

Alors !

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recent visit. We ran for several miles on the banks of the Rhine, and just across the river lay Germany, with Frankfurt and Munich not very far away. No person, unless he had a poisoned mind, believes that a hundred yards of water, however deep, can divide human beings into scoundrels on the one side and angels on the other, all speaking the same language and embracing the same religion. But that is what is done by some unseen power all the world over, and in the name of that intangible and suicidal conception of national sovereignty.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union, struggling to recover ground lost through the war, held its third conference since the end of World War II at St. Moritz, in Switzerland. The British delegation on this occasion was a strong one; there were a dozen of us from the Lords and Commons, including Major Milner (Deputy Speaker), Mr. Clement Davies, Lord Marley, Sir Gilbert Campion, Clerk of the House of Commons, and Sir Cecil Carr, Legal Adviser to the Speaker.

There were about a hundred delegates, representing twenty Parliaments, three more countries than were at the Easter 1946 Conference in Copenhagen. Senator Barkley, the Leader of the Democratic majority in Congress, flew from America to attend, and Czechoslovakia and Hungary made their first appearance since the war. With the Balkan countries already in the fold, needless to say there were some Communists present. They were not slow in trying to convince us that they had discovered a new interpretation of Parliamentary democracy. They were certain in their own minds that any who disagreed with them must be Fascists; metaphorically, to them, there are no colours except black and white! Now that Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, admittedly Soviet satellites, have rejoined, it will be interesting to watch the next step in the process. What constitutes a Parliament is more than ever a puzzle to the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

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Happily, there was an air of optimism throughout our deliberations, and reports of the Paris Peace Conference provided the opportunity for some plain speaking on reparations, reconstruction, migration of population, prisoners of war, and the desirability of greater cohesion and speed in determining Germany's economic future among the Allied Powers. Sitting, as we were, at an altitude of 7,000 ft., "on top of the world" as Count Carton de Wiart, the President, put it, we all felt an obvious desire that statesmen should hasten to fashion a peace this time that will last if man as a species is not to disappear from the face of the earth. Finally, Senator Barkley meant all he said in his farewell speech when he quoted Abraham Lincoln to the effect that 'I deny the right of any man to govern me without my consent.'

ALORS !

It's aergerlich, I understand,
To meet, but rain, in Switzerland;
Some, à la recherche du soleil,
Leave these shores, in grosser Eil,
Because, dark clouds, what for or why,
Verschleiern toujours the blue sky
Und, à la longue, the steady rain,
Obscures the view and auch the brain.

Au moins, versteckt the sun, en Suisse,
Sich pas toujours, behind la coulisse,
Blue sky, as well, is not a myth,
Like here, wo man ihn never sieht
And many, has that Champagne-air,
Revived, made glücklich over there,
England would be, with less Regen,
Really heaven, hier auf Erden.

H.E.

HOME SPUN YARN.

Guter Kopf.— Ein Landmann kommt mit seinem Sohne nach Bern, um ihn studieren zu lassen, und verfügte sich mit ihm zum Herrn Rektor, um ihn einschreiben zu lassen. Der Rektor fragte den Vater nach den Fähigkeiten seines Sohnes mit den Worten, ob er auch eine guten Kopf habe.— "O ja," erwiderte der Alte, "er isch nadisch schon zweu mol ufe Gring vo der Brügi abegheit u es het ihn nüt tah, gäll Sämel!"