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OUTSTANDING INTERNATIONAL QUESTIONS

THE SAAR

A BURNING QUESTION
IN EUROPE

An Account of the Impressions of
two Foreigners

With three maps, two graphs and
thirty-one illustrations

(Translated from the French)

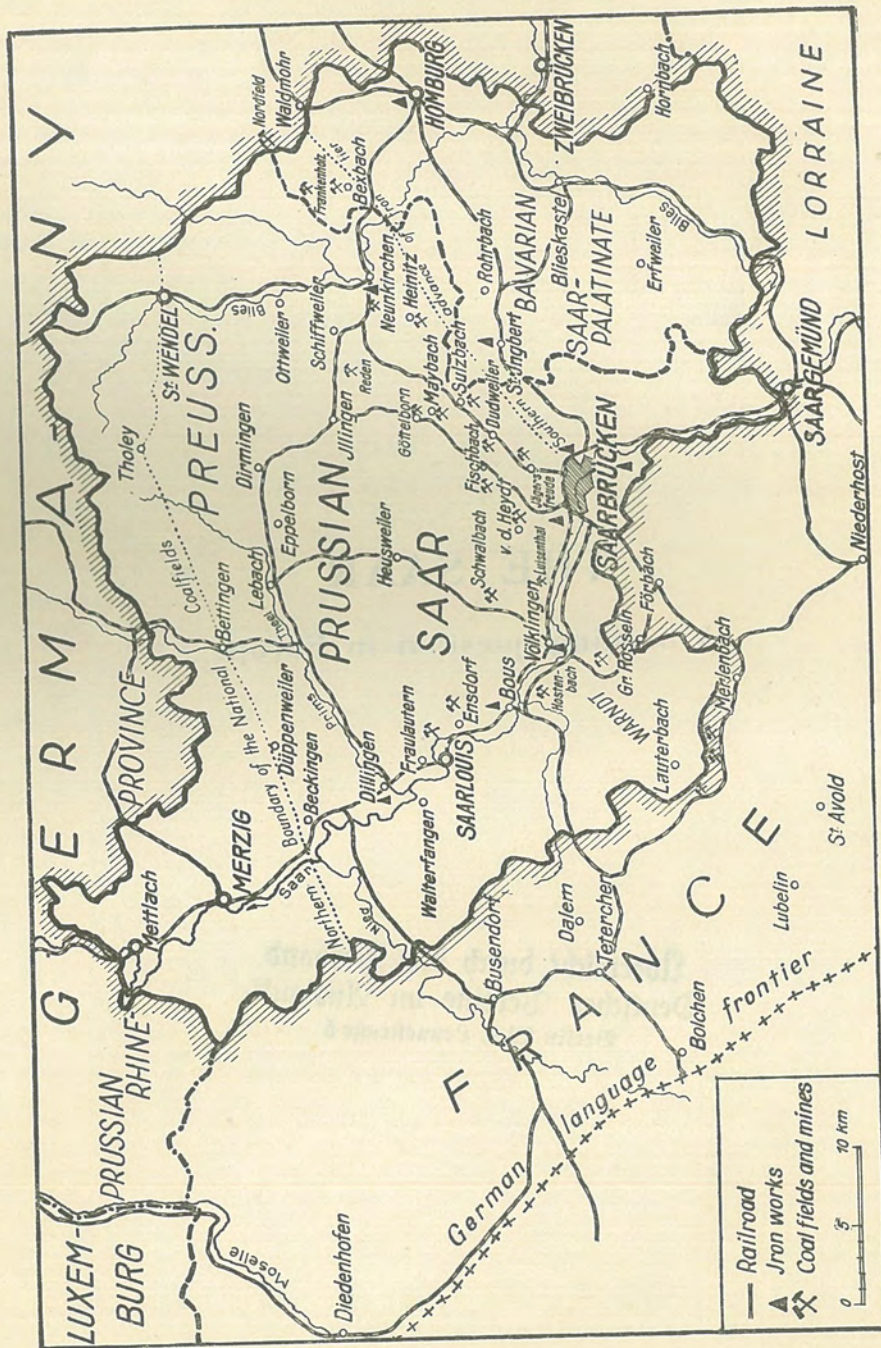
GENEVA
1934



THE SAAR

A burning question in Europe

**Aberreicht durch den Verband
Deutscher Vereine im Ausland.
Berlin W 9, Lennestraße 5**



The Saar Territory, as formed by the Treaty of Versailles.

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At the same time as this translation of the French original appear the translations in the most well-known languages.

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TO THE READER

The first of May, 1934! The great square of the Lustgarten in Berlin at nine o'clock in the morning was a vast sea of human heads. The crowd, made up mostly of young men, filled not only the square itself but thronged forward at the entrances of abutting streets. The entire Lustgarten was overflowing with the masses gathered to hear the speech that Dr. Goebbels, minister of propaganda, was to make to Germany's youth on the new regime.

And so Goebbels spoke and discussed the Fatherland. He explained the lofty significance of the word, and developed his theme of patriotism and the duties that it bears. His words were received with an awed silence. Their power seemed to find echo in the very depths of the hearts of his young auditors.

Beside us stood a young laborer. Tall, young, strong, he wore with pride the outfit characteristic of the Saar miner. His torch hung at his belt. He was listening with wrapt attention as were the others. And his whole attitude expressed the profoundest emotion. It seemed to us at times that he heaved a great sigh, and when Goebbels spoke of what the German Fatherland represents to each man, when he underlined the august meaning of an idea for which millions are ready to lay down their lives, then we saw two tears roll slowly down the cheeks of the rough giant.

Why those tears that stirred us so profoundly? Why?

Immediately we thought of the Saar, that German land which the Treaty of Versailles entrusted for fifteen years to the administration of the League of Nations. This man stood before us as a living symbol of that land. His tears told what his voice could not express: the grievous burden of not feeling free.

But where lies the truth about the Saar question which today arouses the interest of the entire world? If the eyes of this sturdy miner are filled with tears, his country's population bears in its heart a constant sorrow.

We have known by hearsay the love of the Saarlander for his native Germany, and there is no doubt about it. On the other hand what are we to think of the tendencious news from the opposition asserting that numberless Saarlanders want the sovereignty of France or at least the maintenance of the status quo? What truth is there in these reports?

The transition period, established by the Treaty of Versailles is about to end. In a few weeks the Saarlander will be called upon to voice his opinion. And so we decided that in order to sound the

real situation, we must study the Saar question at home, enter into immediate contact with the population, and feel its pulse. And that is what we have done, questioning young and old, workman and factory-owner, townsman and farmer.

The concrete results of our inquest we have consigned to the following pages. We have held strictly to facts, adding as only commentary the logical conclusions they comport.

A population of 800,000 has allowed itself to be governed for fifteen years by an administration not of its own choosing. Now, on the eve of the proclamation that establishes this population's right to dispose freely of itself, two great nations claim the land as an integral part each of her own territory, while all Europe anxiously awaits the outcome of a debate in which so many conflicting elements taken part. A glance over the historic, the geographic and the economic situation in the Saar has, we believe sincerely, put us in a position to lay before the reader the problem objectively and in a true light. We hope to be able to prove at the same time that a fair solution, in other words a natural solution, presents itself to the nations as a duty, not only from the viewpoint of justice, but also for the sake of peace and calm in Europe.

It is indeed beyond doubt that the maintenance of the status quo in the Saar is equivalent to the maintenance of the status quo of Franco-German tension. Furthermore it stands to reason that the transfer to France of the Saar, be it only in part, would be, as an eminent statesman expressed it, the creation of a new Alsace-Lorraine, with all the dangerous consequences.

Let the reader judge whether we have carried out the project that we have undertaken.

Geneva, November, 1934.

I.

THE SAAR TERRITORY

This term does not apply to a well-defined entity, geographic, political, or historic. The Saar Territory is, by the same lights as is the Polish Corridor, an artificial creation of the Treaty of Versailles which established the boundaries in in Article 48.

To the south and to the south-west this territory is bounded by the France of before 1870. To the north-west and to the north the frontier cuts through the former district of Merzig, runs along the souther extremety of the Birkenfeld region, cuts through the former district of St. Wendel, and, taking a southerly direction, enters the Palatinate, of which it claims the county of St. Ingbert and a large part of the canton of Homburg as well as a piece of the county of Zweibruecken.

Here in particular the creation of the Territory is exposed as an arbitrary act : a part of the Saar basin was simply cut off, and a region of the first economic and strategic importance was welded into a political unity. Within its present limits the Saar Territory does therefore not correspond to the Saar district of before the War, but exceeds it by the addition, to north and south-east, of German parts of the agricultural hinterland.

The limits of the Territory were thus established not only for economic advantages but obviously also for strategic purposes. Evidence of this lies in the extension of the frontier to the valley juncture of Homburg, entrance to the downs of Kaiserlautern, to Shaumbourg, vantage point of the entire region, and to Mettlach, with its transverse barrier watered by the Saar. Of the nine railroad lines that enter Germany from eastern France, six run through the Saar. Saarbruecken, the capital, controls the railroad intersections from Paris to Mainz and from Strassburg to Cologne.

This small area, hardly exceeding 2,000 square kilometers, hilly, wooded, not without a certain natural beauty, comprises with its 800,000 inhabitants of German blood and language, one of the most densely populated regions of Europe. From this land, whose wealth is not at first apparent, 13,000,000 tons of hard coal are mined annually. In an average year her mines and smelting plants produce some 2,000,000 tons of steel. The immense reserves of soft coal supply a tremendous metal-

industry, and numerous smaller industries for the production of coke, bricks, porcelain and countless other products. These form the foundation on which the Saar depends for its livelihood, for the 33,000 farmers can raise barely enough to sustain the population. Some thirty percent of the area is wooded.

The industries of the Saar owe their development to the wisdom and forethought of a former overlord, Prince William-Henry of Nassau-Saarbruecken. Toward the middle of the eighteenth century he introduced coal in his industries at a time when charcoal was becoming oldfashioned. And so it happens that to-day the Saar possesses in the Warndt one of Germany's most extensive forest reserves.

The exploitation by ordinary means of the coal-strata is possible only in the surface strata, that is, from Carling to Frankenholz running south-west, north-east across the Saar. The rest of this tortuous vein is difficult to exploit, locked up as it is in the bowels of the earth. The irregularity of the layers and the danger of delving in crumbling earth make approach by ordinary means impossible. The coal is in general readily combustible containing a high percentage of volatile matter, and produces excellent mineral coke which rivals that of Westfalia.

Before the industrialisation of the coal basin of the Saar, from Saarbruecken to Neunkirchen was almost a desert. The appearance of the country is characteristic of its type. Through the great beech forest that stretches over twenty kilometers without a break, in and out of the cities, three industrial routes go from village to village following the valleys of the Sulzbach, the Fischbach and the Scheidt. Along the roadside workmen's colonies stand out against the forest which gave them their building material. The noise of the day's work alternates harmoniously with the restful quiet of evening.

The reserves of coal in this basin have been estimated at approximately 9,400,000,000 tons. But the Saar possesses in its underground treasury not only coal but also sandstone, limestone and clay as well as granite in the north, all of which supply various building industries.

The density of the population — 431 inhabitants per square kilometer — exceeds that of all other countries of Europe, including Belgium (266) and England (264). Compared to that of other parts of Germany, it even exceeds by almost twenty-three per cent that of industrial Saxony (347).

The entire Saar Territory is composed of one urban district (Saarbruecken), and seven rural districts, of which five belong to Prussia (Saarbrueckenland, Saarlouis, Merzig, Ottweiler, St. Wendel), and two to Bavaria (St. Ingbert and Homburg). The

only big city, Saarbruecken, has 132,000 inhabitants, but this total gives no exact idea of the importance of this urban centre whose economic influence practically extends over an area of fifty square kilometers with a further radius of about ten kilometers with a population of 300,000. Distinctly lesser in importance is the city of Neunkirchen, of 42,000 souls. Other small cities are St. Ingbert (23,000), Saarlouis (17,000), Homburg (12,000), Merzig (11,000), St. Wendel (9,000), Ottweiler (7,000) and Blieskastel (3,000). A characteristic of the industrial region of the Saar is the existence of rural communities of 20 to 25,000 inhabitants, grown up out of a steady agglomeration, sometimes inhabited by miners (Dudweiler, Sulzbach, Puettlingen) or by steel-workers (Voelklingen). These communities have not, however, the characteristics of cities.

Seen as a whole, the configuration of the Territory presents a hilly appearance, divided by the valley of the Saar which is fed by numerous tributaries. Of these the most important are the Blies, the Nied and the Prims, which in turn divide the country into valleys and hills. The greatest heights are to the north, at the source of the Blies and of the Nahe. The highest peak among them is at Schaumburg near Tholey (569).

Between Mettlach and Saargau where the forest advances stealthily down to the edge of the river are the most beautiful landscapes of the Saar. Unbridled streams have cut deep into the mountains and bring vividly to mind the romantic panoramas of the Moselle and the Nahe. In striking contrast with this region stands the neighboring Saargau, which stretches north and south along the river all the way to Bistbach, northern extremity of the Warndt. A high plateau stepping down to the river in geometrical terraces toward the east and piling up against the horizon toward the west. Compared to the Ruhr the Saar Territory has the advantage that its forests and valleys, its hills and its industrial centres form an harmonious whole.

The Saar River which used to form the natural transport route of the region has, to a certain extent, lost its importance as a waterway through the recent construction of a system of transverse routes running east and west. Certain disadvantages have resulted for the industrial and mining districts beside the river and also for the waterway transports to Germany. A remedy has been projected in the canalisation of the Saar and of the Moselle, as well as a binding canal to the Rhine. These projects will, no doubt, be carried out as soon as the Territory has been returned to Germany.

During the post-War period the population increased by 150,000 persons, that is nearly 25% of the 1919 figure, at the

time of the separation from the Reich. An immigration movement accounts in part for this increase.

According to the report of the censor of 1927, the social classification of the Saar population names, in a total of 770,000 inhabitants, 305,000 workers, both manual and intellectual, 37,000 capitalists and pensioners, etc., and besides some 428,000 persons living at the expense of the two first-named categories. This would indicate that 39.7 % of the Saar population carries on a trade or a profession.

Out of the 305,000 about 175,000, or 57.2 % are laborers. This figure exceeds the mean for the Reich, which is only 45 %. Of the Saar laborers only 59,000 are women, that is 19.2 %, whereas in the Reich the percentage is 35.9 %. This anomaly is attributable to the predominance of industry in a region where agriculture plays a relatively much less important role than in the other parts of the Reich.

The social structure manifests the same characteristics. Out of 305,000 workmen 185,000 are occupied in industry and craftsmanship, 53,000 in trade, 33,000 in agriculture and forestry, and 34,000 in the administration and in free professions and trades. Grouping the earners and their dependents, one finds that 58.9 % of the Saar population lives from industry and craftsmanship, 15.5 % from trade and shipping, 8.5 % from agriculture and forestry.

The miners form a special category. From an early date they have developed an organization, ever since the overlords took the coal-fields into their possession between 1751 and 1755. And from 1840 to 1850 when the exploitation of the mines progressed rapidly, it attracted many peasants' sons from the forest lands and the eastern Palatinate. Thus the miner became a workman with a homestead upon the bit of land that was handed down from father to son and which could be coaxed to produce his daily bread beside his working wage. He doesn't know the sordid atmosphere of workmen's tenements, the squalor of city slums, but takes pride and pleasure in his own home which he tends to fill with a very large family. And his children grow up in quiet, wholesome surroundings and learn to love their rough and homely hearth for which they are ready to work and fight all their lives.

These conditions have produced a generation untouched by the doctrines of international socialism. Its attachment to the land of its fathers and to their secular traditions has built up in this country a firm pillar of the German spirit.

This, then, is the home of 46,000 miners at work and 26,500 pensioned, nearly 9,000 out of work, and between four and five thousand miners who live in the German economic surround-

ings of the Saar but go to work in Lorraine : in all some 86,000 souls without counting their families. They constitute a stout army ready to defend an idea : that the Saar be returned to Germany.

The farmers as such form a class whose numbers have weakened in the course of the last century as a result of the industrialisation of the Saar Basin. The young men of the country of ten left the paternal farm lured by the tempting wages in mine and factory. And so they became workmen from one generation to the next. Nevertheless all the industrial communities show traces of an old peasant civilisation both in the farm buildings and in the architecture of the workers' houses.

There are still agrarian districts, within the confines of the industrial region, where the peasants have remained faithful to the forms and customs of their ancestors whose life conforms to the requirements of the land and of the village. This is true even in the Saargau to the west of the Saarlouis-Merzig line and to the north of the forest region of the Warndt and all the way to the frontier of Lorraine

Although political and economic questions play a preponderant role in the Saar Territory at the present moment, the question of this people's culture is not to be overlooked. Its unmistakably German character is very much in evidence particularly in this region. Ever since the Franks took possession of the country in the fifth century and down to the present day, German has always and without exception been the people's tongue. Never has the Saarman spoken in another language, nor has he prayed other than in German. The short periods of foreign domination effected no change.

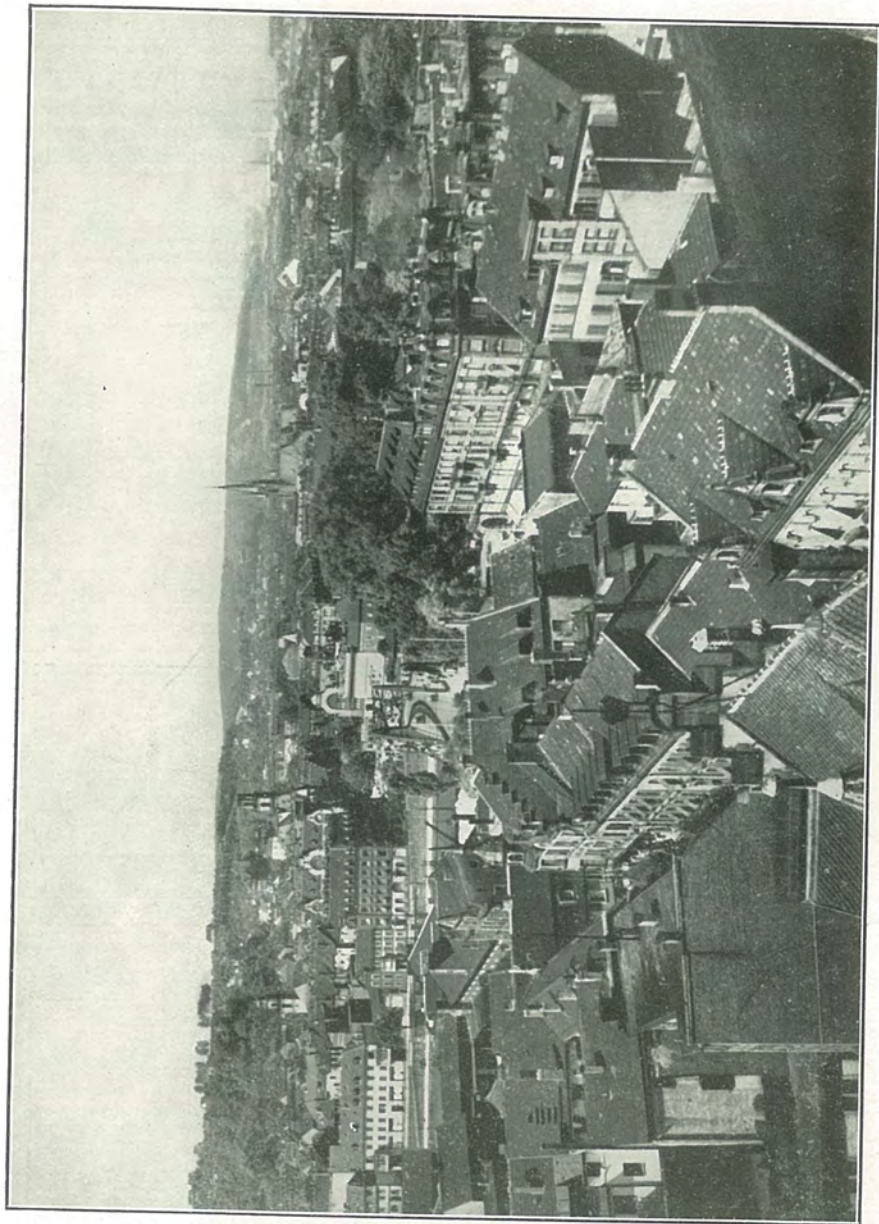
Furthermore, from the point of view of language, the Saar Basin has never had a frontier territory, for the limits of the spoken idiom advance several kilometers westward beyond the French political frontier. And even to-day a visitor in the villages and towns of neighboring Lorraine will hear there a German dialect akin to that of the Saar.

The Saarland has been tempered by a good thousand years of civilisation. Evidence in the form of stone, bronze and iron utensils, and even more the monumental stone columns of Renntrich and the surroundings of Bleikastel all give eloquent witness.

Even in earlier times the Romans dominated there for five centuries, as traces of Roman roads and battlements still prove. And after the time of the invasions the German branch of the Franks settled in this region and remained throughout the

centuries. The oldest monasteries of the region date back to the early Middle Ages. All traces of the first religious foundations have long since disappeared. But in the Abbeygarden of Mettlach stands a round chapel of the eleventh century. This most ancient of all structures in the Saar is a copy of the chapel of Charlemagne's royal stronghold.

It is further noteworthy that despite the close proximity of the French civilisation toward the west, native art tends to affect the style of the German civilisation toward the east. This fact is apparent even in the Gothic monuments of the region. The industrialisation of the country, for which the Prince of Nassau-Saarbruecken paved the way, as we have said, expanding in the 18th century and flourishing brilliantly after 1850, gave a tremendous impetus to the building industry. The architects, unfortunately, have shown neither originality nor any trace of artistic imagination. Nevertheless, the general appearance of the urban landscape does not clash with the characteristic German style.



I. View of Saarbruecken.



2. The Saar Valley near Mettlach.



3. Saarbruecken — The new Statehouse —
seat of the governing commission.

II.

VERSAILLES AND THE CONSEQUENCES

For centuries past France, with the desire to extend her frontier to the Rhine, has kept a jealous eye upon the Saar Territory. This attitude is at first apparent in the diplomatic tactics of Richelieu who was clever enough to keep under cover of security France's movements toward expansion, which he himself personified and which were approved by all his successors. He claimed that it was a perfectly natural necessity for France to conquer her "strategic frontiers", that is : the Rhine, a frontier which had been granted her neither by nature nor through the course of historic evolution. The Cardinal's Memoires contain the following characteristic passage dated January, 1629 :

"If the king wishes to make himself the most powerful monarch of the world and the most highly estimated of princes . . . France must think only to fortify herself from within, and to build, and to force an entry for herself into each of the neighboring states . . . She must think to fortify herself at Metz and to advance as far as Strassburg, if it be possible, in order to gain entry into Germany."

Almost three hundred years later the same idea appears in a confidential letter from M. Briand, President of the Council, to M. Paul Cambon, French Ambassador in London, dated January 12, 1917 :

"A question which will obviously arise is that of the left bank of the Rhine. Good patriots (de bons esprits) in France, clinging to our oldest national political traditions, claim it as the lost heritage of the French Revolution, essential to the formation of what *Richelieu* called "notre pré carré" (our square lot). In our opinion, Germany must no longer have a footing beyond the Rhine."

From Richelieu to Briand, by way of Mazarin, Louis XIV, Louis XV, Vergennes, the men of the Revolution, Napoleon the First, Charles X and Polignac, Thiers, Napoléon III, Foch, Clemenceau and Poincaré, this political movement continues in one continual chain of manifestations, of which we choose several here :

"The acquisition of the Spanish Netherlands and Belgium would furnish for the city of Paris an unconquerable avenue

(the « pré carré » of Richelieu) and only then could one truly call her the Heart of France, and would she be situated in the safest spot in the Kingdom, since we would then have expanded our frontier all the way to Holland, and on the German side, where we have the most to fear, all the way to the Rhine, by retaining Lorraine and Alsace and by the possession of Luxemburg and the County of Burgundy All the blood spilled and the treasures destroyed could but be seen with a favorable eye, even by the most critical, when we realise the annexation to the Crown of all the ancient Kingdom of Austrasia (Austrasia, the former kingdom of the centre, belonging since 870 to the eastern kingdom of the Franks, that is to say, to Germany).”

MAZARIN's secret instructions to the negotiators of the Peace of Munster.

“ Our pet scheme, to have no other barrier than the Rhine to the north and the north-east.

Quotation from d'ARGENSON, Minister of War under Louis XV.

“ Lasting, if not everlasting, peace is the declared object of this work by way of a frontispiece. The cession of the left bank of the Rhine to France is the condition thereof.”

Outline of a peace-treaty presented to the Committee of Public Welfare through the agency of Citizen SIEYES member of the Committee General, in the year III of the Republic.

“ The 13th of March, 1798, Talleyrand sent to the French plenipotentiaries the command to leave the Congress, if the left bank of the Rhine were not assured.”

BOURGEOIS.

“ One thing has been irrevocably and finally decided, that we will keep Belgium and the left bank of the Rhine.”

NAPOLEON, in December, 1800.

“ For the entire generation old enough to take an interest in political movements at the time of the fall of the Empire, the revindication of the Rhine provinces presented the same appearance as for our contemporaries the question of Alsace; it was acknowledged as an irrefutable dogma, considered as a categorical imperative, and followed through as a very condition to our national existence.”

PERRAUD, in the « Revue des Deux Mondes ».

“ We want the Rhine-outline from Strassburg to Cologne. Such are our just claims That is where her frontier must be sooner or later anyhow, *as much for honour's sake as for that of our security.*”

CHATEAUBRIAND, Memorandum for the French Government.

“ The Rhine territories would tend to add to our aggressive power. They would advance our armies into the heart of Germany. Mainz would become in our hands a tremendous entrenchment, whence we could, at will, invade whatever parts of Germany we chose for our attack.”

Memoires of the DUKE OF POLIGNAC.

“ Clemenceau had the same idea as Poincaré, as Briand, as Doumergue, as every Frenchman. The century old program of France : recapturing what had been taken from us by the Treaty of Verdun, elimination of German power from the left bank of the Rhine, this was his idea, and to realise it he engaged in these two great diplomatic battles of the Rhine and of the Saar.”

MERMEIX, p. 194.

“ Mr. President, you are much younger than I. In fifteen years I shall be gone; in fifteen years the Germans will not have carried out all the clauses of the Treaty, and in fifteen years, if you will do me the honour to come to my grave, you shall tell me, I am convinced of it : “ We have reached the Rhine and we are going to stay.”

CLEMENCEAU to POINCARÉ, Session of April 25, 1919.

“ The President of the Republic (Poincaré) was a discreet but resolved partisan of France's taking possession of the Rhineland, an annexation simply to be affected under a convincing disguise. He had spoken of it with General Mangin.”

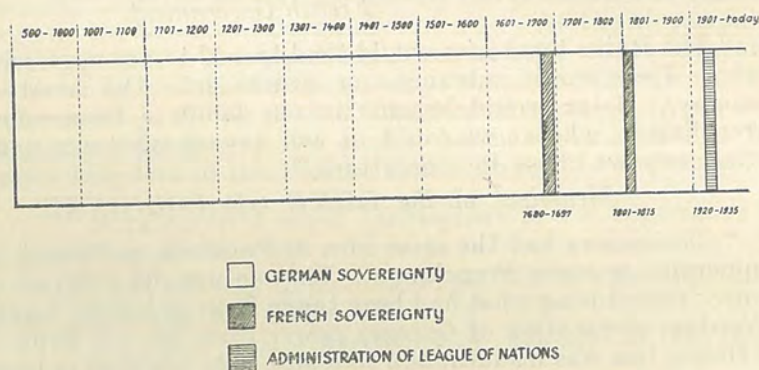
CLEMENCEAU.

“ Such a victory, so great and so costly — we were counting on its setting the German frontier at the Rhine, and assuring a military guard at the head of each bridge. That is the fixed idea of the history of France, the burning, the living aspiration of our people to find at last security to the north, in the Ardennes mountains, in Lorraine, against the perpetual menace of Germany.”

BARRÈS.

With the exception of a single period (and that with an interruption of thirty-one years) that is from 1680 to 1697 and

again from 1801 to 1815, with this exception the Saar has always formed a part of Germany. To be assured of the fact, one need only review briefly its history from the time of Charlemagne's Empire.



Louis the Debonnaire, son of the great Emperor, divided his lands, as we know, among his three sons, Pepin, Louis the German and Lothaire. But a fourth son, Charles the Bald, out of a second marriage, allied himself with the latter two and revised the division : Charles took for himself France, Louis took the kingdom of Germany, and Lothaire took Italy and the territories of the north between France and Germany. And when Lothaire died without an heir, his brother, Louis the German, received the Saar with a part of Lothaire's vast possessions.

In 882 Louis's son, Charles the Fat, was Emperor of Germany and Italy. He became king of France in 884. In the tenth century the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation extended its feudal jurisdiction from the Rhone to Bohemia, and from central Italy to the North Sea.

Saarbruecken, founded in the preceding century, formed a part of the fye of the Bishop of Metz. Not until 1559 did this bishopric return to France, along with those of Toul and Verdun, as a result of the long wars in Italy and of the lack of unity among German princes. But the Saar itself did not go over to France ; nor did it in 1648 when the Treaty of Munster between Germany, France and Sweden, unconditionally ceded to France the three bishoprics and their dependencies.

Louis the Fourteenth activated the French movement of expansion toward the Rhine through brilliant military tactics. In 1679 his armies invaded German soil : Alsace and Lorraine that had been German for eight hundred years were annexed

by the Roi-Soleil, an outcome of the decisions of his "Chambers of Reunion". In 1680 his troops are occupying the Saar.

Hence arises the first dispute between the two countries about the so-called "little-Rhine" question, which is the minimum realisation of the ambitious dream of the Rhine-frontier. The creation of a French Saar Territory in 1680 was the result of the political and military movements of Louis XIV who aimed to open the strategic entry to the east by constructing the fortifications of Saarlouis and Homburg in the Saarland, Mont Royal on the Moselle and Landau in the Palatinate.

But this first period of French domination lasted only seventeen years. In 1697 the War of the Line of Augsburg compelled Louis XIV, by the Treaty of Ryswyck, to restore the greater part of the Saar to the Prince of Nassau-Saarbruecken, retaining only the fortress of Saarlouis, built by Vauban on the heights of the River Saar to keep guard over Metz.

Upon the death of the Count Stanislas Leszczinski, his father-in-law, Louis XV inherited the Duchy of Lorraine, which the former had received in compensation for his renunciation to the throne of Poland. Thus it happened that a few Saar domains belonging to the Duchy went over to France : Dilling, Puttelange-Crehange and the district of Schaumburg, in all hardly a third of the present Saar Territory including Saarlouis.

In 1793, at the time of the French Revolution, the soldiers of the Republic, roused to a spirit of conquest, again stormed the eastern frontier.

The entire left bank of the Rhine became French in 1801. Bonaparte, the "first Council", organized the conquered territory, made an inventory and exploited the coal-mines, built factories and lines of communication, undertook the canalisation of the rivers. Thus began the great economic development of the Saar. But this work was suddenly interrupted when the French withdrew. In 1814 the Emperor abdicated and the First Treaty of Paris restored the Saar to Germany with the exception of the cities of Saarlouis and Saarbruecken.

After Napoleon's return from Elba, the Hundred Days, and the ultimate downfall at Waterloo, France lost, through the Second Treaty of Paris (1815), even these last two territorial possessions.

From this time on the Saar remained German until 1918, that is for one-hundred three consecutive years.

When the World War broke out the question of Alsace-Lorraine arose immediately. But no one mentioned the Saar. It was not until October, 1915, that Robert Pinot, secretary-general of the "Comité des Forges", insisted upon the annex-

ation of this territory. He even went so far as to prove that without it the return of Alsace and Lorraine threatened to plunge France into the gravest of industrial crises, since these two provinces consume, so he said, eighteen million tons of coal, and produce but four. This would add fourteen millions to the to the twenty-one million tons which France had to import before the War.

In 1917 the Congress of French Metallurgical Industries, met at Lyons under the presidency of Theodore Laurent, director general of the Steel Companies of la Marine and Homécourt, announced two hopes for the future Treaty of Peace : 1. The annexation of the Saar Basin ; 2. The guarantee to French industry, over as extensive a period as possible, of a specified tonnage of coal.

This declaration opened the campaign, in a number of French newspapers, for the conquest of the left bank of the Rhine, at the signal to start from the masters of the forges. The practical result was a secret Franco-Russian pact, that Doumergue, president of the Council, gave to the Czar to sign in February, 1917. According to this pact, in case of victory France should win the entire coal basin and the Saar be made neutral territory, or, with even better luck, France should annex the entire left bank of the Rhine. A few weeks later the Revolution broke out in Russia . . .

At Versailles in 1919, however, the pact was not recognized by the representatives of the Anglo-Saxon Powers. Particularly President Wilson, although not opposed to the transfer without plebiscite of Alsace-Lorraine to France, vetoed the annexation of the Saar. The project had to pend fulfillment, since the secret Convention of 1917 had made the pact with Czarist Russia, and the latter defaulted when the time was ripe.

Tardieu, counsellor and right-hand-man of Clemenceau, drew from the pact the substance of his political arguments. He justified the French demands upon the Saar in an historical right, moreover inexistant, in the will of the people (on which side ?) and furthermore in the reparation rights according to which France had a claim upon the mines of the Saar to compensate for the devastation by German troops of the coal-basins of the north and of the Pas-de-Calais.

Lloyd George declared that depriving Germany of the Saar might amount to the creation of a new Alsace-Lorraine. However, he was willing to grant France the possession of the mines. Wilson refused to recognize either one of the claims and declared that "never, in any published document, had France demanded the frontier of 1814, and the conditions of peace accepted by her, covered only the reparation of the harm

done in 1870, not that of 1815. Now these conditions bind the Allies. The historical argument that Germany used against France to steal Alsace-Lorraine, is a dangerous one. Further, the frontier of 1814 does not correspond to any economic reality. It would ruin the Basin, by cutting it in two, without assuring France of a coal supply. A cession of territory, without an immediate plebiscite, would be, under these conditions, inadmissible."¹

And the President added : "There is no more intelligent nation than the French. If I expose frankly my way of thinking I am not afraid of her judgment. I have such a high opinion of the intelligence of the French nation that I believe she will always accept a principle founded upon justice and applied fairly. I do not believe that this problem can be assimilated with that of Alsace-Lorraine.

"I am ready to grant France the use of the mines for a limited term. But since there can be no question of depriving the local industries of coal, the question of ownership seems to me to be purely sentimental. I am sorry to raise objections. It is very hard for me to stand up against France. But I could not do otherwise without failing my duty."

With pent-up emotion, gaging the peril of the debate, Clemenceau availed himself of extreme measures, not even stopping at a lie, in a question of such overwhelming importance. After recalling, in a flight of lyricism, how Rochambeau and La Fayette brought help to the Americans in their fight for independence, he added : "I am old. Yet a few months and I shall have left political life for good. In this matter I am absolutely disinterested. I shall support before Parliament the conclusions we reach together. But to-day, if you do not listen to me, you will miss a chance to weld another link into the chain of affection that binds France and America. *Over there, there are at least 150,000 men who are French.* These men, who since 1918 have been sending messages to President Poincaré, have also a right to demand justice. You are anxious to respect the rights of the Germans ; so am I. But keep in mind the right of these Bohemians as you shall be obliged to keep in mind the rights of Bohemia and of Poland."

And there lies the source of the famous legend of the 150,000 Frenchmen in the Saar, which Clemenceau, moreover, took great care not to prove ! Furthermore, it would have been impossible to furnish the proof. As we have said, and as the

¹ Note : Citations translated from the French of an article by Tardieu in the *Illustration* for June 12, 1920.

map below shows, the Saar Territory is not a frontier region, for the German language is current some twenty to fifty kilometers toward the interior of the French political zone. According to the last German census before the War, out of 572,000 inhabitants of the Prussian Saar (85 % of the total population), only 339 spoke French as a mother tongue, that is, not even one out of one thousand (.06 %).

Two vividly contrasting propositions have been made. The critical situation threatens a rupture in negotiations. Suddenly the news is spread that Wilson has called the S.S. George Washington to Brest to carry him home. Thereupon the



Where are Clemenceau's 150,000 Frenchmen ?

French representatives decide to formulate a new proposition : temporary separation for a period of fifteen years, followed by a plebiscite ; ownership of the mines. Lloyd George lends his support and Wilson finally gives in. And out of the discussion grew Article 45 of the Treaty, which made the following stipulations :

"In compensation for the destruction of the coal-mines in northern France, and in partial payment of War-reparations owed by Germany, the latter cedes to France the entire and absolute ownership, unburdened and free of all debts and charges, with exclusive rights of exploitation, of the coal-mines situated in the Saar Basin, bounded as stated in article 48."

Further, article 49 :

"Germany renounces in favour of the League of Nations, considered as Administrator, the government of the Territory above specified (the new Saar Territory)."

Upon the expiration of a period of fifteen years, dating from the moment when the present treaty goes into effect, the population of the said Territory shall be called upon to make known the government under which it shall wish to be placed."

And so was born the young Saar, placed under guardianship until it should come of age in fifteen years. That she will on the 13th of January, 1935. An addenda of forty paragraphs to the articles of the Treaty, section IV, cover in three chapters the cession and the exploitation of the mines, the government of the Territory of the Saar Basin, and the consultation of the future popular wish.

The French State acquired the possession of all the coal deposits situated within the limits of the Saar Basin, with the right to exploit them or not, at will. The right of ownership applies to all the deposits, free or leased, whoever the owners might be. States, organizations, corporations, or individuals, must all give up entire ownership, including all machinery, coke-furnaces, workshops, building-lots, buildings, even the offices, living-quarters of directors and workmen, schools and hospitals. The value of all these possessions determined by the Commission of Reparations, is credited to Germany in the Reparations Bill.

No exception shall be made to the foreign management of the Basin in the mines and their dependencies, and the French government shall have the right to found primary or technical schools, for the use of the personnel and the children of the personnel, and to give instruction in the French language through masters of her own choice.

The administration is in the hands of five members, named by the Council of the League of Nations, a Frenchman, a Saarman, and three members picked from three countries other than Germany or France. This Commission, representing the League of Nations, holds all the powers of government. Under its supervision the inhabitants may hold their local assemblies, keep their freedom of worship, attend their schools, speak their language, and be accorded all facilities if they desire to leave the Territory. There shall be no military duty. A local police force is kept there to maintain order. Customs offices shall be under French control and French money shall circulate freely in the Saar.

Upon the expiration of the fifteen years of this temporary administration, all persons who have reached the age of twenty-one or more, all men and women who inhabited the Territory at the time of the signing of the Treaty, shall vote by commune or by district upon the three following alternatives :

- a) Maintenance of the government established by the Treaty of Versailles ;
- b) Union with France ;
- c) Union with Germany.

The League of Nations, advised by the result of the plebiscite, shall then decide upon the government under which the Saar shall henceforth be placed.

If after the Plebiscite all or a part of the Territory returns to Germany, the latter shall buy back the entire rights of ownership from France, sum payable in gold, to the mines located in said parts or entire Territory. In case of non-payment at the term of one year, the Commission of Reparations, if it be necessary, shall liquidate the mines or said parts thereof (Paragraph 36). In any event the French Government and the French citizens shall have the right (Paragraph 37) to buy such quantities of coal from the Basin as are justified by their needs at the date of repurchase of the mines, or of said parts thereof, by Germany.

On the other hand, Paragraph 38 states clearly : " It is understood that France and Germany shall be able, through private agreements reached before the date set for the payment of the price of repurchase of the mines, to make exception to the stipulations of Paragraphs 36 and 37.

What was the economic situation of the Saar before 1919 ? For the past decades all the efforts of the German government and of the national economic system had centered upon making the Territory of the Saar a base of supply for big industry. This

effort had been particularly noteworthy since the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine in 1870/71. The Saar and Lorraine formed, so to speak, a bloc, in that the industries of the two regions complemented each other. The Saar mines supplied, with 12.7 % of their total output, the necessary coal for the exploitation of Lorraine's mineral. The two countries formed a part of Germany; no customs barrier stood between them. At that time Luxemburg, too, was included in this free-trade area.

In this industrial bloc centered numerous powerful streams of commercial activity, connecting it especially with the Rhine and the Moselle. In 1913, that is at the peak of the Saar's industrial development before the War, the coal production of the Saar mines of Prussia was, to the amount of 82.8 %, consumed by Germany (including the 12.7 % that went to Lorraine); the remaining 17.2 % was distributed in the following manner : France took 8 %, Switzerland, 6.2 %, Italy, Belgium and Austria the remaining 3 %.

The Saar Basin's participation in the national economy of the German Empire (1913) was as follows : coal and pig-iron, 7 %; bar steel, 11 %; metal rails, 20 %; table glass, 24 %. Important as these resources are to national economy, the proportions are indeed high. The lack of great seaports within reasonable distance naturally made the Basin dependent, for its trade, upon neighboring markets, notably those of central and southern Germany, almost to the exclusion of distant countries.

The Treaty of Versailles completely upset this situation. Alsace-Lorraine was separated from the Reich, and Luxemburg stepped out of the German customs Union. The German economic system was thus deprived of this organic unity of production in the south-west. At the same time new political frontiers were erected around this little country, frontiers artificially created, not corresponding to any political need, without any justification, ethnographical, cultural or historic.

The mines which constituted the greatest wealth of the country passed into French hands, the Basin was cut off from Germany by a customs barrier, and even the German money was to be replaced by the French franc. The entire energy of their commercial activity which had always been directed toward the east, was made to face about abruptly to the west. This brought about such an absurd situation that certain dispositions of the Versailles Treaty had to be revised. Thereupon a Franco-German agreement assured the Saar of duty-free exportation of its products to Germany, and a limited duty-free import of German machinery, mechanical parts, and food-products. And thus were remedied, to a certain extent, the consequences of Lloyd George's astounding affirmation that no natural economic

relation existed between the Saar and Germany. However, as is apparent from contingent political developments, France has since partially annulled this just reparation.

Another decided drawback for the Saar Territory, from a commercial viewpoint, lies in the fact that it must submit to French customs requirements without having any representation in the government since Saar inhabitants are not granted any political rights in France.

The introduction of the French monetary system has also made itself felt. At first the franc was circulated in the form of salaries and wages, so that it should become legal at the time of the inflation of the mark in July, 1923. A people who had known the disasters of the depreciated mark thus became accustomed to a foreign exchange which came to dominate completely the economic life of the country. The sudden change could not but bring with it certain grave disturbances in the popular psychology, and to rouse some resentment in the nationally-minded population.

Further still, the railroad net of the Saar was severed from that of the Reich, one of the greatest railroad systems of Europe. Instead a little private enterprise was undertaken whose costs of operation are unavoidably too high and which wears heavily on the country's budget. The mails too suffered when Saar stamps were introduced as a consequence of the erroneous conception of this Territory as an independent state. It is indeed a mistake to forget that it is a country submitting temporarily to the administration of the League of Nations.

Everything considered, the 800,000 Saarmen were thrown into a most disadvantageous situation from a psychological as well as an economic standpoint. And the Peace Treaty thus inconvenienced not only the industrial, but the peasant class as well, since the latter have had to compete with very powerful rivals in France.

Finally, as another natural consequence of the Treaty, French capital has invaded the country, especially the raw-metals industry, and to a lesser degree the finishing industry and, more or less, all other branches of production. However, regional economy has opposed the invasion by credit resistance, and so the Saar has remained dependent upon Germany to a large measure during the interval until the plebiscite firmly reestablishes its financial fusion with the Reich.

III.

THE ECONOMY OF THE SAAR

Coal in the Saar Basin constitutes the chief resource upon which the economic system is founded. And at the same time, as we have mentioned in the preceding chapters, it constitutes the point of departure of the French influence in the region. It will therefore be pertinent to examine more in detail this branch of Saar industry.

The range of hills that forms the backbone of the Territory and contains the heaviest deposits of coal, extends from north-east to south-west, not only across the Saar itself, but across the French frontier into Lorraine to the neighborhood of Pont-à-Mousson. Geologists have examined its origin. Between Hunsbruecken to the north and the Vosges mountains to the south superimposed veins indicate deposits of the first Coal Age. Lateral displacements of the mountains, limiting this gigantic erosion, have compressed the deposits and developed horizontal veins through the rock and coming to the surface. (This phenomenon can be observed at several points in the valleys of the Sulzbach and of the Fischbach.) The axis of the range follows the line Frankenholz — St. Ingbert — Saarbruecken. But alone the section to the north of the line has been thoroughly exploited, for that to the south holds deposits that lie at inaccessible depths until mining has made further technical progress.

The exploitation of the coal basin of the Saar is less profitable than that of the Ruhr, because the veins are not so wide and the coal is of inferior quality. Thus out of 567 coal-banks, only ninety-five offer a total mining-depth of forty-five meters. Towards the south-west the banks grow thicker, so that in the angle of the Warndt they form a great solid block. The Lorraine deposits which constitute the extension of the Saar Basin produce a superior quality, and the output is higher, although the costs, too, are relatively higher, since the coal lies concealed in steeper mountains bathed in numerous streams. The total reserves of coal have been computed at 9,400,000,000 tons in the Saar proper and 12,500,000,000 if the Lorraine coal basin be included.

The coal is divided into three grades : high, medium and low. The valuable high-grade which supplies the coke, is found predominantly in the Saar ; in Lorraine is found mostly

medium. The present exploitation of the Saar offers the following figures :

high-grade (30-38 % content of volatile matter) : 68 %;
medium-grade (35-42 % content of volatile matter) : 23 %;
low-grade : 9 %.

These figures show that the Saar produces an excellent gaseous coal, suitable for industrial and heating purposes. The coke, however, is inferior to that of the Ruhr. During the period of exploitation by Prussia and Bavaria (1815-1919) the total tonnage mined rose from 100,000 (900 miners occupied) to 13,000,000 (57,000 miners occupied). Privately owned were only the mines of Hostenbach in the Prussian part and of Frankenholz in the Bavarian.

On the 18th of January, 1920, by virtue of the Treaty of Versailles, the German direction of the mines was replaced by the French Federal Administration of the Saar which exploits the entire Basin to the profit of the state, with the one exception of the Frankenholz mine which it had previously conceded to a French private company. But in 1932 the latter gave up the exploitation on its own account and took over a government contract.

The French administration depends on the Department of Public Works, assisted by an Administration Council with a membership of sixteen. A project for the establishment of an "Office of Federal Mines of the Saar" was dropped between the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate.

The concession to France included 166 shafts, of which 66 were fully-equipped hoisting-shafts, 24 coal-washing plants, one cokery with equipment for by-production at Heinitz, three electric plants at Heinitz, Weiher and Louisenthal, two shipping ports at Saarbruecken and at Louisenthal, and finally all the accessory equipment of the mines. The administration kept the Prussian division into twelve inspection groups, adding the two Bavarian mines, and grouping the whole into three districts, called the West, the Center and the East.

As a temporary administration the French directors took the trouble to build only a few new shafts, the most important of which is the Duhamel at Ensdorf, upon which the Prussian administration had already begun work. However the French enlarged several washing and sifting plants, as well as the electrical plants. A new base was constructed at Fenne on the Saar, which is not however used to capacity. For several years research has been made to improve Saar coke by the Salerni method. The technical results have been satisfactory, but it is too early to appraise the net returns that the experiments will

bring, as they have been applied to a mere third of the 250,000 tons of the total coke production.

The output of the mines, which amounted to 600,000 tons in 1850 before the time of railroads, has gradually increased to 13,000,000 tons in 1913. Since the war the French administration undertook to double this figure. But, although they succeeded in raising it to a maximum of 14,032,000 tons in 1924, their average has remained below the 1913 level, contrary to the results obtained in most of the other coal-basins of the world. In fact the average for the entire period of 1920-32 is 11,900,000 tons. These results are to be attributed on the one hand to the shifting of the markets now operated by the French directors, on the other hand to an erroneous price-policy before the worldwide depression. As a result the Saar mines have been suffering what might be called a permanent crisis since 1927, aggravated considerably by the general economic depression that has hit the rest of the world since then. This grave regional crisis has made itself apparent in the cessation of work in the mines of Dilsburg, Louisenthal, Helene and the entire inspection group of Heydt, as well as in some sections of Hostenbach and Altenwald (1930-31). Here the figures on output and employment have shrunk to those of almost a hundred years ago.

The number of Saar miners increased regularly before the war, although less rapidly than in other coal basins. In 1913 they numbered 56,500, of whom 73 %, or 41,000, worked underground. In the beginning the French administration increased this number considerably. In 1924, 74,900 miners were employed in the Saar. But since then, and especially since 1927, there has been a noticeable decrease, making hundreds of miners jobless from one day to the next. With 45,000 at the end of 1933, the number has fallen far below that of 1913. It shows a 40 % decrease from 1924. However the number of government employees has been artificially increased so that it is no longer in proportion with that of the laborers. While in 1919 there were 1450 of the former, or 24 per 1,000 laborers, in 1932 they numbered 2,800, or sixty per 1,000.

In spite of the post-war events, the majority of the miners have remained quite German. The number of "Saargaenger" miners of neighboring German regions who, before the war, used to work in the Saar Mines and come home over Sunday, has diminished on account of the artificially created frontier. They were dismissed before any others by the Commission which wished to avoid having them on its hands without work, since, once they were idle, their support would thus be assured by the Reich and not by the Saar. In 1925 they numbered 6,700, in 1931, 3,000, and since then others have been dismissed. The

number of localities where Saar miners live has fallen from 760 in 1925, to 538 in 1931. Out of this number 314 localities are situated in the Saar, 201 in the Reich and 23 in France. The number of regions profiting by the recruiting of the mines has therefore gone back considerably.

The wages, as we have said, were paid in francs from the first months of the property transfer, that is, from July 1, 1920. In 1930, the average wage of the workmen, underground or above, was forty francs. In 1932 it had fallen to thirty-seven meaning an annual 12,000 francs in 1930, and at present, as a result of the intersperced days without work for all the men (eighty-two days in 1933), 8,400 francs annually. On the other hand the individual output of the miner, which was 803 kg. before the war, exceeded this figure in 1928, and rose as high as 1118 kg. in 1933, a rise of 39 %. This increase results not only from the superior efforts of the worker, but also from technical improvements, and from the fact that the less productive mines were shut down.

Out of the gross sales of Saar coal (12,800,000 tons in 1913) 10,500,000 or 83 % remained in Germany, that is, 4,200,000 or 33 % in the Saar and 6,300,000 or 50 % in the rest of Germany. Subtracting from this last figure 1,600,000 tons or 13 % for Alsace-Lorraine, the present territory of the Reich, without the Saar, used to buy 4,700,000 tons or 37 % of the gross production.

After Versailles, in 1920, the gross production went down to 7,700,000 tons of which 2,800,000 remained in the Saar, 71,000 only went to the Reich and 4,500,000 were absorbed by the French market including Alsace-Lorraine. In 1929, before the crash, the figures are respectively : 11,900,000 of gross sales ; 4,600,000 for the Saar markets ; 1,140,000 for the Reich ; and nearly 5,000,000 for France. The last statistics show for 1933 :

9,100,000 total
3,300,000 remain in the Saar
1,000,000 for Germany
3,900,000 for France.

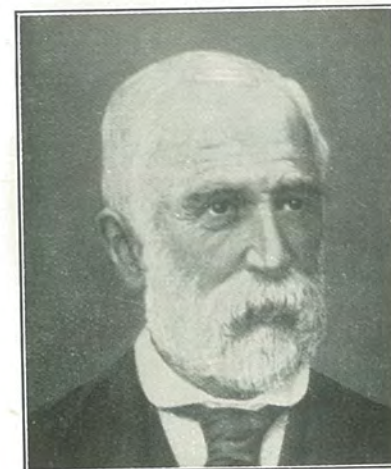
The balance distributed among other countries.

As is apparent, the efforts of the French administration turned commerce from eastern to western markets, at the risk of losing the German market which has at present been reduced to one quarter of the French.

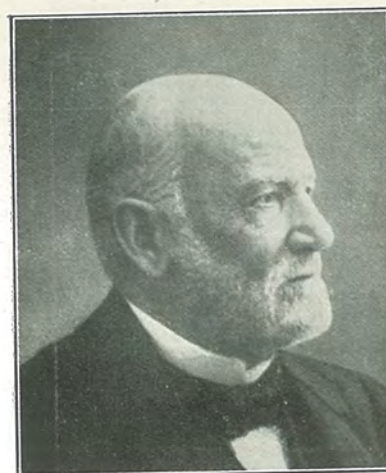
It will be opportune here to explain the coal price policy practiced by France in the Saar. It consists of taking advantage of the monopoly to impose high prices upon the Saar industry to make up for the sacrifices France makes in importing Saar



4. Prince William Henry of Nassau-Saarbruecken.



5. Councillor Eugen von Boch.

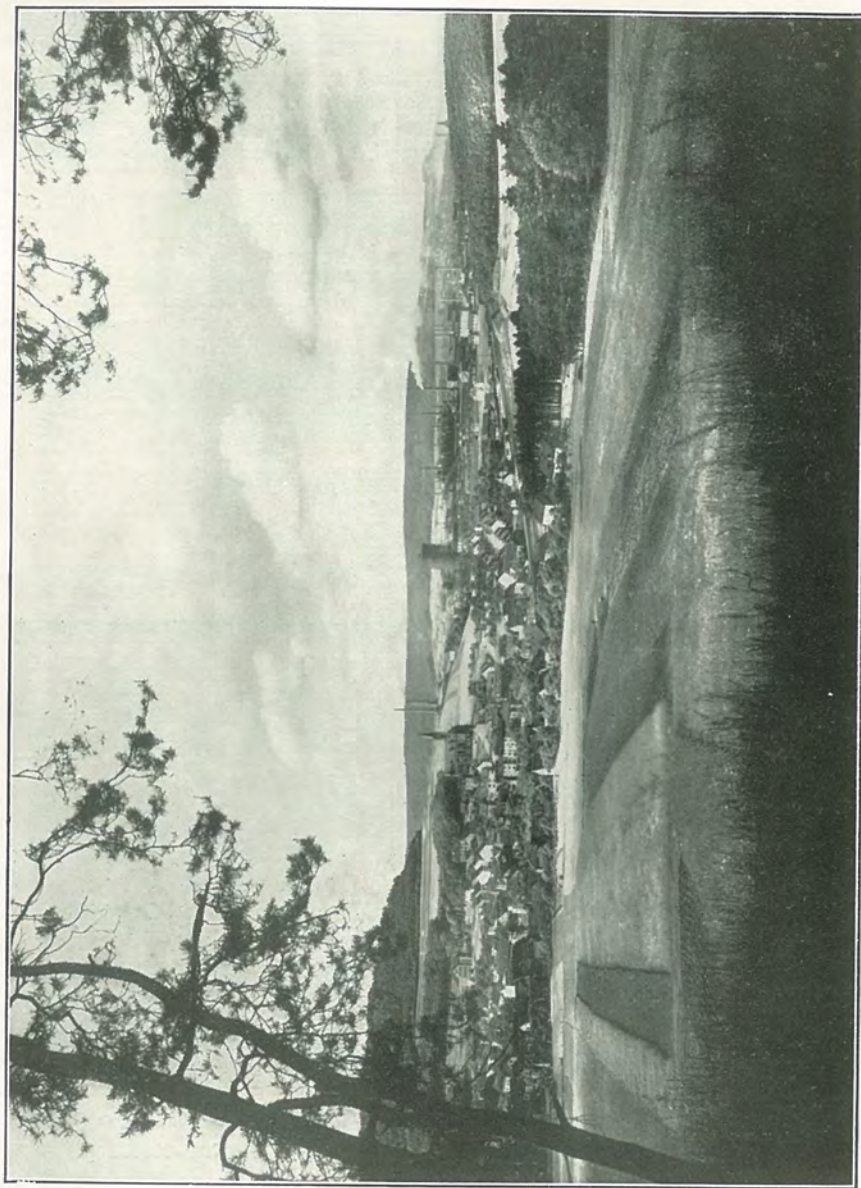


6. Privy-councillor Karl Roechling.



7. Karl Ferdinand Freiherr von Stumm-Halberg.

THE FOUNDERS OF THE UNITED SAAR INDUSTRIES.



8. Voelklingen, view of the Roechling Works.

coal. As a matter of fact, the latter is sold, in spite of its inferior quality, at an average price of 20-25 % more than the better quality coal of the Ruhr. This artificial price-level has even intermittently provoked certain factories in the Saar (Roehling in 1924) to cease operations. Since coke has been covered by a price margin the high tariffs have affected especially the finishing industry.

The fiscal profits realised by the French, thanks to this policy, are astounding. The net profits according to the balance sheets of 1920-28 amount to 310,900,000 francs, to which a reserve of 321,000,000 may be added, making a total of 631,900,000 francs. Since the capital value of the mines was set by France at less than 2,000,000,000, the interest represents about thirty per cent on the capital. It would be difficult to find another coal basin rendering profits on a level with these during the period since the War.

But, as we have seen, the profits accrued to the French Treasury alone, which systematically exploits to the limit the Saar mines, without having a care for the future. The disastrous consequences brought upon the regional industry by the continuation of this imprudent policy will eventually evince themselves in the irrecoverable loss of the natural markets of south-west Germany.

The iron industry constitutes the second in importance in the Saar. It is interesting to note that this industry, as is frequently the case in the Saar, is owned by a family which has for generations been connected with this branch of industry. It is known that the earliest legislation for the protection of workmen was drawn up by a certain Baron von Stumm, whose name figures along with those of his brothers Roehling and others in the annals of the economic history of the Saar.

The iron industry includes the furnaces at Burbach, Dillingen, Neunkirchen, Voelklingen and Halberg as well as the pipe castings works of Mannesmann at Bous with the adjoining steel plant of Saarbruecken, the steel plant of Dingler, Karcher and Company, the Roehling Steelworks and the iron plants of Homburg and St. Ingbert. The four first-mentioned foundries are manifold enterprises, including foundry-chimneys, steelworks and roller-works. The Dilling Foundry produces steel-plate, Halberg makes cast-iron pipe, and the Bous Works produce seamless steel-pipe. The Roehling Steel-works have won important markets for their steel specialities. The Homburg Works, associated with those of Neunkirchen, manufacture especially gas-pipes and rail-rivets. St. Ingbert specializes in plate and wire. The various establishments use thirty foundry chimneys, averaging an annual output of some 2,400,000 tons,

eighteen Thomas-converters averaging 2,000,000 tons, twenty-four Siemens-Martin furnaces averaging 800,000 tons, and in addition seven Bessemer converters and five electric furnaces. The foundries wash and transform the coal into coke, and possess the necessary machinery for the manufacture of by-products.

France furnishes nine-tenths of the mineral, the rest comes from Luxemburg, Germany, etc. The Thomas-process is generally used in the Saar Steel-works. It makes possible the transformation of pig-iron (the "Minette" from Lorraine, which has a high phosphate-content) into malleable steel. The clinkers from the Thomas furnaces are ground in special mills, which make potash, valuable to agriculture by reason of its high phosphate-content.

Stumm and Roechling gave the metallurgical industries of the Saar the necessary start, so that after 1871 they extended beyond the limits of the Basin and acquired important mineral deposits in Lorraine, where numerous branches were founded.

The Treaty of Versailles, we repeat it, deprived the Saar foundries of their immediate resources, that is the Lorraine minerals, forced them to face French competition, and forced them to pay for their fuel at prices set by the Board of Finance. But although the enterprises in part went over into French hands, still the attempt to divert the entire industry of the Basin toward the west failed as a whole.

It is true that the foundries of Fillingen and Halberg as well as the Mannesmann enterprise with the steel-foundry of Saarbruecken, are at present controlled by French capital, which holds 60 % of the stock. But at the "Neunkirchener Eisenwerk" formerly the Stumm Brothers Company, whose financial situation was comparable to that of the above-mentioned, the French holdings are at present reduced to a negligible fraction. Only the Fraulautern enterprise, which manufactures household articles, is entirely in French hands. The Burbach Foundry belongs to the ARBED group (France, Belgium and Luxemburg) and St. Ingbert has gone into the hands of the HADIR group (Luxemburg). But with these exceptions the chief enterprises, such as those of the Roechlings at Voelklingen, and the Seibert, Karcher, and the Heckel have always remained German or in part have been bought back from France, as was the "Maschinenfabrik Ehrhardt and Sehmer" and the steel-foundry "Dingler-Karcher".

Even more than the mines, the Saar foundries need the German markets for their livelihood. The French market, already saturated by the production of Alsace-Lorraine since

Versailles, can hardly begin to compensate. The sales of the Saar foundries to the roller-works offer the following figures :

1933 : 99,118 tons or 8.3 % for the Saar ;
— 421,595 tons or 35.4 % for the rest of Germany ;
— 370,823 tons or a meagre 31 % for France.

For long years the industrialists of the Saar have made a great effort to compensate for the higher price of minerals, brought about by the freight-rates, especially by modernising their equipment. Thereby they succeeded in overcoming Lorraine competition to the extent that they were able to supply the needs of the steel-foundries without importing foreign pig-iron. Another example is offered by the cokeries, the extension of which has assured sufficient fuel for the furnaces which formerly consumed great quantities of Ruhr coke.

In close connection with its iron industry the Saar Basin owns a highly developed manufacturing industry whose products have won a world-wide fame. A few of the most noteworthy are the big gas machines and compressors made by the Construction Company formerly Ehrhardt & Sehmer, the telegraphic equipment and other transmitters of Ernst Heckel, the steel girders of the B. Seibert workshops, the metal cables of Heckel, screws and rivets (Karcher, Roth & Co.), the ironsmiths' tools (A. Schwinn A.G.), railroad cars (Gebrueder Luettgens), steel constructions (Arnoth & Bäcker), steam-tanks (Poensgen & Pfahler), armatures (Keuth & Zenner), pumps (Pumpen A.G.), hoisting apparatus (Kaufmann & Weinberg), and safes and strong-boxes (L. Pabst & Son), and many other famous products of the Saar. It is further pertinent to mention in general the iron and other metal foundries, the machine construction shops, the factories for sheet-iron, iron, or wire articles, the tool-factories, etc. Finally, to complete the list, the electro-technical industry has its famous representatives in the Brothers Adt (insulation pipes and other electro-technical material), and the now independent Saar branch of Brown, Boveri & Co. (light motors, electrical ice-boxes). All these branches of industry employ, in normal times, 14,000 workers, the total number employed by the entire iron-industry being about 36,000.

Although they rate far below the iron and steel industry the secondary branches of industrial production in the Saar have their own great importance. The glass industry, brought in by the Lorraine glass-blowers in the 17th century, is one of the traditional branches of economic activity in the Saar. The industry began to develop under the House of Nassau-

Saarbruecken, helped by the natural wealth of the land in wood and yellow sand. The nearby coal-supply helped to make it an important industry, specializing in table-glass, the production of which even reached, before the crash, four million square meters. That would make a ribbon of glass a meter wide going a tenth of the way around the world. Unfortunately, after the pre-war boom until 1919, when the mechanical blowing device of Foucault was introduced, the number of blowers employed had to be reduced from 1700 (1913) to 900. The sales, four-fifths of which are absorbed by Germany, have been helped by the German trade-agreement which allows duty-free import. The formerly dispersed workshops have been replaced, in the course of a program of rationalisation, by two big factories at St. Ingbert, the United Glaziers of Vopelius and Wentzel and those of Lontzenthal. Although all these keep their financial independence, they are members of the German association DETAG at Fuerth.

The Saar bottle-blowers, formerly so famous, have almost disappeared, because the manual laborer could not keep up with the mechanical competitor of other regions specializing in the manufacture of bottles. Although the table-glass industry had remained German from the point of view of capital invested, the bottle industry was absorbed in part by French capital. On the other hand, the manufacture of crystal has not only maintained its level, but has even grown since the War. The Fenn Glass Company, exploited for a long time by the Lorraine companies of Trois-Fontaines, manufactures especially inexpensive articles, while that of Villeroy & Boch specialize in high-grade crystalware. The production of these two firms, which was 3,600,000 kgs. in 1913, reached 9,000 kg. in 1931, employing 1,000 workers. The depression reduced this production by about a third.

Another branch of regional industry is the making of ceramics, made famous by the name of Villeroy & Boch in Mettlac. Result of a merger of the pottery Villeroy, founded in 1789 with that which J.F. Boch had set up in 1809 in the old Benedictine Abbey of Mettlach, it became one of the largest ceramic enterprises in Europe. It includes, in the Saar, the pottery of Mettlach, the mosaic and terra-cotta factory at Merzig, the crystalware plant at Wadgassen as well as the old pottery of Wallerfangen, where work has at present been stopped. In the rest of Germany, it used to own also a pottery at Dresden, at Torgau and at Bonn, as well as the tile-factories at Daenischburg and at Deutsch-Lissa, which became an independent enterprise in 1919. Two other companies also manufacture tiles, Fr. Pabst at Homburg, and the manufactory

of flat and roofing-tiles at Kleindittersdorf. The gross production of earthenware tiles in the Saar amounted to 1,700,000 square meters in 1913; it reached 2,000,000 square meters in 1930. When building construction in the Territory was almost at a standstill, the production of materials was bound to face a crisis. Among the brick-works fifteen out of forty-two have had to close down.

Further worthy of mention in the Saar are the chemical industry with factories at Saarbruecken, Sulzbach, Ottweiler and Wurzbach, manufacturers of roofing-tiles at Bous and Fraulautern, a powder factory at St. Ingbert; wood-workers, leather-workers (Rheinische Lederwerke in Saarbruecken, Sueddeutsche Lederwerke in St. Ingbert), the papier-mâché industry, food-stuffs and luxury products such as their well-known tobacco which has been localised for more than a hundred years at Merzig and St. Wendel in eighteen enterprises; and finally the breweries which produce more than a million hectoliters a year.

The extension of the manufacture of articles for steady consumption has further increased since the war, through the establishment of new factories. After the Territory had raised a customs barrier against the Reich, hundreds of factories were built to fill the demand of the Saar market for articles of German design. Worthy of mention among new developments is the textile industry, which includes thirty-five plants producing household linen, ready-made goods, knit-goods, etc., and employs 3,300 workers. The shoe-industry at present keeps thirty factories busy (eight in 1931) and employs 3,000 workers. At Fraulautern there is an extensive tin and enamel industry. At Saarlouis there are two kitchen-range factories; Fraulautern further produces tables and chairs, and there too the Gebrueder Adt manufacture steel-pipe furniture. The increasing demand for packing materials gave birth to nine new carton and paper mills. Finally the manufacture of perfumery and soaps has grown to new importance. All these industries employ a total of 24,000 workers, and represent one-fifth of the Saar industries.

Sociologically, the Basin has the great advantage that trusts are quite unknown there, with the exception of a new trust-like groups in big industry. Private enterprise is the general rule, and the chiefs of industry feel personally responsible to the their companies and to their communities.

The professions form an essential complement to the industries in the Saar. Their importance is shown by the following figures :

14,000 firms employ 24,000 artisans and apprentices (in 1931) in the designing and planning of building, metal-

goods, clothing, food-stuffs, wood, leather and paper-goods, etc...

The Saar is especially versed in retail-trade. Saarbruecken is not only the buying centre of the Territory but also of the frontier regions of Lorraine and the Palatinate. The geographic position of the country makes it the natural bridge of exchange between France and Germany. But the Treaty of Versailles and the customs and monetary upsets resulting for the Saar, have deprived several cities like St. Wendel, Ottweiler, and others of their natural Hinterland.

After 1926, when trade was again freed of duty, as a result of the customs agreement, which modified the unbearable situation resulting from the Treaty, German export rose from 54,000,000 marks to 169,000,000 in 1930. On the other hand, the Reich's imports from the Saar rose from 139,000,000 marks in 1926 to 221,000,000 in 1928, but fell back to 164,000,000 in 1930, showing the first effects of the crisis in Germany. Since 1933, the figure has shown a marked increase. We have found no available statistics on the Saar's commerce with France, for this figure of some 2,000,000,000 francs (since fallen to 1,500,000,000) is the result of an evaluation remarkably favorable to the latter. It was only through the pressure of the French customs and contingency policies which sought at one time to isolate the Territory, that German trade shows a temporary decrease. In the long run the Saar economy cannot get along without Germany, either in the matter of imports or in that of exports. In spite of the customs barriers and the monetary system, the Saar market has kept its German aspect.

Finally let us add to this brief review of the commercial situation a few words about the banks. The Reichsbank, the D.D. Bank (Deutsche Bank & Discontogesellschaft) are represented not only at Saarbruecken but in other Saar cities such as Neunkirchen, Saarlouis, and St. Ingbert. Among the local banks those worth noting are the banks of Gebrueder Roechling, of Gebrueder Haldig A.G., and of Grohé-Henrich & Co. On the French side there are in certain Saar cities branches of the "Société Générale Alsacienne de Banque" of the "Banque Nationale pour le Commerce et l'Industrie" and of the "Crédit Industriel d'Alsace et de Lorraine". The other branches of big French banks and particularly of Alsacian banks, founded after 1919, have since disappeared. A local bank which during the inflation held a policy favorable to the foreign interest in the country and detrimental to the local petty industry, went bankrupt in 1928. Two other French institutions are the

"Landesbank des Saargebiets" and the "Saarlaendische Immobilien Kredit Zentralkasse" both under the management of the "Société Nancéienne de Crédit Industriel et de Dépôt".

The branch for loans and mortgages is completely in German hands, as well as the 231 credit cooperatives existing in the Saar. The importance of the Savings Banks is shown by the deposit figures. These reached in 1932, 773,000,000 francs, or 900 francs per capita.

The political development in the Saar and the approaching return to the Reich have brought about a crisis in loans and mortgages on account of the numerous denunciations of French creditors. The forced public sale of property took on such dangerous proportions that the interested parties created an organization for the defense of debtors and thereby reduced the number of forced sales by 40 %. In a later chapter we shall treat this matter more in detail.

One of the essential conditions for the development of an industrial territory, especially when it is situated, as is the Saar, on the great crossroads of European communication, is obviously the organisation of its transports. Before the War this matter was always kept in mind by the German government. It did everything in its power to facilitate communication between the Saar and the neighboring countries, and Saarbruecken was the junction of six great lines : Cologne-Trèves, Berlin-Frankfort, Mannheim-Kaiserslautern, Munich-Stuttgart, Basle Strassburg, and Paris-Metz. The central terminal sent out five hundred trains a day.

The railroad net of the Saar includes 406 kilometers of road, two-thirds of which have two tracks or more. The actual length of rails is 1.419 kilometers. The railroad administration is a very modern and efficient organization and makes use of the latest modern improvements. Their statistics after the following figures before the crash : 60,000,000 passengers, 22,000,000 tons of merchandise (9,000,000 for export, and 6,000,000 for import and 7,000,000 for the interior); and today : 43,700,000 passengers, 17,656,897 tons of merchandise (7,391,432 for export, 3,992,940 for import, and 6,272,525 for the interior).

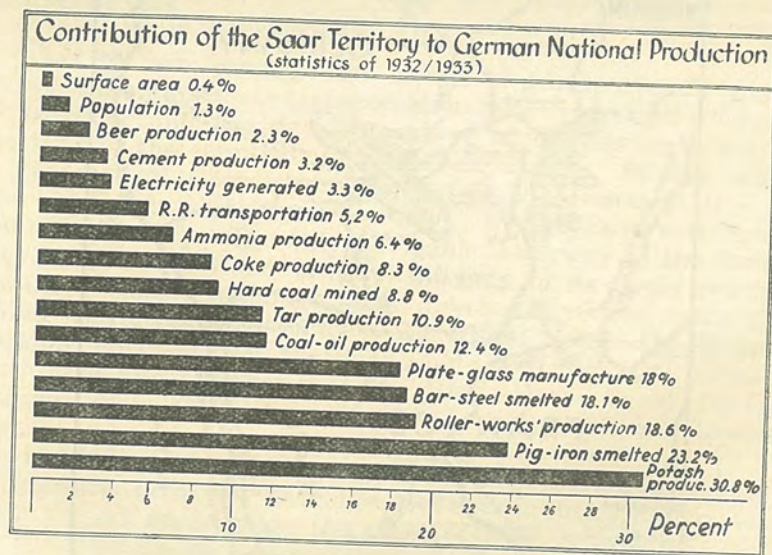
The secondary lines of communication derive their importance from the system of semi-rural colonisation in the country. The trams serve 164 kilometers of lines with 225 kilometers of track. The annual passenger traffic totals forty millions. Besides the street-car associations exploit bus-lines which carry an additional two million passengers a year. Along with the rail-lines, the highway system of the Saar, sufficiently developed to fulfill the extensive traffic needs, centres in Saarbruecken and

that the Saar returns to Germany. This project is further supported by the fact that France has in view, on this side, a Metz-Saarbruecken juncture as an outlet for Lorraine production, the terminal of which is set at only fourteen kilometers from the German canal. The canalisation of the Rossel between Beningen and Wehrden would suffice to unite the two waterways into a great section canal from Metz to Saarbruecken to the Rhine, which would contribute a great deal toward the realisation of an economic agreement between France and Germany.

As the Minister of the Reich, Dr. Goebbels, announced in his speech at Zweibruecken, the German plans are completed, and the first spadeful of dirt shall be dug as soon as the results of the plebiscite return the Territory to the Reich.

The importance of this return, from the economic point of view, may be demonstrated, in conclusion to what has been said, by these few figures :

While from the territorial point of view the Saar represents only 0.4% of the area of the Reich, and its population 1.4% of Germany's, the industrial production of the Basin is on an average equal to 25% of the entire German production. The graphic chart below gives further details.



IV.

FRANCE AND THE SAAR

In the beginning of this survey we quoted the declaration of the secretary-general of the Comité des Forges, M. Robert Pinot, who, as early as October, 1915 forcefully demanded the annexation of the Saar, demonstrating that in case of failure to make this acquisition, France risked facing the gravest industrial crisis as a result of the return of Alsace-Lorraine. From this declaration issued, as we have shown, the entire French political action of the peace negotiations. Further, it has always inspired the governmental policy of France in the Saar, and it forms, even today, the foundation of French propaganda in view of the coming plebiscite. All the revindications of historic rights, of the will of the people, of reparations, etc. are merely a façade covering this eminently practical reason.

Added to the influence of the industrial centers are, of course, the exigencies of the War Department. The line of the Saar, along the river, indicates clearly the strategic value of its position, already recognized by Louis XIV. When in 1870, the French began their attack right near Saarbruecken, they held this same conviction. In France they like to speak of the Territory as the range covered by Metz, and this determination proves in itself that France is not preoccupied exclusively by economic values. The part it plays as the firing-range of Metz is not however the only strategic role of the Saar. The latter consists further in the position for an attack along the Saar-Moselle line toward Coblenz and Cologne along the mountain range of the Palatinate, with its vast Kaiserlautern Plain, along the Nahe and the Glan, toward Mainz and Frankfort and toward Mannheim. The "Kaiserstrasse" constructed by Napoléon, a part of which serves as a road-bed for the line Saarbrueck-Kaiserlautern-Mannheim, follows this natural line of attack across the hilly regions of the Palatinate and the Nahe. As for the Moselle line, France might be satisfied with the former frontier defined by the Treaty of Paris in 1814, but for her march to the Rhine, she would need a territory exceeding the limits of the Saar.

The economic interests of France in the Saar may be classed into three categories : 1) the government mines, property of

the French State, 2) trade, 3) financial participation in Saar enterprises.

In our exposé of the economic situation, we have shown the superior interest that the government mines represent in that they furnish the necessary coal for the iron industry of the Saar. Each year France needs nearly 25,000,000 tons of coal, and of this amount the Saar furnished between five and six millions and offered the possibility of doubling, nay even quadrupling this already huge figure. The attainment of this end alone would justify the zeal that France showed in the struggle against the return of the Basin to Germany. But that is not all : she does not neglect the interest on her sales in the Saar which, through the customs profits alone, constitutes a very important market for her industries, all the more since the temporary trade-freedom with the Reich took an end in January, 1925. After this date the Saar has, to all practical purposes, been incorporated in the French economic system. From 365,000,000 in 1922, the annual sales rose to 1,370,000,000 in 1924 and to 2,200,000,000 in 1927 at the height of prosperity. And even in 1932, when a third of the miners were out of work, they still exceeded 1,500,000,000.

All France participates in the exportation trade : from Pont-Audemer come tanned hides ; from the Somme, rawhide ; from the Vosges, paper, wood, cream and cheeses ; from the Moselle, milk, eggs, cattle, flour, worth tens of millions ; from Boulogne, fish ; from Bordeaux and la Beauce, wines and liquors ; from Marseilles, fifty millions worth of grease, oil and soap ; from Meurthe-et-Moselle, one hundred eighty millions of iron ; and Alsace, Roanne, Roubaix, Lille, Calais, Tourcoing, Beauvais, Troyes, St. Etienne, Lyons, all send to the Saar their textiles, cloth, ribbons, laces, silks.

In ten years the Saar paid France more than 9,000,000,000 for purchases, and in the list of customers it stands above Italy and immediately below Belgium, England, Germany, U.S.A., and Switzerland. This shows the great importance of French commerce in the Saar, and it would be hard to explain through what mental aberration certain individuals choose to represent it as a secondary interest in the Franco-Saar relations ; on the contrary, it is of primary importance.

It is perfectly true that, even if the capital invested in the Saar has diminished considerably, the sum-total of French capital is still very appreciable, although we can hardly accept without question the French estimate of 1,800,000,000 francs.

However the matter may stand, the capital invested certainly exercises an influence upon the political orientation

of France, who, according to the statutes of the Territory, has at her disposition one representative in the Governing Commission of the Saar.

The first manifestation of her policy, as soon as the Commission named by the League of Nations was instituted in January, 1920, brought upon France a storm of unpopularity, because of the importunity of her militia. Although the statutes forbade the presence of any militia in the territory submitting to the administration of the League, France still kept her troops there, even after the Treaty had gone into effect. The Saar delegates in Geneva never stopped pleading that it was illegal to maintain these troops. But for a long time Geneva turned a deaf ear. Only after Germany had entered the League, on the Council session of 1927 a compromise was made with Dr. Stresemann, German Council Delegate, on the strength of which the French troops were withdrawn. But in return a "railroad guard" was established, made up of English, Belgian and French troops. England was the first to retire her troops on September 30, 1929. It was not until the following year that Belgium and France followed suit, twelve years after the end of the War.

Stationed in the Saar as "troops in garrison" to save the letter of the Treaty, which did not account for occupation troops, the militia really constituted, until their withdrawal in 1930, a veritable military domination of the country. They claimed that they were governing, by dint of frequent arrests, convictions and expulsions.

After the removal of M. Rault first French president of the Commission, it was of the greatest importance to the *Maitres des Forges* that the new French member be devoted to their cause. The Commission urged them to continue their participation in the iron-works and to keep the unbelievable profits realised in their factories. In one metal enterprise it has been verified that these profits were so disproportionate that each workman was earning for the stockholders a sum equal to his total wages for the year.

And that is why, after the nomination of the Canadian, Stephens, to replace M. Rault, France was quite ready to send, as an associate delegate, M. Morize, for five years Secretary-General of the governmental Commission. Bound by ties of relationship to M. Rault, M. Morize represented all the guarantees desired by the *Comité des Forges*. Then it was that the latter had its chargé d'affaires, M. A. Bommelaer, found the "Association française pour la Sarre", another façade destined to mask the private interests of the magnates under the general heading of "France". It did not take them long to enter into

the field of action by means of violent press campaigns in papers and magazines, by the publication of pamphlets and books, by lectures, and so on.

In March 1923, the pressure exercised by the French industrial magnates culminated in a special proclamation, made without consulting the representatives of the Saar populace, concerning a miners' strike. It was this proclamation that Mr. Asquith qualified in the House of Commons as "the worst example of despotic legislation and the worst oppression of the fundamental rights of free citizens".

Even after ten years of civil government, the French political system had not advanced one step toward the conquest of the spirit of the Saar. Although there is still some pro-French sympathy, no francophile deputy, no autonomist has ever held a seat in the local parliament. The latter, just as the Chamber of Commerce, and as numerous sport clubs, cultural and professional associations, has continually manifested its loyalty to the Reich. In this period M. Henri Guernut published in the *Cahiers de la Ligue des droits de l'homme* the following conclusion to his inquest on the Saar: "The men of the Saar want to return to Germany; they must be given the chance; we must offer to cancel the plebiscite, and to consent to the anticipated reestablishment of the sovereignty of Germany, while we must obtain from her, in return for the concessions conforming to the Saar and German interests, the safeguard of the French interests."

Following upon the publication of this very impartial inquest, the *Saarbruecker Zeitung* (liberal) wrote on the 24th of September, 1929, the following lines that offer material for meditation: — The *Saarbruecker Zeitung* claims the merit of having always brought out clearly and deliberately the difference that lies between the little group of French vultures who, through personal interest, have wished to annex the Saar as a whole or in part, who wished to hold her under pressure as if she were a colony, who themselves wished to cling to their fatly-paid posts... and the other France.

— We are well enough acquainted with the French people to know that, in a vast majority, they reprove the rapaciousness of these beasts of prey, and that, although without doubt they have a race for their own security, they have in mind a security achieved by an honest policy, and not by force alone.

— We have often enough appealed to the common sense of the French, and without tiring we have repeated: Don't let the Saar problem be handled by those who are in search of prey, but by broad-minded economists and friends of peace. Then we

shall come to an agreement without difficulty, and avoid lasting trouble in the Franco-German relations.

— We have never missed an opportunity to proclaim that we were ready to ally ourselves with this other France, whose voice was practically never heard in the Saar. And that is why we gladly published the appeal of the "Ligue Française des Droits de l'Homme" which clung to the object of making known to the Germans of the Saar this other France.

More openly than in the first masked efforts, the propaganda of the big French capitalists evinced itself in the founding of the "Groupement économique des Français ayant des capitaux en Sarre", of which they themselves took the effective direction in hand, admitting, however, a certain number of statisticians. The first president elected was M. G. G. Puech, managing director of the "Etablissements Delattre et Frouard" and very much interested in the "Ateliers de Construction de Dilling". M. Puech shared with other capitalists the viewpoint that the affairs of the Saar could be managed more advantageously through an agreement with the Germans before the plebiscite. The Coal Advisory Board was of this opinion as well as the Comité des Forges who began to fear the competition of the Saar coal and steel.

At this period, an official inquest in the Saar brought to the government's notice that the optimism manifested by its representative in the Commission had little to do with the true situation. French supporters of the Briand Cabinet suggested the eventuality of an unfavorable plebiscite. On the German side Stresemann gave out to the Press, on August 10, 1929, the German proposal for direct negotiations with France. The negotiations began on September 27, 1929. The program included the examination of the anticipated return of German rule in the Saar, considered in the light of a French concession. The 1935 plebiscite should make known afterwards if the inhabitants approved of the friendly agreement on their account between France and Germany.

To compensate for France's political concession, Germany wished to offer economic concessions which remained to be defined, but which were unquestionably important. In one matter especially, Germany sought to obtain satisfaction, for it was then as now a national question; that the mines be bought back by the Reich, which at that time still held large gold reserves, on a basis of the evaluation made in 1920 when the ownership of the mines was transferred to France, that is for, 300,000,000 gold marks.

In order to keep the Saar market open for her products France proposed that, in spite of the German sovereignty, the existing customs union be maintained for at least fifteen additional years after 1935, the year of the plebiscite which was to sanction the accord.

In this atmosphere of harmony, French capital in the Saar had every favorable opportunity to remain or to withdraw. Industrial and commercial agreements would have inaugurated an era of Franco-German cooperation in the economic world, making way for an even wider understanding in the political field. But unfortunately the negotiations failed. When M. G. G. Puech had retired from the "Groupement économique", the presidency was given to the General Maugas, Director-General of the Société HADIR, belonging to the same group as Theodore Laurent, a bitter adversary of all amiable agreements in the Saar. M. Laurent, supported by M. Bommelaer, suggested not selling the mines to Germany, but internationalising them by dividing them amongst the French capitalists.

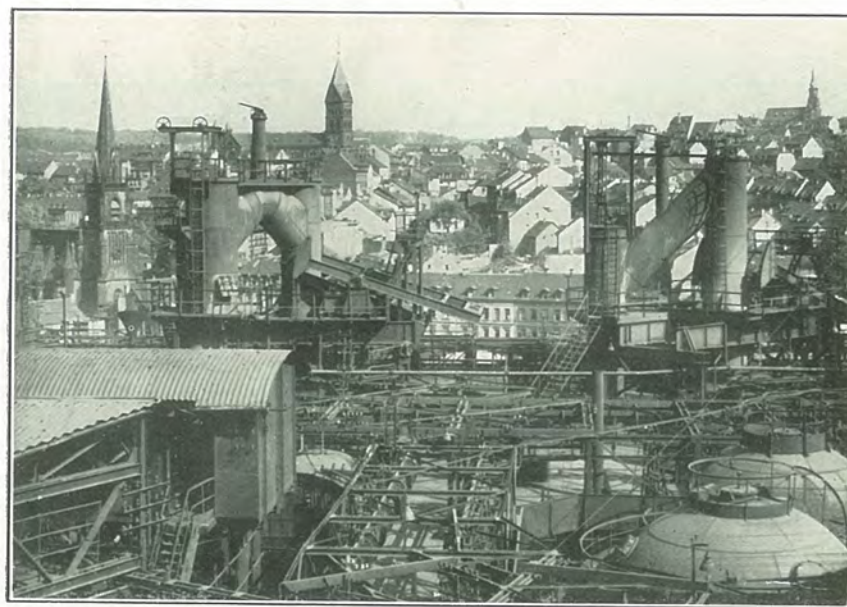
A change came over the French policy of the interior, and M. Tardieu succeeded M. Briand as head of the government. And at the instigation of those circles that were opposed to friendly agreement, the Saar mines were to be reapportioned to the profit of a group of French and German capitalists.

The German delegation opposed this plan on principle. From that time on no further pretext was needed to make the negotiations fail, for any plan excluding the return of the Saar mines to the Prussian and Bavarian budget, was inevitably refused by the German negotiators.

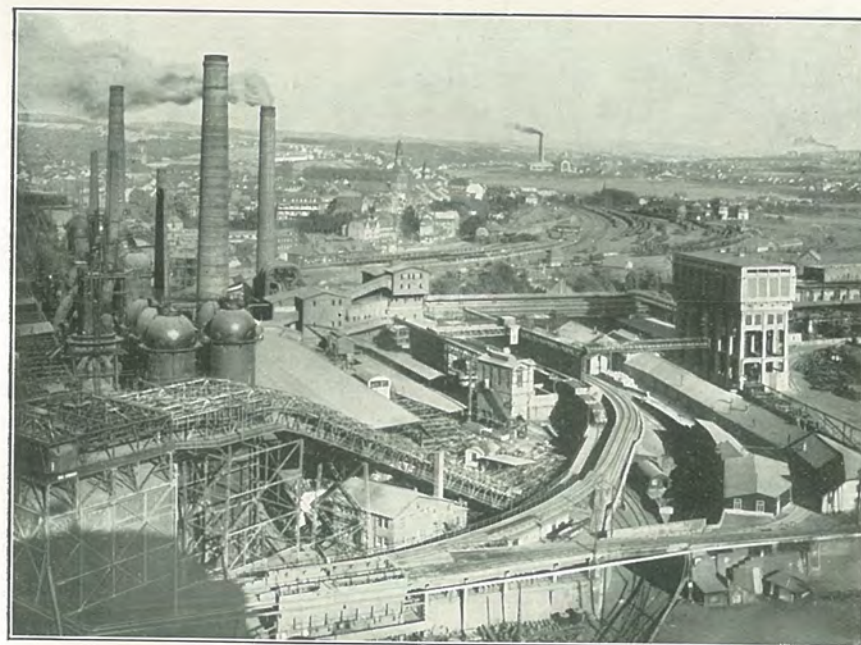
Accompanied by a violent press-campaign, a lively debate took place in the French Chamber, on the day the Tardieu Cabinet made its first appearance, November 7 and 8, 1929. Questioned by Franklin-Bouillon, Taittinger and Georges Bureau, Briand replied: — I have heard this tribunal say that in the terms of the Treaty we were the owners of the mines, — that is true — and that we had only to remain in the Saar five years more, at the end of which time we would sell the mines at whatever price we chose. We should dispose of them at will, and since the prices of mines increase, we have every reason to expect a profit.

— That is not quite true. At the end of the five years if the plebiscite is unfavorable we leave and we are obliged to sell our mines, and that not at our own price, but by arbitration, the procedure being already mapped out in the Treaty....

— We hold a precious hostage in our hands, and should we not try to take advantage of it? If our contracts expire in



9. Reconstruction of the chimneys of Neunkirchen, after the disaster of 1933.



10. Collective view of the Roehling Works.



11. A thieving-shaft on Lorraine territory :
the frontier runs past the milestone and in the background along the sidewalk.



12. Folkdances among the young people of the Saar
There is not a shade of doubt about their German blood.

five years, is it not to our interests, considering the solidarity of interests in Alsace-Lorraine with the Saar and those of the Saar with our country, to control these problems, after thorough study, and to try to create, from the point of view of mining, of metallurgy, of customs, an organisation which overcomes foreseen delays ?

— But even if we wanted to, we haven't the right to dispose of the Saar population. Even if we wanted to, we cannot deprive a people of the rights which a treaty, signed by a great number of nations, has conferred upon it.... —

Finally when in 1930 the delegates dispersed without having attained any results, the French capitalist circles, scenting an air of disagreement with Germany, could celebrate a premature triumph much greater than the failure of negotiations on the Saar. But the law of economic chances soon spoiled their pleasure ; the world crisis reduced by one-third to one-half the profits that they realised in the Saar. This change brought with it a sudden turn-about in the governmental policy.

France interfered in the affairs of the Saar in two different ways : through political measures and through propaganda. Amongst the first must be classed the removal from their posts of all German high functionaries in the mines-administration, and their replacement by Frenchmen. The original French idea to grant the mines to private owners, was abandoned in favour of government exploitation, in order to keep in hand a powerful means of influencing the direction of the plebiscite. Another political measure was the abuse of the right to found French schools for the children of the French personnel.

The Treaty of Versailles gives France, along with the temporary ownership of the mines, the right to establish and support primary and technical schools for the personnel and the children of the personnel, also the right of give, in these schools, instruction in the French language through teachers from outside, and according to a previously established plan of studies. This clause, harmless in itself, allows France, "on a legal basis", to draw the children of German workers into her schools. The Direction of the mines with the support of the governmental Commission, caused these French public schools to be assimilated within the union of German primary schools, so that German children could fulfill their scholastic requirements there.

This result was obtained despite the protests of the German government which presented to the League of Nations two reports, one by Professor Bartsch from the Berlin Law School, the other by Professor Edwin Borchard from Yale University in the U.S.A. The two reports reached the same conclusion :

that the Direction of the mines has not the right to institute government schools for the children of German miners, that it is not authorized to open schools where German is the language of instruction, and that the governmental Commission has not the right to issue declarations by which children of German miners and other German children should be permitted to fulfill their scholastic requirements in these schools.

Nevertheless, the schools were opened. Their purpose, from the very beginning, was to denaturalize the youth of the Saar. This mission was clearly defined in these terms, in a speech by the Deputy, Ferry (1923) : — Let us make a clear picture of the influence which our wisely planned instruction may have over the youth of this country. In twelve years, when the plebiscite takes place, the children who are now nine will have reached a voting age. Formed in our schools, they will probably decide in favour of reunion with France. —

It is principally in the mining districts that the French established their schools. Beyond a doubt they constitute a grave threat to Germanism in the Saar. The major subject in these schools is naturally French, taking from six to eight hours a week. German, on the other hand, becomes secondary. The schools in question, where French culture is presented to the children in the most flattering light, are little else than blatant propaganda. This attempt to recondition the taste of the Territory to a French mode of life is carried on by the Administration of the mines, in other words, by the French State.

In order to enroll the children of German miners in these schools, they exercised severe pressure upon the parents. The French enrollers, who were assured of a generous reward for each child enrolled, canvassed the region, and tried to convince the miners or their wives that their children would later obtain a good position, that every year they would have a free vacation in a French watering place that all school books and supplies would be furnished free, that the children would receive Christmas presents, etc. And if the miners do not look favorably upon these promises, and send their children to the German primary school, then the canvassers use other methods. They are threatened with dismissal. This puts in a particularly difficult position the miners who live in Administration-owned houses. Not only would they lose their work, but at the same time they would be put out of their homes. Institution heads, school-directors, supervisors of the mines, engineers, all are at the service of this propaganda. This goes so far that a French school director once forgot himself to the point of saying to the children : — *I hold in my hands the bread of your fathers !*

A few examples will suffice to illustrate the severity of the pressure exercised over the miners :

1) In a mining village, a miner and his family of six occupied a damp, unwholesome lodging of two rooms in a cellar. All their efforts to better their home had failed. Then he was given the advice to send his children to the French school. Sad in spirit he decided to send them his youngest son. After a short time, the director of the French school sent for the father, who sent him his wife. The director declared that she had two more children of school age, and that they, unfortunately, were attending a German school. If they, too, were sent to the French school, then he would see what he could do about a better home. The father had nothing left to do but to submit. A fortnight later he entered into possession of an Administration lodging.

2) In a mine, a widow had for a long time been employed as charwoman. When a French school was opened in the district, a director of this school, in the presence of one of the managers of the mine, bade the woman send her two children to him for their scholastic requirement. The woman refused. The school director threatened to deprive her of her position. The widow, persisting in her refusal, was dismissed on grounds of "refusing to work". The complaint she lodged was ineffective.

3) A miner tried to find work for his eldest son. They told him it was out of the question unless he sent his four other children of school-age to the French school. Finding no other opening for his son, the miner had to comply to their demands.

The above examples date far back. But these methods of enrollment are still in use, and even quite recently, as has been proven, in December, 1933, appeal was made to the superior court at Saarlouis. And the case came to the attention of the Councillor of Commerce, Roechling, and the editor, Hall, of whom we shall speak again later.

Thus several hundred children were forced into these schools. The pressure was never removed, although the Director-General published the following statement : — Every, one employee or worker of the Administration of the mines, is according to the existing laws, at liberty to send his children to the German public school or to the French school ; and this freedom of choice should not prejudice him one way or the other.

Signed : *Guillaume.*

The chapter of the public schools is a dark page in the history of the Saar Territory, from 1920 to 1934. Both the parents, and the children who had to attend the schools, went through many hard conflicts. But, deeply to be regretted as this matter is, it is still heartening to discover that a great number of parents had the courage to withdraw their children from the Government Schools and to send them to the German public schools.

The change in currency was also put at the service of political interests. By virtue of the Treaty of Versailles, the German mark should be allowed to remain without causing any difficulties for the circulation of the French franc. The Direction of the mines, employing about 70,000 miners, set the machine in motion by paying wages and salaries in francs. The governmental Commission followed suit by using the franc in its transactions, and also forced its circulation upon the communities. By reason of the constant depreciation of the mark, the Commission put an end to the dual system in 1923, and replaced with French money the mark whose circulation had been established legally and by contract. Saar economy, braving the inflation of the mark as well as that of the franc later on, did not enter quiet waters until the franc was stabilised in 1928, and after the Franco-German customs agreement.

Furthermore, according to paragraph 27 of the Statutes of the Saar, the nationality of the inhabitants of the Territory should in no way be disputed. A Prussian inhabitant remains Prussian, a Bavarian remains Bavarian. But that did not prevent the governmental Commission, under French influence, from inaugurating the title of "inhabitant of the Saar-Saarman", and putting the Saarman in foreign lands under the protection of the French State. Every passport of the Saar inhabitants bears the inscription: "*Protégé de la France*".

The economic prescriptions of the Statutes of the Saar have a decided importance for the Territory. Now the Treaty of Versailles stipulated that the mines belonging before that time to Prussia and Bavaria, as well as the private enterprise of Hostenbach, should become the property of the French State, to compensate for the mines destroyed in the north of France! It also prescribed that, in case of a vote in favour of Germany in 1935, the mines should be bought back by their previous proprietors. As a matter of fact the motive that France gave for the possession of the mines has long since lost its value, in so far as the mines in the north of France had years ago outlived their pre-war output.

In spite of that fact, the French Administration was not content to exploit the existing mines, but in the course of the last few years, France has striven illegally to make economy further her political ends. And so she has attempted to attach to the coal region of the Warndt, the "coal-block" of great value which the Germans had never yet exploited. This region is situated on the immediate frontier of Lorraine, and on the German side no legal objection could have been raised, if France had sunk a shaft on this land. But no, the French company "Saar et Moselle" sank a shaft on Lorraine soil, close to the frontier. The French miner enters the Saar Warndt *underground*, and the Warndt coal-deposits are brought to light in Lorraine territory. In this same fashion the "Société Saar et Moselle", Wendel's company, acquired a concession in the Warndt, where they reach the great deposits of high-grade coal underground by way of their shafts in Kleinrosseln.

The purpose of this illegal penetration into a still-unexploited coal region is manifestly to create legal difficulties in the assignments of the post-plebiscite repurchase. At the Franco-Saar Economic Congress in 1927, the former director of the government mines, Defline, made an allusion according to which the grant of the claimed lands to the French companies represents, so to speak, a "rectification of the frontier".

These subterranean machinations, called in the popular tongue of the Saar "Diebesschächte" or thieving shafts, are a great detriment to the workers of the Saar, because numerous French miners are employed there, while, since 1924, nearly 30,000 Saar miners have been without work. Eminent experts have qualified as "a glaring violation of all the principles of international law" these encroachments of which the governmental Commission has, on the other hand, never taken notice. It is indeed very convenient for the French *Maitres de Forges* thus to obtain their coal from the Warndt, much nearer the surface of the ground than in their own territory; but it is hard to understand the governmental Commission which ought to be the protector of the popular interests and the vigilant guardian of respect for treaties, but which stands by, impassive to these unqualifiable manoeuvres of French big industry.

President Rault had announced his desire to inaugurate a truly democratic government in the Saar, yet the facts formally gave him the lie. It took great struggles before the governmental Commission decided to grant a semblance of popular representation, because M. Rault knew perfectly well that the Saarmen would combat with all their might those measures that were inspired by the French spirit. Paragraphs twenty-three

and twenty-six of the Statutes of the Saar stipulate popular cooperation in any changes of legislation or budget and so M. Rault finally had to swallow the bitter pill of allowing the Diet to subsist. But this parliament is in reality devoid of all the essential rights of a popular representation, and holds no other than the right to approve the laws and decrees proposed by the government.

However the Diet finally succeeded in winning general consideration and in enlightening the League to some extent on the political tendencies of France in the Saar, and in pointing out the German sentiments of the population. As a matter of fact, in the course of the many legislative sessions down to the present time, no deputy has yet been elected who was not of German sentiment. Below we give the results of the thirty seats of the Diet during the period of international administration :

I.) June 25, 1922 : Center, 16 ; Social-Democrats, 5 ; Communists, 2 ; Popular Liberals, 4 ; German Democrats, 1 ; Union of real-estate owners and farmers, 2 ; II.) January 27, 1924 : Center, 14 ; Social-Democrats, 6 ; Communists, 5 ; Popular Liberals and German Economists, 4 ; German Democrats, 1 ; III.) March 25, 1928 : Centre, 14 ; Social-Democrats, 5 ; Communists, 5 ; German-Saar Popular, 3 ; Economists, 1 ; Popular German National, 1 ; Christian Social, 1. IV.) March 13, 1932 : Centre, 14 ; Social-Democrats, 3 ; Communists, 8 ; Popular German-Saar, 2 ; National Socialists, 2 ; Economists, 1.

Finally, the attacks and encroachments of the governmental Commission of French sentiment, working in cooperation with the Administration of the mines, advanced even into the field of religion. The Saar minister of religious cults, the Danish Count Moltke-Huitfeld, at the beck and call of France, tried to cut off the Territory from the confessional connections with the dioceses of Trèves and of Spire, after he had failed in previous tentatives to cut it off from the evangelical church of the Rhineland. The bishops of these two German dioceses, just as the protestant leaders, opposed with all their might these several changes in the jurisdiction of their faithful. In a later chapter we shall explain the second means of intervention used by the French politicians, that is, the French propaganda.

V.

THE GOVERNING COMMISSION

French political history in the Saar, described in the preceding chapter, is indissolubly allied with that of the governing Commission which administrates the Territory in the name of the League of Nations. By whom is this Commission formed ?

According to the dispositions of the Treaty of Versailles it shall be composed of five members, named by the Council of the League, a Frenchman, a Saarman, and three members of other nationalities. This proportion was planned in view of establishing a fair equilibrium, because if the Frenchman is called quite naturally to defend the rights of France, the Saar member would hold the opposition, while the others, standing on strictly neutral ground, would have the task of seeing to it that everything is carried out justly and according to the general laws and prescriptions, and of safeguarding the interests and the prestige of the League of Nations.

The Commission thus composed shall take care that the population of the Territory be treated and governed in such a manner that they shall not be too heavily burdened by the imposition of the fifteen-year transition period.

It would be difficult to claim that the League was fortunate in her choice of members. Let us examine, in its general aspect, the character and the policy of this Commission.

Until the International Administration was instituted in February, 1920, the Saar Territory had to bear the dictatorial domination of the French troops. During this period all the machinations of propaganda and political influence were put in motion by the army of occupation. Newspapers, pamphlets, lectures, theatre, expositions, all were used to give the Saar population the best possible impression of French civilisation and culture. Added to these positive propaganda methods were still others of negative character : intimidation of the population oppression of all freedom to express pro-German sentiments, belittling allusions to the German government, and finally expulsion of undesirable persons, among whom were members of the Diet, mayors, deputies, teachers, members of the clergy, and other worthy individuals. During the miners' strike, March 26 to April 10, 1919, more than four hundred miners

were thrown out, some of whom were to be repatriated later.

In spite of all that, at the time of the entry of the French troops as well as during the fifteen months of military occupation, the attitude of the population was cold and reserved. The circumstance is the more remarkable in that the French troops did not limit themselves to parading their power but further considered it their mission to convince the Saar inhabitants of the justice of French political views. Naturally the press had to submit to a very rigorous censorship which even imposed upon local papers the publication of articles on "the French cultural movement in the Rhineland" or on the would-be "German atrocities". In case of refusal, the newspapers in question were suppressed. The French also established their own paper, *Der neue Saarkurier* (the new Saar courier) which breathed its last a few years later.

When in February, 1920, the governmental Commission, delegated by the League of Nations, began to function, and the reign of the generals came to an end, the population was comforted in the hope of a new era. But they were soon disillusioned. Far from being at an end, the struggle to keep the Saar German had only begun.

In spite of the statute stipulating that the well-being of the population must remain the chief end in view of the conduct of the government, and in spite of the assurance given by the first president of this government that he considered it his chief duty to win the confidence of the people through his neutrality, it would have been hard to overlook the manifest tendency toward a veritable annexation policy. The constitution of the first government confirmed this tendency. The first president, the French State Councillor, Rault, held in his hands the most important springs of action: the department of the interior, the foreign department, commerce, industry, labour, and social insurance. The power was shared, in perfect harmony with him, by the Belgian, Lambert, and the Dane, Count Moltke-Huitfeld. The former was director of the railroads, the postal department, the telegraph and public works. The latter directed the schools, public instruction and the department of justice. With these, in a minority, sat the Saar delegate, Alfred von Boch, directing the Department of Agriculture, of public welfare and of hygiene, and the Canadian, Waugh, directing finance, the forests, and the food department.

The Saar member, von Boch, soon noticed the futility of his position, and withdrew, giving his seat to the practicing doctor, Hector, from Saarlouis, who lined up immediately on the French side, until action was brought against him for bear-

ing false witness, and thus made it impossible for him to continue in office. He was replaced by Land, a notoriously incapable individual, and he in turn, not long afterwards, by the former syndical secretary, Kossman, who still holds his post today.

During the fourteen years of exceptional administration a few members of the Commission have courageously and openly supported the interests of the Saar population from a strictly neutral point of view. But this attitude won them the hostility of their pro-French colleagues. And thus it was that the Canadian, Waugh, frankly disconcerted by the French president, Rault, gave up his charge, and his successor, the Canadian, Stephens, who had adopted the same neutral attitude as his compatriot, withdrew in turn when he realised the futility of his struggle against a pro-French majority in the Council of Five.

A particularly striking circumstance in Rault's administration was that in all the chief administrative branches the important posts were confided to French directors who are still in office today, which very often places Saar functionaries under the control of French superiors. In order to use former Saar functionaries as political instruments for France, President Rault made a decree known as the "Beamtenstatut" (Statute of the functionaries) according to which the superiors enjoy the disciplinary right and the servants of the state cannot belong to big corporative organisations of the Reich. When they undertook a strike of protest, President Rault put the executive power in the hands of the troops. That was the signal for a brutal repression. The strike took an end because the forces in conflict were too unequal. But the president, far from acquiring the desired confidence, reaped a harvest of hate, for the functionaries had the support of the entire population behind them.

In an attempt to sever more and more the natural ties that bind the Territory to the Reich, the government hastened to institute a Supreme Court of Justice, composed of a majority of foreigners, and sitting at Saarlouis, at the express request of France. Besides, an administrative supreme tribunal, a regional insurance office, a superior direction of railroads, of the postal service, etc. further confirmed the political tendency to make the Territory (which, we repeat, is a part of the Reich, submitting temporarily to the administration of the League) an independent state. They even wished to grant her a would-be national flag, black, white and blue, but it is nowhere to be seen in the streets bedecked in the colours of Germany and the Swastika banner. A special coat-of-arms and Saar postage-stamps complete the properties for a supposed sovereign State.

During the first years the policy of the governing Commission in general was frankly French: in the choosing of new functionaries, in the customs system, in the rights of establishment, in the housing distribution, in the maintenance of an important garrison (contrary to the Statutes), in the disastrous combination of the bureaucratic manner with the military mentality, and last but not least, the constant pressure of the mining interests. Two out of the three "neutral" members of the Commission and the Saar member himself were chosen for the support of this disguised annexation policy. And so it is easy to understand that the Saar population soon experienced a great antipathy to the Commission, and that all that finally fell back on the League of Nations which is responsible for the acts of the Commission in that it names its members.

Nevertheless it is understandable that it was at that time very hard to stand up against the influence of an all-powerful France, wearing the halo of her heroic struggle against imperialism in defense of the rights of man. The Englishman, Cecil, and the Swede, Branting, were the first to react. They instigated the departure of M. Rault, who was replaced as president by a non-Frenchman. This set a precedent that has been followed ever since that time.

There is a certain document that illustrates, perhaps better than anything else, the way France exercised her preponderant influence upon the very soul of the governmental Commission from the beginning of the League's administration in the Saar. It is a declaration of a former member of the Commission, the Canadian, Mr. Waugh, to the press in 1923 at the expiration of his term. The most telling passages follow:

"During the three and one-half years that I was a member of the Commission, I had every day evident proofs that no member of the Commission was appreciated for his competence unless he were in accord with the French president. The latter received directly from Paris instructions that took absolutely no account of the dispositions of the Treaty of Versailles, or of the rights resulting therefrom for the inhabitants of the Saar. The League of Nations seemed to be incapable of restraining the French influence which was exercised without reserve upon the Belgian and Danish members of the Commission. The Dane was a simple instrument in the hands of the Frenchman and the Belgian and the three together had a constant majority within the Commission to carry out, in all debatable questions, the instructions from Paris. When Dr. Hector was elected by the Council of the League of Nations to represent in the government of the Saar the interests of the inhabitants, his obedience to the orders of the French government and his

direct relations with the latter became so manifest that he had to quit his post. His successor, Mr. Land, chosen by Mr. Hector himself, and the choice confirmed by the vote of the Council of the League of Nations, was, so to speak, even more subject, to suspicion than his predecessor. He was thoroughly limited without competence in the matter, and accepted from the start and in every case, the order of the president of the Commission.¹

The Commission at present is composed of Mr. Knox (England), president and Minister of the Interior; M. Morize (France), Minister of Finance; M. Zoricic (Yugoslavia), Minister of Cults and of Justice; M. von Ehrnrooth (Finland), Minister of Public Works; Mr. Kossman (Saar). It will be interesting to review the tendencies that animate these characters.

Mr. Knox is one of those rare Protestant Irishmen, of Scottish origin. Former Ambassadorial Counsellor to the British Government, he holds his present post thanks to the sympathies he enjoys in French circles. Indeed, Mr. Knox who, in his quality of a British subject, should have brought into the Commission the chivalrous tone and spirit characteristic of the Foreign Office, has only given continual evidence of his extraordinary phobia of everything connected with the Third Reich.

A Dutch journalist, not suspected of excessive sympathy for Germany, described him as "110% French". This qualification became in the Saar a popular definition for Mr. Knox. He continues in ill-disguised sympathy for the partisans of the *status quo*. He considers "neutral" all persons and actions tending to harm the German interests. This odd conception of his duties has effected for his person an impressive isolation. He noticed this immediately but it does not appear to trouble him, for he is content to cull the favour of a few officials who surround him and whom he sees as allies in that they reject, as he does, all things German. This is more than a prejudice, it is a sort of obsession. It would be difficult otherwise to explain Mr. Knox's zeal in the accomplishment of his task of suppressing the profoundly German character of the people confided to his administration. The Foreign Office itself could not refrain from giving him to understand that it was not satisfied with the proceedings of its representative. And if the former does not disown him openly it is probably to save the general prestige of British Diplomacy. The people of the Saar, so they say themselves, would have been better treated if the presidency had been confided even to a Frenchman. Such is his mentality, that he declared publicly, one day, that the

¹ Retranslated from the French.

German emigrants arrived in the Saar after Hitler had come into power, since they had left their country for political reasons and reasons of common right, were loyal personalities, representing in the Saar the very epitome of neutrality. In protecting them and taking them into his service, he believes that he is acting in the interests of the Saar.

The episodes that throw light on the character and the tendencies of the Commission President are innumerable. This year on the first of February the *Saarbruecker Abendblatt* published an open letter to Baron Aloisi in his capacity as Saar correspondent to the Council of the League of Nations, in order to stigmatise Mr Knox's policy toward the political emigrants and others. The author of the article made clear the resulting situation that unquestionably defies the moral sense of every civilised nation. Recalling to the Baron Aloisi that he himself comes from a country that first made impossible the shameful procedures of men of no conviction, it asked him to take measures to put an end to this unbearable situation. Mr. Knox, enraged, decreed a fortnight's suspension of the newspaper.

Another case : — the president of the Saar Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Karcher, an industrialist enjoying a good reputation in the circles of international commerce, held a speech upon the results obtained by Saar commerce since the Commission had held office. Mr. Karcher showed how the economic policies of the Commission, keeping in view immediate results without having a care for the future, were bound to favour exclusively the interests of France which could hardly be identified with those of the Saar. On the contrary, he said, the interests of the Saar, being traditionally allied with those of the Reich, the economic policy of the Saar, temporarily directed by the governmental Commission, should have kept in step with Germany economy in its new orientation.

This speech was not made to please the dictator of the Saar, who addressed a haughty letter to Mr. Karcher, conceived in insulting terms. The latter was obliged to answer to defend his reputation, based on his past integrity, and declaring that he objected to reproaches formulated in such incorrect manner. Mr. Knox then called a meeting of the Commission and made them pass a law authorising the government to deprive the President of the Chamber of Commerce of his authority. A protest vote on the part of the local parliament had, as usual, no effect.

March 11, 1934, the editor-in-chief of the *Saarbruecker Zeitung*, Doctor Hellbrueck, on the occasion of M. Knox's fiftieth birthday, published an open letter to tender him his

respectful wishes, but regretting, on the other hand, that they could not include any feeling of gratitude in view of the President's negligence to care for the true interests of the Saar.

Dr. Hellbrueck noted further that Mr. Knox had never spoken to the people since he had entered into office, that he had never sought any direct contact with them, on the contrary, always holding himself aloof without doing anything for the welfare or in the interests of the country. The people's disappointment had been all the greater, in that they had looked forward to an entirely different manner of approach in an Englishman, that is, that he would grant a German the same right to give open evidence of his national sentiments as he would claim for himself. Added to this is an impression of the personal hatred that Mr. Knox bears to National Socialism, without himself knowing how to govern in a democratic spirit. And that is why the people of the Saar see with astonishment and bitterness the measures that the President of the Commission considers necessary, his various prohibitions, his reports to Geneva and the claims that he lays there as just.

In spite of this state of affairs, no irreconcilable spirit dominates or blinds the Germans of the Saar, and that in spite of the fact that Mr. Knox went so far as to call in a foreign police force for the protection of the vote. Foreign troops have always been the favorite solution for all the votes imposed by the victorious Powers since the War. The Germans had their experience at Eupen-Malmedy and in Upper Silesia. This method served to obtain the desired result rather than to guarantee security. But in the meantime, confidence in the justice of the Treaty of Versailles has been shattered from the point of view of justice as well as from the moral standpoint. The practice of such a method would constitute a return to the immediately post-War proceedings.

Doctor Hellbrueck pointed out the existence of more convenient proceedings, more economical and suited to saving the Commission President the admission of his impotence to assure the security of the vote. It would be quite sufficient to render all parties truly neutral by imposing the duty of abstaining from all attacks upon the opposition party. Each party should, in future, carry on only positive propaganda, excluding all polemic publications, and bringing to the fore only the truthful end in view. Thus peace would be guaranteed, and that tranquillity and security so greatly desired by the people as well as by the Commission.

The article which we have just reviewed gives quite correctly the true attitude of the people of the Saar toward Mr. Knox,

whose Germanophobia has been in evidence particularly since the advent of Hitler in power.

Toward the end of the month of January, 1933, the National Socialist movement developed very actively in the Saar, and naturally enough Mr. Knox, a democrat by tradition, in his double capacity of President of the Commission and Minister of the Interior, immediately devised measures to take against the reaction produced in the Saar by the triumph of the National Socialist party in the Saar. Unfortunately, the methods which he considered it his duty to employ disconcerted very thoroughly the majority of the people who identified their German nationality with the Third Reich. His declarations were intended to counteract their loyalty to their native land, but did nothing more than to complete the impopularity of M. Knox. The press did its share in forming this opinion at times even laying at his door the responsibility for certain autonomist initiatives seconded by the Maitres de Forges.

In January, 1934, during the session of the Council of the League of Nations, the German Front as well as the Saarbruecken Chamber of Commerce presented two petitions declaring that almost the entire Saar population was rallying to the Reich's newly created order. The petitioners emphasised the fact that the Government Commission tried to influence the course of events by direct intervention, through a policy hostile to that part of the population that was rallying to the Government of the Reich and favouring their adversaries. The German Front also stated its willingness to struggle from the outset against the hiring of neutral police for the protection of the plebiscite. The solemn protest was raised not only against the call to arms of an interested Power, but also against the presence of any foreign troops in the Saar Territory.

Mr. Knox hastened to join to these two documents a note that pointed out the gravity of the situation in the Saar in order to justify his own severity. The exaggeration of this pessimistic note led even M. Paul-Boncour, French representative to the Council, to react with a certain amount of reserve. He merely recalled the duty of the League of Nations to assure the guarantee of the plebiscite, and thereby to carry out the mission confided to her by the Treaty of Versailles. On his side the British representative, Sir John Simon, did not conceal his disapproval of his colleague's policies. However, Mr. Knox's mandate was confirmed, and as the Council had expressed its decision to take all measures, even the most severe, to safeguard the freedom of the plebiscite, the President, on his return from the Saar, continued the system he had inaugurated and all his drastic measures went into effect.

Beside Mr. Knox the Governing Commission includes, as Minister of Finance, M. Morize, a Frenchman. A former history professor and nephew by marriage to the first Commission President, M. Rault, M. Morize is openly in sympathy with the Maitres de Forges. A protege of the latter, he was elected at the moment when his uncle withdrew, although he had been politically active with M. Rault, in his capacity as Secretary-General of the Commission and as the French representative there. Enjoying the combined legislative and executive powers, as well as the advantage of holding the portfolios of commerce and industry, he constructed for himself an autocratic regime, very much in favour of his compatriots and particularly of his friends. For instance they tell of how he deposited at a two percent rate of interest in the French banks of the region almost all the administration money. These banks then made loans to the German banks at a ten percent rate. It was only as the result of an energetic campaign led by the local press and various Saar organisations that this state of affairs was partially modified, and that a part of the funds were deposited directly in the German banks.

Another notorious case is that of the seven million franc loan floated on public funds of the Saar for the benefit of a construction enterprise of Ehrhardt & Sehmer. Another still, the illegal tax-exemption amounting to some eighty millions of the Steel Works of Dilling, a large proportion of whose stocks are in French hands, and whose Council of Administration is presided over by M. Theodore Laurent.

By reason of his long experience in these matters, M. Morize is, for Mr. Knox, an indispensable advisor whose suggestions he must needs follow without fail. This circumstance cannot fail to arouse criticism, even in certain French industrial circles, who are afraid that such undisguised machinations against all that is German might compromise future economic relations between the Saar and France. M. Morize makes no secret of his leanings toward the maintenance of the *status quo* and therefore supports the movements of the separatists. Although no more than an ordinary member of the governmental Commission and not its president, M. Morize may be considered in reality as the *Deus ex machina* of the government policy, all the more since according to the statutes of the Diet, the latter may intervene only under the title of a consultant.

Among his colleagues is the liaison-man for the governmental Commission and the French State, a mine-owner, M. Octave Raspail, retired captain who lived in Switzerland during the War, where he became acquainted with M. Morize

who was obliged to stay there as an escaped prisoner from Germany. Thanks to their friendly relations, M. Morize, on becoming a member of the Commission, obtained for M. Raspail the post of Director of the French Government Mines, although he had had no technical education justifying his appointment to a post entailing such great responsibility.

M. Zoricic, from Yugoslavia, holds the portfolio of Cults and of Justice. Croatian by birth and of Austro-Hungarian origin, he is one of those who approve of the Serbian governmental policy in Belgrade. And for this reason he is well looked-upon by the French government to which he is thoroughly devoted.

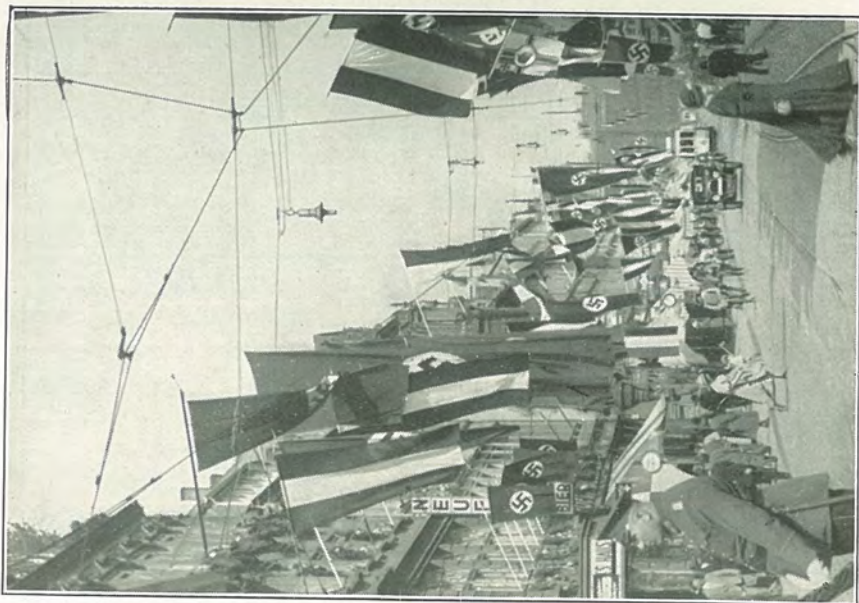
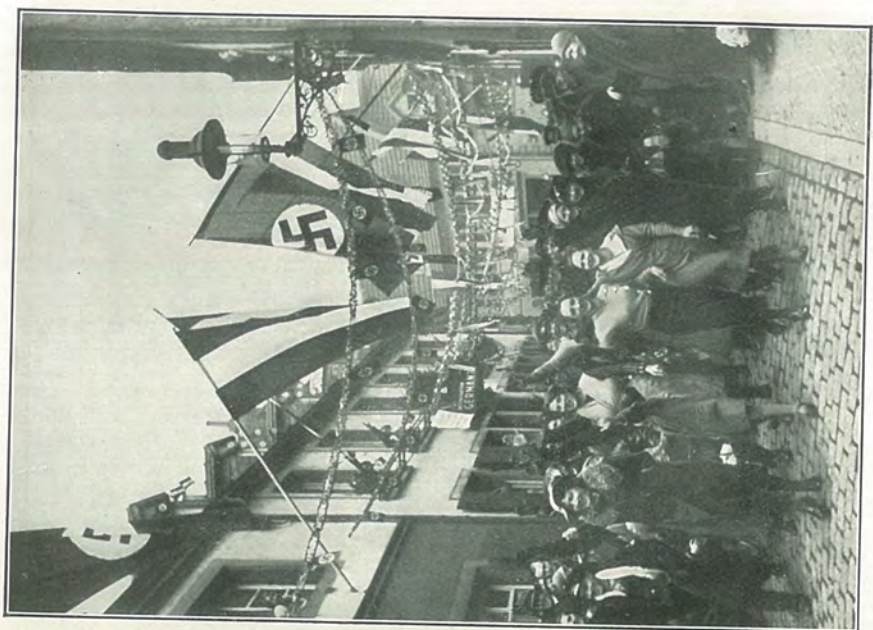
At the head of Public Works is the Finn, von Ehrnrooth, member of the Legion of Honour. Very ambitious, he openly aspires to the post of Secretary-General of the League of Nations. He has, however, tried to win the sympathies of the people by means of a pretended admiration for Germany, which his actions deny. In fact, he follows faithfully the Francophile policy of his President. In an administrative way, his activity is reduced to very little, for public works in the Saar have been limited, during his term in office, to the bare necessities without a care for the future. Since the budget favours the Government Mines and the taxes that should fill the public treasury have therefore been reduced to a mere nothing, the possibility of carrying out important works is practically inexistant.

The last member of the Commission is Mr. Kossman, a former Minister and once a representative of the Catholic Centre in the Reichstag who is, obviously from the above account, kept in a perpetual minority by his colleagues. However the populace is grateful to him for the efforts he makes to defend their interests as best he can before the Commission which, they call the "Negerregierung" (Nigger government), or "Kolonialsystem" (Colonial management).

In conclusion, we may affirm frankly that the principles that inspired the Statutes of the Saar, that is, the maintenance for fifteen years of a government of purely neutral character in calm preparation for the plebiscite of 1935, these principles have been wronged and distorted by those persons to whom the League of Nations entrusted this task. We may add further that the resolutely pro-French policy of the Commission members has brought no moral benefit to France for the natural reaction provoked in the Saar has been all to the advantage of Germany. And that is what made M. Charles Drouard, the very objective President of the Franco-Saar Chamber of Commerce, say that



13. The Saar's declaration of loyalty near the Niederwald (August 27, 1933).



14-15. January 30, 1934, in Saarbruecken.

“ to change the plebiscite, it would need a sort of miracle. One cannot ask those who have charge of French interests to found their actions on the expectation of the miracle. That would lead them into the most serious disillusionment and cause them the worst hang-over. These facts must not come as a surprise. Not only the Germans but the majority in the Saar, give the question a national character which outshines all secondary considerations. To understand this, one must only think that would be the vote of the citizens of Nancy if an unfortunate war had separated them from France for fifteen years. And that is why many good Frenchmen not only admit the probability of the return of the Saar to Germany, but recommend it as the most reasonable solution, best conforming to French interests at large.”

We now proceed to the executive organ of the government, the police force. According to the Statutes of the Territory, the maintenance of order is confided solely to the local police. As a matter of fact, every community has its own police force. The City of Saarbruecken has, for example, 250 men that wear police uniform. This figure includes the personnel charged with executive power as well as the administrative personnel. The judiciary police (twelve men) does not wear uniform. The police force of Saarbruecken must submit to the orders of a prefect. The entire Territory has one thousand policemen.

Despite the dispositions of the Treaty, President Knox has not hesitated to place among the police a certain number of Frenchmen whose evident mission is to watch over their colleagues of the Saar. Besides, and still in contravention to the Statute and despite the protests raised in Geneva, after the National Socialists had taken power in the Reich, he hired German emigrants who had left the Reich because they were notorious Social Democrats or even because they had been condemned for delinquency.

This group is directed by three persons who enjoy the heartfelt confidence of M. Fabiani leader of French espionage in the Saar. It will be rather interesting to recall a few biographical notes on these men, by name Machts, Lehnert, and Ritzel.

Machts, Hartwig, born in Jena, July 16, 1895. A former soldier, receiving the grade of lieutenant in 1918, he entered the police force in Thuringen and became judicial Commissary. He became one of the most active agents of Marxism. Dismissed by Frick, Prime Minister of National Socialistic Germany, Machts went to Berlin and entered the service of the Prefect Gresinsky who made him lieutenant. After Hitler came into power, Machts was again dismissed on application of the law

on officials carrying on a profession. Through socialist intermediaries he established relations in the Saar and became judicial Commissary on the first of December, 1933 and then advanced to the post of Chief Police Inspector. This man succeeded in bringing under his own control many branches of influence and profits thereby to further the socialist and pro-French tendencies that arouse all his sympathy. This fact alone is sufficient to indicate his aptitude to fulfill his mission the political character of which must needs provoke friction with the majority of the population who are fundamentally German and anti-marxistic.

Commissary Machts was quite lately the victim of an attempt on his life, by an irresponsible person. He killed his aggressor. President Knox thought he ought to discover the motives of the attempt in the attacks of the Press and in the German radio broadcast. But he followed a false scent. He himself bears the responsibility because he entrusted Machts with such an high office and thus provoked in the people a feeling that can easily bring with it such excesses. Also, the generally accepted opinion of the people should not be overlooked. They say that this "attempt", committed in the most crowded section of Saarbruecken, was mere pretence and that the author fired a blank. No passer-by was wounded, in spite of the traffic in the street, and no trace of bullets was found. This point of view was developed in a protest to the League of Nations.

The severest reproach that the people make to Machts is that he, once a German officer at the Front, tried several times to inflict wounds upon himself in order to be exculpated afterwards. An action brought before the regional tribunal of Eisenach in 1930 revealed these facts, confirmed under oath by his former comrades. This raises rather difficult situations for his subordinates, former combatants for the most part, who did their duty during the War.

Lehnert, Gustave, born at Crefeld, July 6, 1896. Has been since November 1, 1933, in Saarbruecken as judicial Commissary. Until March 3, 1933, he was an officer of the judicial police in Essen where he was known as a capable man. Carried on by the political current, he became one of the leaders of the Reichsbanner. Suddenly he disappeared, to reappear in the Saar, first at Puettingen, where he made pro-French propaganda. The Germans suspect him of having been a French spy. Any how Lehnert is an admitted confidant of the Chief of the espionage, Fabiani, and is interested exclusively in political affairs. He is a subordinate to the Alsatian, Heimbürger, director of this branch of the governmental Commission.

But the following case marks the high point in Mr. Knox's inexplicable policy :

Ritzel, Henry, born in Offenbach, April 10, 1893. Has been connected with the government of the Saar in the capacity of judicial Commissary since November, 1933. In Germany his last position was that of Mayor of Michelstadt in Hessen. There he was guilty of embezzlement of state funds, and preferred to take flight. Ritzel became judicial Commissary in the Saar and was a candidate for the post of Chief of the Political Police. A convinced marxist, he makes political agitation in this direction. It is he who draws up the reports that go to Geneva, takes care of political delinquencies and and exploits them cleverly to the interest of the French. He succeeded the Chief of the Political Police who was retired from his functions, and is at present at the head of the entire judicial Police Force.

Mr. Knox went so far as to entrust to him quite recently the examination of the documents seized in the course of the searches made in the meeting places of the German Front. He was charged with drawing up the official report. If Mr. Knox charges with missions of such importance people of this sort who put themselves at the disposal of a foreign government against their own people, such an act cannot be qualified in too severe terms. The prestige of the League of Nations does not benefit thereby. The fact that these emigrants, officials bothered by the new regime in the Reich, openly frequent reunions of Social Democrats, proves their intention of not even pretending, for outside appearances, to be objective. Certain revelations of members of the Socialist party have brought to light to what point these emigrant policemen have participated in the propaganda against the government of the Reich, among the people of the Saar. And that is why the clear conscience of this people cannot fail to be aroused against these proceedings, which they have repeatedly pointed out in Geneva."

The President of the governmental Commission has, as we know, made several requests to the Council of the League of Nations to obtain the institution of an international police force during the operations of the plebiscite. To justify his request Mr. Knox attributed to the German Front the responsibility for acts of terrorism. In a report signed by M. Pirro, chief of the organisation, and by MM. Levacher, Roehling and Kiefer, in the name of the fraction of the German Front contained in the Saar Diet, the Saar protested against this insinuation, and emphasized the fact that the organisation demanded the strictest discipline of all its members as well as the strict

observance of all the laws of the Saar. And in future it guaranteed that order would continue to reign in its ranks.

During the fifteen past years the Saar population has kept order and calm even in the most critical circumstances. At the time of the military occupation, from 1918 to 1920, they never gave the military authorities occasion to intervene. When the governmental Commission took office in the Saar and the French troops remained in flagrant violation of the Treaty of Versailles, this disregard for the law still did not change their attitude. From 1918 to 1924 thirteen victims fell to the bullets of French soldiers. The Saar had to bear her cross. The state of nervous tension provoked in 1923 by the entry of the French and the Belgians in the Ruhr was aggravated by the hundred-days' strike of the Saar workers who were struggling for their existence. But in spite of the moral oppression, in spite of the arbitrary acts of the military occupants, in spite of the assassination of a Saar miner, Johan Trenz, by a separatist, the order was never troubled by a public revolt. The men of the Saar have given proof of their discipline and of their pacifistic sentiments and live up to the judgment published March 12, 1927, by the former President of the governmental Commission before the Council of the League of Nations. Here is the opinion of Mr. G. W. Stephens :

The population of the Saar is a population that loves order, that is proud and filled with patriotic sentiments. The governmental Commission could only succeed in its task by virtue of reciprocal respect between an intelligent administration and a people worthy of consideration."

In the June, 1934, session, the Council of the League of Nations gave proof of its objectivity. It rejected the attempt of Mr. Knox to institute an international police force, and did no more than to authorize the governmental Commission to augment, in case of need, with elements recruited among the inhabitants of the Territory, the main police force and the local police during the period of popular consultation. Furthermore, in case the Commission deemed it necessary to add to the recruits with elements foreign to this Territory, the latter must possess a knowledge of the German language¹. Be that as it may, the presence among the Saar police of the doubtful elements whom we have mentioned previously is not the best guarantee of liberty and of the secret and sincere vote demanded by paragraph 34 of the addenda to the Treaty of Versailles.

This presence is not only contrary to the spirit and the

¹ It is known what attitude the Swiss government adopted toward this matter by advising her nationals not to enter the auxiliary police.

letter of the Treaty, which in stipulating that "only a local police force shall be organised in the Saar for the maintenance of order" wished, without a doubt, to indicate the native police force to the certain exclusion of the emigrants; but even further it constitutes a partiality for one of the Powers directly interested and a lack of tact toward the people. The Marxists, whom Mr. Knox received in the ranks of his Police Force, left the Reich with hatred in their hearts against the government in power. Thus they are the declared enemies of official Germany. To entrust them with the public functions in a territory, although temporarily submitting to the administration of the League, has remained German, is a gross disregard for the principles which direct international diplomatic relations.

On the other hand, putting the maintenance of order in the hands of emigrants who, through their political views, see enemies in the majority of the population, means sacrificing the disinterest inherent in the functions of the police, and making them instruments of their own party.

This flagrant impartiality is epitomised when the President of the Commission charges these same "partisan-policemen" to carry on a search in the meeting places of the German Front which includes all the Nationalists thus giving the police a chance to examine the archives of their worst adversaries and to bring forth the documents that might be most useful to carry on their own propaganda.

If Mr. Knox really wished to affirm the guarantees of the maintenance of order, why not make use, for example, of the firemen whose sense of duty and discipline is well known the whole world over? Thus he would have reliable men, within call at any moment, respected by the population of whom they are a part, instead of irritating a people who are inspired by a respect for order recognised even by the Commission of the plebiscite. One would search in vain, before the tribunals of the plebiscite, for any acts justifying the cry of alarm that the separatists, supported by Mr. Knox, broadcast in Geneva.

VI.

THE CONDITIONS OF THE PLEBISCITE

According to the articles 45 and ff. of the Treaty of Versailles, after a period of fifteen years during which an international government administers the Territory of the Saar, at the beginning of 1935 then, the inhabitants of the Territory shall, by a plebiscite, make known under whose rule they choose to be put.

A vote shall be made by community or district and shall decide upon one of the three following alternatives :

- a) maintenance of the government established by the Treaty of Versailles,
- b) union with France,
- c) union with Germany.

The right to vote shall be accorded, without distinction of sex to all persons aged twenty or more on the day of the vote, and who inhabited the Territory on the day of the signing of the Treaty. The other rules, the conditions, and the date of the vote shall be set, according to the Treaty, by the Council of the League of Nations in order to assure freedom, secrecy, and security to the voters.

And so, at its 178th session in January, 1934, the Council of the League heard the report of Baron Aloisi (Italy) on the question of the Saar. Mr. Aloisi first recalled textually paragraph 34 of the Statutes and then brought out the far-reaching importance of the problems of this popular consultation which he said made it advisable for the Council immediately to take the necessary measures in preparation.

His report was approved unanimously by the Council, who at the same time, at the Baron Aloisi's suggestion, appointed Messers Madariaga (Spain) and Cantilo (Argentine) to join the Committee of Three, under Mr. Aloisi's presidency. They would have the duty, according to the Treaty, of preparing for the plebiscite with the help of technical experts. The Council expressed its willingness to fulfill all the incumbent duties concerning the preparation and the execution of the popular vote in the Territory in 1935, in order to " assure the freedom, the secrecy and the sincerity of the votes ".

In view of the report that was to be submitted, the Council bade the Committee :

a) to study the measures that might assure all appropriate means of protecting the populace from all pressure and the execution of any menaces that might affect the sincerity of the vote ;

b) to study the suggestions that the governmental Commission might present regarding the maintenance of order during the period of the plebiscite."

This nomination was the object of favourable comment in the Saar Press, which regretted, however, that the exact date of the plebiscite had not yet been set. It congratulated itself that the French project of bringing foreign troops into the Saar to assure the liberty and security of the vote, had failed in face of the opposition of Great Britain and Italy.

The *Saarbruecker Zeitung*, speaking for the German Front, greeted the nomination of Baron Aloisi and of Mr. Cantilo, Argentine delegate, as a guarantee of the neutrality and disinterest of the new committee. As for Mr. de Madariaga, the Spanish delegate, the paper hoped that he himself would dissipate the grave apprehensions that his former ambassadorship to France and his well-known liberal and democratic tendencies might raise in the Saar.

Furthermore the paper said if Mr. de Madariaga, in accord with his colleagues from Italy and the Argentine, was resolved to free politics in the Saar from the influence of emigrants who are not themselves voters, and to take account of the national will of the indigenous population, then not only the latter, but the entire German people, would gladly proclaim his disinterest and his neutrality. That would be the greatest favour he could do for world peace and for the improvement of Franco-German relations ¹.

In its June, 1934, session, the Council of the League of Nations approved the agreements made under the auspices of the Committee of Three to settle upon the condition and the date of the popular consultation which would decide the fate of the Territory.

It might be useful to re-view the principal points of the report presented by Baron Aloisi in the name of the Committee :

As far as the freedom and the sincerity of the vote are concerned, the Committee has estimated that these would be

¹ As a result of a political crises, Mr. de Madariaga was replaced by Mr. López Oliván, Spanish Ambassador in Bern.

compromised in such cases where persons taking part therein might have reason to fear ulterior measures of force of which they would be the object by reason of their political attitude during the administration of the Territory by the League of Nations, and in connection with the popular vote. They considered that the very eventuality of such measures might alone affect the freedom and the sincerity of the votes.

On the other hand the Committee seemed to take it for granted that the Powers who signed the Treaty had, by stipulating that the vote was to take place in conditions assuring liberty, secrecy and sincerity, thereby assumed the obligations that the execution of these stipulations implies.

Therefore first of all the Committee was anxious to obtain, without interference from the dispositions of the Council (see paragraph 39 of the Statutes), from the signatory Powers directly interested (Germany and France) engagements on their will to fulfill the obligations resulting from the Treaty, and clear statements concerning the practical order and the special procedures that they were ready to accept as a guarantee for the accomplishment of these obligations. The Council was to find, attached to the report, a correspondence on the subject between the President of the Committee and the said governments.

Under these conditions the Committee proposed to the Council to adopt the following resolution :

“ The Council, in view of paragraph 34 of the addenda to article 50 of the Treaty of Versailles, decides as follows:

1. The Council, acting upon the declarations of the governments of France and Germany about the execution of the obligations resulting from Paragraph 34 of the addenda to article 50 of the Treaty of Versailles, reserves the right to examine in proper time and on the basis of paragraph 39, the conditions according to which there might be extended to those inhabitants of the Territory that have not the right to vote, the benefits of the engagements that the two governments have taken through the declarations (see above) concerning the voter ;

2. The Council shall see to the accomplishment of these engagements, which it considers as an essential condition of the popular consultation ;

3) The Council sets the date of the vote on Sunday, January 13, 1935.”

As measures of practical order for the organisation and the execution of the plebiscite, the Committee proposed the organisation of a special Commission of the Plebiscite, under the authority of the Council of the League of Nations having

the attributes of organisation, direction and control, ready to submit to the Council of the League of Nations, or, in case of need, to its Committee, all useful declarations and dispositions not accounted for within the limits of its regular dispositions.

The governmental Commission of the Saar shall lend its assistance to the Commission of the plebiscite by seeing to it that the latter receives from public authorities the help and the means that it might require from them.

The report proposes that the Plebiscite Commission begin its functions on July 1, 1934.

The report then presents certain suggestions for the order of the plebiscite, including sixty articles, of which Articles three to nine define the right to vote.

Art. 3 : The right to vote in the plebiscite belongs, without distinction of sex or nationality, to every person complying to the following conditions : a) having reached or passed the age of twenty years at the date of the vote ; b) having the capacity of inhabitant of the Territory on the date of June 28, 1919.

Art. 4 : The capacity of inhabitant, mentioned in the preceding article, shall be attributed to whomsoever had his habitual residence at the place and the date indicated in the preceding article, and had settled there with the intention of remaining.

If the intention has not been expressed, it may be deduced from the factual circumstances. The factual circumstances are established, either by means of acts and documents existing in the public offices, or by any other means of proof. If the habitual residence is proven, one may take for granted that this residence was chosen to be maintained if there is no reason for believing the contrary.

Art. 5 : Temporary residence in the Territory on June 28, 1919, does not bring with it the capacity of an inhabitant. On the other hand, temporary absence from the Territory on the exact date of June 28, 1919, of persons inhabiting the latter in the sense of the preceding article (for example by reason of military service, study or imprisonment or expulsion) does not in itself denote the loss of the capacity of inhabitant.

Art. 6 : The fact alone of having done military service in the Territory does not determine the capacity of inhabitant. The right to vote does not belong to whomsoever resided in the Territory in military or civil service only following the needs of the military occupation.

Art. 7 : The residence of minors, on June 28, 1919, shall be the same as that of their parents or guardians. The residence of parents or guardians shall not be considered in the

case of a minor who, at that time, was living separated from his parents or guardian and was earning his own living. The married woman shall have the residence of her husband, unless there be a legal separation, or the wife have established her own habitual residence away from that of her husband.

Article ten stipulates that the result of the vote shall be determined by a union of communities (Buergermeisterei) and for the communities that do not form a part of such a union, by communities, and that after the actual voting, each union of communities and each community that is not a part of such a union constitute a voting circumscription.

Articles 11 to 16 define the offices instituted on the occasion of the plebiscite: communal committee instituted in each voting circumscription, circuit office in each circuit, plebiscite tribunal in the Territory.

The articles regulate: the establishment of the voting lists; the claims; the procedure of the vote; the voting stations; the operations of the vote; the penal dispositions.

All persons invested with public function on the occasion of the plebiscite shall take the following oath: — I swear to observe loyally the laws of the Territory, and, to use the power with which I have been entrusted as a man of honour and of conscience.

Concerning Article 10 of the regulations, the report of the Committee interprets as follows the stipulation of the Treaty that the vote shall take place by community or by district: According to the Committee, the Treaty points out a method that shall permit the appreciation of the results of the plebiscite. The vote shall therefore be the object of separate calculations in each union of communities (Buergermeisterei) and each community not forming a part of such a union.

As for the measures of judicial order to be taken during the period of the plebiscite, the Committee proposed the institution of a superior plebiscite tribunal in the Territory as well as eight circuit tribunals. These jurisdictions shall handle — according to special prescriptions which shall be dictated further —:

1. any contestations concerning the inscriptions on the lists of those who have a right to the vote, and concerning the validity of the operation of the vote;
2. any infractions covered by the regulations of the plebiscite;
3. any infractions of the common law in so far as they have bearing on the object of the popular consultation, committed before, during, or after the operations of the plebiscite.

The date of the opening of the offices shall be set by the commission of the plebiscite in accord with the Committee of the Council. Magistrates of the superior tribunal shall be named by the president of the Council of the League of Nations after he has consulted with his colleagues.

In consideration of the measures for the maintenance of public order, the Committee deemed it wise to make the necessary preparations to assure, in every eventuality, the maintenance of order by the reinforcement of the state police and the local police. Consequently the Committee proposed that the governmental Commission in the Saar be authorized to increase, if need be, the forces of the state police and local police during the period of the popular consultation, as far as possible by recruiting elements chosen among the inhabitants of the Territory. In case the governmental Commission deemed it necessary to recruit further among elements foreign to the Territory, the Council of the League of Nations, through its Committee, would give it every assistance to this effect.

The necessary expenses would be charged to the expense fund of the plebiscite. For this purpose the French and German governments, as well as the governmental Commission of the Saar, shall be requested to advance immediately sufficient sums to cover these expenses.

Because of the limitation of the treasury resources, the governmental Commission of the Saar shall be requested to advance one million French francs. It shall also be requested 1) to furnish free of charge the offices and meeting places needed by the Commission of the plebiscite, by the tribunal of the plebiscite, by their personnel, as well as by every other office that might be created for the service of the plebiscite; 2) to assure, free of charge, the transportation by rail of the members of these divers offices, of their personnel, and of the material necessary to their activity.

The governments of Germany and France shall be requested to advance each five million French francs, with the understanding that if these funds proved insufficient, the Committee of the Council would request them to advance an additional sum.

The most important point, and at the same time the most delicate, of the conferences that preceded the final draught of the report of the Committee (approved afterwards unanimously by the Council), was incontestably the guarantee that had to be obtained from the interested parties, to assure the freedom, the secrecy and the sincerity of the votes.

Mr. Aloisi addressed to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs in France and Germany identical letters in which, after having

remarked that the liberty and the sincerity of the vote would be compromised in cases where the persons taking part therein might have reason to fear measures of ulterior rigor of which they might be the object by reason of their political attitude during the administration of the Territory by the League of Nations, in connection with the object of the vote, and that the mere eventuality of such measures might be of a nature to affect the freedom and the sincerity of the votes — he requested the governments of Germany and of France to declare solemnly to the Council their extreme willingness to fulfill the obligations resulting from the Treaty and to define the measures of practical order and the special proceedings that they were ready to accept in order to guarantee the accomplishment of these obligations.

To this letter Mr. Neurath, for the German government, and M. Barthou, for the French government, made identical replies. The text of the letter follows :

Mister President :

In reference to your letter of June 1, 1934, concerning the plebiscite in the Saar Territory, I have the honour, in the name of the German (French) government, of making known the following :

I. The German (French) government without interference of the dispositions of paragraph 39 of the addenda to article 50 of the Treaty of Versailles, engages :

a) to abstain from all direct or indirect pressure of a nature to affect the freedom and the sincerity of the votes ;

b) to abstain likewise from all persecution, reprisal, or discrimination in regard to persons having the right to vote by reason of their political attitude during the administration by the League of Nations in connection with the object of the popular consultation ;

c) to take the needful measures to prevent or repress every action of their countryman contrary to these engagements.

II. If a dispute should arise between Germany (France) and a member of the Council of the League of Nations on the subject of the application or the interpretation of the engagements taken by the present declaration, the German (French) governments accepts that this dispute be carried before the Permanent court of arbitration, according to the dispositions of the convention of the Hague of October 18, 1907, for the peaceful regulation of international conflicts, in order that it (the Court) may decide the dispute and the measures to be taken, without interference of the rights of the Council of the

League of Nations in consequence of the mission confided to it to see to the carrying out of these engagements.

III. Furthermore, the German (French) government accepts that for a transition period of one year dating from the establishment of a definite government, the superior tribunal of the plebiscite be maintained under the following conditions :

a) All persons having the right to vote in the Saar shall be able to lodge with the superior tribunal of the plebiscite a plaint based upon pressure, persecution, or a measure of reprisal or discrimination by reason of his political attitude during the administration of the Territory by the League of Nations in connection with the object of the popular consultation. The plaint, in order to deserve consideration, shall indicate an act accomplished within the Territory of the Saar or a decision emanating from the existant authorities in this territory or in the territorial circumscriptions to which the parties of the said territory shall be attached.

b) The said tribunal shall be competent to decide upon said complaints and to order all measures of appropriate reparation, pecuniary or otherwise ; no decision, even of judiciary order, coming under the above conditions, shall prevail against the decision of the tribunal of the plebiscite.

c) In the case of penal or administrative persecutions outside the Territory, all persons having the right to vote in the Saar, thus persecuted, shall, under the same conditions, be able to demand of the tribunal of the plebiscite to declare whether the persecution is contrary to the engagements made in the present declaration ; the persecution shall be suspended until the tribunal has come to a decision, and abandoned if the decision of the latter requires it.

The German (French) government engages to accept all dispositions to assure the execution of the decisions rendered under the conditions above defined.

Yours etc.

Signed : *Freiherr von Neurath (Barthou)*.

These two letters no doubt constitute a satisfactory solution of a debate that has not failed to present difficulties, moreover hardly avoidable. The task was all the more delicate as the prestige of the League of Nations was at stake. Germany showed herself ready for conciliation in order that the people of the Saar might at last glimpse the day of their return to the Fatherland. But, quite justly, this spirit of conciliation gives Germany the right to expect that no more tentatives will be

made to interfere with the plebiscite, and that the offices controlling the plebiscite will operate with perfect impartiality and tact. Since all hope of the separatists to cancel the plebiscite was gone as soon as the situation became clear, Germany hopes that the governmental Commission will be willing to help the Commission of the plebiscite loyally in the accomplishment of its task, so that the freedom and the sincerity of the vote will truly be assured in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles.

On the fourth of June were made known the names of the three candidates presented by the Council for the Commission of the plebiscite :

1. Judge H. Montot (Switzerland);
2. Governor Rohde (Sweden);
3. Mr. de Jongh (State-official, Holland).

The nomination was retarded longer than was expected because new difficulties arose in the designation of the president after several Swiss gentlemen had refused to accept the post. Finally, on June 13th, President Vasconcellos of the League of Nations nominated messers de Jongh, Rohde and the Prefect, Henry (Switzerland), since Judge Montot had declined his nomination.

In accord with the resolution adopted by the Council of the League, on June 4, the President appointed, on August 30, 1934, the members of the tribunals of the plebiscite. As president of the superior tribunal, he appointed Mr. Galli Biudo (Italy), First President of the Court of Appeal in Genoa; as vice-president Mr. Meredith James Creed (Ireland). As judges of the superior tribunal he named two Swiss, a Portuguese, a Swede, a Spaniard and a Norwegian. As (juge d'instruction) Grand Inquisitor a Luxemburgian; as (avocat-general) Attorney General an Italian and as his substitute another Luxemburgian.

For the Circuit Tribunals, the appointed judges belong to the following nationalities: Yugoslavia, Latvia, Holland (two), Norway, Sweden, Luxemburg and Denmark. The substitute (avocat-general) attorney, specially attached to the circuit tribunals, is Mr. Toribalo Mario (Italy).

The Commission of the plebiscite began its functions on July 2, 1934. It published a notice, appealing to the kindly cooperation of the populace in view of assuring the liberty, security, and sincerity of the vote. The notice was addressed especially to officials in the Territory, of whom the Commission expects the widest cooperation in the accomplishment of its task.

VII.

THE SAAR AND THE THIRD REICH

We have seen how the Franco-German negotiations on the Saar, foreseen at the time of Briand and Stresemann, failed the first time in 1930 because of the immoderate demands of the French government. France sought to assure for herself political and economic advantages in the Saar that would reach beyond 1935. She tried at first to reserve the exclusive right of exploitation of the mines until this time, while demanding for later the institution of a government in common with Germany. According to France's wishes, Germany's right of repurchase should be limited to those coal-beds already in exploitation. This limitation would have permitted the Republic to remain in possession of the Warndt Coal-Basin. Also, in accord with the governmental Commission, the closed contracts between the Treasury and the mining companies of Lorraine, concerning the deposits in the Warndt, were to continue in effect after 1935. To these excessive demands the German negociators held up the right of the Reich to reestablish the *status quo ante*, and to obtain the return of the mines to the advantage of the former owners, that is Prussia, and Bavaria, since Germany could not negotiate the return of the Saar under conditions unworthy of her Government.

From 1930 until Hitler's advent in power, the question of the Saar remained undecided between France and Germany. The world-wide economic crisis kept the German Government sufficiently occupied to push all other complications into the background, especially when, as in the Saar, it was an economic as well as a political question. And on the other hand the foundry owners were not anxious to upset a situation that was momentarily all to their advantage.

The year 1933, which brought Hitler's advent to the head of the Reich Government, placed the question of the Saar on Germany's political program, and the Wilhelmstrasse expressed its desire to come to a definite agreement on the question with France, without awaiting the date of the plebiscite. In his Ruedesheimer speech, at the Niederwald monument, before 100,000 people of the Saar who came to hear the Fuehrer for the first time, Hitler declared that of the three solutions foreseen by the Treaty, Germany could accept that

one only that meant the return of the Territory to her government. He said : — We have manifested countless times our wish for peace. No one among us wants the property of another, no one thinks to incorporate in the Reich a foreign people, but those whom Providence created as members of a people must form a part of that people. If treaties must be respected, that applies to the other party as well as to us. The treaties express the clearly defined right of the Saar populace to decide its own fate. We have sought an understanding with France. This understanding would be impossible on one condition : if it implied that the Reich denied the Saar or that the Saar denied the Reich. —

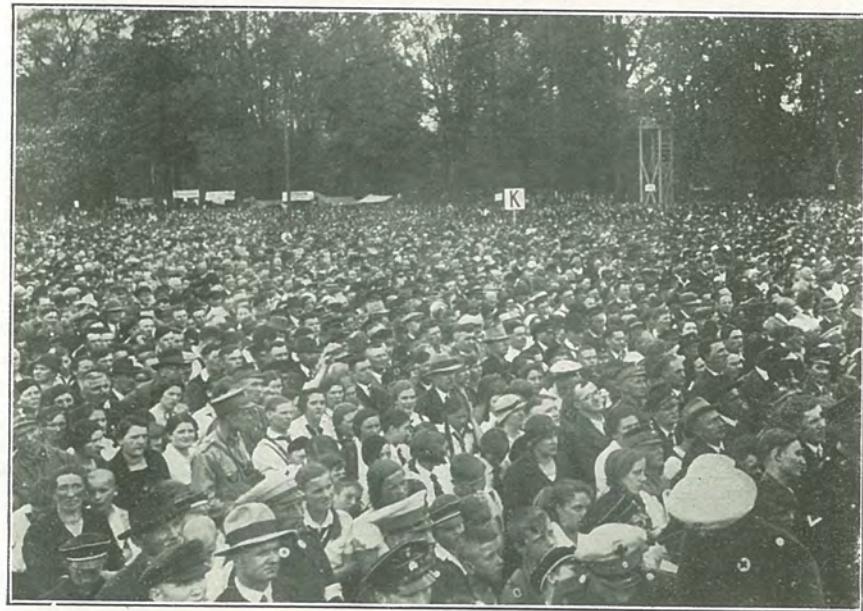
As is generally known, the attitude of a few Powers and of France in particular, on the question of disarmament, obliged the Reich, in October, 1933, to withdraw from the League of Nations. However in Berlin they declared themselves ready to undertake direct negotiations in view of an agreement with Paris not only on disarmament, but on all the other imminent questions, and particularly the Saar.

On October 14, in a speech to the German people, broadcast in order to reach the foreigner directly, Hitler exposed the reasons that had decided the government of the Reich to leave Geneva, and brought out even more clearly the reasons for his attempts to make direct agreements with France on the Saar. Taking as a point of departure the speech of the French President of the Council, M. Daladier, in which the latter addressed conciliating words to the Reich, the Chancellor declared that National-Socialist Germany desires nothing more heartily than to reestablish the desire of emulation among peoples of a cultural land where honourable rivalry engenders the ineffable goods of civilisation. In the name of the entire German people, the Chancellor expressed his desire to put an end to an hostility, of which all eventual profit would never justify the human sacrifices, and to spare future generations the suffering of the generation of combattants. Hitler concluded thus : — *In laying our claim upon the rights that the treaties themselves confer upon us, I declare openly that, beyond that, no further territorial litigations with France exist for the Reich. After the return of the Saar to Germany, only a madman could conceive the possibility of an armed conflict between our two peoples, a conflict for which, in our eyes, no one could discover a motive justified by morality or by reason.* —

The direct negotiations between France and the Reich to anticipate a common ruling for the return of the Saar to Germany, were indeed begun in the course of a conversation be-



16. Minister of State, Dr. Goebbels, speaking about the Saar declaration in Zweibruecken on May 6, 1934.



17. Thousands upon thousands of Saarmen listening thoughtfully to the Minister of State.



18. The "violent" demonstration against French students was in truth nothing more than a gathering of a few hundred curious citizens.



19. The oath of loyalty of the 200,000 upon the heights of the Ehrenbreitstein on August 26, 1934.

tween Hitler and M. François-Poncet, French ambassador to Berlin. But they came to an end through non-acceptance on the French side. In his speech on the foreign policy before the Chamber, January 17, 1934, M. Paul-Boncour, Minister of Foreign Affairs, entered as follows upon the problem of the Saar and upon the question of renouncing to the plebiscite as Germany had proposed :

— *We do not have to renounce to the plebiscite. Such a decision is not ours to make, but that of the people of the Saar, and theirs alone.* Therefore France has estimated that even the very decided economic advantages that were offered in exchange for the renunciation to the plebiscite, could not be put in the balance against the right of the people to dispose of themselves.

We want only to assure the sincerity and the freedom of the vote, while preparing ourselves for the conversations which will follow this plebiscite, whatever the result may be.

To appreciate this attitude equitably, we must always keep in mind the fact that the Saar is an international territory, that the governmental Commission is an international organ, and that it is in the capacity of Council member of the League of Nations that the French Minister of Foreign Affairs acts on these matters, for it is in Geneva and not in Paris that the game is being played. —

In his great political speech to the Reichstag, January 31, 1934, they day after the anniversary of his advent in power, Hitler justified the German point of view. Speaking first of Franco-German relations, the Chancellor went on to explain in detail the purpose of the German proposition to France concerning the Saar. He said : — My proposition is dictated by the following considerations :

1. *The question of the Saar is the only territorial question that remains open between the two countries.*

2. The German Government is afraid that, particularly under the impulsion of foreign emigrants, the plebiscite campaign may revive national feelings, useless in this case of an already definite result.

3. Whatever the outcome of the plebiscite may be, it is certain that *it will leave with one of the two nations a feeling of defeat.* That is why, from the point of view of reconciliation between the two peoples, we should have preferred a satisfactory solution for the two parties to have intervened beforehand.

4. We are convinced that if France and Germany had regulated and decided this question under the form of a projected

common treaty, the entire people of the Saar would have ratified joyfully and with an overwhelming majority the new ruling. In this manner, they would have exercised their right to vote and yet neither of the two nations would have had to interpret as a defeat the result of this vote, and even further, *no propaganda against the Franco-German agreement could have found a new subject for disagreement.* —

— And therefore I am sorry even today, the Chancellor said, that on the French side it was thought impossible to carry out this idea. —

This declaration was for the French Press a signal for a tendencious campaign which aimed to interpret the German offer as inspired by the fear of a result unfavourable to Germany in the popular consultation designated by the Treaty of Versailles.

Mr. von Papen, vice-Chancellor and plenipotentiary in the Saar question, replied as follows to this extraordinary affirmation : — We Germans can desire nothing more heartily than to prove to the world at large by the plebiscite of the Saar, that this country is German and that it aspires from its inmost being to return to the arms of its Fatherland. *We do not have to fear the plebiscite.* We are ready to let the voting begin tomorrow if France so desires. May History take note of the errors in such an imperialistic policy.

And that accounts for the failure of the second attempt for direct negotiations between the two countries interested. So France missed an occasion to make, on her own initiative, the proper gesture to solve a dangerous question of litigation, as that of the Saar certainly is, a gesture that would at the same time have built a bridge of understanding between France and Germany. This characteristic sequence of Franco-German relations is not without many parallel cases where France made reconciliation impossible because she would not compromise or attempt to understand the German point of view. We have only to recall Chancellor Bruening's trip to Paris in 1931 and his visit to the President of the Council, M. Laval. German finances were at that moment in a very critical situation. The banks had closed because of the retirement of foreign capital deposited in Germany. With the help of several hundred millions France could have shown her willingness to be friendly with a neighboring people, and to win, at the same time, a liquidation of reparations under much more advantageous conditions than those she was forced to accept later at Lausanne.

Another case is that of the recognition of the rights of parity in disarmament, which French Governments have always

opposed through non-acceptance. In consequence, on December 11, 1932, they were constrained to admit the recognition under pressure of foreign influence.

The consequence of this policy, renewed once more in the Saar question, is that, in the end, concessions are made too late to give France the benefit of the German people's hearty gratitude. And it forms the base of the German opinion that France's foreign policy always draws back before the German aspirations toward an agreement.

Despite the failure of negotiations that resulted from France's refusal in January, 1934, Hitler did not abandon the hope of attaining the end he had in view, either in the common interest of the two countries, or in that of the Saar itself.

A few months later, on August 26, at the imposing manifestation of 200,000 at Coblenz, after having spoken of his general program and of what the Government proposed to undertake in favour of the Territory as soon as it was returned to Germany, Hitler addressed to France a new offer of peace in these terms : — The problem of the Saar still remains a subject of discord between France and us; nevertheless we are not willing to abandon the hope that, once the question is solved, they will be more disposed, on the other side too, to face the problems in their true light, and to make peace sincerely with us. The question of the Saar is the only territorial question that still separates us today from France. After the solution, I see no plausible reason why the two great nations should continue eternally to oppose each other. Perhaps our former adversaries will realise, too, that our mutual tasks are of such nature, that instead of disagreeing, we ought to accomplish them in common. And if there are still some international provocators without conscience, known to us, to whom we could not attribute any nationality, who attempt to maintain between the two great peoples a perpetual enmity, I, for my part, have faith in human common sense! I hope this sense will finally triumph any how, and that beyond the Saar and the thirteenth of January, 1935, an agreement will be possible and will be effected on this much wider scale.

You, the people of the Saar, have, on the thirteenth of January, a great mission of peace to fulfill. We should be happy if on the thirteenth of January, 1935, when the bells will be ringing in all Germany, their voices would proclaim not only the return of the lost territory and of our German brothers come back to us, but also the return of peace. — (This peroration was greeted by prolonged ovations for several minutes.)

And that is how, one week after the plebiscite of August 19th by which the German people sanctioned the nomination of Hitler as the successor of the president, Marshall Hindenburg, the Fuehrer, in his capacity as Chief of the State, once more appealed to France for peace. But unfortunately that did not prevent the Press on the other side of the Rhine from casting new doubt upon the sincerity of the Fuehrer. *L'Echo de Paris* even reproduced a photograph showing the fortress of Ehrenbreitstein under a guard of French soldiers during the occupation, accompanied by a commentary making a comparison between the ten years of "peaceful" occupation of the Rhine by France and the "warlike" speech that Hitler made before hundreds of thousands of fanatical Germans! A German paper replied that the state of peace created on the Rhine by the troops of occupation was no other than the silence of the gaol, a peace that France aspires to grant the Saar forever.

On the same day, in the inauguration speech for the Saar Exposition at Cologne, in presence of the German Chief of State, Dr. Goebbels, German Minister of Propaganda, again exposed the pacific sentiments of the Third Reich: — Germany wants only her rights and nothing but her rights. She wishes to affirm them peaceably, but will not hear of giving them up. The German people are absorbed in their daily work, far from any ideas of revenge. But what is ours must return to us. —

In Coblenz again, on the Ehrenbreitstein, the new delegate of the Reich to the Saar, Mr. Buerckel, successor to Mr. von Papen, characterised the plebiscite campaign of the Saar separatists as their last tentative to prevent the return of the Saar to Germany, since the vote in favour of union with France has no longer any chance of succeeding. The propagandists of the autonomy abuse the good faith of the people by making them hope that, in case of maintenance of the *status quo*, a second plebiscite will be arranged the day when the Hitlerian Germany has fallen. Mr. Buerckel explained the veritable state of mind of the Saar as follows: — It is with the firmest resolution that the population sees the coming of the thirteenth of January. They want to return to their home where they are assured their rights, their honour and their liberty, as well as a fatherly welcome. On the thirteenth of January the people of the Saar, in the full strength of their historic past, will make their voices heard beyond the frontier: , *Now* ', they will cry, ' *the road to understanding is finally free!* ' —

Not only has the Fuehrer made reiterated advances to France in order to resolve the Saar question amiably, but he

has also not neglected the direct relations between the Saar and Germany, in the more than probable case of a favourable vote. The question is considered a national problem in Germany affecting the sixty-six million citizens of the Reich. The Government has drawn up an imposing program of public works and of economic relief measures for the Saar. On Saar Day, at Zweibruecken, May 6, 1934, Dr. Goebbels outlined the program: — We are preparing projects on a grand scale: the exploitation of the coal basin of the Warndt, by the installation of new shafts, by the reconditioning of the old ones, by technical improvements and by creation of sufficient outlets for the Saar coal¹. This relief program shall form an integral part of the national project of public works in the Reich. We shall also do everything to give back to Saar agriculture its former vitality by offering new markets. The people of the Saar will find their worthy place in the great work of interior colonisation of the Reich, in keeping with the peculiar possibilities of the Territory. The Minister concluded: — *I can assure you on the faith of results already obtained elsewhere that this is no project to moulder in our archives; we will carry it out and we will give it a real vitality.* —

The Chancellor himself proclaimed the double task that the National-Socialist Government has imposed upon itself:

— *First of all: conciliation and meeting on friendly terms without consideration of party-political precedent. Everyone who can declare, 'I am German and want to remain German' is sure to be received with open arms.*

Secondly: We want to heal the economic wounds and use all our efforts to rebind this Territory more firmly to the Reich and to the German people. The whole world shall see that if on the thirteenth of January next 90% vote for Germany, ten years later this figure shall reach 100%. —

¹ Let us recall that at present this basin is exploited indirectly only by the French industries that have simply sunk a few shafts on Lorraine territory, in close proximity to the frontier and cross over the latter underground in order to extract the Warndt coal to French profit. It is a well-known fact that the Warndt is considered the hidden treasure of the Saar Coal Basin.

VIII.

IN THE ALLEYS OF GENEVA

More and more as the date of the plebiscite approaches, the Palace on the Lac Lemman has become a centre of underhanded manoeuvres on the part of Germany's adversaries in the Saar question, especially since they could profit by the absence of the Reich in the League. These manoeuvres have lately had three main objectives : first, postponing the plebiscite, under the pretext that on account of National-Socialist propaganda the state of mind of the Saar would not enjoy the tranquillity necessary for the vote ; secondly, the establishment of another plebiscite which would permit the people of the Saar (who, they say, do not want to return to an Hitlerian Germany) to return when Germany is freed from National-Socialism ; finally, institution of an international police, and even occupation by foreign troops, in order to assure the freedom and the sincerity of the vote.

These three tentatives, that contradicted the very Treaty itself, found little sympathy in the good sense of Geneva and in the splendid disinterest of the Committee of Three presided by Baron Aloisi. The promoters of the triple campaign are the well-known Matz Braun, leader of the Saar Social-Democrats, who has not the right to vote in the plebiscite, and other small groups of separatists without numerical importance and not fulfilling the requirements for the vote, groups that depend upon encouragement from the French delegation in Geneva.

Although drawn up in haste during a single night, the Statutes of the Saar are, at least in so far as they concern the dispositions for the plebiscite, perfect in clarity and precision, and leave no openings for the manoeuvres of the separatists. The plebiscite shall therefore take place on the appointed day, January 13, 1935, that is, exactly on the expiration of the fifteen years of international administration. There is no mention of a second plebiscite, and the police force will be limited, as we have said, to an augmentation of a few hundred men who speak German, recruited in the Saar or, if need be, outside.

But the offensive on a grand scale was undertaken by the French delegation in an indirect way, that is, under pretext of safeguarding interests of the Saar. On August 31, 1934, four days after Hitler's conciliating speech at Coblenz, M. Bar-

thou, at that time Minister of Foreign Affairs, sent the League of Nations a memorandum, approved by the Council of Ministers, very obviously tending to influence the Saar voter, but with the apparent purpose of requesting the League to regulate beforehand certain judicial and financial questions. This attempt confirmed once more France's refusal to come to a direct agreement with the Reich, and her determination to take the detour by way of Geneva.

This document recalls first of all that Paragraph 39 of the addenda to Part III, Section 4 of the Treaty of Versailles gives the Council of the League of Nations very extensive powers to solve these numerous and difficult problems which the popular consultation cannot fail to bring with it. To wait until after the plebiscite to undertake the study of it would, according to the French Government, risk, either prolonging abusively and not without disturbance, perhaps even danger, the period that will elapse between the popular vote and the functioning of the new government, or stopping at incomplete solutions that would harm legitimate interests, to begin with, even in many cases those of Saar inhabitants. " And so, to the Government of the Republic, it appears most desirable that, beginning in the present session, the Council undertake to examine the questions that have arisen through the liquidation of the present regime of the Saar Territory, and to decide upon conscientious solutions ". The sincerity of the popular consultation, according to M. Barthou, could only gain thereby, since the inhabitants would not then be left in ignorance or doubt on the significance and the consequences of the vote that they are called to declare.

The judicial questions concern first an extension to all the inhabitants, and not only to those having the vote, of the guarantees concerning their past political attitude. The questions pertaining thereto differ in their significance if the Territory of the Saar be joined to France or to Germany, or if it be placed under the sovereignty of the League of Nations. In the first two cases, decisions will have to be taken on the nationality of the inhabitants and on the right of option. On this subject M. Barthou, evidently making electoral propaganda, hastened to assure them that in case of union with France of all or a part of the Saar Basin, *all the inhabitants would be equal before the law, that they would have full and entire protection of life and liberty, and that they would enjoy, without distinction of language, race, or religion, the same civil and political rights as all French citizens.*

As for the second case, that is the prolongation of the *status quo*, the Council should adapt the regime definitely instated

to the permanent interests of the Territory, and to the general interest, and should, from this session on, trace the outlines of this regime, in order that the voters may have a clear notion of the state of affairs that would eventually result from their suffrage. The French Government, while reserving the right to develop her views on this point later on, was anxious to declare (second propagandist insinuation) that one should, in the elaboration of the statute, make plenty of room for the collaboration of the people of the Saar, for the Treaty wished that they express themselves.

Besides, to guarantee the rights acquired by the inhabitants of the Saar in the course of the period of fifteen years of international administration, a mixed tribunal should be established in the Saar and should reside there for another fifteen years.

The French memorandum then went on to financial questions, beginning with the question of the future of the mines, which comports no judicial difficulty in case of union with France, their present owner. In case the Saar be placed definitely under the control of the League of Nations and the mines remain consequently in the hands of the French Government, *the Government of the Republic declares itself, from now on, ready to cede to the Territory itself, under equitable conditions, a large part of the deposits* (third tempting offer). Finally, in case of the return of the Saar to Germany, France could not give up the ownership of the mines before the matter had been satisfactorily regulated. Since the conditions of repurchase would take some time to carry out, during this period of preparation for repurchase in a bloc of all the mines, payable in gold, the amount of which, to be determined by three experts, will be transferable within a certain period, during this period, then, either France would have to carry on her exploitation in a dangerous coexistence with the German Government in the Territory, or else the installation of the German Government in the Territory would, with difficulties, have to be suspended until after completion of payments.

To obviate these difficulties, the French Government deems prudent that the Council of the League of Nations regulate the question of the mines, in collaboration with Germany and France, in order to reach an agreement under its auspices, on the price of repurchase and on the conditions of payment.

On this last subject, M. Barthou recalled that *the mines do not constitute the only title to credit of the French State in case of return of the Saar to Germany* (rail-lines from Alsace-Lorraine established in the Saar, question of the customs' stations). Furthermore, according to M. Barthou, one must take account of the private debts made with creditors of divers nationalities,

having confidence in the administration of the League of Nations and having consented to make loans to the Saar in general on the basis of an authorisation from the governmental Commission. And therefore the Council should, as soon as possible, take decisions on this subject, in order to put a stop to the withdrawals of capital which, at present constitute a decided hindrance to the advancement of Saar economy.

M. Barthou took this occasion to make a declaration in the name of the French Government, which, he said, saw no reason why French money should not remain the currency of the Territory in case of maintenance of the status quo. In that case the Government would be obliged to examine (as in the case of union with France) what measure might be taken to assure credit facilities to the Saar (fourth electoral tidbit).

The last question treated in the memorandum is that of *the francs in circulation in the Territory*. M. Barthou found that if the ruling for money-transfers at present established in Germany, subsisted, it would be inadmissible for these foreign moneys to be withdrawn and replaced by the Reichsbank without being used to regulate foreign debts, public and private, of which Germany would have to take charge in view of the acquisition of the Territory. The Council should therefore see fit to take the necessary steps in this matter, and if, as is probable, the sum of francs thus set free did not suffice to cover all the above-mentioned debts, it would be advisable to devise a method that would assure the regulation of the financial situation.

In publishing this memorandum, M. Barthou emphasised certain points that appeared to him particularly important. These points deserve mention.

A promise was made to the people of the Saar that they would share all rights and privileges equally with all other French citizens. But history offers a lesson on the way in which this promise was realised once before in a country right near the Saar, Alsace-Lorraine. There it was that they created, immediately after the union with France, the category of "undesireables" whose only right consisted in crossing the bridge at Kehl in the direction of the Reich with a sixty-pound pack. There it was that the Sorting Commission was instituted, with its system of identity cards varying in colour and size according to the rights that they accorded their holders.

A second point that M. Barthou brought out was the intention of the French Government to give up, in case of maintenance of the *status quo*, a large part of the mines under equitable conditions. Now this is the real situation: the Saar mines are at present for France a business that bears a great risk. The

world market is saturated with coal, and coal has lost its economic importance. This is true particularly for France who has, in the Saar, coal enough and to sell. Added to that is the poor condition of the mines as a result of negligent and thoughtless exploitation by the governmental Administration and its lease-holders. In the course of the last years the mines have caused a deficit, as the Director-General, M. Guillaume, acknowledged in his report to Paris. He himself is afraid that this state of affairs might cause great difficulties, in the eventual negotiations for the repurchase by Germany. France would like nothing better than to rid herself of these risks; that shows the generosity of her government expressed in the disinterested gesture of M. Barthou.

At the same time it would be an excellent transaction from the financial and the political point of view. The cession to the Saar would have to be made through the intermediary of French capital, since the Territory, as Mr. Knox said in his report to the League of Nations, is an industrial basin disposing of very little capital. French money would also take care of the necessary upkeep, and then what would be the result? The Saar would become the owner of mines with such a deficit that they would really belong to French capitalists, after all. She would have to pay interest on the loans made by France; all profit from the new combination would accrue to France. The Saar would become the debtor thereby, while the creditor would have exchanged a speculative title for a good steady income. Finally, and thereby hangs the political tale, France, on the strength of her solidly reinforced economic influence, would remain absolute master in the Saar.

M. Barthou states in his memorandum, referring to the "formal texts" of paragraph 36, that the French State retains ownership of the mines during the payment period and until that, by Germany. This is a manifest misinterpretation, as is clear by the Treaty which stipulates in alinea 2, Paragraph 36, that Germany "shall be able to furnish a first mortgage on her capital or on her income of every sort, which will be accepted by the Reparations Commission". It is therefore evident that the Treaty foresees a delay in Germany's payment, but without interference with her taking possession, as soon as the price of repurchase is established by the Commission of Three Experts, prescribed in the alinea of the same paragraph.

When M. Barthou refers to the accounts of French creditors with Saar corporations, he expresses the hope that theoretical decisions for the regulation of these accounts will be made as soon as possible. But in this matter he has limited himself completely to the active side and quite ignored the passive

represented by the Saar's credits to France, as, for instance, the support of the governmental Commission which is still owing the communities today.

On the other hand, the fact that the memorandum makes no mention of the customs, gives the impression that if the plebiscite favours Germany, the "sheet-iron curtain" so often used to suppress public opinion in the Saar, would be lowered, thus cutting off all exportation of Saar products into France. But in this matter it is a question if such measures would not be even more harmful to French industry for which the Saar represents the market sixth in importance. The annual buying capacity (of French products) of each inhabitant of the Saar is 2,600 francs, while Great Britain, for example, France's most important market, buys but 230 frs. worth per annum per inhabitant. These eloquent figures are taken from French statistics.

What would be the situation, on the other hand, if the "sheet-iron curtain" were lowered by the Reich, in case of a *status quo*? In the month of June, 1934, with no customs barriers against Saar exportation to Germany, the Saar exported of her pig-iron production, which totaled 10,000 tons, 6,000 tons to Germany and 623 tons to France; of 117,000 tons of sheet-metal 58,000 went to Germany and 21,000, to France. The Reich therefore presents thirty million marks per annum to the Saar industries.

All in all, M. Barthou's memorandum seeks very obvious ends, the propositions it contains are not to be carried out, and, still further, it presents formal contradictions. It serves France's interests very poorly and it wars against any spirit of agreement between the two countries. The document is a collection of arguments which, unable further to convince any one, point toward a Saar autonomy to attain a masked objective: M. Barthou merely camouflaged his annexation-policy, and the people of the Saar were perfectly aware of the fact.

Finally, it is to be wondered if the French document, by its manifest tendencies to influence the opinion of the Saar electors, is not in contradiction with the engagement made by the Government of the Republic in its letter of June 2, addressed to Baron Aloisi, in which it promises to abstain from all exercise of pressure, *direct or indirect*, of a nature to affect the freedom or the sincerity of the votes.

At the end of September, during the autumn session of the Council of the League of Nations, M. Barthou took it upon himself to commentate his memorandum, giving it the benefit of a manifestation characteristic of the French spirit. Whatever

claims are made, he said, France has not given up the thought of any one of the three solutions mentioned in the Treaty, and she is interested in each one. That is why she would have liked to have it determined immediately what the situation will be after the plebiscite in each one of the three eventualities. In each case it entails a new regime which may be clearly foreseen if the result of the popular consultation brings about the union of the Saar with France or with Germany, but which will be much more difficult to define in case of the *status quo*. M. Barthou said that the Saar elector must know exactly, from the beginning of the electoral period, on what he may count in the matter. And so the Council, whose duty it is to make the matter clear to him, must meet again as soon as possible, in order to make the necessary decisions.

The French Minister then read aloud the essential part of his memorandum, which contained the declaration of the French Government that elaborated a project of restoration, with a more extensive collaboration of the people. He emphasized that the Government is also prepared to take note of the desire, already shown in the Saar, to reserve the possibility of modifying the Statutes and thereby using profitably the experience gained, in the lasting interests of the Territory and in the general interest.

As for the one question of public order during the electoral period, the Minister of Foreign Affairs deplored that it had not yet been regulated. The situation was bound to be "grave", according to the information furnished by the governmental Commission, thence the necessity to put at its disposal, within a short time, a police force capable of assuring the sincerity of the plebiscite and of guaranteeing the prestige of the League of Nations. He explained why the French Government is particularly interested in this question, saying textually: As a result and on a basis of the resolutions adopted by the Council in 1925 and in 1926, *France may be called upon to assume particular responsibilities*. She does not refuse, and she will not avoid what she has been called to do. But I interpret the unanimous feeling of my country when I declare that *she is very anxious to have thrust aside all dangers that might make her intervention necessary*.

In reality, M. Barthou had very interested motives when he spoke of his preoccupation for the tranquillity of the Saar. He thought it necessary to call for the spectre of intervention by French troops in the Territory, in case the police were not in a condition to maintain order. But the fear that trouble might be begun in the Saar is not justified, for the people, as we have shown in preceding pages, has always kept, and still

keeps perfect discipline. Then again M. Barthou made a mistake when he thought he could refer his actions to the decisions of the Council sessions of 1925 and 1926, in the matter of the occupation of the Saar by French troops. These decisions in no way concerned the Territory of the Saar itself, but had to do with the establishment, in any case, of a connection between France and the troops of occupation in the Rhineland. With the evacuation of the Rhineland, these resolutions lost all their political and judicial value. Recalling them could have no other effect than that of spreading distrust and unrest among the people of the Saar, and endangering the freedom of the plebiscite under pretext of wanting to assure both freedom and sincerity.

The impression produced upon the Saar by the attitude of the French Government, in the course of the last session of the Council of the League of Nations, is clearly expressed in a telegram which the Chief of the German Front, Mr. Pirro, addressed to M. Barthou. A translation of the principal passages follows:

Dear Sir,

"In your note to the Council of the League of Nations you brought up several questions that tend to influence the plebiscite in the Saar, and you have also made declarations before this Council which have brought the German Front to make the following statements:

The people of the Saar eminently distrust the statements made by the French Ministers, either by M. Tardieu, who wrote in 1919, that the Saar had been French for several centuries and had been snatched away from her by force; or by M. Clemenceau who, on March 28, 1919, declared that there were in the Saar at least 150,000 Frenchmen. These erroneous statements wronged the statutes on which the Territory of the Saar was established.

The note put in the hands of the Council of the League of Nations shows that you consider probable the return of the Saar to the Reich and that you are preparing to face several questions concerning the reintegration.

In our idea, the relations between the Germans of the Saar and those of the Reich are a matter that should be regulated in the heart of the family and without interference from a foreign instructor.

The sovereignty of Germany in the Basin after the reintegration, must be *integral* and without any condition, all the more since you yourself acknowledge that M. Clemenceau's allegation

which brought about the separation of the Saar from the Reich, is inexact. The attribution of a part of the Basin to France is a question which does not even come to the fore, since M. Tardieu, your predecessor, wrote : To this Basin, all parts of which are intimately related, any artificial separation would be a mortal wound. —

You say that France is ready to give up to the Saar a large part of her mines. Do you speak of the mines already exploited or of those still in exploitation ? If you speak of the former, you simply suggest transferring to the people of the Saar the loss that you suffer annually with these mines and that even their own Administration set at forty million marks for 1931 and 1932.

The mines have been left in such a state that, in the opinion of competent persons, it would need between 100 and 120 million marks to make them again profitably productive. If we were given half the mines, the Saar should then advance sixty millions out of her own means. Where shall she take the money ? That you do not mention, at a time when, as you say, French loans in the Saar ought to be guaranteed, as any foreign loans, which would lead us to think that we ought to reimburse our creditors and pay back all our debts at the same time when we advance sixty millions for the mines.

Add to that the fact that, in case of the *status quo*, the Reich would no longer pay the 280 million francs which it pours into the Basin in the form of pensions. It is easy to calculate what that would represent for 200,000 inhabitants.

For that matter, what the *status quo* would bring us from the political point of view, is known to us in the past, when M. Rault, President of the governmental Commission, on August 6, 1920, ordered a state of siege to the entire Territory and brought in the unaccustomed competence of councils of war, admitting openly that as a French member of the Commission, he had to follow the instructions that France gave him and defend the interests of his country in the Saar. He also declared that the duty of the Commission President was to assure the autonomy of the Territory by breaking all political and administrative ties that united it with Germany.

The state of rights which, according to us, would be modified in case the present regime were maintained, to give the population a more effective collaboration in the affairs of the state, cannot be changed by a simple decision of the League of Nations. Any modification made without the accord of all the signatories of Versailles, including Germany, would be a blatant violation of right ; and anyhow, the *status quo* would mean that the Saar would be ruled autocratically, afterwards as before, by a foreign government.

We know that the people that you have the honour to represent, desires peace, as well as the German people. We believe that a solution of the Saar question will be found, which will give a guarantee for durable peace.

We will always call ourselves Germans, just as those few Frenchmen who are in the Saar will always call themselves French.

What the prolongation of the *status quo* would mean for the peace of Europe, was already foreseen, in 1929, by Matz Braun, who is not unknown to you, and who is now a partisan of this unnatural regime. At that time he said : — It is the thought of every German, of every European, to prevent, in the South-west of the Reich, the creation of a second Alsace-Lorraine which would breed new secular hate between two peoples between whom harmony would mean the happiness of Europe and in fact, of the whole world. ”

Just as we do not consider that we have the right to discuss the personal affairs of the French people, so too we object when you, the French Minister, claim that you wish to determine the future of our people who are of German nationality.

Yours, etc.

Signed : Jacob PIRRO ”.

As to the impression that M. Barthou's speech made upon the foreigner, it will be quite enough to cite the following commentaries from the British Press.

The *Morning Post* writes :

“ The bold declaration made by M. Barthou reflects the increasing nervousness of the French Government concerning the results of the plebiscite. This inquietude is motivated, not so much by the result itself as by the consequences that are bound to follow. The problem of the Saar is a formidable problem. Given the relations existing at present and the acute tension that holds sway in the Territory of the Saar, the problem causes considerable worry. ”

The *News Chronicle* expresses itself as follows :

“ The situation in the Saar is disquieting and embarrassing, and we do not see how it can be bettered by a speech of the sort that M. Barthou just made in Geneva. The President of the French Council declared that France was anxious to have thrust aside all the factors which might make her intervention in the Saar necessary. This wish is reasonable, but to realise it, she must not proffer threats of isolated intervention, but must,

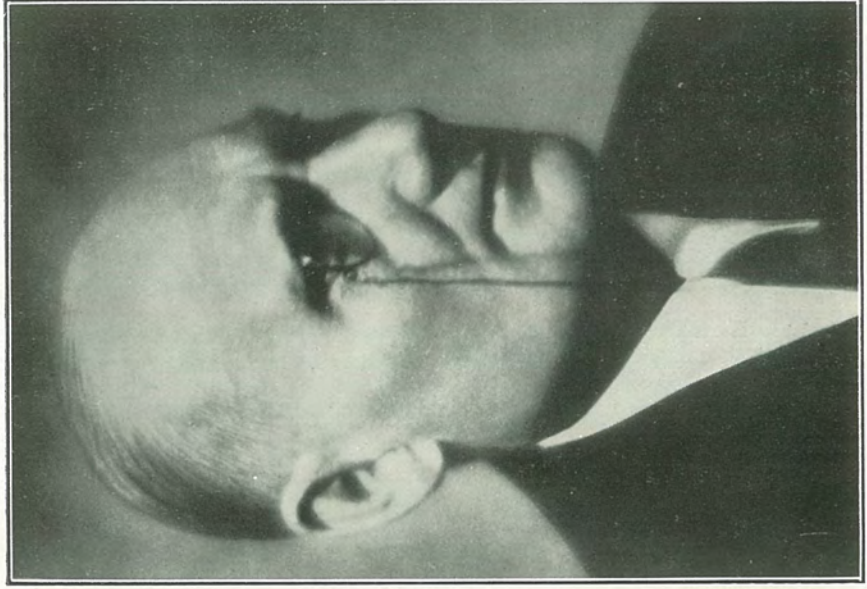
on the contrary, reinforce the action of the League of Nations, so that the latter may efficaciously guarantee the impartiality and the sincerity of the approaching elections in the Saar. Such is the duty of the League of Nations and not that of some one of its members. ”

The Daily Express :

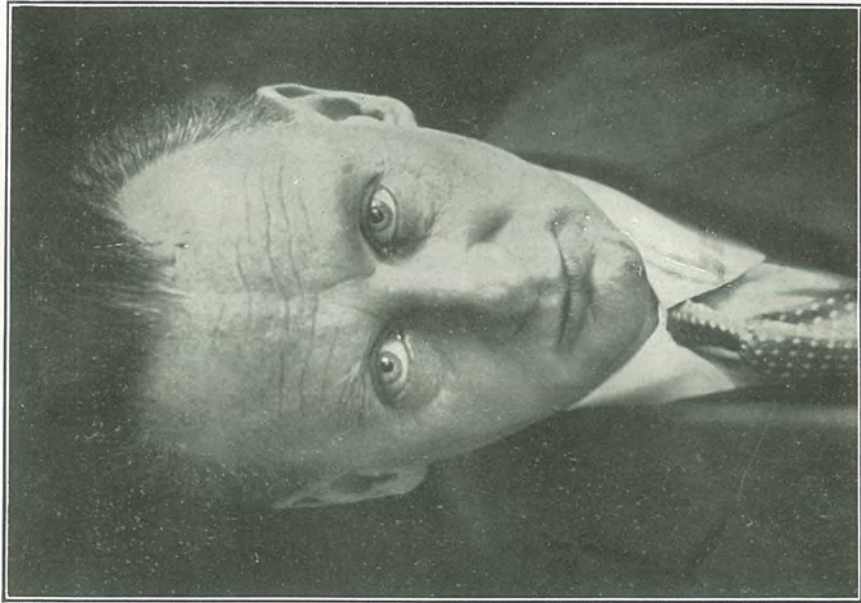
“ France is ready, at any time, to bring her troops into the Territory of the Saar. It is to be feared that this threat may provoke an answer from Germany, and that will merely aggravate the situation which is already so tense in the Saar. This is a grave warning to Great Britain. The latter must mind only her own business. If the French march into the Saar, they shall march alone. ”



20. Regional-chief Buereckel,
The Fuehrer's Commander-in-chief of the Saar.



21. Baron Aloisi,
president of the plebiscite Commission.



22. Mr. Knox,
president of the governing Commission.



23. M. Morize,
French member of the governing Commission.

IX.

FRENCH PROPAGANDA AND SEPARATISM

French activity in the Saar has not been limited to the political and economic measures mentioned in the previous chapter, but has been extended to wide-spread propaganda intended to influence the outcome of the plebiscite. Although M. Barthou declared in Geneva that France has not given up the idea of any one of the three possible solutions mentioned in the Treaty, it is evident from his attitude that he has abandoned all hope of absorbing the Territory. And that is why the efforts of his propaganda are concentrated on the maintenance of the *status quo*, and consequently the support of the local separatist movement.

It will be recalled that at the time of the occupation of the Rhine and the Ruhr, the wires of all French propaganda in the Rhineland, as well as those of the separatist movement, all centered in Paris. But as the Government could not carry on this propaganda openly, tremendous organisations were created which, under cover of private associations, obeyed the directions of the Quai d'Orsay. The organisations of this nature already existing were united in the "United French Associations for national economic improvement", placed by the "Central Office of National Expansion" under direct control of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The private organisations were to cover the State, since the Government itself could not carry on propaganda, as de Jouvenel declared in 1934 before the Commission of the Senate. Naturally, the gigantic propaganda machine of these private organisations was financed by the Government. In 1923, the budget of the Central Office set aside 74,200,000 francs for the sole purpose of such political activity.

Why recall history? Isn't the propaganda of 1919-1924 a thing of the past? Didn't it die out with a French political failure in the Rhineland? No, it lives again; it has been transplanted from the Rhine to the Saar, and is now concentrating on this small territory. The commissions that set the pace for the Rhine propaganda are still alive at present, and are now operating in the Saar. The methods have remained the same. They are careful not to express openly their end of annexation, but their political concentration centres on autonomy. The Saar autonomists, just as the separatists of the Rhine, obey

their masters in Paris, the great associations founded during the War in view of preparing for annexation, and who should have lost, long since, their excuse for being.

One of the most noteworthy of these associations is the "Comité de la Rive gauche du Rhin" (Committee of the Left Bank of the Rhine). Founded at the beginning of the War in view of the annexation of the left bank, the Committee elaborated the plans that started the separatist movement; most of the leaders of the movement were in relation with it, its representatives appeared in the important separatist meetings, and its publications favoured the "Rhine Republic". As a directing political organisation the Committee had the "Union des grandes Associations françaises" which kept it in perpetual contact with the Quai d'Orsay. When the French political movement had reached the end of its usefulness in the Rhineland, the work of the organisations was left intact: the Committee of the Left Bank still subsists under the direction of the University Professor Jules Doutenville, and devotes its time particularly to the Saar question at its meetings and lectures.

The "Comité Dupleix" (Committee Dupleix), founded in 1922 as a special organisation, works in close collaboration with the Committee, as it is intended to second the work of French political direction. Its purpose was to organise lectures, to distribute pamphlets, manifestoes and billboard announcements. And so it was that in 1925, it distributed a pamphlet by Doutenville, intended to diminish the importance of the great Rhine celebration; and then again in 1926, it made other publications, also by Doutenville, on the annexation of the Saar Territory. In the course of the last years the Committee has taken great care to bring this matter to the fore in its lectures, and luncheons to which Saar annexationists were invited, have been in the order of the day.

Beside these two old organisations for special propaganda in the Saar there was also established in 1928, as we have said before, the "Association française pour la Sarre" (French Association of the Saar). Since it was founded, thanks to the support of authorities and big industry, this association has had a marked influence on the treatment of Saar questions by French public opinion. Its purpose is, in short, to maintain a preponderantly French political and economic influence in the Saar. To this end it supports the theory that "the best solution of the Saar problem lies in the maintenance of the present state of affairs, with a few slight changes allowing the people of the Saar a wider participation in political life. "This makes it perfectly clear that the idea of the autonomy does not come from the Saar itself, but is a product of French annexationism.

The activity of the French Association of the Saar follows this one direction: in 1928, distribution of a pamphlet by Jean Revire in favour of annexation pure and simple; in 1929-30, sabotage of the Franco-German conferences on the Saar; in 1932, outspoken opposition to the conferences in Lausanne; and this year, foundation of various associations of annexationists. Furthermore, through sending numerous provocative writings to the French Press, through imposing demonstrations with the encouragement of the authorities, through resolutions and interpellations to the Chamber, the Association is doing its best to bring about French public opinion to its own way of thinking. In 1930, it instigated the reading of a so-called "protest of the Saar people against the return to Germany" to the Senate Commission for Foreign Affairs; in 1932, in a resolution and in a letter to M. Herriot, who was at that time President of the Council, it demanded a postponement of the Saar plebiscite to make up for the dispensing of German reparations payments, which was then being discussed at Lausanne. The Association keeps up relations with the most influential spheres in France; in the beginning of June, 1933, it was received by the President of the Republic, Albert Lebrun. This may give some indications on the location of the hidden springs of this propaganda. One of its presidents, who in June drew up the letter to Herriot, was M. Ordinaire, vice-President of the Senate, at the same time one of the leaders of the Poincaré group, "Union republicaine". The honorary president is M. Jacques Bardoux, of the Institute, well-known as a publicist for the Comité de Forges. Several great French names figure among the members, such as the Generals Mordacq and Le Rond, Senator Eccard, Deputy Oberkirch, and even Gaston Doumergue.

At present the Association is presided over by M. Rossignol, former president of the National Union of Combattants, who lost the latter post through the Affair Stavisky in which he figured as the beneficiary of a check of 100,000 francs. The propagandists are: the commanding officer Lanrezac and the publicist Robert Herly. The former, son of a general, would have been made Financial Secretary of the governmental Administration of the mines if M. Tardieu had not interfered, and it is he who, under the pseudonym of De Cazernal, edits the *Journal des Français de la Sarre*, an instrument of the Association. The Secretary-General, Herly, spends most of his time as a polemic journalist with the pseudonym of Jean Revire. Once employed by the Government Mines in the capacity of Administrator of Materials of the Hirsbach mine, he was transferred to Paris, on the recommendation of MM. Morize and Bommelaer, in a sinecure of the Mines Office, which allows him to devote his

time to the Association and its propaganda. Of these two men M. Guernut said in 1929, in the *Cahiers des Droits de l'homme*, which we have cited before, that it was odd that the Administration of the Government Mines of the Saar, an organisation of the French State, should have procured for them "positions in which they have, as far as public knowledge goes, absolutely no service to render".

The French propaganda exercised directly in the Saar Territory was at first conducted by two chief centres, who often covered the same ground; the Office of Major Richert and the Direction of the Mines.

The unity of this propaganda, at first often compromised by this double arrangement, was later assured by the removal of M. Richert. Since that time, the Direction of the Mines has distinguished itself in the systematic pursuit of its propaganda work, decidedly superior to that of the Parisian associations. Until the first admixture of Frenchmen entered the Diet elections in 1924, the director of this organisation was Consul Koechlin, instated in the Administration of the Mines as leader of the section of the Economic Studies, but in reality a representative of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and most intimate Counsellor of President Rault. All the funds employed for French propaganda in the Saar Territory went through his hands. Deputy Lamoureux, in a report to the French Chamber in 1925, openly expressed the opinion that "the Direction of the Mines is the central circulation office of all the funds destined for the Territory of the Saar".

For obvious tactical reasons, this propaganda attempts not to let its true annexationist ends show through; thus it clings to the autonomist program still more resolutely than the above-mentioned Parisian organisations. The Propaganda Office of the Mines Administration is, in fact, responsible for all the separatist foundations that have gratified the Saar since 1923. And this applies not only to the period of Mr. Koechlin's activity, but even more to that of his successor, Consul Vaysset, his former assistant. The relations of this man and of his office, the famous "Chambre 17" of the Mines Direction, with the association foundations and with the separatist papers have been proven. M. Vaysset's actions and those of his brilliant second, Lanrezac, have shown a desire to win, or rather to drive the workers toward an autonomy. From the economic point of view the miners do, of course, depend upon the French State, since the latter is the owner of the mines.

This economic situation is exploited by the proprietors with unbelievable harshness and cruelty in a terrorist regime.

Whoever does not submit is put into the street. The fact that this regime is stigmatised in the eyes of the tribunals has troubled neither the Mines Direction nor the Government Commission, which rather considers it its duty to permit and even to encourage this shameful violation of rights, than to protect the Saar population against such terrorism.

Who are the real political agents beyond the Rhine that depend upon the Administration Office? Slowly it comes to light how all this propaganda, begun under the slogan: "The Saar to the Saarlander", is a purely French business which has nothing in common with the interests of the people that are called to give their vote. The people who try to pass for true Saarlanders are generally Frenchmen or Luxemburgers, or separatists not even enjoying the right of suffrage, not natives of the Saar, but immigrants after 1919.

As we have pointed out in a preceding chapter, Saar separatism received its first impetus in the fact that those who have been called "Mikumfluechtlinge" who have lost the game on the Rhine and in the Ruhr, found a refuge in the French mines and at the same time became auxiliaries for France. Later on, when the National-Socialists took the power in Germany, the Saar Territory was invaded by numberless Marxists fleeing from the Reich whose numbers were augmented by emigrant Jews. Thanks to the support of the Second International, of the Anti-Fascist Committee, of the Marxist Welfare Organisation, of the League of the Rights of Man and others, they were able to find a foothold and temporarily to establish a new existence, by adapting themselves to all trades, even the most lowly. Then they applied to the famous "Chambre 17" and thus found employment in the mines, while the good German miner who had become undesirable was dismissed by virtue of Paragraph 52 on "lack of work".

The governmental Administration did not shy at any expense to procure at least a shelter for the emigrants and even went so far as to draw up a so-called "Saar Guard", a troop organised in military fashion and housed in former miners' dormitories. To present to the world at large the intrigues of these people and their groups and associations as a true picture of the Saarlanders' opinion is a blatant falsification, a distortion of the people's will whose representatives to the regional parliament have always manifested their loyalty to the Reich. The opinion expressed at that time by the Englishman Geyde, on the separatist movement in the Rhineland, applies equally well to that of the Saar: — This movement was from beginning to end the work of the French, conducted and financed

by their Secret Service and by their chauvinistic organisations.

The propaganda centred in the French Direction of the mines works through countless organisations and associations disseminated throughout the Territory. The latter may change their names as often as they wish, as well as their exterior form, but their activity and their program do not vary. There are four groups which follow different paths according to their work and their program and make contact with different centres of the population. These are: 1) the political party foundations; 2) the Francophile miners' associations; 3) the economic organisations; 4) the so-called non-political and neutral associations, for the most part devoted to cultural propaganda.

1. *Political parties in the service of the Saar autonomy.*

The Propaganda Office of the Commanding Officer Richert was transformed, after his departure, into the so-called "Saarbund" (Union of the Saar), which appeared at the Diet elections, in 1924, under the name of "Saarlaendische Arbeitsgemeinschaft" (Saar Workers' union). The glaring loss at the elections (not a single mandate, and only seven percent of all the votes, although French mining officials were authorised to vote), hastened the death of this party. However, in October, 1929, it emerged once more as the "Saarlaendische Komitee der Autonomisten" (Saar Committee of Autonomists). Nothing further has been heard of its existence, and only in the summer of 1931, the Union of Workers again came to light under the worthy denomination of "Arbeitsgemeinschaft zur Wahrnehmung saarlaendischer Interessen" (Union of Workers to safeguard the interests of the Saar).

In an appeal before the Diet elections, this Union described itself as "Exchange of various economic unions representing all the social classes and all the tendencies of the Saar populace". Its adherents are members of a great number of private unions and are therefore often counted several times in general statistics. In order to escape an open denunciation of this trick, the Union announced that it would not enter the 1932 elections. The Saar population replied with a 75% participation. It is only at the elections for the local representatives of the communities that the Union of Workers ventured into thirteen localities with voting lists, under the name of "Unabhaengige Arbeiter und Buergerpartei" (Independent Labour and citizens' Party) or that of "Unabhaengige Buerger- und Bauernpartei" (Citizens' and Peasants' Independent Party).

Although the signatures of the electoral lists were in part forged, they had no success whatsoever, even when the governmental Commission, in the interests of the pro-French parties, required a reelection in a few localities. The proportion of 4% to the autonomists against 99.6% to the already-existing German parties, is eloquent in itself. The directing group of the Workers' Union does not count a single Saarlander in its ranks; the French officials of the Direction of the Mines cooperate with the separatist band of the Rhineland.

The separatist movement received unexpected help from the Marxist parties in their common struggle against the new Germany.

Matz Braun, leader of the Saar Social-Democrats (SPDS), came to the Saar in 1925, from Neuss, in the Rhineland. At the beginning of the nationalistic revolution in the Reich, and at the time of the terrible catastrophe at Neunkirchen, in February, 1933, Braun's publication, *Volksstimme*, proclaimed the national loyalty of the party, thus for the moment putting an end to the illusions of the autonomist circles, who always appear as the "Association française de la Sarre". The latter had interpreted Braun's refusal to appear at the Press conference called by von Papen, as a sign of changing tactics in the Social-Democratic party, which had until then preached the return of the Saar to Germany. But when Hitler turned against the leader of the Social-Democrats, who was considered a renegade by the National-Socialist party, despite his campaign for the return to the Reich, then Matz Braun was ready to change his opinions.

He did it prudently and slowly, in order not to lose his partisans in the Saar who felt more German than Social-Democratic. But he had to take off his mask the day he brought out the *Deutsche Freiheit*, destined, according to him, to replace Berlin's *Vorwaerts* that Hitler had forbidden. The effect was still negative; the right wing of the party went over to the German Front which has replaced the former nationalist, popular, and centre parties, while the extremists joined the Communist party. Matz Braun finally, and hardly to his own liking, became an autonomist, after having tried in vain to gather together the debris of his party in an anti-fascist solid front, which should operate together with the Communists. The latter refused to march with the Social-Democrat leader, whom they accuse of having betrayed, not his German Fatherland, but the Saar working class, which he tried to harness to the French capitalist cart.

It is interesting to recall what Matz Braun thought, only five years ago, about the French political machine, whose

interests he serves today. In an article entitled "Our hopes and our ends", which was part of a bigger work called "The Saar Territory, its Structure and its Problems" (1929) edited by Professor Kloevekorn of Saarbruecken, the present leader of the Separatist movement wrote the following :

The German Saar was sacrificed at Versailles to that reflex movement, as remarkable as it is dangerous and disastrous, of French nationalism, which threatened and still threatens to make all Europe and the whole world lose its clear conception of that terrible event, the late War. The catastrophic fall of the monarchic and aristocratic systems of Europe put an end to the World War, but the unexpected victory of the French Revolution and the principles of 1848 awakened in the rulers of France at that time and until today, such as Clemenceau, Tardieu, and the others, before the dizzy height of their victory and its consequences, this sudden fear that even made them hesitate in the path of modern methods, and made them beat a hasty retreat to the nocuous conditions of the past, to the mad dream of unlimited power, passing from the triumph of the idea to the surety of bayonets.

And farther on : — The idea for which supposedly millions of bayonets have been brought into action, and which was proclaimed as the supreme hope and the last promise of all the countless victims : the powerful idea of the free self-determination of the peoples, was violated without measure by those who claimed to make it triumph over those who scorned them. And among the victims of this act of violence was also the Saar.

And going on to the period of the League Administration : — It is the sad heritage of political acts of violence, that they bring after them economic, social, and cultural disturbances, and the cutting blow of Versailles, under cover of an ulterior free self-determination of the people, by giving the territory of the Saar for fifteen years into the hands of the high capitalist and military class of a neighboring nation, interested only in annexation and exploitation, thereby endangered the economic, social, and cultural future of this Territory to a terrible extent, almost fatally, so that we today have but a vague conception of what is to come.

But still more significant is the following passage on the inseparability of the Saar economy from that of the Reich : — Saar economy has always faced, and still faces toward the east. This economy is shut off today from the vital and natural contact with south-western Germany. It must win back its market, if it does not want to become a desolate frontier country, and thereby constitute a danger for itself, for the Fatherland, and even for the neighbouring peoples. All the problems of political

economy for which Saar public opinion struggles today : matters of traffic and transport, electricity, the gas supply at long distance, the sale of coal, the problem of the maintenance and building-up of an expanding industry that brings in supplementary income and could be capable of resisting business-crises, the practical regulation of the Franco-German commerce treaty — the solution of all these problems is slowed down or even made impossible by the unjustified separation of the Saar. This solution will become all the more difficult and all the more burning with the continued existence of the political wrong inflicted upon the Saar Territory.

Then this reflexion, which might have been written yesterday and might even be attributed to Hitler : — It is in the interest of all Germans and of all Europeans, but it is especially in our own interest, to prevent the creation of a second Alsace-Lorraine in the south-west corner of the Reich, for this would arouse a new hereditary and secular enmity between two peoples who, by complementing each other, could insure the happiness of Europe and of the entire world.

Finally, speaking of the plebiscite : — Neither the soldiers and the cannons of Poincaré, nor the economic disinclination of the Comité de Forges for a German Saar, nor France's attempts toward a " pacific penetration ", nor all the insidious tentatives to mask and falsify the right of the Saar to dispose of itself by a plebiscite, (as in the Warndt by means of the sugar-plum and the switch) : all such efforts could not prevent the triumph of the IDEA over injustice and brutal force.

In spite of all the things he had said, Braun became the white hope of the " Association française de la Sarre ", but the rest of his forces are made up mostly of emigrants from the Reich, who consequently cannot vote in 1935, as is the case with most of the members of the Saar Socialist Party (SSP) and those of the two Communist parties, " Linientreue " and " Opposition ". The president of the SSP is Max Waltz, of doubtful reputation, who once won laurels by recommending, at a Communist meeting, the introduction of the French franc. In October, 1923, after having had the honour of being presented to M. Paul-Boncour, he was accused in a writing of the office of the party to all its members, in which it was declared that Waltz was excluded and should appear before a court of arbitration for having embezzled almost all the funds of the party, for having attempted to corrupt the party to the advantage of its enemies, of having broken into the offices and stolen the seal, the list of party members and, some secret documents... The writing containing these grave accusations was published

in October, 1933, by the Hitlerian papers. Waltz was also condemned for putting immoral literature into circulation.

These wellknown facts suffice to show the level of intrigues carried on in the Saar by corrupt men, who thereby discredit French politics among all serious-minded people.

2. *Pro-French Miners' organisations.*

The heritage of the *Saarbund* fell to the lot of a series of local miners' organisations who are now all included in this former common denomination, but on the other hand, whose individual names change constantly. Everybody knows that as a whole and in all their parts, these organisations are the work of the Mines' Direction, as is the terror in the hearts of the German miners that forces them into the organisations.

In the Warndt, there is the Union of Warndt miners, and for the rest of the Territory, the Union of the Miners of the Saar. Thanks to the efforts of certain French deputies, this Union is included in the General Confederation of Labour, socialistic and therefore under direction of the Central International Labour Office. Joined to the Union are the Parents' Associations, founded in all the localities having French governmental schools, on the injunction of the Mines Administration. The direction of the French school keeps them at the immediate service of the propaganda. Thus the Parents' Council, instituted in 1931, at Neunkirchen, was assigned the task of preaching in favour of the French school, and in favour of the *Saarchronik* (instrument of the above Workers' Associations) and hereby to represent the interests of France. In a great number of cases, as for example in Reden, the Parents' Associations was directly transformed into a pro-French Workers' Association. So they are not content to push children of German parents, against their will, into French schools (let us recall the premium per capita offered for fruitful collecting), but by the detour of the Parents' Associations they wish to press into service the parents themselves, who cannot be brought openly to become members of pro-French associations.

Since 1926, there has also been instituted for the officials and employees of the mines, a real French organisation, the "Berufsverband der saarlaendischen Bergbau Angestellten" (Professional Union of Employees of the Saar Mines), called for short the "Bedsab", which, in its own monthly review, *Grubenlicht*, carries on a systematic fight against the German Press in the Saar.

3. *Economic Organisations.*

In connection with the economic and political penetration of the Saar, there has long existed the Association of French industrialists and merchants of the Saar, which the founder, the Swiss Lieutenant Bringolf, an agent for France, transformed into the Franco-Saar Chamber of Commerce. This foundation naturally was officially recognized by France, as well as by the governmental Commission of the Territory.

There is a group in France that works for the same ends. It is called the Group of Frenchmen having interests in the Saar. These two groups together, in 1927, staged the Franco-Saar Economic Congress, among whose participants were, besides the representatives of the Eastern French Chambers of Commerce, the President of the governmental Commission, Sir Ernest Wilton, and the French member, Morize, not to mention the French Mines Direction.

In the county of Saarlouis, they tried above all to win political influence by means of economic associations. In 1923, they influenced a peasant reunion, conducted by Wagner-Picqard, also of doubtful reputation, to adopt a resolution for the maintenance of the French standing army, particularly for the cavalry, under pretext of the need to *supply cheap manure to the farmers of the Saar*. The consequence of the "manure resolution" (Mistresolution) was to turn all the Saar peasants away from these groups who then founded the "Saarlouiser Kreisbauernschaft" (Peasant Union of Saarlouis County), a separatist union. But as things did not work out as was desired, they created, still under the leadership of Wagner, a stockholder of the *Saarlouiser Journal*, a "Kreditgenossenschaft fuer Stadt und Land", (Credit Association for the City and the Country), which, since 1931, has been trying to win over the rural population by offering easy credit.

This creation was followed in Saarlouis by that of the cooperating "Saarlaendische Wirtschaftsvereinigung", (Economic Association of the Saar) founded by Dr. Hector, former member of the governmental Commission, and by the naturalised Catholic priest, Busert. As is indicated by the name, this association has for its main object so-called economic interests, which it tries to put forward as bait for the city and the county of Saarlouis. However, its program proclaims, beyond the maintenance of the Concordat and of the confessional schools, the adoption of two languages in the schools, under pretext of "facilitating for the children the struggle for existence in a frontier country".

The founder, Dr. Hector, quite recently still a Frenchman, convicted of fraud and giving false witness, and who owes his

escape from a well-merited punishment only to the intervention of the former President, Rault, has the impudence to declare in the statutes of the association that admission is free to every Saarlander "who has a clean police record" !...

In the group of economic organisations, may also be counted, in a certain sense, the "Saareisenbahner-Verband" (Saar Railwayemployees Union), separatist also, and enjoying the particular encouragement of the Belgian one-time member of the governmental Commission.

4. "Non-political" and "neutral" organisations.

The picture of French propaganda in the Saar would not be complete, if we ignored, as lacking in importance, the organisations without a well-defined political or economic program. It is they who, under various appearances, give the clearest impression of the tremendous net of French propaganda. But they characterise at the same time, through their instability, the unsure foundation of this propaganda which finds no appreciable echo in the population.

During the first years after the War, three associations sprang up which, from all appearances, seemed to have no political intentions, but represented a sort of compatriots' assemblage. They were the "Ligue française" (French League) the "Association des Alsaciens-Lorrains" (Alsace-Lorraine Association) and the "Association des anciens soldats de la Légion étrangère" (Association of former soldiers of the Foreign Legion). These three associations showed great zeal to naturalise Frenchmen in the Saar, and took care of all the formalities necessary to obtain such naturalisation. As a result of their activity, there sprang up, in 1928, a "Association franco-sarroise" (Franco-Saar Association), and in 1931, the "Association des naturalisés Français de la Sarre" (Association of naturalised Frenchmen in the Saar). The latter, by its name alone, deserves to be characterised as a blatant attempt to dupe public opinion, for most of the members are French or from Alsace-Lorraine, and the few Saarlanders constitute only a feeble minority having absolutely no prestige among the people. Let us recall here the case of Dr. Hector, previously mentioned, and that of the engineer Rosenbeck of the governmental Commission, Chief of the Association and considered in the Saar as a renegade.

Recently, a new foundation has joined the company: the "Union franco-sarroise" (Franco-Saar Union), having its seat for the moment in Paris. At Saarbruecken, in the popular Marxist idiom it is called a "spontaneous foundation" of

Saarlanders settled in France, but its purely French origin is apparent. It is a foundation of the French Association of the Saar; it has its offices in the meeting places of the latter and is directed by a French officer, one-time ordonnance officer of the military administrator of Saarlouis.

Another foundation of French propaganda is the "Saarlaendische Liga fuer Menschenrechte" (Saar League of the Rights of Man), who put off until October 1933, the delivery of a long memorandum to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, at that time M. Paul-Boncour. The delegation which went to Paris for this purpose and which was received personally by the Minister, was led, as we have said before, by Max Waltz. The memorandum contained a resumé of all the false reports of atrocities of the pro-French Saar Press, the *Volksstimme*, the *General-Anzeiger*, and the *Chronik*.

Among the "non-political" propaganda organisations we may also mention the "Franzoesische Gesellschaft der Saarfreunde" (French Society of Friends of the Saar). It has been in existence since 1922, and may be regarded as the most stable of all the French organisations of the Saar. The statutes of this society stipulate, as one of its duties, historic, geographic, and economic research on the Territory as well as on the intellectual relations between the Territory and France. Their political-cultural ends are therefore presented in scientific form. Founded at the instigation of the Mines Direction, it had for its first honorary president the former Technical Director of the Mines Direction, once President of the governmental Commission, State Counsellor Rault; as honorary member, the former Director-General of the mines, and as a member of the Directing Office, the former Director of public instruction in the governmental Administration; the propaganda agent in the service of the Mines Administration, Robert Herly (alias Jean Revire), whom we have mentioned before, is Secretary-General.

The relations of the Friends of the Saar with the Mines Direction were very intimate. The latter organises excursions with the Sport Club of the Saar Mines, and advertises the other French propaganda organisations. Its activity has found high recognition in France, and its publications were crowned by the Academy, in 1928. Its President and Secretary-General were made corresponding members of the National Academy in Metz. The organisation is itself a member of the Lorraine Historical Federation, which already includes the Saar in its field of action and calls meetings within the Territory. It is hardly necessary to add that M. Morize, French member of the governmental Commission, is always honorary President.

Their second Congress, in 1931, met under the patronage of the Director-General of the Mines Administration.

Beside the organisations acting directly in the Saar, we may also recall a few great French Associations who, thanks to their public position and to their relations, exercise a powerful influence on all French propaganda, as it is carried on at the present time. Their position relative to the Saar question has undergone changes at various times. These organisations are : "Ligue des Patriotes" (Patriots' League), one of whose members is Maurice Barres, one of the most ardent exponents of the annexation of the Rhineland ; the "Fédération Républicaine" (Republican Federation), whose president, Louis Marin, is a well-known orator on the Saar question, and whose opinion has always tended to reflect that of official circles ; finally, the "Union du Commerce et de l'Industrie" (Union of Commerce and Industry) and the "Comité des Forges" in which all the exponents of big industry are prominent.

In order to develop their propaganda, all these parties and associations have established their own journalistic agencies which flood the Territory with all variety of newspapers, reviews, pamphlets, etc.

In January, 1920, when the governmental Commission first took office, appeared the first separatist organ, the *Saarcourrier*, under the auspices of Dr. Schoettler and his acolyte, Gebelein. After a few years, and despite all the attempts of the Mines Direction to support them, the *Saarcourrier* stopped publication. Dr. Schoettler became a thermometer manufacturer in Forbach, and at the same time director of a Bureau of Espionage that had its chief seat at Metz. But since he did not take his thermometers very seriously, and in the course of time defrauded the French State of several millionst, his faithful servitor was finally put in chains.

The acolyte, Gebelein, who long since had stepped into his master's shoes, went on with the publication of a weekly magazine, which until the month of October, 1931, appeared under the name of *Saarchronik*. At present it has been transformed to *Chronik* and represents even today the interests of the *Saarbund*. It is edited and printed in the French frontier city of Forbach, and has the support of French big industry.

The chief separatist instrument is the *Saarlouiser Journal*, which has always been pro-French, because it was owned by French families to whom Napoleon I. presented this Saar property. It keeps step with the *Generalanzeiger fuer das Saargebiet*, also autonomist and pro-French. The chief editor of these two papers is Dr. Feyen, once editor-in-chief of the

Saarbruecker Abendblatt, an evening paper resolutely hostile to France. His first attempt in the adverse field of action was a weekly, the *Saarspiegel*, which brought him into the courts several times for slander, for which he was severely punished. It was after this adventure that he went over to the two previously mentioned enterprises.

The attitude of the *Saarlouiser Journal*, which regularly published accounts of separatist reunions, has of late changed remarkably. It is now proud to be the protective organ of the Catholic faith. It appears every day in the week, in an eight page edition without advertisements, which makes it fairly obvious whence its financial sources spring.

This purely separatist Press has not the approval of the well-known Socialist leader, Matz Braun, with his *Volksstimme* popularly called *Stimme ohne Volk* (voice without a people), which still publishes the *Deutsche Freiheit* for the emigrants in Luxemburg and Alsace-Lorraine. The Jews also read the weekly *Westland*, edited by their bloodbrother, Dr. Thalheimer, an emigrant from Duesseldorf. The editor-in-chief is the former director of the *Saarbruecker Abendblatt*, August Stern.

Another separatist publication recently founded is the *Neue Saarpst*, supposedly Catholic, and concerning which we shall later quote the opinion of the Bishop of Treves, Mgr. Bornewasser. The Catholic label on the paper does not prevent its having Jewish foreign correspondents even in Rome.

The Direction of the Mines also has its own propaganda spreaders, such as the *Saarbruecker Bergmannskalender* (Saar Miners' Calendar) and the *Grubenlicht* (Mine Torch), instrument of the Bedsab, an organisation of the officials. The "Friends of the Saar", published annually in Saarbruecken their bulletin, a collection of historic, geographic and economic works. The "French Association of the Saar", in Paris, has been publishing since 1931, the *Journal de la Sarre*, a fortnightly, in which Jean Revire gives free expression to his annexationist attacks. This Association and the Friends of the Saar despite their affirmations that they have nothing to do with each other, have, nevertheless, organized a publication in common, *Les Cahiers Sarrois*, which treats especially on the French influence on the history and the economy of the Saar. Here Jean Revire appears under his own name Robert Herly¹.

All in all, the French propaganda is carried on in the Saar in a manner that could not be described as other than awkward.

¹ Now, on the eve of the plebiscite, Jean Revire has just expressed, with biting cynicism, in the *Revue hebdomadaire*, his personal ideas on the Saar question. In his opinion, France must demand a rectification of the frontier, because she

The mainsprings are controlled by a few capitalists and others who have an interest in view, but the people, believing appearances, think that France is responsible. The political, polemical, destructive agitation that results from such a state of affairs, has done no better than to poison the entire situation, much to the disadvantage of French influence.

Quite objectively, the only logical conclusion is that France's prestige has nothing to gain by this struggle; she wastes her strength and poisons the atmosphere of Europe without any practical result whatsoever. Walter Schuecking said: — *No government and no administration will succeed in realising the impossible, that is, making 800,000 Frenchmen out of 800,000 Germans.*

needs at least a part of the Territory of the Saar, to fill out the population at a time when the French birth-rate is exceeded by the death-rate. France needs two or three Saar community groups, and for that a majority is not indispensable, in fact, a minority will do. She has to combat not only Hitler's Germany, but Germanism in general. The Saar question dates not from Hitler's rise, but from the time of Julius Caesar, and constitutes an entire chapter in the history of the occidental civilisation.

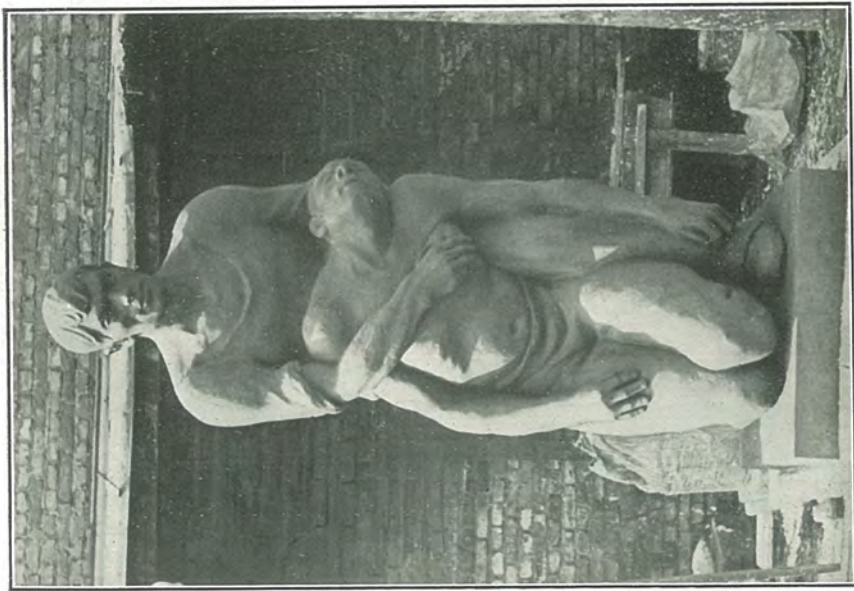
Here we see represented only French interests, without a word on those of the Saarlander!



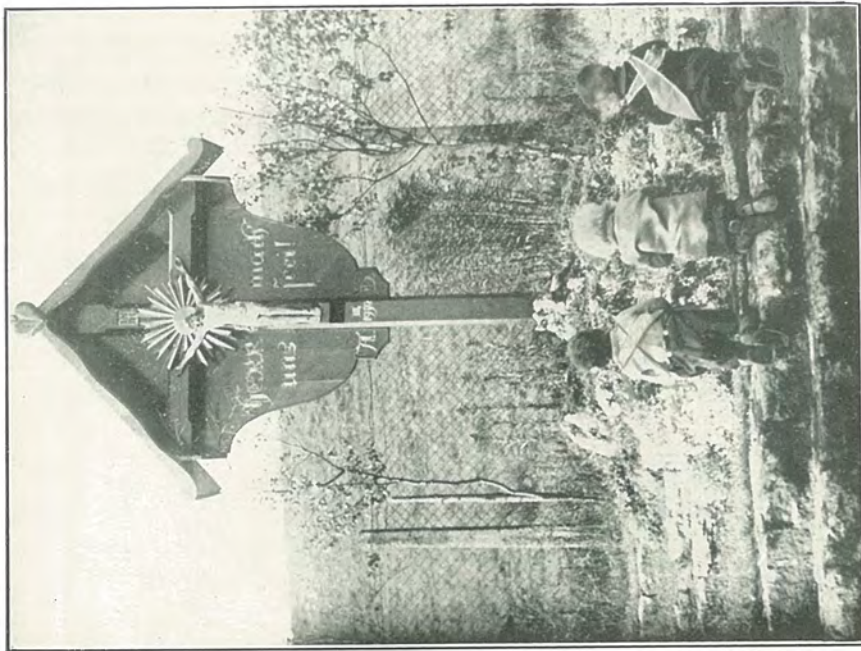
24. Saarbruecken on May 1, 1934.



25. The same day, St. Ingbert.



26. The memorial of the "victims of Work", recently unveiled in Saarbruecken by the "German Industrial Front of the Saar".



27. Praying children, before the famous Warndt Cross right near the French border. The Cross bears the inscription: *Master, make us free!*

X.

THE GERMAN ORGANISATIONS

In the face of the French propaganda and the ever partial politics of the government, it was necessary that the population, up to that time divided into several political clans, should repudiate the different particular tendencies, to unite in a common organisation. The leaders of the parties which existed at this epoch, especially those of the Catholic Centre, of the German populist party, of the nationalist German front, and of the German middle-class Centre, adopted from the very beginning the principle that the question of parties could only be considered from the unique point of view of the best obtainable result in the struggle for the definitive deliverance of the Saar.

In fact, on July 14th, 1933, while the French authorities and administrations were hoisting their flags everywhere for the Feast of the Revolution, the different middle-class parties, including the national-socialist party, joined in the "German Front", nevertheless keeping their independence. Still the latter was not to last long, for on the following 1st of October, the parties voted their dissolution, one after the other. Solely, the national-socialist party subsisted, and was thus induced to play a preponderant rôle in the organisation of the Front, all the more so as the Fuehrer of this party, the State Councillor Spaniol, was, at the same time, elected Fuehrer of this Front. Mr. Spaniol at once declared that the "German Front" grouped as members the Saarmen of all political parties whatever, for the organisation was prompted by the sole idea: their German country.

Thus the Front soon gained for itself more than 90% of the population, entitled to a vote at the plebiscite.

Local sections arose in all the country-districts, to which even former members of the social-democratic party adhered, even though this party had remained aside from the movement of middle-class union.

The practical results of this union soon became evident. The progress of the organisation and of the propaganda were so great within a few months, that a certain uneasiness took possession of the members of government, of the French Saar-Association, and of the dependent organisations. The Associa-

tion, having ascertained that the social-democratic party of the Saar of Matz Braun and the Saar-League of Man's Rights, created by Max Waltz, leader of the socialist party of the Saar, among the German emigrants and Saar-Jews — league which has nothing in common with the French league of Man's Rights — had kept aloof from the combination, thought to be able to make use of those two groups with a view to beginning a campaign, destined to throw light upon the so-called Hitler-terror.

In fact, while Matz Braun, supported by the autonomic papers, *General-Anzeiger* and *Chronik* proceeded to the attack in his *Volksstimme*, Max Waltz published a memorandum, sent to all the French deputies and senators, in which, exaggerating some real incidents and creating a few other absolutely fantastical ones, he tried to throw discredit on the German Front and its real aims.

The French Chamber of deputies was, at the same time, the scene of numerous interpellations, when the Minister of the Foreign department, Paul-Boncour, was violently attacked by those who reproached him with his indolent policy in this question of the Saar.

Mr. Knox then issued, December 1933, very hard decrees, sapping, so to speak, the very bases of the political liberty of the population. These decrees were not only refused, though uselessly, by the Diet, but also unanimously condemned by the Saar-people. They concerned the "duty of neutrality of the officials", the public displaying of flags, the modification of a complementary law of association of the Reich, the maintenance of public order and quiet, the institutions with the aims of public assistance, the completion and the modification of the penal code and of the law of procedure.

Mr. Knox, however, only succeeded in producing an effect that was the very reverse of the one aimed at, and all the edicted measures only cemented all the more the solidarity between the members of the "German Front". The Diet, the associations, the press, did not cease protesting against all these humiliating restrictions of their liberty, that were so shocking for their national sentiment.

In January 1934, an incident of very important consequences for the direction of the German Front occurred. A Swedish journalist, Victor Vinde, published in the *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* a series of articles reproducing interviews with Mr. Spaniol, with regard to the relations between the national-socialism and Christianity, interviews in the course of which Mr. Spaniol, fervent nazi, is supposed to have allowed himself to be so far carried away by his convictions as to make declar-

ations wherein the national-socialist idea was unmeasuredly exalted in opposition to the religious idea.

These articles could do no less than produce a profound impression, not only in Catholic spheres, but also in those of the German Front itself, where a danger for the union of all the Germans of the Saar was foreseen. Mr. Spaniol explained that this was a case of misunderstanding, and did homage to the national attitude of the Saar-Catholics, as well as to the patriotism of the clergy.

But the incident had produced keen discontent in the midst of the Council of the leaders of the German Front, where, among others, men of the old German faith and personalities such as the great industrial Röchling, the deputies Levacher, Kiefer and Schmelzer sat, all of them preoccupied with avoiding an ever disastrous scission, especially considering the importance of the Catholic party. Thus, on the following 28th of February, the Council placed at their head the Saarlander Pirro, former deputy at the Reichstag, as a substitute for Spaniol. At the same time, the national-socialist party was dissolved by order of Hitler, who, a few days before, had declared by the voice of his representative Hess: "The position of a Saar-nazi will not constitute a right to the position of a nazi, after 1935. But, on the contrary, all those will be admitted to the German nazi party, who, by their attitude before the plebiscite, by their action in favour of the German cause will have acquired titles. And all those who, in any manner whatever, should have harmed the cause of the union of the Germans and the reunion with Germany, would not be admitted, even if they were inscribed in the nazi party of the Saar".

In order to underline the program of union which he proposed to develop, Mr. Pirro immediately issued a significant proclamation in which, among other things, he said: "The struggle of the parties is at an end, and we have the duty and the honour to tell the world what it signifies to be German.

To-day we form the most beautiful alliance among brothers. The Catholic goes to the Catholic Church, the Protestant to the Protestant church; but all say the same prayer: "*Our Germany*". At the same time Mr. Pirro completed the declarations of Hess, affirming that solely the adherence to the German Front would constitute the criterium of admission to the national-socialist party of the Reich for all the Saarlanders, had they, or not, been members of the dissolved party, or even excluded from the same.

From this moment dates the conquest of the small minority, which had remained undecided up to that moment, and which finds to-day in the adherence to this organisation a pledge

leaders in the Reich had disappeared. Not being able to affiliate themselves to the new German organisation created by Hitler, because of the legal and social conditions which existed in the Saar, the governmental Commission having modified the German law concerning the associations, the leader of the German Labour-Front explicitly confirmed to the Saar-groups the right and the duty to continue their task in complete independence till the return of the Saar to the Reich. Endeavours to sound them were soon made among the leaders of the different groups, in order to prepare the fusion of all of them into a unique syndical Saar-front. First the Christians, then the neutral groups, and later on even a few groups affiliated to the socialist Federation, showed their agreement, so that, on October 11th, 1933, Peter Kiefer, member of the district-parliament and secretary of the miners' Association, was able to found the Deutsche Gewerkschaftsfront Saar. This organisation, copied from the German Labour-Front in the Reich, is completely independent from the latter, though their social and national aspirations blend. The German syndical Saar-Front is actually grouping 35 federations which comprise about 75.000 members.

The few socialist groups that have stood aloof, are daily losing a part of their effective forces, who join the syndical Front, prompted by their conviction of being first of all Germans. The aspirations in no manner alienate the syndical Front from their primordial object : the protection of the economical and social interests of their members, for, the fact that the German worker in the Saar very often works for the French master's account, by the side of foreigners, makes a strong Labour-organisation necessary.

A German organisation of a particular kind and which has rendered the population great services, is the " Trutzbund für wirtschaftliche Gerechtigkeit ", league of defence of the economic interests of the Saarlanders. It owes its existence to the fact that during the summer of the year 1933, be it under the influence of a political agitation in the press, be it for reasons of personal interest, the French private capital suddenly called in more than 1000 mortgages for an amount of nearly 60 million francs. In fact, the creditors feared that after the return of the Saar to the Reich, the transfer laws would be extended to that territory and that, consequently, their possibilities of disposing freely of their properties would thus be greatly restricted.

These notices reached the Territory under very unfavourable circumstances, the market for long-period credits being

then extremely reduced, and even completely null in several regions.

The consequence was that the repurchase on an equally large scale was practically impossible. The creditors, nevertheless convinced that their contracts, which had been concluded with the utmost caution, gave all power into their hands, prepared to put in an execution of their mortgage-debtors. These measures would necessarily create an anormal depreciation on the market of the landed property. This was complete ruin in prospect for one thousand small land-owners, for want of being able to free themselves from a debt which represented, in short, but a part of their landed property. Generally, the debtors in question belonged to the low commerce and the small industry, they were also miners and peasants.

In the presence of this alarming state of things, the natural rôle of the governmental Commission, charged with attending to the welfare of the population, was to intervene to avoid the catastrophe. They did not, and because of its stoppage of income and the great poverty which threatened a part of the population, an economist of the Saar, Dr. Herrmann Savelkoul founded the Trutzbund " " with formed a connection, be it with credit-institutes of the Saar and the Reich, for obtaining credits, be it with the creditors, to realise agreements. In order to support his intervention with the creditors, Savelkoul organised a vast action of defence by passive resistance.

The sales, on the strength of the authority of justice, of the mortgaged properties did not find a single purchaser, and the creditors were obliged to put up with this fact, because they lost all interest of possessing irrecoverable claims in the Saar and still less wanted to burden themselves with landed property which they could neither sell nor exploit with profit, against the united will of the indigenous population. Suddenly the situation was completely reversed, and the creditors were compelled to recognise that they had no longer the trumps in their hands. The practical result was that the notices which had accumulated in the space of a few months, were extended to the whole year 1934, and even beyond. The action of the " Trutzbund " thus protected at the same time the debtors from ruin and the creditors from the inevitable damages they would have suffered as a consequence of their fictitious measures.

This action which, logically, ought to have obtained the support of the governmental Commission and, specially that of its president, Mr. Knox charged with the affairs of the Interior, was opposed from its very beginning by the central

government, which forbade even the meetings. The writings of the "Trutzbund" were confiscated, the papers which backed them, interdicted, and a decree issued which anticipated sanctions against anyone who would hinder the forced sales. This strange attitude provoked a protest from the "Trutzbund" with the League of Nations, protest which provoked a campaign of the press, chiefly from the *Journal des Débats* and the *Strassburger Neuesten Nachrichten*, which in articles at the same time violent and spiteful attributed to the League the character of a terrorism aiming at securing numerous partisans.

The "Trutzbund" answered, affirming that they were here in the presence of an attack which was systematically conducted by the French propaganda. It pointed to the fact that the articles in question did not say a single word about interests at 10%, and even more, which were demanded by the French creditors, nor did they mention that, besides, the question was about sums resulting for the greater part from the fraud of the fisc. The ghost of the terror is, according to custom, part of the system of each of these attacks, without any one ever succeeding in bringing a proof of it.

A very interesting detail is the fact that the French side admitted without any contestation that the French circles, even those who were justly interested in the Territory of the Saar and from whom those mortgages proceeded, are quite naturally convinced that the Saar population will declare itself in favour of Germany.

The above mentioned articles of course appealed to the governmental Commission on account of an intervention against the "Trutzbund" nor was there neither in the French papers nor in the whole of the polemic of the separatist Saar-press, which was also in favour of the strict execution of the forced sales, a single word to be found about the duty of the governmental Commission of taking care of the thousands of families thus threatened with ruin.

It would be interesting to know if this polemic of the press and the local measures that have been taken, have any connection whatever with the opinion uttered on the 25th of February, at Forbach, in a meeting of the leading separatists and of noted French politicians, opinion according to which the action of the "Trutzbund" represents a "catastrophe" for the movement in favour of autonomy.

According to the last statistics, 72% of the Saar-population profess the Catholic religion. From the ecclesiastical point of view, the Saar Catholics depend on the bishoprics of Treves and Spire. Politically, they have always confessed their German

sentiments, and, after the first months of the national-socialistic system in Germany, when the Catholic centre-party joined Hitler, the Saar members of this great party approved of this decision by publishing a declaration of loyalty to the Reich. It was said textually: — Aspiring keenly to a speedy return to the mother-country, we approve of the leading principles of the foreign policy contained in the declaration of the government of the Reich. All our political efforts must, in the future as in the past, aspire to the only great aim to save the German soul of the Saar. We also fully approve of the attitude of the German centre-party, that wishes to serve the cause of the union of all the national forces. —

On the 14th of July, 1933, when all the political parties in the Saar joined to form the German Front, there were, it is true, some hesitations because of discussions concerning the religious creeds, and which had been produced meantime in Germany on the subject of the application of certain clauses of the Concordat negotiated and signed in Rome by Mr. von Papen. But soon the patriotic sentiments of the Catholic Saarmen gained the upper hand, and the religious question was relegated to the background, in perfect accordance with the former attitude of the party, which had appealed to conciliation in the domain of interior policy, in order better to favour the speedy reunion with the German mother-country.

Everyone realised, in Catholic circles, that differences regarding the application of the Concordat, chiefly concerning the education of young people, are quite natural, because the Church and the national-socialistic philosophy both aspire at educating the new generation in conformity with their principles.

In fact, a very clear separation, on the basis of the Gospel text which prescribes to give to God what belongs to God and to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, offers with relation to this latter question practical difficulties which only time can suppress, in the long run. A similar phenomenon arose in Italy between fascism and the Vatican, even after the Concordat had been finally recognised. It must still be observed that, in the Saar, this resistance shows itself chiefly among the clergy, jealous of their prerogatives, rather than among the believers. It is wrong, in any case, to wish to attribute to these divergencies of opinion an importance capable of vanquishing the patriotic aspirations of the Catholic Saar-people.

They are rather incidents of a local character, which do not go beyond the political frontiers.

The mission of the envoy of the Vatican, Mgr. Testa, who, in 1923, had been entrusted in the Rhineland with a similar

mandate, at the time of the separatist movement, was, in reality, limited to ascertaining the real state of things. The result of the second mission of the prelate shows that the idea advocated by a few separatists, of turning away the believers of the Saar from their traditional bishoprics of Treves and of Spire, would have produced a violent reaction. Ever from the beginning of modern times, the Vatican has always refused to make religion serve particular or political interests, and it has always been careful to keep it its character of universality. Rome never has conjured up any case of conscience likely to bring into conflict the patriotic sentiments of a population with its religious feelings. Besides, in the particular case of the Saar, the Holy See cannot forget that one third of Germany is also Catholic, and that the solidarity of the Saar-people, professing the same creed with so great a part of the population of the Reich, has been linked these many centuries.

A symptomatic fact, showing the state of mind of the Saar-believers, is the enthusiastic reception that was given the bishop of Treves, Mgr. Bornwasser on the 29th of July, 1934, at Saarbrück, by 50,000 members of the Catholic Saar-youth. Affirming his will to observe the same neutrality promised by the German and French governments with regard to the plebiscite, the ecclesiastical dignitary did not, for all that, fail to stigmatise the intrigues of a new separatist Saar-paper, the *Neue Saar-Post*, so-called Catholic, which had wrongly propagated the news of a tacit support with the diocesan authorities. These are the prelate's own words : — If any one tells you that your bishop sides with a recently founded Saar-paper, answer him in my name that he is a liar. And if he says to you that your bishop sides with the friends of this new paper, but that he cannot avow it, then answer him that he is worse than a liar, for he calumniates me.

Much noise had been made about the speech made by the Catholic priest, Dörr, on the occasion of a separatist counter-manifestation, at Sulzbach, on the very day when Hitler was speaking at Coblenz. This priest had just been talking about the above-mentioned separatist paper, adding his voice to that of the anti-fascist leaders Matz Braun and Pfordt. If no one is willing to admit that the man in question is an eccentric individual who has no scruples in associating with "godless" people and even with professed enemies of religion, his voice most certainly has remained isolated, beside those of a few rare clergymen, as the reverend Father Weber, the vicar Bisten, and that his words fully contrast with the numerous and quite recent manifestations of the Saar-prelates, such as the vicars Wüsten, Wilhelm, Arez, Heinen, and others, who leave no one

in doubt about the sentiments of the great majority of the clergy for Germany ¹.

Generally, the clerical circles wish the priests to stand aloof as much as possible in the interest of the prestige of the Church, thus avoiding to seem to be forming two adverse camps in the interior. Nevertheless, as the national sentiment is part of a very high moral sentiment, it is impossible that the neutrality of a minister of religion should go as far as indifference in a question interesting the whole of a population, in the highest degree.

Mgr. Panico, successor of Mgr. Testa, as papal nuncio, is perfectly aware of this state of things, and keeps up, in fact, an objectivity which does the greatest credit to the tact and the just conception of this high dignitary of the Catholic Church.

The *Saarbrücker Landeszeitung* is the organ of the Saar-Catholics, a paper that keeps an indisputably German attitude.

A few words about the Chamber of Commerce of Sarrebrück. It has existed these 70 years, having been founded in 1863 and inaugurated the following year. Its edifice, built in an architecture, at the same time sober and elegant, rises on the left bank of the Sarre, surrounded by gardens, in a charming site. It offers the aspect of a small patrician palace, rather than of a building serving economical interests. Here too, we have thought it opportune to sound the place to gather more particulars concerning the question which interests us.

The men presiding over the destinies of this institution under the direction of Mr. Kardier, are not the first comers, but personalities gifted, in their sphere, with vast knowledge and a long experience. The Chamber of Commerce controls the economical management of the Saar-territory, control bearing no official nor obligatory character : it is quite voluntary and proposes to study the means and necessities which impose themselves in the interest of production and sale, to lead the merchants and industrials of the Saar into a better track with the aim that not only individual enterprises, but also the economy of the whole country may find their advantage there. In this period of provisional system, the activity of the Chamber of Commerce has been particularly intense. They have taken pains to examine, equitably and without any preferences, under all aspects the pro and con susceptible of influencing the future

¹ The abbé Dörr has been disavowed by his ecclesiastical superiors and sent by way of punishment to a Dutch monastery. It is interesting to know, concerning this personage, the names of the books he used to borrow from circulating libraries for his favourite reading. They were a series of erotic books, such as Boccaccio's *Decamerone*, the works of Pitigrilli, the *Erotic Art*, by Fuchs, the *Sexual Mirror*, by Wulfen, etc...

of the country. Their observations, made with perfect objectivity, did not fail to produce, as it is quite natural they should, criticism from the side of the governmental Commission, so that the Chamber has very often been driven to the absolute necessity of turning directly to the League of Nations, in order to protest against such a partial superintendence.

They have been able to show that this method did not produce any profitable result for the Saar-merchants, but that, on the contrary, it raised obstacles to the action which the Chamber was developing for the general interest of the country. However, in spite of these complaints at Geneva, the obstructive intervention of the governmental Commission has always constituted an obstacle to the free course of the activity of the organ representing the economy of the Territory.

According to our personal informations that are confirmed by the authorised voices we heard, we are permitted to formally give the lie to rumours, partially spread in France, that the return of the Saar to Germany would be effectuated at the expense of the economy of the Saar-land. This tendency aims at pointing out that the best solution would be the maintenance of the *status quo*. For, in that case, as they say, the Territory would continue to derive benefit from the present particularly favourable conditions, be it for the custom-house system, be it for the economic system, generally. But this is not correct, because if the Saar were to declare itself, hypothetically, in favour of the *status quo*, it is not certain that the ingress of Saar merchandises into Germany would still be possible under the present conditions, i.e. free of duty. On the other side, it is impossible to foresee what the French policy would be with relation to the exchanges between France and the Saar.

The return of the Territory to Germany would, on the contrary, give a great impulse to the economy of the Saar, because the custom-house duty on the merchandises of German origin, without which the country cannot, in any case, do, would evidently be annulled. As we have stressed in a preceding chapter, the export of the produces of the Saar is chiefly directed towards Germany. If this country were obliged to close its gates to these produces, this measure would completely ruin a number of industries and commercial houses of the Saar. Having the possibility of finding at home equivalent produces, Germany can, strictly speaking, refuse the produces of the Saar. On the other hand, the Saar would then be in a most critical situation with regard to its industry, which is the vital point of its existence.

This situation has, besides, been coldly and objectively admitted by Mr. Drouant himself, the president of the French Chamber of Commerce in the Saar, whom we do not hesitate to recognise as one of the most clear-sighted French personalities, among those who are at present in this territory. Conscious of the fatal consequences that would follow the loss of the German market, Mr. Drouant tries hard to recommend moderation, and to round off the angles in the struggle between the opposite tendencies. That is why his action, doubtlessly inspired by a principle of international co-operation, deserves to be closely followed and appreciated at its just value because it constitutes a precious contribution to the maintenance of the peace.

As the above-mentioned figures prove, the great public works got ready by the national-socialist system and which have procured occupation for millions of unemployed, represent, at the same time, a new sway for the economy of the Saar. The curve, already declining, immediately showed a considerable recovery, in consequence of the importations into Germany, which became possible owing to the program of reconstruction of the Reich.

To this we must add the employment, in 1933, of 15,000 young Saarmen in the labour service in the territory of the Reich, after the governmental Commission had unluckily interdicted its organisation in the Saar itself.

The Saar would evidently see with much regret the sudden stopping of this current, which, since 18 months, has procured so much work to the different industries of the country, while the collieries, that are managed and directed by the French, have registered no improvement. These are a great preoccupation to the leaders of the Chamber of Commerce, because of the state of their exploitation, after 15 years of a foreign system, state which experiences the consequences of the short-sighted economic policy of the exploiters, whose sole aim is a momentary excessive yield, at the expense of the future.

As to the French capital still engaged in a few great industries of the Saar, the Chamber of Commerce sees no difficulty to its withdrawal. Besides, this capital, very important in the beginning, has continually diminished ever since.

Is this, perhaps, a symptom of the more and more marked conviction among the French industrials, that an annexion of the Saar by France is absolutely out of question, and that the maintenance of the *status quo* itself has no effective chance of realisation ?

One of the predominant figures and, at the same time, one of the greatest representatives of the Saar-industry is, doubt-

lessly, Mr. Hermann Röchling, of the firm that bears his name, owner of the great steel-works and blast-furnaces of Völklingen.

The name of Hermann Röchling is henceforth linked with the history of the Saar, in consequence of the fifteen years of courageously kept up struggle to the end that the intangibility of the German faith be not hurt in the whole country.

A true patriot, and without any restriction, he has always energetically refused to admit any interference whatever in his industry, which he succeeded in completely closing to the French capital. The works, to be mentioned among the most important of the Saar, are actually in the hands of Germans, and his family is their sole owner. These works employ more than 7000 persons, workers, employees : 25,000, reckoning also their families.

The French, when speaking of him, call him the *Irreducible*, justly owing to the intransigency of which he always has given proofs against all foreign participation in his affairs. They cannot forgive him, besides, his attitude during the war. Röchling has indeed been one of the rare personalities who understood that the conflict would be a long one, where, generally, people foresaw but a few months, at the beginning. He at once realised that the steel which was necessary for the making of arms of which Germany might have disposed annually, did not amount to more than 14 million tons, whereas the Allies disposed of 55 millions. From that moment, he displayed a great activity of organisation and finally succeeded in attaining the parity.

After the end of the war, the French made him responsible for what he had done in this respect. A striking law-suit was brought against him, at Amiens, as well as against his brother Robert. The charge chiefly based on the circumstance that Mr. Röchling had taken the machines needed for an enlarged manufacturing from the mines and works of the French territories which were occupied by the Germans.

They did not consider that Robert Röchling had requisitioned these sets of tools in his capacity of an officer of the occupation troops, and that, on the other hand, everything had been regularly paid by the staff of the German army. The law-suit proceeded, and on the 24th of December, 1919, Robert and Hermann Röchling were sentenced by the tribunal to ten years imprisonment each, 15 years interdiction of sojourn and fined 10 million francs. Mr. Hermann Röchling being absent, was sentenced contumaciously. The sentence against Robert Röchling was subsequently annulled for an error of procedure and handed over to the council of war at Nancy, but the sentence striking Hermann Röchling was confirmed, and

the "criminal" has never again been allowed to set his foot on the French territory.

The procedure at Nancy took its course against Robert Röchling, who had been imprisoned on the charge of compulsion. Interested Frenchmen gave them notice that it would be possible to obtain a quashing of the law-suit, if the Röchlings were willing to give up 60% of their industrial properties in the Saar. Mr. Hermann Röchling, seeing no other means of getting his brother out of prison, acceded to this. A contract was signed under the clause that Mr. Robert Röchling should be set free and Mr. Hermann Röchling no longer prosecuted. The general commanding the place of Nancy had a quashing of the law-suit against Mr. Robert Röchling issued, who was set free after 23 months of detention. Hermann Röchling was solicited to go first to Amiens and later on to Forbach on Lotharingian territory, 3 kilometres from his Saar-residence Völklingen to purge his contumacy. But, considering all that had happened, Mr. Hermann Röchling declined the summons and asked the French to pronounce the "quashing of the law-suit" without his presence. The French having refused this solution, the contract was not dwelt on any longer.

In 1923, on the basis of the condemnation which had struck him, he was forbidden even the ingress into the occupied territory. But a communication published by a group of eminent English journalists, gave the assurance that the Treaty of Versailles, far from foreseeing the possibility of this interdiction, stipulated that the free passing of Saar people into the occupied territory would be fully admitted, whichever their juristic situation with relation the French justice might be.

One of the brightest pages of Röchling's struggle for the return of the Saar to the German mother-country is that of the famous law-suit, named law-suit of the schools which he had to carry on, in December, 1933, before the police-court of Sarrebrück, for having warned, by means of a loose leaf, the parents of the Saar from sending their children to French schools. Along with him the editor Hall, of the *Landeszeitung*, as printer, and the jobless Mercher, Hillmann, and Dibo, as distributors of the loose leaf.

This law-suit cast a broad light upon the nature of the French propaganda in the opposite sense, and gave Mr. Röchling an opportunity of criticising, in the face of the public opinion of the whole world, the policy of the governmental Commission.

The accused declared, among other things, that this Commission in decreeing, in April, 1929, the liberty for the French children to frequent the French schools, had violated the statute

of the Saar, for according to the latter, the French schools have only been created for the French children whose parents reside in this territory. Besides, the governmental Commission witnesses with pleasure the way the Administration of the mines of the domain, while exploiting the economic dependency of its workers, keeps their children in the French schools.

The open declarations of Mr. Röchling were actually confirmed by numerous evidences of witnesses in the course of the law-suit, some of which we give hereafter :

The woman Stiewitz, of Neunkirchen, called up as a witness, declares : My husband was out of work in 1928-29. She went to see the head of the coke-furnace at the pit of Dechen and asked him to give her husband some work. The man wanted to know to which school she was sending her children. When she answered : " to the German school ", the master declared : " That is impossible, I cannot help your husband to get any work " But he told her the latter could receive work and lodgings, if they sent their child to the French school. In their distress, they acquiesced, and within a week, her husband got some work. In the spring of this year she again sent her children to the German school : a short time afterwards, her husband was turned away.

The witness Oscar Diesel, from Wiebelskirchen, was employed at the pit Kohlwald. In March, 1931, the director of the French school and a teacher came to see him, saying they were acting in the name of the inspection VIII of the mines. They requested him to send his child, which had now reached the age of fulfilling its duty towards the schools, to the French school. Diesel refused. On March 21st, the director of the school had a conversation with Diesel's work master, and on March 24th, Diesel was transferred to Schiffweiler. From that date, he continually was given worse and worse posts, up to the 15th of April, when he was finally sent away.

The witness Karl Blatter, from Wiebelskirchen, for 15 years secretary of the pit Kohlwald, declared that in the course of the week after Easter 1931, the inspector Linn and the head-miner Markhofer tried to induce him to send his child to the French school. The inspector Linn informed him that the French teacher was going to call on him, and advised him " to give the same a friendly welcome and not to be stupid, but to send his children to the French school ". Blatter refused and was sent away, later on.

All the accused were acquitted by the lower court in this law-suit, but the public ministry appealed to the international Supreme Court, where the debates went on in the second suit,



28. The free bus for the public-school children is not... too heavily loaded.



29. Community of thought of the Catholic Church and the National-socialist youth.



30. Saarbrücken, corner of Wilhelm and Heinrich Streets, on the anniversary of the National-socialist revolution.



31. Citizens of the Saar before the voting-lists.

in February, 1934, giving once more to Mr. Röchling an opportunity of defending the rights of the Saar-population and, at the same time, those of Germanism. The law-suit closed up with the acquittal of Mr. Röchling, concerning the chief points of the accusation. He was, however, fined 800 francs, because the accuser Dorscheid who, at that moment was still a German and was sending his children to the French schools, was justified in feeling offended by the tenor of the loose-leaf. The statement of the motives proved that Röchling had acted according to a moral sentiment, worthy of respect, and for reasons of patriotism.

On the other hand, this law-suit gave rise to charges of perjury against the French engineer Gustave Schöller, director of the pit Kohlwald, and against some other persons who had been called up as witnesses. Mr. Schöller had, in his evidence, denied having exerted any pressure on the Saar-miners under his orders, with a view to forcing them to send their children to the French schools. It is really astonishing that the amnesty, decreed on the occasion of the entering upon duty of the Commission, with the aim of bringing about a certain unbending of the minds, was applied to these prosecutions: this amnesty was meant to simply concern all the political delicts or those caused by economical distress. The political favouritism of such an inclusion is evident.

We may, in every respect, register this law-suit as one of the most striking episodes of the foreign administration in the Saar and as a characteristic picture of the real situation in that country.

In June, 1934, on the occasion of the general assembly of German engineers, at Treves, Röchling spoke of the Saar-mines, putting in relief the behindhand condition of the technical tools and the lack of prevision of the exploiters who make no expenses to keep them in good trim.

Whenever money was spent, it was mostly wasted money, owing to want of technical knowledge of the engineers. In short, a deplorable technical and economical situation causes the low quality of the produces, inadequate prime costs, bad financial results, and difficulties met with on all the markets.

Mr. Guillaume, general director of the French domanial mines, feeling himself assailed and foreseeing that he might be made responsible for the bad management of the enterprise entrusted to him, addressed the following letter to the industrial of the Saar:

Sir,

I have learned from the press of to-day the report of the speech you made yesterday at the Association of German engineers.

I can assure you that your appreciations of the work of the French engineers in the Saar will provoke nothing but a shrug on their part and will leave them completely indifferent.

As to the rudenesses of your language, I have a right to tell you that they do honour neither to yourself nor to your audience.

Kindly accept my greetings, Sir,

Signed: GUILLAUME.

The tone of this letter proves that far from shrugging his shoulders, its author had had, in consequence of Mr. Röchling's speech, a fit of temper, very much to be regretted in a person of such high rank. This cannot be explained in any manner but admitting that Mr. Röchling had exactly been touching the weak spot. Underlining the fact that the General director Guillaume is nearly exclusively preoccupied with the present profit, without caring about the future of the mines, Mr. Röchling has unveiled no secret, but he has simply confirmed by his acknowledged authority what every body in the Saar had been aware of for a long time.

To the letter of the Director Guillaume, Mr. Röchling contented himself with answering :

Sir,

I received your letter of the 11th instant, and I am really astonished to receive from a Frenchman an epistle written in such a perfectly impolite manner. That is exactly the proof that the criticisms I passed in public are not unjustified.

I handed your letter and my answer over to the press.

Accept my greetings.

Signed: RÖCHLING.

Much might be said about the technical errors and the faults of organisation which the French Administration of the mines has been the cause of, and on their economical and financial consequences, for an exploitation of this kind does not only weigh on men, but it affects, while lessening it, the value of the property. Are not the provisions of this depreciation the cause of the nervousness of the general director of the mines ? These consequences may become very noticeable in a most unpleasant manner at the time of the negotiations for the repurchase of the mines.

We fancy we know that this question grieves Mr. Guillaume. He doubtlessly considers it from the unique point of view of

the income. Once, the mines yielded a rather large benefit, to wit : 870 million frcs, from 1920 to 1928, and, among these years there are a few in which the benefit amounted to nearly 180 million frcs. Now there is an end of this magnificence and, for several years back, the balance of accounts has become passive. There is a reason of anguish for Mr. Guillaume, who, in his report about the results of the exploitation in 1932, has not been able to overlook the fact that the negotiations for the repurchase of the mines would reveal a great disadvantage for the French State, if a formal improvement cannot be realised in 1933 and 1934.

In short, this situation for, which Mr. Guillaume is responsible, explains the tenor of his letter to Mr. Röchling and forms an absolute contrast with the shrugs mentioned above. Be that as it may at Treves, Mr. Röchling has asked a question, destined to play a first rate rôle in the Franco-German economic negotiations, to be foreseen after the plebiscite.

In consequence of the world's crisis, the industries of all the countries experience the most earnest economical difficulties, to which are added those of political order with relation to their workers. The group of the Röchling industries that occupy, as we have said, 7000 workers and employees has never had to deplore these last difficulties. Among the mass of the Völklingen workers there is, in fact, a very small percentage of communists, viz. scarcely one hundred. Besides, they have had themselves inscribed at the Deutsche Front and have declared that they were chiefly Germans and that they would vote for the return of their country to Germany.

On May 1st, 1934, Röchling, crossing on horseback a locality, notoriously known as a communist centre, was greeted by cheers addressed to his person and to Germany.

Such is, cursorily sketched, the work of the man and industrial Röchling, who could not be reproached with anything but his loyal attitude in the defence of the interests of his country.

CONCLUSION

The campaign for the plebiscite has begun during the last week of September. It has been opened by imposing demonstrations of the German Front, not only at Saarbrücken, but also in all the other towns and in a number of less important localities.

At Saarbrücken, the leader of the German Front himself, Pirro, made the inauguration speech, and the vicar Wilhelm associated with him in the name of the Catholics, concluding that "Munich and Leipzig would rather become French before Saarbrücken would vote for France". At Merzig, the Abbé Arens, speaking of the intrigues of the foreign emigrants, puts the following question: "Since when does any one judge the French nation by a Stavisky or the twelve apostles by Judas?" He was warmly applauded.

At the same time, the provisional lists of the voters for the plebiscite were posted up in all the towns and localities of the Saar, to remain there four weeks. According to a first evaluation the total number of voters was about 510,000. In fact, the statistics indicate a population amounting to 659,680, at the end of 1919. By the application of the tables of mortality, this number must be reduced to about 558,517, from which must be deducted the children born from 1915 to 1919, who will not have reached the age of 20 years on January 13, 1935, supposed all in all 63,234. Thus there remain about 495,000 persons enjoying the required qualifications for making use of their right of voting. To this 10,000 to 15,000 must be added, not to forget the prisoners of war who had not all returned to the basin, in 1919, nor the inhabitants of some townships, that were tardily incorporated with the Territory and whose number was not comprised in the census of 1919. From all these elements the figure of 510,000 was prognosticated as supposed to be the definitive total of voters.

The Council of the League of Nations had already caused two Swiss, Dr. Bonzon and Dr. Reynier to perform the preparatory work destined to establish the basis for the plebiscite: polling lists, lists of the taxes, controlling registers. The Commission of the plebiscite has exhumed this enormous documentation, which had remained under official seal for eleven

years, and has drawn from it the provisional lists that were communicated to the public.

During four weeks the Saar electors have thronged in front of the enormous panels (about 100 metres long) on which the lists were posted. The particular interest of every one on reading them was all the greater as, according to regulations of the votes, every person living at present in the Saar, may lodge a complaint at the polling-station of the district with the suggestion to strike off the list or inscribe on it a person residing for the moment in the Saar. The claimant must give his address and furnish proofs to support his claim. The competent plebiscite tribunal decides about those appeals and the lists become definitive after the rectification has been confirmed.

Considering the activity of the separatists with a view to raising difficulties, it is easy to imagine the work to be done by the Commissions of the plebiscite. The regulations, it is true, have endeavoured to foresee, as we already said, a great many of these cases susceptible of complaints, especially concerning the quality of inhabitant of the Territory in June, 1919. This title must be given to anybody having his customary residence in the Saar at the above-mentioned date and who had settled there with the intention of remaining there. The regulation adds that if this intention has not been expressed, it will be inferred from the circumstances of a fact to be ascertained, be it by means of acts documents existing in the public offices, be it by any other means of proofs. It is easy to see what contestations may have been arising as to this "intention of customary residence", or as to the proof of the fact circumstances related to it, all the more so as, from the first moment, the separatists have developed an extraordinary activity with a view to create numerous cases of contestation, in thus augmenting the arduous work of the plebiscite Commissions. The aim of this manoeuvre is striking. The endeavour to obtain at Geneva an adjournment of the plebiscite having failed, they now hope to be able to obtain this adjournment in making it materially impossible for the Commissions to judge all the cases of contestation before January 13, 1935.

A consortium which has become a real manufacture of such complaints has even been formed. They furnish formularies of complaints with printed text, where it suffices to affirm without any other formality that those against whom a complaint is to be lodged do not possess the qualification of an inhabitant in the sense foreseen by the regulation of the plebiscite. The consortium has engaged 50 persons who are occupied day and night with this work. The postage expenses for the

registered letters amount to several thousand francs. This is the proof that the manoeuvre finds its support in important financial sources.

This action has, of course been accompanied in the Saar and abroad, by a campaign of the press where the number of appeals against the lists has falsely been estimated 100,000 and even 150,000, affirming at the same time that on the German side numerous falsifications have been committed. The matter has been pushed so far that the governmental Commission has found itself compelled to stop it and to protest in a communication to the press against these insinuations, announcing at the same time that the number of persons entitled to a vote will probably amount to 550,000. It has stated in a letter to the separatist paper *Neue Saarpost* that there is no reason to believe in voluntary falsifications in the drawing-up of polling lists.

The tribunals of the plebiscite are thus placed before a task the responsibility of which nobody can overlook, and which requires on the part of their members a high sense of objectivity and an absolute impartiality. It is to be hoped in the interest of justice and right that these law-courts will show themselves equal to their difficult mission, even in full contrast with the attitude of the governmental Commission.

It would be impossible to affirm on this occasion that this Commission has given up the partial proceedings which have distinguished it in the course of the nearly 15 years of its administration. The measures taken against the Voluntary Labour Service, *Winterhilfe* (Organisation for winter help) and others, prove in fact that it continues to confuse its task of entailment-commissary of the League of Nations with the rôle of a third party interested. This is an unbearable situation: if the Commission wish to take up their position as participant in the struggle which must substantially be decided between France and Germany, it is their duty to give up the post to another really disinterested commission.

A characteristic circumstance, on this subject, is the offer of Matz Braun to the League of Nations, which offer he himself has openly proclaimed in a public meeting, and according to which the marxists are supposed to have at the disposal of the Ligue "several thousands of teams of workmen, devoted to the League of Nations".

The attitude of a certain French press does not seem adverse to this idea, when we see, for instance, the *Petit Parisien* naïvely complaining of the means of the "partisans of the League of Nations" and asking: "Will they not finally make up their minds to send to the Saar territory the money and the

men who are necessary for the organisation of the vote that confronts the prestige of the League of Nations and Hitler's?" We hear there thus manifestly speaking of "partisans of the League of Nations" of "prestige of the League of Nations", of "gangs of workmen, faithful to the L.O.N., of money and men to be sent to the Saar, in order to organise there the "solution of the League of Nations". What does the Council of the League of Nations say to this involving of its authority? Silence from it cannot last any longer, on pain of being interpreted as a tacit adhesion; if they will not adhere, they must put a stop to this denaturalising of the electoral struggle.

The prohibition of the Voluntary Labour Service is doubtlessly one of the evident manifestations of the partial policy of the governmental Commission, which policy they follow at all costs, even in opposition to the interests of the population that is entrusted to their care. It is useful to fix the real state of things. The disastrous situation of the work market and the impressive growing of the non-employment, especially among the young people, because of the bad disposition of the Administration of the mines to engage young men, have these two years stimulated the townships and the public corporations to contemplate the opportuneness of the creation of a Voluntary Labour Service. The few first endeavours in that direction at once collided with the opposition of the governmental Commission, who, among other things, made the reunion in labour centres impossible, thus hindering a work aiming at wrenching away from the street thousands of unemployed, thus furnishing them in this manner an occupation in order and discipline.

The Commission has not even realised the advantages which would have resulted for the townships and for the Administration of the Territory and has not asked itself how it might intervene, if some day the Reich sent to the Saar the 16,000 unemployed Saarlanders whom it occupies at present.

M. Knox stood up against so-called military forms and against a pretended soldierlike spirit of those organisations. For any one who knows the state of things in Germany and who had the opportunity to visit the labour centres, it is evident that there is no question of a real armed military service, but solely of the development of the qualities inherent to labour. In his motives Mr. Knox has so to speak boasted of the title of protector of the unmilitarised zone, which is not the case, the labour centres having, as we had said before, no military character. Even from the standpoint of hygiene the Voluntary Labour Service is a beneficent institution: the inscribed young

workers are, moreover, regularly insured against all damages and all accidents.

The reasons alleged by the governmental Commission justify in no way whatever the pronounced interdiction, the real aim of which is no other but to show itself agreeable and obliging towards the separatists.

The interdiction of the *Winterhilfe* is also inexplicable. It is an institution of a pure character of benevolence, which has produced in the Reich remarkable results, in stimulating the solidarity of the citizens before the threats of the winter season, with the absolute exclusion of any political mental reservation. The distribution of the gifts has been effectuated in a uniform measure among the needy nazis as well as among the Marxists suffering in the same conditions. The interdiction pronounced by Mr. Knox is thus not only a partial measure, but also a lack of political tact and an offence against all humanitarian sentiment ¹.

But the extreme in the attitude adopted by the president of the governmental Commission is the decree on the strength of which the meeting premises, with a view to the plebiscite may be occupied against the will of their proprietors or other owners. Here they aim at the cases when political parties complain that the use of fitting rooms for their meetings has been made impossible for them in some places and when the party formulating the demand deposits a proper sum as indemnity for the use of the room.

The prejudice of this decree to the German Front is evident. It results from the motives themselves where the fact that "certains partis" (indeed the separatists) are lacking rooms to hold their meetings is stressed. But this is the natural consequence of the fact that the German Front unites in reality the immense majority of the population, that does not feel in the least inclined to put its localities at the disposal of the propaganda of the adverse minority. In fact, how can one even only imagine to force, for instance, the national-socialist circles to yield up their meeting-halls to Marxist emigrants, or the Catholic circles, to the godless? At all events, this decree creates a state of things without any precedent in the annals of Law, to wit: that a determined political party receives means

¹ At the last moment we hear that the governmental Commission, in consequence of the reclamations of the charity associations, has finally decided to annul the prohibition of the *Winterhilfe*. However, the latter has not been able to begin working before November 3, instead of on the 1st of October, that is with more than one month's delay.

of propaganda from the authorities. Better still: this official aid does not consist of means belonging to the authorities themselves, but are lent thanks to confiscations operated in the homes of persons politically belonging to the adverse parties. Persons are thus compelled to contribute to the propaganda of their adversaries, with their own means, against their conscience, against their conviction, and against that of the majority of their fellow-citizens.

In their decree the governmental Commission refer to the clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, but the scrutiny of the Treaty shows nothing that justifies this measure juridically. On the contrary, we find there for the Council of the League of Nations and for the governmental Commission the obligation of securing to the population "the respect of the rights and its welfare" (Art. 50 of the Treaty) and to warrant "the liberty, the secrecy, and the sincerity of the votes" (Paragraph 34 of the annex). That is why the decree, besides its character of flagrant violation of private property, is in opposition to the civil rights and the rights warranted by the Treaty of peace.

Finally, it exerts still a real moral pressure and endangers the neutrality which is obligatory for the governmental Commission, for the separatists are the only persons who can profit by this decree.

What are the possible provisions to be uttered about the result of the plebiscite? The preceding pages have, so we hope, raised in the reader the conviction of the profoundly German sentiments of the Saar population, feeling, which the unskilled and shortsighted French policy has not succeeded in modifying in its entirety. A well-known French writer, André Gide, some time ago asked the question: "Why consult a thoroughly German population?" Should we ask Frenchmen of the North Department, if the Germans had occupied this territory for 15 years, if they want to remain Frenchmen?"

The attachment of the Saarlanders to their German mother-country is, moreover, traditional. It suffices to recall to memory with regard to this subject: the wish transmitted in 1815 by all the citizens of Sarrebrück and the ancient town of San Johann to the king of Prussia, by the mediation of their burgo-master Boeckling; the declaration of the Saarlanders in 1848, equally to the king of Prussia; the protest of the representatives of the population, in 1866, against the aims of Napoleon III. upon the Saar; the petition of the Saarlanders, in 1919, to president Wilson to ask not to be separated from the German mother-country and incorporated to France; finally the oath taken, in 1925, on the occasion of the thousand year's festival

of Rhenania, to "present ourselves with a pure heart, when the ardently wished for day of the decision will approach, united with our German brothers and sisters."

In its illusory dream French policy has not reckoned with its historical precedents, or has it perhaps fostered the hope of succeeding, in spite of all, in securing for itself the sympathies of the population? If this is the case, the employed methods have not been the most suitable for reaching this aim. Ever since Versailles, the Territory has had much to suffer, the pressures and the coercitory measures have not failed, and this France has lost all chance of winning the game. It is, in fact, a natural law that the resistance of a nation always becomes stronger the more the exerted pressure is felt.

Divergences of opinion have arisen, it is true, between the old German parties at the moment of the taking possession of the power by the national-socialists in the Reich, and a part, moreover not important, of social-democracy has stood aloof from the constitution of the German Front to follow — and we do not know to what extent — the separatist movement of Matz Braun; but to-day, the situation is greatly modified after the open declarations of Hitler that, at the time of the return of the Saar to Germany, the political precedent will not be carried to any one's account. Everybody being able to declare he is a German and wishes to remain a German is sure to be given a hearty welcome by the Reich.

The alluring promises contained in the French Aide-mémoire concerning a larger participation of the population in the management of the Territory, concerning the cession of a part of the mines, concerning the granting of credits to the Saar economy, in case of the maintenance of the *status quo*, do not tempt any one. We have pointed it out already when commenting this document, and the population, in its majority, clearly foresees that such a solution would signify for the Saar the continuation of what the socialist Vandervelde himself has dubbed "political colonial system".

The public opinion of the Saar deplors the fact that France, in the interest of the Territory, interest which she asserts taking to heart, and in her own economical utilities, has not acceded to Hitler's repeated proposal to renounce the plebiscite, while previously coming to an agreement with the Reich as to the future economical relations between the two countries concerning the basin of the Saar. The same opinion regrets that the French press has interpreted these friendly advances of the Führer as the fear of a failure, which is an absolute error: Hitler can only fear not to obtain the unanimity. With a view to his policy of Franco-German reconciliation, a perfectly

possible reconciliation on the Saar question will be eliminated, he has tried to avoid a loss of prestige for France, and, at the same time the resentment which would be its consequence and would inevitably constitute an obstacle to the wished for understanding.

This is another error of French policy added to that of an unskilled propaganda, the only result of which has only been to alienate the sympathies of the population. As soon as 1929, another Frenchman, Gaston Roux, wrote with regard to the Saar question: It is doubtless that at the time of the plebiscite, which is to take place in 1935, an infinitely small number of voices will declare themselves in favour of France. It can be said already now that the plebiscite will be useless for the prestige of France. The question is regulated. A much more important fact is that the simple return of the Saar territory to Germany would constitute for France an economical catastrophe of its own. —

On the other hand, Mr. Daniel Serruys, whose competence in commercial policy is duly established, said in an interview with the correspondent of the *Stuttgarter Neue Tageblatt*, in January, 1933:

—I declare frankly and without reservation: Franco-German negotiations for the soonest possible regulation of the Saar question and the future of the Saar economy are urgent and useful.

They ought not to wait until the year of the plebiscite, for the coming into force of the dispositions that are foreseen in the Saar Statute.

As we must needs reckon with the return of the Saar territory under the sovereignty of Germany, a desirable opportunity of a real Franco-German economical collaboration presents itself there. The Saar territory is submitted to particular international ties, and, even for this reason, negotiations with a view to regulating the economical position of this territory in the spirit of Franco-German collaboration are desirable, urgent and useful.

I am of the opinion that through the exclusion of the political element, the elements of the Saar problem, (future of the domanical coal mines, maintenance of certain French interests, financial agreements relative to the French capital invested in the Saar) can be solved in a satisfactory manner. If politics were removed from the Franco-German negotiations concerning the Saar, this could not but be profitable to the economical interests and facilitate the realisation of a practical result. —

Another of the reasons which prompt the population, nearly completely united in the German Front, to make this majority

as strong as possible, resides in the prescription of the article 35 of the Statute, according to which the League of Nations must decide of the sovereignty under which the Territory will be placed, taking into consideration the wish expressed by the vote.

The last decision as to the fate of the Saarlanders thus rests in the hands of the League of Nations. The habit at Geneva has been until now to confide the treatment of the questions concerning the Saar to the Council, that, generally, decide unanimously, but in the matters relative to the territory of the Saar, take their decisions according to the majority. The possibility of submitting these questions to the Assembly, where unanimity is necessary, exists however. It is a duty for the Geneva League to find the strength to react against the influences which, at the right moment, will be felt on the lake Lemane and to keep completely and strictly in the compass of the Treaty of Versailles. The stipulations of the latter are of a manifest clearness, settling that any considerations whatever from the economical, geographical, strategic point of view or others must in no wise be taken into consideration: the statute solely has regard for the wish expressed by the vote of the population.

The Saarlanders are convinced that the value of this vote in the face of the endeavours of the adverse party with a view to complicating the directives that are established by the treaty, will be all the greater as the percentage of the votes in favour of Germany will come very close to the unanimity. They know that, theoretically, the Treaty makes a division of the Territory possible, if, in a part of the same, the votes for France or for the sovereignty of the League of Nations excel. But this superiority must be of a marked importance, for it would be impossible to imagine such a division for a lowest portion of the country. The Saarlanders finally realise that the maintenance of the *status quo* would make them politically without any right and that economically they would be taken in tow by France.

For these reasons the result of the vote is doubtless, and all is summed up in the more or less high figure of the majority that will pronounce in favour of Germany.

In case the League of Nations should decide the union with Germany, it will behove it, according to the Treaty, to provide for the reinstallation of the Reich in the government of the Territory, and, as we recalled to memory in its time, the rights of property of France to the mines must be repurchased in a bulk by Germany at a price payable in gold and fixed by three experts enacting at the majority. One of these experts

will be named by Germany, one by France, and the third by the League of Nations, this last one having to be neither French nor German. The obligation on the part of the Reich to effectuate this payment will be taken into consideration, and for this end it will be allowed to furnish a first mortgage on its capital or on its income in all manners which will be accepted by the Council. If, nevertheless, one year after the date when the payment ought to have been effectuated, Germany has not fulfilled it, the Council will provide for it in conformity with the instructions which may be given to it by the League of Nations and, if necessary, in liquidating the part of the mines in question.

This is a new great task for the Council, for, notwithstanding the clearness of the prescriptions of the statute, the endeavours to create difficulties of interpretation have already begun on the French side. It suffices to recall to memory the declarations of Mr. Barthou that, by virtue of the treaty, the mines remain the property of France, until this property be repurchased in a bulk by Germany, which is contrary to the stipulations above reproduced, concerning the right on the part of the Reich to offer a mortgage.

This passage is found in the definitive text of the treaty as a substitute for the formula insinuated by the French merchants, at Versailles, in the first edition, formula, according to which "if the population of the Saar decided in favour of Germany, and if the latter were unable to pay the price of the repurchase of the mines, the entire Territory was to fall due to France". The new text and the letter of May 24, 1919, which accompanied it, stipulates that the mortgage is to be taken into consideration so, there does not exist any juridical possibility to delay the taking possession of the mines by the Reich, after the popular vote.

Practically, the French manoeuvre may be considered superfluous and put forward for evident reasons of electoral propaganda, in showing the Saarlanders in a bright mirror the eventuality of a return to Germany, while the mines would remain French as a "carens" of the Reich.

The value of these mines has been estimated in 1920 at 300 million gold marks carried to Germany's account for the reparations. Since that time this account has suffered such reductions that, logically, this amount ought also to be proportionally reduced. Besides, in consequence of the excessive exploitation and the lack of prevision, the mines have become a bad business. Only in 1931 and 1932, they show a balance of a loss of 40 million marks, a round sum, and this loss, which became still considerably higher in 1933, is solely due to a want of dispositions on the part of the domanial administration

to grant the sums necessary to the ulterior technical development of the mines¹.

So, everything allows us to foresee that the sum of repurchase will be very much inferior to the 300 millions established at an epoch when gold was less expensive than to-day, but at all events, it is illusive to think that a nation of 65 million inhabitants, rich in industry and in natural resources, finds it impossible to gather 300 millions in gold to be again put in possession of a secular property of which it has been deprived by a dictum and that forms at the same time a claim from the national point of view. The French nation has just been able, to its glory, to find in the days of the Revolution, by voluntary sacrifices from the citizens, the gold that was necessary for the defence of its threatened frontiers. Could the German people under a national-socialist system be unable to imitate this magnanimous gesture of the neighbouring nation?

And, without going back so far into the past, it suffices to recall to memory the spirits with which thousands of holders of Italian State's bonds answered, but a few years ago, to the Duce's appeal in favour of the national finances? Whole parcels of bonds were offered and burned in heaps in the courtyard of the Italian State Bank, in the midst of the applause of an assistance in raptures of patriotism and enthusiasm.

The question of the mines is, besides, not the only one which the Council of the League of Nations is called upon to solve. There are others, especially of an economic character, which, because of the refusal of France of a direct agreement with the Reich, demand a decision of the Geneva League.

It is especially the question brought forward by the French reference book, in relation to the franc, at present in circulation in the Territory, which the French government would like to be used for the payment of the debts of the townships. The president Knox, in a letter to the Council, has supported this French demand, proceeding as if the governmental Commission had taken upon itself the guarantee for the loans of the townships. Now, according to the Prussian decree about the communal administration, the authorisation of the governmental Commission for the loans has solely the aim to fix the necessity

¹ The Administration has, indeed, striven for 15 years, with a system of exploitation pushed to the extreme, to draw from the soil all it could give, without taking the necessary precautions to ensure the security which the normal conditions require.

We can quote, by the way, the example of the pit "Itzenplitz". Does the general Direction of the mines know the conditions in sway there? Does it know that in the section 33, for instance, hardly a third of the logs of wood necessary for the consolidation has been furnished? That the pillars are wanting in a long gangway, and that the logs must be dragged?

of the loan in the interest of the township, but does not admit of any responsibility whatever towards creditors who keep all their risks, risks that are all the more justified if we think of the high rate of the interest nearly double the one customarily fixed in the interior of the country. The case is perhaps here of an endeavour to utilise the transformation effectuated in its time, in spite of the opposition of the entire Diet, of the German money in circulation, with a view to covering the French private debts at the expense of the Saar population.

Still other questions of no lesser importance are put, such as those of the lines of the railway-net of Alsatia-Lotharingia, established in the Saar, lines the payment of which France claims, in case of the passing of the Territory to Germany. Then there is the question of the custom-house stations. All of them questions that demand on the part of the League of Nations a spirit of equity and a sense of lawfulness on a level with the difficulties of the situation.

The responsibility of the League, be it for these questions of financial order, be it for those of juridical order, be it, and specially, for the one concerning the definitive fate of the Territory, is, in fact, of a capital importance, not only for the rights of the Saar population, but also for the European political situation. By the treaty of Locarno, Germany definitely renounced Alsatia-Lotharingia, and this renunciation has been confirmed by the head of the third Reich. The secular point of litigation between the two neighbouring countries has thus been eliminated. Will they create a new one with the Saar?

As we have said in presenting these pages to the reader, it is in fact doubtless that the maintenance of the *status quo* (without mentioning a reunion with France, be it of any part whatever) would signify at the same time the maintenance of the *status quo* of the Franco-German relations. Is such an eventuality in the interest of our old Europe, so troubled and so little sure of the morrow?

Hitler accentuated several times that the question of the Saar once regulated there is nothing in the way of a loyal and sincere political and economical understanding between the two great nations. With a view to this lofty aim, we must wish that this regulation may be effectuated according to justice and without any discussion. That is the duty of the responsible Statesmen.

At the moment when these pages are to be put in print, the situation in the Saar has suddenly assumed a character of gravity which claims the entire attention of the international political circles and particularly of the League of Nations.

The cause has been the fact that the threat, already intimated by Mr. Barthou at Geneva, of a military occupation of the Territory has taken more precise shapes on the ground of movements of troops in the neighbouring French zone. The pretext used for these measures resides in the insinuations of the separatist elements of the Saar, with relation to a so-called *putsch* of the Hitler formations and is said to be the consequence of steps taken in Paris, unknown to Germany, by the governmental Commission of Sarrebrück. Mr Knox need thus only press the electric button to determine immediately the marching off of the French troops.

As was to be foreseen, this information produced the most keen impression in Germany, that of a return to the poincariste policy of the Ruhr, annihilating all endeavours from the German side to improve in a fruitful manner the Franco-German relations. By this gesture France accomplishes an act of violence, threatens the peace, and exerts indisputably a pressure on the coming vote : such is the opinion in Germany.

In commenting in the preceding pages the speech of Mr. Barthou at Geneva, we have already shown the illegality and the danger of an occupation of the Saar. We can only add, as we have, besides, already pointed out that the law-courts of the plebiscite have not had to occupy themselves with cases that can justify the cry of alarm uttered by Mr. Knox. He has thus not given a proof of such solidity of nerves that the right of arbitrarily emitting a S.O.S. and of taking upon him the earnest responsibilities which might arise from it could be confided to him.

If these fears really have their justification in threatening letters attributed to the Germans of the Saar, he must see, after thinking the matter over that the authors of these letters may be, to all possibility, separatists, with the aim of making fancies arise before his eyes and thus provoking the French occupation which would fulfill their wishes.

There is nothing in the Saar to authorise the president of the Commission to set the gunpowder on fire and thus suscite complications, the consequences of which are incalculable : the Germany of to-day is no longer that of the time of the Ruhr !...

Convinced of the gravity of the situation, Mr. Bürckel, delegate of the Chancellor of the Reich for the question of the Saar, has found it necessary to intervene without delay. The ideas of Mr. Bürckel about the plebiscite and, particularly about the Franco-German relations concerning the Saar question are well-known. He has clearly developed them in his speech at Kaiserslautern on last October 18 :

— Ever since the negotiations of Versailles, there have never been but two points of view in the Saar problem ; the German and the French. The German point of view is the simplest, for it starts from the principles of international right, of the right of peoples to dispose of themselves, and also of the statute of the Saar. The French thesis tries to use the interior policy of Germany to raise in the Saar a minority that is hostile to the German government. This attitude is contrary to the last declarations of the French president of ministers, for it constitutes not only an endeavour to influence the vote in the sense of the *status quo*, but an immixture in the interior affairs of our country.

If the *status quo* should be maintained in the Saar, this would not only be an obstacle to a Franco-German agreement. This territory would become a focus of dangers for the national unity of the French nation itself. Partisans of the *status quo* are, for the greater part, Marxists immigrated from Germany who wish to constitute a centre of action in the heart of Europe. They wish to secure a safe refuge, from where they can infect the two neighbouring peoples with their communistic, Marxistic, international ideas.

The maintenance of the status quo in the Saar would not be a victory of France over Germany, but the victory of bolshevism over all the national States of Europe.

Mr. Bürckel still says :

“ The declarations of Mr. Doumergue permit us to hope that a loyal will of peace between two great nations will become the basis of an honest and honourable understanding. Unfortunately there still exist between France and Germany serious divergencies of opinions with regard to the Saar.

But the Saar problem would cease to be an obstacle to the understanding, if the principles expressed by the president of the French ministers formed the basis of the Saar policy of the French government.

For Germany the unconditional return of the Saar to the Reich is a quite natural thing, as it is stated that this territory is only inhabited by Germans. According to the principles of the right of the peoples to dispose of themselves, solely a reintegration into the Reich is possible.

The French propaganda and diplomacy try to obtain the definitive installation of the *status quo* in the Saar with the help of an opposition directed against the German government. They wish to obtain by this means an apparent minority which

must prevent the natural return to the Reich. The partisans of the *status quo* do not struggle with Germany. They fight the government of the Reich, that is, they falsify the sense of the plebiscite in making of this vote a vote against the governmental system, at present in power in Germany.

They reckon with an eventual second plebiscite. Now, a second plebiscite is contrary to the treaty, it does not correspond to the real intentions of France, it is impossible. It never was the intention of the conference of Versailles to make the future of the Saar dependent on a given interior political situation in Germany or in France.

Germany expects the League of Nations to formulate a definition without any equivocation and which apprises every voter of the fact that the plebiscite is definitive.

Taking into consideration the new state of things which came by surprise since that time, in the Saar, Mr. Bürckel, with the approbation of the Führer, has ordered *the Hitler formations of the border territories not to wear the uniform and not to assemble for appeals or defiles, from next January 10 to February 10, in a zone extending as far as 40 kilometres from the frontier.*

In the appeal directed to the S.A. and to the S.S., Mr. Bürckel expresses himself thus :

— France threatens the territory of the Saar with a military occupation. They are trying to involve you in this dangerous game, in conjuring up the ghost of a march of the assault sections of the frontier regions in this territory. I protest in your names against this unjustified reproach.

I stand up before the world as a witness to your discipline and to the confidence which you deserve. I thank you for the disciplined attitude you have always observed, even when you were obliged to hear the calumnies and the insults hurled against the Führer and the responsible men of the Reich and of the national-socialist movement, in the press and in the assemblies, by the emigrants and the adversaries of the return to Germany, without any intervention on the part of the governmental Commission of the Saar territory.

In the name of our Führer who, for the maintenance of European peace, goes to the limits of the possible, I must inflict upon your correctness and your discipline still greater requests, in order to show the whole world the injustice of the French intentions.

Mr. Bürckel then announces that he will invite the representatives of the chief foreign papers to sojourn as guests of the Reich before, during, and after the period of interdiction

(January 10-February 10, 1935) within the zone of the ancient frontier, so that they may be convinced by their own eyes of the inanity of the accusations directed against the S.A. and the S.S.

And the delegate for the Saarland concludes :

— We solemnly declare that *we have never had any of a "putsch"*. There is no room in our ranks for terrorists. Neither have we given the slightest pretext to the monstrous provocation which is expressed by the concentration of foreign troops to threaten a German territory with a foreign invasion. If I request this new sacrifice of you, I do so in the interest of the European peace, which we wish for with the most extreme sincerity. —

In the face of this decree, Mr. Pirro, leader of the German Front, has addressed to all his adherents an appeal in which he says that the situation of the Saar begins to become serious : he protests against the campaigns of the press and the hostile manifestations, appealing once more to the most strict discipline.

— Do the responsible organs know, says the appeal, that the decrees of the governmental Commission are continually trodden down in the assemblies organised by the immigrants and by our adversaries ? That the immigrants are methodically drilled for the guerilla-war ? That the immigrants misuse the right of sanctuary that is granted them against the will of the population, and that by daily acts of terrorism they endanger the public tranquillity ?

That the immigrants devote themselves to this dangerous game under the protection of the direction of the mines ?

The governmental direction is about to take a decision of an historical importance : either they cut short by their own means, as they can easily do, every act of terrorism, particularly on the part of immigrants ; and they forbid them to appear in public assemblies and to collaborate to Saar newspapers, and in that case, every "terror" will disappear : or they call the French troops into the Territory and cause a misfortune which may have incalculable consequences for the whole of Europe and the occidental civilisation.

But you, German men and women of the Saar, I exhort you again, in this gloomy hour, to observe the strictest discipline. At the same time, I command :

1. The members of the German Front who transgress my orders and do not observe the discipline will not only be excluded from the Front, but also put, should the case arise, at the disposal of the attorney general ;

2. He who, by denunciations to the attorney general, obtains the condemnation of a terrorist who had perhaps sneaked into the ranks of the German Front, will receive a recompense of one thousand francs. I take this measure because our adversaries are trying to introduce provoking agents into our ranks.

These instructions of Mr. Bürckel, addressed to the Germans residing outside the frontiers of the Saar, and those of Mr. Pirro to the Germans of the interior, are a new proof of the absolute will of the national-socialist and the German government to avoid at any cost all incidents. They form at bottom a simple and more detailed adjustment of the general dispositions already taken long ago. This attitude stands in full contrast with that of the separatists, who reckon with the intervention of the French troops in case of troubles, and do all they can to create the realisation thereof. But they are mistaken, as the recent demonstrations of Saarbrücken, of Neunkirchen, and of Saarlouis have proved. The population in no way cares for them, and the police are in a perfect position to re-establish the order in a few minutes. It is only to be deplored that the emigrated commissary Machts, at Saarbrücken, waits to intervene, that incidents occur.

Meantime, notwithstanding Mr. Laval's and Sir John Simon's declarations of tranquillity, the government of the Reich did not hesitate to clearly signify to the Powers that signed the Locarno Pact, that an appeal to the intervention of French troops in the Territory, even in case of troubles, must be considered, from a juridical point of view, as a violation of the Treaty. And if, from the French and English side, the decisions of the Council of 1925-26 are invoked, foreseeing the intervention of foreign troops in a certain case, the answer from the German side is that these decisions concern the epoch when Rhenania was still occupied, and when the French troops were necessarily obliged to secure their lines of halting-places. This occupation once ended, the paragraph 30 of the statute, fixed by the treaty of Versailles, came into force, paragraph, according to which the local military police-force alone is appointed for keeping up the order.

As in conformity with the numerous declarations and the measures of the government of the Reich, every violation of the Saar frontiers by German troops, that would be able to create a new situation, is out of question, Berlin expects that the other governments conform to the principles of right, established by the Treaty of Versailles. This Treaty, we repeat it, does not in any case authorise the appeal to foreign

troops, and all the more, the appeal to the armed force of one of the parties in questions during the plebiscite. The League of Nations itself would not be in a position to take such a decision, for it would then give the Treaty an interpretation equivalent to a violation and an absolute alteration of its tenor.

To sum up, not only from the point of view of the Locarno Pact, which, stipulating the inviolability of Franco-German frontier-territories, naturally also extends to the Saar territory, but equally in the interest of the League of Nations, it is to be hoped that the Saar question may be solved in a form likely to raise the prestige of the Genevese League, which, in the course of the last years has been several times compromised, and to reassure the confidence in its judgement free and independent of all secret corridor manœuvres.

May the Consuls take care : *Caveant Consules !*

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