

Good German-Canadian Citizens

J. P.'s Weekly (Vancouver) has the following:

How easy it is to generalize on a question like that of interning enemy aliens. The Sun for months past has been making "frantic demands, "a campaign of violence" it coyly admits, for the internment of all aliens, and it is apparent the Sun is quite indifferent as to whether they are really enemies or not.

The following from the Toronto Star is interesting and appropos. The Star says:

"When the 34th regiment of London left for overseas, marching side by side with men more than twice his years went young Gabriel Haas, a lad of German descent, who has volunteered to be one of the several million men required to repel the hordes of Hun invaders and crush for all time the forces of Kaiserism and German militarism. Young Haas, who has just passed his seventeenth birthday, is a brother of Mrs. W. J. Fulton, 53 Albany avenue, and the youngest son of Alex. Haas, contractor, Walkerton, who was himself born of German parents in Alsace-Lorraine. The father lived under German rule until 16 years of age, when he migrated to Canada, and long ago became a naturalized subject of this country. Mrs. Fulton, questioned by The Star as to the sentiments which led her father, a German-born Canadian, to send his youngest son to fight the Germans, said: "No persons who know us need to be told that we are intensely pro-British. My father is determined that the Kaiser should and will be hanged, and to show that he is doing more than hoping, he is sending the only son he has left at home to help in the great cause of the Allies. No, you can't make it too strong that all our family are death on German militarism. It breaks our hearts to see the baby of our family go, but then we felt it must be done."

"Young Haas enlisted at Walkerton last summer, and has been in training ever since at London. At the time of enlistment the lad was under age, and it was necessary for the father to sign his release papers for him."

The above story is one which sheds an interesting light on the "Germans" in Ontario at least. I am personally acquainted with the family of Haas, the lady mentioned having been a school mate of mine. The case is typical of hundreds of others in Ontario and of scores of which I have personal knowledge. A very large

proportion of the so-called "German" families in Ontario are really conquered and denationalized Frenchmen from Alsace-Lorraine. These people were busy hating the Kaiser while the rest of Canadians were either regarding him with indifference or amusement. I can recall dozens of such "Germans" in my old county, many of whom I chummed with as a boy in Bruce. The young men of many of these old families came west and prominent among them is Jos. Reichenbach, of New Westminster, and his two brothers, all of whom were bonny lacrosse players in the old days and are just as good Canadians and loyal Britishers as the best of us. A nephew of Mr. Reichenbach is in the trenches of the Allies.

Then there is Ed. Wettlaufer, known to every hockey fan in Canada, one of the same breed. Ed. is gray, fat and "bantam" in stature, but his purse has been opened wide to many friends since the war began. One of his brothers is at the front with the Allies. Mr. Wettlaufer comes out here regularly on business trips and is well known in Vancouver. For years Ed. and his brother and father were the backbone of the old 32nd battalion band in my old home town.

At this moment another "German" school chum of mine, Otto E. Klein, is recruiting officer in Walkerton, where for years he has been a company commander. A third to a half of the boys who have been enlisted in the east half of Bruce county have German names which originally were French. In one month Bruce county has enlisted 606 men of the 1000 required for the 160th Overseas Battalion. And this does not include the contingent of several hundred already at the front. And as showing the spirit of these "German" lads from Bruce county, here is an extract from a letter written by young Haas from Bramshott. He says: "Please thank Mrs. O. E. Klein for the box of home-made candy. We had a General here this morning inspecting us in order to pick a battalion to go to the front and I don't know whether we succeeded or not, but I hope we have. I had a letter from Harry Wettlaufer the other day and he is in the hospital pretty sick. Ernie Cartwright and I intended to go up to Shorncliffe in a week or so, and try to see some of the Walkerton boys."

It doesn't sound downhearted, does it?

Bruce county's per capita contribution to the Patriotic Fund is over two dollars, while the average for Ontario is \$1.50. And the population of Bruce county is at least half "German."

Quite well as a boy do I remember how Capt. Kleip's father explained to me in his broken English why he hated the Prussians—it being the story of Alsace-Lorraine since 1870. He had a large family of boys, one of them a county judge in Bruce, who were all brought up in that faith.

Most of the Germans in this country, that is the honest settlers, not the floating adventurers, are in Canada because they hate Prussian militarism and all that it means. And many of them, like the Haas and Kleins and Wettlaufers are doing their bit to put the Kaiser and his warband out of business—to hang him, as Mrs. Fulton says. They have reasons for hating Prussia of longer standing and quite as deeply rooted as our own.

So, when in some quarters there is a demand for the internment of all Germans, and suspicions are raised against everyone with German names, it should be remembered that there are "Germans" and Germans, and care should be taken to avoid giving offense to people who, even though they speak with an accent or have German names, are yet loyal subjects and wholeheartedly in sympathy with the Allies, and this statement applies to the great majority of the citizens of German origin in Ontario and their sons who have come west, and to many good men who settled direct from Europe in this province.