels $1\frac{1}{4}$ metres square, and put together by bolts and nuts. For railway transport they packed solid. Associated with the hut building was the furniture manufacture, carried on in several of the French centres. The furniture was made in birch and pine, and, like the huts, packed solid. Another remarkable industry was the framing in birch wood of school slates for the French schools. The slates were quarried between Frutigen and Adelboden; they were cut to size at the quarries and finished at Adelboden.

At Adelboden the Belgians had a weaving shed, with hand looms capable of turning out linen 2 metres in width.

At Vevey a French Colonial officer, had established the "T.I.M." This appeared to be a purely commercial undertaking where unskilled labour made saleable goods, which comprised bags, wire rat-traps, wire for champagne corks, kitchen utensils, etc. In connection with the majority of this work it was hard to believe that the training would be of value to the men when they returned to France.

At Leysin the French had secured an unfinished hotel, and as there were no windows the men had the advantage of working almost in the open air. Excellent work was done in small cabinet work and French polishing. A modeller with four or five assistants made models of the Kaiser and Crown Prince in plaster, which were painted by a specialist. The demand was so great I could not purchase one. Another man with four or five assistants was making paper-knives from wire nails about 20 c.m. long and 1 c.m. in diameter. This industry was learned, I understand, from Russian prisoners in Germany. At Meiringen the French had a workshop for light leather work and another for rope slippers.

There was little about the work in general that could be regarded as systematically educational, though the assistants

had the opportunity of learning as apprentices. With few exceptions, the educational element was entirely lacking.

Attention was also directed by our Allies to other fields of employment. On the initiative of the French Embassy and the Belgian Legation at Berne, an orchestra was formed at Montreux, and was assimilated from the point of view of administration and finance to the system of national workshops. This orchestra was composed of Interned professional musicians, and was placed under the leadership of Monsieur Marc de Ranse, a well-known French musician, who drifted into Switzerland as a P. of W. after a long period of captivity in Germany. British musicians were asked to join this orchestra, though few availed themselves of the privilege, as most of our bandsmen preferred service in the camp orchestras at Château d'Oex, Mürren, and Leysin. Monsieur de Ranse made many tours in the Cantons of Vaud, Geneva, and the Bernese Oberland, where his orchestra met with a well-merited success.

Arrangements were also made for the employment of category 4 (full-day workers) in the workshops, factories, and farms of the country, and for this purpose Labour Commissions were set up at Berne, Lausanne, Lucerne, and Zürich. These regional Commissions, on receipt of a demand by an employer for the services of an

Interned, were called upon to satisfy themselves that—(1) The employer was in a position to carry out his engagements, and (2) The employment proposed was not detrimental to the interests of the Swiss workmen. If the investigation proved satisfactory, the demand was referred to a Central Labour Commission at Berne, where it was again examined, and, if approved, was transmitted through the "Médecin d'Armée" at Berne to the camp authorities, by whom it was dealt with. The system gave rise to vexatious delay, but in the end the employers' demand was, as a rule, satisfied. Men so employed were paid the same rates as Swiss labourers or artisans of the same class, and were obliged to provide their own board and lodging. During the period of their contract they ceased to receive the frs. 4–5 per diem allocated by the Swiss Government for the entertainment of Ps. of W. in Switzerland, an exception, however, being made for men working in the open air, such as labourers, masons, or wood-cutters, for whom such daily grant continued to be paid on Sundays and other non-working days.

It is of interest, in connection with the French, to record the fact that the Swiss Federal Department of the Interior was much pre-occupied with the question of the preservation of walnut-trees. As a means to that end, grafting (*greffage*)

as practised in France, but the method of which was unknown to the Swiss, was considered of great importance. Instructors were accordingly recruited from amongst the French Interned, and in January, 1917, as many as twenty men were engaged in imparting their knowledge to Swiss gardeners in different parts of the country.

By December 31, 1916, out of a total of 28,081 Ps. of W., consisting of 1,879 British, 15,574 French, 1,893 Belgians, 8,504 Germans, and 231 Austrians, only 818 men of category 4 had found employment through the intermediary of the Labour Commissions, and even this limited number was distributed amongst as many as 741 different Swiss masters.

As regards general and technical education, schools ("écoles nationales") were formed under the auspices of the officers in charge of the Interned. I am writing now only of the French, Belgians, and Germans. With the French and Belgians, attention was directed to *general* education in elementary subjects, languages, literature, commerce and accounts, and to *technical* instruction in agriculture, aviculture, designing, and telegraphy.

The Germans appear to have interested themselves in languages, English and Spanish being specially favoured. Other subjects were shorthand, accounts, geography, and commerce,

whilst technical instruction was also given in fruit and vegetable culture, forestry, chemistry, and mining. The aforesaid subjects cover a wide field, but only a limited number of students were able to avail themselves of the facilities offered.

Funds for the above purposes were provided, directly by the Governments concerned, and indirectly by private individuals and public societies.

To make provision for the needs of category 6, i.e. of officers and men wishing to continue their studies at the universities or schools of Switzerland, "L'Œuvre Universitaire Suisse" was founded in June, 1915, with a central office at Lausanne. This body assumed responsibility for the intellectual patronage of the Interned. In September, 1915, a decision was taken authorizing the Interned to follow university or college courses in the principal intellectual centres of the country, and local Committees of the "Œuvre" were formed for the purpose of assisting the students at the Universities of Bâle, Berne, Fribourg, Geneva, Lausanne, Neuchâtel, and Zürich.

A special subdivision of the Interned, too, comprising all these centres, was instituted under the general direction of Colonel George de Montmollin, of Neuchâtel, and at each centre

a "Commandant de Place" was appointed for the organization, discipline, and lodging of the students. Commissions were also nominated in each region, who pronounced on the eligibility of the students for inscription at the universities.

In January, 1917, a total of 1,364 students had inscribed themselves on the rolls of the universities, of whom 13 were British, 195 Belgians, 749 French, and 407 Germans. For their administration and discipline, 16 Swiss officers and 18 N.C.Os. had been designated. "L'Œuvre Universitaire" arranged that these students should be exempt from all university charges, a gracious concession which caused some comment, as a distinction was thus drawn unfavourable to the Swiss student, who, in many cases, was financially less well endowed than his foreign comrade. The question of language was a stumbling-block to the generality of British officers and soldiers, and no amount of goodwill or zeal could compensate for a want of French, more particularly as this language was the medium used by the professors in the universities open to the British.

CHAPTER XI

EMPLOYMENT OF THE BRITISH INTERNED—CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS — TECHNICAL TRAINING—SCHEME OF DR. GARNETT

THE facilities afforded by the Swiss to the French, Belgian, and German Interned, as explained in the foregoing chapter, could not, it will be readily understood, be made applicable in the same degree to the British Interned, who, unlike their Allies and enemies, were strangers in a foreign land, ignorant of the languages spoken by the people, and, further, apart in race and habits. There was, moreover, this essential difference: whereas the French and Germans were largely drawn from the industrial classes, and had received a training in civil life, our men, and especially those who first arrived in Switzerland, in May, 1916, were professional soldiers, enlisted young, and therefore unskilled, and without technical equipment. Very few could hope to find work in the factories of Switzerland, and those classified in category 4, as "capable of a full day's work," were to all intents and

purposes eliminated in so far as the Swiss field of labour was concerned. Some sort of educational and technical instruction was, therefore, in my opinion (I return to this question later), essential, if these professional soldiers were to be fitted to take their place in civil life, sooner or later, on leaving the Army. Even with regard to the New Army men with technical experience, the language difficulty was a bar to their employment by the Swiss.

As a preliminary measure for immediate practical purposes, shops, such as bootmakers', carpenters', tailors', barbers', etc., were opened at Château d'Oex, but beyond giving employment and remuneration to a limited number of men with some slight experience in these trades, they served no ulterior purpose.

Very shortly after, however, training on a more pronounced scale came prominently into question with the arrival at Mürren of the second contingent from Germany in August, 1916. The officers and men of this contingent were in a better state of health than their comrades who had preceded them at Château d'Oex in May, 1916, and Lieut.-Colonel F. H. Neish, Gordon Highlanders (S.B.O. at Mürren), found himself supported by a capable staff of young officers, keenly anxious to get to work after their long period of inactivity in Germany. Colonel Neish,

accordingly, at once turned his attention to the formation of schools, classes, workshops, etc., thus laying the foundation for a scheme of technical training which, with the financial support of the "B.L.R.C.O.," and, at a later period, the "B.R.C.S.," London, received a considerable and satisfactory development.

Elementary classes were started for Telegraphy, Electricity, Shorthand, Typewriting, and Motor Engineering. Bookbinding of a simple nature was taught at both camps in connection with the circulating libraries; and a few men gave their attention to wood-carving, taking advantage of the Swiss Schools of Art in the Bernese Oberland.

As regards the schools, it was soon found necessary to add to the staff of teachers, and army schoolmasters were, at my request, sent out from England to meet the increasing demand.

The most important of the classes, however, were those of motor engineering, opened by Lieut. C. E. Wallis, Loyal North Lancashires, at Mürren, and by Captain Reynolds at Rossinières (Château d'Oex), whence men were subsequently selected to attend a more advanced class established later by Lieut. Wallis at Vevey. Of this I shall have more to say later on.

In the spring of 1917 I was approached by Mrs. Cook Daniels and Miss Martin, who had

opened a hand-made carpet factory at Gunten, on the Lake of Thoune, with the object of giving employment to French and Belgian Interned quartered at that place. They had made a success of the enterprise, and offered to give similar employment to forty or fifty disabled British soldiers. This number of men was accordingly gradually drafted to Gunten from Mürren, where they were continuously employed until their repatriation in December, 1918. The Gunten carpets obtained a high reputation in Switzerland, and found a ready sale in the country. The profits were distributed to the men in salaries varying from frs. 3 to 6 per diem, frs. 1·20 being paid for every 1,000 stitches. These ladies also opened at their own expense a Club House and Canteen, which became a social centre for the men of the whole district. Gunten always struck me as one of the happiest and best organized of the Allied communities in the Bernese Oberland, and reflected great credit on the two ladies who stood sponsors for its welfare.

With the above exception of the carpet workshop, all the classes and workshops at the camps were financed by the "B.L.R.C.O.," sums being advanced to the S.B.Os." for the purpose. At Mürren the management was so successful, that Colonel Neish was able to refund, out of

profits, the greater part of the advances made by the "B.L.R.C.O."

During this period of preliminary organization, the number of Interned was constantly increasing, owing to the arrival of fresh contingents, whilst the health of the men who had been in the country some months was showing signs of marked improvement, thus adding to the sum total of those for whom it was desirable to find work. For the reasons already given, any outlet in the factories or workshops in Switzerland being practically barred, the minds of our officers were turned to our own schools and workshops, as offering the most likely and useful field for the absorption of the surplus energies still available, and it was calculated that by developing these so as to provide training for another 350 men, the needs of the Interned would be fairly well met. Further development at the camps was out of the question, as every inch of roof space had already been utilized, and it was determined, therefore, to look elsewhere for the necessary accommodation. A step in this direction was taken by the formation by Lieut. Wallis of the advanced class of motor engineering at Vevey, on the Lake of Geneva.

So far, the financial arrangements involved had been commensurate with the funds at the disposal of the "B.L.R.C.O.," but as the develop-

ments contemplated went far beyond the resources of that Organization, it was realized that we should have to look farther afield to meet the increased cost of additional technical training.

In framing any scheme of advanced technical training, some knowledge of the probable demands of the home market for skilled labour under after-war conditions was essential, so that, in order to prevent any haphazard growth of the existing Institutes, I addressed myself in the autumn of 1916 to the War Office, with the request that a qualified official might be sent out as my "Technical Adviser" for educational purposes. The matter was taken in hand, and in February, 1917, a specialist in the person of Dr. Garnett was found. Dr. Garnett was peculiarly well fitted for the part, as he had occupied the positions of Secretary to the Technical Education Board, and Adviser to the London County Council. From 1892 to 1904 he had been responsible for the organization of the Polytechnics, and for the work carried out by the London County Council under the Technical Instruction Act. From 1904 to 1915 he had been closely associated with their work as Educational Adviser, and in that capacity had acquired an intimate knowledge of trade requirements.

Dr. Garnett reached Switzerland in April, 1917, and, accompanied by Major H. R. Charley, Royal Irish Rifles, made a tour of inspection of all British and French Institutes. On the conclusion of this inspection he framed a scheme of instruction based on the following principles :—

1. The preservation and development of the training already initiated in the camps.
2. The erection of additional central schools removed from the disturbing influence of camp life.
3. The utilization of the elementary camp classes for the selection of men to attend the central schools.
4. The appointment of Interned officers to take charge of these schools.

To give effect to these recommendations, he proposed the erection of Central Schools at Brienz, Meiringen, and Seebourg (Lucerne), where the necessary accommodation and motive power could be obtained, and, further, the enlargement of the Motor Engineering School at Vevey. Brienz and Meiringen had the advantage of being in the vicinity of Mürren and Interlaken ; Vevey, in that of Château d'Oex ; whilst Seebourg, though farther away, had the unique advantage of affording residential and workshop accommodation in one institution—the Polytechnic Châlets.

The subjects suggested for technical study were :—

1. Joinery and Cabinet-making.
2. Electric Wiring and the Care of Domestic Installations.
3. Light Leather Work.
4. Tailoring.
5. Automobile Engineering.

The teaching staff was to be sent out from England, with the exception of that for No. 5. The expenditure for the above-mentioned scheme, inclusive of the cost of new materials, was estimated at about £4,000 per annum.

The report of Dr. Garnett, transmitted by the War Office to the "B.R.C.S.," London, was approved by the latter, who undertook to promote and finance the undertaking. Interest in the question was also taken by the Ministry of Pensions, to whom the training and education of wounded men was naturally of great importance. The practical application of the scheme was placed in the hands of Lord Sandwich and Major R. N. Mitchell, the former representing the " B.R.C.S.," London, the latter the Ministry of Pensions. Prior to the departure from London of these gentlemen to inspect conditions in Switzerland, several British firms, with whom Major Mitchell had been in consultation, offered

to send out managers and instructors to take charge of one or other of the classes related to their interests, to provide all the raw material required, to remunerate the men, and, further, to guarantee employment on repatriation to all those men giving proof of efficiency whilst under instruction. This guarantee appeared to me the solution of the whole problem, and honour is due to the brain which first originated the idea. Amongst firms taking part in this venture were: Messrs. Brinsmead and Co., pianoforte makers; Messrs. Worral and Co., Birmingham, leather work; and Mr. D. Davis, fancy leather bag manufacturer. The "Auto-Car" Management, under the inspiration of Lieut. Wallis, also offered to bear the whole cost of the Motor Engineering School at Vevey. The above proposals practically ensured the success of the scheme laid down by Dr. Garnett, and gave it a very attractive form in the eyes of the men, whose future was thereby safeguarded.

On the occasion of the visit of Lord Sandwich and Major Mitchell to Switzerland in August, 1917, they had the advantage of the advice and assistance of Dr. Garnett. The chief problem consisted in finding premises where the whole of the proposed technical training might be centralized. Unfortunately, nothing of the

kind was available, and it was accordingly decided, with my approval and that of the Swiss authorities, to establish the Central Schools as proposed by Dr. Garnett, with the exception of Brienz, which was eliminated:—Meiringen, for leather work and tailoring; Seebourg, for pianoforte making and carpentry, electrical work, watch-making, etc.; Vevey, for motor engineering. This would suffice, it was estimated, to exhaust the available number of men seeking training, and, apart from the closure of the elementary motor engineering classes at Mürren and Château d'Oex, leave the Institutes of the regimental type, such as Army Classes, and all the other classes, to continue their work as heretofore at the camps.

On Lord Sandwich's return to London, arrangements were made to give effect to the amended scheme, and, at my request, Major Charley and Lieut. Wallis were nominated by the War Office to take their place on my Staff, the former as Officer in Charge of Technical Training, the latter to resume charge of the Motor Engineering School at Vevey. These officers, further, represented the interests which the "B.R.C.S.," London, had in the scheme.

In September, 1917, the repatriation of some of the British Interned somewhat delayed arrangements, but at last, in October, expert

managers and instructors arrived from England, sent by the firms mentioned, and work was seriously begun by November, 1917.

The men displayed considerable aptitude, and achieved a standard of efficiency which should enable them to keep their situations on their return to England. Remuneration was made to each apprentice in proportion to his work, and was sufficient to give him a personal interest in the output.

The Tailoring Class was conducted by a West-end tailor, late Sergt.-Instructor in the Army. The workshop was located in an annexe of the Hôtel Flora, at Meiringen, and was fitted with four machines electrically driven. Attention was mainly directed to the making of uniforms, the raw materials for which were supplied by the Army Clothing Department. The garments, on completion, were taken over by that Department, ordinary rates being paid for the work, the men receiving a proportionate remuneration.

The Advanced School of Motor Engineering, opened at Vevey by Lieut. Wallis in March, 1917, owed its origin to the success of the elementary motor class founded by that officer at Mürren. It was, further, made possible by the splendid generosity of the well-known firms of Peter Cailler, Kohler and Co., Messrs.

Nestlé and Co., and other Swiss firms in the Jura, surplus machinery, moreover, being given or lent by Messrs. Picard and Pictet, Geneva, and Messrs. Müller and Co., Lausanne, and others.

The expenses of the School, beyond the money gifts made to Lieut. Wallis for that purpose, were met by the "B.L.R.C.O." and the Central P. of W. Committee, until October, 1917. From that date, the expenses were guaranteed by the management of the "Auto-Car," London, who further provided material and machinery, and whose keen interest in the enterprise was of inestimable value.

The training, which included electrical instruction in connection with motor-car work, was of a thoroughly practical nature, and should be of great value to the men later; as also the Metal Work Class, opened in connection with the Vevey School at Château d'Oex, and instructed by a skilled Interned, Chief Petty Officer, Harpe. In this class, various kinds of sheet metal work, welding, and brazing, were taught with great success.

All the Central Schools were well established and in thorough working order when I left Switzerland in May, 1918. Both instructors and men showed great interest in the work, and were ably supervised by Major Charley

and Lieut. Wallis—the latter since promoted to Captain—and I had every reason to be satisfied with the results.

In August, 1918, it was decided to close down the Meiringen and Seebourg Centres, and concentrate the classes at Vevey, in the workshops previously occupied by French Interned. These premises were taken over by the "B.R.C.S.," London, with their machines, tools, fittings, etc., and the transfer was made in September and October. These workshops, known as "B.I.T.S." (British Interned Technical School), were closed on November 25, in anticipation of the repatriation of December 6, 1918, when British Interned in Switzerland left the country.

The following figures have lately reached me, giving in detail the final results achieved under the scheme of technical training:—

Average number of men in training from December, 1917, to December, 1918	172
Total number of men trained ..	443
Average period of training ..	5·35 months.
Total cost of undertaking ..	173,534·87 francs.
Average expenditure per man for 443 men	391·72 francs.

The total of frs. 173,534·87 includes the "B.R.C.S.," London, outlay, the "Auto-Car" outlay, and running expenses of the Motor School

at Vevey, and the expenses of installation of "B.I.T.S." at Vevey (about frs. 33,000). The average cost of training would have been considerably higher had it not been for the valuable assistance rendered by Swiss firms in the equipment of the workshops. The installation of the "B.I.T.S.," for instance, was comparatively inexpensive, owing to the generosity of Messrs. Nestlé and the Anglo-Swiss Milk Company, who put in all the electric light and extra heating free of cost.

The figures given above appear to me somewhat disappointing, as they fall short of our original intention, which was to provide technical instruction for 300 men at a time. That figure was never reached, owing to an impression, held in common by the men, that regular work might militate against their chances of repatriation. Many of them were, therefore, loth to engage themselves for continuous instruction, and though the impression was entirely erroneous, it was none the less difficult of eradication, and rendered the men shy of the schools.

There is no doubt, I believe, that many of the men were, temperamentally, incapable of making the best of their opportunities. This was more especially the case with soldiers of the Regular Army, who were not immediately concerned as to their status in civil life after

the war. I cannot avoid the conclusion that the fault lies in no small degree in a system which makes no provision for the technical instruction of the soldier whilst still serving in the ranks, and in this connection an incident of my cadet days at Sandhurst in 1874–75 comes to mind. We cadets were asked to give our views regarding the training of the soldier, and I hazarded the opinion that he should be taught a trade, in order that he might be fitted to take his place in civil life on discharge. This view met with no encouragement, and I was informed that "financial considerations alone would prevent the realization of any such quixotic ideal."

Under the stress of war, the Ministry of Pensions and the "B.R.C.S.," London, have, in initiating a system of training in Switzerland, Holland, and at home, done much to remedy the faults of the past, and have awakened in the public a sense of their obligation towards the man who is ready to give some of the best years of his life to the service of the country. I have little doubt that it will be found necessary in the future to give every soldier a thorough technical training during the years of his military service, in order that he may without delay take his place in the economic life of the country when the term of his military service expires.

CHAPTER XII

THE CHURCHES IN SWITZERLAND IN RELATION TO THE INTERNED—ARRANGEMENTS MADE FOR THE SPIRITUAL WELFARE OF THE BRITISH INTERNED—ESTIMATES OF THE PSYCHICAL STATE OF THE INTERNED

BEFORE mentioning the arrangements made for the British Interned, I should like to give a short sketch of the steps taken by the Churches in Switzerland, and of Swiss regard for the spiritual welfare of the Allied and German Interned, before the advent of the British.

I take the Roman Catholics first, as most of the Allied Interned were of that persuasion. The "Mission Catholique," founded by Mgr. Bovet to give moral aid to Ps. of W., engaged itself from the very first to provide, under the direction of the "Aumônier en Chef," for the religious requirements of the Roman Catholics. Mgr. Colliard, Bishop of Lausanne, was appointed President of the Mission, and the Abbé Savoy, one of its members, was charged, in collaboration

with both native and Interned priests, and with the assistance of Mgr. Gariel, Professor at the University of Fribourg, with the duty of organizing services in the centres of Internment.

Apart from purely spiritual efforts, the Mission also organized a series of Conferences dealing with the geography, history, industries, and social life of Switzerland.

Early in 1916, the Abbé, now Captain Aumônier Herbert Savoy, was nominated Chaplain-General to the Roman Catholics, Captain Aumônier Spahn to the Protestants, and Dr. M. Erlanger, of the "Rote Mogen David Society," to the Jews. These appointments affected the French, Belgian, and German Interned, the British not having as yet made their appearance in the country.

Each centre of Internment was as far as practicable considered as forming part of local parish organizations, and Interned priests were also appointed to assist the Swiss in their work. The services were held in the parish churches or chapels and oratories improvised for the occasion. Protestants being in a minority, it was not found possible to arrange in an adequate manner for their worship, and Captain Aumônier Spahn could only hold a service for the men once a fortnight, the dissemination of the Interned throughout the various cantons adding to his difficulties. The Jews were ministered

to by Grand Rabbi T. Lewenstein at Zürich, and by Dr. M. W. Rappaport and Rabbi Jules Wolff.

The above arrangements met with little difficulty in their application, as they simply portended an expansion of the existing religious organizations of the country. Language offering no bar to common worship, the addition of accommodation in church, chapel, or synagogue was seldom necessary, and the Interned Frenchman, Belgian or German took his place as a member of the ordinary Swiss congregation. The clergy, too, understood the psychology of their flocks, and were not puzzled by any new manifestations of racial characteristics.

In the case of the British, the conditions were of a different order. Here, at once, the differences of race, religious observances, and language became apparent, and it was evident that I should be thrown on my own resources in providing for the spiritual welfare of our officers and men. Château d'Oex was, I found, well served as to religious needs. The importance of the place as a popular mountain resort for British tourists had led to the maintenance there by the Colonial and Continental Church Society of a resident Church of England Chaplain, the Rev. E. Dudley Lampen, and there was also a resident Swiss Roman Catholic priest,

the Abbé Bullet. Both these gentlemen placed themselves at my disposal for the service of the men. The Rev. A. M. Sutherland, Minister of Trinity Presbyterian Church of Lausanne, likewise offered himself for duty, and in due course established, at his own expense, a chapel at Château d'Oex for the use of his military congregation.

In September, 1916, the C.C.C. Society further sent the Rev. Isaac Hutchinson from England to assist Mr. Lampen, and these gentlemen performed all the duties connected with the Anglican Church at Château d'Oex, Rougemont and Rossinières, until their relief in 1917, when Army Chaplains were appointed by the Chaplain-General for duty in Switzerland.

At Leysin Church of England services were conducted by the resident Chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Tisdale, who also rendered valuable assistance in his relations with the British Catholics, when as yet no English-speaking priest visited the place.

As regards his military flock, the Abbé Bullet was much handicapped by his imperfect knowledge of English, and I found it necessary, therefore, to make other arrangements, and sought for assistance elsewhere. At this juncture I was brought into touch with the Rev. Father D. V. Rowan, Professor of Exegesis

at the University of Fribourg. This town is well known throughout the Catholic world as a seat of learning, and a centre for theological study. For decades past British students have been attracted to its schools, and British professors have long been engaged there at the university and religious institutions. Father Rowan, hearing of my difficulties, at once came forward with the suggestion that he and his British confrères of Fribourg should take it in turn to visit the camps, and thus supplement the work of the local priests. This system was at once adopted and pursued until the winter of 1916-17, when two Fribourg priests, Fathers W. J. Neville and D. Fahey, were allocated duties at Château d'Oex and Mürren as resident Incumbents, a change which gave much satisfaction to them, as they had found the weekly journeys to and from Fribourg extremely trying during the winter months. It was also equally pleasurable to the men to have their spiritual advisers with them at all times.

The arrangements thus inaugurated continued without further adjustment till early in 1917, when, owing to increased numbers of British Interned, it was thought desirable to transfer part of the duties to trained Army Chaplains. The Rev. A. H. Sewell, Army Chaplain 2nd Class, of the Church of England, was appointed

to Château d'Oex in January, 1917; and in the course of that year four additional Army Chaplains,—two Church of England, two Presbyterian,—were sent out from England to the various camps, but it was not till early in 1918 that a Roman Catholic Army Chaplain, Dom Chapman, replaced the Rev. Father Neville at Château d'Oex, on the latter receiving his commission and proceeding to France. Apart from this change, the arrangements for the Roman Catholics remained as before. With the arrival in Switzerland of the Rev. A. H. Sewell, who was entrusted with the duty of co-ordinating spiritual effort, the pastoral work gradually assumed the aspect to which the men were accustomed, thereby greatly adding to the comfort of the camps.

I feel bound, however, to pay a tribute to the Rev. E. Dudley Lampen, the Rev. A. Sutherland, the Rev. D. Matheson, M.A., and the Rev. Fathers Rowan, Neville, and Fahey, who did valiant work, and filled the breach, in the absence of the regular Army Chaplains, whose services were at the time required in more important spheres of labour. That they had a difficult task, and one that can only be appreciated by those who were intimately concerned with the daily life of the camps, goes without saying; but it was met in a hopeful spirit,

and in some cases with considerable success. They were called upon to deal with soldiers who were sick at heart, and suffering from the harsh treatment of a long captivity, and who had been starved in mind and body, as a result of which they were physically and mentally debilitated, suspicious of their fellow-men, and without much sense of proportion. Moreover, the system adopted in the camps in Germany was calculated to weaken the influence of the N.C.O., and with it had come a relaxation of discipline and a levelling down all round.

The psychology of officers and men during the first year of their internment is one very difficult to analyse. I say expressly the first year, because at the end of that period the building-up process, as affecting both the physical and mental conditions of all ranks, had made headway, and new men were being evolved. After that period the problem had changed, fairly normal conditions had been re-established, and the British soldier of the type known to us all had emerged, differing no doubt from, but approximating to, our previous conception of him.

One of our temporary Presbyterian Chaplains, who gave his services entirely to the men during the critical period of the internment,—that

of 1916,—and whose success amongst them was of a high order, has recently written to me of his experiences, which, from the point of view of that difficult question, "the psychology of the men," appear to me of special interest. I cannot do better than refer to his letters on the subject. He writes:—

I am not yet certain how to state the psychology of the life there (in the camp), nor how to justly analyze the why and wherefore of affairs as lived out by the men, but in case it may be a faint glimmer of the thing, may I say one or two things that impressed me.

In the more moral and spiritual region of the men's psychology I found that, given your purpose in being kind to them was on the basis of their humanity, and not to exploit them for your religious or Church ends, but desire to give them a lift in every way, they had a great respect for your sympathy and appreciation, and looked on that which R. L. Stevenson had so much of as evidence of the "true blue piety." Yes, just kind deeds and words, hoping the best for them amid their failings and faults, and doing the best for them in spite of these, and speaking the very best things in spite of these.

The work you gave me to do among the men in the form of religious services I came to feel could not compete in the influence over the men just like the human fellowship; for example, at the farewell one Tommy rose and said: "He was one we could go to in our joys and sorrows, and we found him give us his confidence and friendship, and some of us got it as much when we were bad boys in prison." That reveals a very striking side of the men, their estimate of the moral values of life.

I don't know if I can trouble you with my own spiritual work when I say that I adopted with the men a quite new line for me, which came as a kind of inspiration when I

saw them and their natures. Instead of the usual line in our Church life of putting pressure on the men to become religious, or fall in with our ideas of religion, I represented my work among them in its humblest forms of service as a divine power that was seeking to help them. . . .

How little we ministers reveal the true Master, and how much we camouflage Him, and also how much more religious the men are than we think. At Mürren, when Mr. Hobday was presiding with about 200 men on a Sunday night, I went over the last week of our Lord's life, and suddenly I realized that the events of conflict with unscrupulous enemies looked very like the experiences that the men passed through, and when I said, "Men, I feel as if I was describing the path you trod in Germany," there was a distinct approval. . . . I don't know if you have read the poem by Francis Thompson, called "The Hound of Heaven," well, it describes the pursuing of love, and I found *that* the best way to win the men. You could woo them into doing anything if you cared for them and they knew it.

I discovered also that the men have no real grievance against the Bible, but against the manner of its presentation, and if we would only be more human we would get them interested. I came to the conclusion that the men had more religion in them than I believed. They were so unselfish and considerate of each other, and they loved and idealized their homes and their children, and I also realized that though they had formed some bad habits, say, drinking too much, there was a great deal of it the result of their abnormal condition of mind, and perhaps we lay too much emphasis on these outward sins, and far too little on the inner faults of spirit.

You will be pleased to hear that I never felt disturbed about their swearing, as I seldom heard it. They were a singularly high type, I thought. Low talk I never heard, and I mixed about with them and conversed with them in quite a human way, and I would have come across it if it existed.

In the moral region of the men's psychology I must refer to the subject of swearing, of which a Chaplain at the front says : " He heard enough to keep his hair on end for the rest of his life." This is a strange experience, and I have no doubt he is not exaggerating, but I want to tell you a fact, that neither I nor . . . ever in all our experience heard even the mildest swearing, nor ever had to blush over low talk; and what . . . said is just my own experience that in their intercourse with us, at our own table, where some of them were every week, we found them behave like gentlemen. I am not inclined to explain this by the fact that having our confidences these men were loyal to our friendship. It may be in some measure the reason, but I think it is owing to the fact that those men came out of a terrible experience, an agony of soul, that left its impression ; in fact, they had, in religious language, seen the face of God, and could never be the same again.

When I had it said to me that my influence over the men had been accounted for by my sympathy with socialistic principles, I felt it keenly, for it was neither true of me nor of the men I met. I was very pleased to discover not the slightest inclination among the mass of the men of any revolt against law and order, or discipline, when justly administered, and the only instances of a spirit of revolt were when the discipline revealed, as it did only very rarely, I confess, a desire to hit the actor and not the act, or when it in fact seemed revenge or anger against a particular man. I found, indeed, a very general acquiescence in military orders, when the commands came from officers that the men loved and trusted and who treated them as men, with minds and feelings. That certainly could not be called socialistic principles. The " Beloved Colonel " or Captain in the British Army is a man the men continue to respect, and would follow to the death in the path of duty.

What they (the men) want first of all is the human touch, the assurance of comradeship, and only when human friendship has done its work spiritual talk may follow—

and perhaps not even then unless there is abundance of kindly actions to your credit. The soldier quickly detects if the dominant idea of the Padre is to bring glory to his Church, and is not passion for doing good to all irrespective of their communion. Among soldiers the religion without label is the most respected. It is a distinct advantage to value at a minimum the petty divisions of the ecclesiastical fold.

The psychology of Ps. of W. and of the Interned has also been the special study of certain well-known Swiss doctors, amongst others, Dr. Clement (Fribourg), Dr. A. L. Vischer (Bâle), and Professor Dr. Robert Bing. Their views have been well summarized by Major Edouard Favre in his work, "L'Internement en Suisse des Prisonniers de Guerre, Malades ou Blessés, 1917," and may be briefly stated as follows :—

The fundamental causes acting on Prisoners of War are loss of liberty, the herding together of large numbers, the unknown duration of captivity. They suffer from want of space, the impossibility of isolating themselves from their fellows, the constant expectation in which they live whilst awaiting letters or parcels, and the ever recurrent disappointments connected therewith ; and all these sufferings are accentuated by that important factor, ignorance of the duration of captivity.

At the outset the prisoners seek in febrile

activity a release from all these sufferings, which are aggravated by the memories of horrors lived through, apprehensions regarding the future, and nostalgia for country and relatives. Schools, theatrical performances, and concerts are organized; but gradually the exterior world effaces itself and disappears, and the prisoners live in a shadow land, without colour or life. Sensations are blunted, and give place to apathy, and the events of the war are followed with a mediocre interest.

Such is the *milieu* in which neurasthenia develops, well marked in some, less so in others, but common to all those who have passed six months in captivity behind wire barriers, and reaching a special intensity amongst, roughly speaking, 10 per cent. of the captives. First of all, an exaggerated irritability manifests itself, and the least opposition becomes insupportable. Quarrels are frequent. Then intellectual concentration becomes difficult, and such as renders close attention to a few pages of a book impossible. In such cases the prisoner often deliberately gives up his promenades, and prefers to remain quiescent.

A phenomenon of constant occurrence is the loss of memory, and inability to recall names of persons or of localities, specially those connected with memories anterior to the war.

A Sergt.-Major, for instance, forgot the name of the Colonel who commanded his regiment since 1913, and has been unable to recall it up to the present. Several Interned cannot remember the Christian names of their fathers, mothers, and other near relatives. Another cannot recall the name of his village. Such cases are numerous even amongst those who have been in Switzerland for eighteen months.

As a symptom of a secondary nature, insomnia may be mentioned, though this varies. It may play a rôle in one camp, and not in another.

Some prisoners complain of a loss of sight, and many become extremely suspicious and defiant. All have a marked tendency to regard the ordinary events of their daily life from a distorted point of view. The chief sufferers become silent for three or four days at a time, and are plunged in a sort of torpor. Once this state is established, it becomes in general stationary, and does not diminish as long as the captivity lasts.

The horrible monotony, combined with a succession of petty incidents, tends to render the captives small in spirit and egoistic to a degree. They are no longer capable of any deep feeling, and cannot vibrate to the higher emotions. Suspicion is a marked characteristic. Some of the Interned could only see in

the disinterested services of one of the greatest of Swiss surgeons the desire to experiment on interesting material. They compared themselves to "lapins de laboratoire."

Outside these symptoms, the impression conveyed by many of the Interned is that of personalities profoundly changed. Their relatives find them altered out of recognition. A distinguished British General of forty years' service who visited his compatriots in Switzerland made the remark, "I thought I knew all there was to be known of British officers and men. I must confess I no longer understand my Interned comrades after their experience as 'Ps. of W.' in Germany."

Dr. Clement remarked that under the changed conditions due to internment in Switzerland, psychical troubles would, it was hoped, rapidly cease to exist, but this did not prove to be the case. This optimism was only justified in a certain measure. Symptoms which persist for a long time, and only gradually disappear, are, a mental instability and a want of power of concentration. The British Interned designate this state by the characteristic expression, "difficulty to settle down."

Troubles of memory are extremely frequent even amongst those who have been a long time in Switzerland, and this symptom differentiates

itself from other neurasthenic manifestations by the fact that the sufferer is conscious of his state.

Amongst the intellectuals, an excessive impressionability manifests itself. Despite themselves, they misinterpret a gesture, a play of feature, a tone of voice, a silence even. Sometimes a certain misanthropy has been noticed amongst the Interned, which tends to a desire for that solitude of which they have been so long deprived. One of them explained this by saying: "It is not a dislike of our fellows, but simply the absence of all pleasure, and perhaps a sentiment of discomfort at finding oneself amongst people whose condition is other than our own."

The happy influence exercised by the visits of relatives in bringing back the realities of life to the Interned, and in re-establishing contact with the family, is especially dwelt upon by Swiss medical officers.

CHAPTER XIII

HOMES—VISITS OF RELATIVES—RECREATIONS AND SPORTS OF THE BRITISH INTERNED

AS soon as the first contingent of officers and men were installed at Château d'Oex, there arose the need of some place where the men could meet in their leisure hours instead of finding attraction in the local cafés, and in July, 1916, the Rev. A. Sutherland, in association with a lady interested in the scheme, succeeded in finding suitable quarters where the men might foregather, much to my own and Colonel G. Vansittart's ("S.B.O.") satisfaction. Within a few days, with the assistance of the "World's Alliance of the Y.M.C.A." at Geneva, the "B.L.R.C.O." at Berne, the "Patriotic League" at Lausanne, and private friends, the necessary funds for installation, rent, etc., were provided. In this Home, generally known as the "Foyer," the men were able to write, read newspapers and books, listen to music, join in debates, and smoke. It was, moreover, strictly non-sectarian, and

welcomed Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and Presbyterians alike to join in the comfort and enjoyment offered. In the long run the very popularity of the Home was its undoing, the accommodation being unequal to the strain put upon it. When, therefore, in October, 1916, Sir Starr Jameson, on behalf of the "B.R.C.S.," London, offered to establish a large hut in the camp, to be staffed by a section of V.A.Ds., I gladly accepted the offer. I afterwards learned that we were indebted for the gift to Mr. (now Sir William) Cresswell Gray, of West Hartlepool.

The "Gray" Hut was built during the winter 1916-17 under the supervision of Mr. Middleton Jameson (brother of Sir Starr), who came out to Switzerland expressly for the purpose, and was opened by Lady Rumbold in January, 1917.

In the opening speech by Lady Rumbold there occurred the following words: "Now that this Red Cross Hut has been built, it will replace the Foyer which has been found too small for the needs of the increasing numbers of British Interned at Château d'Oex. I cannot let this occasion pass without paying a tribute to the initiative of Mr. Sutherland and his friends who inaugurated the Foyer and carried it on for the benefit of the men. Now that the Foyer has ceased to exist as such,

Mr. Sutherland is resuming his work at Lausanne. I am convinced that his departure will be greatly regretted by many."

With the closure of the Foyer, and the imminent arrival of Military Chaplains to take up duty at the camps, Mr. Sutherland decided to return to his congregation at Lausanne, carrying with him the warm regard and affection of large numbers of the men.

The "Gray" Hut had a prosperous and useful career; and as canteen, club, and social centre, fulfilled, I would fain believe, the intentions of its generous donor. On the termination of the Internment, in December, 1918, the hut, I understand, was formally presented by the Commandant, Miss Murray, to the "Conseil Communal"—a brass tablet recording the fact that it was handed over by the "B.R.C.S.," London, in accordance with the wishes of the donor. It is to be used by the Swiss for their "Colonie des Vacances."

We were indebted to two English ladies, Miss Annan and Miss Metcalfe, for the establishment of Homes for the men at Rougemont and Rossinières. These ladies provided for the initial outlay, rent, and running expenses, and must have drawn largely on their own financial resources, besides carrying out all executive work connected with the Homes, and, to use

an Eastern hyperbole, they both "fathered and mothered" the men. Miss Annan organized basket-making and fancy work classes, which, *pro tem.*, gave the men occupation, and put money into their pockets. I cannot lay too much stress on the practical and idealistic nature of the work accomplished by these two ladies and their friends.

At the same time the National Council of the "Y.M.C.A.," realizing that the benefits they could provide would be particularly acceptable to British soldiers arriving from Germany, made proposals to me for the establishment of their work at Mürren, and so it came to pass that, when the second contingent of Interned arrived at that mountain resort, in August, 1916, they were greeted by two representatives of the "Y.M.C.A." National Council, in the persons of Mr. Alfred Brauen and Mr. R. I. Whitwell, who had already secured and opened comfortable quarters in the Hôtel Jungfrau for the use of the men. Here the usual refreshments and pastimes were provided, and made available to all.

These gentlemen now made a tour of the camps, and, at my request, turned their attention to Leysin, where the need of a social centre for the men had made itself greatly felt. As a result of this tour and the recommendations made by

Mr. Whitwell, Lord Tavistock very generously offered to build a hut to meet requirements there. The hut was constructed on Mr. Whitwell's designs, and was opened by him in February, 1917. It was well equipped with workshop, billiard table, library, etc., and under the leadership of Mr. J. G. Griffiths, and later of Mr. S. K. Morrison, proved most successful. The influence, disciplinary and moral, of the "Y.M.C.A." work at Leysin was a revelation to me, and was beyond praise.

A lady to whom the British at Leysin owe a debt of gratitude was Mrs. Anderton, of Vevey. All schemes for the welfare of the Interned received her support, but the sick at Leysin were the object of her predilection, and her generosity was unbounded. In recognition of her numerous charities the Holy See conferred on her in April, 1919, the Pontifical Cross, *pro Ecclesia et Pontifice*, which was transmitted to her by Mgr. Maglione, the successor of Mgr. Marchetti at Berne.

Mr. Whitwell subsequently laid plans for work on a more comprehensive scale at Mürren, to give effect to which the National Council of the "Y.M.C.A." erected a splendid hut, the finest of the kind ever seen in Switzerland, and the highest in the world, it being at an altitude of 1,630 metres.

The inauguration ceremony occasioned considerable interest in the Bernese Oberland, and attracted visitors from all parts of the country. Lady Rumbold, in opening the hut, mentioned it as having been erected for the British Interned as a mark of gratitude for their services, and I had the pleasure of thanking the "Y.M.C.A." for their warm-hearted regard for our soldiers.

This "Y.M.C.A." hut, equipped with canteen, cinema, billiard and bagatelle tables, stage, library, "quiet" room, lantern for lectures, etc., was of the most up-to-date kind, and round it revolved the social life of Mürren. An Entertainment Committee was organized, and weekly concerts were held. The theatrical company, composed of officers and men, had a successful career both at Mürren and Interlaken, and drew large houses, in which figured many visitors from Berne and elsewhere. Popular lectures, mock trials, and a General Election, roused great interest; and various classes for fretwork, basket-making, embroidery, and languages, were established. Agriculture was not forgotten, a large piece of land being leased for market gardening. Here scores of men found agreeable occupation, and produce was raised which assisted in supplying the garrison during the winter months.

In January, 1917, Mr. J. W. Hobday was

appointed Secretary of the "Y.M.C.A." in Switzerland, and co-operated with Mr. Whitwell, whose place he filled at a later date, when that gentleman returned to England.

When Interlaken was opened as a British Camp, Mr. Hobday installed a canteen, under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. R. Hughes, in one of the best hotels of the place, to which was adjoined a concert hall, with the finest decorated interior within a large radius. Here, as elsewhere in all "Y.M.C.A." centres, the daily arrival of British and Colonial newspapers kept the men in touch with the outside world, and concerts, sing-songs, lectures, tennis, and billiards, gave them plenty of amusement and recreation.

At Meiringen the "Y.M.C.A." acquired the local "Casino," which was admirably adapted for its purpose, and to it Mr. John Mahler, J.P., and the Rev. D. Dowling devoted much of their time and energies. The winter of 1917-18 was very severe, but the "Y.M.C.A." made a point of keeping their quarters well warmed, thus adding to the comfort and health of the men.

By the courtesy of the "Châlet" authorities, and of Mrs. Mitchell of Seebourg, near Lucerne, a large hall was placed at the service of the men, where, likewise, the "Y.M.C.A." opened a

"Home" under the experienced leadership of Miss Leckie. Thanks to her sympathetic efforts, and the assistance given by Mr. and Mrs. W. Cecil Stronge, the local clergy, and Mrs. Hauser, of the Schweizerhof Hotel, a fine piece of work was performed here.

Previous to the opening of this hall, Mrs. Hauser (English by birth, and the wife of the proprietor of the Schweizerhof Hotel of Lucerne) had, together with her husband, placed at the disposal of British Interned a room in their hotel, which served all the purposes of a club. This lady also acted as visitor to those in hospital, and supplied them with hospital comforts, both on her own behalf and, later, on that of the "B.L.R.C.O.," whose representative she became. Her generosity and untiring service were of great value.

At Couvet, in the Canton of Neuchâtel, our men were indebted to Monsieur Pierre Dubied, a Swiss gentleman, for a fine hall, where the "Y.M.C.A." were installed in the interests of a British working party who were employed in cutting fuel during the summer of 1918. Mme. Dubied and her friends gave unstinted help, and endeared themselves to the men.

In connection with the Motor Classes at Vevey, Colonel A. K. Gillespie founded the "Soldiers' Club," which, later on, was amal-

gamated with the "Y.M.C.A.," who had taken up their quarters in the excellent premises of the Swiss "Y.M.C.A." (Union Chrétienne des Jeunes Gens), on the Boulevard St. Martin, and proved a happy meeting place for social intercourse, concerts, and sports. I may mention that Colonel Gillespie's name has become a household word to the British Interned in Switzerland, owing to his association with the "B.L.R.C.O.," the "Soldiers' Club," and the "Bureau de Secours aux Prisonniers de Guerre."

At Gunten, on the Lake of Thoune, and in connection with the Carpet Workshops, Miss Martin and the late Mrs. Cooke Daniels opened a much appreciated club for the use of the British, French, and Belgian Interned; and Miss Simpkin, of Manor Farm, also established a tea-room at Interlaken, which proved of great service to the men passing to and from Mürren.

I think I have said enough to show how active was the part taken by the "Y.M.C.A." and others in Switzerland, and how beneficent were their labours. The Association appears to me more than well served by its staff, and evidently has the happy faculty of choosing the right man for the right place. Nothing could have been better, for instance, than their choice of Mr. Whitwell and Mr. Hobday,—the former for his large-

heartedness, the latter for his administrative and executive abilities.

In anticipation of the arrival of the first contingent of "Ps. of W." in May, 1916, the wives of several of the officers had found their way to Switzerland, and many others followed as soon as they heard of the arrival of their husbands at Château d'Oex. It struck me as eminently desirable that N.C.Os. and men should also, if feasible, have an opportunity of seeing their wives or members of their families, and I accordingly addressed myself to the War Office, in the hope that arrangements in this sense might be made. My hopes were realized later through the kind initiative of Lord Northcliffe, who had seen the camp at Mürren, and much approved of the idea. Thanks to his lively interest in the question, Lord Northcliffe, by means of *The Times*, collected sufficient funds, and caused steps to be taken for providing the necessary machinery for the care of the women whilst in transit and during their visit to Switzerland.

The arrangements in England were entrusted to Mr. Harold Wilkins, on behalf of the "C.P. of W.C.," and after examination of local conditions by Mr. (now Sir Ellis) Hume-Williams, preparations were made for the despatch of parties of sixteen to twenty women

under the guardianship of "chaperones," for a fortnight's visit at the camps. The Young Women's Christian Association very kindly co-operated with the "C.P. of W.C." by leasing a house in Bedford Square as a hostel where the women were assembled and lodged before departure. On arrival at the camps, they were taken charge of by an Interned officer, by whom all arrangements regarding finance, accommodation, and catering were made.

The first conducted party of women reached Château d'Oex in September, 1916, and their reception by the Swiss was as thoughtful and considerate as in the case of the men themselves. It was a comfort to hear a wife, when sympathized with for having only a fourteen days' visit, reply: "Yes, but I would have come if only for an hour"; and another: "The bairns think that I have gone to fetch their daddy home. I just let them think it."

The arrival of the first party at Mürren was memorable as symbolizing a return to home life, and the men, one and all, turned out to demonstrate in honour of the event. An excited crowd of soldiers, armed with every conceivable instrument of noise, amongst which figured numberless cattle bells requisitioned from the peasants far and near, met the women at the railway station, and escorted them by the light

of torches to their hotels. The visit must have passed like a dream, for Mürren remained *en fête* during the whole fortnight, and our countrywomen had the time of their lives.

From time to time, and not infrequently, the movement to and from Switzerland was interrupted owing to the exigencies of the military situation in France, but in all not less than 600 wives and mothers were privileged to visit their husbands and sons in Switzerland. I have often been asked by people who evidently bore in mind the cost of the operation, whether the visits were a success. The financial records of the "B.R.C.S.," London, for the year ending October, 1917, show that £12,187 were received from the public as donations to the fund for "relatives' visits." The records for 1918 are not yet published, but I am given to understand that the total expenditure will amount approximately to £15,000, thus averaging £25 per visitor, a reasonable figure when war-time conditions are envisaged.

I think we have only to place ourselves in the position of the Interned to realize what such visits must have been to them. To my mind public sentiment did not err in responding so graciously to the special appeal made by Lord Northcliffe for funds to enable him to deal with this question, and in doing so struck a note which

vibrated in sympathy with the hearts and souls of their Interned countrymen in Switzerland. Major Edouard Favre, in his official publication, "L'Internement en Suisse, 1917," gives the Swiss view of these visits. He writes: "We cannot sufficiently insist on the happy influence exercised by the visits of relatives. By this means a living contact with the family, that basis of social life, is re-established."

In the field of sport, the men soon realized that they were in the midst of a sporting community, and football, lawn tennis, boxing, skating, ski-ing, and ice-hockey, were freely indulged in according to the season. Football was especially popular, many matches being played against Swiss and Allied clubs. The former were generally too strong for our men, who were never really fit enough to compete with the best Swiss teams. Boxing also was popular, the Swiss sending some of their best amateurs to take part in the tournaments held at Château d'Oex. The spirit was willing—for our men were ever ready to meet the Swiss—but the flesh was weak, and here again the condition of our men told against them.

As regards ice-hockey, the Canadians showed excellent form, and practically carried everything before them. They appeared to me to be the equal of the best teams the Swiss could

put into the field. In the realm of lawn tennis, some of the best players were handicapped by wounds and other disabilities, and therefore unable to make a mark in the championship games. It is of interest to record, however, that one of the members of the British Legation at Berne (not an Interned officer), who played under the name of "Marcel," won the International Swiss Championship for the third year in succession, and in so doing became entitled to a handsome cup, which bore on the shield the names of Wilding, Decugis, and others who had won the championship in previous years.

Some of our Interned gymnasts took part at a Swiss Military Tournament at Neuchâtel, at which officers and men of the Swiss Army and our Allied comrades competed. Our success was practically limited to the bayonet competition, where we beat all comers in the team matches, and took the first and many other prizes for individual fighting. Our Belgian and French Allies distinguished themselves with foil and sabre, and, as some of them had been fencing professors before the war, they held their own with success against the best Swiss exponents of the art.

As regards subjects theatrical and musical, the men at Château d'Oex formed a Variety Company to give concerts, with the laudable

ambition of building a châlet as an annexe to the Children's Convalescent Home of the region, as a remembrance of the time spent there by British soldiers. How far they were successful in their purpose I have not heard, but I doubt whether they were able to achieve their full intention. Château d'Oex also boasted an amateur theatrical company, recruited from amongst officers and men. As a side show, they were able to count on a foursome of Scottish dancers, whose services were in great request for charity bazaars at Geneva, Montreux, Bâle, Lausanne, etc. They invariably brought down the house, and made themselves the life and soul of any entertainment at which they assisted. Their kilts, sporrans, etc., and bearing, were a never-ending joy to the spectators.

A small orchestra, with brass and stringed instruments, and which played twice a week, was started by Mr. Sutherland at the Foyer. This formed the nucleus of a band afterwards organized by the "S.B.O."

Mürren developed on similar lines. In one respect, however, it was more fortunate than Château d'Oex in having available a larger proportion of musicians, and was able, therefore, to create a very useful band, which added notably to the amenities of its social life. I remember well the astonishment of Colonel Hauser and

his Staff on the occasion of a visit of inspection, when he was entertained by the officers, to find an orchestra of stringed instruments discoursing music during dinner, the procedure followed being identical with that of a Line Regiment at home.

I must not omit to mention that the Mürren foursome of Scottish dancers met with the same success in the Bernese Oberland as that of Château d'Oex in the Cantons of Vaud and Geneva. I recall with special pleasure the furore they created amongst the Bernese public on the occasion of a bazaar for the disposal of the work of the Interned (*vide* Chapter XIV).

Under the heading of "Pastimes," I may mention the publication by the Interned of a paper called the "B.I.M." (British Interned, Mürren). Major Charley started this paper in June, 1917, in connection with a printing press installed at Mürren, with the financial assistance of the "B.L.R.C.O." The management and editorship was undertaken by Lieut. Hubbs, 4th C.M.R., and later by Lieut. Evans. It concerned itself almost entirely with the doings of the Mürren garrison until January, 1918, when it was converted into a magazine for the Interned in general, and was then printed at Vevey, under the supervision of Captain Button, Oxford L.I. The paper appeared

monthly until September, 1918, and bi-monthly up to October 29, 1918—its last issue. Major Charley, writing to me on the subject, states that, compared with the magazine published by French Interned, "it was rather a poor effort." It was, however, of interest to our men, and the effort was not wasted.

Thus were spent the leisure hours of the men in camp life in Switzerland.

CHAPTER XIV

BERNE IMPRESSIONS: ARTISTIC, MUSICAL, AND SOCIAL UNDER WAR CONDITIONS

THE nucleus proper of Berne (the old mediæval town) is situate on a promontory running between two arms of the River Aare, high above it, however, and connected on three sides, by long-spanned bridges, to the newer outlying portions of the town, where are to be found the more modern residential quarters. Along the southern side of the promontory, facing a splendid view of the Bernese Alps in the distance, with the river running below in the immediate foreground, stretch the handsome buildings of the Federal Palace and other Government offices, flanked on either side by the two most modern hotels, the Bellevue Palace and the Bernerhof, where, when not occupying private residences, members of the Diplomatic Corps and Bernese society congregate. Further along the promontory, beyond the Kirchenfeld Bridge, runs one of the most interesting old streets of Berne, a relic of the

Middle Ages, the Rue des Gentilshommes, where many of the houses date back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and several, I believe, even to the fifteenth. This street, in times gone by, was the residential quarter of the old Bernese noblesse, and walking down now under the old arcades, past the Cathedral Square and Terrace, one can still see the dates and emblazoned arms indicating when such and such a house was occupied by the d'Erlachs, the de Wattenwyls, or some other illustrious family. Indeed, many delightful hours can be spent evoking, and peopling with old world silhouettes, the now deserted street, where only stone and beam remain to tell the tale. The very silence, perchance, induces one to note the care evinced in the preservation of every old house, sign, knocker, and quaint bell, evidence of the feeling in which the Bernese hold their departed glories and traditions. The same families still inhabit many of these old houses, but gradually the advantages offered by the more open and modern residential quarters are drawing them slowly, but surely, away.

In matters artistic, especially musical, Berne, though small in comparison, offers many of the advantages of larger capitals. It possesses a fine concert hall and a good theatre, visited, especially during the war, by the best European

as well as Swiss talent. Owing to Switzerland having maintained her neutrality, and being situated geographically at the very centre of the main belligerent countries, and therefore easily accessible from these, she has become, par excellence, the focus of artistic as well as other propaganda from all quarters.

To begin with the most popular form of artistic propaganda, the cinemas presented films of the war in an ever increasing number, the Germans making great use of this means of impressing the public, but sometimes with a result the reverse of that which they had intended. In this connection the *Moewe* film, given all over Switzerland, and portraying the exploits of that pirate ship in sinking numbers of British and Allied vessels, may be mentioned. This was one long succession of views of merchantment and beautiful sailing vessels riding the waves, to be seen the next moment struck, and slowly disappearing beneath the surface. The most revolting part, however, of an altogether revolting film, was the brutality and delight evinced by the crew of the *Moewe*, who continued their sports and dancing in sight of their drowning victims. If the Germans hoped to impress the Swiss by their prowess and merciless inhumanity, or by showing them how easy a thing it was to accomplish the starvation of the Allies, and

especially Great Britain, they utterly failed in their aim, for the public in general, mostly Swiss, was horrified at the sight of the destruction of so much constructive human endeavour, and, above all, at the brutality and disregard evinced towards the unfortunate crews of the doomed or sunken vessels. All over Switzerland the impression conveyed in the main by this film was one of disgust and horror, and comment bore more than all else on the entire absence of anything to indicate so much as the slightest endeavour to save human life. In a word, the Germans could not have chosen a subject more unfavourable to themselves, or done better propaganda work in favour of the Allies, than by exhibiting their *Moewe* film.

When, later, the British *Battle of the Somme* film was given in Berne, in 1916, in the huge Concert Hall of the Casino, the contrast in the spirit of the whole performance was all the more noticeable when the feelings of horror evoked by the *Moewe* performance are recalled to mind. Amongst other films, the remembrance of which stands out, the *Champagne*, the Italian *Izonzo*, the *Tank*, and *England's Effort*, all of which were very fine productions, may be noted.

As regards painting, not many exhibitions took place, owing mainly, presumably, to the

ever increasing difficulties of transport. During 1916, however, the Society of Belgian Artists sent a number of paintings done at the Front; and the French held an exhibition of old engravings and woodcuts. In 1917 the Musée du Luxembourg organized a magnificent collection of about 200 pictures of the "chefs-d'œuvre" of the École de Barbizon, which represented most of the leaders of this great school: Corot, Cézanne, Daubigny, Degas, Monet, Manet, Millet, and many others. This exhibition was opened at the Musée d'Art in Geneva, and created a good deal of stir, and when I left Berne it was just about to be transferred to that place. Another exhibition of interest was that of the works of Franz Hodler, the great Swiss painter, one of whose canvasses fetched in America, it is said, the enormous sum of frs. 500,000.

It was, however, in matters musical that Berne offered the greatest artistic enjoyment. Not only were a series of concerts given by the "Liedertafel" and "Cäcilien Verein" and the Berne "Stadt Orchestra," which, in the winter of 1917, under the conductorship of M. Brun, gave excellent interpretations of the complete nine Symphonies of Beethoven, but we also had a visit from the famous "Orchestre du Conservatoire de Paris," as well as recitals by

Risler, Louis Vierne and others. With reference to the visit of the "Orchestre du Conservatoire de Paris," a rather amusing incident occurred, typical of the spirit of war that had so insidiously, during forty years of military preparation, made its way into the very heart of intellectual and artistic Germany, and even Austria, prostituting these, also, to the ends of "Deutschland über Alles." The French Orchestra had, for some time past, announced their arrival for a certain date, together with their programme, when suddenly, a few days before the event, which was creating a good deal of interest, Weingärtner, with his Philharmonic Orchestra of Vienna, advertised a concert to take place just three days prior to the French performance, and with an almost identical programme. This naturally created excitement, but, judging by the overflowing hall and tremendous enthusiasm displayed at the French concert, left the palm of victory in the hands of the French musicians. In a word, the Germano-Austrian artistic tours in Switzerland were throughout marked by a competitive spirit, and every detail of them was, I understand, arranged under the ægis of high German officials.

Many were the artists of European renown who visited Berne during the war: Mesdames Réjane, Leblanc Maeterlinck, the Russian dancer,

Nijinski, as well as those of the Central Empires, such as Moïssi (who gave "Hamlet"), Nikish, and others.

Of all artistic enjoyments, however, two series of operatic and dramatic performances remain pre-eminent: the Wagnerian series of operas given by a Swiss company, and the series of classic and romantic drama presented by members of the "Comédie Française" of Paris. The vocal rendering of the Wagner operas could scarcely have been excelled. Herr Rudolph Jung, a young Swiss tenor, interpreted in turn Lohengrin, Tannhäuser, Tristan, Hans Sachs, and Parsifal, and not only was his tone one of perfect purity and beauty, but, what is rare, his physique lent itself to the glamour of knightly armour as harmoniously as his interpretation was satisfying mentally and emotionally. Unless I am much mistaken, this young man is destined to become one of the world's greatest singers and artists. He had made his the spirit of knighthood, the spirit evoked by Wagner as opposed to the old German ideal of brute force, a fact which appears to have entirely escaped the German public and critics. It is always of knighthood that Wagner sings, of knights in conflict with material forces; and if he rescued from oblivion the sagas of a dawn of civilization, it was but as the forces against which his

knights hurled themselves in the true spirit of knightly honour and disinterested service. Lohengrin rescues Elsa from false and deadly intrigue; Tannhäuser, his soul from the snares of the Venusberg; and Parsifal, proof against all false allurements, reaches the serene heights of absolute command over himself and life.

Whether aware of it or not, Herr Jung ideally portrayed the knightly spirit, to save which practically the whole world is fighting the Central Empires in this terrible war. It is a trite saying: "No one is a prophet in his own country." Assuredly Wagner was not in the way he intended, as an apostle of World-Brotherhood; and perchance it was for this reason that he was banned and exiled, and forced to spend most of his life away from his native land. As to the life-work of Wagner and the lessons it teaches—fully explained in his writings—Germany appears merely to have extolled his evocations of the past, the nebulous historical sagas, and to have deified these, the better, presumably, to serve her one end and aim of conquest.

Another series of performances, well worthy of remembrance, was that given by members of the "Comédie Française," with Madame Bartet and Messieurs Paul Mounet and Lambert in the title rôles. These artists scored great

successes, Monsieur Lambert being recalled no less than eight times in Berne, and sixteen in Zürich, the very centre of German influence. With regard to these performances, it may be of interest to note a passage in the Third Act of "Les Horaces et Curiaces." In Horace Corneille typifies the Roman ideal, and in Curiace the Gallic. When, in the Third Act, the two friends and brothers-in-law, chosen by their respective States to fight each other to the death, meet in a last farewell interview, Horace brutally says to Curiace: "Rome a besoin de moi—je ne te connais plus." (Rome needs me—I know thee no more.) Curiace answers with emotion: "Et moi—je te connais encore, et c'est cela qui me tue." (And I—I know thee still, and it is that that is killing me.) Could any words better portray the two fundamentally differing attitudes of mind between the Roman and the Gaul, or better illustrate the brutal, if heroic, insentience of the Roman, or the tender and no less heroic (for the Gaul overthrows the Roman) humanity of the Gaul?

It is said that one nation, in the absence of means of contact, to a great extent estimates other nations by what it sees of these on the stage; and doubtless a good deal of truth lies hidden in this saying. To those who understand both the English and French "théâtre

pour rire," the realistic farce provides an evening's desultory laugh, the memory of which dies with the last joke; but to foreign eyes and ears strained, whether consciously or not, to catch traits of character, a farce may give birth to very wrong impressions, and become a positive international danger through false estimates of values. For this reason, chiefly, it was with the keenest pleasure one welcomed the advent in Switzerland of the "Comédie Française," the embodiment of all that is best, highest, and most ideal in France.

During the first days of the war, and the ensuing unprecedented situation, before the horror of it had become uppermost, many were the incidents of awkwardness whispered from ear to ear. Berne being a small capital, certain sets in it meet daily, and the Diplomatic Corps assumes almost the aspect of a "vie de famille." Many of its members were on intimate terms, friends often of years' standing, when the curtain descended on the old order of things on those fateful August days of 1914. One night perchance the French were dining with their Austrian colleagues, or the British with the Germans, and the next morning were to meet as strangers. The situation seemed unreal and impossible, and naturally led to much groping and questionings to find a new "modus vivendi."

In one case a Minister's wife meeting her Austrian colleague, whom the day before she had called by her Christian name, would be at a loss to know what to do, the result culminating on both sides in a half-nod with averted eyes; or an Allied caller at a Swiss house would unavoidably come face to face with a new enemy—an erstwhile familiar friend. Such incidents were at first of daily occurrence. I remember one especially, more humorously long drawn out. An Allied Military Attaché was calling on Swiss friends, when the servant came in, and, with a perplexed look, whispered something in the ear of the hostess. "Be quick," said the latter to her Allied caller, "the servant has said I am in; but if you go through my boudoir here to the left, you will escape an awkward meeting." The caller, following directions, tiptoed through the boudoir to a door leading to a passage, but only to find himself confronted by the Austrian Military Attaché, who, conducted by the no less tactful servant, had also made the same détour. The Allied caller, quickly closing the door with the hope that he had not been recognized, retraced his steps to fly by the usual entrance—only to meet his new enemy again. This time escape was impossible, the Austrian ejaculating: "Well, Colonel, bad luck this time!" at which both laughed and passed on.

In a very short time, however, events in Belgium and France made too deep an impression for any room to be left to the lighter side of things, and such incidents were avoided by more careful forethought and organization. The Swiss and other Neutrals held separate reception days for the Allies and their antagonists, and official receptions at the Palais Fédéral were accurately scheduled as to time, so as to avoid any untoward meetings of the representatives of the belligerent nations. The severance became complete, though it required a little time to accomplish. The Diplomatic Tennis Club, for instance—a favourite resort for tennis in summer and skating in winter—had likewise to modify its rules to meet the changed conditions. As a mode of partition between the Allies and the Central Empires the even dates were allotted to one side, the uneven to the other. How it came about no one exactly knew, but the Central Empires secured the uneven, thus gaining the advantage of seven extra days in the year, as the least calculating found out in the course of time. Gradually the new "modus vivendi" became established; and, indeed, the news reaching Berne of the urgent demands from many quarters for help developing the instinctive desire to be of some service in the struggle at hand, more and more restricted the purely social functions.

When the idea of the "B.L.R.C.O." was suggested by Lady Grant Duff, she, together with Mme. Pageot, organized a "Thé-Tombola," the first social function started in German Switzerland for charitable purposes in the Allied cause. The success of this so far exceeded all calculations, that arrangements for tea made for about 300 visitors were called upon to provide for more than double that number, the net result in funds amounting to the gratifying total of frs. 22,000 towards French and British Red Cross work. Later, again, when the prisoners of war had arrived and been interned some little time in Switzerland, and had accumulated a good deal of work to be disposed of, a series of bazaars was held in the large towns by the French and Swiss. In these the British took part, their stall of carpets, arranged by Miss Martin, making a handsome and very successful exhibit amongst others, such as book-binding, leather work, etc. It was a pleasure, too, to see some, however few, lovely wooden box designs, one with figures and animals in high relief. Wood-carving was a talent I had no idea our men possessed, but which these samples conclusively proved they did.

It was at the bazaar of this series held in Berne that the Scottish dancers carried off the palm of attraction. The long hall set aside

for the buffet had a stage at one end, and long before the afternoon performance was to take place every tea-table was occupied. This in itself meant 200 spectators, but by the time the dancing began, every available inch of room was crammed, tremendous cheering greeting the Scotsmen. The same thing occurred in the evening, when my wife, who was in charge of the buffet arrangements, and had fortunately had the doors closed until eight o'clock so as to allow holders of reserved tables to reach their seats, was warned that some 400 people were massed outside. On the doors being opened, the effect was like that of a river breaking a dam and flooding the entire hall. The success of our Scotsmen was phenomenal, and their services, always attended with the same results, were never dispensed with at any bazaar later on.

Another scheme put in motion for the disposal of Allied Interned work was that afterwards called the "Suisse-Amérique." This consisted in disposing of some of the work in America, and received its practical application through Mme. Grouitch, wife of the Serbian Minister to Switzerland, and American by birth. Mme. Grouitch had just returned from the United States, and suggested organizing a Pavilion of Allied Interned "Ps. of W." work at the great

war bazaars taking place yearly in some of the large towns in the States, such as New York, Washington, St. Louis, Chicago, and Philadelphia. A Committee was at once formed called the "Suisse-Amérique," under the ægis of Mme. Schulthess, wife of the President of the Swiss Confederation, as President. Mrs. Stovall, wife of the American Minister to Switzerland, and Mme. de Sprecher, wife of the Swiss Chief of Staff. Some 300,000 and more articles were despatched to the States, Mme. Grouitch graciously volunteering to return thither to act as delegate of the Committee. If, fortunately for the Allied cause, America shortly after entered the war, it was not so fortunate for the scheme in hand, as only one of these bazaars—that in New York—was held during the winter of 1917, when, no doubt rightly, the scheme, now that America had entered the struggle, was stopped by the U.S. Government. At this one bazaar about $600,000 were taken in entry fees alone, so that it was a blow to hear of the cancelling of the others. Owing, however, to the splendid energy and spirit of Mme. Grouitch, who at once took other measures for the disposal of the consignments, no loss occurred to the venture. To meet the initial outlay required by the despatch of the Interned work to America, my wife was

asked to organize another "Thé-Tombola" at Berne, and was much touched by the support and sympathy shown by the Allies and Neutrals, more especially by Russians who had been hard hit by the revolution in their country. This "Thé-Tombola" made a clear profit of frs. 8,000.

These activities, together with the daily office routine, occupied much of our time, so that little was left for other social distractions, which had diminished proportionately. Small dinners, teas, soirées and bridge, with an occasional amateur dramatic performance for some war need or other, filled to overflowing the remainder. One eventful evening, however, I cannot pass without mention—that of the arrival of General Leman, the heroic defender of Liége, who, it will be remembered, when unable to offer further resistance to the Germans, had had the fortress mined, and ordered it to be blown up, himself remaining in it, preferring death to surrender. That he was still alive when rescued from the débris is one of the marvels of the war. What the Allies owe General Leman for that heroic resistance to the first German onrush will probably be only generally known and valued when history has made the facts clear, but on the night of his arrival, the sight of his small and compact figure, very like Lord Roberts

in build, was well-nigh overwhelming. The enthusiasm of his reception at the station and *en route* to the Hôtel Bernerhof could be gauged by the echoes of the cheers reaching us in the Central Hall, where we had congregated. Many Germans, mostly members of the Diplomatic Corps, were present at the time, and were sitting at various tables over after-dinner coffee, when the General appeared, surrounded by compatriots: members of his own and Allied Legations. Every one rose as at some magic signal —even all the Germans, men and women alike, their faces reflecting curiosity and wonder, quite different from their usual supercilious expression. Deep was the general emotion. Of all present, however, General Leman was probably the only one unaware of the depth of the feeling he evoked.

Especially agreeable and sympathetic is the remembrance of the charming hospitality of Swiss friends, whose salons have an old world atmosphere peculiarly their own. One is tempted to believe that, owing to their forming more or less a society, removed from the excitements and stress of larger capitals, they have been able to maintain an atmosphere of quiet conducive to thought and sentiment regarding the more abstract interests of life.

Looking back from this distance, the first

months of the Great War appear to have passed in a strange semi-hypnotic state of mind, made up of surprise, anxiety, and horror. Mentally unprepared for the inhuman catastrophe—a "lèse-humanité" in its truest sense—one felt as must a tree at blows levelling its growth and blossom to the ground. At the same time, a deep sense of indignation little by little restored the mental balance, which was soon to enable one to return to a sense of the immediate and growing necessities of the situation, and endeavour to meet these as they arose; and one cannot but feel a great thankfulness at having been privileged to find work in the many war activities in Switzerland, herein detailed, towards the relief of our suffering brotherhood.

As I mentioned at the opening of these chapters, I little thought when taking up our residence in Berne that it would be for four consecutive years. Yet, looking back, these long years appear to have passed as a flash, so great was the anxiety, so full the daily task, so steady the conviction of an ultimate successful issue to the horrible drama of the World War.

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