

PATHFINDER

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Duce: Peeve No. 3

A sore humiliation to dictator Mussolini of Italy lies in the fact that what should have been a proud conquest has turned into a diplomatic white elephant. Only one democratic nation in the world—Switzerland—has recognized Italy's claim to Ethiopia.

In September, 1936, when the League of Nations refused to expel the African empire from its membership, Il Duce kept Italian representatives away from League halls. They have never set foot in them since. Last spring, British envoys led a successful boycott against diplomatic attendance at a first anniversary celebration of Italy's conquest. Il Duce countered with a peeve so wrathful that Italian newspapers made no mention of Great Britain for two whole days.

Mussolini vented his third Ethiopian peeve last week. For six months and more, there had been no French ambassador in Rome. The Paris government had accredited its choice, Rene Saint-Quentin, to Vittorio Emanuele, King of Italy, and had scrupulously ignored the monarch's claim to another title: "Emperor of Ethiopia." Rome refused to receive Saint-Quentin.

Last week, Vittorio Cerruti, Italian Ambassador to France, packed his bags, explained that he was taking a "just and opportune" step to put French and Italian diplomacy on an equal footing, and prepared to quit Paris for an indefinitely long leave of absence. Because a solution of the difficulty depended on France's recognition of Italian Ethiopia, it seemed that there would be no French ambassador in Rome and no Italian Ambassador in Paris for a long time to come.