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FOR OUR STAMP COLLECTORS.
THE GREAT NEW SEASON IN THE WORLD OF STAMPS.

The Philatelic Auction Season in London and New York witnessed new records for both Bond Street and 57th Street. London topped for the first time in history the two hundred thousand pound mark, reaching in fact over £230,000 for Auction sales alone and just over £100,000 for Private Treaty transactions. In 57th Street also figures were much higher than in any previous year, helped in no small manner by the grand total of nearly £70,000 for the " F. D. Roosevelt " collection alone.

The sensational find of a block of 48 2d. blue stamps of Great Britain, issued in 1840, was the most interesting Private Treaty sale of the Season. The find was made by the secretary of the Duke of Buccleuch at Dalkeith Palace, the Scottish Ducal Seat, and was sold to an English collector last June for six thousand guineas. The sale of Doctor Martin Button's collection of New Zealand was conducted on the long distance telephone, an Australian collector completing the purchase for £3,000.

Political difficulties and strikes both in Britain and the United States have caused some nervousness in Wall Street and on the London Stock Markets and it is clear that any large extension of recent falls will affect stamp prices; at the moment there is no sign of weakness or an easing of prices — in fact if this existed it has been offset by the re-entry of overseas purchasers who, for obvious reasons, were unable to compete during the war.

Whilst American stamp purchases from Britain have been on a smaller scale, South Africa has figured prominently as a bidder and buyer in the London sales. Barter facilities have assisted Continental dealers to replenish stocks. In order to assist the export drive and enable distant collectors to take part in the more important auctions, specially printed light-weight catalogues are sent by air mail to all parts of the World.

The hoped-for removal of currency barriers will have the two-fold effect of releasing material for the London market and enabling European philatelists to buy more easily in Britain and America.

The New Season in Bond Street bids fair to rival or perhaps even exceed last season in interest and value. The programme of sales, commencing September 16th, is exceptionally full and auctions of important collections have been scheduled for dates well into the New Year.

Among the many important properties are the World-famous collections of New Zealand and Norway, formed by the late Mr. Benjamin Goodfellow, a Manchester lawyer who was Vice-President of the Royal Philatelic Society, London. These and " Big Ben's " other philatelic properties, including the collection of re-entries (a second impression of part of the stamp) of all countries, and his many smaller collections of British and Empire and other countries, (some 200 volumes in all) wil be offered early in the New Year.

On October 21st a specialised collection of Rhodesia, offered by order of the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Winchilsea and Nottingham, will be auctioned with a specialised collection of the famous triangular stamps of the Cape of Good Hope. There are many rarities in these collections and keen competition is expected from South African philatelists.

In New York the auction programme includes a number of important properties. There are probably more on hand than has ever before been known in the American auction field — included are the Albright and Admiral Randall specialised U.S.A., some outstanding British Colonials, notably Grenada and Jamaica, some fine general collections and an old-time dealer's stock. The late President Roosevelt's duplicates and a large quantity of correspondence addressed to him from all parts of the World will be auctioned in December. *H. R. HARMER.*

RETURN TO SWITZERLAND.

I have got back to Switzerland. After seven years of war and its resultant peace, I found myself yesterday in the Buffet at Vallorbe, a tray of unsurpassable coffee and rolls before me. I was on the brink of the Promised Land, and this the high peak of expectation!

This morning, I awoke to the grey-green waters of Lake Leman. A boat was moving slowly across its untroubled surface. As I looked, the sun caught the sail, and lit the cold peaks, above, of the half-forgotten Dents du Midi. The mind accepts guardedly these radiant reminders of spring, as if afraid of too swift a descent of life upon the long-seared land.

The war has changed England with a completeness it is impossible to realise while within its shores; and London is the main index of this change. Not only destruction to buildings, and a general shabbiness of condition strike the eye, but the invasion of its streets by a new type of Londoner. 'The people' walk here, where once moved persons of distinction and grace, and, ignorant of Britain's ancient tradition and fame, seek to establish themselves on immediate, practical certainties.

I have got back to Switzerland, after seven dusty years, and find its calm and prosperity, at times, almost unbearable. The Swiss have known travail and strife, but, withal, they possess a peace which seems oddly at variance with one's sense of actuality. There is some stronger kinship of feeling with the haggard people of France than with the undespoiled inhabitants of this land, to which we now turn in our need.

So I thought. Yet when I had climbed the nine hundred feet odd that separated me from the village of Chernex, where once I was known, I realised what the profound stress of war may do to knit together unlike human beings.

Switzerland offers much to the tired peoples of the world, and it is to her, more than to any other country, that we turn, in our confused search for international security. War, and its attendant emotions, corrupt and disintegrate, and lead away from, rather than towards, the fair ends of peace. The Swiss, who by their own efforts and good fortune, by the determined action of belligerent nations, have managed to preserve their liberties intact, hold the key to a political integrity we cannot know, and in some sense are guardian to the security of others. This fact, and not merely the many allurements offered to tourist and mountaineer, gives Switzerland a unique position in the world. We have come back to her out of the dark passage of many indeterminate years, and greet her with profound gratitude of heart. *E.F.I.*