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THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

THE APPALLING MISERY OF STARVING VIENNA

Whole City Tottering Under Scourge of Constant Hunger and Cold. Many Babies There Who Never Tasted Milk. Streets Ring With Pitiful Cries for Food.

This price list just received from a correspondent in Vienna shows the rates prevailing there for fuel, food and clothing: Wood—\$16 for 100 lbs. Coal—\$1.50 for 14 lbs. Potatoes—\$1.00 a lb. Apples—\$2.00 a lb. Margarine—\$4.00 a lb. Butter—\$12.00 a lb. Cheese—\$8.00 a lb. Eggs—75c apiece. Rationed meat—\$8.00 a lb. Sardines—\$3.75 a tin. Chocolates—\$8.00 a lb. Boots—\$60.00 a pair. Suit of clothes—\$375.00. Hat—\$35.00.

(Workmen received from three to five times more wages than for a long time past.)

(By Major Sherman M. Craiger, in New York Sun-Herald.) At the time I visited Vienna the rich could not contrive to get enough vegetables—potatoes, carrots, beans or rice—for a stereotyped vegetarian menu. Eggs, meat and cheese were so scarce that the business men who knew the city and suburban markets—found it difficult to pick up a shoulder of lamb, a roast of beef or pork, or a few chickens. Flour and meal were on a ration basis to every one, rich and poor alike. There was beet root for coffee and no sugar. A slim diet at best.

The middle class felt the pinch severely. The only way in which they could provide sufficient food was by sacrificing insurance policies, modest savings, heirlooms or jewels and homes. University professors told me that it took all of their salaries to buy food for their families, and even then they could not get enough. It was necessary to sell their property to exist. As for the great mass of working people, they were, and are, in misery, due to hunger and unemployment. Approximately a hundred thousand of them—say a population equivalent to Bridgeport (Conn.)—are out of work, due to a lack of coal and raw materials for the factories. Without employment there is, of course, no money in their pockets, although nothing they could earn would suffice to buy them enough food to keep body and soul together. The poor of Vienna are not only hungry but starving.

Meat Once in Three Months The head porter of the Hotel Hammernd, where I stopped, told me that he had had beef in his home but once in a period of three months. "Our last bit of pork was in the distribution of two weeks since," he went on. "For thirteen days past my wife and I have eaten no meat. It is announced this week that there will be a distribution of American salted pork to all citizens at the rate of twenty-five deka (1/2 pound) apiece. This is much more than we received at the last sale, as our allotment then was only one-tenth of a pound." The Viennese consume 1,418 tons of meat daily, and barring snowstorms of shortage of freight cars, the city manages to bring enough flour from the ports of Trieste, Danzig or Hamburg to give everybody bread. (This ration has since been reduced to three ounces a day.)

CARBON MAKES MOTOR KNOCK

Waste-Clogged Liver and Bowels Cause Thumping Head and Other Misery. Take "Cascarets"

Like the carbon clogs and chokes a motor, so the excess bile in liver, and the constipated waste in the bowels, produce foggy brains, headache, sour, acid stomach, indigestion, sallow skin, sleepless nights, and bad colds. Let gentle, harmless "Cascarets" rid the system of the toxins, acids,

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as on its menu, but this is deceptive, as there are so many combinations of cabbage sauerkraut, cold slaw and similar unsubstantial courses. The prices ranged higher, and two meals cost from \$6 to \$8. Because of the fact that high-priced restaurants like the Trocadero are able to offer a few extravaganzas one overhears gossip about the "protection" these eating places are supposed to enjoy. The fact is, however, that they are able to get hold of more food than individuals. A careful inquiry, however, fails to disclose the existence of such a traffic.

Peasants are said to be smuggling food into Vienna in spite of the vigilance of the police, but it is difficult to come upon such practices. The managers of the high priced restaurants told me that they stood ready at all times to pay as much more as the country folk than they could obtain elsewhere for their vegetables. Some of the wealthier business men make a practice of buying and kind of food from any source. One banker said he had just purchased a sack of rice from an Italian officer. Naturally necessity knows no law, and there is no doubt that the abnormal prices for foodstuffs in Vienna are being taken advantage of by every peasant and selfish outsider.

Each traveller arriving in Vienna must open his baggage at the railway station and the police are instructed to confiscate anything in the way of food which is not clearly intended for individual consumption. However, the facilities for examining trunks and bags are necessarily limited and I was told that by means of false bottoms and other devices much food is smuggled into the city and disposed of at fabulous prices. During my stay in the Austrian capital it was a customary sight to see the clerks in the stores and offices, the salesmen and women, as well as the working people, carry their midday meal along with them. They could not afford to go to the restaurants for luncheon and it is probable that the fare from their homes, meagre as it was, went farther toward satisfying their hunger than the restaurant menus. Even the woman conductor's bundle of eatables as she walked through the street car to collect the helters.

Not a Fat Man Seen One of the first things a stranger notices is the listlessness of the Viennese. They do not walk with alacrity. There is no "zip" in either the men or the women. The girl who sells the papers in the kiosk on the corner is wan, appearing, with dull eyes and languid movements. There is no snap in the step of the salespeople in the large shops. A long-continued diet of the make-believe food of Vienna turns out undernourished men, women and children. They lack blood and sinew. Naturally under such conditions none can thrive or accomplish much work. Even the children have the tell-tale hunger ring under their eyes. They look pale and thin. Their clothes are the worse for wear, although a troop of schoolgirls out for a walk with their teacher all looked as neat and clean as could be.

It is curious to see no stout people in a city of a couple of millions, but that is one's experience in Vienna. Those who weighed more than the normal have lost so much weight that their appearance is completely changed. Others have really shrunk so that their clothes no longer fit them snugly but hang in folds. The watchman at the National Art Museum told me that he had lost sixty pounds, weighing now but 150. There are no more fat men in Vienna. The womenfolk are all becoming slender.

A tragic aftermath is the resulting incapacity of the people. Mothers are unable to nurse their infants, and the death rate among the latter is shocking. Public officials cannot properly do their work on the scanty diet. It is pathetic that Austria's best class of public officials are on the verge of physical breakdown. Without their help who will guide the unhappy country along the ways of reconstruction and prosperity? The only animals surviving in the menagerie at Schoenbrunn, once the beautiful summer palace of the Austrian emperors are the elephant and the brown bear. All the others died of starvation during the past year. I walked for several blocks past rows of empty cages, and listened to the stories of how the foot surplus dwindled until it was no longer possible to feed the birds and animals. It seemed very unreal, as if I were moving in a world out of which had gone all hope.

There is no doubting, however, that Vienna is actually on her last legs, as far as food is concerned. I tramped many miles along the streets of the city but saw practically nothing on display in the shops. Occasionally there was shredded salt fish, sauerkraut, pickled fish, canned celery, pickles, carrots. There were indifferent native wines and excellent beer. Now and then one comes across some coarse cakes, covered with a brown substance resembling chocolate. These are literally all the offerings of the staples are practically wholly under control of the government, which undertakes a distribution on an impartial basis at cost.

Nothing in the Stores In front of practically every grocer's windows were gathered two or three persons, critically inspecting the offerings. Every housewife carries a bag, and it is only by occasionally to come upon some little extra for the family table. To get any sugar substitute it is necessary to go to an official distributing station in the Amhof, and there one may find long queues of persons standing in line, awaiting their chance to buy a "sweet strip". This resembles a small piece of

brown cake, covered with a coating of syrup. One cannot walk far in Vienna without encountering hordes of hungry people asking for bread: in the Kaerntnerstrasse, where are located the most expensive shops, the Graben and other business streets, the poor beg in droves. Never in my life saw much heart-rending distress as among the Viennese poor.

A squad of children assembled about the door of a fashionable shop, their clothing dirty and shabby, and their faces pinched with hunger and cold. Let a customer emerge from the store, and these youngsters will make a beeline for the door. They literally surround one, and cry out in shrill ones for help. Involuntarily you hand out coins or bills on all sides, while inwardly you invoke maledictions on the base rulers who, under the old regime, brought down the Austrians to ruin and want.

A few steps down the street is a poor woman with two children, one a babe in her arms. "For Christ's sake help us!" she pleads. There is no color in her cheeks, or lustre in the eyes. Her features, as well as those of the children are drawn and weakened. Hunger and destitution are killing off slowly but effectively.

There is an assortment of misery at the street crossing. A soldier, crippled and bent, leans against the building, holding on to his cane. The sympathetic must shove their

money into his coat pocket. On the opposite corner is another victim of the war, with his wife and little ones ranged on either side. He is weak and emaciated, but the children can hold out their hands for alms.

All at once an ex-soldier steps in front of you and drops down on his knees, imploring aid. Nearby stands an aged couple, reduced to beggary. Women weep in their distress and despair.

Most Agonizing Sight It is the most terrible experience I have ever met with. To come face to face with such suffering and famine is agonizing. Not only is any individual relief futile, but the problem is so tremendous that it almost defies solution. Probably there is not much likelihood of Bolshevism breaking out in Vienna unless there should be an absolute disintegration of government. I noticed along one street many broken shop windows. It appears this was the result of a demonstration by the unemployed, one of whom told me it was for the purpose of calling attention to their grievances. When I questioned him he thought the officials were honest and capable he answered that they were but it would be necessary for them to work harder.

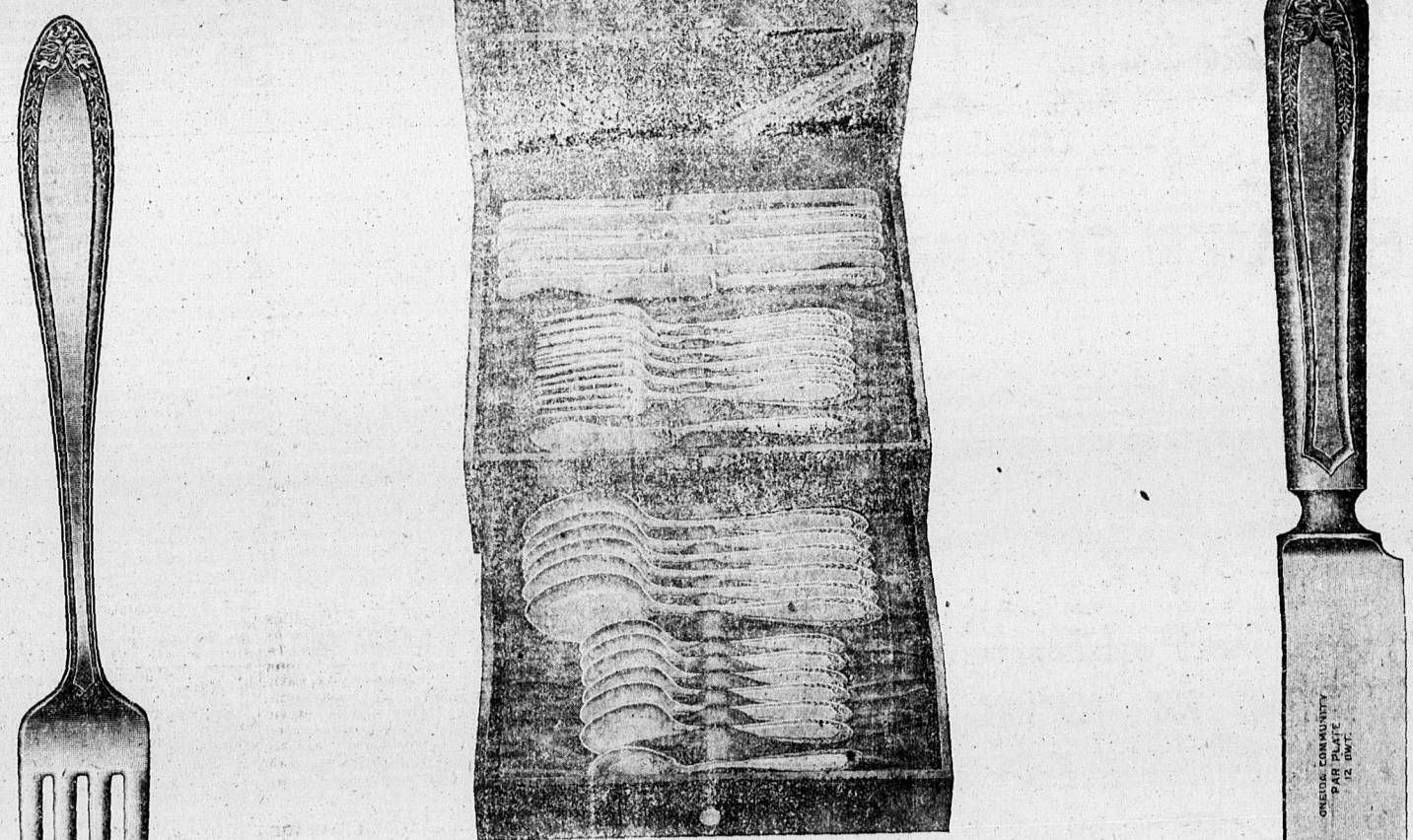
As far as the outsider can determine the officers of the government are laboring with might and main to keep Vienna from starving. I attended a session of the parliament, which was very business-like. Public health measures were to the fore and Chancellor Renner, conducted the proceedings with celerity. There were half a dozen women deputies. Former school teachers, factory inspectors and labor leaders. They took part in the work of the chamber, and seemed to get along well with their male colleagues.

There is little business for the well-to-do owing to the lack of credit and raw materials. The people having any money left patronize the opera and theatre. I heard "Der Barber von Basdal" sung in delightful fashion. At the Wien Theatre is being played the jolly new opera, "Wo die Lerche singt," by Franz Lehár. All public performances start at 4 o'clock in the afternoon and end at 7, owing to the shortage of fuel and light. All electricity is turned off at an

early hour, and at night the city presents a dismal and forlorn appearance. Vienna and its people must be saved, however, if humanitarianism is to live in the world. They will long continue to pay, for the wickedness and incapacity of their former rulers. They cannot at the same time be left to starve unless the principles of charity and good will.

Keep up Brave Front The Viennese are keeping up a

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