

# MAYOR OF COLMAR INTERVIEWED BY WALLACE IRWIN

Says Alsace-Lorraine Is French to the Heart.

30,000 IN ARMY OF FRANCE

Desert From German Army When War Broke Out—Not Only Does France Want Her Alsace-Lorraine, But Alsace-Lorraine Wants Her France—Tells of His Escape.

By WALLACE IRWIN.  
I did not go to interview M. Daniel Blumenthal, because he has come to Washington as a member of the French high commission. Heaven knows, and my wife is still better aware, that I know nothing about finance, high or low; and had it been up to me, I should have loaned the French government, via M. Blumenthal, any number of billions right out of Mr. McCoo's treasury. But it was as the ex-mayor of Colmar (Ancien Maire de Colmar is the way it is expressed on the large, foreign-looking card he hands you) that I wished to see and talk to him.

Now, Colmar isn't the largest nor yet the second largest city in Alsace. But it is in the heart of that freedom-loving little province which has been held by Germany like a caged eagle ever since 1871. The Hohenzollerns have held the bars across Alsace, but they have never been able to clip her wings. And if you think they ever will, just talk with Daniel Blumenthal.

A little man with a graying beard and round, black, humorous eyes, I found him in a hotel room packing for another flight with the commission. I told him that since I had heard of his famous escape from the Germans,



Misses Janet and Lydia Blumenthal, Daughter of Mayor of Colmar.

Invading Colmar, I imagined he would be a hard man to coerce into an interview.

"To escape from America would be something," he assured me, talking with all the fingers on both his hands. "But the Germans! They are what you call it—bone-in-the-head."

"It would be doing us a service," I said, "to tell America what Alsace-Lorraine would prefer to be after peace is made—French or German."

"Do you know," he replied, "standing straight as a ramrod, that the Marsellaise was first sung at Strassburg? Freedom has always been to us the passion, and from us the best blood of the French revolution went out. Do you think, then, we would have any business with spiked helmets from Berlin?"

French to the Heart.  
I had heard talk in the newspapers of a plan to leave the nationality of the twin states to a plebiscite of Alsace-Lorrainers.

"A German-made plebiscite would be pretty to see," he informed me with a smile. "Alsace could vote with scraps of paper, but never by fair election. Why? Because she is French to the heart today, and since 1871 she has never forgotten her loyalty to the free republic to which her soul belongs. German editors write editorials full of learning to show that the children of Alsace-Lorraine today are different from yesterday, because they speak the language which Berlin has forced upon them. Eh bien! Do you know how many Alsace-Lorrainers deserted from the German army when war broke out and are now fighting with France? Thirty thousand. It is an honor to say that they are the bravest among the French; but that is so.

"German papers will tell you that because we speak the language that has been forced down our throats we are content. That is the thinking of Prussia. But can the Prussian tell us why while we were a part of France we never spoke bitterly of the government? Why, under that kind

German rule have we protested by our representatives at the reichstag? Why our young men have emigrated to escape military duty, while our citizens innumerable have gone to imprisonment for expressing their affection for France?

"Despite the mills of industrious kultur, which strive forever to pour everything into a hideous German mold, Alsace-Lorraine is today overwhelmingly French. If you wish, I will recite some figures. Our population is 1,900,000 altogether. Of those 1,500,000 are natives, almost without exception totally French. There are 400,000 German immigrants or descendants of immigrants.

Deported to Slavery.  
"Germany cannot possibly substantiate her claims that your provinces have been Germanized," I agreed. "German logic is able to think both ways, like a donkey with two heads. She has well learned the speech, 'What is yours belongs to me and what is mine is my own.' Since the beginning of the present war the German generals have made no hesitation about declaring that they consider Alsace-Lorraine an enemy country. How much better than Belgians have we been in the sight of Prussia? Look at the thousands of Alsace-Lorrainers who have been deported to slavery and answer for yourself. We have been told, we speak the French language in a provoking manner. Therefore it is taken out of our mouths, so that we may worship the Kaiser in his own sweet words. The prisons are full of my people who were arrested during those first awful days of the war.

"When they are candid—which happens seldom—the Germans admit that they have no faith in the loyalty of Alsace-Lorraine. They mistrust us because we do not admire the goose step do not regard the sign 'Verboten' as more beautiful than our mountain scenery. Thus it is that Germany longs for 'der tag' when we shall be dragged by the hair of our heads into further despotism.

"Monsieur, loyalty and love are not bought without price; that you know. The martial courts have sought to silence us with frightful grimaces. We have spoken our love for France at the cost of our lives. Executions have been many, and thousands of years of imprisonment have been ordered by their councils of war. And it is not alone a matter of language, this loyalty, for the Alsations of the upper Rhine, who speak the dialect, have suffered no less terribly than the others.

"In the larger cities, particularly Metz and Strassburg, you will find the Germans concentrated most thickly. When Alsace-Lorraine becomes French again—and we are sure of it, Monsieur—there will be a scattering from those large cities, because the German population is mostly of the garrison or the official life. And what shall we care for those remaining? In power the German is rude and brutal, out of power he is dull and slavish."

Must Be Returned to France.  
"France was wise to send you here on her high commission," I suggested. "France knows that I am like the heart of Alsace, all French," said M. Daniel Blumenthal. "My own country must be returned to France or there can be no lasting peace. We will accept no sedatives from Germany, no hypocritical offers to become an autonomous state in the German confederation. It is not alone that France wants her Alsace-Lorraine, Alsace-Lorraine wants her France."

Those round black eyes began snapping again with the joke of it when I referred to his escape into France. It was not so humorous, perhaps, in that July day in 1914 when the Huns appeared with bayonets on their rifles and stood sentry on the good mayor of Colmar.

"You Americans do things tout a coup—all of a sudden—what you say? Maybe no mayor from these United States ever resigned himself from office so quick as I took myself out of the mairie of Colmar."

"You see I had not been loved for some time by Berlin, because I had refused to receive decorations from M. le Kaiser or to acknowledge that Deutschland was uber alles in Colmar. We Alsations are not pacifists. We knew for quite a while that war would break over us one of these days and that the Boches would come marching in with the kind of kultur we hated to think about. One of my daughters thought of what to do, so she said to me:

"Papa, when war comes you must be the first out of Colmar."

"So we talk it over often en famille. Nothing was omitted. For we knew that the name of Blumenthal was at the head of the list of those to be arrested.

"Eien! It was the day of July 31, 1914, that very polite German officers and soldiers arrive to my office in the town hall of Colmar. They show me proclamations from the general commandant, which I am, with greatest politeness, requested to post. Those posters say how danger of war is proclaimed. Colmar is to go under martial law. That is sufficient. I am still considering my program when more gray soldiers come in with still more politesse to inform me that I am now an ex-mayor. A German judge at the court of appeals is to take my office.

Fritz Is "Bone-in-the-Head."  
"I see my daughters! The day is pleasant for motoring! I say! Why not a little trip to the station! They are delighted to take the air. But when we reach the town of Neubreisach we are completely halted by more German bayonets. The officer is full of anger and all puffed up with rules, like every German. What do I mean by driving up to a guarded city with my motor? Do I not know the rules of war? It makes me nothing when I tell the Herr Lieutenant that I am a peace-

ful avocet and do not know anything about war. He arrests me and sends my daughters back home in the automobile.

"Herr Lieutenant is quite German in his behavior. He calls a common soldier, who goes steps away with me to see the general. This poor Fritz was bone-in-the-head, too, as you say it in America.

"Well, well!" says the general in great irritation, "what have you there?" "He was arrested at the gate, Herr General!"

"Take him away!" groans M. le General.

"Jah, Herr General. Where shall I take him?"

"Take him anywhere. Take him to the station."

"The private salutes, shoulders his musket, and marches me away to the railroad station."

The former mayor of Colmar stroked his little gray beard and shot bright sparks from his round, black eyes. "I thought the train I took would go right across the Swiss border. But it was war time, and the Germans were not making it easy for escaping Alsations. About two miles from Switzerland we were taken off the train and left to walk.

"It was at the German outposts at Leopoldshoeshe that we met our last obstacle. On the very wall that marks the border of Switzerland stood a German Herr Lieutenant with sentries.

"Halt!" We do so.

"What business have you crossing the borders in war time?"

"Herr Lieutenant, I say, I am an avocet who was obliged this morning to cross the border in pursuit of his peaceful calling."

"Pass!" says the lieutenant in the disagreeable voice of a German officer doing a favor.

Very Slender Escape.

"Monsieur, it was by a stairway of a few steps that we mounted that wall into Switzerland. There were a few more steps leading down to the other side. And what should happen then, just as I was standing at the top of the wall?"

I couldn't imagine, and confessed as much.

"I had one foot on German territory, the other on Swiss, when a great clown of an Alsatian soldier, one who knew me at home, began saluting very politely.

"Ah, Herr Lieutenant," he says, intending to pay me a great compliment, "you are letting pass a very great man—the mayor of Colmar."

"I awaited no more courtesies, but descending the stairs into Switzerland by leaping nine steps. Nom d'un chien, but it was—what you call it?—a very slender escape."

"What becomes of your wife and two daughters?" I asked in my best nursery manner.

"Ah, you see we had arranged everything. I was more happy than surprised when they joined me in Basle."

"Weren't you afraid they'd miss connections somewhere?" I inquired.

"How could they?" he counter questioned. "Did we not all make up the program together?"

And I bade him adieu, full of the faith that is making Alsace safe for democracy.

## U. S. SOLDIER BREAKS RECORD FOR WOOLING



Private Barnoff and his bride, who was Miss "Bibi" Garrell of Oakland, returned from the Philippines recently and entered a "trig store" telephone. Miss Garrell handed him a telephone slug and spilled. Just one hour and fifteen minutes later she became Mrs. Barnoff. He is stationed at present at Camp Fremont, and plans to have his wife join the Red Cross.

## Sheep Will Mow Golf Course.

The members of the Arkansas City (Ark.) Country club are combining golf and patriotism. They have discovered that no green keeper can do as good a job of mowing as a flock of sheep. The government is urging people to raise sheep; ergo, combine the two and mow your golf grounds and be a patriot at the same time. The members have "chipped" in and bought a flock of sheep, and now expect to have one of the finest 18-hole greens in the state, and possibly to receive a leather medal from Herbert C. Hoover as a forerunner aid in the food conservation.

## RABBIT SAUSAGE A BERLIN TIDBIT

Britain Studies Economic Position of Central Powers.

DEBT IS 94 MILLIARD MARKS

Industry and Commerce of Germany and Austro-Hungary Must Devote Its Energy to Rehabilitation—People Raid Food Fields—Serious Shortage of Coal in Both Empires.

The economic position of Germany and Austria is being carefully studied by the British intelligence department, and from a series of notes taken from the press of the central empires one learns, for instance, that after-war problems in Germany are the cause of much anxiety. It is expected that the debt of the empire, according to the Vossische Zeitung, will, by the end of the year, have increased to ninety-four milliards of marks. This will involve an annual charge of six milliards, a sum which will be increased to ten milliards by pensions, debts of separate states, municipalities and communes. After the war industry and commerce will have to devote its attention to methods for reconquering its old position in the international market, "but they cannot succeed in doing so unless the burdens that industry has to bear—taxes, wages and other expenses—are kept within bearable limits."

There are fears of an economic war, and hence the writer lays it down that "it must be one of the principal items in the German conditions of peace that no door anywhere shall be bolted against the entry of German products. Without any artificial obstruction there will be plenty of hindrance to overcome. Not one out of all the efforts of our enemies to substitute their own products for German goods can be successful in the long run. Yet after the war hatred toward Germany will certainly persist among our enemies and may result in the temporary boycotting of German goods."

Shipping Shortage Serious.

One of the first problems Germany will have to face will be the shortage of shipping. Herr Heinken, director general of the North German Lloyd Steamship company, thinks the opinion that the shipping lines will "roll in gold" somewhat premature. He considers that after a certain period, short or long, Germany will again enter into relations with her enemies, but until such time arrives he believes that the German shipping industry will have to wage severe and stern war. The two vital tasks of German shipping will be, first, to make up losses and injuries suffered during the war, and, second, to catch up the enormous advantage gained by the enemy and neutral shipping as a result of the war.

It is also predicted in Vienna, according to the Neue Freie Presse, that steamships probably will be commandeered by the government after the war and required to convey raw materials to and manufactured goods from the country at fixed rates.

In both Germany and Austria the manufacturing industry and agriculture will tend more and more toward substituting work by machinery for the labor of men and beasts. The enormous sacrifices of human lives demanded by the world war in all countries has reduced the number of working men to such an extent that no branch of industry will have at its disposal as many trained men as before.

Turning to more domestic matters, these notes afford a good insight into the internal condition of Germany and Austria. The four-pound loaf in the new harvest year in Germany cost just a fraction less than double what it cost before the war. There was an increase in the daily bread ration from the middle of August from six ounces to nearly eight ounces, while at the beginning of this month the flour, meat and potato rations were regulated anew on the basis of the harvest estimates and the live stock census.

People Raid Food Fields.

Previous allowances were considered insufficient, and the position of food supplies was one of the principal causes of labor discontent. It was complained in August, by the general officer commanding in the marks, that "people are not ashamed to help themselves to produce growing in fields and gardens, often long before it is ripe."

In Austria the position was still more serious. On Saturdays great crowds proceeded to the country around Vienna to buy up early potatoes from the peasants, and people stood in queues right into the peasants' houses. When the supply gave out exciting scenes were witnessed, and the much-annoyed citizens proceeded to the fields and dug-up potatoes themselves.

Rabbit sausage having made its appearance in Berlin at 5.40 or 6 marks a pound, and being considered a tasty morsel, the municipality has taken up the manufacture at 2 marks a pound. Blood sausages are regulated at 2 marks a pound, and liver sausage 2.30 marks. German "tea," made from blackberry, raspberry, currant and strawberry plants, sells at an equivalent of 55 cents a pound, while both tea and coffee substitutes are declared by a learned professor to resemble the original in color only; in taste and smell there is none.

There is a serious coal shortage, and it is announced that in Frankfurt half the schools will be closed this winter.

## EXILED KING VISITS EMMANUEL OF ITALY



An unusual photograph, showing the kings of Montenegro and Italy in Paris. This is one of the very few taken of them together, although King Nicholas is father-in-law of Emmanuel.

The picture is the best and most recent made of the monarchs. The meeting took place recently after the Italian king returned from his visit to the French front as guest of France. King Nicholas since his exile from his native land at the war's beginning has made his home in Paris.

## TOKENS FROM AMERICA DELIGHT THE FRENCH

Soldiers and Surgeons Show Childlike Pleasure Over Anything From This Country.

Letters from France tell of the childlike delight of the French soldiers and surgeons when they receive even the slightest tokens from America. Miss Kate T. Cooke, writing to the American fund for French wounded, which had sent some hospital supplies says: "If only you could have seen the pleasure of my head nurse, and Doctor Ferris and Doctor Buc when your cases were unpacked and treasure after treasure was brought to light!

"The shirts and pajamas were the admiration of these doctors, and when they discovered the handkerchiefs and post cards, and even chocolates in the pockets of these garments, their delight knew no bounds. "The unpacking was held up while I translated for them the various messages of courage and good luck sent across the ocean by your committees at home. Monsieur le Medicin Chef Ferris begged like a child for one post card which bore the address of a girl of ten.

"The compresses in those lovely boxes appealed especially to the surgeons. We have been using such fearfully rusty boxes for sterilizing, and the prospect of life new ones makes my heart glad.

"The twelve surgical blouses brought forth cries of joy from the two surgeons, and I warn you that the medicin chef (chief surgeon) in his letter of thanks, is going to beg you for more.

"The fly-killers (swatters) were much appreciated. No one here had ever seen them used, and I had much trouble to keep them for the blesses (wounded), the personnel of the hospital liked them so well."

Thanks were also received for six cases of surgical supplies sent to the hospital at St. Brieux.

"Our stock has been pitifully low," says the letter. The greatest call is for socks, sweaters, shirts and warm underclothing.

## THE FLAG GOES BY.

Hats off! Along the street there comes A blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums, A flash of color beneath the sky.

Hats off! The flag is passing by.

Blue and crimson and white it shines Over the steel-tipped ordered lines.

Hats off! The colors before us fly; But more than the flag is passing by.

Sign of a nation great and strong To ward her people from foreign wrong, Pride and glory and honor, all Live in the colors to stand or fall.

Hats off! Along the street there comes A blare of bugles, a ruffle of drums, And loyal hearts are beating high.

Hats off! The flag is passing by.

—Henry H. Bennett.

## MAKE GOWNS IN MIST OF WAR

Paris Dressmaking Industry Is Not Hampered.

SPAIN IS BEST CUSTOMER

Takes the Place of the United States as the Most Lavish Buyer of Dresses—Rabbit Fur, Cunningly Dyed, Keeps Up Rich Appearance in Fashions—Norway Heavy Buyer.

The great war does not seem to have worked the same hardships on the Paris dressmaking trade that it has on other branches of French industry. The openings at the big couturiers go merrily on, and though American buyers have long since flown back to the States representatives of European houses of neutral lands are much to the fore.

The New York Sun correspondent had an opportunity to verify this on a second visit to one of the most famous dressmaking establishments in the Place Vendome.

The Revue des Modes was scheduled for three o'clock, and at that hour the soft tinted, silk hung salon was filled with a score or more of professional purchasers. There was about them a striking similarity of type—all save three being dark of skin and black of hair and eye. Consequently the only three blonds in the room stood out in startling relief.

Lead in Buying Shifts.  
As the bored, supercilious-looking mannequins, wearing the season's latest creations, filed by Mme. Yvonne, the premiere, answered the New York Sun correspondent's interested inquiries.

"No, I can't say that the war has hurt our trade to any great extent; rather are we doing a bigger business this year than ever before. But there is a distinct change in the nationality of our customers. Whereas in former years our biggest sales were in America, that country, though still among our best clients, no longer holds the palm for lavish buying. You may have noticed that most of the buyers here are of the Latin type. In fact nine-tenths of them are Spanish, for Spain is the country with which at present we are doing the heaviest trade.

"In the old days the Spanish dress market was a negligible quantity. A few of their buyers came to our openings, saw our models and gingerly chose one, and sometimes two, but never more. They were most conservative and economical, haggled prices and commissions, and when we had made for them what considered easy terms we were never sure we had made a sale. The buyer would hesitate, ask for time to consider, and usually after a week or ten days give us a niggardly order. Now all that is changed.

"Spain has never been more prosperous than since the war and her people spend money in lavish fashion. All our most flamboyant and elaborate models, those with the richest materials and brightest colors, find a market in Spain, and these buyers whom you see here today will probably order twenty or thirty of our most expensive frocks. We also have a huge private trade with Spain. The ladies of the court do not come to Paris as much as they did in former days. We send them colored photographs and drawings of our models, from which they select their frocks, as their fancy dictates. We keep their exact measurements here, so that it is no trouble for us to insure a perfect fit. The dresses are shipped by express, opened at the customs on the frontier and forwarded to their destination without further formality."

Norway Spending Money.

In answer to an inquiring glance in the direction of the three blond buyers seated together in one corner of the room:

"No, they are not from Madrid," explained Mme. Yvonne, "but from Christiania. It will probably surprise you to hear that Norway ranks next in importance to the Spanish trade. Most people are under the impression that Sweden contains the greatest number of war profiteers, but her sister kingdom far excels her in the spending of money for luxuries. Much of our Norwegian trade is a private one and, as with Spain, is done through the colored photographs and customers' measurements. Only this time we ship via England."

During this conversation the passing review of the models went on without a halt. The Sun correspondent noticed that street and afternoon frocks and even evening gowns were lavishly trimmed with fur—beaver, sealskin, blue fox, kolinsky. On expressing surprise that, despite the war, such a variety of foreign pelts were still finding their way into the Paris markets, Mme. Yvonne smiled:

"You have just paid our French workmen a high compliment. These aristocratic looking furs that you admire are all pelbeians masquerading under high sounding names. Every one of them comes from the same humble source, the common or garden rabbit, which is being raised in enormous quantities to satisfy the desire of the mondaine for fur trimming. As you see, the Germans have not quite the monopoly on dyestuffs, since we are still able to successfully disguise our modest lapin in such attractive form."