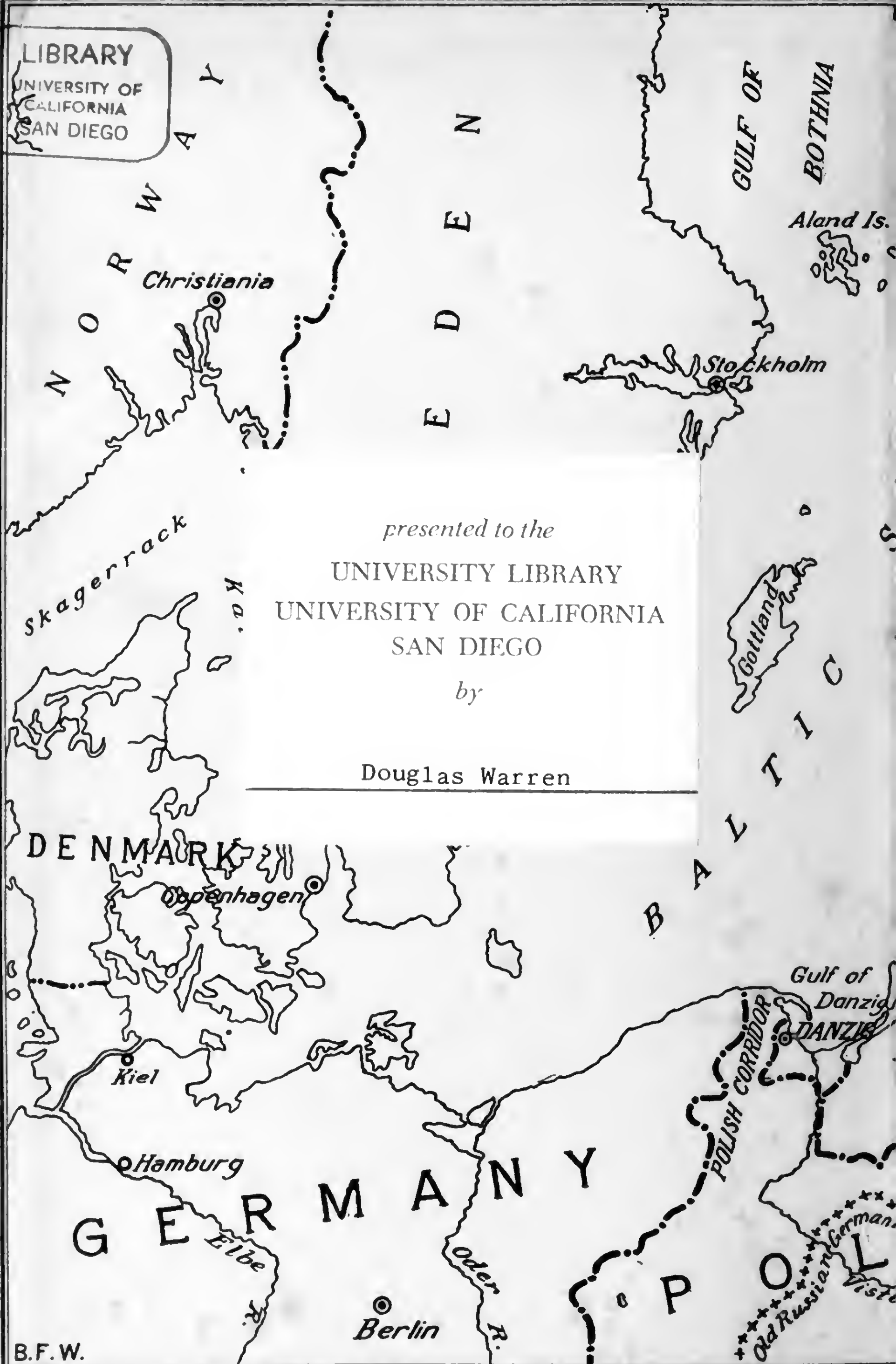
NEW MASTERS OF THE BALTIC

ARTHUR RUHL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NEW MASTERS OF THE BALTIC

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A Peasant Family and Their Cabin on the Shore of one of Finland's Innumerable Lakes

NEW MASTERS OF THE BALTIC

BY

ARTHUR RUHL

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INTRODUCTION

The four new republics on the eastern Baltic—Finland, Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania—owe their independence to the World War and the Russian revolution. The breaking of the political tie with old Russia, which resulted almost automatically from the Bolshevik revolution, was followed, however, in each case, by a bitter internal struggle—a more or less clearly defined social revolution—for which their curious social and economic make-up had long been preparing them.

This curious social arrangement, and the tragic drama growing out of it, was similar in all four countries, different as they are in relative development and local scene. The characters and "lines" were unlike, but the plot, so to speak, was the same.

Each, as a more or less forcibly held province of old Russia, was subject in the old days to an external political rule. Internally, each was dominated socially and, to a certain extent, economically, by an aristocratic minority which was neither Russian nor "native." The Swedes, or Swede-Finns, made up this minority in Finland; the Germanic Balt Barons in Esthonia and Latvia; in Lithuania it was the estate-owning Poles or Polonized-Lithuanians. In each, the under-dog "native" majority, serfs originally (except in Finland, where they were peasants), of late years peasants, with a gradually increasing middle-class, and now come

into their own, are more or less ruthlessly pushing aside the old aristocracy and making themselves masters in what they regard as their own house.

In Finland, modern and partially industrialized, this internal struggle took the form of a clearly defined class-war—a Red revolution and a White counter-revolution—and the subsequent adjustment (still in process) to a settled republican régime. Finland shows in miniature and with the cycle completed—and this makes it politically so interesting and significant—what happened, and might yet happen, on a vaster scale, in Great Russia itself.

In Esthonia and Latvia, both less politically developed, the social revolution took the less definite form of a seizing and parcelling of the nobles' estates. A landed aristocracy, for centuries secure, is now being brushed aside under the mask of a theoretically legal agrarian reform. In Lithuania, still less developed, the phenomena are similar, although the action moves more slowly owing to local differences which will later be explained.

Overshadowed by the Russia and Germany on either side of them, these border states, before the war, were little noticed in the West. Travelers hurried through them, so to speak, as Mr. Tarkington once complained they hurried through his beloved Indiana, with heads in novels or Baedekers, their Pullman curtains drawn.

Finland, to be sure, because of her sturdy fight for home-rule, had attracted a certain esoteric Western sympathy. University professors signed petitions, editors wrote bitterly. The Romanoff dynasty was an ogre at whom all liberals were privileged to heave

bricks, and little Finland—"just like ourselves"—a brave Jack-the-Giant-Killer, about whom superior people, untroubled as yet by such phrases as "bourgeois" and "proletarian," could indulge their taste for long-distance altruism. Most Americans, however, thought of Finland, when they thought of it at all, as a half-Arctic wilderness. They saw reindeer and ice instead of unspoiled lakes, round granite rocks and birch trees, where even Russians flocked to spend their summers, and they little recked of white-night enchantments, and still less, perhaps, of woman suffrage, co-operatives and socialism, and a capital city cleaner and more consistently well-built than any of their own.

Esthonia and Latvia, across the Gulf to the south (they were then the Baltic provinces of Esthonia, Livonia and Courland) were even less known. Western tourists rarely got so far from home as Reval and Riga, although these ancient Hansa towns had been looking out on the gray Baltic for seven hundred years. The manor-house life of the Esthonian and Livonian countryside might, so far as most Westerners were concerned, have been buried in the eighteenth century from which it had, in many ways, scarcely departed. These Balt barons and baronesses, although they read the books and reviews of Berlin, London and Paris, and spent their winters in Petrograd; old Reval itself—town and country both—were, indeed, a bit of the eighteenth century, forgotten here behind the peninsula which shut off the eastern Baltic into almost an inland lake.

As for Lithuania, it was but a vague, east-European region, whence came cannon-fodder for the industrial

battles of steel-mills and packing houses, or, to the very few, a place where somebody's titled Polish husband was said to have his estates.

The War lighted up this obscurity and the peace changed it completely. Allied Missions, mainly intent at the moment on drawing what was described as a sanitary cordon around Bolshevik Russia, established themselves in Helsingfors, Reval, Riga and Kovno. American food ships began to poke into the eastern Baltic all the way up to Viborg and almost within sight of Petrograd, and American flour, bacon and beans were carried even to the northern Finnish forests. Relief workers of various sorts—A. R. A., Red Cross, Y. M. C. A.—spread through the provinces and began to feel at home in such unfamiliar places as Pskov, Walk, or Narva, while Esthonian and Lettish boys began to study English and the game of baseball. Newspaper correspondents followed — when Litvinov came out of the mystery of Bolshevik Russia in the early winter of 1919, to start the first talk of peace with the border states, a flock of these nervous scouts descended on Dorpat, and that old university town, which the Balts were sometimes pleased to call the "Baltic Heidelberg," got into the western news.

Finland, having weathered a Red revolution, a White military dictatorship, elected a middle-ground President and kept its trade and industry going, seems now definitely to have established its independence, and taken its natural place alongside its sister Scandinavian states. It is hard to picture the Finns ever again bowing their square heads to the Moscovite. Even the United States, with its apparent policy of preserving the terri-

torial integrity of Russia, has recognised Finland and has its Legation and Consulates there.

Esthonia and Latvia have been recognised *de jure* by all the Allies with the exception of the United States; Lithuania has received *de facto* recognition from Britain and France and *de jure* recognition from several neutral countries. The future of these latter three states, set squarely as they are on Russia's road to the Baltic, and possessing several of old Russia's principal ports, is less certain than that of Finland. But whether or not they retain complete independence, or accept at some future time autonomy within a great Russia, they can never return to their position before the war.

The spell of the old political and social orders, however they may be patched up again, is broken. These new states fought for their independence, organized armies in the face of every sort of economic difficulty and drove the Russian Bolsheviks beyond their borders. They elected national assemblies, called back their intelligentsia from the ends of the earth and established governments which work. They are marching to new tunes now, and singing new national songs, and have even begun to celebrate the anniversaries of their independence. Real people are doing these things. The hot, intemperate enthusiasm of these new masters, the dismay and despair of the old; political realities destined to become more and more serious as Russia and Germany regain their strength, lie underneath what to most Westerners are mere names.

It is impossible to speak with finality of the future of these new republics, with Russia and Germany

momentarily helpless and all Eastern Europe more or less broken. With their separation from Russia, however, the coming into power of the native majority and the recognition of their independence, an historical epoch has been completed, and one may speak with a certain finality of that. It is the main steps in this transition period which are to be traced here, and as an eye witness of some of them I shall supplement this brief excursion into recent history with more detailed impressions of the peoples themselves and the more permanent aspects of their local scenes.

A. R.

New York, October, 1921.

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NEW MASTERS OF THE BALTIC

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ARCTIC OCEAN
NORWEGIAN SEA
WHITE SEA
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GULF OF BOTHNIA
FINLAND
RUSSIA
Lake Ladoga
Petrograd
Gulf of Finland
ESTHONIA
OSEL
LATVIA
Riga
BALTIC SEA
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NEW MASTERS OF THE BALTIC

CHAPTER I

RUSSIA'S IRELAND

THE Finnish frontier is only about thirty miles from Petrograd, but in the old Russian days of 1917, Finland really began before that. One stepped into Finland at the Petrograd station, when, after swallowing a final glass of Russian tea in the musty buffet, one stepped into the little Finnish train and saw its trim Finnish stewardess.

She was Lutheran Protestant instead of Greek Catholic, and belonged, one somehow felt at once, to the West instead of Asia. And the mere way in which she made up a berth, and, by some deft and hygienic sleight of hand, whisked a blanket inside its baglike sheet, showed that she would fit into Stockholm, or Copenhagen, or the Hague, among people who save their pennies and keep their door-knobs shining.

She was as different as could be from Russia and yet here she was in Petrograd and apparently as much a part of the Russian scheme of things as the jovial old bearded *isvoschick* outside the station, who came, perhaps, from Moscow or Nizhni-Novgorod. And

there was suggested the whole problem of the Finns and their independence as it used to be—their closeness to Russia and their difference from it, their natural wish to be free and the practical objections to granting that freedom.

You had scarcely settled down in your apartment when along came the frontier and you had to tumble out, have your baggage examined, and tell the story of your life all over again. For the traveller this was merely bothersome, but Russians took it more seriously because the distance was just about what an invading army could march over in a day.

To be sure, Holland and Denmark were little independent nations smaller than Finland, and in a similar position to a large one. Geographically, Denmark is but a peninsula reaching out into the ocean from Germany, and on paper there may have been as much reason for England's invading Germany through Denmark as for Germany's invading Russia through Finland. The argument against Finnish independence on this ground was not unanswerable, but it was an argument, nevertheless.

Well, one crossed the frontier, hurried past lakes and rocks and white birch trees, and presently came to a station lunch room. On the other side of Petrograd everybody would be drinking very hot and very weak tea out of glasses; here, for some unexplainable racial reason, they all drank coffee out of cups. The smell of it was in the air, and there was something in that sharp, pungent odor which set up a new train of thought. The cups and counter were clean as a whistle, and the pink-cheeked girls serving coffee had

a certain prim, hardy, slightly stubborn air, different from the easy-going, "broad-natured" Slavs—something that goes with sharp church spires rather than little gilded domes—something of the "earnest of the north wind."

As for the north, they were, indeed, true children of it. The south of Finland is in the same latitude as the lower end of Greenland, and the country extends northward, well beyond the Arctic Circle. It is a hard, bare—though beautiful—land where only a thrifty, hard-working people could make a living at all; and the Finns have not only made a living, but built cities and a civilization which compare favorably with those of other little nations.

Their capital, Helsingfors, a city of about a quarter of a million people lying by the sea, is a model of good building and cleanliness. There are no shabby backyards or areaways—they are all covered with brick or concrete. Their gas-tanks are hidden in brick roundhouses of pleasing design which vaguely remind one of Castle Angelo at Rome. Bills are not pasted on lamp-posts or trees, but tied on with a string and when they have served their purpose both bills and string disappear.

When I first saw these bills with their circumspect strings around their waists, I recalled a good-natured old bear of a baggage-room attendant at one of the stations in southwest Russia a few weeks before. I had given him a suitcase and overcoat to check. The old fellow daubed a label with paste and slapped it on the suitcase, then daubed another and slapped it on the coat. He was dumfounded at my howls of

protest. Pins, or tags on a string, had never occurred to him, apparently, and he finally ended by hanging the coat up and pasting a label on the hook!

As I walked through some of the residence streets that first evening, past brightly lighted windows with shades up, I was reminded of some of our Middle-Western towns where it used to be considered rather fashionable to have big plate-glass windows behind which the whole family could be seen reading magazines, or playing the piano, round the evening lamp. Here in Helsingfors one saw just that, and could fancy that the reading resembled our own and that these households might be interested in the "House Beautiful" and advertisements of automobiles and cameras and patent things to eat. That picturesque "humanity" often found in Russia, made up of crowded rooms full of smoke and talk and the reek of human breaths, and a good-natured indifference to the morrow, had given way to something different and more up to date, so to speak, at once superficially brighter and morally more austere.

In old Russia people lived, as a rule, rather spaciously or rather crudely. There were expensive hotels and there were stuffy, dirty *traktirs,* but little in between. One did not find in Russia the places found at every step in modern Western cities, where one can drop in on the run for something to eat or drink, neatly and attractively served. In tramps across Petrograd's endless distances, there were among the unexpected things one missed most. Here in Helsingfors—and in 1917 this was still Russia—these once-despised conveniences were found again. And it would be difficult,

perhaps, to explain to Americans, spoiled as we all are by mechanical comforts, with what almost infantile delight one hailed the Helsingfors "automats." To drop into these warm, clean, brightly-lighted rooms, where cheery girls in white were serving, drop a coin in a slot, have something revolve and deliver you forthwith coffee, cream and sugar on a shiny metal tray,—this, after the black bread and tea and dirt which one would have found in a corresponding place in Petrograd, gave one a most amusing sense of beating the game and getting more than one deserved. One went about nibbling here and there as a child in a dream nibbles from a castle made of chocolate.

Adventures with people were similarly refreshing. I went into a bank to cash a letter of credit—a performance that consumed the better part of an hour in Petrograd—and had just sat down to read, according to custom, when there was the clerk beckoning from the counter with the money, and a quick Swedish *"Tak!"* for thanks. At Ellen Key's, in Sweden, the year before, I had met Annie Furuhjelm, a well-known Finnish suffragist and a member of the Finnish Diet. Although I had got into the habit of expecting things which should take minutes to take days or weeks, nevertheless, as soon as I reached my hotel, I telephoned to see if Miss Furuhjelm were in Helsingfors, and when I might call. She was there, right enough, but explained that I had arrived on election day, and that she would be busy until evening, but would try, meanwhile, to find someone to show me round.

A moment later she telephoned again that if I would be at their party headquarters at eleven o'clock, their

campaign manager, a young banker, would be pleased to act as guide. I went to their headquarters and the amateur "boss" greeted me heartily and started in to explain things. He said that all the parties of the Right and Middle had combined to beat out the Socialist; spread out the big ballot—voting was on the proportional system—and explained how it worked; and then we hurried out to see the town and some of the polling places.

We climbed a hill and looked down on the harbor and the Russian dreadnoughts, which had been collecting barnacles there since the beginning of the war, and then went to see the voting. The polling booths were in clubrooms, schools and such places, and with their white-haired old ladies, and nice-looking young ones standing in line with the men, very dignified indeed. We went to the other side of the town to a factory district, where there were lines of people waiting to vote, a block long, and scooted through the People's Palace, a big building run by Socialists (it was to be badly damaged by White shells a few months later) with club and lecture rooms and a hall to dance in, and a big restaurant where food was served at moderate prices. All the time he was explaining things, and when he left me, after four hours, to return to his own work, I knew as much about things in Helsingfors, as, under similar circumstances in Russia, I might have known in a month.

But quick lunches and promptitude are unimportant, perhaps, except to a homesick American. The Finns have other things. They were the first people to grant women the vote—everybody over twenty-four votes

in Finland, and women are eligible to the Diet. There is a University in Helsingfors, moved here in 1827 from the old capital, Åbo, and various scientific societies whose publications circulate far beyond Finland. In their past history, ethnology, archeology and folklore, the Finns have made painstaking and thorough researches. There are contemporary poets and novelists, whose work, if not of the first importance, is interesting, sincere and characteristic. The mournful beauty of Jean Sibelius's music is known everwhere.

THE Finns, themselves, as distinguished from the Swedish-Finlanders, are, like the Esthonians just across the Gulf, often said to be of "Mongolian" stock. This, very likely, is inaccurate, but at any rate their language belongs to the Ural-Altaic group of languages, to which Esthonian, Mongol, Magyar and Turkish also belong. They were conquered by the Swedes in the 12th century, and the country belonged to Sweden until 1809 when it was re-conquered by the Russians. The Swedes were the people of consequence then, the official language was Swedish, and nobody paid much attention to the more or less submerged "natives" and their musical but very difficult speech. The Finns are a hard-fisted people, however, they were much in the majority, and when, in 1835, Prof. Lönnrot published his monumental collection of folk-songs as the Finnish epic, "Kalevala," the Finnish national revival began.

The Fennomans—the Finnish name for Finland is "Suomi"—kept pushing, until Finnish was permitted in official communications and used as an alternate language in Helsingfors University. A Finnish the-

atre was built where nothing but Finnish was spoken and when the war started, 274 out of the 384 newspapers in Finland were printed in Finnish. The Finns made nearly 3,000,000 of the 3,500,000 population, and although the Swedish landed-gentry still survived and the Swedish-Finlanders held a position in society and affairs to which their greater sophistication and experience entitled them, "Finland for the Finns" became more and more a fact.

When Russia annexed the province, the Finns—all Swedish subjects then, of course—were promised by Tsar Alexander I that they were to retain their constitution and "fundamental rights" and be attached to the Empire as a semi-independent Grand Duchy with the Tsar as Grand Duke. They had their own army, with Finnish officers, and except in international affairs, were almost free.

The existence of such a province, in such a place, with a different language and religion, was naturally a red rag to the Pan-Slavs, and after various clashes, Nicholas II, in the late nineties, started a definite policy of repression. He reserved to himself the right to decide what were local and what imperial questions, and in 1903, General Bobrikov, whom present-day Finns look back to as the very devil himself, assumed almost dictatorial powers. Conscription was introduced, and the good old-fashioned reactionary program began—spies, searching of houses, shutting up of newspapers, banishment, and so on.

The Finns put on black to mourn their lost liberties, they crossed to the other side of the street when they saw Bobrikov coming and finally in June, 1904, a young

educated Finn, Eugene Schaumann, shot and killed the Governor. The tragedy was planned with peculiar seriousness, and for months before the young man lived as a sort of hermit so that none but himself might be connected with the crime.

When the great national strike of 1905, with which the Russians forced the Tsar to grant a Constitution and a Duma, shook the foundations of the empire and started fires of revolt in all this Russian border world, the Finns also struck. The Russian Government hurriedly withdrew its more objectionable measures; the Finns were again exempted from conscription and permitted to pay an annual contribution instead, and finally the old-fashioned Diet, with its four estates—nobles, clergy, burghers and peasants—was changed to a one-chamber Parliament with 200 delegates to be chosen by direct and proportional election.

Relations did not, however, improve. With the suppression of the revolution of 1905, the policy of Russification began again. The introduction of constitutional government in Russia itself had also complicated things. The Finns claimed that the Tsar had not turned over his powers in Finland to the new Duma and Imperial Council. The Russians claimed that he had. Laws were passed affecting such matters as taxes, police, schools and control of the press, which the Finnish Diet refused to recognize and some Finnish judges declared illegal.

While Finland was thus drifting rapidly toward the demand for complete independence, the line between Red and White in Finland itself was become more sharply defined. The growth of industrialism in a

land originally almost wholly agricultural—and it was rapid in the next decade—brought with it the usual conflicts between labor and capital. The war brought great material prosperity to some, for the Russians, shut off from the West, gladly took everything the Finns could sell them, and increased these differences.

The Socialists, who had more to do than many realize with forcing the reforms in the Diet and other legislation following the general strike, grew amazingly, and in the elections held in 1916 for the Diet returned 103 out of 200 members. The leader of this majority was Senator Tokoi, a workingman who had gone to America as an immigrant, worked in the mines of Colorado and California, and come back to be the man of the hour, in a way, in his home land.

Late on that afternoon of my arrival, as I was crossing the Esplanade, a brass band came up the street banging out the "Marseillaise." Behind the band marched a crowd of men and women under red banners like those we were used to in Petrograd, except that they carried in Finnish the legend, "All Power to the People," instead of the Russian, "All Power to the Soviets." They were on their way to a park on the edge of town, where they were going to make speeches and set off fireworks in the frosty northern twilight.

I tramped along with them out to a natural amphitheatre, fenced in by big gray boulders and white birch trees, and already filled with delegations from other sections of the city, each grouped under its red banners. There were speeches, and in between, the Russian soldier and sailor bands played, and the crowd listened with stolid approval—solid, broad-faced, thick-

necked men in black overcoats and derbies, with red sashes, quaintly wild, looped across their chests. There was something unexpected and almost incongruous about socialism away up here in the unsociable cold, about the "Marsellaise" and the red sashes, against those granite rocks and white birches, and one thought of the many strange things afoot, and of America away off there below the horizon on the other side of the earth, and how really prim and staid, and in some ways almost antique, we were in spite of our slot machines and hurry and skyscrapers.

The Diet had passed a few weeks before a new Constitution which they had declined to submit to the Kerensky Government for approval. When Petrograd replied by dissolving the Diet and sealing up the parliamentary doors, the members went on meeting in another building.

All Finlanders wanted independence, and were more or less anti-Russian in consequence, but this feeling against Russia was tempered in the case of the radicals, most of whom were Finns, by sympathy for their proletarian brothers across the border; and in the case of the conservatives, mostly Swedish-Finlanders, it was sharpened by fear. The curious result was that the more conservative the Finn the more violent was apt to be his opposition to Russian rule, and the more violent his domestic policies the more conservative was he likely to be toward Petrograd.

Underneath the surface neatness and thrift of which I have spoken, conditions in that late autumn of 1917 were very similar to those in Russia itself. Red Finns

had already sided with the revolting Russian garrison in Sveaborg fortress in the harbor of Helsingfors in 1906; the murder of a score of Russian officers at Viborg when the revolution broke out in the spring of 1917, had been partly brought about, it was said, by Finnish agitators. The lack of food (the Finns had paid 40,000,000 marks to the Kerensky Government for grain that had never been delivered) and the requisitioning of fodder by the Russians had forced them largely to kill their dairy cattle; the herds of idle Russian soldiers and sailors; the robberies and killings were Russia repeated, with this difference—the Finns were not Russians. The bourgeois Swede-Finns, particularly, looked on the idle soldiery almost as an invading army, and felt as Californians might feel if they were annexed by Mexico and forced to see their towns overrun by Villa's soldiers and to wait for orders from some uncertain authority holding the stage for a moment in Mexico City.

The amateur "boss" saw red as he talked of these things—indeed, he literally got red to the tips of his ears. If, he said, he seemed cool toward England and warm toward Germany, it was only because England was Russia's ally and they never could expect help from there. I reminded him of the general sympathy for Finland in the West and the many friendly things said and written about them in England, France and America.

"Sympathy—yes!" he snorted, "But what do they *do?* We *know* we've got one friend!"

The tragedy in the air, actual and impending; the apparent willingness of the Socialistic majority to

jam their measures through almost at the point of Russian bayonets; the helplessness of the more conservative elements before the gathering storm, had united the parties of Middle and Right in this attempt—which proved successful—to beat the Socialists. On the evening of the last voting day the amateur campaign-manager gave a dinner to several of those who had helped.

He was much more like a young American college-bred business man than a Russian, and the home in which he entertained us was a reminder of the homes of similar young married people in pleasant American suburbs. He had been a first-rate all-round athlete, and had a cabinet full of silver cups and other trophies won at tennis and track games during his days at a German University, and while his was the business end of the domestic partnership, his handsome young wife, who looked as if she, too, might play a good game of tennis, supported, in true American fashion, culture and the arts. She had paintings from several contemporary Finnish artists, including her own portrait, and various signed drawings, and her frank enthusiasm over these things, and over the pieces of fine old furniture she had picked up at incredibly small prices, was exactly like that of the same sort of young housewife in Kansas City or Grand Rapids.

The vote-counting, on the elaborate proportional plan used in Finland, continued for a week. The ceremony took place in a big library-like hall in the Senate building. Several professorial dignitaries presided, while the clerical work was done by young women as-

sisted by a few young men in longtailed black coats. As they assembled at long tables and the big blanket ballots were spread out, each of the young men proceeded down the length of his table, solemnly shaking hands with each of the young ladies and giving a stiff little bow. It was in quite another style from election nights at home, with the count going on in smoke-filled cigar stores and barber shops.

While the votes were being counted I talked with Finns of various political opinions. A professor of sociology at the University was particularly hospitable and kind. He had made explorations in New Guinea and written a book about it, and he had spears and leather shields on the walls of his study, as all true explorers should. On the way home to Finland he had crossed America and tramped down Bright Angel trail to the bottom of the Grand Canyon, and up again, and had stopped in several of our large cities. His wife said that she thought Finns and Americans were a good deal alike—anyhow, they got on well together. He had no hatred for Russians, he said, and admired them in many ways and wished them well. They had a "wonderful humanity," yet the Finns, nevertheless, were ripe for independence. The two peoples were so different they could never get along well together.

"Still, whatever we do, we should do with Russia's consent. To get our independence by violence would only mean trouble sooner or later."

Another, the successful manager of a large business who had begun life as an immigrant in America and rather prided himself on his hardheadedness, had little interest in independence. It was a sentiment, he said,

speaking from what seemed then the "realistic" acceptance of the dominance of Russia or Germany or both, and very likely the Germans would take Finland before the war was over. It would be the natural thing to do if they decided to take Petrograd. Doubtless they wouldn't keep it, but would merely use it for Peace Conference bargaining. He told how they had got flour before the war by way of Lübeck and other Baltic ports.

"The grain was Russian grain, but we could get the flour cheaper through Germany than we could buying it direct from the Russians and it was clean when we got it, and when we paid for a lot we got the whole lot, and not 80 per cent of it."

Senator Holsti, a foreign editor, when not busy as one of the leaders of the Young Finns, and little dreaming, probably, that he would be Foreign Minister of an independent Finland in another two years, was particularly interesting because of the fact that, while just as cultivated and amiable a gentleman as any Swedish Finn conservative, he was himself looked on as a radical and a true-blue Finn.

"They ought to be proud to be Finns—they are no more Swedish than Roosevelt is Dutch," he said. Finland had been held back by the conservatism of the Swedish Finns, who had "fought every reform for a generation past, for fear it would decrease their power and prestige." The extreme demands of the peasants nowadays were largely due, he thought, to the stupid reaction of the past generation. He was for buying up the Crown and other idle lands, and distributing them among the people who couldn't get enough to

live on. Finns weren't disloyal—they only asked that the Russian soldiers and sailors be used for something beside eating them out of house and home—for purposes of defense and not those of international robbery.

Certainly, he said, the time had come for Finland's independence. They were different in every way; they had built up a civilization of their own; it was absurd that three and a half million people—there were only about six thousand Russians—should be ruled by strangers from Petrograd. The talk about Russia's danger from Finland was not well founded. There never could be any danger from the Finns themselves. As for the Germans, why should they go to the trouble of getting an army across the gulf in ships when they could almost as well invade Russia from their own territory? With Finland independent and a buffer state, Europe would, as a matter of fact, be much better arranged. Sweden would have less fear from her traditional Russian bugaboo, and hence be less forced to look to Germany for help, and Russian development would take its natural course—toward warm water and the southeast—instead of being more or less artificially pushed out toward the Atlantic.

Senator Tokoi, the Socialist leader, from whose door my "bourgeois" professor-guide fled precipitately as soon as he had led me to it, was a solid, capable-appearing little man, who received me with some muttered, half-ironical phrase about a "plain working-man's quarters," in a neat little flat in a modern apartment house, like the homes of thousands of clerks or prosperous mechanics in New York or Chicago. He spoke slowly and declined to get excited about any-

thing. As for independence, it was enough to say that "Finland would get along better if not tied to Russia." The presence of the Russian soldiers didn't seem to irritate him specially; the talk about their dumping good bread in the harbor he thought mostly gossip. Doubtless they had thrown stuff overboard, but that was "only an episode." Giving away the Crown lands wouldn't help much—they were away up north mostly, and not much good for farming. The people did want better hours for work, but so far as he knew they hadn't tried to insist on eight hours for the stable side of dairying.

He was more animated when he told about the places he had worked in America—the Colorado mines, whither he had gone straight from his immigrant's ship, a stone quarry near Sacramento, then up Vancouver way—he had been all over our Far Western country. It was with the air of a man who had arrived that he recalled these far-off adventures. "I'd like to go back there some day," he said as I was leaving; "that's where I got my start."

The discomfiture of the cultivated minority at being bossed by Mr. Tokoi was understandable, and of his somewhat variegated subsequent experiences there is no place to speak here, but he seemed a well-meaning man of some force and shrewdness. The thing that struck me most, coming fresh from Petrograd, was the difference between this Finn and most radical Russians. There was none of that naïve and childlike quality so often felt among the non-Jewish Russians—"poor dears!" as I once heard a woman remark of a mob of *tovarishi*. This man might be pig-headed, or

wrong, or dangerous, but he was "grown-up," he had both feet on the ground, and knew how to take care of himself.

The Russian point of view was put with a great deal of tact by the young vice-governor, Baron Korff, married to an American lady, formerly of Washington. The vice-governor, in his unofficial life, was also connected with the University, and he spoke, therefore not only as a representative of the Petrograd Government, but as a citizen of Helsingfors as well.

He granted all that the Finns said about their different civilization—and it was true, as anyone could see for oneself, they had built up an external culture, schools, streets and so on, far ahead of Russia. He believed in giving the Finns all the freedom possible, but—here he opened an atlas and pointed to the narrow gulf running up to Petrograd. The fact that the Russian navy, in spite of its lack of discipline, had succeeded thus far in keeping the Germans out of the gulf, was proof enough of its natural advantages.

The question of policy here was a practical one, similar to that which the English face with Ireland, and to what our own would doubtless be if we had a hostile nation close to New York, and Long Island or Connecticut should demand independence.

He spoke of the murder of officers at Viborg a few weeks before and of the tragic position Russian officers were in, particularly on the ships. I repeated the remark often made that it was hard to reconcile Russian good nature with much of the reported brutality to officers against whom men had nothing in particular. The vice-governor nodded sadly, and spoke of the

bête humaine which came out when race or class hatred was hot and authority removed, our own American lynchings and burnings were examples—and how, when authority returned, the same people became decent human beings again.

"They don't want to do wrong, but they have a certain horror of the old régime and all its symbols. They see everything in terms of international brotherhood. If you tell them the German Emperor is the worst enemy of international brotherhood and ought to be smashed, they will agree, and if the next man tells them that he's a human being like everybody else, and let's be brothers and stop fighting and make peace, they'll applaud that, too!"

The moral condition of the men one saw loafing about Helsingfors—the same men the Finns objected to so much—was, on their side, the vice-governor said, really tragic. The men were suffering—you could see it in their faces. They hated one minute and the next were ashamed. Before the revolution they hadn't been allowed to read much—only children's books—for fear they would get too many political ideas. Now they read, or had read to them, everything. They were overwhelmed with pamphlets on all sorts of subjects of which they had only the dimmest understanding—harangued and pulled this way and that until they didn't know where they were at.

The seizing of the ballroom in the Governor's palace "for lectures," while I was in Helsingfors, was an example of this groping. On another day sailors with collection boxes appeared in the streets, and posters were tacked up addressed to "Sailor Comrades," with

many words about culture and progress, calling for contributions to a "Sailors' University."

With the air full of such portents, the Kerensky régime collapsed a few weeks later and the Russian Bolshevists seized the power. After they dissolved the Constituent Assembly, the Finnish bourgeois parties asked whether they were ready to recognize Finland's independence. The Bolshevists intimated that they were, but meanwhile continued to send agitators and Red guards across the border. Before any definite understanding was reached, the question of independence was blown aside by the Red Revolution.

CHAPTER II

RED TERROR AND WHITE

THE Baltic is open again now, one does not need—as in 1917—to go up almost to the Arctic Circle and back again to get from Sweden to Finland, and a big white steamer sails straight across the Gulf from Stockholm to Helsingfors. The course is laid through the Islands—the much-discussed Åland Islands among them—which are almost continuous between the two mainlands, and the trip is almost like one down some northern river.

Round granite rocks, with the water dropping off sheer and green from their edges, are always in sight, and pines and white birch, and as the big ship slides quietly between them one can hear the shore birds twittering. Peasant children and fisher folk run down to greet the ship, the elders calling out long and circumstantial messages to friends of theirs in the crew, and often enough you could toss a stone ashore.

After twenty-four hours of this, the "Ariadne" (she was built with Finnish capital and is the pride of the Baltic in these new days of independence) comes into the harbor of Helsingfors in the early evening, just as the military bands are beginning to play and people to promenade in the Esplanade. This Esplanade—trees and walks, running straight up into the center of the town, with band-kiosks and open air cafés at either

end—is crowded in summer at this hour with soldiers, sailors and civilians, blonde-haired girls in white dresses and stiff young officers, saluting and clicking spurs. And coming into it from the ship, you might almost fancy yourself entering some Spanish-American capital before the war was thought of—anywhere in the world, in fact, but the latitude of Greenland and a country literally starving not long ago, and just emerging from a frightful civil war.

The white night descends; and imperceptibly, without darkness—for even at midnight one can read a newspaper, and though doorways are black, the faces of the houses above them seem as bright as day—throws over the whole daytime world its strange enchantment. It is the same, yet not the same. The outlines are there, yet something is added and something taken away. One moves as in a picture, as if oneself a part of that ethereal something which the painter's imagination adds to actuality. The bands stop, but the people keep on drifting, curiously out of the world and at peace, wrapped in unreality. It is literally out of a purple sea that the moon rises, and the pleasure yachts far out among the harbor islands, their white sails and all the air between, are turned to amethyst.

It is difficult to believe in such moments, not merely that Finland has problems, but that any political problems are of importance; that parties and parliaments are not mere playthings, and this the real reality. The white night, while it lasts, makes anarchists of us all. Men are good, and if governments would but leave them alone, they would get along quite well in their beautiful world. . . .

When you get up next morning, however, and read what the conservative *Hufvudstadbladet* has to say about Socialist "rebels" and "Reds" and what the *Socialedemokratti* says about White "robbers" and "butchers," life again becomes complicated. And you have but to talk with almost any intelligent Finn of either side to see that the bands and the crowded promenade were but a mask; and even the new Constitution and democratic President but a hopeful facade; and that behind is a jagged social chasm it will take years of slow education and increasing broad-mindedness to bridge, and blind hate and fear and smouldering revenge such as at home—except between blacks and whites—we have known little about.

In short, anyone can see in Finland what the term "class war" really means. And this detached fragment of the old Russian Empire shows in miniature something of what Russians themselves have suffered, and what they may still have to go through. Finland had its Red revolution and its Red Terror; its counter-revolution and White Terror afterward. And what these comparatively "western," cleanly, law-abiding, pious Lutherans found it necessary to do may well cause one to shrink from what might happen in half-Asiatic Russia were reaction to get its chance.

The revolution was over when next I returned to Finland, General Mannerheim was in power and the first President about to be elected. I saw neither Red Terror nor White, therefore, with my own eyes. But it has seemed worth while, nevertheless, to go back and follow through with some care this Finnish cycle. And the facts here collected are commended to two

sorts of people at home—to those adventurous intellectuals who talk glibly of the "coming revolution," as if a class war were a sort of jolly thunderstorm, after which, all wrongs righted, the people, unwounded and unembittered, go on living as before, only much more happily; and to those others who see "Bolshevism" under each and every dream of social betterment; who believe that the "only way to crush is to crush," and do not suspect that in crushing one, a dozen others are often automatically created to jump into his place.

THE RED REVOLT

We have already seen where things were drifting in Finland in the autumn of 1917. The coalition of the bourgeois parties to beat out the Socialists was momentarily successful. The coalition returned 102 members to the Diet to the Socialists' 92. After a failure at compromise, a Ministry was formed excluding the Socialists altogether. The Russian Bolsheviks did what they could to drive their Finnish comrades to be, as Lenin put it, "less meek." And after the bourgeois majority had authorized the Government to take any measures thought necessary to preserve order, after appeals for help had been addressed to several foreign powers and White Guards had begun to drill, the Left seized the power. On January 27, 1918, the Diet was surrounded; the railways, telegraphs and telephones seized, and the Red revolution was on.

It lasted a little over two months—until early April, when General Mannerheim and his White Guards, aided by a German expeditionary force under General

von der Goltz defeated the Reds utterly, captured some 20,000 of them, and reprisals began.

At no time during the Red régime was there organized killing on a large scale. Helsingfors was taken without bloodshed and given up after slight resistance. The Terror—and it was real terror—was due to desultory but more or less constant killing during all that time; here by groups of peasants, with a grievance, real or imagined, against the local landowners; there by bands of criminals or degenerates turned loose on the community when the Reds opened the prisons. Hideous things happened. Men are said to have been buried alive, and to have had their feet boiled before being finally disposed of. The typical story is that of the family found with their tongues nailed to a table. This may, or it may not, have happened. I call it the type-story because it is the tale repeated everywhere, by people who haven't the remotest evidence to back it up. It had even crossed the Baltic, and in Esthonia that summer a pretty young Balt baroness told it to me as something the Bolsheviks were accustomed to commit there. It is one of those things, which, although it may have had reality somewhere, presently becomes a myth, like the Belgian children with their hands cut off. I know of no one who actually saw it.

Nevertheless there were atrocities and tortures. While it would be unfair to blame such things to Socialism or even to Bolshevism, if they were mostly done, as seems probable, by feeble-minded people turned loose by a general jail delivery, the Red régime must, at any rate, accept an indirect responsibility.

The word "murder" is so loosely used by both sides in Finland that one must accept figures with the greatest caution, but it seems safe to say that the number of Red killings to which that term might reasonably be applied was not more than 1,000. This would include those shot while trying to get through the Red lines to the White forces organizing in the north.

The sort of tragedy which a class war brings to the possessing classes is illustrated in the killing of the brothers of Annie Furuhjelm. Miss Furuhjelm, whom I have already mentioned, was one of the conservative members of the Finnish Diet, and as well known in Finland as Mrs. Pankhurst in England or Jane Addams in America. The men members of her family had had an honorable place in Finnish public life for two hundred years. They did not work with their hands, but the estate in southwest Finland in the neighborhood of Åbo was run as a practical farm, and as generals, admirals and judges they were not idle. They were aristocrats of a type similar to our own colonial gentry, who left their Virginia plantations to become Presidents.

Their neighborhood was, it should also be said, one of the "Reddest" in Finland. It was a region of large estates and rather patriarchal customs, and the "torp" farmers, who owned no land but paid for their little farms by working for the proprietor—two days with man and horse a week, for instance, for the use of sixteen acres—were dissatisfied. There were a good many of these "torp" tenants on most estates.

During the Red days, the local Reds—including peasants with whom the Furuhjelms had been on the

friendliest terms—surrounded the house, and arrested Judge Furuhjelm, his brother, Colonel Furuhjelm, a young man studying law with the judge, and a secretary. There was no accusation against them. The judge had been known as a particularly just and liberal man. He had built a house on his estate in which his Social-Democrat peasants could hold their meetings; some of his friends had even jokingly called him a socialist. The men were confined in an almshouse nearby for several weeks, and finally shot. The ladies of the family, under guard in their own house, and not knowing from one day to the next what their own fate might be, did not learn of the executions until days afterward.

There must have been scores of just such wholly unjustifiable killings among the better sort of landowners in Russia. It would be as useless to attempt to find any logical explanation for such murders as to try to explain the slaughter of the youth of Europe by any individual fault on one side or individual sense of offense on the other. The individual becomes the symbol of some wrong, real or imagined, and he is killed quite blindly in the hope that the wrong may be righted. It might be said in this case that the "torp" peasants have now the right, by a subsequent decree of the Diet, to buy the farms which they have cultivated at the price which their land would have sold for before the war.

In addition to killing there was a good deal of sacking and general destruction. And although Finland was on the verge of starvation—and presently to be over it—cattle were slaughtered for no reason at all

and hay and grain burned. Destruction of this sort is often, however, much less than is imagined. Unless people are drunk or insane, or unless they destroy things *en bloc* by setting a fire, they are held back by centuries of tradition and all sorts of unconscious inhibitions. The Bolshevik depredations in the Baltic provinces were often a sort of childish vandalism—sticking a bayonet through a family portrait, breaking vases and so on, rather than thoroughgoing destruction. I spent the better part of an hour one evening in Esthonia going through room after room of a fine old baronial house admiring the antique furniture. The rooms could scarcely have been fuller, it seemed, and not a scratch on the varnish. The dialogue during this progress consisted of exclamations of admiration from the guests—a party of appreciative French officers—and sighs from our hostess that the Bolsheviki had left them nothing.

Meanwhile, in the north, near Vasa, General Mannerheim was organizing the White Guard. Baron Mannerheim was a Swede-Finn by birth, but he had commanded one of the smart Russian Guard regiments of cavalry under Brusilov, and had been a favorite at the Petrograd court. Handsome, dashing and capable, with unusual charm of manner and a keen eye for the picturesque, he was an ideal hero for a counter-revolution. The bourgeoisie were with him to a man, and he also gathered about him some of the northern peasants—fathers and sons coming in, it was said, in true minute-man style, with their long muzzle-loading rifles used for shooting seals. Arms were the great

General Mannerheim, Regent of Finland Before the Election of the First President

Dr. Grenius, Prime Minister of Lithuania
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difficulty, but some 5,000 rifles were taken from a Russian garrison, and the force grew formidable.

Mannerheim himself had come up from the Ukraine disguised, and contrived to slip by Petrograd and through Helsingfors. To get to his growing army from the south the young men had to cross the Red lines, and if they were caught they were shot on sight. In the capital itself life was only somewhat less harassing for the bourgeoisie than on lonely country estates. There were killings every now and then—nobody knew what the next day might bring.

A young lady who had lived through the winter of 1918 in Helsingfors showed me where a chance bullet had broken one of her bedroom windows and plowed through three or four books in the case along the wall. She and her mother had hidden a White officer for several weeks in their apartment.

"It's the waiting, day after day," she said, "and thinking all the time—'Now to-morrow they may come *here!*' " . . .

She had been one of a committee of women who had acted as a go-between to identify and claim the bodies of Whites whom the Reds had killed. Men relatives were naturally in danger of being seized themselves. The Reds would call her up and say that they had another body to be identified—for all these victims they used the Finnish word for "butcher." Altogether that winter, she helped to identify some seventy corpses.

Her own experience as a writer, very different from that of most American writers, who can share slightly

with the popular magazines their advertising incomes, had led her not to feel so much as she otherwise might the wrongs of the proletariat. A Finnish writer has a population of only three million to appeal to, a comparatively small number of which, of course, will buy his books. He has no big magazines to which to sell his "first serial rights." She would spend months writing a book and feel that it had been reasonably successful if she made a thousand marks—in peace times about $200, less than $100 at the time she spoke. People who worked with their hands were well paid, she thought, when one considered how hard it was for teachers, writers and such to get along.

Suddenly, in April, the Germans came. The negotiations that led up to their coming were not very clear and participation in the invitation was not enthusiastically claimed afterward by those most interested. Some say now that Mannerheim and his White Guard could have handled the situation alone; others say that the Germans saved southern Finland from destruction. Their prestige alone was a powerful weapon in so little a country—they landed at Hango on the 8th, and on the 13th, after slight resistance, marched into Helsingfors.

For the whole bourgeois population it was like the sudden awakening from a nightmare. For months, terror and uncertainty, and then all at once—for the Red press had concealed as far as possible the Germans' coming—there was order again, and the Germans' military bands were booming away in the Esplanade. People went wild with joy; women hugged the

horses of the German troopers, put roses in their bridles and fed them with sugar, although sugar had been almost unknown for months.

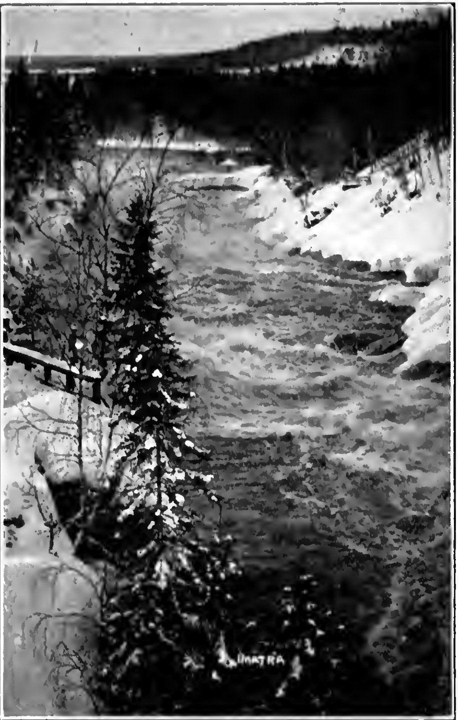
The Germans had not come into Finland merely for their health; had the war ended differently they might have tried to annex the country, or, at any rate, have given it a German king. Yet the gratitude felt by a considerable portion of the middle-class Finns was genuine and understandable. In one of the parks in the center of Helsingfors are the graves of those who died in capturing the city, heaped always with flowers. German children were invited over to Finland to be fed real food in Finnish country homes. One of them, the son of a Berlin postal clerk, happened to be at a country house where I spent a few days. He and his brothers and sisters had lived largely on carrots the winter before, he said. He had gained twelve pounds in a few weeks. My hostess said that some had thought it unwise for them to try to feed foreigners when Finland itself was just recovering from starvation, and was still short of food. She felt otherwise—"Any food we may give these children would be small return for what they saved us from!" she said.

The Whites, cooperating with the Germans, attacked the main Red force from two sides, cut their communications, and captured some 20,000 of them in a herd. So far as armed resistance was concerned the revolution was soon crushed. It is estimated that about 10,000 Finns were killed on each side in actual fighting. Svinhufvud became Regent and continued as such during the terrible summer of 1918, when all Finland was more or less in a state of starva-

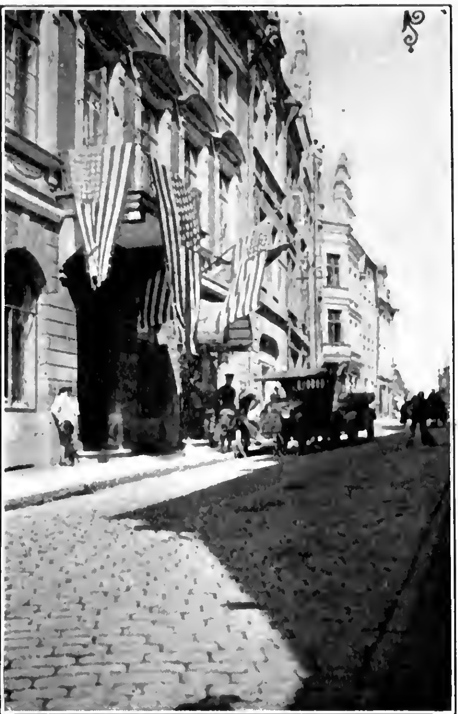
tion and thousands of Red prisoners were dying in the prison camps. In October the Diet—from which the Socialist members had been removed by the simple method of accusing them of treason—declared for a monarchy with the German prince, Frederick Charles of Hesse, for King.

It should not be assumed that this necessarily represented merely blind reaction, although some of the ultra-conservative Finns, especially Swedish-Finns, are undoubtedly reactionary enough. There were quite sane and moderate men who felt, during the summer of 1918, that in the then state of the world and of Finland, an experiment with republican government could never succeed. The war, however, decided the matter. When the Germans were beaten in the West, the prince decided that he did not care to become king of Finland. Svinhufvud, who had been pro-German all along, stepped out, and Mannerheim, who had gone abroad, was recalled and made Regent. In June, 1919, the Diet—to which the March election had given the Socialists 80 out of 200 seats—adopted a Republican constitution, providing for a one-chamber parliament with a cabinet and a president to be elected, first by the Diet and afterward by the people for a term of six years. With the moderate-liberal Professor Stahlberg as President, order and food again in the land, and Finland's independence recognised by various friendly powers, the little country began to assume the outer air of peace and stability which I have described as meeting the stranger stepping off the Stockholm boat.

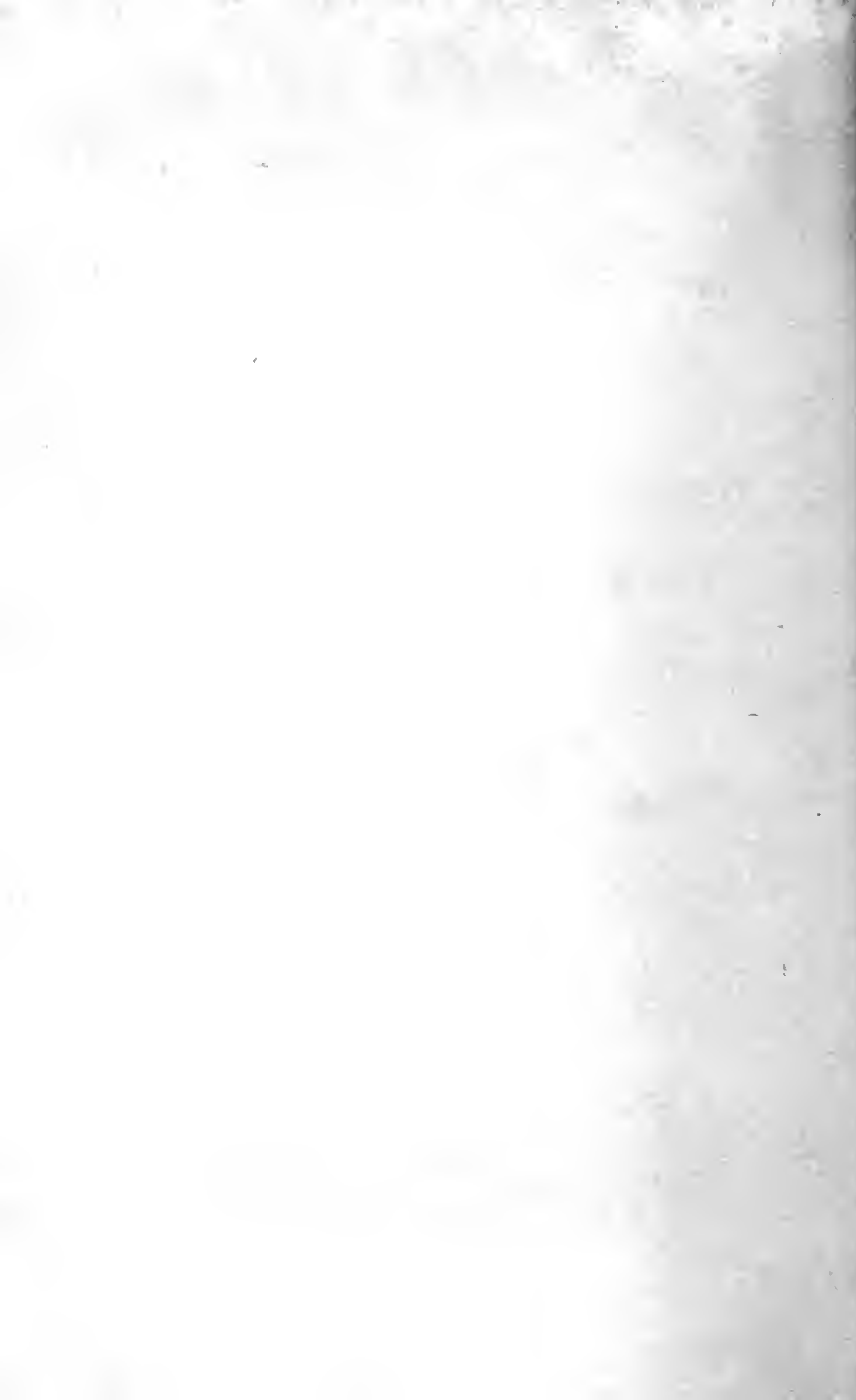
This condition did not follow the White victory at



THE RAPIDS OF IMATRA, ON THE VUOXEN, FINLAND



REVAL'S "LONG STREET," SHOWING AMERICAN RED CROSS HEADQUARTERS



Lahtis and Kauvola, however, as the grass grows green after the rain. And having shown something of what a Red terror is like, it now remains to speak of the White terror that followed it.

COUNTER-REVOLUTION

One of the first persons I saw on arriving in Helsingfors in 1919, was a young business man who had been polite to me during my first visit two years before. During a chat in his library he showed me a photographic history of the training and exploits of the White Guards. There were pictures of the front; of Mannerheim's triumphal entry into Helsingfors in May; and some curiously realistic photographs of the execution of Red prisoners.

Of the latter there were three views. The first showed a row of men facing the firing squad. The next showed them just after the first volley was fired —only a few seriously hit, apparently; one fallen flat on his face in the snow; another slowly kneeling; one turning aside with his hands in his overcoat pockets as one turns from a cold wind; another, bareheaded with his hands clasped in front of his lips, praying, or perhaps merely blowing on his cold fingers. The third showed them after several volleys had stretched all in a heap on the snow. In the foreground the boy who had had his hands clasped, lay on his back with his mouth wide open as if gasping for breath, and indeed the steam of what was perhaps his last breath could actually be seen in the frosty air.

There was a certain informality in this row of quite ordinary looking men in overcoats who might have

been picked up in any winter street at home, which, with the camera's clumsy literalness, combined into something curiously horrible. I remarked on the fact that none of the men was blindfolded. "Oh," said my host quickly, "there was no time for that!"

This remark, falling so naturally in the quiet air of that pleasant library, may perhaps suggest more effectively than many words the chasm a class war brings and the general nature of what happened when the Whites set out to crush the revolution.

There were, according to the official figures, after the first weeding out of the obviously innocent, 73,915 Red prisoners. The Reds assert that the number was nearer 90,000, or nearly 3 per cent of the entire population. Naturally, only a very small percentage of such an army were guilty of any crime. They were men, women and boys, peasants and city workpeople, who for one reason or another were assumed to have taken some part or had some sympathy with the Red revolution. There were murderers among them, and there were doubtless humanitarian dreamers too; there were women who had cooked for Red soldiers and shoemakers who had made boots for them. Thousands must simply have been those who follow the crowd,—do what the rest of the folks who live in their part of town and eat their sort of food and have their sort of amusements happen to be doing at that particular time.

The contagion of a Utopian revolution is like any other epidemic. What should have been done with this great herd of more or less ignorant people might be an interesting subject for academic discussion. What

the Whites actually did was to kill a good many out of hand and to cram the rest into prison camps. No preparations had been made for any such number. There were not at first even roofs to cover them. One camp would have used all its available space and food, and suddenly a telegram would come—"Fifteen hundred more prisoners arrive to-day." They did what they could.

Everybody was pinched for food in Finland in 1918 and the winter of 1919. People made bread out of bark and straw and sawdust. With a condition of literal starvation among thousands of the population outside, it is not difficult—even without accepting the Red assertion that prisoners were deliberately starved—to imagine conditions in the camps.

Accurate figures are almost impossible to get. The Reds were in wretched condition, many of them, when taken prisoners. Diseases of various sorts naturally broke out. When an undernourished man dies of pneumonia it is not easy to tell where the disease began and the starvation left off. That many literally starved everybody admits. The Socialists and their sympathizers assert that of the 11,783 who are officially admitted to have died in the camps up to April, 1919, the larger part died of starvation. In figures which the Foreign Office sent me in answer to a request for information, the statement is made that of the 11,783, "only 551 died of starvation."

Professor Tigerstedt, a Finnish physiologist of international reputation, in a report to the Government not originally intended, apparently, to be made public, found that in the prison camp at Ekenas the death rate

per thousand per week increased from 5.90 between June 6 and 12, 1918, to 43.33 between July 23 and 31. The latter figures would mean a death rate, per week in Helsingfors, which has about 200,000 people, of 8,466. With such mortality there would, of course, be no annual death rate at all. Everybody would be dead in less than six months!

In speeches, booklets and newspaper articles—some of them in foreign papers of good standing—the case against the Whites was presented with great detail. General Mannerheim's régime did not seem to be sufficiently interested in foreign opinion to make any detailed answer to these charges. The Minister of Justice, Soderholm, in answer to an interpellation in the Diet, in April, 1919, made a rather sketchy reply in which he stated that the number of Red prisoners on June 27, 1918, was 73,915—as already stated, "among them about 4,600 women. During the first investigation about ten per cent were released. About 15,600 more were released with the obligation to come before the court when called. Some 31,000 were set free with conditional sentences. The amnesties of October 30 and December 7, 1918, reduced the number by some 16,000. On April 5, 1919, the number, including those subsequently arrested, was 5,950 men and 45 women; 72 cases had not yet been brought before the court."

I saw none of the Finnish prison camps—it was not an easy thing to do—but just across the Gulf, in Esthonia, I visited, in the summer of 1919, with some of our Relief Administration officers, a camp of Red prisoners which must have resembled, one imagined,

the look of some of the Finnish prisons and prisoners as they were the year before.

Some four or five hundred men and a few women, raked together when the Russian Bolsheviks were driven out of Reval in the autumn of 1918, had been taken out to the lonely island of Nargen, six or seven miles from Reval, and shut up in a high, barbed-wire stockade. They were lying, most of them, as we came up, in or about their semi-dugout barracks, as if asleep, sick or dead. The few who were moving suggested moving pictures run at about one-third normal speed. They had the air of being so weak they could scarcely more than stand.

It may have been, as the young officer showing us about said, that they were fed enough now. If so, it seemed that food had come for most of them too late. Half had the look of men already dead. A sharp rap would have disposed of any of them, it seemed, like so many white rabbits. Their rags and dirt and wretchness, their swelled, misshapen limbs—for "war oedema," that is to say malnutrition, had puffed their legs up to twice their natural size—combined to make a picture at once so repellent and so pitiful that one scarcely knew whether they should all be packed oft to a sanitarium, baths and food, or simply swept aside as refuse of which the earth were better rid. Whatever crimes they had committed, it was certainly a crime against anything with a human body and soul that it should be brought to this.

We stepped into one of the crowded, noisome barracks—a path between two wooden shelves packed with heaps of rags from which there came now and

then a cough—the whole lot looked to be in the last stages of tuberculosis. At the further end were women. Near the door a young fellow held his bare feet in the ashes of a little cook-stove, although the day was sunny and warm.

A crowd of them shuffled round after us, trying to tell their stories and snatch while they could this chance straw of hope. One old man, sixty-three he said, so weak he could only whisper, and so unstrung nervously he could scarce hold himself together long enough to tell his story at all, said that he had three sons in the Esthonian army fighting the Bolsheviks. They had brought him in with the rest when his village was taken. His wife, in similar condition, was with him. They had no trial, they said, no notion of what was charged against them. Others with similar stories had been wasting away in this place since the preceding autumn.

You must not conclude from this that the Esthonians are necessarily a barbarous people. Such things might happen even in New York, after five years of foreign and civil war and more or less general starvation, with those in authority at the moment back in Manhattan too busy patching the new order together to think of a few Communists sent months before to some island down the harbor.

The brand-new Parliament in Reval was absorbed in the land question, and in getting enough exports to pay for the imports the country couldn't get along without —probably many of the delegates didn't even know there was a prison camp on Nargen, or if they did, thought as much about it as the average man thinks

of what may be going on in the State penitentiary. How many thousands of men and women, for whom somebody cared, who had their own possibilities of usefulness and beauty, have perished like starved city cats, all over Europe, not because anybody deliberately willed it, but merely because it was nobody's particular business to help them, and they were caught in the hopeless jungle of military red tape, personal indifference, and general orders issued by some authority as far away from them as the moon!

"Restoring order" in Finland was not, however, a mere matter of starvation in prison camps. I have spoken of the thousand murders the Reds are said to have committed and of the tortures which occasionally accompanied them. When victorious troops came, hot-foot, on such sights, it is not hard to picture what happened to the Reds captured near the place, whether guilty or not. Even without provocation, the Whites were not loath, generally, to use what are described as vigorous measures. The word "murder" is so loosely employed by both sides in Finland, and the Reds apply it so carelessly to include summary executions, executions after some sort of trial, and even those killed in what might be called fighting, that exact figures are almost impossible to get.

The New Statesman, in an article published in April 1919, stated that the Whites "had shot from 15,000 to 20,000 out of hand, without any form of trial. In this way 500 were executed at Rihimaki; 2000 at Lahtis; 4000 at Viborg; 600 at Tammerfors; 450 at Vichtis. At Lahtis 200 women were shot in the second

week of May in a batch, with machine guns," etc. My personal impression is that this article was recklessly one-sided and inaccurate, and I quote it merely as an example of the sort of thing printed in reputable periodicals to which no adequate reply was made.

A Finnish Socialist who had made it his business to collect such statistics told me that 18,788 had been killed without any trial except military court-martial. As an example, he spoke of Vichtis, where, he said, only four persons had been murdered by the Reds. The Whites came, he said, went to the church where the prisoners were collected, asked for the most dangerous, and took out and shot down 400 men and women.

A White to whom I repeated this statement said that he knew of his own personal knowledge of eighteen Red murders at Vichtis, and that the Whites had not executed more than a hundred. Practically every statement on either side is similarly disputed. The facts may never be known, even roughly, until some neutral commission is permitted to make a thorough investigation. It is plain, however, that the lives destroyed in prison and out of it after the fighting was over were many more than those killed in actual war, and that so far as mere numbers went, the White Terror was several times as destructive as the Red.

Of the 70,000 or 80,000 original prisoners, 27,000 are said by the Socialists to have been sentenced for three years or more. Between 400 and 500 were condemned after formal trial to death for high treason.

The accusation was repeatedly made that prisoners

were flogged to make them confess, or to punish them. One particularly notorious case was that of a police officer, Troborg, who is said to have flogged a prisoner for twelve hours—whipping him as long as he could stand it, letting him rest, and then going at him again. The Minister of Justice, answering an interpellation on this subject, said that in only two cases had it been proved that prisoners had been beaten. He admitted that "the investigator, Mr. Troborg, had been too brusque in his manners toward prisoners," but the Minister's statement—"that while a thick whip had been found in the room of Mr. Troborg and also in the rooms of his assistants, these were only used to beat the walls and tables, in order to frighten the prisoners" —seemed to leave something to be desired.

Among his statistics on the domestic results of the revolution, Mr. Helenius-Seppälä, of the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs, stated that there were records of 23,000 fatherless children. The fathers of 10,000 of these children were still in prison or unable to do anything for their families. The fathers of 13,000 were missing or dead. Of these 13,000, 760 were children of "White" fathers. Of the remaining 12,240 "Red" children, the fathers of 5,000 had been executed, of 3,100 had died fighting, and of 1,100 had been "murdered." A *Manchester Guardian* correspondent, an intelligent but prejudiced observer, in quoting these figures, estimated that between 25,000 and 30,000 Reds had been destroyed in one way and another after the White Guard was victorious and the revolution supposedly crushed.

This "crushing" process, in milder forms, through censorship, passport restrictions, secret police, and social ostracism, continued long afterward; in certain cases is still going on. Two years after the revolution there were still large numbers of provisional prisoners, people unable to leave their towns. One could not travel anywhere in Finland without a passport, few could leave the country at all. The secret police, three years afterward, were still busy listening to telephone conversations—even of Cabinet Ministers—following people about, descending on premises suspected for one reason or another, in quite the good old Russian style.

Nearly every afternoon in Helsingfors in summer one could see the White Guards drilling in the parks—middle-aged men from their offices, the same public-spirited business men, lawyers and bankers who would turn out for such service at home after our own Red revolution had been put down. There were said to be some 80,000 of these determined volunteers in Finland—enough, one was assured, to guarantee that there be no serious strikes or other disorders. In remote country neighborhoods where people had gone to spend the summer, one every now and then ran across one of these drab uniforms and white arm-bands—a reassuring or sinister figure, according to the point of view. Patriotic and public-spirited their service undoubtedly is. They saved the country. Yet the continued presence of an extra-national army like this, a sort of permanent vigilance committee, could not but sharpen class lines. Democratic conditions seemed scarcely possible so long as an armed minority decided who were and who were not respectable.

The less direct results of the revolution, the legacy of hatred, fear and prejudice, of smoldering revenge and stupid reaction, may be left to the individual fancy of those who observed through seven years the phenomena of war psychology. The worst of foreign wars is something from without, like a storm or an attack from wild beasts, before which one makes head as best one may. But a class war, especially to the conservative side, has something of the uncanny quality of an earthquake. It is the ground itself that gives way, and one is taken unaware by the servants in one's own house, one's fellow workmen and apparent friends. This probably accounts for the panic fear which is at the bottom of such reprisals as the Whites made in Finland, and the hatred which is scarcely distinguishable from fear.

And having seen what merely reading about a war three thousand miles away did to mild and sedentary Americans, no one will be surprised to find a Finnish novelist, Mr. Kianto, for example, urging the killing of Red women on the ground that when "exterminating wolves it is always better to kill a she-wolf," and that it was "short-sighted to leave those unpunished who by increasing mankind bring new strength to the enemy."

Conversely, no one will assume that the Finns are peculiarly barbarous. While I was investigating the class war, Promotion Day—corresponding to our Commencements—came in the Helsinfors University. The University is in the center of the town, on the big square by the Nickolai church (a sort of Lutheran cathedral) and the Senate Building, and the very formal

and serious old ceremony became, therefore, the event of Helsingfors' day. The young men, all in evening clothes, with laurel wreaths, which the young ladies had woven for them, round their brows; the young ladies—fine-looking, clear-eyed, northern girls—with laurel wreaths too, stood for hours with their parents and friends in the University Hall listening to Latin addresses. Then, two by two, they marched up the street to the church, for another formal service there—the former graduates in top hats with broad crepe bands, like undertakers, marching with them; then back again, and finally ended the day driving around town, still bareheaded, with their laurel wreaths; getting their pictures taken; and dancing in what used to be the Hall of the Nobles until dawn.

And these ministerial looking young men, with their laurel wreaths and white ties, and the clear-eyed, blonde-haired girls, and the solemn old gentlemen in their undertaker hats, and the proud parents and prim lady teachers in lavendar—all the figures in this quaintly formal, God-fearing picture—all these were Whites! It was their class, the nice, quiet, kindly, useful people, who, directly or indirectly, were responsible for what had happened in the prison camps. No more were most of the Reds, I should say, hyenas or bandits. They were just ordinary men in overcoats, like that row facing the firing squad; a little more ignorant than the average White, more or less pigheaded and resentful, and bound, whether in Finland or America or elsewhere, to become more so, as long as nothing real or sensible is done to find out what they are driving at, and they are treated, instead, as beyond the pale.

General Mannerheim was the bright and picturesque sun around which the White régime revolved. His rule as regent, practically a military dictatorship, ended in July, 1919, when a Professor of law, and former speaker of the Diet, Stalberg, candidate of the Young Finn or Progressive Party, was elected President. His election became certain when the Socialists, who had eighty seats in the Diet, withdrew their candidate, Tanner, and threw their vote with that of the Agrarians and the Young Finns. The conservative Swedes talked as if the sun had indeed left the world, when Mannerheim left the stage. Their fear that fighting was not yet over was to be respected, but some of their arguments, especially those based on the miraculous effect of Mannerheim's sophistication and charm of manner on foreign chancellories, sounded rather silly.

It was no disrespect to Mannerheim, nor lack of appreciation of his services to Finland, to believe that the time had come for another sort of leader. The vital thing in Finland was not so much foreign adventures or influence at St. James or the Quai d'Orsay, as the restoration of normal life within Finland itself, and the healing of the wounds opened by the revolution. Mannerheim had become, however, unjustly, in the minds of a large section of the Finns, a symbol of the White Terror. Stalberg, respected, at any rate, by all, essentially the civilian-republican instead of the man-on-horseback, was the logical candidate. His coalition government was bound to seem weak in comparison with the dictatorship, but it was the normal next step in the slow climb to solid political ground.

CHAPTER III

FIRST AID

An importer of essential food even in peace times, Finland was on dangerously short rations by the autumn of 1917, and efforts were made to have the blockade lifted enough to let a shipload through from America. Flour was actually bought and loaded on a ship in Boston, but commandeered for our own use before the ship could sail. The civil war and the shutting off of Russia demoralized trade, industry and normal farming, and a good deal of what food and fodder remained was burned or otherwise wasted during the struggle between Red and White.

In the spring of 1918 when the Red revolution was put down, conditions were so desperate that the Government had to seize for food about half the rye intended for seed. The crop, even such as it was that autumn, was damaged by excessive rains, and there was a deficit at the end of the year of some 200,000 tons.

It began to be a literal fight for life, especially in the remote forest districts in the east and north along the Russian border, where, with the short summer and almost Arctic winter night, existence is rather precarious at best. Even in Helsingfors itself, comparatively comfortable middle-class people lived for weeks sometimes on little else but carrots and tea.

Before the war Finland had exported dairy products to Russia and the diet of the peasants consisted largely of bread and milk. What with lack of fodder and the consequent killing of the herds, there was no milk. You would not believe that human beings could chew and swallow, let alone digest, the stuff that in the country, and sometimes even in Helsingfors, did duty for bread. I have seen chunks that looked as if they had been chopped, literally, from a door-mat.

Bark, straw, sawdust, moss and hydrated cellulose were among the substances used. The better specimens had the appearance of dried horse or cow dung. The coarsest one could scarcely imagine passing through any human alimentary system. As a matter of fact, they did not, at any rate satisfactorily, even when mixed with such lubricants as linseed oil. When the American relief men arrived in the spring of 1919, they found children in the forest districts as pot-bellied as so many African pygmies. Many, left without a father, as the result of the revolution, were packed into orphanages with adult idiots and paupers, especially in the districts along the Russian border. One lot of eighty, suffering from rickets, were described as "more like dispirited, dying, mangy animals than human beings."

The bark bread, it might be remarked, is not always as bad as it sounds, and even in peace times the forest peasants were accustomed to mix some pine bark with their flour. This was not the outer bark, but the soft layer close to the wood. It was stripped off in the spring when full of sap, dried in the sun, ground and mixed with enough flour to hold it together when

baked. When well made this bark bread is said to contain as much as 40 per cent nourishment. Moss bread could be digested up to about 10 per cent. The wood-pulp and saw-dust breads had no nourishment.

It was under such circumstances that the first food-ship of the American Relief Administration came to Finland in March, 1919, as literally a relief ship as if she had come to a party of explorers locked in the Polar ice. There were similar expeditions in the other border states and similar relief, and deep-laden American freighters were poking their rusty camouflaged noses all that summer into ports all the way from Archangel to Batoum. There were ships that used to carry bananas up from the Caribbean; ships built in a month's time in Great Lake ports and floated down the St. Lawrence—and lucky, so some of their crews thought, after they hit the Atlantic gales, if they ever lasted out a month at sea.

". . . The *Western Plains* discharged 609 tons of wheat at Cattaro, 190 tons of wheat at Zelineke, and proceeded to Constanza with 6,642 tons of wheat flour. . . ."

". . . The *Lake Eckhart* discharged 1,500 tons in Libau and will discharge 1,254 in Memel. . . ."

Reports like this, by the score, came ticking into London headquarters. There were ships in the Black Sea, ships creeping through the Baltic before the ice was out and while the mine-sweepers were still to begin working; new ships, battered tramps, all carrying to the farthest corners of Eastern Europe their Dakota

flour and Iowa pork, Illinois milk and Southern sugar and beans.

This is not the place to retell that many-colored story —a drama of hunger, vaster and more terrible, perhaps, than any Frank Norris could have imagined for what was to have been the last of his trilogy of the "epic of the wheat." Nor is it necessary to indulge in any self-adulation. We had the men, the money—the first appropriations were for $105,000,000—and most important of all, we had the food. It was distinctly up to us. Except for a few millions given away for children's relief, in this first A. R. A. program we donated nothing. The food was paid for, at least in promises to pay. Amidst, however, the jostling of forces, local and foreign, and the cloud of advice and pressure, well-meant and sinister, in which these young states had to find their feet, these A. R. A. missions and the food they distributed—especially in the first pioneering days—were oases of concrete helpfulness. They not only fed the hungry, but in helping restore normal physical conditions, helped also, in some small way, toward preparing the ground for sane politics. In that light, some mention of their work is a legitimate part of our story, and an American who saw a good deal of this work may be permitted, perhaps, to recall the satisfying way in which, on the whole, it was done.

We made nothing out of our opportunity except good will. There was no attempt to use our power to drum up future favors. Every man was warned to remember that he was there, not as the military repre-

sentative of his government—although practically all the personnel were fresh from the A. E. F.—but as a human being helping the helpless, and to avoid even the appearance of ulterior adventures harmless in themselves and in other circumstances entirely honorable. At the same time every endeavour was made to accompany this altruism with hard common sense and an eye to facts, so that as soon as possible normal life might be restored and the people we were helping be able to take care of themselves.

There were joy-riders, of course, but the healthy spirit of humanity and service with which Mr. Hoover inspired his organization was felt all the way down. And young officers whom the bleak impersonality and wasted effort inseparable from every big military machine had given a mood of somewhat ironical resignation—who had got to thinking, after a year of Europe, that, as one of those in Finland put it to me, "there was a 'joker' in everything," recovered their lost enthusiasm and began to feel at home again. I shall not myself forget the welcome sight, in the harbor of Hango, after crossing a disillusioned and critical Scandinavia, of the American freighter *Philadelphia,* with grain from half-a-dozen chutes pouring up from her hold into the cars run close along the dock wall. Here, at last, was something to stand on—proof that the America these people had believed in was not a thing of the past.

The first of our ships reached Finland on March 25, and during the following month—a critical one everywhere, far away as it was from both harvests—seven ships came to Finland, with 25,000 tons of rye,

10,000 tons of flour and a considerable amount of pork products.

A food-importing corporation, including representatives from the cooperative societies which are so highly developed in Finland, had had charge of food importation for the greater part of the war, and they supplied useful statistics. The Finnish Government contributed 300,000 marks. A central committee was formed, headed by Professor Tigerstedt, a distinguished Finnish physiologist and a very lively and charming old gentleman, and including various public-spirited Finns with experience useful in such work. This committee, in cooperation with the Food Ministry, took charge of the organization of sub-committees and the distribution of the food delivered to it by the A. R. A.

Here, as elsewhere, food for children was given away instead of sold, local committees working with the Food Ministry attending to its distribution and preparation. Half the expense of transport was borne by the Food Ministry, half by the Finnish railways. By the end of June about 40,000 children were being fed, and we had given outright (food for adults was sold at cost) about $525,000. Similar work was going on in Esthonia, Latvia, and so on down through Eastern Europe all the way to the Turkish Caucasus.

The headquarters of the work in Finland was in Helsingfors, and from here officers went on tours of inspection to the remotest parts of the country. There were characteristic training-camp officers of an improvised army. One, for example, had just started in before the war as an instructor in Romance lan-

guages in an American university. Another was himself a Finn who had seen service with our expeditionary force in Mexico. Another's experience included service in France, several years' business training in Chicago and a season as trombone-player with Ringling's Circus. He picked up Swedish and the difficult Finnish as if they were American dialects, and came back from tar-boat trips down Finnish rapids—a standard summertime amusement in Finland—with new and wonderful samples of bread substitutes and stories of food being hauled by man power up rivers so wild and swift that it would seem as if boats, men and all would be swept downstream.

The head of the mission was a Grand Rapids insurance man, one of those "regular" Americans who suffer an acute nostalgia when word comes from the country club at home that the tennis courts are ready, and yet through the chance of war and the real power represented by the possession of real food, hobnobbed quite naturally with diplomats and soldiers as one of the big men of the land. His reports suggested anything but the shop-talk of the trained social worker. Writing of an inspection of some of the more wretched districts in Esthonia, he said: "It had not been realized before that 200 women could have so many children, nor that the children could have so many things the matter with them. . . . the peasants have not learned, after hundreds of years of this sort of living, that one of its greatest blessings is at hand and free—namely, fresh air."

Returning from a motor trip through the Finnish

timber country, he reported: "Everywhere we saw white sheets of pine bark hanging on the fences to dry. The peasant landlord of the inn where we slept one night was away with a load of pine-bark which he was taking to the mill to be ground so that it might be mixed with flour. . . . As often as we sighted a peasant cart we knew it meant a run-away. The horses climbed fences, jumped ditches, and dragged their drivers off into the woods, with the two-wheeled carts bumping at their heels and their excited and frightened passengers being yanked along in their wake, spilling disjointed sentences in the disjointed Finnish language. The country was all forest, the roads up and down, and a breakdown meant death or insanity from mosquito bites."

We motored out one summer day to a country schoolhouse food-kitchen in the pretty timber-and-lake country near Helsingfors. The work here was directed by a distinguished-looking old gentleman, who had run a food-kitchen in the same place before the Americans came. He was German by birth, although he had lived in Finland for forty years—an old-school Liberal, full of wisdom and comfortableness, like those who migrated to America in the middle of the last century. Some of his relatives had, indeed, gone to the States he said, during the revolution of '48. Two of his cousins had taught in a medical college in Boston, and another, a woman, had taught in a school for negroes in the south. For two weeks before the American food came, he said, it was literally impossible to buy a pound of flour in the whole district, and the

children, who walked in several kilometers to get their one meal a day, had several times fainted before they could be fed.

These same children were all lined up in front of the schoolhouse now to greet us—some of them still a bit peaked—a big American flag floated by the roadside, and as the party ascended the slope past them, the little bare-footed boys saluted solemnly. The inside of the schoolhouse was all fixed up and fragrant with balsam and wild flowers, and mixed with this was the cheerful smell of bean soup. A big cauldron of it —American beans and flour and milk and pork—was lugged in by the teachers; a little girl with a record book stood beside it and called off the names, and one by one the children stepped up, each with its big bowl and pail and much-fingered food ticket. They carried their bowls back to their desks and went to it, and most of them had some to take home besides.

There were 205 children here, from 80 different families. One hundred and twelve fatherless; the fathers of 44 others had either disappeared or been made prisoners during the revolution.

It is not convenient, of course, for all blasé or grouchy Americans to take a trip abroad these days. Nevertheless I should like to recommend to all those left cold by brass bands and the artifices of literature and the theatre, who think that life has no thrills left and that things generally are going to the bow-wows, a food-kitchen like this, three or four thousand miles from home, a line of pale children with bluish rings under their eyes waiting with their bowls and spoons, some nice comfortable women bustling about, a smell

of bean soup in the air, and an American flag floating lazily outside in the summer sunshine. . . .

A supplementary program followed the original one, and by the summer of 1920 conditions were such —the American Red Cross had meantime come in— that the A. R. A could discontinue its work in Finland. Bread and sugar cards were still used, but the supply of food, even of white bread, was comparatively normal, and Finland began to be a regular place to live in again.

TRADE AND FOREST WEALTH

The new republic is about as large as the New England States, plus New York and New Jersey, or about two-thirds the size of France. Its climate, comparatively warm for the latitude, is similar to that of Sweden. More than a tenth of the total area is made up of fresh water lakes—a map of southern Finland is like a piece of lacework—and 61 per cent of the land area is covered with forests.

These forests supply most of the fuel, just as they do in northern Russia, and wood, paper and pulp are Finland's main resources. According to government statistics, Finland exported in the period just before the war, more cubic meters of wood than Sweden, nearly twice as much cardboard, and about three-quarters as much paper. As more than one-fourth of the forests are owned by the State, it seems reasonable to assume that this thrifty and practical people will take care of the problem of reforestation and the scientific development of this all-important natural wealth.

Sixty-six per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture and dairying, and before the war the Finns used to find a ready market for their butter and milk and cheese in near-by Petrograd. They used to export, for instance, as much as 26,000,000 pounds of butter annually, before the war. They always imported, however, a good deal of grain and flour, and much of this came from Russia by way of Germany. Oats,—which ripen even in northern Finland—rye, barley, potatoes and hay are their principal agricultural products. Most of the country is too cold for wheat. The Finns could feed themselves, undoubtedly; could exist, that is to say, but sugar, coffee and what are called "colonial" products in northern Europe, must be imported, and to be really comfortable they must always depend for a good many things on lands farther south. And the mysterious and romantic workings of international trade brought oranges and lemons and Oregon apples to the market on Helsingfors Quay, even during the days when the country was short of bread!

The mineral resources thus far uncovered are trifling, and the only coal is the "white coal" of the innumerable rapids, but there is a growing and important metal industry—for which the raw material must be imported—and manufactures of textiles and various luxuries. Among the interesting things exhibited at the Finnish fair of 1920, in addition to a Finnish-American band and a ship load of returned Finnish-Americans, were the fine furniture and the homemade Finnish rugs and linen.

Finland's nearness to Russia will always give it an

important carrying trade, and its delightful summer climate and the charm of its countless unspoiled lakes will make it more and more sought as a vacation place. As Europe settles down to normal life the tourist trade will become a not negligible consideration.

Characteristic of the country is the extent and success of its various cooperatives. Started in 1901, they spread rapidly, and in 1919 there were 3,135 societies, which the government statisticians described as "cooperative." There were societies for agricultural credit, for the sale of eggs and butter, for the purchase of farm machinery, for supplying city people with provisions of all sorts. The turn-over of the "Finnish Cooperative Wholesale Society" in 1919, was, for instance, 205,000,000 marks; of the "Valio Butter Export Cooperative Society," 105,000,000 marks; of the "Hankkija Agricultural Cooperative Society," 156,000,000 marks. (The value of a mark, equivalent to a franc in peace time, had, of course, a good deal depreciated.) The "Elanto Society's" restaurants and shops are among the characteristic furnishings of Helsingfors. Elanto owns about 30 establishments in the towns, two large farms, a model steam bakery, a dairy, a factory for drying vegetables, saddlery and tailoring shops, and various cafés, restaurants, groceries and small bakeries. Its restaurants in Helsingfors, all spotlessly clean, are of two classes, the one somewhat more luxurious than the other, and one of its restaurants for workingmen is said to be the largest of the sort in Europe.

The revolution and the closing up of Russia, as has already been remarked, paralyzed industry and trade.

Not a pound of paper went abroad in 1918 from January to July. New connections had to be built up in the West and these were hindered, not merely by distance and lack of shipping, but by the distrust of a state so close to Bolshevik Russia. Not even the "Whitest" Finnish banker or manufacturer could visit the United States, for instance, in 1919 and the early part of 1920, without special individual permission from the State Department. Slowly the new market was made. More than 48,000 tons of paper went abroad in 1919. In the first five months of 1920 this figure had already been passed.

These amounts may not seem startling, but to those who know these Baltic countries, and how they had been fairly fainting for exports to pay for their indispensable imports, and lift a bit somehow their all but impossible rate of exchange; who had seen economic illness worked out in terms of half-starved children, of families used to comforts grubbing along in half-heated rooms and made-over clothes, the sight of a deep-laden freighter moving out to sea, was as exciting as seeing the color creep back into the face of an invalid friend.

We watched a big gray freighter thus sail out of Helsingfors harbor in the summer of 1920, loaded with paper for South America. Thanks to direct steamers and comparative lack of competition, some of the earlier shipments went as far afield as that. The promenaders in the Esplanade studied her with somewhat the same wistful interest that the dwellers in a prairie village bestow on the daily flight of the Overland Express. People speculated on her cargo

and destination. And those of us who knew could amuse ourselves with the fancy that trees cut in sombre forests, on the edge of the Arctic Circle, were going to end in newspapers printed in Portugese, and held in long slim brown fingers, and read in the blazing sunlight and languid airs of Santos or Rio.

CHAPTER IV

THE ESTHONIAN WORM TURNS

The ancient city of Reval has stood at the western entrance to the Gulf of Finland for seven hundred years. Just across the Gulf on the north shore, four or five hours away by the little steamers that cross thrice a week, is Helsingfors. In the old Russian days, when Russia held both sides of the Gulf, Helsingfors and Reval and the fleets that hovered between them, guarded the outer ocean gate to Petrograd.

As you come to Reval from the sea, and the low Esthonian coast appears behind the sentinel islands of Wulf and Nargen, you notice a round hill rising above the lower town, and the roofs and towers, and presently the gray walls, of what was once a medieval citadel. Tall steeples cluster around it, sharp aspiring Gothic spires, that recall Gustavus Adolphus and Charles Twelfth (one of the old churches is called *"Karl's Kirche"*), the Danish and Swedish occupations, and the Protestant-Lutheran faith of most of the people. In the very center of these tall spires, on the top of the hill, shine the exotic golden domes of an orthodox Russian church—these clustered, beet-shaped, half-oriental domes which shine above the Kremlin and lift their riotous green and indigo and sky-blue over every Russian landscape.

They and the spires and citadel wall about them

tell part of Esthonia's story—of the Teutonic Order which took these Baltic lands in the middle ages; the Germanic "Balt barons" who inherited them; Imperial Russia reaching out to the West ever since the great Peter opened his window on Europe,—indeed, ever since the first invasion of Ivan the Terrible. The spires shut in the gilded domes, but they glisten there in the center, alone, and as it were, a little insolently, as if to remind the world, as Mr. Sazonov and his friends now and then remind it in Paris and elsewhere, that old Russia is still watching what once was hers.

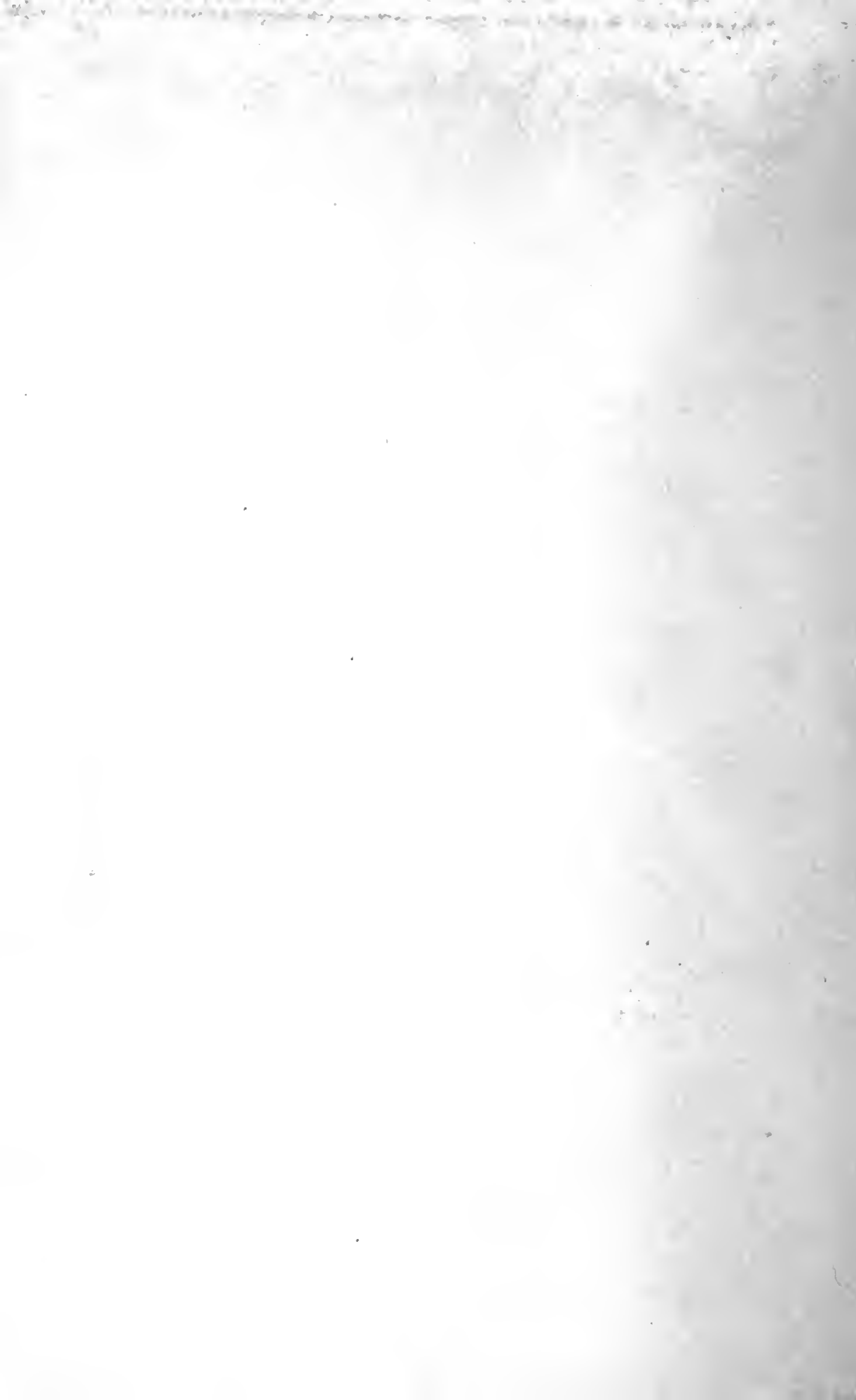
Climbing up through the twisting, cobble-stoned streets of the citadel you find that the Russian church is almost vulgarly new, but the Lutheran church on the very summit near-by is old as the hills, and in it, from a high Gothic pulpit, a pastor preaches in German to a congregation sitting beneath walls hung with tattered battle-flags, and the heavy, carved, coats-of-arms of the Baltic noblesse. They themselves live—or did, until yesterday—in the houses round about; stone houses, with thick walls and deep windows, guarded sometimes by iron bars. Plain as so many warehouses from without, within are spacious rooms filled with family portraits, and old furniture, and now and then a ball-room with parquetry floor and mirrors and glass chandeliers. Shut in between stone walls you forget that you are on a hill, and entering some unpretentious front from an alley-like street, suddenly find yourself looking out of drawing-room windows from which the cliff drops sheer to the town below, and the curve of beach and the sea.

It is a splendid view, intended for superior persons, and up here on the Domberg they used to live, while the lower town was left largely to commoners. Although these gentry served as officers in the Russian army and navy, and as Russian diplomats and courtiers, and owned at one time practically all the land in Esthonia, they were neither Russian nor Esthonian by race, but Germanic "Balts," German in speech, and sometimes in sympathy. And as late as the spring of 1918, after the Esthonians (a people of the same stock as the Finns, who make up the majority of the inhabitants of the country and had always done its manual work) had declared their independence, the Balt nobles, speaking as the "furthest outposts of Germanic civilization in the East," begged Emperor William to free them from the "Russian yoke, already a century old," and signed themselves "Your Majesty's very humble, very obedient, and very faithful, Esthonian Noblesse."

In the country are the estates from which they drew their incomes—most of these Balts lived on their estates the greater part of the year and were intelligent farmers—estates handed down, not necessarily in a direct line, of course, from the days when the Knights of the Sword, in their white mantles with red crosses, conquered or bought these lands for the Church, or for themselves. Sixty per cent of the land was theirs before the war, although their families made up only about seven per cent of the population. Until the middle of the last century all the countryside was in the hands of these large land-owners. The Esthonians themselves made up about ninety per cent of the

A View of Old Reval, from the Sea

Early Winter in Reval



people, and they, serfs until 1811-19, and most of them peasants ever since, did the work on those estates.

It is they, the third element in this tangle of forces, who now hold the whip hand in Esthonia,—men and women whose grandfathers were peasants, who are, perhaps, peasants still. Since their release from serfdom (a full half-century, as the Balts point out, before the serfs were freed in Russia proper) they have developed an intellegentsia and small bourgeoisie—folks with the suspicion and stubbornness of those long oppressed, as well as the fresh energy and ambition of those newly arrived, or hoping to arrive tomorrow. With them grew a sense of nationality, and when the political, and later, the Bolshevik revolution, snapped all the old Russian ties, their smouldering discontent burst into a hot flame of national consciousness.

LAUNCHING THE NEW STATE

In the half century before the war, the local rule of the Balts had been a good deal shaken by an aggressive Russification of the Baltic provinces. Originally the Balts, under the Russian Governor-Generals, in the three provinces of Esthonia, Livonia and Courland, had run things pretty much as they wished. The Diets, representing the Corporation of Balt Nobility, ruled the land, and the Town Councils, consisting largely of Balts, ruled the towns. In return the Balts were loyal and efficient servants of the Tsar. A Baron Schilling, for instance, was Assistant Foreign Minister, in 1916, under Sazonov. Prince Lieven, whose estates were in Livonia and Courland—the provinces southwest of Esthonia—and whose regiment

was brigaded with the anti-Bolshevik army of Judenitch in 1919, began his career, as did so many of these young Balt nobles, in the Russian Corps des Pages. Names like Rosen, Manteuffel, Keyserling and Pahlen, were common in the Russian Diplomatic Service and at the Imperial Court. Some of these Balts had estates in Russia as well as in the Baltic Provinces, and time, association and intermarriage had developed a local type. They were, as a rule, much less stiff in their manners than their Prussian cousins, less meticulous about titles, more or less, as they say in the Baltic, *"verrusst."*

In 1867, Russian was made the official language in the Baltic Provinces, and from then on until the war there was a steady Russification. Old Balt schools were closed and Russian schools took their places; the medieval, but economical and often roughly efficient government by squires, gave way to the regular Russian bureaucracy. The old Balt university at Dorpat was closed. And there was a certain attempt to play off the Esthonian peasants against the Balts and to sharpen the former's discontent.

Until the Bolshevik revolution, however, very few Esthonians, probably, dreamed of anything more than autonomy within the Empire. Even to speak Esthonian on the streets in Reval in the old days marked one as not of the elect, and ambitious young people, feeling themselves looked down on and discriminated against, were likely to go abroad. This tended to make the educated class among the Esthonians smaller than it must inevitably be, although measured by the

mere ability to read and write the Esthonian peasants were much better "educated" than the Russians.

In 1917, after the political revolution, the Miliukov-Kerensky Provisional Government granted Esthonia, including a northern belt of what had been the province of Livonia, a wide autonomy with a Provisional Council as the supreme local power. After the Bolshevik coup d'état, in November of that year, this Council, elected by universal suffrage and regarding itself as the legal government, declared Esthonia independent. Before this independence could become established, the Bolshevik wave, rolling in from Russia, and rising among the Russian troops in the little country itself, made it temporarily impossible for the Council to act, or for the Constituent Assembly to be held, and the Council retired to Stockholm.

The Balts, meanwhile, threatened in their ancient security by Esthonian nationalism scarcely less than by Russian Bolshevism, asserted that the Capitulations of 1710 with Peter the Great and the stipulations of the Treaty of Nystadt in 1721 made them the only legal authority in Esthonia, declared an independence of their own, so to speak, and asked Germany and the Soviet Government to recognize it. In reply to the protest of the Council that the Barons had no right thus to speak for the people, Great Britain and France recognized provisionally the Constituent Assembly (for which the exiled Council stood) as a *de facto* independent body pending the final decision of the Peace Congress, and the English note added that

Great Britain "would not recognize any settlement contrary to the principle of self-determination."

The Germans, in February 1918, entered Esthonia and took possession of it. What happened is variously reported. The Esthonians assert that they themselves ousted the Bolsheviki and established order before the Germans came. The Balts generally will tell you that the Germans saved Esthonia, and that it was only after the approaching German troops had frightened the Bolsheviks away that the canny Esthonians, in the interval between the departure of the one and the arrival of the other, hastily organized a provisional government. The knowledge that the Germans were on the way, must at any rate, here as in Finland, have weakened the Bolshevik morale.

At the end they fled, apparently in mad haste, blowing up forts which had cost millions and sailing away in their warships without firing a shot. Stories are told of how German cyclists pushing on the heels of retreating Bolsheviks, ordered sailors who were hurrying supplies off to the fleet to bring the stuff back to shore, and of how the Russians obediently did so, and then paddled off to their mute battleships. The elaborate fortifications on Wulf and Nargen Islands were blown up, and east of Reval scores of miles of trenches cut through the rock which lies here just below the surface soil, concrete magazines and *abri,* macadam roads of no use whatever except to haul big guns over—millions of dollars worth of work which had never done anybody any good (and for which French bondholders had doubtless partly paid) were left without a tear.

The exiled Council again addressed the Allies, and in May, 1918, Great Britain and France re-affirmed their provisional recognition and also received diplomatic representatives from the Esthonian Provisional Government. To further protests against Germany's apparent intention to annex Esthonia, Great Britain replied in September that neither Germany nor the Soviet Government had any right to dispose of the Esthonian people; that Great Britain was "in full sympathy with their national aspirations" and "entirely opposed to any attempt to impose on Esthonia, either during or after the war, a government which would not be in accordance with the desires of her population or which would limit her claim to self-determination." The United States took no official notice of Esthonia but the declarations of President Wilson and the Fourteen Points were regarded as support almost as concrete as these definite statements of the other Allies.

On the signing of the Armistice the Esthonian Provisional Government resumed active power, with Mr. Paets, an Esthonian banker and landowner, and the leader of the exiled National Council, as Premier. With the retirement of the Germans, however, the Russian Bolsheviks again invaded Esthonia, and this time the Esthonians had to depend on themselves. The stubbornness with which they defended themselves during the succeeding year and their comparative success in putting their own house in order, meanwhile, showed capacity for teamwork and considerable political sense.

There was a lack of everything, but they contrived to get an army together, nevertheless. They fished

breech-blocks out of the bay where the Germans had thrown them, they got some old cannon, a few machine-guns and five thousand rifles from the Finns and hired some 2,000 Finnish volunteers to come over and help them. England sent munitions and a fleet strong enough to keep the Bolshevik ships close to Kronstadt. The Balts themselves cooperated and raised a regiment of 700 men which all through the next year fought side by side with the Esthonians. Finally, the Northern Russian Corps (later known as Judenitch's Northwest Army) joined in, and with these forces, all available Esthonian man-power, and the skill of the Esthonian Commander, General Laidoner, the Bolsheviks (peace was not finally made until early in 1920) were driven across the frontier.

With a good part of the man-power at the front, fighting still going on and economic conditions demoralized, the elections to the Constituent Assembly, on a basis of universal, equal suffrage took place in April, 1919. They showed a decided drift toward the Left. The Social Democrats led, with 41 delegates, and altogether 78 radical representatives were returned as against 42 from the more conservative parties. The make up of the almost Socialistic Assembly was as follows:

	Delegates
Social Democrats	41
Labor Party (radical bourgeois)	30
Social Revolutionists (In Esthonia, extreme radical)	7
Peoples Party (middle-ground bourgeois)	25

Agrarian Party (Esthonian land-owners and conservative bourgeois)	8
Christian Peoples Party (Protestant Clerical)	5
German Party (Balts)	3
Russian Party	1

The leaders in the original independence movement had been, like those who headed the political revolution in Russia, itself, comparatively "bourgeois." The President of the Council, Mr. Paets, was himself an estate-owner, although an Esthonian, and head of one of the Reval banks. The Agrarian Party to which he belonged, which included not only estate-owners but a good many of the more experienced Esthonian business men, returned only 8 delegates to the Constituent Assembly. Mr. Paets was not included in the new Ministry and in the rapid drift toward radicalism, he disappeared for the moment as an active force in Esthonian politics.

This drift toward the Left, very natural anywhere as the second phase of revolution, was more than usually inevitable in Esthonia. The inexperienced Esthonian statesmen—and stateswomen, for there were six women delegates in the Constituent Assembly—took over a country swept bare of nearly every solid thing, from mowing machines and cigarettes, to a settled frame of mind. Successive raids and requisitions had taken horses, machinery and food, and there was not even seed for the 1919 sowing until the A. R. A. dragged a little from the Danes, and even part of that arrived too late. Trade had stopped, factories were closed, the country had no credit and

no present means of getting any. What few exports could be raked and scraped together had to pay for munitions to fight the Bolsheviks. Money consisted of scraps of paper of various colors and sizes, brand new Esthonian bills printed by the Finns and worth nothing outside Esthonia; tattered "Ost-marks" left by the Germans; promises to pay issued by the Judenitch army and dependent for their value on the taking of Petrograd; even the kopeck stamps used for small change in Russia. Coin had completely disappeared, and when I gave a Reval waiter a little Swedish tenpenny piece (about two and a half cents) he kissed it reverently before dropping it in his waistcoat pocket.

Close by were the Russian Bolsheviks, and still closer their agents or their Esthonian comrades, promising the millenium and urging Esthonian workers and peasants to throw off their "capitalist exploiters and oppressors." Far away in the West were the Allies, sending little concrete help, seeming to forget the struggling people whose independence they had encouraged, or remembering them only, so it struck the Esthonians, as convenient cannon fodder for their uncertain, shifting, but never-ending war on Soviet Russia.

The exchange of notes between the "Big Five" in Paris and Kolchak in Omsk, in June, 1919, and the statement of the former that Kolchak's reply contained "satisfactory assurances for the freedom and self-government of the Russian people and their neighbors," seemed to the Esthonians practically to leave them to the doubtful generosity of some future counter-revolutionary government. During all that

summer it was feared, and not without reason, that if the Judenitch army ever did take Petrograd, it would not be long in turning against the Esthonians themselves. And when the Baltic winter closed down again, with the Judenitch army routed, economic conditions still desperate, Allied policy toward Russia still vague and the Bolsheviks threatening, it was plain that if any reasonable offer of peace were made, the Esthonians must accept.

The radical demands encouraged by this politico-military situation, by economic distress, and the underlying social and agrarian character of the independence-movement, centered on the land. The parcelling and distribution of the baronial estates was the main pre-occupation all that summer of 1919, while the Bolsheviks were being fought along the Narva-Pskov front and the Constitution passed.

Mr. Paets was one of a small group of Esthonians who might have served as a bridge between his own people and the hated barons. While believing with everybody else, the Balts included, that the land should be more widely distributed, he thought that this should be done gradually and with compensation, and that the trained intelligence and administrative experience of the old aristocracy should not be lost. Those who succeeded him were of another way of thinking. Although mild conservatives like Tonnison held back and protested, the land program grew more and more radical, and finally, in the late autumn, a law was passed giving the Government the right practically to confiscate all except peasant farms. There was

theoretical compensation—the subject will be discussed in detail in a later chapter—but it was so small as to amount to almost nothing.

How much this "land-hunger" was due to actual need of land, and how much it was made up of ancient grudges, the propaganda of city agitators, and the hot breath of revolt blowing all over Europe, may be a question; the demand, at any rate, was real. Time pressed, the Esthonian majority felt. None could tell how long this chance, which, a few years ago, nobody could have dreamed of, would last—the chance to depose the barons, and build up a nation of small proprietors. Moreover, something had to be done at once to "meet the competition" of Soviet Russia. What took place in Esthonia under the cover of legal forms, was a social revolution only somewhat less complete than that which had taken place in Russia itself.

TYPES FROM BOTH CAMPS

A true picture of the state of things existing in Esthonia in the summer of 1919 cannot he had, however, if one assumes that the type of person who approves of seizure of property without compensation is the wild-eyed, homicidal Bolshevik so often depicted in the West. A more calm and disarming pair of blue eyes than those of Mme. Ostra, one of the Social Democratic members of the Assembly who was for taking the barons' estates without compensation, one would not ask the privilege of looking into. They were the blue sky itself. With her strong simple features, blonde hair combed back from a wide, intelli-

gent brow, one might fancy her some peasant Joan of Arc, fresh risen from the fields to fight the people's battle. She was, as a matter of fact, an "intellectual" and revolutionist of considerable experience, with her prison years in Siberia—a sort of honorary degree in the old Russian days—and a picturesque escape, including a fictitious marriage in Moscow to get the necessary passport. Her present husband was Mr. Oinas, Esthonian Minister of Interior in 1919, although she was generally spoken of by her maiden name.

I found Mme. Ostra after considerable wandering among the twisting side streets of Reval—most of those guiding the destinies of the new Esthonia came from the country or the side streets—and she talked about the Esthonian national spirit and their determination never to be Russian again. I remarked—this was before the law passed—that confiscation of the estates would be a hard pill for Americans to swallow and that they might be prejudiced against the new republic and say that the Esthonians were mere Bolsheviks. She knew that, she said, but the feeling of the mass of the people was so intense that if they were to announce now that the estates must be paid for, that the people, already just keeping their heads above water, must mortgage their future and give the barons the ready means to continue their fight—it was doubtful if they could hold them back. They might, indeed, go Bolshevik.

A more conservative Esthonian to whom I repeated this remark said that it might well be true, and she

and her party were to blame, for they had made their campaign on a program of promises bound to make trouble in the end.

Mrs. Oletz, a thoughtful-looking young woman with wavy hair cut short in the Russian or Greenwich Village style, was also a member of the Social Democratic Group in the Assembly. She spoke in English (German was the usual foreign language of most Esthonians, in addition, of course, to Russian) and mentioned Mrs. Pankhurst, and I was told later that she had spent some time in England, among those gathered about Prince Kropotkin.

Mr. Martna, another of the Social-Democratic Assemblymen, author of a book on the agrarian question, and one of the delegates just then back from Paris, seemed more doctrinaire than his two women associates and opposed compensation as inconsistent with the general international program of the Social Democrats. The peasants would be helplessly tied to capitalism, he said. He quoted figures to prove the ingenious theory that by excessive labor, unjust rent and interest, and other charges, the peasants had already paid for the land long ago. He talked with dizzy fluency of the economic possibilities of an independent Esthonia, and suggested the sanguine pamphleteer rather than practical business man. Mr. Martna thought that Esthonia, which is larger than Denmark, Holland or Belgium, would be as rich a country as Denmark in another twenty years.

In this connection it might be observed that Esthonia is a moderately fertile agricultural country

about the size of Massachusetts. The round granite rocks of Finland's coast gives way across the Gulf to sandy beaches, and behind them is a pleasant forest and farming land, improving in fertility as one proceeds southward. In so-called normal times, Esthonia exported flax, wood-pulp, butter, potatoes, cement, paper and a great deal of alcohol made from potatoes. Esthonia is sometimes called the Potato Republic, and a distillery for turning these potatoes into spirits is as much a part of the furniture of the typical Esthonian estates as is the silo of our Middle West. There are large cotton mills at Narva, the seaport closest to Petrograd, and in peace times cotton was manufactured here chiefly for sale in the interior of Russia. At Reval, a city of about 150,000 people before the war, there are docks and shipbuilding plants, paper, cotton, and furniture mills. Other Esthonian ports are Narva, Pernau, Baltic Port and Hapsal. While these ports are not as indispensable to Russia as Riga and Libau in Latvia, they are doors to Europe nevertheless. According to Esthonian figures, Russia took from Esthonia in revenues in 1912 more than $40,000,000 and spent on administration nearly $20,000,000 less. Esthonia was, in short, one of the Russian provinces which is said to have a good deal more than paid its own way, and this is a fact on which Esthonians rely in looking to the future.

At tea one afternoon, at the same time that I was making the acquaintence of some of the Esthonian Social Democrats, I met one of the Balt barons, a sprightly and amusing gentleman, who arranged an

excursion for the following Sunday to some of the nearby estates. He, himself, was not a land-owner, but had served as an officer in the old Russian navy, and we were accompanied, when Sunday came, by a young man who had fought with the Russians, been a prisoner two years in Germany, and was now acting as Secretary for the Esthonian nobles.

We took a narrow-gauge road for a couple of hours out into the country, breakfasted on black bread, boiled eggs and milk at a peasant cottage (the poor woman spent half an hour scouring her knives and forks before she thought them fit for such exalted guests) and then started tramping through the fields. The baron made a point of gossiping at length with all the peasants we met—"he knows just how to talk to them!" confided the young secretary—and the farmers gossipped back, complaining volubly of the weather, prices and life in general. The secretary explained that peasants always complained, but that secretly, as a matter of fact, they were all rich.

Once, when we tried to get some lunch, the facile baron seemed to have met his match. We had come to the cottage of a well-to-do peasant and a young woman under a tree ironing a summer dress. At the baron's request for bread and milk, the girl merely shrugged her shoulders indifferently. They had sent all their milk away, she said pointing to a barefooted girl with a pail disappearing through the woods. To his suggestions of payment she replied that they had all the money they needed. Things seemed hopeless until the baron suddenly bethought him that a maid-servant of theirs in town came from this neighbor-

hood. He mentioned her name—it was the girl's own sister!

Whether blood was thicker than wit, or she became aware for the first time who her visitor was, her manner changed instantly. She giggled and covered up her mouth as if fearful lest we might see within it, did a sort of courtesy, first on one foot and then on the other, ran into the house, and in no time we were sitting at a table under a tree, with bread and eggs and a big bowl of milk in the center. The baron's spirits revived instantly, and he pointed out how natural and peaceful it all was, how busy and contented the family were—after all, this was real living.

And so, presently, we came to the gate and the tree-bordered drive leading to the manor-house of Prince Volkonsky. The Prince's family is an ancient one and he had other estates in the Ukraine. Russian in name, his blonde hair and blue eyes suggested a strain of German blood, and through his wife, who brought him this Esthonian estate, he was connected with one of the old Balt families. A relative of his wife, a famous Chief of Police under the former Tsars, was buried here in the family plot, on a shaded hill-side overlooking the sea.

The estate—the Esthonians took it a year later—was not run as a practical farm, but used merely as a sort of secluded Garden of Eden for the Prince and his large family of children. They were all out working in the garden, the major-domo said, when we presented ourselves, and there we found them, indeed, the Prince, very fresh and tanned and healthy

looking; bareheaded, in flannels and tennis shirt, quite like any New York suburbanite playing among his radishes on a sunny Sunday morning. One of his sons, a tall, handsome boy in Russian peasant blouse and big Russian boots, came up, whacked his heels and shook hands.

After arranging to come back for tea, we took a walk through the park and hot-houses, past the mill and over the water-fall, and as we walked the baron gossipped about Volkonsky and his family. He had been criticized in Petrograd early in the war for talking German. "I am the Prince Volkonsky," he replied, "and I talk what language pleases me!" Very neat, the baron thought. An elderly princess of the same family refused to leave Petrograd now in spite of the dangers and discomforts of life there, because she couldn't travel in a special car as of yore. Volkonsky would not permit any of his sons to join the Balt regiment because he did not think it suitable for a prince's son to be fighting Bolsheviks.

One might have expected, perhaps, from such antecedents, to find the Prince a crustaceous old bird, as truculent as an editorial in some reactionary Prussian newspaper. As a matter of fact, a more modest, unassuming, hospitable and likeable gentleman you could not imagine, living a similar life at home, with his family and garden. He showed us all over his two houses, one of which the Bolsheviks had pretty well smashed—statues, vases, china; blotting out the eyes of a marble Venus with ink, scribbling a mis-spelled "*sveboda*" (freedom) on one of the walls. The other was full of books and old paintings and old furniture,

and portraits of court beauties and quaint souvenirs—an account, for instance, of the travelling expenses of the royal party during one of the former Tsar's visits to these parts years ago. A comfortable old house, set low on the ground, with an air of having been long and pleasantly lived in.

The almost shy solicitude with which the Prince showed us about and had us write in the big guest book where Kaiser Wilhelm and other notables had already written, and apologized for his tea (for even he had no sugar, and "when shall we ever get jam from Scotland again!" he sighed) was as charming as could be. The great event of the afternoon was the arrival, from Reval, by hand, of half a sack of American flour from one of our relief ships there. Everybody ran out to inspect it and see that it was really white, and to smell of it and taste it and be sure that it was real. When we left the Prince had his two remaining horses hitched up to take us to the station; thin, angular brutes,—"like Don Quixote's Rosinante!" laughed Volkonsky.

In short, even Balt barons are people, and while on anything that touched his sense of prerogative, of what he regarded as his own rights or the duties of inferiors, he might have been difficult, as a human being among his friends he was like any other simple country gentleman.

The estate of Baron Stackleberg—Esthonia is full of Stacklebergs—a few miles away, was of another sort, a practical dairy farm, carefully managed by the late baron to yield an income. An enormous amount of work and money had gone into it, for these

lands along the coast are as bleak as New England, and one had but to look at the country roundabout to realize that generations of patient and intelligent cultivation had put these shaded drives and rich meadows on what was scarcely more than a skin of soil on top of rock.

Before the war the estate had had a herd of several hundred dairy cows and supplied a considerable portion of Reval with butter and milk. Most of the cows had been requisitioned by one side or another, and the Government had already taken over most of the estate on the ground that it was not being sufficiently worked; but they were still sending enough to Reval so that the manor house and the buildings immediately around it had been left and here the Baron's widow was still living.

The late baron had been very proud, so my guide said. He had affected a tall gray "cylinder"—"like an English lord," and declined to take it off for anybody. Whereas Volkonsky would return a peasant's salute from a quarter of a mile away, Stackleberg would simply stare straight ahead. *"Chacun à sa methode!"* observed the baron, sententiously. Stackleberg had also been a mighty hunter and he had a big book in which he kept a careful record of everything he killed. Of foxes, which are shot here instead of being hunted cross country, he had destroyed enormous numbers.

The present mistress of the big house—rather more in the formal palace style than Volkonsky's rambling villa—was a self-contained, rather sad-looking lady, who received us graciously, apologized for the bare

rooms, from which two Bolshevik raids had stripped nearly everything, and soon had a little maid-servant bringing coffee. She had no sugar, either, and helped us from her own little private box of saccharine. Even in the best of times being a baron on those bleak coast lands was not the lotus-eating existence one might imagine. The average American millionaire would scarcely find such simple living tolerable.

During the first visit of the Bolsheviks, she said, when a Commissaire had taken up quarters in the house, she had stayed. But the second time, though her intellect told her to stay, her "heart and soul," as she put it, urged her to run. It was just as well, perhaps, for from what they learned afterward, that time, she thought, they would all have been murdered. I asked if they had been accustomed to live on the estate in the old days and she said they spent practically all their time in the country, only going into Reval for a few weeks in the winter "so that the gentlemen could pay the bills and the ladies go to balls." They were practical farmers, and she wondered how the plan of small holdings would work out in Esthonia—for the present, at least, with machinery and animals so scarce, it must necessarily cut down production. It had been the big places, worked with a certain economy in machinery and horses, which heretofore had supplied a surplus for the towns and for export. They had all thought, she said, for years, that something should be done toward a wider distribution of the land and several suggestions had been made, but the Russian Government, which had done everything it could to make friction between Balts and Esthonians, playing them

off against each other, had put through nothing. They were ready now to sell a third of their property at a reasonable price, and if that amount of land were sold from any considerable portion of the estates, it would supply all the land that was needed, or at any rate, that could be worked.

The Baroness Stackleberg seemed a reasonable and practical as well as cultured woman, and one could not listen to her without feeling that the destruction of the estates and of a whole class of proprietors, many of whom were intelligent farmers, would mean more than a merely sentimental loss. To build up places like this, almost as much had been put into the land as was taken out of it. The young generation of Esthonians would flock toward the towns, doubtless, here as elsewhere—how many of those demanding land would actually go to work to farm it once the estates were broken up? The Balt squires really lived on the land and loved it and had a tradition as well as a selfish interest in good farming. And whatever social benefits might result from a wider distribution, the capital and leadership they supplied were not going to be created over night.

There is something to be said, in short, for each side of the Esthonian triangle. The argument of the Russian nationalists that Esthonia, because of its ports and its position on the Gulf of Finland, must remain Russian, is stronger here than it was in Finland—would be unanswerable, indeed, if Esthonian independence meant shutting off the greater nation from the sea. The Esthonians forsee this, naturally, and ex-

plain that they have no intention of bottling Russia up; that their ports will be free, that Russia might even have their own customs zones within them, and that so far as trade goes, the new republic would be merely so much territory to cross. Plausible as this may sound, its practical working out, human nature and nationalistic prejudices being what they are, would be anything but easy.

The legal case of the Balts is even more clear. While their remote ancestors may have taken land from the natives as ruthlessly as we ourselves took land from the Indians, the present generation of owners acquired title by actual purchase in good faith, or inheritance through generations of unquestioned ownership. They can say with J. S. Mills that while the State "is at liberty to deal with landed property as the general interests of the community may require, supposing always that the full market value of the land is tendered to the landlord," without this "expropriation would be nothing better than robbery." This rule was not followed in the French Revolution; it was not followed in Russia; nor is it being followed in much of eastern Europe to-day.

If, however, one's human sympathy goes to the Balts, as a personally innocent aristocracy ruined by revolution, what might be called one's political sympathy must be largely yielded to the Esthonian majority and their natural desire for self-government. They were encouraged to assert their independence at a time when they could be useful to the Allies, and they feel they have paid for recognition not only by organizing a government but by their blood. It may be that guar-

anteed autonomy within a great Russia, may seem eventually the most expedient solution for all concerned, and it is quite possible to foreshadow some such arrangement while meanwhile recognizing the independence of a state which must look out for itself for the present and for an indefinite time to come. Whatever the final solution, Russia must accept the fact of Esthonian nationality; the Balts come down from their lofty Domberg, and Esthonia become part of the modern world.

CHAPTER V

WAR AND PEACE WITH THE BOLSHEVIKS

THIS local drama of the land was played, it should be recalled, against a wider background of Russian Bolshevism. The Esthonia in which a peasant majority was struggling for footing and an aristocracy suddenly finding the ground literally cut from under its feet, was, in the Allied strategy of the moment, merely one link in a "sanitary cordon" around Soviet Russia. All through the summer of 1919, while the agrarian law was being threshed out in the Assembly and estates being taken over by the Government, the Esthonians were fighting the Bolsheviks on a front extending all the way from Narva to Pskov, and the law was finally passed just as the anti-Bolshevik army of the Russian General Judenitch, which had fought with the Esthonians, was being flung back from Petrograd.

The Russian "White" armies faded away one by one, but they were real enough to the thousands who went forward to kill and be killed. The Northwest Army, which fought from Esthonia as a base, was doubtless typical in many ways of the others in the South and East, and one who was on the spot, and even stood on the hill at Krasnicelo looking down on Petrograd when the Judenitch force expected at any

moment to enter the capital, may perhaps be permitted to recall a bit of the atmosphere of that strange and tangled time.

Twice during that year, Judenitch's army was in the very suburbs of Petrograd. One little push more, just a moment of team-work on the part of the variegated forces in the eastern Baltic, and it seemed that Petrograd must fall.

Neither the push nor the teamwork was forthcoming. The push did not come because Judenitch did not have enough of the right kind of men or equipment, including that most useful thing, an idea for which to fight. His officers generally knew what they wanted and some of them were capable men; but his soldiers were mostly peasant conscripts from the so-called liberated neighborhoods or prisoners and deserters from the Bolshevik army itself. And these peasants, poorly equipped, had to attack other peasants, men of their own race and speech, fired with the idea of "saving the revolution" and fighting at last, as all sorts of men and animals will fight, when defending themselves in the last ditch. And when the Soviet Army actually reached the last ditch in front of Petrograd, its leaders were able to call up reinforcements from other fronts to outnumber their opponents by perhaps five to one.

The teamwork did not come because the various non-Russian peoples of the eastern Baltic were more interested in establishing their independence than in sacrificing their man power to establish a Great Russia which might turn and destroy that independence; and because the Allies, the main source of muni-

tions, were either dilatory or unable to do what their representatives on the spot wanted done, because of active opposition from their own labor parties at home.

In the resulting hodge-podge of motives, personalities, and events, horror and farce were jumbled in every quantity and degree. One could go out on the Narva front and see Bolshevik commissaires shot, or stay in Reval and see a new "democratic" Provisional Russian Government (for the purpose of placating the Esthonians by recognizing an independence which Kolchak declined to acknowledge) organized in seventeen minutes! The Esthonian woods were full of Russian peasant refugees facing a winter with nothing to eat, and the Finnish summer hotels equally crowded with soft-handed emigrées arguing as to who was the best ballet-dancer in 1913, and spoiling their digestion with chocolate and *pirozshni.*

In the Baltic, with headquarters at Reval, was a British fleet. Britain was not at war with Russia, but this did not prevent British aviators from bombarding Kronstadt, and one fine day British volunteers in motor-boats swooped down on the Bolshevik fleet hiding in the harbor there, and sank, in addition to other craft, two battleships! This really brilliant exploit—"the best show yet," as one of the returned officers told me, "better than Zeebrugge!"—might be described as a major operation, yet it was followed by nothing, and strategically seemed merely a sort of lark. Real enough, however, to the twelve young Englishmen blown to kingdom come when their motor-boats were hit directly by Bolshevik shells. And the

same England, whose naval officers thus lived up to their best tradition, solemnly transported field batteries all the way from Mourmansk to arrive without breech-blocks; sent machine-guns to Judenitch without cartridge-belts, and was constantly unable to deliver the Northwest Army what its Mission had promised because of red tape and labor troubles at home.

The quaint adventure of Mr. William Goode was characteristic of that curious and melodramatic time. Mr.—or Professor—Goode was an energetic little Englishman, with a pointed brown beard and candid blue eyes, who had spent most of his life as the principal of a young ladies seminary in the suburbs of London. He knew something of Finland and several foreign languages and was sent to the Baltic as a correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*. In August, he contrived, after many difficulties and some danger, to get through both fronts, to Moscow—where he spent a fortnight interviewing everybody in sight—and back to Reval again. All his procedure was open and above board, he had permission from both Esthonian and Soviet authorities, was passed back from one Esthonian staff to another, and lunched immediately after his arrival with most of the Esthonian Cabinet.

A few hours after this luncheon, he was taken from his hotel by the Esthonian secret police, acting at the instigation of the British Mission in Reval, and put in a prison for political prisoners. No charge was made, nor explanation given, nor chance given him to communicate with his friends. A man more easily dismayed might have remained locked up indefinitely, but the ex-school-teacher was not, as he put it, "born

an Englishman for nothing," and he promptly found means of getting messages out—one way being to drop them from a window when a mirror operated by two amiable young ladies across the street flashed the signal that the coast was clear. He thus sent scribbled appeals to everybody he knew in Reval, including the Esthonian Foreign Minister, who was naturally somewhat bewildered to find that his luncheon guest of the day before was in jail, and the result was that Mr. Goode was released.

He had a stormy interview with his own countrymen which ended with an invitation to accept a British destroyer to ferry him over to Helsingfors. Somewhat ingenuously, perhaps, Mr. Goode accepted the *beau geste,* and departed with his precious pile of notes for Finland and home. Nothing was heard of him for a week or more, when finally a wireless from the British naval base announced that "Mr. Goode, who has been conferring with Admiral Cowen on the Russian situation, is still conferring with the Admiral!"

The case had attracted some attention in Parliament, meanwhile, and about a fortnight later, Mr. Goode, minus his memoranda, was landed in England. It could be complained of him as an investigator that he was credulous, and inclined to accept radical theories and programs when these were well put, without sufficient correction from fact. It had to be admitted at the same time that he had done a plucky thing, that he was a tireless worker, with a real passion for truth as he saw it. Apparently a certain distrust was felt of what he might write were he permitted to write it, and the British authorities therefore adopted

the effective if somewhat Asiatic method of censuring, before he had committed any indiscretions, the writer himself.

The quaintest, and thoroughly British, part of this story, however, was its sequel. For custom dies hard in England itself and among the stubborn English customs is the habit of free speech. And when I came through England a few months later, the same thoughts for the assumed harboring of which Mr. Goode was cast into a dungeon in Reval, were being delivered by him in almost nightly addresses in various parts of England. I heard him speak at Holborn Hall —mildly and objectively enough—on the same platform with a labor-leader and a member of Parliament. The latter prophesied that Lenin and Trotzky would be received one day in the streets of London as the representatives of a recognized government just as surely as they had recently received President Poincaré. The labor leader said that this was all very well, but that he would add that the time was not far distant when the President of the British Soviet Republic would be received with similar hospitality in the streets of Moscow! There were no policemen, as far as one could see, in or about the hall. The audience received these observations with satisfaction, sang a song or two and went home.

THE "WHITE" DRIVE ON PETROGRAD

The Judenitch army, starting out as the Russian Northern Corps under the Esthonian high command, became, after the Bolsheviks were driven east of Narva and the Esthonian border, the separate Russian

Northwest Army. It was supposed to contain about 26,000 men. General Judenitch, a fiercely-moustached relic of the old régime (he had commanded at one time on the Caucasus front) remained in the rear at Helsingfors or Reval. The actual commander in the field was Major-General Rodzianko, a relative of the big Rodzianko who used to preside over the Imperial Duma. The A. R. A. was sending food to the "liberated" districts as well as to the Northwest Army itself and it was with a party of A. R. A. officers that I first went on a tour of the Narva-Pskov front.

We drove along the coast road to Narva and thence, across the frontier a little way to Jamburg. Peasant refugees were shuffling westward through the main street, driving their pigs and cattle before them, and the clean woods on both sides of the town were full of their gypsy-like camps. While watching the pigs poke rearward under our window, I chatted with a pleasant young officer who had served in a Tcherkass regiment—troops like those on which Kornilov depended in his unfortunate adventure against Petrograd in the autumn of 1917. I mentioned Kornilov and Kerensky.

"Bah!—that Kerensky!" he muttered, in evident disgust.

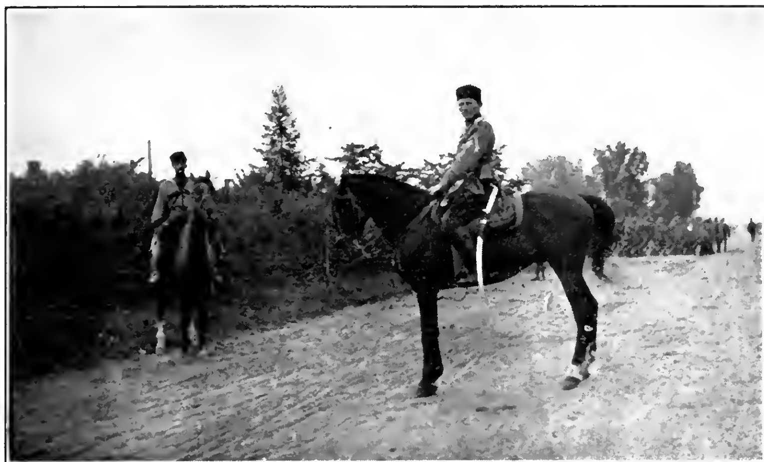
I asked about their men—did they have anti-Bolshevik convictions, or were they merely fighting for something to eat? They began he said, with a notion that "things weren't good" under the Bolsheviks; their officers kept talking to them,—well, you might say they did have convictions now. About a fortnight later, the Bolsheviks retook Jamburg. The refugees went, some one way, some another, as seemed to them

best. The brand-new American soup-kitchens, for the children of the neighborhood, were abandoned. And of the convinced soldiers, some hundreds, according to the Russians, several thousands according to the Esthonians, went over bag and baggage to the Bolsheviks.

A little beyond Jamburg and to the south was Rodzianko's headquarters. The group which came out of the farmhouse to greet us might have stepped from any smart Guard regiment of the old days—picturesque young aristocrats with vivid Russian faces, charming manners, and that air so many young Russians of their class had, of something dashing and brave and yet not quite serious—as if next minute they might all be going to paint pictures or play the piano.

There was much heel-clicking and saluting, all done with a certain half-smiling air of detachment, like that of virtuosos playing a game they knew well, for the pleasure of playing it. Delightful companions; ready, no doubt, to charge batteries as Russian officers did in the early days of the war, like knights in a tournament; and facing with the same amount of understanding the wild forces loose in their Russian world and the fanatic seriousness on the other side of the barricade. Most of them, or so it seemed, were still living in the Russia of 1914, and had learned and forgotten nothing.

From Narva we drove southward—in Russia now —through Gdov and on along the shore of Lake Paipus to Pskov. The country was surprisingly rich and well cultivated; the peasants were celebrating a church holiday and dancing on the green; there was



Belakhovitch, a Russian Guerilla Leader [*Page 96*]

Peasant Refugees Shuffling Through Jamburg, Driving Their Pigs and Cattle Before Them

little to show that the Bolsheviks had held the neighborhood until a few weeks before and were soon to hold it again, or that the human life all about, which seemed so thoughtless, quiet and kind, was worth, if it collided with the fears or hatreds of either of the enemy forces, quite nothing at all.

Any officer captured by the Bolsheviks, any Commissaire, or known Communist captured by the Whites, might expect to be shot out of hand. "The most beautiful woman in Gdov," so they told us as we went through, had been hanged a few days before by Belakhovitch, an adventurer-commander on the White side, accused of giving to the Bolsheviks the names of former Russian officers living in the neighborhood. The procedure here, if somewhat less thoroughgoing, was doubtless similar to that described by a young officer who came up to Reval from the Denikin front.

All Bolshevik Commissaires, Letts, Finns, Chinamen and former Russian sailors, he said, were shot or hanged. This was partly because they were thought better out of the way, partly because they had no spare troops to guard them. His father, a rich landowner, and his two brothers had been killed by Bolsheviks, he said. He knew the men responsible, and sooner or later would kill them himself. He had been an officer in the Russian Baltic fleet, where the sailors murdered a good many of their officers in 1917, and the mere sight of a sailor now made him see red. He had gone into a barber shop in Reval and caught sight of a Russian sailor getting his hair cut,—he saw only the back of the man's neck, but that bit of flesh made his

fingers itch so that he left the shop lest he should try there and then to kill the man. He had run across one of his old friends in Reval and the latter had said that he was almost afraid Denikin would take Moscow, and then there would be nobody left for them to fight. Speaking of the possible use of volunteer German troops to beat the Bolsheviks, he said that the unfortunate result of that would be that while the Bolsheviks were being put down many people would be murdered and robbed and then the people would say that the capitalists had brought in foreigners to crush them. There must be a lot of murdering and robbing, of course, but Russians had better do it themselves—it would be better in the end. As for Russia itself, after the Bolsheviks were disposed of, they would merely go back a few generations and restore a condition of serfdom—not in so many words, perhaps, but as a matter of fact.

The young man who said these things, not noisily nor with an air of showing off, but quite quietly, across a cozy tea-table, at five o'clock in the afternoon, to two ladies and myself, was a handsome youngster, with a compact, athletic-looking body and a face and manners that seemed to show generations of gentle breeding. He looked a capable man as well as a gentleman,—one of those on whom one ought to be able to depend to do something to bridge over the chasm between his own class and those in power.

There were many like him in the anti-Bolshevik armies,—fine young fellows, naturally, the flower of the old army or what was left of it, so obsessed with that peculiar mixture of fear and hate which class-war

produces that it was hard to see how they could ever be fitted into any comparatively peaceful work of re-adjustment and reconstruction. Possibly nothing could be done, and in Russia, where assassination had so long been a means of argument, what began in blood must end in blood. But no one who knew what counter-revolution meant in Finland would leave untried any chance, even the longest, to avoid it.

Toward sundown we came to Pskov, the shabby streets of which were brightened with samples, it seemed, of every uniform in the old Russian army. We were put up at the house of a retired Colonel, whose daughter under the steely glare of her fiancé, played melancholy Russian romances on the piano for us, and as we ate the supper we had brought with us (for the A. R. A had more food to spare than anybody else) we could look out across the river to two amiable herds of bathers, men in one crowd, women a stone's throw away in another, all in the costumes of Eden, in the Arcadian Russian fashion. The next morning two of us took a swim ourselves before breakfast. The broad river was a mirror; upstream, in a bend, against a background of open green meadows, lay a snow-white Russian church or monastery, with its gay little sky-blue domes—and the peace and fantastic beauty back of it brought back the old sentimental Russia that Stephen Graham used to write about. It really did exist—at least in the subjective sense that New York sky-scrapers become cathedrals in the last light of a Jersey sunset.

After breakfast we drove out to call on the much-

talked-of General Belakhovitch, commander of this sector just north of Pskov. A private soldier in 1914, later the commander of a rough-riding troop used for harrying German communications, he had fought in the Soviet Army and later gone over to the anti-Bolshevik forces with a good many of his men. Half-patriot, half-bandit, he was another type altogether from the old-school officers already mentioned, and in some ways more useful. He had dash and instinct for handling men, got more out of the latter, and got along better with the Esthonians.

Hopping into our motor, he whirled us along the edges of his extremely informal "front." Coming on a herd of reserves loafing by the roadside, he was out of the car with a bound and a cry of *"Zdarovo molodzie!*—Good morning, Boys!" to which the men bellowed a grinning *"Zdrave zhlaem!"* and hastily fell in. Laughing one moment, rapping out a sharp command the next, asking questions and giving rapid-fire and blood-curdling advice as to what to do to the "Reds," he had his good-natured Russians on their toes every second he was there.

Once, after motoring down an unprotected chaussée in the bright sunshine to some outposts, we asked where the Bolshevik line might be. "Right there!" said Belakhovitch, pointing to a speck of a man not more than three-quarters of a mile away. We might easily have been picked off with rifles, and before we got away a shell or two did come whistling over our heads.

"For us!" cried Belakhovitch, evidently greatly pleased. At another place the Bolsheviks neatly timed

the motor's passage through the woods and landed half a dozen three-inch shells in quick succession uncomfortably close to us, as we came into a clearing. Belakhovitch chatted gaily of his success in drumming up deserters, and the most capable-looking officer we saw that day—a regular army cavalry Colonel, had come over recently he said, after negotiating several weeks.

As we started back toward Pskov this remarkable person jumped on his horse and tried to race the automobile. For a time he actually did so, standing in his stirrups in true circus style, looking back, now over one shoulder, now over another, saluting passing officers in magnificent style, although our speedometer showed 35 miles an hour. As he seemed quite ready to kill his horse rather than be overtaken, we finally slowed down and let him have his way. Nothing at all, he cried, as we came up—that horse could do 120 verts (about 75 miles) without a whimper!

Belakhovitch's superior, General Arseniev, a polished Guard's officer and comrade of General Mannerheim of Finland, had no love for his subordinate and at one time both these officers were trying to arrest each other. Not long after, indeed, Belakhovitch's chief of staff was arrested, charged with counterfeiting and trying to sell out to the Bolsheviks and "shot while trying to escape." Belakhovitch fled for safety to the Esthonians, later went to Lithuania and in 1920 was again in the field as commander of another "White" army which Savinkov, Assistant Minister of War in the Kerensky time, organized on the Polish front.

We left Pskov after lunch and started northwest-

ward across Esthonia for Reval. All afternoon it rained, a steady, round-the-horizon downpour, that pelted the streaming windshield and side-curtains, threshed across the bending fields of rye, and filled the air with freshness and a curious sense of peace. It was as if Mother Earth were trying to wash away the wickedness of her foolish children.

We met no one but peasants, and their cradle-shaped wagons and little Esthonian horses, all with their home-made look, and air of being unlike our noisy chariot, a part of the world about them, and quite naturally growing there. Women and girls, barefooted, carrying their shoes when they had any, or merely barefooted with no shoes at all, pattered by as regardless of the rain as their own sheep, or as the nodding rye itself.

The motor, drumming through the mud, came like a meteor into this Arcadian world. Children bolted like rabbits; once a woman, associating automobiles doubtless with requisitions, grabbed a child with one hand while with the other she flung shut the barn door. The sheep waited until the last moment, then wheeled and fled in a body; theirs a perfect democracy, or even dictature of the proletariat. Cows were more individualistic, and sometimes disdained to notice us altogether; horses likewise, although generally they were terrified.

The light peasant wagons showed themselves as practical for this as for many other emergencies. A ditch ran on either side of the road and the horses generally dove into it and out again, or jumped it altogether, leaving the wagon to take care of itself.

The fore-wheels dropped into the ditch and stuck there, with the rear wheels still in the road and the horse prancing on the opposite bank; or the whole outfit bumped into and out of the ditch and on across the field, the loosely jointed little contrivance none the worse for the adventure. Sometimes there was an upset. The peasant and his wife simply rolled off, boosted the wagon on its wheels again, and no harm was done. Often, seeing us in time, the woman driver slid off her load and covered her horse's eyes with her skirt or the flats of her hands, laughing at us the while as if she were playing with a rather unusually big sheep-dog.

Everything in that wet and fragrant countryside; the little drab houses and little drab horses and wagons, the subdued colors and lack of hurry and stress, belonged to a world in which steam and machinery had scarcely entered as yet; where there were almost no strange, extra-human forces, nor things that man could not control with his bare hands. After hours of drumming through it, always hemmed in by soft gray curtains of rain, one became a part of it, in a way, and caught something of what must have been in Tolstoi's thoughts, when, after a life in cities and the army, among such polished officers as we had seen the day before, he "went back to the peasants." The motor car and all our heavy and elaborate trappings for keeping out the rain began to seem absurd and unreal, and one looked with envy on the peasant girls, splashing along with a wisp of something over their shoulders or nothing at all, and turning their faces to the rain as calm and undisturbed as the wheat; and was

left with a vague, unreasoning nostalgia, by stray glimpses of them, disappearing, single-file, across the fields, toward home and waiting wood fires.

To the husbands, sons and brothers out of homes like these—the Esthonian soldiers, fighting, after six years of war for they scarce knew what—this homesickness was anything but vague. Must their little country, bankrupt and distracted, be destroyed utterly in order to save the Great Russia from which they wanted to be free? Murmuring like this, growing stronger as the weeks went on, finally brought about the withdrawal of the Esthonian force south of Pskov back to their own frontier. This, together with the difficulties in Belakhovitch's force, gave up Pskov to the Bolsheviks. Gutchkov, War Minister in the Kerensky Cabinet and a leader of the conservative Octobrist party in the old Duma, came up to Reval from Denikin's army in a last attempt to get the Judenitch machine going again before the winter. As the result of this and other pressure, a new offensive was started against Petrograd just as the first snow began to fly.

IN SIGHT OF ST. ISAAC'S

This drive was lost sight of at first in the astonishing attack by the Russian General Bermondt on Riga, and the fear that the latter and Von der Goltz's "Iron Division" of stranded German soldiers (who had received a promise of land in Courland) might be planning a Russo-German alliance to overrun both Latvia and Esthonia. It met with surprising success and one dark afternoon a messenger came to the A. R. A. mission in Reval with a telegram from General

Judenitch stating categorically that Petrograd would be taken in a few days and asking that all available food supplies be collected for the relief of the civilian population.

The statement seemed incredible, yet if it were true there was no time to be lost. Cables were sent to London and Paris, cars were ordered for what food was on hand, and at daybreak two days later, two big American army trucks, with enough beef, bacon, flour, sugar and cocoa to feed several thousand children for at least a few days, were already east of Narva and the Narova river (which they had crossed on a pontoon bridge) and rumbling down the road toward Petrograd.

The road was slithering mud. Beyond were sodden fields where rusted grain still lay unharvested, and further on the dark walls of the forest, stiffened as it were by the cold, stark and funereal. The bitter, east-Baltic air lay on overcoats and slickers like water around a diver's suit as the careering trucks drove into it, boring through the least crack and crevice. Refugees were already pushing hopefully eastward, the wife driving the overloaded cart with baggage and babies, husband and older girls scattered into the fields like sparrows to pick up as they went a few armfuls of soggy grain. Every few miles, a string of peasant wagons drawn by scrubby little horses and driven by old men and women bundled up in sheepskin *shubas,* trailed past, or huddled into the ditch as our strange chariots, each with its tiny American flag fluttering over the radiator, drummed past.

We had hoped to cover the sixty or seventy miles

between the border and Gatchina before dark, but one truck broke down, the other mired itself, and we finally had to shoulder the luggage and tramp through the mud to the nearest village. A squeaky-voiced old peasant watchman was scuffling up its single street in the dark, shaking a sort of wooden rattle clapper, to let the world, good and bad, know that he was coming. Was there any place we could spend the night? *Nyet* —none! Soldiers everywhere. After many words and much waiting, however, the officer in charge of the reserves in the neighborhood was unearthed, and presently we were sloshing through the mud toward a light and shelter.

We were invited into a snug living-room, the house, evidently, of some one of local consequence. There was a sofa, a big round table with a kerosene lamp, crayon portraits and gilt pictures of saints. The big china stove which rounded out one corner of the room was already hot, a fresh fire blazed in the open firebox on the other side of the partition, and the cold was further shut out by double windows and at least three doors, one of which was padded like an easy chair, and fitted with a wide leather weather-flap. At home one might have looked round for some sign of ventilation, but at this season in the eastern Baltic, after a day on the front seat of a truck, quite enough oxygen seemed to come in without that.

A place to curl up in was all we had thought of but our hosts insisted on getting supper. There were eggs and bacon, though bacon must have been like pearls in this war-swept countryside, black bread and butter, although butter was many hundred roubles a pound in

Petrograd, tea and a big steaming samovar—even a nip of vodka. The Colonel in charge, a careworn man very different from the young bloods of headquarters, told what little he knew of what was going on up ahead, and a tall, handsome, long-haired priest, wearing the usual cross on a long chain from his neck and the Order of Vladimir on his chest, stood by the door and watched us with big, soft, interested eyes.

After supper, the old wife and her tall strong young daughter spread fresh straw on the floor, put sheets over that and even pillows with pillowcases, and we all lay down in a row. There was one pillow short and after the lights were out the younger woman came to the door with a cushion and a bit of linen to cover it. Our legation attaché, never averse to showing his Russian, assured her that she need have no fear; though there were eight of us, we were all old. The young woman answered briskly that she had no fear of us, old or young, and added, as she returned to the kitchen that it was unnecessary always to think of men as men—one could also think of them merely as human beings.

In the dark, at last, with the cannon grumbling in the distance, the fact that our security in this warm little island depended on the somewhat uncertain stability of the anti-Bolshevik line, came more clearly to mind. About three o'clock in the morning the Colonel tiptoed into the room with a lighted candle and began to fumble with papers.

"What's up?" somebody whispered. The Colonel said that they were ordered to fall back—the *"Krasni* (Reds) were coming." "What! . . .

Hey—get up! Get out of this! . . . Wha-a-t! . . . It's the Reds—the Reds are coming!" Wild excitement. Matches scratched; flash-lamps pulled out; boots pulled on; frantic rustling about in the straw to find this and that. The Colonel, calmly gathering his papers, remarked that there was nothing to be flurried about. The Reds mightn't get close at all. There were bands of them, a hundred or so, here and there, not yet rounded up; as a precautionary measure he had been ordered further back. The wagon trains we had heard during the night were transports moving back out of danger of possible surprise. We might as well go to sleep again.

Daylight and a few glasses of tea brushed aside these visions of the dark, and both drivers having succeeded in getting their trucks up, we pushed on toward Gatchina. Through several dismal villages and then the landscape changed. We passed an old stone gateway, a statue or two, and finally, with a curious stab of familiarity I recognized the long X-shaped, high pole fence that used to enclose the Imperial game-preserve in Gatchina. I had last driven along it on a pleasant summer Sunday in 1917 before the Bolshevik revolution. Most of the game had already been killed then, but the kennels still had at that time their packs of wolf-hounds, people were still strolling in the parks and sunning themselves on the banks of the lake, and Gatchina still held its air of a royal pleasure place.

In the pale sunlight of the early winter morning, down a long avenue strewn with yellow leaves, through air soaked not merely with the melancholy scent of autumn but with the crowding tragic memories of what

had come between, the two strange trucks drummed into the almost deserted town. There was the great six-hundred room palace, just as it used to be, and the statue of Tsar Paul in front of it, outstretched hand resting proudly on his long cane, and here too, a dreary little cue of people waiting for food; and then a burned house, still smouldering; a couple of half-starved dogs shamefacedly tearing at the carcass of a dead horse, and a dead soldier lying face upward in the street.

The A. R. A. officer reported himself to the town commandant, got an empty house for his own quarters, and before noon a committee of sad-looking men and women, in cloaks and overcoats patched and made to do for many winters, were arranging with him to start serving lunches in several schools next day. I was told later in Reval by a picturesque old Baroness who had fled from Gatchina with a solemn document, asking foreign governments in three languages in the name of the Tzar to treat her with consideration—I was assured by this undaunted old relic, who firmly believed that this ancient passport would help her with the re-volted Esthonians, that the Committee chosen that morning were nothing but Bolsheviks themselves. It was "their" children, not "ours," who got the American food. Another lady assured me that day that the committee were as good as could be hoped for, and that several were, indeed, "good monarchists." It makes little difference now. Everybody was hungry. But the incident was characteristic of the tangle of jealousy, prejudice and downright lying which ingenuous outsiders meet as soon as they break through the

Chinese wall round Russia and start in to separate the sheep from the goats.

The Bolsheviks had already done a certain amount of public feeding of children during their time in Gatchina and the children were not strikingly undernourished as children went in eastern Europe. Their general appearance was better than that of some of the Finnish children I had seen at our relief stations earlier in the year. One of the stations—they were going full blast by noon next day—was entered by a dingy passage from an inner court. The tables were packed, the children spooning away for dear life, the double windows dripping steam and the whole place filled with a thoroughly Russian atmosphere of noise, disorder and freehandedness; heat, humanity and cabbage soup.

The children shouted *"Zdrastvitzye!"* (How-do-you-do!) as soon as they could see through the mist who was visiting them, and a stubby-toed youngster in a soldier suit was brought up and introduced as a member of the First Infantry Corps. And what did he do in the Army, we asked? He whacked his heels, saluted, and with a great satisfaction replied *"Nitchevo dyelayem! Yem khleb!"*—(I don't do a thing and I get bread!)

At another kitchen the energetic lady in charge, after proudly showing the new white bread, led me to an unheated reception room where we shivered and chatted in the fading twilight. She had gone to work for the Bolsheviks, she said, after selling all her clothes. There was so much graft in the office, she said, that she had protested openly, been denounced as a counter-revolutionist and narrowly escaped hanging

—and she drew her finger across her throat. She told of a man lodger in her house who, before she went to work for the local Soviet, had come to her one day and ordered her to clean out his rooms. His wife was ill, and couldn't do it, he said.

Black bread and a few herrings, turnips and cabbages had been their food. Sometimes for days there was nothing to eat but nettle soup. They boiled the heads of herrings, ground them up, bones and all, and made a sort of croquette. Lowering her voice, as if some shocked Orthodox might be listening, she said that she was a Christian Scientist and that one of her dreams was to come to America and visit the Mother Church. Riches, she said, she did not need. She had God's love and her faith, and these were riches enough. As for that, indeed, was not Christ the first Communist?

As she talked there in the half dark, in that frigid room, there entered an elderly lady in mourning. The two flew into each other's arms, kissed on both cheeks in the Russian fashion, and stood there for a moment comforting each other and murmuring something about how happy the older woman must be at what had happened the day before. Her husband, it seemed, a retired General, had been imprisoned by the Bolsheviks, but recently released, and when the White forces took Gatchina the old officer had died of joy. It was that which made the older woman so happy—that her husband, instead of perishing in prison had been spared to die and be buried with honor among his own people. They sat down and went on to talk of other things—of those who had fled as the White Army came, and

of one young woman whom they thought had been executed. It was a pity that she should be shot, she was a nice girl in many ways, but of course after she had married that Commissaire. . . And that dark room, and the cold, and the woman in black, and their strange talk of fear and suspicion and death, and almost stranger joy over what had happened the day before, was, one felt, but a thread, an outer corner, of a vast black pall, a nightmare become real, that hung over millions of lives in Russia.

Judenitch's troops were advancing over a fan-shaped area centering on Petrograd. The Bolshevik right flank ran along the shore of the Gulf of Finland straight westward from the capital; their left, southward from Petrograd along the railways leading to Moscow. The task of the Whites was to cut both these lines, and particularly to cut the railroad, so that reinforcements could not come up from the South. When we reached Gatchina they were supposed to have cut through to the Gulf near Strelna, leaving a Bolshevik force west of that, bottled up to be disposed of later; and the cutting of the railway was momentarily expected.

While awaiting this, the officer in charge of the A. R. A. work, ran a truck up to Krasnicelo, about a dozen miles north of Gatchina in the direction of the Gulf, and started to open kitchens there. The village was held by Prince Lieven's detachment, and from the brow of the hill just beyond it we could look down on the Gulf and the flats that stretch toward the capital. There, big as life, about a dozen miles away in an air line, clear and calm in the afternoon sunlight,

lay the Forbidden City. There was the dome of St. Isaac's, and the gilt spire of the Admiralty—one could even see trains pulling out of the Nikolai station, and the white plumes of their steam trailing across the brown landscape as they hurried toward Moscow!

To the left, one could follow the Gulf shore up to Kronstadt and beyond. A dark craft, apparently a gunboat, was steaming westward close inshore, and across the Gulf were the white sand beaches where we had gone swimming in 1916. There was not a sign nor sound of war, as we came out on the hill, and one looked down on the city which I had been trying for months in vain to get into, as one looks down on New York across the Jersey meadows. It seemed as if one could slip a couple of sandwiches in one's pocket and tramp downhill, across the meadows and into the capital before night. Possibly one could, but the country was not as empty as it looked, and two days later, just after the first kitchen was opened, the Reds swarmed back on Krasnicelo and the men left in charge barely had time to reload the truck and run for it.

On our way back to Gatchina we noticed a man in civilian clothes under guard tramping across a field about two hundred yards from the road. Peasants were staring from the road and somebody called out "It's a Commissaire!" We stopped with the rest and also stared. The men passed behind a screen of bushes. One could see them but partly now, and we climbed on the highest parts of the truck, passed a glass from hand to hand, endeavored, with that strange mixture of eagerness and shame, with which human

beings watch another being killed, to see what we could.

"Look! Look!" screamed the legation attaché. "They are undressing him! I can see the white!" One could, indeed, see a bit of white, a man's shirt sleeves, evidently. There was a moment's silence, then a shot. Then several; then, after a long pause, a final one. Presently, the men in long tan overcoats, without the civilian, reappeared from behind the screen of bushes and started back across the field, stepping rather high over the spongy ground in the long grass. The peasants kept staring, and the truck starting with a jerk, shifted gears and went drumming on its way.

Just short of Gatchina we turned off to the northeast and took the road for Tsarkoecelo, another of the old Imperial residence towns, only about fifteen miles from Petrograd, and now reported in the hands of the Whites. We passed batches of prisoners scuffling rearward, farmyards with soldiers warming themselves about wood fires, and finally batteries firing into the hazy northeast. We had caught sight of the palace roof and were just starting into Tsarkoecelo itself when an officer standing with several others by the road held up his hand.

It was General Rodzianko himself. Often spoken of as a dare-devil, he was outwardly now, as when I had seen him earlier in the year, a rather slow-moving, lustreless person, with the air of surveying with a good-natured, somewhat weary irony, a hopeless job. We couldn't go into the town, he said. He held it, but

didn't have enough men to consolidate his position. "I may have to fall back to-morrow morning, myself," he muttered.

What, he asked, was Denikin doing? Now was his time to strike—he ought to fling everything he had against Moscow. The Northwest Army had done everything men could. They had been advancing twenty or thirty kilometers a day, fighting all the time and sleeping in the mud wherever they happened to be. "I went very fast," he sighed, in his rueful way.

An old retired officer who had been living in Tsarkoecelo wanted to get back to Gatchina. Would we not come into headquarters and wait a moment while he sent for him? We went through a muddy farmhouse court and up a narrow unlighted stairway into a room where several officers were sitting. There was a table with a smoky lamp, maps and papers, and looking down from the wall, faded framed lithographs of Nicholas II and the Tsarina. Rodzianko dropped into a chair, and pushing his face close to the dim light, began doggedly to read through the Bolshevist papers just brought in by his orderly—papers printed in Petrograd the day before, and full of stories of Soviet successes, abuse of himself and other anti-Bolsheviks, and appeals to the workers to unite and throw back the capitalistic invaders.

The clock on the wall ticked sleepily, the guns rumbled in the distance, half an hour or so passed and no sign of our passenger. The General pushed back his chair and went out, the last of the daylight disappeared and the only light left was the feeble lamp.

With his eyes fixed on this lamp, across from where

Rodzianko had been sitting, a young officer leaned, wrapped to the chin in a long tight-fitting Cossack coat, with an astrakan cap stuck rakishly over one ear. His elbows were on the table, hands folded in front of his chin, in one of them a cigarette. The half-barbarous costume contrasted oddly with his cameo-like features, almost too finely cut, and his air, head thrown back and eyes fixed dreamily on the lamp, of having been born a little tired. The curious wax-like delicacy of his upper face was again accented by his long Dundreary whiskers, which recalled the languid dandies of Leech's and Thackeray's time. Oblivious to everything about him, pulling at the cigarette from time to time, eyes never leaving the lamp, he was lost, one could imagine, here on the edge of the Petrograd his army was losing, in memories of old Russia, of hunts and courts, Crimean summers and Petersburg winter nights, or visions even more remote and Byzantine.

The wick burned out and began to sputter. Another officer came in, and talking as he sat on the edge of the table, turned the wick up as fast as it burned down. That this did no good, that the only thing to do was to refill the lamp or to send for another, or that either of these things was worth doing, did not seem to occur to anyone, least of all to the motionless figure, rapt as a Buddha, staring into the guttering light. The officer stopped turning presently and went out. The light sank to a mere spark, scarcely brighter than the cigarettes that spotted the dusk. And at last a soldier came in with a new lamp and his peasant's air of something positive and practical. The officer in Cossack's uniform shifted slightly, put another ciga-

rette in the holder and with chin resting on his crossed hands, continued to gaze into the light. . . .

Our passenger not appearing, we started back for Gatchina. The guns were pounding briskly and flinging up their heat-lightning along a wide arc fronting Petrograd. Not far from Gatchina the road was blocked by two tanks grinding back for rest and repairs. They loomed monstrous in the dark and stillness of this rural Russian world, so remote from the industrial civilization of which they were a sort of nightmare excrescence, and seeing them thus, each staring down the road out of its one tiny search-light eye, one could fancy that to the Russian peasant soldiers who had to face them, they might seem, indeed, the living, poison-breathing symbol of all their Communist leaders taught them to fight.

Our truck swung out, slewed, and sunk its rear wheels in mud. We tumbled off, somebody called out "Hello!" there was a cheery, "I say! It's good to hear English again!" and we were gossiping with two young British officers and a greasy mechanician just emerged, fire-extinguisher in hand, from the overheated insides of the clumsy dragon. On the side of the tank, in Russian lettering, was the name "Captain Cromie"—the British officer killed by the Bolsheviks early in 1918, in the British Embassy in Petrograd.

This was one of the tanks for which the Northwest Army had been pleading all summer, in the fond belief that they were irresistible. They had arrived late, like nearly everything else, and while their volunteer crews had fought tirelessly, tanks in trench warfare,

backed by a profusion of artillery and first-class infantry, and a few tanks rattling around in scores of miles of open country are very different things.

"You can't make these Russians understand that a tank can't be fought right along day after day," said one of the officers. "We were on fire three times yesterday, and once we were all out on our backs on the ground, coming to, when the Bolos attacked and we had to go to it again." The Bolsheviks fought well, they said, especially some of the new cadet battalions. "Those boys came out yesterday within fifty feet of us, with nothing but their rifles in their hands!'

It was plain that the Soviet troops, whether they had run away or had merely fallen back to draw the White army on, were now holding hard. If Rodzianko was not sure of Tsarkoecelo, he did not stand much chance of taking a city like Petrograd, cut by canals, divided by a wide river, and defended now by a force probably five times as large as his own.

If the much-talked-of uprising within the capital had come off, if Denikin and Kolchak could have started, if all the various possibilities could have been translated into action, history might have been different. As it was, Krascicelo was retaken the next day, Gatchina was evacuated a few days later, and the Northwest Army fell back on Narva. The Esthonians, having agreed with the other Baltic states to meet the Soviet representatives at Dorpat for a preliminary discussion of peace, announced that they would be compelled to disarm the White army if it attempted to take refuge in Esthonia. This was partially done and the Judenitch army, as a fighting force, ceased to exist.

THE BOLSHEVIKS' FIRST BRIDGE TO THE WEST

The early Baltic winter had shut down in earnest when Litvinov came out to Dorpat. The Baltic was closed, or closing, to further naval adventures; the remnant of the Northwest Army was huddled back on Narva; and with the assurance that the Soviet Government was willing to pay well for peace, the Esthonians began to assume a new air of masters in their own house.

For the old university town of Dorpat, the intellectual center of the old time Balticum, this meeting of Russian Bolshevik and revolted province was quaint enough—as if, for instance, Sinn Fein had come to Oxford to discuss with the British Labour Party what sort of a government should be given Ireland. The Balts were wont to call Dorpat the "Baltic Heidleberg." Here, with a slight sprinkling of Esthonians and Letts, came the sons of the Balt squires. They had their student corps and duels, although not quite in the German fashion; professors were brought from Germany (keeping painstaking diaries of their adventures as if they were going to Borneo)—it was a real outpost of Germanic culture in the half-Russian province.

The Russians had already done what they could in 1895 to change its character by turning out the old professors and changing the name of Dorpat to Juriev, although the young Balts continued to attend. And now that both Balt and Russian were being swept aside by the tide of newer nationalism, the brand-new masters were trying (with a handful of teachers, no capital

and the Esthonian mark worth less than two cents) to make the place quite Esthonian. The campus trees and walks still held their air, but all over the little town, itself, the new broom was sweeping clean.

The Esthonian name for the town is Tartu. Esthonian soldiers marched frequently through the town by day, Esthonian sentries demanded permits if one was abroad after ten at night. The former Russian Corps headquarters had been newly furnished for the conference, and Esthonian sentries snapped their bayonetted rifles out at full arm's length, as one entered, in the old-fashioned Russian salute.

It was toward the end of one of those dark Baltic days when it never seems quite light nor warm anywhere (the big china stoves only turning the houses into slightly tempered refrigerators) and you go shivering about in a sort of half-Arctic twilight, that the Bolshevik delegation—Litvinov, a man and two young women secretaries—arrived. They had been brought on from the frontier in a special train, carefully escorted by a young British officer and a secretary from the Esthonian Foreign Office, and they were whisked away, bundled up in furs, to a house conveniently set back behind trees, a high wall and an iron gate. Sentries stood all about it in the snow; another was at the gate who had to blow a whistle and call an officer before anyone was allowed to enter. No one might speak with Litvinov, and the only chance he had to make propaganda was to send it up in balloons.

He appeared in public the next afternoon on his way to the conference—a stocky, round-faced, rather

amused-looking man, in fur overcoat and gray astrakan cap, comfortably settled in the back seat of an Esthonian military automobile with a big cigar in his teeth. Cigars in Esthonia at the moment were all but unknown; cigarettes from the British warships had sold for two marks apiece in Reval during the summer; even particular people were trying to grow their own tobacco; the common herd smoked *mahorka* and other evil-smelling substitutes, and few things could have given a more "bourzhooy" air to this representative of the proletariat.

In conference he had the air of a good-natured business-man rather than the "intellectual" or professional diplomat. He seemed direct and frank, not without a sense of humour and distinctly able to take care of himself. The delegates were impressed with his shrewdness. English he spoke fluently but with a strong Jewish roll to his initial "r's." His style of writing was compact and authoritative.

At the head of the conference table sat the Esthonian Acting Foreign Minister, Mr. Piip, a teacher by profession, lately Esthonian representative in London, with agreeable manners and something of a gift for saying nothing, or, with a child-like blandness, saying something quite impossible. On Mr. Piip's right was the Lithuanian, Dr. Sliupas, a bearded and spectacled veteran of the Lithuanian national movement who had spent a good part of his life in America. Litvinov sat at Mr. Piip's left, and beyond him the rather vivacious delegates from Latvia—Mr. Friedenburg, a bushy-haired, heavy-featured man, with somewhat the air of an Italian tragedian, and Mr. Arvid Berg, a

slim young lawyer, himself a graduate of Dorpat, and the author of a little book translated into French showing how easily Latvia could get along without Russia.

The Finns took no active part in the conference. A Polish delegate was present in Dorpat but reticent, and on the day Litvinov arrived he took care to announce in the local paper that he had left town, and having thus established an official absence went to a masquerade and lightheartedly danced until six next morning. The delegates from White Russia, or White Ruthenia, and from the Ukraine, also merely looked on.

The Baltic delegates stated that they were there to act as a unit and prepared to discuss only the exchange of civil prisoners, or so-called hostages. Litvinov expressed regret at this and said that he had hoped to talk peace at once—it would be easy to arrange about prisoners afterward. However, just as they pleased about that, and the discussions began.

They were complicated by problems of national dignity which seemed vitally important to each group concerned, and burdened with those preoccupations about what "the powers" might think, from which little nations are rarely free. Americans forget, or are too fortunately situated ever to have been obliged in the European sense to remember, how tragically real such political pressure may be. A thousand miles away, for instance, Mr. Lloyd George makes a speech. Mr. George is a light-footed opportunist, with a keen desire to know and a gift for finding out what the other man wants. It is hard to know what the British

want to do in Russia and he sends up what the diplomatists call a trial balloon. He declares that Bolshevism cannot be beaten by force, having already in the same speech, stoutly praised the views of a military gentleman who declares that force is the only thing.

The phrase, "no force" flashes round the Baltic, and finally out to the dreary front. England is pulling out, the word goes round. The Esthonians, hungry for peace, see at last a chance of getting back home. "Deserted!" cry the Judenitch leaders—then all is, indeed, lost. Mere words, tossed out, perhaps to please some particular group of faces which happen to be looking up at the speaker, and a thousand miles away an offensive stops, or real men go forward, perhaps, to kill and be killed.

The delegates here in Dorpat might hate old Russia as much as they pleased, but if the Allies put a blockade on them and cut off munitions all their fine independence enthusiasm would go up in smoke. If England had not, for instance, recently turned over 25,000 rifles to the Letts, Bermondt would probably have taken Riga instead of merely bombarding it; and if the four ships, two British and two French, then in the Duna, below Riga, were to sail away, Bermondt might still cross the river and take the town.

The Esthonians had a government that worked and 80,000 men to back it, but their men were wearing British uniforms and they carried British rifles. It was reported on what seemed good authority one evening that Finland was to be forced into the war and that 30,000 men were to be marched against Petrograd. Pressure, economic and political, was being ex-

erted on the other Baltic States, so strong that the Conference would probably close next day. The Finns were not forced in, although for a day or two it seemed but a toss-up, and the Conference did not break up, but it is in such an atmosphere that little nations have to settle their present and future affairs, and free will and self-determination are for them decidedly relative terms.

In the tangle of interests and rumors, and the interesting but vague talk of a Baltic Federation which should unite in a defensive alliance all the border states, the Esthonians kept their feet on the ground, comparatively speaking, and their eyes on the main chance. There was no doubt of Mr. Piip's satisfaction when he blandly announced one day that the Judenitch troops would be disarmed if they retreated into Esthonian territory, and it was with the air of having already arrived at some sort of an understanding that he said that they no longer feared attacks from Bolshevik Russia.

The Esthonians felt sufficiently at home, indeed, in their new nationalism to begin to assume the air of generous hosts. There were various festivities for the visiting delegates, including dancing, and dancing, it might be said, is still dancing in this part of the world. No lazy shuffling, but quick and complicated steps, the ball going on for an hour or so, and never the same dance twice; furious waltzes, nobody reversing and the girls feet scarce touching the ground; mazurkas with spurs clicking every few steps; *pas de quatre* and *pas d'Espagne,* and the *wengerka* or Hun-

garian dance, with a whole ball-room leaping and stamping until the very floor shakes.

As human animals go, the Esthonians are not, at any rate as yet, a beautiful race. They have rather heavy features, often of a slightly Mongolian cast, and rather heavy manners. They have not had much time for cultivating the amenities. In literature and the arts they have done little, naturally, but their folk-songs and folk-lore are said to be very rich and interesting and they are fond of music and the theatre. In Reval they had built themselves a big, cream-colored pleasure palace, the "Esthonia," with a theatre in one end and a concert hall in the other and even in times like these something was going on there nearly every night. And when they do give a party they give it with the determination and thoroughness of a new people whose social curiosity is still fresh and vitality unlimited.

One day that summer the Esthonian Foreign Office sent out invitations to a tea at nine o'clock. Just what a tea at nine o'clock might be was a bit puzzling to most foreigners but a great crowd came, including all the foreign Consulate and Mission people, the brand-new Esthonian society,—"everybody," in short, but the excluded Balts. For a couple of hours people sat at tables and listened to a concert while consuming vast amounts of fruit, cakes, ices and tea. Then, about midnight, as many strangers were thinking of going home, doors to another hall were thrown open and the guests invited to attack a full course dinner. Then there was dancing; and later a supper with plenty of *vodka* and other beverages; and about five or six in

the morning coffee and fruit—nearly nine hours, in short, of more or less continuous eating and drinking in a country in which there was a real shortage of necessary food!

The Dorpat Conference lasted three days and then Litvinov moved on to Copenhagen to begin the long negotiations which ended, over a year later, in the trade-agreement with Britain. The only concrete result of this first diplomatic sortie of the Bolsheviks was a mutual agreement to exchange prisoners. The questions of an armistice and peace had been touched on pretty completely over the tea glasses, however, and peace was made between Esthonia and Soviet Russia early in 1920. Esthonia received certain minor territorial additions and 15,000,000 roubles in gold. The Bolsheviks opened up a regular diplomatic mission in Reval and had at last their bridge to the West.

CHAPTER VI

REALITIES OF LAND "REFORM"

The Reval of the following June seemed another world altogether from the dark, cold-beleaguered, half-Arctic town I had left just after the Dorpat conference. Spring in the Baltic is an enchantment even more compelling than in our own latitude, and all at once the magical northern summer had come, so incredibly bright and soft and bountiful, so soon to go. Over night, so to speak, the chestnuts were in bloom and thick with shade, the old gardens fragrant with lilacs, and from the Domberg one looked down on a sea as soft and blue as that of Italy.

The hibernating Esthonians, gluttons for the sun when it comes, like all these northern peoples, bloomed like their own trees. The blond, broad-chested Esthonian girls went at a jump from furs and felt goloshes to the airiest of summer dresses, and came back from the Whitsuntide holidays, tanned black as Indians. Before the seeds were up in the gardens, Briggitan beach was strewn with bathers, and in the amber radiance of the lengthening white nights, people went strolling on and on until the birds began to chirp their morning songs.

Nature, in short, had spread her beguiling veil over Esthonia as over all this Baltic world, but the economic

and political realities underneath this illusive mask were as hard and uncompromising as before. The Esthonian mark, worth nearly two cents the year before, was selling at 150 to the dollar, and dropping all the time. The trade with Russia, and between Russia and the West, which peace was expected to bring, had not come, or had come only in driblets. Attempts to use the Bolshevik gold as a basis for foreign credits, to stabilize their own currency and bring in the raw materials for which the Esthonian's factories were famishing, failed because of the refusal of the Western Powers to permit its acceptance. The Esthonians had sold some 14,000,000 tons of potatoes to the Bolsheviks, but the operation had accomplished little beyond reducing their own supplies, and bringing back into Esthonia some more of their own almost worthless paper.

Lack of a market and their own trade restrictions had prevented the export of any considerable amount of timber. A certain amount of potato spirits was smuggled into Finland, and this alcohol was so concrete a form of wealth in comparison with Esthonian paper, that Esthonians travelling to Finland often contrived to carry along a bottle or two in place of money, and in Helsingfors one evening my Esthonian host, as he passed the *schnapps,* asked if I would not "have a nip of *valuta.*" But Finland was theoretically enforcing prohibition, and the Russian market, which used to take most of the Esthonian alcohol, was almost non-existent.

The cotton-mills at Narva and Reval were idle on account of lack of cotton, and the combustible shale,

THE ANCIENT HOUSE OF THE "BLACK HEAD CLUB" IN REVAL

THE OLD TOWN HALL IN REVAL

about which there had been much talk the autumn before, was still to be developed. The men were back from the army, but the breaking up of the large estates had generally substituted for comparatively efficient management, a number of inexperienced individuals, with neither the animals, machinery nor capital necessary to work their farms when they got them. The acreage planted to rye was a quarter less than the year before, and the yield on even this reduced area would be less per acre, the Minister of Agriculture admitted, than it was before the war.

The road to independence was not rose-strewn in Esthonia any more than elsewhere in eastern Europe, and the outstanding problem, now that war was over, even more than before, was naturally the land. With the agrarian reform law passed in October of the year before and more or less actively put into effect, this whole subject had begun to come down from the region of oratory in which it had tossed about during 1919, toward the level of practical affairs. The tyranny of the Balt nobility and the land hunger of the Esthonian peasants might have a greater or less reality according to the point of view, but one reality could not, and can not in the future, be escaped—the land must produce, whoever holds it, and the people must be fed.

It is difficult to write with finality of land reforms swept through by majorities dazzled or menaced by Bolshevism. Future changes in Russia might bring changes in the border states as well. But laws were passed, at any rate, and real property changed hands as a result, and it is at least pertinent to state what

these laws were and examine into their enforcement. Before doing this, however, it might be well to get a more definite notion of the typical Balt estate, of the usual arrangements between owner and peasants, and the sort of life that went on there.

The Esthonians are fond of describing the Balts as robber barons who have been sitting for seven hundred years with their feet on the Esthonians' necks. The picture has a certain figurative application—about like that, for example, of our own cartoons which used to represent the Trusts as obese giants in clothes covered with dollar marks, lording it over a diminutive, meek and spectacled Common People. It is true that the Teutonic Knights conquered the country seven hundred years ago and took the land, as was the custom in those days. As fighting ceased and Europe settled down and the need of a steady population of laborers became more definite, the Esthonian peasants became attached to the land as elsewhere in feudal Europe. It was at the initiative of the Balts, however, that the Esthonian peasants were freed nearly half a century before those in Russia proper, and when it became apparent that freedom without the right to use the land they had tilled merely made a land proletariat, the Balts set aside part of their estates as co-called "peasant-land" and gave the peasants the right to buy it on long-term payments. When the war started, the Esthonian peasants had acquired over a million and a half acres by this sort of purchase. Very few Balts could trace their property titles back to the thirteenth century; many estates had been in the family for but a generation or two, and some of those taken by the

Esthonian Government since the agrarian law passed were bought shortly before the war and paid for in hard cash.

The Balt baron lived well and spaciously. He had broad lands, cheap labor, and a very agreeable sense of social superiority. But the Western reader, thinking in terms of his own industrial and banking millionaires, may easily make a very inaccurate picture of the average baron's splendor. Individually, he was more often than not a practical farmer, with little ready money, and compelled, in order to give his family a few unproductive weeks or months each winter in Reval or Petrograd, to live with comparative frugality to make ends meet. Motors were rare, steam-yachts unheard of; the ladies of the family, unless very much *verrusst,* had a quite German understanding of housewifely duties, and the family atmosphere toward expenditure and mere frivolity was often characterized by an almost Puritan bleakness. Americans must think of the Balts, not in terms of Western plutocracy, but rather in those of 18th century squires, or our own Southern plantation owners before the war. Esthonia was, indeed, a bit of the 18th century, forgotten here in the lonely Baltic marches between new-rich Berlin and lavish Petrograd.

ON AN ESTHONIAN ESTATE

Imagine yourself, for example, visiting one of these estates not yet taken over by the government, and not a great deal different from what it was before the war. From Reval, the little wood-burning train rolls lazily southward for four or five hours away from the rather

stony coast lands to pleasant, level, wooded country, not unlike our own Middle West. One is met at the little wooden station, all the attendants of which are Esthonian, by a roomy old victoria (if the various raids and requisitions have overlooked it), with an ancient family-coachman on the box, and driven six or seven miles to the house.

The peasants doff their hats as the carriage passes them, the Baron doffs his likewise, and the Baroness bows politely. The chimney of the distillery—an important part of all these Esthonian estates—shows presently, and then the thick trees of the manor park, and you drive through a gateway and up to a big white house to be received by the family. Visitors are an event and everybody is interested. In the lower hall are hunting trophies—fox heads, possibly even a big stuffed bear—dogs appear, to smell the unfamiliar clothes and be petted, and the walls as one ascends the stairway to the living rooms, are hung with English sporting prints or plates of the uniforms of the old Russian army.

The rooms are high-ceilinged and spacious and filled with family portraits and old furniture. There is a library with books in French and English as well as German and Russian, and always a ball-room with parquetry floor and glass lustres. Tea is ready on the balcony or vine-enclosed upper porch, and from this balcony one looks across more or less formal flower-beds to the garden and hot-houses and bee-hives. Nearly everything except clothes, books and a few luxuries, comes from the estate itself—the barley porridge in the morning, the whole-wheat flour or rye from which

home-made bread is made, is ground in the Dutch windmill which you can see on the hill from your bedroom window. There is lots to eat—apples and pears in the autumn, and in the berry season strawberries and raspberries by the bushel.

Adjoining the house is the park, with formal walks and allées, a summer-house here and there, and perhaps a specially level bit of turf on the outlying edge, where the peasants come to dance. From here, several miles away, you can see the roofs of another manor-house—the nearest neighbor. In the old days, of course, there was a good deal of going and coming between these country families—hunts and dinner-parties. Much of the country is covered with forest and in some of these forests there are, or were before the war, deer and bears and even wolves—the country is still a little "wild."

Life is very comfortable, but of course, like most country life, even in more thickly settled parts of Europe, without many of the mechanical conveniences to which Western city folk and especially Americans are used. There may or may not be electric lights. Bathrooms are few and sanitary arrangements, generally, cruder than those in even moderate-priced American city flats—in these matters one is quite in the 18th century. But of servants, and willing, even kindly service, there is plenty. And it is not the stiff and rather oppressively exotic service of many of our American country-houses. A round-faced, smiling Esthonian maid, barefoot, perhaps, if it is midsummer, slips in to fling back the window curtains when it is time to get up, and bring your shaving water. In the same quiet

and friendly fashion she whisks away clothes to be brushed, and boots to be blackened the evening before. The kitchen is full of people, there are others working about the garden and whenever the owner passes they salute or curtsey. He himself must be a sort of father to the lot. If someone is ill he is sent for to prescribe and to decide whether it is necessary to call the doctor. The latter lives in the village by the station and must be driven for and taken home, and when he does come, he probably stays for dinner and a rubber of bridge.

The peasants themselves live in cottages or in barrack-like dwellings made to accommodate several families. The owner provides land and fuel, and possibly the building for their children of school age, while the community, as a rule, pays for the teacher; or the owner may pay him a small salary which is eked out by playing the organ in church and similar services. As a rule the Esthonian peasants read and write and they are likely to take a Reval or Dorpat newspaper. Amusements are few and simple. They dance now and then in summertime, go swimming, and sing their folk songs, but there is rarely, if ever, as there is in Finland, a common meeting place or what could be called community-spirit. Balts to whom I spoke of this, smiled incredulously, as if the suggestion were scarcely serious.

The estate-owner's children are likely to have their English governess, or at any rate a teacher who speaks English. German is spoken commonly by the family when they are by themselves, but they are equally at home in Russian, and almost as familiar with French.

English is not so common, but there is almost always someone in the family who speaks it with comparative ease. All know enough Esthonian to talk with their servants and peasants. The Balts' divided allegiance between the Russia to which he politically belonged and the Germany with which he was racially connected is picturesquely illustrated sometimes in the children of these families, and you will find one daughter, for instance, who loves the country, hates the town, rides like a trooper, shakes hands with a sharp correctness, talks crops and cattle with her father, and, in the unsentimental sense of the word is *echt Deutsch* and a true junker's daughter; and another who hates practical farming, reads novels, laughs at German manners with a true Russian contempt, and dreams of getting back to the city like the restless young ladies in Chekov's "Three Sisters."

One such estate as this with which I was familiar, covered an area about five miles by three, and contained 9,814 acres. Of these, 4,100 were in forest and 2,520 acres in swamp lowland which the owner had spent a large amount of money in draining. There were 2,200 acres in grain and potatoes; 716 in hay and 278 in pasture.

The peasants on this estate were all what are called *deputat-knechts* or hired laborers. There are no *halb-körners*—those who work on shares, giving the owner half their harvest for the use of the land, an arrangement more common in Latvia—nor the lower order of *land-knechts,* who give half their time to the owner

for the use of a small piece of land. The contract which this owner made with his peasants was as follows:

The peasant got lodging for himself and family, garden land for his own vegetables, half an acre for potatoes and another half acre for barley—the horses for the cultivation of which were loaned by the landlord—enough meadow land for two or three cattle and a few sheep, and wood for fuel. In supplies he received yearly 35 *poods* of barley (a pood is about 40 pounds), 200 pounds of wheat, 200 pounds of dried peas, 120 pounds of salt, seed potatoes, malt for his beer and enough kerosene for house lamps. In cash he received from 90 to 100 roubles—about $50. In return for this he was expected to work every day except Sundays and holidays—about 280 days in the year. The hours of work in the short summer, when it is light practically all the time, are twelve, at least; in winter much less. With the help of his family, the sale of eggs and milk, and a cow or pig every few years a peasant is able under this arrangement to put aside a little for capital provided he spends nothing on "luxuries".

A "bourgeois" Esthonian who owned an estate had a similar arrangement. His peasants, he told me, received their lodging, half an acre for potatoes, quarter of an acre for a garden, enough meadow for a cow and two or three sheep, and some necessary straw and hay. Each family got 1600 pounds of barley and the same of rye, and a few bushels of seed wheat and peas. They were permitted to keep a pig and chickens. They had free fire wood and about three gallons of kerosene

and from 85 to 100 roubles in cash. The wife was expected to work steadily the same number of days as her husband for from 30 to 40 *kopeks* (15 to 20 cents) a day. Food, clothing, shoes and amusements the peasant was expected to provide out of this for himself—"by stealing what he can from the estate," this emancipated Esthonian observed with a knowing grin.

With the work of his wife and children, a peasant husband could often get the use of spare land in addition to the plot regularly allowed him, and accumulate capital and buy land on payments running for long terms of forty or fifty years with interest. Families which remained on the estate for several generations could thus acquire slowly but without sharp effort, farms of their own and the children or grandchildren become themselves, in a small way, independent farmers. The less thrifty and ambitious stuck pretty much where they were, not greatly dissatisfied, probably, nor dreaming of anything much better, living very much as farm horses and oxen did, certain at least of food, shelter and security, but not getting much ahead.

Getting ahead depended, of course, on the broad-mindedness of proprietors as well as on individual quality. Peasant girls who showed ability as ladies' maids and were taken up to town with their mistresses might make themselves so indispensable as to work out of the peasant rut altogether. Clever and ambitious boys could be encouraged to help themselves, and there are not a few such among the Esthonian intelligentsia today—men whose fathers were peasants, who began life as peasants themselves perhaps. There were pro-

prietors, on the other hand, who regarded any attempt of the peasants to better themselves as something to be sat on at once—they must keep their place—and it is such proprietors who get remembered in days like these.

Where some fundamental reason for resentment exists—like the social inequality between Balts and Esths—hatred is bound to flash out even against those who do not individually deserve it. The stranger will see many examples of friendly relations between the two races, and even, now and then, a touch of old-time feudal beauty and faithfulness. It was after the land law had been passed and the estates were being taken over that a Balt friend wrote me of the scene at the funeral of one of his relatives—how the peasants had gathered at her grave to sing hymns, and as his sister was about to enter the house afterward, how they had run forward in a spontaneous gesture of sympathy to seize and kiss her hands.

But with most Esthonians, particularly educated ones, the Balts are a sort of blind spot—any objective consideration of them is made impossible by inherited prejudice and the slant their minds have been given by convictions absorbed before they were old enough to think for themselves. A very sensible and intelligent Esthonian woman who could see little good in any Balt told me one day, as if it explained everything, how her father had once been called up by the Baroness who employed him and asked what he meant by sending his son off to school, merely to spoil him—a boy who is now a successful and respected business man. Another, after listening doggedly to favorable

comments I had been making about a Balt acquaintance suddenly flung out in a tone like cold steel—"You don't understand how we feel about these things! When my grandmother was a girl the Baron could make his peasants marry whoever he pleased, and if the girl pleased him she must come to him, if he wished, after the marriage, before she went to her husband." . . . Whether such *droits de seigneur* have been enforced in recent times, or are merely echoes of an earlier age altogether, family traditions of this sort are a very real force today and sometimes explain acts and opinions that otherwise might seem incomprehensible.

The estate of which I have just spoken was run as a practical farm and the main source of its owner's income. He himself was an intelligent farmer, with little love for the town, and the active executive of what, on a farm of this size, is a man's size business. He planned the general scheme of crops, time of plowing, sowing, etc., and worked out the details with the help of (1) a manager or superintendent. The latter, at once a subordinate and a more or less independent executive, must be carefully chosen and tactfully treated. The other members of the farm organization were (2) the book-keeper, (3) the store-keeper or quartermaster who had charge of tools, machinery, seed and other supplies, and (4) two assistant superintendents. The rationing of stock, what sort of feed and how much of it should be fed at particular seasons, was worked out by the owner, superintendent and book-keeper, and transmitted to the quartermaster to be carried out. In addition to these persons there was,

above the general run of "hands" (5) a blacksmith with two helpers (6) a machinist for the reapers and (7) another for the threshers and finally (8) a distiller to attend to the making of potato spirits.

This latter industry was an important one in peace times, not only for the barons themselves, who had a monopoly of it and carried on a rather demoralizing trade in *schnapps* with their peasants, but for the province as a whole. The nobles had their central distributing agency in Reval and alcohol was one of the main exports. These distilleries, with their huge fields of potatoes, grown for alcohol as sugar beets are grown for sugar, made many of these farms semi-industrial units, which it will be difficult to divide into small parcels without changing crops and methods altogether, and potatoes are a crop which flourish particularly well in Esthonia.

The owner of this particular estate, told me that in peace times he had been accustomed to spend in actual cash, including all expenses for clothes, books, and the winter months in Reval or Petrograd for himself, his wife and daughters, about $3,000. All the rest, he said, had for years gone back into the estate itself in improvements, and particularly into a rather ambitious project of drainage of his 2,500 acres of swamp land. The parcelling of the estate into small peasant farms which could be worked by a family with two horses would probably stop this latter work—unless the peasants were far-seeing enough to combine into some sort of cooperative scheme of drainage—and would mean the loss to the owner of the capital already invested.

REVOLUTION BY ACT OF PARLIAMENT

The agrarian law passed on October 10th, 1919, had given the Government the power to take over "for the purpose of creating a land reserve," any estates belonging to the Balt nobility, and, roughly-speaking, any arable land except that owned by charitable institutions, or by farmers, not noble, holding less than 150 *dessiatins* (about 400 acres). Compensation for the land itself was to be fixed by special legislation later. The "inventory"—machinery, animals, etc.,—was to be appraised at its value in roubles in 1914, and then paid for, with a deduction for depreciation, in Esthonian marks at a rate of exchange to be fixed by the Government.

The land thus acquired might be farmed by the State itself, or leased to groups of farmers for cooperative farming, but the main purpose of the law was, of course, to give land to the peasants. The estates were to be parcelled into farms small enough to be worked without hired help by an average family with two horses; and in distributing these parcels, preference was to be given to soldiers who had served with special bravery at the front, or had been wounded, to families of soldiers who had been killed, and to peasants who had actually lived on and cultivated the parcels themselves under their former owners. These new farmers were to have a six-year trial. If their farming was then regarded as satisfactory, they could remain on the land indefinitely, and even hand it down to their children. For practical purposes they were owners, as long as they continued properly to cultivate

the land, although strictly speaking ownership rested with the State.

The enforcement of this law, or indeed of any regulation which the Reval authorities might make, was determined by a multitude of local conditions over which the Reval Government, none too certain of itself, naturally had slight control. Already in 1919, before the law was passed, many estates had been taken over on the ground that the owners were "traitors," or that they were not cultivating them as they should. Yet in the autumn of that year one heard frequently in Reval of this or that owner who had succeeded in "fixing" things with the local land officer so that he might harvest his crops, and although the estate was theoretically taken, continue to live there. On one estate at which I called, the owner, Count T., was still living in the manor-house—a wing of which was occupied by the Esthonian supervisor, theoretically in charge of the property—and at tea he passed with a certain sarcastic enthusiasm a jar of honey which the superintendent had generously permitted him, made by his own bees.

Here, the peasants would take matters into their own hands; say what they must have, would and would not do; even though it were more than the local land officer demanded; and in another neighborhood, dismayed at the prospect of finding machinery, animals and seed for themselves, would voluntarily ask the former estate owners to restore the old arrangements. Some local officials were reasonable and conciliatory; others dishonest and grasping. An owner would come up to Reval, prove to the satisfaction of the Ministry

there that his estate was well run and should not be taken—the theory was that efficiently cultivated, moderate-sized estates were not to be taken, at least at first—get a promise from the Minister to that effect, and return to the country only to find the local Land Officer already in possession. And when this happened the Reval Government was not likely to interfere.

Accurate figures as to what was going on in Esthonia at this time were very hard to get. One would have had to go up and down the country, covering it estate by estate. The disagreements between Balt and Esthonian estimates as to the relative amounts of land held by each group; whether the Balts held more or less than half the land and the kinds of land which each held, may be passed over here. They have a bearing on the reality of the land hunger, but do not change the actual facts—that an aristocracy was being dispossessed of its property and driven out of its homes, without violence, to be sure, but just as surely as if it were falling back before cannon and machine guns.

The forests were taken over *en bloc* by the state and a superintendent put in charge who was not infrequently the forester formerly employed by the old owner. The curious social relations which resulted when the Baron went with hat figuratively in hand to buy wood for his own stoves from the man whose hat had literally come off for him in the old days, may readily be pictured. On the estate which I have just described—only the forests of which had been taken over—I was a witness of such a scene. The supervisor was living

in the house formerly occupied by the Baron's mother, on an outlying part of his property, and the Baron drove there and interviewed him as he sat solemnly at his desk. The supervisor's ponderous gravity and meticulous interpretation of the clauses and sub-clauses which, evidently, he scarce understood himself; the Baron's uneasy smiles and nods and unconvinced assents, the queer air of unreality and acrid farce which hung about the whole scene was like a bit out of Gogol's "Dead Souls."

To put the control and division of the appropriated estates and the appraisal of the "inventory" into the hands of brand-new officials, who were not only without any training or tradition of professional responsibility, but the more or less active enemies of those whose property they were handling, was, of course, an invitation to all sorts of irregularity. No one familiar with graft inquiries at home will be surprised to find that the reports of a committee of investigation sent out by the Constituent Assembly to look into the behavior of the land officials should be peppered by such phrases as "does not understand book-keeping and is entirely indifferent to the interests of the property"; "pays his relatives out of the money belonging to the estate"; "uses the property in such a wasteful way that he is practically squandering it," and so on. One was constantly told of new overseers requisitioning for their own uses grain, horses and cattle, and grafting in a petty fashion in butter and milk.

The theoretical compensation for the inventory amounted, when finally turned into Esthonian marks,

to almost nothing. One owner told me, how correctly I can not say, that the amount he would receive if his estate were taken would just about pay for the copper fittings in his distillery. Another who had come up to Reval to protest against the appraisal of his property said that two horses had been set down at 10 and 5 roubles, rather than less than $2 and $1, at what was then the value of the Esthonian mark. A pedigreed stallion on another place was appraised at 500 roubles or 10,000 marks (less than $100). An ordinary work horse cost then in the open market at least 20,000 marks and this animal, it was said, would have fetched at least 100,000 Esthonian marks. There was even a tale of a library table appraised at a few marks, the estimated accumulated depreciation of which since 1914 made it now worth less than nothing, so that the owner actually owed something to those who took it away from him!

While such stories are a bit too good to be true, they show how the wind was blowing, or seemed to be blowing, to the Balts.

A pro-Balt pamphlet, *Die Agrarfrage in Estland,* which presented a variety of evidence as to the enforcement of the land law, reported a somewhat similar incident. The owner of the estate Kardina which had been taken over before the law went into effect, had received a credit of 70,800 Esthonian marks for six of his forty horses. Later, the whole forty were appraised at 61,000 marks, and the owner lost, according to this authority, not only his horses, but had to pay 9,800 marks additional! The same writer—Oskar Bernmann—told of horses appraised at 3 roubles (60

Esthonian marks at that time) while "the horsehair for a violin bow cost 80 marks;" beds at from 2 roubles to 80 *kopeks;* lamps at 15 *kopeks;* sofas at 1 rouble, 20 *kopeks.* The last three items were reported from the Estate Lechts. On the estate Hark, near Reval, "cowbells bought in 1917 were reckoned to have depreciated 80% and horse chains bought in the same year to be depreciated 58%. The distillery of the estate Kappo was valued at 2,124 roubles (42,000 Esthonian marks) the price of a good work-horse. In Morras plows were appraised at 84 *kopeks;* whole mills at from 80 roubles upwards. Mills and sawmills in Sommerhusen were worth together, according to the Commission, 150 roubles (3,000 Esthonian marks, the price of two pairs of shoes), while mills at Allenküll and Sellie with turbine equipment were appraised at from 420 to 545 roubles (about 10,000 Esthonian marks)—"the price of a poor typewriter," and so on.

One of the Balt members of the Constituent Assembly, returning from a visit to the country, addressed to the Prime Minister a characteristic lament, in which he said that he felt it his duty to warn him of the danger threatening Esthonia's whole agricultural industry. The letter was published in the *Revaler Bote,* a Balt newspaper, on May 10th, 1920.

"The small, but for several decades very efficiently managed estate of Wayküll, whose former owner I represent," said the letter, "has been taken over by the Government although it was clearly stated that estates not necessary to parcel would not be taken, provided they were properly managed.

"Several months ago the Government Land Officer

in Wierland proposed to my superintendent in Wayküll that they might make an arrangement according to which they could operate the estate together. It goes without saying that I declined the proposal. On March 12th, my manager was suddenly removed from his position and the management of the estate turned over to the laborers on it, although the estate itself was not as yet taken over. To my protest I received the answer, after eleven days, that my manager might remain at his post, but that the division of the work on the estate should be given to the overseer. The same Herr Waher (the State representative) high-handedly took from the estate flour, potatoes, groats, and wood without paying anything for it, with the explanation that he had a right so to do and was sending all these things to his own house. In addition he demanded horses from the estate, and finally did take a horse and brought it back only after several days. To my protest to the Land Ministry I received the reply that my complaints were 'very exaggerated'.

". . . The farm work for the past month and a half has been so demoralized that indispensable spring work, especially seeding, has been brought to a standstill and the larger part of the seed-potatoes have already begun to sprout.

"The same Waher, a few weeks ago, after I had sold 300 poods (about 12,000 pounds) of oats at the command of the food administration in Wesenberg, ordered the oats unloaded and held although the estate has several thousand poods of oats on hand—twice as much as is needed for seeding and feed.

"The appraisal of the estate's inventory was set on April 13th for April 20th, although according to the law a fortnight is provided. As it is impossible in the country to find experts in so short a time, I went to the Land Ministry where I received the answer that, while it was not according to law, yet for technical reasons it was impossible to do otherwise, and that I always could make a protest. The only result of a protest would be that a new appraisal would come in the time

of hardest work when the horses would be worn out and the machinery damaged and that the owner would be punished by waiting several months longer for his pay. It might be observed here that the estate belongs to the Family S., of the three sons of which, one fell fighting in the ranks with our troops, while the others were killed by the Bolsheviki. . . .

. . . "The same Waher took from the Estate Mödders, which is not yet taken over by the Government, 3 stofs of milk and also wood, naturally without paying anything for it . . . said Waher keeps no records of his land parcelling. In Kurküll he started to parcel the branch estate of Wohu whereby the central farm was left without hay. In Poll, only the branch estate was to have been parcelled, but he has already taken part of the fields from the central estate. Mödders, that was to have been unparcelled, he has already divided and arbitrarily seized several barns and put people to live in them. In Innis, before taking over the estate, he permitted the laborers to remove from the forest wood already cut belonging to the owner.

. . . "The Land Officer Laur in Pühajöggi, without following the decrees of the local court, arbitrarily divided the estate of Türpsal, Ontika, and Toila, where first-class cultivation existed. To the former owners are left only 80 dessiatins. Sound farming methods are impossible; first, because the decrees of the local court are not observed and secondly because there is nothing left with which cultivation can support itself. Especially is this the case where land, broken for the first time, is unexpectedly taken away from its owners, and the impulse to work destroyed. . . . Against the Superintendent Lais, in Mettapäh, there is already lodged an accusation of theft and sale of alcohol. The alcohol was found by N. in the village of K. . . . The demoralization in the district is so great that on several estates it is impossible to continue farming. . . ."

A Balt, writing to me from Reval, early in 1921, said: "I have just on my desk the protocol of the taxation of the inventory of my sister's estate, which took place some days ago. The distillery, the electric station, 73 cows, 32 horses, sheep, pigs, agricultural machinery, wagons and sledges, grain, hay, altogether are taxed for 320,000 Esthonian marks, or about $900. For this price it will be expropriated after May first. My sister is ruined. How long can she live on the interest of $900?"

With the intention of seeing some of these parcelled estates as the Esthonians saw them I one day accompanied the Minister of Agriculture and several of his associates on a tour through some of the expropriated farms near Reval. On one, the owner's house had been turned into a school-house—one of the purposes for which it was generally argued the manor-houses were needed. Two rooms had been fitted with benches and some old Russian charts. The school was not in session and the rest of the house, with the exception of several rooms occupied by the young school-master and a sort of land-clerk, was empty.

The new tenants were lodged in various outbuildings, and on one part of the estate several new cottages were slowly going up. The lack of resources of all these new farmers—one had been a blacksmith on the estate, another was a cobbler from Reval—was very noticeable, and the whole air of the place was less shipshape than it would have been, undoubtedly, before the estate was taken over, yet at least the

thing was really working. Those to whom we talked seemed hopeful, and the stand of grain on parts of the estate which had been given out the preceeding autumn suggested what the whole might with good luck become when the new farmers had had a fair chance.

On another estate we ran into one of those disputes which must be very common in this transition period. Two peasants laid claim to the same land. One was a returned soldier and a farm had been given him as a veteran of the war. The other was the son of a peasant who had lived on the land under the old owner and some authority, either the central government or local board, had given him the farm for that reason. For the better part of two hours the two peasants stated their cases, repeating them over and over again in stolid, stubborn, solemn peasant fashion, while the officials from Reval chewed grass, looked wise, and tried to hit on a solution. It was finally decided that there was enough land for both. The disputed tract was therefore divided, and leaving the details of the decision to be worked out later, we motored back to town.

I mentioned to the Minister several specific instances similar to those reported in the complaint already quoted and spoke also of some of the more general objections which might be made to the government's policy. The difficulty, not to say impossibility, of finding animals and machinery for all these new farms was a very pertinent argument for proceeding more slowly with the breaking up of the estates. Esthonia was not another Belgium, either in soil or in its near-

ness to great city markets,—it was yet to be proved that small parcels, intensively cultivated, were practicable. It seemed no more than just that the estate owners should be permitted to keep at least their houses and the 150 *dessiatins* allowed to non-noble owners.

The replies of the Minister, an agreeable and outwardly reasonable person, showed plainly that political and social rather than agrarian problems, strictly speaking, were the main preoccupations of the new régime. They were, he said, founding a new nation. Time was flying—the chance might not come again. Something must be done to meet Bolshevik competition in the present, and as solid a defense as possible prepared against the demands of a great Russia that might later arise from the revolution. They must have citizens with a real stake in the success of an independent Esthonia, loyal to the new Government and ready to fight for it. The way to get such a body of citizens was to build up a population of peasant proprietors or small farmers. As for some of the acts which struck me as unjust, they must be viewed not merely as attacks on property, but also in the light of the owners' loyalty to the Esthonian Government.

In other words, what was going on here, was, as has already been suggested, not an agrarian reform, but an agrarian revolution. The weapons employed were appraisal boards, land officers and an act of parliament, but the Esthonians were at war, none the less. Their point of view was put even more clearly to me one day by one of the secretaries in the Foreign Office. To any questioning of the justice of the expropriations,

he gave the answer that the Esthonians were merely righting an ancient injustice, and taking back lands that seven hundred years ago had been taken away from them.

"But seven hundred years is a long time," I said. "Do you suppose that our Indians could come down to lower Broadway and take over a lot of office-buildings because their ancestors may have sold the land there for a few beads?"

He listened with entire equanimity. "If your Indians," he said, "were in as big a majority in America as we are in Esthonia—about 95 per cent—very likely they would!"

A revolution is generally justified by its success, and the outcome of this social and agrarian revolt will depend largely on the result of Esthonia's political revolt against Russia. Some of the Balt proprietors have declined to acknowledge the new régime to the extent of accepting the compensation offered for their property, preferring to await the judgment of the future. That Esthonia itself might change without waiting for Russia to change, was suggested by the drift to the Right in the elections of November, 1920, and the return, a few months later, of Mr. Paets to the Ministry, although the first effect of his return seemed to be rather to hasten than to retard the tempo of expropriation. In any case, it is easier to knock Humpty Dumpty off the wall than to put him together again, and easier to put new owners on the land than to take them from it.

CHAPTER VII

LATVIA AND THE LETTS

A CERTAIN amount of confusion in regard to Latvia and the Letts is a mere matter of names. Latvia, Lettland, Livonia, Livland, Courland and Latgale, are among the names used in reference to a little country only about half again as large as Switzerland. Russia's Baltic Provinces, strictly speaking, were Esthonia, Livonia and Courland. The majority of the inhabitants in Courland, the southernmost of the three, are Letts. Livonia, in the middle, was divided between Letts and Esthonians. The enw Esthonia takes the northern fringe of Livonia. The southern part joins with Courland and a district east of it, known as Latgale, to make the new state of Latvia. Lettland and Livland are merely other forms for Latvia and Livonia.

Substituting Letts for Esthonians, the past history and present problems of Latvia are similar to those of Esthonia. The Letts were conquered by the Teutonic Knights and made serfs. They, too, had their periods of foreign domination—Swedish, Polish, and finally Russian—and Riga was an old Hanseatic town before the Great Peter set up his "window on Europe" in the Neva marshes. Liberation from serfdom and the development of a national spirit and an intellectually conscious class was, roughly speaking, coincident with that of Esthonia.

One of the interesting things about Europe, however, is the dramatic differences so often found on crossing an all but invisible frontier. Journeys no longer than those made for week-end vacations at home—or even between suburban homes and a downtown office (like the hour's ride between Petrograd and the Finnish frontier, for instance) take one to another race, speech, religion, a different civilization altogether. The Esthonians are of remote Mongolian origin; the Letts, like the Lithuanians, are non-Slavic, Indo-Europeans. They speak a different language, are, in fact, a different people, although as you travel through the pleasant, level, timber-broken country, there is no more to mark the boundary than there is between Indiana and Illinois.

No great amount of love is lost between the two, although they are in the same boat, politically, and one way to get at their respective temperaments is to listen to what each says about the other and himself. An Esthonian will cheerfully admit that he is rugged, dependable, hard-working, plain-spoken, realistic,—in a word, masculine; while the Letts, he intimates, are voluble, undependable, frivolous and all for show. The Lett pictures the Esthonian as heavy, obstinate, suspicious, grasping, while pointing out that his own people are idealistic, vivacious, unselfish and reasonable, or, as he concludes with a bright smile, more "Southern".

The Letts are "southern" in the same sense that Bowling Green is south of Harlem, and yet, oddly enough, there does seem to be a little something in what they say. The Lettish politicians I met in Riga did seem rather more lively and flexible than the cor-

responding types in Reval. One explanation may be that Riga, the Latvian capital, was, before the war, a big cosmopolitan town of more than half a million people, and that these Lettish leaders are "city folks," comparatively speaking.

The touchiness of the two peoples towards each other was illustrated by the dispute over the border town of Walk. The point at which nationalism passes from the sublime to do something else may be difficult to fix, but little doubt of its whereabouts remained in the minds of the unhappy travellers who had to worm their way, during the summer of 1920, through the patriotic atmosphere surrounding this dreary village. It was a concrete example of the apparently unlimited capacity of human beings to wax enthusiastic over the general idea of patriotism and gladly to squander on it a self-sacrifice and stubbornness rarely to be extracted from them for the personal and particular affairs of everyday life.

Walk is a place of about ten or fifteen thousand people situated near the ethnological boundary. Northward people begin to speak Esthonian; southward, Lettish. But there are streaks and islands of both races on both sides of the town. In the old Russian days this made little difference, inasmuch as both Esthonia and what is now Latvia were Russian, politically, and Walk a mere junction-point on the Reval-Riga line.

Independence changed all this, and Walk—which most casual visitors would gladly sell for a jack-knife and a few beads—rose to a position of vital strategic

importance. Both sides claimed it. Without it, each was "cut off," "strangled," unable to exist. Press and politicians of both countries supported their respective claims with the arguments, threats, and appeals to patriotism and national honor, invariably employed in such cases. Stripped by war as they were, both countries nevertheless rallied to the idea of defending Walk as if that spot embodied all they held most dear. There was actual likelihood of war when the British Military Mission stepped in with an offer of arbitration. British Officers motored all over the surrounding country, until the already limited local supply of gasoline was well-nigh exhausted—not greatly to the enthusiasm of the militarists of either side—and handed down a decision.

The line was run through the middle of the town. The Esthonians got the more important part, including the railway station, while the Letts received various strips of territory which it was hoped would serve as substitutes. The Letts promptly tore up the track for several kilometres, and withdrew to a station of their own. This hindered when it did not prevent the shipment of heavy goods. They had already changed the gauge from Russian to standard—partly to keep the Esthonians from sending armored trains down into Latvia—and the traveller, in addition to changing cars, now had to tramp across the interval.

A barbed-wire entanglement zigzagged through Walk and sentries stalked solemnly in front of it with fixed bayonets. This "frontier" was closed between ten at night and seven in the morning, and the timetables so arranged that no matter how the traveller

fixed it, he must kick his heels in Walk for from eighteen to twenty-four hours. There were even refinements on the obvious discomforts of these waits and of trains that left at three in the morning. And after arriving in Walk at midnight, waiting through the next day, and staying awake the next night for fear of missing the train, I stumbled forth at two in the morning cross country, only to find at the station that the Letts had a patriotic time of their own, an hour and a half ahead of Esthonian time—although Latvia is west of Esthonia—and that the three o'clock train was already on its way to Riga!

The Letts were about a year behind the Esthonians in getting their national organization started—it was just a week after the Armistice that a National Council representing all party groups, except the extreme Left Socialists and the Conservative Balts, met in Riga and declared Latvia an independent Republic—and their orderly progress was hindered during the ensuing year, not only by the same difficulties the Esthonians had to meet, but by the active interference of German and Russian troops under Generals von der Goltz and Bermondt.

The National Council appointed a Ministry, headed by Karl Ulmannis, a Lett who had spent several years in America and been an instructor in the University of Nebraska, drew up a rough Constitution and decreed that the cabinet should act as a provisional government until a general election should be held for a national assembly.

Before this government could establish itself firmly, it was driven from Riga to Libau by the Bolshevik in-

vasion of the succeeding January. And in April it was ousted by the Balt Landeswehr, acting with the approval, if not the active help of General von der Goltz, and a new cabinet, headed by a Lutheran pastor, Needra, put in its place. Needra was honest and patriotic in the opinion of the Allied commissioners on the spot, but they also felt that the coup d'état was an unjustifiable act of violence, and after much wrangling, and some pressure, Needra withdrew in July, 1919, and a new cabinet with Ulmannis again at its head, took the power.

The Allied Commissioners insisted that the Balts, who included not only landed proprietors, as in Esthonia, but a considerable portion of the solid citizens of Riga, should be represented in the Government, and two were thus chosen as Minister of Justice and of Finance. There was one curious moment during the summer of 1919, when a clash between the Esthonians and the Balt Landeswehr along the frontier brought the Esthonians hotfoot almost to the gates of Riga. They actually began to shell this supposedly friendly city and might have taken it and—so they urged—disposed of the German element altogether, had not the Allied representatives interposed and forced an armistice. There was another moment, scarcely less curious, in the late autumn just before the Dorpat conference, when the troops of the Russian adventurer, Bermondt, together with the "Iron Division"—a body of German troops who had been promised, or thought they had been promised, land in Courland by the Ulmannis Government in return for service against the Bolsheviks—laid siege to Riga. The Letts threw

up barricades and fought back and forth across the Duna river and had they not been supported by several British and French destroyers might very well have lost the town.

These dangers were passed, the army strengthened, the Government began to stabilize itself, and in April, 1920, elections were held for the Constituent Assembly. About one-third of the delegates returned were from the so-called Peasant, or Farmers' Union Party, to which Ulmannis belonged; about one-third were Social Democrats; and the remainder represented various minority groups, including the conservative Balts. This Assembly confirmed Ulmannis as Minister President and asked him to form a new Cabinet, and then proceeded to the discussion of the constitution and the settlement of the all-important problem of the land.

LETTISH INTELLIGENTSIA

It was while the Bermondt adventure was still undecided in the early winter of 1919 that I first saw the pleasant old town of Riga and met some of the Lettish leaders. The city—it had more than half a million people before the war—lay like a run-down clock. Bermondt was on the west bank of the Duna; the Letts held the east bank and the main town. Trenches ran through the narrow, cobblestoned streets close to the river and those running down to the Duna were blocked by barricades. There was constant sniping from rifles and machine-guns back and forth across the stream and all day long, now up this street, now down that, came the desultory detonation of shells, and the rumble and crash of falling masonry and glass.

It was to this accompaniment that I met Premier Ulmannis, and had various glimpses of the Lettish intelligentsia. Ulmannis himself had fled to America when the reaction set in after the revolution of 1905 and at the end of a few years found himself instructor in agriculture in the University of Nebraska. He might have become a professor shortly, and written a book on the making of an American, but one romance of this sort was not enough for the sanguine, bushy-haired Lett, and like many another half-Americanized immigrant now helping to build these new states, he returned to his native land when war and revolution had made it a new "new country."

He seemed one of those argonauts who had got nothing but good from his American adventure—easier manners, broader outlook, more tolerant point of view. With none of that overpowering gravity which sometimes afflicts these aspiring statesmen, he went at once to the things a stranger wanted to know, chatted frankly and with humor, and put at my disposal a young lieutenant who spoke a half a dozen languages and had nothing to do for several days but show me about.

The Foreign Minister, Mr. Meyerovitch, a tall, dark, fluent young man of not more than thirty-five, was another interesting example of the possibilities in such new states—of the young men, that is to say, of comparatively simple origin, who in the old days, might have been lawyers, professors or journalists, and are now suddenly become statesmen, with their fingers in world politics. The son of a school-teacher, with his Lettishness sharpened by a touch of Jewish blood,

he spoke English and French, as well as Russian, German and Lettish, and seemed as much at home as if trained a diplomat.

The rapid industrial and commercial growth of Riga before the war had assisted in the building up there of an untitled, Balt bourgeoisie, not altogether unlike the rich Moscow merchant families, and almost as proud and self-sufficient as the landed gentry themselves. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Ehrhardt, was one of these—a pleasant-mannered, slightly quizzical, business-man politician, who had served in the old Russian Duma as well as at the head of one of the large industrial concerns of Riga. He talked of music, pictures and people as well as of business and politics, with a betwixt-and-between manner characteristic of some of the more flexible Balts; of the standing between Russia and Germany, and was able, according to his mood, to accent the energy and tough-mindedness of the one or the "broad-nature" and speculative enthusiasm of the other. He seemed loyal to Lettish independence and said that most Balts were willing to work for it, and added, whimsically, that the Letts were more excited in their hatred than the facts warranted. There were only about 170,000 Balts in the two provinces, anyway, and as they had no peasant class to build up from, they were dying out, so why couldn't the majority take things calmly?

My guide was a Doctor of Philosophy—his grandfather had been a peasant—he spoke English easily, and was interested in everything from politics to futurist cafés. After we had visited the barricades, we went to a newspaper office on the edge of the section

under bombardment. The building had already been hit several times, the City Room had been moved into the interior, and with its short-haired girls smoking cigarettes and scribbling copy, and volunteers dropping in from sentry-duty with rifles slung across their shoulders, it reminded one of a play about some secret printing-office in the romantic days of the old régime.

The editor invited me to a quieter room to talk with some of his friends, all enthusiastic Letts—a dark little poet, with thick spectacles and thick black hair growing low on his forehead; a futurist painter just in from the trenches; and a pale, thinly-bearded gentleman in a rusty overcoat, who looked as if he had just stepped from "La Vie de Bohême." They were more radical than the Ministers, more like those who had the upper hand in Esthonia.

The paper had backed the Ulmannis Government, the editor said, because they thought all Letts should stand behind it for the moment, but later they hoped to come out stronger for purely Lettish interests. The Government was too lenient with the Balts. Why was there any need of a separate Balt Landeswehr (it was later merged with the Lettish army), it had overthrown Ulmannis once, who could say they wouldn't try it again?

To my suggestion that it was the Balts' fatherland, too, and that the two groups ought to work together, the young men listened gravely and began talking rapidly in Lettish. My guide explained that they thought I didn't understand how much their people had had to stand from the Balts. The latter were not an op-

pressed minority—the Government hadn't been stiff enough.

I asked if they thought that Latvia would be able to keep her independence when Russia was herself again. Yes, they said, they did; if the non-Russian border peoples got together in a defensive alliance, old Russia would have some trouble in coercing them. But they would like to ask me a question. Did the Allies, who had encouraged them to declare their independence, really believe in it? Or were they merely being used because the Allies thought their own soldiers too good to send against the Bolsheviks? I said I thought most outsiders would like to see them have all the independence that was politically and economically practicable. If our government had done nothing toward recognizing them it was because it felt it best to wait about settling the status of the border states until Russia was better able to speak for herself.

The little black poet, the writer and painter had left talk to the editor, but when I asked the former two about their own work and whether they actually wrote in Lettish instead of in Russian, they woke up and began to ask questions. Who was our great poet now? Who could be translated into Lettish, for instance? They all knew Poe in translation, and Emerson, but who was worth translating now? They had read some of Jack London's stories in Russian, and thought them all very well in a certain field, but who could be called in any large sense American?

The pale gentleman in the rusty overcoat spoke with much feeling on the subject, he seemed to feel an al-

most personal grief in the fact that American writers had so little to say. Why was it that a nation so great as America should not have writers to express that greatness? Perhaps, he suggested, we were waiting a renaissance? They, the Letts, were now in the midst of theirs; they had begun to wake up about half a century ago. Did I think it would help toward getting recognition of their independence if some of their Lettish writers were translated into English? . . .

Skirting the leeward side of the narrow, twisting streets of the "Old Town"—for Riga also has its seven hundred years of history—we looked into the square in front of the *Black Head House,* from which the Letts were firing a trench mortar over their own roofs and across the river. The *Schwartz-häupterhaus* was originally built in 1330 and a thousand memories of the tangled history of this Baltic world crisscross about its high gabled façade, with the Saint George on the roof-tree, and King Arthur on the clock, and across the front the arms of the ancient Hansa towns of Riga, Hamburg, Bremen and Lubeck. The portraits of various monarchs who had a part in that history hung in its banquet hall, and Peter the Great, himself, who pounded old Russia together, looked down from his gilded frame a year later when Poles and Bolsheviks met here to make peace.

The Black Head Club was a company of merchants banded together in the fifteenth century to defend their town, and later mellowed into a mere social club with various quaint traditions. There is another Black Head House in Reval, also very old, and now turned

Railroad Station at Helsingfors [*Chapter I*]

The "Schwarz-häupterplatz" in the "Old Town" at Riga

over to Esthonian uses, and I presume still others in other Hansa towns. Mauritius was their patron saint, and the kinky-haired Moor's head—the *schwartzhaupt*—is found on all their houses and carved on their pews in church. Royal and other guests visited the Riga house and wrote their names in its big golden book and sometimes contrived to leave behind a glove or veil, or some other personal token. The last official Russian visit was in 1910, when the unhappy Nicholas, then Tsar of all the Russias, King of Poland, Grand Duke of Finland, etc., etc., came to Riga to celebrate the 200th annexation of the Province of Livland to Russia.

We had another glimpse of the non-political side of Latvia in a visit to the Riga Art Museum. The museum was closed and cold as ice, but I had scarcely mentioned an interest when my guide had hunted up the Director, the distinguished painter, Purwits, and not only had the museum opened, but Mr. Purwits and his assistant-director there to receive me. The young futurist painter came along, too, because he had some of his own things hung there. With the unhappy notion of correcting his impression that the modern schools were unknown in America, I told the lieutenant to tell his friend that we had a great deal of work like his in America. The young painter answered in Lettish that if I said there were pictures like *his* in America, that *proved* I didn't understand them!

Purwits was known in Russia, where he had worked with the great Russian landscape painter, Levitan, and before the war he would have been reckoned, I suppose, as Russian. It was interesting, therefore, to

find him apparently as convinced a nationalist as the younger men. He chatted of his experiences with Russians and said that they were quite another people from the Letts, and the longer one knew them the more one felt these differences. Most of his Russian friends had had little interest in Western culture. "The light comes from the East!" was their way of putting it, he said.

There were several of Purwits' pictures in the museum—white birch forests, generally, seen across water against a sombre autumn background of brown and black and green—landscapes easily understandable, yet full of a melancholy Russian beauty. The young futurist could only shrug his shoulders gloomily. Too naïve for him! he said. . . .

THE TRAGEDY OF RIGA

Riga, before the war, was one of Russia's principal seaports and a rapidly growing city of more than half a million people. Beyond the "Old Town" on the Duna shore, with its crooked streets and ancient Lutheran spires, had spread a new city, based on manufacturing and trade with the Russian interior, with theatres and parks, broad, shaded boulevards and suburban villas, and all the furnishings of a modern West-European city. German was heard as often as Russian or Lettish on its streets, there were a good many English and other foreign colonists—it was a live and cosmopolitan place.

Out of the port of Riga before the war went annually something like $120,000,000 worth of goods, a good part of it grain and other produce from the in-

terior of Russia. From Riga and the other Latvian ports, Libau and Windau, went some $210,000,000 worth of merchandise. About half as much came in, bound mostly for the Russian hinterland. There were about 400 factories (the figures are Lettish) grouped about Riga and some 90,000 workmen.

With the outbreak of war in 1914 the port of Riga was closed, and all this huge trade with Russia stopped short. At the height of the German offensive in 1915 (when the great Brest-Litovsk and Ivangorod fortresses were blown up almost without having fired a shot) the Grand Duke Nicholas gave order that Riga should be evacuated. It was an order that would have come, probably, only from a Russian, thinking in terms of the Napoleonic invasion and the passive means which defeated it—an example of that curious, inverted genius for self-destruction which poured hundreds of thousands of Lettish, Lithuanian and Polish peasants over into Russia, to be scattered, dying of starvation and disease, across Siberia, and into Turkestan. Factories with their machinery and workmen, banks with their securities, were emptied out of Riga in a few hours. The population dropped from 517,522 of 1914, to 210,590 in 1916; the population of Courland, in which Riga is situated, from 798,300 to 269,812. After the Russians came the Germans; then Bolshevists; then, in the autumn of 1919, Bermondt, and the fighting back and forth across the Duna river.

Few neighborhoods outside the zone of actual trench warfare have suffered more from the war, and yet, coming into the town in the summer of 1920, for instance, one found the surfaces almost unchanged.

Trolley-cars bowled cheerfully down the wide streets; the park and Serpentine winding through the center of the town were well kept, grass closely mowed and flower-beds blooming; and the trim nurse-maids and their children, old gentlemen pausing to exchange a leisurely good-morning, the snatches of talk one caught from gentle-appearing ladies meeting as they crossed the Park from morning marketing, combined, with the beguiling summer sun, to create an air of well-ordered social life and settled urbanity.

But this impression was soon succeeded by another one—a curious sensation of having got up too early, or having arrived on some unexpected holiday. The business streets were almost like streets on a Sunday; banks all but empty; wharves deserted. An excursion down the river to Baldera (where the British and French destroyers had anchored the year before during the Bermondt attack) or in the other direction to the Strand, was a melancholy progress past dismantled factories; some smashed, some standing intact with smokeless chimneys,—mile after mile of bleaching industrial skeletons.

The big Provodnik Rubber works, known all over Russia before the war, stood like a gigantic dried-up honey-comb, its modern reinforced concrete shell scraped so clean that there was not so much as a window-frame left. In short, Riga was a city starving commercially, attacked by a sort of pernicious industrial anemia. And its pleasant surface only made more haunting the impression it left—like that of a handsome human being afflicted by some obscure and supposedly incurable disease. . . .

The disease was, of course, not at all incurable. Riga's position as one of Russia's main gateways makes its ultimate recovery inevitable. Some of its industries, which owed their success to a high protective tariff and Russia's comparative lack of manufactures, may not be resumed, especially if Latvia continues as an independent state. But the land is there, and considerable quantities of timber, and the continuance of the carrying trade is only a matter of time and peace and more normal conditions in Russia. In another five years Riga may be booming, and looked at in terms of history one might almost say that there was nothing the matter at all. Unhappily, it is not in terms of history that everyday people live—those who need the rubbers the Provodnik no longer is making, and the flour that used to come out of Russia, who must contrive to live with a rouble that is worth one or two, instead of fifty cents.

The "psychology" which such commercial illness might tend to encourage in some of the less tough-minded inhabitants was suggested by a little adventure I had one summer afternoon in one of Riga's suburbs. It was a still, hot day, and I had taken a trolley-car out to the end of the line and then continued on foot in search of a place to swim. Tramping along in the neighborhood of the Kaiserwald, a villa neighborhood near a lake, I hailed a passerby and asked him how one got to the water. He eyed me with some curiosity, asked if I were a foreigner, and on hearing the word "American" at once insisted that I should return with him to his own house on the lake.

He was, it appeared, an untitled Balt who had visited America in 1893 at the time of the Chicago World's Fair. The Fair, a clubhouse at Bath Beach, New York, where he had spent many happy days, the enormous tomatoes we were able to grow in America had made an indelible impression. It had been his grand tour, that trip to America, and it was thrown into peculiar allurement now by the black cloud of war in which he had been wrapped for six years, the collapse of the old Balt order in Latvia, and the ruin of his beautiful Riga. I must take one of his rowboats, for the lake was shallow inshore, and afterward come back to the house and have a bottle of his home-brewed beer.

So I took the boat and had a swim in the middle of the lake, the shores of which were dotted with the "pink seals" found throughout these Baltic waters, all splashing about, as refreshingly free of bathing suits as so many South Sea Islanders, and rejoined my hospitable host. He showed me his garden and ice-boats, the two cottages he had hoped to rent—but what good would it do to rent them now and be paid in paper money?—all the while interspersing his cheerful and matter-of-fact comments on life in general and summer colonies in particular, with a sort of recurrent lament on the downfall of Riga. It had been a fine city, but where were their intelligentsia? Who were these Letts, anyway, and what did they know about running a country? They didn't want to work, were always jealous of each other—a queer lot, who had been ground down too long.

Seated on a little balcony at last, looking out on

the lake over the top of one of those enormous glasses, six inches across the top and nearly as deep, which the Germans use for particularly foamy beer, I remarked that Riga would be herself again as soon as Russia opened up.

"Russia will never open up!" declared my companion, "Russia is finished. Only foreigners can ever do anything with Russia. The Russians will never be able to do it for themselves. Everything has an end. Persia went at last, so did Rome. So will England go, finally, and America. This disease that's in Russia will go round the world. It's the end of everything." He turned with an air of explanation—"It's all in my program!"

Going into the house he returned with a huge, leather-bound Bible, printed in old German type with an introduction by Martin Luther. Turning to one of its chapters he said, "They took this out of the later editions because they said it had too many fairy tales. As a matter of fact, there's more truth in this book than in any of them!" He began to read cryptic phrases about a time of destruction coming, when a great wind should blow from the East . . . "You see—that's Russia!" It would blow in the morning, and through the noon—"Noon . . . that's Central Europe!" Kings would rise against each other, and no man's property be respected—in short, there it all was, just as things were happening today. "No!" he concluded, oracularly, "Russia must burn! *Russland . . . muss . . . brennen!*"

He took the Bible back and brought out a faded photograph of the Bath Beach clubhouse. "That's

it!" he said. "It was twenty-seven years ago. I was a young man then!" . . . We finished our beer, and he walked back through the pines with me and pointed out a short cut to the trolley-line.

TRADE AND THE NEW ORDER

While the cutting off of trade with Russia and the evacuation of its factories made Riga's lot particularly hard, the difficulties caused by a depreciated paper currency, and the problem of paying for indispensable imports were similar to those faced by all these border states. The efforts of the Lettish Government to climb out of this slough of commercial depression were also similar to those made elsewhere and what is said here of Latvia may be taken, therefore, to apply more or less accurately to other states as well.

A casual tourist arriving in the Baltic in the year after the war, and seeing amber necklaces traded for a few hundred cigarettes; officers from Foreign Missions disposing of second-hand shirts and boots before they left for home for almost as much as they paid for them; and delicate ladies receiving from their gallant admirers abroad, not candy and books, but toothpaste and soap, might easily have conceived a sure and certain plan of making a fortune. Simply go home, load up a ship with all sorts of things, from shoes and silk stockings to chocolates and cotton cloth, and sail round the Baltic coast as New England skippers used to sail out to the East, and trade with the natives!

The only objection to this scheme was that while the natives needed everything, they had little or nothing

with which to pay for it. There was, however, a little flax, and here and there a surplus of potatoes, and nearly everywhere quantities of uncut timber. Hundreds of houses were smashed in France. Why not take the timber to France and bring back some of the things needed here?

This was an idea which occurred, in one form or another, to many, and there were various projects with timber as a basis, expanding all the way from purely private ventures to schemes to issue currency with timber concessions as a basis. Eventually, no doubt, businesses based on real wealth, like that in forests, will succeed, but they met at first with all sorts of unforeseen difficulties, and among these difficulties were the measures taken by the very governments anxious to encourage trade and build up their own finances.

In both Esthonia and Latvia, for instance, there were attempts to keep up the rate of exchange and pay for indispensable imports by compelling the exporter to exchange his foreign currency receipts for local paper or to import an amount of goods equivalent in value to that exported. The first might take the form of a requisition of 25 per cent of the gross receipts received for exported goods, in return for what the Government deemed an equivalent amount of its own money; or the Government might requisition a part of the goods later imported, for sale in government-controlled cooperative stores. Under the compulsory importation scheme, your timber exporter who sold $1,000 worth of lumber in England would be expected, for instance, to bring back into the country $1,000 worth of cotton cloth, or shoes, or soap, or

machinery. Sometimes he must even state beforehand at what price in local currency these imported goods would be sold.

While the Government's desire to keep up its balance of trade is understandable, these schemes were difficult to work out in practice. Exporting is one business, and importing quite another, and the man who knew all about Esthonian timber might know little about buying advantageously in a foreign market. Moreover he could not reckon on a comparatively fixed and easily convertible medium of exchange. Even were the paper which he was eventually destined to accept for his English pounds wanted abroad, its actual value, before the transaction was completed, might be cut in two. And the rate at which the Government compelled him to exchange his foreign money was almost always below the rate at which that money sold in the open local market.

Or again, the Government declared a monopoly and went into business itself, on the theory that in time of great need the Government ought to have some control over the available resources and utilize them for the good of the greatest number. But government monopolies, even in highly organized communities in normal times, are not always efficient; and here nothing was normal and the amateur financiers had little experience. They bought hides, for instance, at a high price, and promptly hides dropped 50 per cent in Belgium where it was hoped to sell them. The Government wanted to make money, naturally, and as the peasant knew this he would not unnaturally wish to sell his flax to somebody else, who might give him, instead of the

Government, the higher price. In Lithuania, for instance, where flax was a government monopoly, the smuggling of flax across the border into the occupied district about Memel became a more or less regular thing. As the French were occupying Memel and some of the flax found its way to France, the Lithuanians, who regarded Memel as rightfully theirs, accused the French of smuggling. The accusation may not have been just, but the flax slipped over, nevertheless.

The Lettish Government decreed that the new Lettish rouble should exchange at the rate of one Lettish rouble for two Tsar or "gold" roubles. As this was more than the Lettish rouble was worth in the open market, the result was that all prices jumped accordingly. Either the consumer lost, or, if the Government stepped in again and fixed prices, the merchant might have to close up his business. A poor Lithuanian had 2,000 Tsar roubles on deposit in a Riga bank. He sent word that the money, which, before the war, would have been worth $1,000 should be paid to a member of his family in Latvia. The Government had also decreed that payments from banks should be made only in Lettish roubles. The man's relatives were therefore paid 1,000 Lettish roubles—worth about $15. instead of $1,000. The loss on Tsar roubles was something that struck everybody whose funds were in Russian money, but in this case the bit of salvage was cut in two. Decrees of this sort—compulsory rates of exchange below the market rate, the forced acceptance of local paper money—made business men uneasy and decreased confidence in banks.

If people got any "real" money, they were inclined to put it in a stocking.

In addition to such embarrassments, there were, as might be expected in such disorganized communities, with officials ill paid, without traditions of responsibility, and tasting power for the first time, a good many extra-legal demands. Stories of private speculation accompanying government business were constantly heard, and the necessity of tipping on a more or less extensive scale seemed to be taken for granted by most foreign business men. Here is an anecdote characteristic of the sort of gossip in the air:

A man whose factory had been sequestered, wanted to sell the machinery to the Government. The Minister whom he approached was agreeable, but suggested that it might be pleasanter to make the nominal price 30,000 instead of 25,000 so that there might be something left over for accidental contingencies. The factory owner agreed, but before the deal could be put through several of the Minister's subordinates intimated that they also were interested and that it might be still better to make the nominal price 35,000 and so take care of them as well. The would-be vendor might have agreed to this, for the ethical aspect of the transaction did not appear to weigh heavily on him, but suddenly bethought himself that he might be brought up for profiteering later on if the nominal price became known, and so was reluctantly forced to call the whole affair off!

The *Rigasche Rundschau* spoke editorially one day to the length of two columns on the "unproductivity and dishonesty of our public officials."

"It cannot be disputed," it said, "that the war has lowered the standards, not only of our public officials, but of other circles as well. War and revolution have seriously shaken ideas of private property. The State requisitions, sequesters, and expropriates in a manner often little in accord with old-time principles of justice. What wonder that our lesser officials, who already begin to look on themselves as little parts of the State, do as they see the State doing—i. e., take what may be taken?

"The officials against whom there are nowadays so many complaints are not something dropped from heaven. They are simply part of the people, and every people has the officials it deserves. We know that the Prussian State grew great, thanks to its unusually honest public servants (it is not necessary to construe from this any criminal sympathy for Prussians) and that Russia went to pieces largely through its rotten bureaucracy. This is a matter, not of subordinary but of the greatest public importance, and one that should be attended to without further delay."

The *Rundschau,* as an organ of the Balts, was, in a sense, an organ of the opposition, yet its general attitude toward Latvian independence was patriotic, it had long been one of the most substantial papers of the Baltic neighborhood, and the criticism expressed here would have been shared by many Letts as well. This aspect of independence is less pleasant to dwell on than home-rule, broader democracy, and the picturesque careers of men like Ulmannis, for instance, who seem to personify the hopeful romance of such young "peasant" states. The hope and romance are there, but human beings continue to be human even under majority rule—and none the less so when they get a chance to get even with those who have long oppressed

them—and this side of the picture is something which, in nearly all these struggling new states, it would be a doubtful friendship to overlook.

PEASANTS AND THE LAND

The story of the land in Latvia is similar to that in Esthonia. Substituting Letts for Esthonians, it is in its essentials the same. But there were, of course, local differences in custom, history and scene; differences in the events preceeding the passage of the land law, in the autumn of 1920—a year after the Esthonians had passed theirs—and minor differences in the law itself.

When the Revolution of 1905 blazed up through Russia's border states, it burned itself out comparatively harmlessly in the Lettish towns in meetings and talk, but in the country there were peasant uprisings, burning of manor houses and occasional killing. The Lettish small-farmers who had grown up since the Balts began to sell land from their "peasant estates" in 1863, took no part in these disorders, and after the reaction set in, they joined the bourgeoisie on the side of law and order. These small farmers—*wirte* in German, *saimneeki* in Lettish—were sometimes called "gray barons" by the radical Socialists and disliked almost as much as the Balt barons themselves. Socially, President Ulmannis might, I suppose, be included with the *wirte* class. While the small independent farmers were developing in the country, a Lettish middle class was growing up in the towns, and in industrial Riga what might be called a Lettish proletariat. Many of these workers, as well as some of the peasants, were

thrown over into Russia when Riga was evacuated in 1915. They were later enlisted in the Soviet Army and became perhaps the toughest and most trustworthy fighters for the Bolsheviks.

The bringing in of German colonists—mostly from the German settlements in southern Russia—had interested some of the Balts before the war, and in 1914 it was estimated that some 13,000 of these Germans had been settled in Courland, the southern province of Latvia, and about 7,000 in Livonia. The vague promises of land to the dissatisfied soldiers of the "Iron Division"—already mentioned—was a last flickering of this attempt, and when Bermondt and the German troops were disposed of, the Letts set about to put their agrarian problem in order.

The old manor house life had already been ploughed from end to end by war, Bolshevism and government seizures. The estates were swept of horses, cattle and machinery, and there was scarce a manor house in which you would not find furniture and carpets gone, libraries burned, and family portraits gouged and slashed. After the Needra coup d'état in 1919 most of the estates in north Livonia had been sequestered by the Government and the owners declared traitors. There was the usual amount of mixed guilt and justice. Some of these "traitors" were fighting against the Bolsheviks as bravely as any Lett. Some whose estates were taken over on the ground that they were not being worked, were out of the country and unable to get back, or had lost all their means of keeping up work. The wholesale seizures discouraged owners whose land was not yet touched and cut down production. After

the Bermondt adventure had been smashed there was similar action in Courland.

In answer to a questionnaire addressed by the Government to the landless and to peasant proprietors who needed more land, there were some 43,000 responses, the large majority of which expressed a preference for actual proprietorship to renting land of the State. About two-thirds of the applicants already had a horse and cow and a bit of money, and felt that with small farms they would be self-supporting. A good many had been employed as gardeners, millers, and foresters on the large estates, and had had the use of their little parcel of land from the owner. The 43,000 requests represented a total of 172,474 people, counting women and children, and of these, 120,889 were described as being able to work.

While the agrarian law was being discussed in the Assembly, I ran across a collection of Lettish folk-songs, of which the Letts, like the Esthonians, have quantities. I asked one of the Foreign Office secretaries who was interested in such things to pick out some of the more interesting ones, and afterward, at her home, she played and sang several of them. Some were merely quaint and playful, like all such ballads, and told about horses and geese and true love, but others brought back echoes of serf days and the long-smouldering hatred of an oppressed class.

Of the first sort was "*Puht, vehjini* (Blow, little wind)" of which the Lettish poet, Rainis, made a play, and in which a young man asks the little wind to blow

him to Courland to get him a wife. There was another in which girls sang about a lamb that wanted fine clover and an old man who wanted a young wife. The lamb got the clover, but the old man didn't get the girl. What should they, the girls asked, want of old men? Better tie us up and sink us in the river! There were several variations on this plan for a song, in which cows calling for clover and horses neighing for oats were contrasted with young men and maidens calling for each other, and sometimes one side got what it wanted and sometimes the other.

In another song, a young peasant "worked five years and earned five pelts." He went after a bride but dogs fell on him and tore the skins to pieces. When he asked the girl's mother for her daughter, she said No, indeed; her daughter was white and fine, and all he had was a torn pelt. Then there was an endless one, a sort of jig, telling what a young peasant got for every year's service. He served the master a year and got a hen—*"piku, piku"* . . . served another year and got a rooster—*"piku, piku, rooste* . . . served a third year and got a duck or turkey . . . *"piku, piku, rooste, woorkigu, rigun"*—and so on.

There were mournful songs like the one beginning *"Kastee tahdi, kas dseedaja"*—"What is that mournful song in the dark? Those are the servants of the hard masters. They are weeping and making fires in the fields to keep warm. . . . Go away quickly, O Sun, and give us a free evening. Hard masters give us work, but they will give us no rest." Here are snatches of others in a similar key:

"Hurry home, little horse, with your bridle of birch bark. Bitter years and hard masters give us no chain bridle. . . ."

"Three maidens swam the Duna but one did not get across. Was she filled with lead, or silver money? No, with sorrow for the lad who was sent away to war. What is all the noise in Riga? They are making a wreath for the girl who was drowned. . . ."

"The little mother (not a real mother but a sort of woman superintendent on the estate) would let her daughters sleep, but the work will not . . ."

"When the fence-post blooms, when the stone floats, when the feather sinks—then shall I come back (from war) . . ."

More bitter is the one about the "black snake which grinds flour on a rock in the sea. The master who gives us no rest will have to eat that flour." In another the Balt is asked where his own land is, and his horses and cows, and why does he come into their land to live by their work? In still another the peasant says that he would like to buy Riga with all its German people. He would make the Germans jump and dance on a red-hot stove and the higher they jumped the hotter he would make the fire. Mr. Ralph Butler in a chapter on Latvia quotes one in which the peasant tells his German guest that there is no room for him in the hut for it is full of smoke; nor in the yard, for it is full of wind and rain; and advises him to go to the bottom-most place in Hell where the devil makes his fire,—"no rain, there, German, no smoke there!"

The taking over of estates before the land law was passed and the methods of local administration were characterized by the same sort of vagueness as in Esthonia, but it appeared, according to figures given out by the Land Ministry that, shortly before the law passed, about 200 manorial estates and nearly 1,000 branch estates and smaller farms were in the hands of the State. Between 15,000 and 16,000 tenants were leasing farms from the Government on the sequestered private lands—more than half of whom expected to become owners of the land they were renting—and there were said to be nearly 9,000 new tenants on the former Crown and Russian Peasant Bank lands. The general plan of parcelling was similar to that in Esthonia—farms of 20 *dessiatins* (about 55 acres) which a man and his family, with two horses, could cultivate without hired help.

When the discussion started in the Assembly, the Social Democrats demanded confiscation of the large estates without compensation. The Agrarian Commission, which was dominated by the Social Democrats, recommended such a law and it had been demanded by the party as the price for their participation in the Ministry. The middle-ground parties declined to pay this price and the Social Democrats took no part in the Cabinet, in consequence. They had 57 of the 150 seats in the Assembly—the poet Rainis and his wife were among them—but the Farmers' Union—the party of Premier Ulmannis—and the other middle-ground groups, had 55 seats; and with the help of the other third, some eleven small minority groups,

including the conservative Balts, they were able somewhat to hold the extremists in check. Ulmannis himself favored compensation and the right of the owners to retain a part of their estates for their own use—say 100 *dessiatins* (about 270 acres).

The Balts fought desperately for their existence, and the *Rundschau* hoped that "our representatives will not be controlled by the thought of 'what will Europe say?' but will themselves be good enough Europeans to make a decision which will not only protect the interests of the State, but will also not lower the good reputation of our people in the eyes of civilized Europe." The papers of the Left flamed with the reiteration of ancient wrongs and exhorted patriotic Letts to finish with the barons for good and all. "The 700-year tyranny is broken at last," said the *Latwijas Kareiwis,* "the dragon is struck through the heart and lies at the feet of the Lettish people," and the picturesque hope was expressed that his carcass might be used to fertilize the new Latvia.

It was not a moment for calm discussion. In the middle of the argument the Soviet Army drove to the gates of Warsaw, there was talk of Bolshevism sweeping clear across Germany to the Rhine, and fear enough that the Bolsheviks might overthrow the Lettish Government itself to lead the British and American representatives to cable for warships. The question was not so much what the Ulmannis Government might think best, as what they could succeed in making the Left accept.

The law as finally passed was slightly less drastic than that in Esthonia. The large-estate owners ap-

parently retained the right to about 125 acres of their original property, and they could also lease—but not own—their former *bei-güter* or small sub-estates, when these made "separate complete farming units" of less than about 247 acres. The peasants to whom the parcelled farms were given could either lease them from the Government or acquire real property rights. The amount they had to pay for such property was to be determined by later legislation and be based on the amount of compensation—also to be fixed later on —given the original owners. Small farms purchased in the past by peasants as a freehold—the farms of the *wirte*—were not included in the land taken over. The new farms were to contain not more than 55 acres of arable land, and not over about 12½ acres of other land, of which not more than about 7½ acres should be in forest. On land suitable for gardening and close to a market the parcels were not to exceed about 25 acres. Citizens whose main occupation was not farming might obtain, within the discretion of the Central Land Committee, plots of not more than 2½ acres near towns or 5 acres in the country. The preference given to those who had served in the army and to the relatives of soldiers was similar to that in Esthonia. It was while the discussion of these proposals was at its hottest that I went down into the country to visit one of the large Livonian estates.

CHAPTER VIII

BALT TWILIGHT

My host's younger daughter was spending the week-end with her parents and she met me on the station-platform at Riga that baking afternoon, lugging a big suitcase and an armful of bundles. She was nineteen, perhaps; tall and slimly strong, bright-cheeked and shy—a regular girl, and at the same time, although not related to royalty, a regular princess. As a Balt, her name was German; the title for over a century had been Russian; and her friends, travels, and general background was a mingling of the two. Her speech was German, Russian, French, English—it made little difference which—and she also talked Lettish, enough to get along.

Before the war, or even before the Bolshevik revolution and Latvia's independence, she might not have carried her own luggage or gone to work as a translator and secretary, and certainly a guest would not have started for the country in a cattle-car. But motors were long a thing of the past, and as for the estate, who could tell what might have happened to it, even today? . . . We flung our things into one of the long line of boxcars and scrambled in after it. The train, not due to leave for another half hour, was already packed. People sat in the doorways—

naturally the coolest seats—with their legs dangling outside. In one, a boy was strumming a *balalaika.* Inside were pine benches without backs and air like an oven. There were families going to spend Sunday with their farmer relatives, unhappy babies, and market-women returning with empty baskets and damp gunny-sacks full of crabs or fish. We squeezed among this uncomfortable but patient crowd, ate wet raspberries out of a brown paper bag and finally got under way.

An hour or two of stewing and we came to Mitau—headquarters of the Bermondt adventure of the year before—and here waited another hour and changed to third-class cars. Another hour or two, and we were deposited at a siding in the open fields. We sat in the grass beside the track and played mumblety-peg, and at last, toward evening, a miniature, wood-burning locomotive appeared from the nearby pines trailing a string of little flat-cars. The train was a relic of the German invasion, when Riga was being surrounded in 1917, and the Germans had used this narrow-gauge to carry ammunition to their battery positions. It had been thriftily taken over and was now used for people instead of shells.

There was nothing to sit on, and as soon as the train got under way the smoke and live cinders poured back on our heads. The peasant women lay down, covered their heads and went to sleep. We dodged from side to side of the lurching little trucks and tried, not always with success, to brush the cinders off before they burned clear through.

The late sun went down at last, the moon came up,

and a cool night smell breathed out from the harvested fields. It may have been eleven o'clock when the Princess broke a long silence by pointing toward a black stretch of forest.

"That's where we used to hunt," she said. "It was full of deer."

Another hour of slow trailing through pines and sweet-smelling stubble, past one or two ruined manor-houses, and then we climbed down and started along a faintly seen path across the fields. The Princess, insisting on carrying her share of the luggage, strode ahead like an Indian. Past a Dutch windmill; lonely, silent houses on a hill, and we came, after half an hour's tramp, to a little river. There was a rattle of chains, a sleeping peasant boatman shook himself awake, and we were ferried across. Up the bank, past stone barns and a watchman loitering in the shadow of the gate, then a driveway, and then—a long, high, silvered mass against black pines—the manor-house itself.

There was neither light nor sound, but the girl walked round the house and pounded on a closed wooden shutter. It was opened presently and shut hastily.

"It's my little brother," she laughed. "He thinks we're burglars!" and continued pounding. The big front door opened finally and a tall figure peered out. "O!" he cried, and welcomed us in. It was the Prince himself, still limping from the wound he had received the autumn before on the Bolshevik front, but still the debonair master in his own house. There were apologies and a scurrying for candles, and pres-

ently we were telling the last Riga news over bread and milk and a big dish of wild strawberries.

They were quite literally camping out in what had once been a sort of palace. Since 1914 the place had been ransacked again and again. Furniture and pictures were gone or smashed; parquetry floors ripped up and wall covering pried away in the search of hidden treasures; marble statutes overturned and their necks, noses and arms broken; there was not a horse left in the stable, except one or two second-rate animals. One of our bundles, it turned out, was sheets for the guest's bed. I had brought a blanket and in a few minutes—it was after one by this time—was dozing under it on a saggy mattress which had supported soldiers with their boots on—Russians, Germans, Bolsheviks, Bermondt's men, and goodness knows what other strangers for the night.

We gathered for a late breakfast after taking our various dips in the river—more wild strawberries, and their own honey—and then spread blankets on the grass, and proceeded, as people do in the short Baltic summer, to soak up all we could of the sun. It was a delicious Sunday morning, so still and peaceful that one could not but remark on it. Princess X. more outspoken than her husband, shrugged her shoulders a little bitterly.

"On the surface, perhaps. Really, we are living over a volcano." . . .

On the surface, indeed, the old order still held. The peasants had raised a little arch of branches and flowers in front of the house in honor of the Prince's homecoming, and decorated some of the rooms. The

canny old Jew who rented a bit of land across the river and played the traditional role of money-lender, store-keeper, and general middle-man so common in East European countrysides—every estate-owner "has his Jew," they say in Poland—had sent a big cheese-cake. A pastry-cook, driven from Riga by the war that made café-keeping impossible, and now trying to make a farmer of himself, on another corner of the estate, had sent a splendid example of his ancient handiwork—an elaborately frosted cake with whipped cream filling that would have cost a fortune in the city.

Everything was quiet about the place, the Prince said, the harvest work had gone on as well as could be expected with the lack of hands and of horses, the peasants were not complaining. But he felt that they were patient because they expected that they were going to get the land. If the agrarian law were not satisfactory no one could tell what might happen. He spoke—as all these Balt estate-owners now speak since the people have begun to realize their strength—of the desirability of a wider distribution of the land, and his own willingness to sell, or even give away, a third of his property.

"It should be done slowly, though, and given to those who understand farming and have the capital to make a success of it. The Russian Government, with its land-purchasing program, had started many thousands of small farms in the years just before the war. The old Russian Government was not perfect but it was not nearly so bad as people think in the West. It was getting ahead, and in another genera-

tion, if the war hadn't come, it would have come close to solving the whole land problem."

We started presently for a walk, the Prince limping alongside and in his rapid, slightly-lisping English, describing the estate and the manner of working it. One of several places belonging to him, it contained about 18,000 acres and in peace times had been run as a practical farm and a model dairy. There was the great house itself, a tawny, stucco-covered structure, in that "institutional" style so common in Russia; the park adjoining it; extensive stables, hothouses, and dairy outbuildings, and beyond that fields and forest. The general look of the country—rolling plain broken by woodland and the lazy little river winding through—was much like our own Middle West.

We looked into the empty stables, only the names of the pedigreed horses left over the stalls; the long cow-barns; electric light plant, all smashed now, and despite the ruin of a business into which the surplus of many years had gone in improvements, the Prince rattled off technical facts and figures with the enthusiasm of one who had all his life lived on the land and loved it.

"Yes," he said, "it was a fine place. A good life. Lots of work going on. Lots of people coming all the time. Travellers from abroad used to visit us. It was not so much out of the world as you might think. . . . Now my oldest boy doesn't know a thing about a farm. He's insulted if you ask him if the cows have come in yet. How should he know about such things? Such knowledge is beneath him. But I'm a countryman. I like the country. We used to

spend all our time here except for an occasional trip in the winter."

We passed a row of peasant cottages, good-looking brick buildings, more like dormitories or barracks than those I had seen in Esthonia. Families were loafing about the front steps and the men took off their hats. As we crossed the garden, an old peasant darted forward, ducked, and quickly kissed the Prince's hand.

"That seems odd to an American, I suppose. . . . Well"—he smiled apologetically. "It's a custom here." He told of his arrangements with the workers on the estate.

There were *land knechts* and *half-körners,* as well as the *deputat-knechts* found on the Esthonian estate already described. The first, the lowest type of laborers, gave the proprietor half their time—both husband and wife working—in return for the use of a small plot of land. The *half-körners* gave half their crop as rent. The arrangement with *deputat* laborers was similar to that in Esthonia. They were paid mostly in kind, and about 60 roubles a year. Altogether their wages, supplies included, came before the war, to about a rouble (fifty cents) a day. The *deputat* peasant had a house supplied by the owner, a meadow for his cows, a bit of land for flax and potatoes. It was possible for him, with the help of family, to accumulate a certain surplus and become a renter himself.

"Those are the people to whom land should be given," said the Prince. "They are capable and ambitious and would know what to do with it."

The peasants were housed in large brick dwellings,

accommodating about a dozen families, or in small two-family houses. Teaching for the peasant children had been attended to by an individual who also helped the sexton and played the organ in church. A single man—one could fancy a mild-mannered, threadbare creature, coming, as it were, from some eighteenth century novel—could live on the salary. A married man could not. The hours of work in summer were twelve hours at least.

"We have only four months of spring and summer. It is light for practically the whole twenty-four hours during June and July; things grow fast while they do grow, and we must make the most of it. They work from four in the morning until seven and then stop an hour for breakfast. Then from eight until noon, and again from one until five. Then there is another short spell in the evening.

"In the winters, on the other hand, we have in this latitude only about five hours of daylight and there is not much to do out of doors. But there are all sorts of odd jobs indoors—repairs, threshing, weaving and spinning." I asked about amusements, thinking about our own prairie-country Fords, and the movies and Orpheum in the nearby town. Apparently there were not many amusements except when they got together to dance or sing.

We returned and tramped through the house, still littered with straw, smashed furniture, statues and pictures. The Prince kept muttering: "Here we had carpets. . . . There were always flowers there. . . . This wall was covered with leather. Fancy trying to cover walls with leather, nowadays!" and he would

give that high, slightly-mocking giggle with which his amiable talk was often punctuated. "The only books we have left are these old encyclopedias. There used to be some rather nice books. There was one with annotations by Erasmus. The Bolsheviks threw them all into the river. They said that I might read them when they floated down to Mitau—I was in Mitau then." And again he laughed.

After lunch we all went out on the grass again, the Prince and his wife and daughter and two small boys. And as we loafed there in the sun an elderly peasant approached, kissed his master's and mistress's hand, and then, quite at his ease, started in on one of those interminable peasant visits. It was characteristic of that personal friendliness and "democracy" which, in Russia and along the western edge of it, within class lines much more rigidly drawn than ours, existed in a sense rarely found in corresponding circumstances at home. In a curious half-oratorical sing-song the old fellow rambled on about the weather, crops, the extravagence of the local government. After half an hour of it I strolled away for a walk and when I came back the visit was still going on. If the Prince and Princess were bored they gave no sign. They asked and answered questions, listened and nodded as seriously as if they were gossiping with one of their oldest friends. Except that the peasant stood and they lay on the ground there was nothing to suggest any difference between them. The interview must have lasted for an hour and a half.

In the lazy warmth we strolled down to the river, rowed across and started up the hill toward the family

burial ground and the little ruined church. Half way up, in a sunny clearing, stood a baby carriage. The Prince and Princess exchanged glances. It was a carriage that had been used for their own children and must have been taken from one of the upper rooms of their house. They walked over toward it, looked in—there were strange baby clothes there—and saying nothing, continued on up the hill.

At the top, two peasant women were sitting, between them on the ground, with eyes as blue as the sky into which they peacefully gazed, a baby girl. This was evidently the baby of the carriage. The Princess talked to them in Lettish and asked about the child. It had belonged to a couple who had run away in the Bolshevik time and left the child without a word. And where were they now? The women shrugged their shoulders patiently. Who could tell? Who knows in this broken eastern Europe, where to-morrow, anybody may be? The baby girl, healthy as a young trout, slowly waved her arms, aware finally that somebody else had come. Hers the gift of youth, at any rate, and she would see a generation more than the rest of us of this changing world.

It was beautiful there on the hill. Below us, drowsing in the lazy afternoon, lay fields and river, the tawny length of the manor house, the distant pine woods of what had once been a little principality all but sufficient unto itself. A little way upstream peasant girls were swimming. They laughed and splashed and chased each other over the grass, all that was peasant about them left with the clothes out of which their strong round bodies had hurried—white nymphs in an

ancient paradise. Just beneath us a mother was trying to teach her little dolls of girls to swim. Their notion was to lean over with tremendous deliberation and just touch the tips of their noses to the water and snatch their faces back again. The mother gently poked them with a stick. There was not a sound but the laughter of the peasant girls.

We went on into the churchyard. The church itself had been burned, the walks and tombs, uncared for for six years, were overgrown with weeds and grass. The Prince pointed out the tomb of one ancestor who had been an Ambassador to England. Another, his great grandmother, I think, had been, a century and a half ago, instructress to the Tsarina's children. For that service—and one could fancy what Social Democratic land-reformers would think about this!—this great estate had apparently been given as one would give a ring or a cigarette-case.

There was a tomb to officers who had fought against the Russians in the Napoleonic wars. The Germans, coming into the neighborhood in the Great War, at a time when Germany hoped to make these Russian provinces hers, had seen this tomb and its German names and placed an inscription of their own above. *"Es grüssen sich,"* it began, "We salute you Ancestors—children who are worthy of you!"

As we read the inscription the daughter spoke: "We used to wonder how war could ever have been here. It was so quiet and so far from the world. And that war should come here again . . . here. . . ."

We walked back down the hill, making a slight detour to thank the Jew for his cheese-cake. He was

harnessing a team behind his barn—a bright-eyed, bearded, sly-looking old fellow, who began at once, as if it were something expected of him, to gossip knowingly of prices and clever trades. No worries in his head, evidently. Whatever happened to this world in which he had turned a penny here and a penny there, without precisely being a part of it, he would land on his feet.

We said our good-byes and turned in early that night, for I was to catch, on its return journey, the same narrow-gauge train on which we had come the night before. It was about two o'clock when the watchman knocked on the shutters and a few minutes later I had crossed the river and was tramping alone through the moonlit fields. From the hill where the path turned toward the station one could see the house on the lowland half veiled in white mist. . . .

. . . I had gone north to Reval and Finland, before the land law was passed. It was several weeks later, and the winter rains had begun, when I heard that the estate had been taken at last and that the Prince had gone to Switzerland.

CHAPTER IX

THE CASE OF LITHUANIA

THERE is a rough analogy between Lithuania and the other Baltic republics—here again a peasant people are determined to free themselves from Russia and from a local, non-Russian aristocracy. But as one proceeds southward from Finland, national outlines become less sharp and the whole problem of independence more complicated.

Finland, grown-up politically, detaches itself easily from its Russian moorings to sail away with its Scandinavian sisters as an independent state. Esthonia and Latvia, while less developed, are nevertheless fairly compact. With their old Hansa ports, and the Germanic culture, material and intellectual, which the new masters inherit from the Balts, they start with the individuality which has always set the "Balticum" apart.

When, however, the traveller leaves the high-gabled houses and Lutheran spires of Riga and Reval, and journeys southward into Catholic Lithuania, he finds himself entering a very different world. The cosy, neighborhood feeling of the provinces looking out on the northern sea is gone. One is getting down into Europe now; into a vaguer and vaster region, and that all but inextricable jumble of race, religion and politi-

cal sovereignity found in the region once ruled by Poland, and after the Partitions, by Russia.

The Lithuanians are more numerous than either the Esthonians or Letts, and the territory they inhabit is larger. Their intelligentsia, if one were to include in it all the educated Lithuanians scattered over the world—nearly a million Lithuanians, for instance, are said to be living in the United States and Canada—might be larger too, but geographical position and historical experience have not tended in the same way to set their nationality apart.

Except for a bit of coastland about the former German port of Memel, which the Lithuanians now hope to make their own, they are shut off from the sea—a socially undeveloped, agricultural country, crowded in between Russia and Germany. If one except Vilna, the ancient Lithuanian capital, but now half Jewish, and, culturally, more Polish than Lithuanian, they have nothing that could properly be called a city. Kovno, used as a capital most of the time since they declared their independence, is but a shabby, one-story town, as much Jewish as Lithuanian, and regarded by the Russians before the war as a mere sort of garrison-place for its surrounding forts.

An ancient people, with a proud medieval history which naturally loses nothing in the accounts of present-day nationalists, the Lithuanians were so long merged with the Poles, that until very recent years, Lithuania, as a separate political entity, was scarcely thought of. If not Russian, it was Polish, in the minds of most outsiders, and to the Poles, of course, it is so

still. The Poles roughly take the place in the Lithuanian picture of the Balts in Esthonia and Latvia, but with this significant difference. Whereas the Balts are a mere handful of titled landlords, cut off by the defeat of Germany from even the moral support of powerful outsiders, the Poles in Lithuania are the outposts of a potentially powerful state which regards the Lithuanians as a rebellious minority of what it hopes will become a greater Poland. The Lithuanians, in short, have been swallowed twice. And the escape of both Lithuanians and Poles from the belly of the Russian whale does not in the least deter the Poles from doing a little swallowing on their own account, or, as they might put it, from keeping what they swallowed long ago.

The Lithuanians are not Slavs, but of the same Indo-European stock as the Letts, and their language, which is similar to Lettish, is one of the oldest in Europe. Enthusiastic Lithuanian philologists have picked out phrases which are almost identical with Latin and Greek; the language is said to be especially rich in caressing diminutives, and it is frequently said that Lithuanian is more like ancient Sanskrit than any other European tongue. It is not Slavic, at any rate, although the Russian Government endeavoured to make it so, and while many abstract and technical terms have been borrowed, just as they have in modern Finnish and Ukranian, it must be reckoned as a separate and serious speech.

When the Teutonic Knights were conquering and converting what is now Esthonia and Latvia, the Lithuanians were tough-fisted pagans, worshipping the ele-

ments and a variety of gods in their sacred groves and keeping outsiders at a safe distance. Their northern tribes succumbed before the invaders, but those further south, protected somewhat by their marshes, held out, and at one time their princes ruled loosely over a wide territory extending almost from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

In 1386, Jagiello, Grand Duke of Lithuania, married Hedwig, Queen of Poland, accepted the Catholic faith and was crowned King of Poland. Jagiello brought a rugged barbarian vigor to this alliance, while the gentle Hedwig—she was young and in love with a youthful prince—might be said to have contributed the graces. In the generations which followed, something like these relative positions continued. The well-born, socially-aspiring Lithuanians tended to become Polish, and as there was almost no middle class in this fighting feudal state, the rank and file of the Lithuanians dropped to the position of serfs and peasants.

At the second diet of Lublin, in 1569, King Sigismund of Poland tightened what had hitherto been a sort of offensive and defensive family alliance into a more definite political union. The Treaty of Lublin was not entered into with entire willingness—the chronicles relate that the Lithuanian delegates knelt before Sigismund in protest and begged him to remember their merits and not to expose them to humiliations —and Lithuania preserved a certain autonomy. But she lost some of her richest provinces, and politically began to disappear in Poland.

The Lithuania which made this union with Poland

included a considerable portion of the White Russians, a branch of the Great Russian family, who to-day are found in the Vilna neighborhood, in the Russian "governments" of Moghilev, Smolensk, and Minsk, and, in general, in the lands about the headwaters of the Dnieper river (which runs southward through the Ukraine to the Black Sea) and the Dvina, which runs northwestward through Latvia into the Baltic. The poet, Miczkiewicz, who wrote in Polish, and Kosciuzsko, himself, came from the White Russian part of Lithuania and they are claimed therefore by the Poles, the Lithuanians and the White Russians. Prince Sapieha, the Polish Foreign Minister, is White Russian in his remoter ancestry.

The word "white" has no color significance, but is said to have been a term applied to those who did not have to pay tribute to the Tartars. The White Russians now also want independence, and they have organized themselves to a certain extent, but their nationalism is rather too sketchy to be considered here further than as illustration of the complications and nuances of the Lithuanian question. Most of the White Russians are Russian Orthodox in religion, but some are Uniates (those in communion with Rome but retaining the Greek rite) and some Roman Catholics. And as peasants along the Russian border not infrequently confuse religion and nationality and say they are "Orthodox" when asked their race, and answer "Polak" when they mean "Catholic," the problem of disentangling nationalities in such a region as that about Vilna may be imagined.

When Poland was partitioned, the Lithuanians became Russian subjects, except for a fringe in the Memel and Tilsit neighborhood who went to Prussia. By this time the Lithuanian nobility regarded itself as Polish; the serfs had little or no interest in national politics; the nationally-conscious Lithuanian intelligentsia was still a thing of the future, and Lithuania, except as name applied to a Russian "government," had practically ceased to exist.

Lithuanians were lumped in with Poles in the general policy of Russification. In 1864 the Russian Government, having crushed the insurrection started by the Polish nobles, prohibited the use in Lithuania of Latin script. Lithuanian was assumed to be a Slavic language and if it wasn't, the Russians were going to make it so. For fifty years, until the revolution of 1905, this prohibition was enforced. When the prohibition went into effect, Lithuanian as a written language, kept alive in the clerical seminaries, was just beginning to revive. The freeing of the serfs and emigration encouraged the growth of a nationally-conscious Lithuanian intelligentsia—it was the natural moment for a literary revival. The result was that a flood of smuggled books, pamphlets and papers began to pour across the border—from the Lithuanian printing presses in Tilsit and Memel, and later from other countries, especially America. The Prussian Lithuanians were naturally not much hindered by the German authorities in this patriotic anti-Russian work. Indeed, there was instruction in Lithuanian in the secondary schools in Memel and Tilsit,

and a chair in Lithuanian in the University of Königsberg. The magazine *Ausra* (The Dawn), started in 1883 by Dr. Basanavicius and published in Tilsit, did so much to fire the younger generation, that to have been one of its editors is a sort of Lithuanian equivalent of having signed the Declaration or come over in the Mayflower.

With the revolution of 1905, a National Assembly, which the Lithuanian clergy did much to keep in bounds, met in Vilna and asked for radical educational reforms and autonomy within Russia. The Petrograd Government was frightened into granting permission for the use of Latin script and for a modified use of Lithuanian in the schools, and it began, too late, a policy of playing off the Lithuanian nationalists against the Poles.

When the war broke out the Lithuanians were mobilized along with the rest of Russia's heterogenous millions. It can not be said that they had any heart in the fight, or that the common soldier had any notion of what it was all about. The intelligentsia, fired with the idea of independence since 1905, and not caring greatly whether it came from the East or the West, began to look hopefully toward Germany after the Germans had occupied Lithuania and suggested their interest in protecting the aspirations of small nations. Meanwhile there were nationalistic congresses at Lausanne, the Hague, Berne, Chicago, and nationalistic speeches in the Russian Duma, and in December, 1917, a Lithuanian National Council, or Tariba, proclaimed Lithuania's independence and asked the protection of the German Empire. In March,

1918, Germany recognized Lithuania's independence, but before the proposed federation between the two countries could be definitely arranged, the Lithuanians became alarmed at Pan-German talk of out-and-out annexation, and hastily offered the crown to Prince Urach of Wurtemberg. It had been discovered that he was a descendent of the ancient Lithuanian dynasty of Mindaugas, and the intention was that he should bear the title of Mindaugas II.

This project blew away with Germany's defeat, like the somewhat similar project in Finland. The second of Lithuania's overpowering neighbors was removed for the time being, however, although Poland still remained and the Lithuanians started in to paddle their own canoe. A new Tariba was elected in January, 1919, a cabinet chosen to act as temporary executive, and in April, Dr. A. Smetona, President of the Tariba, was made Chief of State, or President. The cabinet was succeeded by another in August, Dr. Smetona retaining his office, a law passed providing for elections to the Constituent Assembly, and in the late autumn of 1919 this government received *de facto* recognition from Great Britain and France.

The two pressing problems here, as in Esthonia and Latvia, were keeping out the Bolsheviks and doing something to divide up the large estates. The Lithuanians organized an army, with the aid of German money and arms, and later with assistance from England, and with some backing from the German troops left in the country after the Armistice, and the active cooperation of the Poles, succeeded in keeping the

Bolsheviks at bay. Vilna, their theoretical capital, on the eastern edge of their territory, changed hands several times. The Bolsheviks took it in January 1919, and a few months later were driven out by the Poles under Pilsudski. They took it again in 1920 during their drive on Warsaw, and when they made peace with the Lithuanians, retired and turned it over to them. The Lithuanians had scarcely moved in and set about making it their permanent capital, when the Polish General Zeligowski, acting apparently with the knowledge, although without the official sanction of the Warsaw government, drove them out again, and although requested to get out by a committee of the League of Nations, declined to budge.

Central and western Lithuania were comparatively normal, meanwhile; farming in the rich lands along the Niemen was going on almost as usual, and the new government was gradually putting its house in order. The elections to the Constituent Assembly were held in April, 1920, and Dr. Smetona resigned and turned over his powers to the Constituent itself. A new Cabinet, on which several of the old Cabinet served, was chosen, with Alexander Stulginskas as President of the Assembly and Dr. Kazimir Grenius as Prime Minister. It was decided that the Supreme Power should rest in the one-chamber Assembly, that the President of the Assembly should also act as President of the Republic, and that the Ministry, chosen by the Assembly, should be responsible to it. A Constitution embodying these provisions, and an agrarian law, somewhat less radical than those in Esthonia and Latvia, were gradually elaborated during 1920 and

it was expected that the elections to the first regular Parliament would take place in the autumn of 1921. Lithuania had meanwhile received *de jure* recognition from Esthonia, Latvia, Germany, Soviet Russia, Argentina and Spain, while Italy had given what the Lithuanians regarded as its equivalent by sending a consular representative. *De facto* recognition had been given by Britain, France, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Switzerland and Poland.

AMERICA AND THE POST-PIONEERS

The two things that struck me at once on coming to Kovno from Riga in the summer of 1920 were the amount of food and the number of Americans. Kovno, like Ivangorod and Brestlitovsk, was a fortress town in the old Russian days, and the Russian Government did not encourage it to be anything else. It is a shabby, smelly old place, the best the Lithuanians could do for a capital until they could get into Vilna, but the traveller from the north promptly forgot this in the startling sight of shop windows full of white bread and curly Vienna rolls, tarts and meringues of all sorts, and even heaps of real chocolate creams.

Preoccupation with such things may seem frivolous to those who know no more of the effects of war than we did at home, but it is quite understood in eastern Europe. The pastry was not only in the windows, but in several little cafês along the main street (the ones which bore the Polish label *cukernia,* were looked at very much askance by the Lithuanians) officers and young ladies were devouring it and sipping coffee with half an inch of real sugar in the bottom of the glass

in quite the good old Russian style. One talked of little else for the first few hours, and couriers carried the tidings northward all the way to Finland.

The Lithuanian soil is richer than that of most of Esthonia and Latvia, and in spite of everything the little country was still comparatively fat. It was exporting timber, eggs and flax; the parcelling of the estates had not yet been radical enough to cut down production much; there were herds of cattle in the meadows, although how they had been saved from requisition was a secret known only to the peasants and the Lithuanian swamps and forests; there was scarcely a peasant's team without its smart little colt frisking along beside it. In a word, Lithuania, although less far along politically than its two northern neighbors, and less developed in many ways, was economically better off.

As for that other novelty of the Lithuanian scene, the returned Americans, I must, in the first morning in Kovno, (*Kaunas* the Lithuanians call it) have run across half a dozen of them, all intent on getting their little nation on its feet, and sometimes even able to talk enthusiastic nationalism one minute, and the next to gossip quite objectively about "these people" in the vernacular of Chicago or Scranton, Pennsylvania. The Lithuanians in America are humble people for the most part, working in mines and factories, meeting in obscure halls to talk Lithuanian politics and sing folk songs, and little known to Americans except settlement-house workers and their immediate employers. And yet, when one considers the Lithuanian printing that was done in the United States

when it was prohibited by the Russian Government in Lithuania—there is even such a thing as "The Lithuanian Booster"!—and the proportion of the Lithuanian intelligentsia recruited from returned emigrants, it might almost be said that if the national movement was born in the Lithuanian clerical seminaries, it grew up in America.

Mr. Balutis, for instance, who was acting as a sort of Assistant Foreign Minister, and Mr. Rimka, one of the land reform theorists, had both edited Lithuanian papers in the States. The head of the Lithuanian Health Department was a young woman doctor graduated from Cornell. Her sister, also a Cornell student, had left college a few weeks before graduation to marry Mr. Ycas a former Lithuanian delegate in the Russian Duma and one of the first Lithuanian Ministers of Finance. Their father, Dr. Jonas Sliupas, an old war-horse in the Lithuanian national movement, had been one of the editors of the *Dawn,* and it was quite characteristic that, although he had spent most of his life in America and brought up his family there, he should represent Lithuania in 1919 at the first peace conference with the Bolsheviks at Dorpat.

Still another member of this redoubtable family was young Mr. Kestutis Sliupas, whose first name, which is that of one of the ancient Lithuanian kings, means, as he explained to me with a dry grin, "one who can suffer much." Mr. Sliupas had done graduate work at Yale, and taught physics for a time at the University of Wisconsin, and in a half hour's talk he touched familiarly on a score of varying phases of American

life all the way from the "Hill" at Madison to Greenwich Village.

"This Nation-and-New Republic stuff gets on your nerves after a while," he observed, as we strolled through the streets of this curious capital, where Lithuanian, Jewish and Polish influences were all clashing, "On the other hand, you can't stand that Nicholas-Murray-Butler-stuff either!"

He told of one of his relatives who had taken a drive near Warsaw one day with a Polish lady. As they passed some peasants, the Polish lady remarked, "Do you know the difference between those people and their cattle? The only difference is that the peasants don't eat grass!" . . . "Isn't that pure Europe for you? It's hard for an American to understand that!" Remarks like this get remembered in these days by people whose parents or grandparents were themselves peasants.

The tangled municipal affairs of Kovno were being handled by a sort of three-cornered commission, with a Lithuanian, Jewish and Polish member, and Sliupas, who was holding up the Lithuanian end at the moment, spent most of his time at what he generally referred to as "Tammany Hall," wrangling with his two colleagues and trying to get them to forget ancient jealousies long enough to put the right man, whoever he might be, in the right place, and get some constructive work done.

Here again, as in the case of Premier Ulmannis of Latvia, war and revolution had made a new "new country." And the spirit which crackled through the streets of this shabby old village was not unlike that

with which pioneers used to load up prairie schooners and start for Kansas or California. Nearly all these neo-pioneers were working harder and getting less pay for their work than they had had in America, and doing so for motives as various, I suppose, as peoples' motives usually are. Some were thinking of themselves, doubtless, and some of Lithuania; some had risen to their opportunity and were doing bigger work than they had ever done before; there was one quaint little lady in the Foreign Office, who had come, it seemed, in search of a fatherland which she could never quite find anywhere else.

She had been born of Lithuanian parents in America, educated partly in Switzerland and partly in New England. There, where she had passed most of her life, she would doubtless have seemed like any other girl, and she liked and felt at home in the States. But she had been brought up on Lithuanian history and folklore and the old *dainos* poetry, these were among the things she first remembered, and Lithuania had always been a sort of sub-conscious fatherland. In Switzerland, she said, she had envied the other girls —Peruvians, Greeks, Argentinians, Roumanians and what not—and the tremendous and undivided patriotism each had for her little country, and wished she might have a country like that—"for her very own."

For this she had come to Lithuania. She had landed at Memel and come by river-steamer up the Niemen, and across a picture made up of medieval legends and old ballad poetry had spread the actuality of sodden peasants and tumbledown villages with pigs in the streets. . . . "But it is a pretty country—don't

you think so?" she demanded. We were standing on one of the round hills outside of Kovno, looking down on the Vilya and the broader Niemen—"And we *will* make it a success!" . . .

Her part in this task at the moment was to turn into the French she had learned in Switzerland, the Lithuanian replies to the Polish notes in the southwestern boundary disputes, and to see that the Lithuanians' private sentiments were masked in a verbiage as punctilious and exquisite as that in which Prince Sapieha masked his. Educated people are rare in these new republics; everyone is needed, and in nearly all their Foreign Offices, one finds clever girls who happen to know a bit of English or French, getting glimpses of the inner wheels of national politics which, in older countries, come only to politicians or diplomats of experience.

I went one evening to a meeting to which the Lithuanians had invited several of the government people, with the notion of organizing an information-bureau or Chamber of Commerce. The Cabinet members were a bit puzzled as to the purpose of the gathering, not having had much experience with what Sliupas explained to me in an aside was merely "a little of that get-together, Rotary stuff!"

The meeting was held in a pavillion in a park on one of the big wooded hills overlooking the city, one of the few places of beauty in Kovno. It was a moonlight night, with mist on the lowlands, and one looked out through an open space between the trees and down on low roofs and white towers that might have been in Spain. One after another, the returned Lithu-

anian-Americans got up and in the frankest fashion and often with a good deal of humour told what they thought was wrong with Kovno and Lithuanian customs, generally. One man wanted to know, for instance, why it should take three quarters of an hour to do a bit of business in a bank which in the States would be concluded in five minutes? When one of the young functionaries felt a draft blowing on him, why couldn't he get up and close the window, himself, instead of calling a girl, who called a boy, who might finally close it? Was it always necessary to kiss a lady's hand, even on the street or in a crowded office? He had been reprimanded, he said, for wearing his hat in the bank, having put it on so that his hands might be free to count his money. He had told his critic to hold his hat for him, and thus the money might be counted and local custom still preserved.

Most of the discussion was of a more serious nature, there was a good deal of complaint about graft, and through it all America was held up as a model of all that was admirable and worthy of emulation. It was impressive, recalling the side of America that many Lithuanian immigrants see, to find these returned Lithuanians remembering only what was good about their adopted country, and one could not but wish that some of our more raucous nationalists might have been there to learn something about their fellow-citizens of foreign birth.

The evening gave point to a conversation which I later had with one of the ex-editors, in which he chatted amusingly of the difficulties he had had in war time, translating into English for incompetent censors,

with his small staff, everything he printed of a political nature. He thought that in such cases supervision might often better be trusted to the more responsible members of the foreign colonies themselves. Immigrants who "made good" in America were likely, he said, to be more American than the natives themselves, and more intent on preserving essentially American institutions. Moreover they knew their own people, their psychology and prejudices, and how to reach them. He spoke of indiscriminate raids and ignorant handling of radicals. At any average "red" meeting, he said, there might be at most two or three who could be called "dangerous." The thing was to know who these were, and not break up the whole meeting or arrest the whole lot.

"You can't make an American in a few days," he said, "nor with a club. It takes time and tact and education."

There appeared to be less Bolshevism in the air here in Lithuania than in either Esthonia or Latvia. The lack of an industrial proletariat, the comparative lack of political consciousness among the peasants, and the restraining influence of the Catholic clergy—for the Lithuanians like the Poles with whom they had so long been associated, are devout Roman Catholics—might all be suggested as partial explanations of this. Here, as in Esthonia, there had been a slight drift toward the Left, and "bourgeois" liberals of the type of Dr. Smetona, were for the moment regarded somewhat askance, but in the Constituent Assembly of 112 members there were only about a dozen Social Democrats. The majority group were Christian

Democrats—a collection of delegates of various shades of political opinion with few trained men; and the next in numbers were the so-called Socialist-Populists, described by one of the Lithuanian-Americans as a radical-liberal group of somewhat the same leanings as, for example, Prof. Ross of the University of Wisconsin. The Prime Minister, Dr. Grenius, a forceful country doctor from the town of Mariampole, and Mr. Rimka, the land theorist, late of Boston, belonged to this party.

The Progressive Party, at whose name the more radical Lithuanians smiled a bit, had no delegates in the Assembly and yet contained most of those who stood out by reason of their greater sophistication and broader European experience. Dr. Smetona, a scholar-publicist before his election as President; the Finance Minister, Mr. Galvanauskas, a clever young man, educated at Liege, married to a French lady, and acquainted, as civil engineer, with various parts of Europe; Mr. Ycas, formerly one of the Cadet representatives in the Duma, were all members of this group. Men of this type are so much needed in any such new state that they sometimes more or less run things whether their party happens to be represented in the Assembly or not.

THE LAND AND FOREIGN TRADE

The territory which the Lithuanians might reasonably call their own is about the size of New York State or Illinois. It is for the most part rich agricultural country, of which about 39%, so the Land Minister informed me, was cultivated; 25% was covered

with forests; 22% was used for grazing; and 14% made up of marsh land and peat bogs. Nearly half of the whole area, he said, was in large estates of over 500 acres, 60% of which were more or less heavily mortgaged before the war, and would, so many think, have been broken up by natural economic pressure in another thirty years.

There was talk of nationalizing the large forests, lakes, rivers and peat bogs; of parcelling estates given, or sold at a nominal sum, to the present owners or their ancestors in return for special services to the Tsars; estates not worked by their owners; and those owned by persons guilty of treason to the present state of Lithuania. The Polish Chief of State, Pilsudski, for instance, is one of many Polonized Lithuanians, and as the leader of an army which had invaded Lithuanian territory and seized what the Lithuanians regard as their capital city, Vilna, he was spoken of as a "traitor" by some of the more violent nationalists, who demanded that his Lithuanian property be confiscated.

The feeling against the Polish landlords, as landlords, seemed to be a good deal less definite and consciously worked up than the similar feeling in Esthonia and Latvia against the Balts, and the general attitude of the land theorists more conservative. While both Christian Democrats and Socialist-Populists were thoroughgoing enough in their plans for parcelling, both said that this should not be done without compensation. Mr. Rimka, the theorist of the latter party, spoke of the necessity of keeping up production, whatever reforms were undertaken; he was for all compen-

sation practicable without putting too great a burden on the state, and intent on avoiding speculators and building up a class of solid small-farm proprietors.

Nearly 90,000 acres, mostly as I understood it, from former Crown lands, had been parcelled out already and given chiefly to soldiers. There were available for parcelling, it was said, nearly 1,600,000 acres, and the whole program was not to be completed short of fifteen or twenty years. The suggested size of the small farms was 20 *dessiatins*, or about 60 acres, and here, as in Esthonia, the new owners were to have a six years' trial, and if they proved satisfactory farmers, they were to acquire actual property rights.

We had a glimpse of the old order in Lithuania on the estate of Count Tyszkiewicz—the Count was said to have twenty-nine others in Lithuania and the family has many branches—on the beautiful hills above the river Vilija, a few miles outside of Kovno. The Lithuanians were using the place as an artillery school.

Although occupied by various armies during the war, this particular estate had suffered little. At the time of the German occupation, when it looked as if Lithuania might become another Bavaria, under a German King, the "Red Estate," as this was called from the red-brick color of its curious old manor-house, was used by one of the German princes. The owner had succeeded in trimming his sails to the wind, and with his name—(pronounced "Tys-kaý-vitch")—spelled in Lithuanian fashion, "Tiskevicius," was representing Lithuania in London, quite as much to the advantage of the new republic, doubtless, as to him-

self. And although the former Majordomo, who took us through the house, pointing out family portraits and speaking of the parents of the Count with quaintly intimate respect as "Papa" and "Mamma," mourned the loss of many things, the old French furniture, the library with its Russian, French, German and English books, the paintings and prints and even the hunting trophies, were much as they had been.

It was while reading the names under one of the portraits—that of a demurely pretty young lady in a costume of the eighties or early nineties, of whom there were many pictures—that I ran across "Bancroftova" in between several Christian names and the final "Tyszkiewicz." Was the former Countess an American then, one of the Bancrofts? The caretaker said that she was, the daughter of a banker. He showed other pictures after that, formal picnics, house parties, and amateur theatricals, and taking us out into the Park, pointed out the winding road leading from the river up through the trees, which, he said, the Count had hewn out in honor of his bride when she came to the house for the first time.

One could imagine a pleasant and gracious life up there on the hill in the trees, looking down on the Vilija and miles of comfortable country, with other estates nearby to visit, and visits further afield to Warsaw or Paris or the Riviera—a life which, for thousands of amiable, more or less decorative people in what used to be Russia, is going or gone. Even were the owner to succeed in adjusting himself to the new order in Lithuania, it was doubtful that such a place would again become a private residence. If the central por-

tion were not kept by the artillerists, it would doubtless be turned into a school, hospital, model farm, or other semi-public use, and the land itself parcelled into small farms.

In the land, naturally, and the forests that grow on the land, lie the main resources of this essentially agricultural state. Before the war there were minor iron and textile manufactures in Kovno and Vilna, and spirits were distilled from potatoes as in the neighboring states. These and other industries will doubtless be started again, and the damage done by war naturally suggested the desirability of using some of their own trees for furniture and their own sand for glass. Out of Memel, Prussian before the war, and Lithuania's natural outlet to the sea, went annually in the old days some five million dollars worth of timber, most of which had been floated down the Niemen from the Lithuanian and White Russian forests. Three-fourths of the Lithuanians are farmers, however, and important as the carrying trade with Russia may one day be, the main preoccupation for the present with the essentially Lithuanian—as distinguished from the Jewish—population will be the land.

Rather better fed than their northern neighbors, they were like them at the start of their independence in needing capital and nearly every manufactured thing. The Germans loaned them a hundred million marks shortly after the armistice, and continued later, partly because of nearness and the fact that they continued after the war to use German marks and *Ostmarks* as their medium of exchange, to supply them

with most of their indispensable imports. Lithuania's strategic situation, squarely between Russia and Germany, with a navigable river, the Niemen, running down from the Russian border to the sea, gives her an interest to outsiders more compelling than merely local needs unsupplied, and the rest of the world, with the exception of ourselves has not been slow to act on it.

The British, particularly, have made the Lithuanians, along with the other Baltic nationalities, their little brothers. They were among the first to grant *de facto* recognition; they opened a Consulate, sent a Military Mission and a succession of civilian scouts. It was arranged that a considerable portion of the Lithuanian flax—a Government monopoly—should be sold in England on a commission basis through an English bank. It was proposed that the Lithuanians should issue their own currency with their timber as a basis, under an arrangement profitable to the English financiers who were to assist in the operation. Visitors to the British consulate at one time might while away their time in the waiting-room looking at the anti-Polish Lithuanian posters on the wall, and the Consul was regarded by the Poles as so partisan in his friendliness for the Lithuanians that he was transferred. In short, the British were doing everything to make themselves solid, to get control of Lithuania's financial possibilities, and pending the opening up of Russia, to prepare here a bridge into that promised land.

The French also had their Military Mission in Kovno, but their interest in a strong Poland, and the fact that Lithuanian flax was being smuggled into the

Memel district while it was under French occupation, did not make them popular. Other things being equal, the Lithuanians, like many of these East Europeans, would prefer to see development undertaken by Americans for the simple reason that we are presumed to have no political or territorial preoccupations. They would have liked our cheap automobiles and tractors. The grotesque water and sanitary arrangements in Kovno—ordinary wells and cess-pools—cried for improvement now that Kovno was by way of being a capital. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Galvanauskus, in speaking of these and other needs, spoke particularly of the development of the Niemen's water power as something that might interest a large American electrical company. There was said to be enough power easily available in the river above Kovno to light both Kovno and Vilna, displace the former's horse-cars, and revolutionize the whole power and transportation situation of the country, then largely dependent on wood for fuel.

The existence of such opportunities did not, of course, imply that Americans cared to take them up. There was the difficulty of payment here as elsewhere, and there might be just as good chances of investment nearer home which would give employment to our own citizens. But the active interests of other governments, the active rôle played by returned Lithuanian-Americans, the Lithuanian population in America itself, did throw into rather curious relief our policy of ignoring Lithuania.

We had given no sort of recognition, there was neither Military Mission nor Consulate, and the only

visible sign of the power and authority of the United States was an American flag hanging from the second story window of a branch station of the American Red Cross. The two officers in charge were supposed to distribute food, blankets, gray knit sweaters and the like, but a good deal of their time was taken up attending to the hundred and one questions and wants of a people who had a million relatives in the United States and Canada.

Most of them were hunting for passport visas. Some were just hopefully starting on this long and wearisome quest. Some, with sweat rolling down their faces and their hands full of papers the language of which they couldn't understand, were wallowing in the difficulties which not unnaturally resulted from trying to do business through a Consulate in another country (Latvia) with a State Department five thousand miles away. Some wanted to know what had become of the money sent by their American relatives and held up in Poland or lost somewhere in the tangle of censorships and demoralized postal systems which obstructed all eastern Europe. On the day I reached Kovno, one old man came to get the insurance money made over to him by his son killed fighting in the American army in France. (The Lithuanians say that about 50,000 Americans of Lithuanian descent were in the American army.) All the peasant father had was a notice stating that the insurance money was due him, and the photograph of a field of wooden crosses under one of which, he was informed, lay the body of his son. The collection of this money and the identification of the father involved the taking of affi-

davits in America and the supplying there of information about the boy's relatives in Lithuania, so elaborate and detailed as—communications being what they were—to seem almost impossible for him to get. At any rate, so the Red Cross man thought. Plainly such payments should be hedged about with suitable formalities, but plainly, too, it would have been a good deal easier for peasants who did not speak English if there had been in Kovno a Consulate to which they might have gone for help and advice.

The Consul in Riga was too busy to visit Kovno more than about once in every two months, and for the Lithuanians to go to Riga meant getting permission to leave their own country and to get into Latvia, by no means easy, and an expense which most of them could ill afford. Nor must it be assumed that when all of these difficulties were surmounted and their applications sent on to Washington, our State Department displayed any very startling examples of American efficiency. The Latvian Government, for instance, wished to send a representative to the United States. His application for a passport visa, officially made for him by the Latvian Government, was cabled to Washington with a recommendation from the United States Commissioner in Riga for immediate action. One might expect that such a request would at least be acknowledged by return cable. Not so. When I met the would-be Latvian representative he was sitting on one of the Riga beaches acquiring tan. He had been there then, he said, for nearly two months, and while it was pleasant enough, it was not a particularly useful life, and he hoped that our Government might

soon act, as the Baltic summers are short. After three months' wait without reply of any sort to repeated cables, our Commissioner, who had of course himself to ask many favors of the Government with which he was constantly dealing even if we had not recognized it, cabled that in the absence of a negative reply he would take the responsibility of granting a visa himself. Still no answer. The visa was given, the man started, and was midway in the Atlantic when word came that he was "inacceptable."

THE LITHUANIAN ZION

Among the minor embarrassments to travel in the Baltic republics is the enthusiasm of these young nations for changing street and shop signs into their own language. When hotel becomes *woirastemaja,* restaurant *söögisaal* and barber *habemeajaja,* the Westerner begins really to feel abroad. Long street might be guessed from *Langstrasse* but the Esthonian *Piküül* is another matter. In both Reval and Riga, where streets used to be known by their German as commonly as by their Esthonian or Lettish names, they are now turned into their native tongues which resemble the languages usually studied in western Europe or America about as much as Chinese or Choctaw.

Here in Kovno street names had been put into all three of the local languages, Lithuanian, Polish and Hebrew, and while this might not help the American much, it meant a great deal to the inhabitants, more than half of whom are Jews. "It is a symbol," one of the latter remarked to me, solemnly, pointing out the window at the street-sign on the corner; a

symbol of that "cultural autonomy" which the Jews had won for themselves here—and would like to win in Poland—and which makes them almost a home-rule island in the small Lithuanian sea.

The Kovno shop signs were a quaint example of the drive in the opposite direction, toward Lithuanian nationalism. Nearly all the Kovno shops are run by Jews, just as they are in Poland, and the long main street is just one Jewish name after another. But the owners of all these names had been forced, since Lithuanian independence, to take the Lithuanian termination *as,* and one bought fruit, groceries and hats from Messrs. Goldsteinas, Rosenbergas, Apfelbaumas, and so on. And that was also a symbol.

The Lithuania of which the home-sick immigrant dreams as he looks back to it from the Pennsylvania steel-mills or Chicago stock-yards—the real Lithuania, as one might call it—is a rich and placid land of farms, scarce touched by modern industry. The country is rolling prairie with a good deal of timber. Along the dusty road, every few miles, there rise tall, weather-beaten wooden crucifixes, and near the villages one meets perhaps a church procession, with priests and holy banners. One drives for miles and never sees a town; only from time to time a comfortable village, with its big white church enclosed by a white wall and shaded by lime trees, and a stream where little goose girls knit and watch their geese, and on the long, drowsy Sundays, peasants come to bathe.

The Lithuania one sees in Kovno, and to a certain extent in Vilna, is quite another thing. In Kovno, the

Jews, although making up rather less than one-fifth of the country's population, are in the majority. Trade is in their hands. And because there are too many of them, and not enough of their particular sort of middle-man business to go around, and most of them were uprooted and flung eastward by the war and are just beginning to get rooted again, they are wretchedly poor. There are old men in gabardines with patriarchal beards and side-curls, and sharp-faced young men just back from America in the latest editions of American store-clothes; wrinkled old women in brown wigs, and fuzzy-headed, dark-skinned girls with an air of the desert. And all of them, packed into their chattering streets, as Jews pack themselves into their Ghettos everywhere, are as distinct from the blue-eyed, placid Lithuanians as so many crows in a flock of sheep.

It was among the poorer of these Jews that the Red Cross was largely working, and I stood by the battered old A. R. C. ambulance one morning in the square at Kovno, while a long queue of them slowly edged toward it, watching it, as if it might somehow get away from them, with the eyes of puzzled, hungry hawks. Too used to deceit and rough handling to be patient, too ignorant to be grateful, they only knew that if they stood in line long enough and showed the right slip of paper, something for nothing came out of that car—blankets, sweaters, cotton stuff for shirts, it didn't matter much which.

They gouged each other out of place in the line, fought with the Red Cross man who was superintending the distribution, complained after the stuff

was given them that it was not what they wanted, or not enough. It seemed the wreckage of oldest Europe, squabbling there like caged animals for bits of flesh. The battered Ford car which had already bounced and snarled its way through several adventurous years on the French front, was jaunty and youthful in comparison, and one caught an echo of another world, incredibly fresh and hopeful, as one read on the brass plate on the front of the car,—"From Surprise Valley, Modoc County, California." . . .

The Committee of Jewish Delegations at Paris in the spring of 1919 demanded that the Jewish minorities in the several countries spoken for, should constitute "distinct, autonomous organizations, and as such have the right to establish, manage and control schools, religious, educational, charitable and social institutions." They should have the right to use their language in the courts and elsewhere; a proportional part of the public funds intended for schools and other public services; proportional representation in the legislative bodies, and the right to rest on their own Sabbath, and to work, if they chose, on the Christian Sunday.

In August 1919, the Lithuanian Peace Delegation in Paris made a declaration granting practically all these demands. The Lithuanian Jews were to have the rights of other citizens, proportional representation in the Government, and a special Ministry for their own affairs. While Lithuanian was to be the language of the State, and all public institutions must correspond in it, and its study be compulsory in the

schools, the Jews might use their own language in their own schools and newspapers. They were to have the right to their own Sabbath and their rabbis were to have the same legal position as priests of other faiths. Teaching in the Jewish schools was to be compulsory, universal and free, if similar obligations were imposed on other primary schools.

The "organs of autonomy" were to be local committees or councils, working in conjunction with a central council. The Ministry of Jewish Affairs was to act as a sort of liaison body between the Central Council and the Lithuanian Government. The local councils were to have the rights of legal persons to receive donations or gifts from wills. The Jews might take obligatory resolutions for their co-nationals and tax them. If these taxes were not paid they could appeal to the central Lithuanian Government for force to compel payment.

Not all the clauses of the Lithuanian declaration—"our Magna Charta," as one of the Kovno Jews described it to me—had been carried out. There was not enough money or teachers to make primary education compulsory in either the Lithuanian or the Jewish schools. The question of the Jewish Sabbath, and whether Jews might be permitted to do business on the Christian Sunday, was not clearly decided. But in January, 1920, representatives of 78 local Jewish committees had met and elected a national council, and when I reached Kovno in the summer, a Ministry for Jewish Affairs, with a Minister, minor officials and Press Department, was functioning between the

Jewish minority and the Lithuanians very much in the fashion of the usual Foreign Office.

This ministry was above a row of shops, on the second floor of a low white stucco building, a little way down into the "old town" and the Jewish quarter, from Kovno's long main street. With a few minor changes in scenery, the place might have been duplicated on New York's East Side, in Warsaw, or in any other Ghetto neighborhood. There were similar shops all about with cheap clothing and jewelry, wilted fruit and queer-colored drinks; the same patriarchal old men and sharp-eyed young ones, the same avid air of bargaining and never-relaxing struggle for existence.

Inside, the Ministry again suggested what such a Ministry might be were it transferred to Grand or Rutgers street. The stooping, owl-like old gentleman in black glasses, who acted as a sort of page or messenger in the outer office, might have just come from selling shoe-strings at the entrance to the Second Avenue "L." The brisk young people further in, hurrying about with papers or whacking type-writers, could have been matched in any East Side settlement or theatre audience. The consideration with which, as a complete outsider, one was received, contrasted characteristically with the brusque, even over-bearing manner which these newly-placed officials had soon learned to adopt toward timid petitioners of their own people. And when one finally reached the Minister himself, one felt that curious inner concentration, that brooding self-absorption, with which the Hebrew, in con-

trast with the more boisterous, blue-eyed northern races, so often seems to wrap himself away from our comparatively youthful and frivolous western world.

A Lithuanian might be as different as you please from his American visitor, yet as long as he was talking to you he had the air of wanting to be accepted as "one of the same crowd." Mr. Soloveichik—if one is not making too much of a few minutes' conversation—had the air of being little interested in such amenities. He came of a race too ancient and too long-suffering to bother about such matters; a tough-minded minority, trained by centuries of oppression and hardship to defend itself, and while accepting its present position as a sort of partner in the new nationalism as the best thing that offered, nevertheless, here as elsewhere, keeping its eyes fixed on the main chance. If this "autonomy" meant anything real, all very well, they would make the most of it. They were too old to have illusions, or to waste time in congratulatory words.

The comparatively detached attitude of the Lithuanian Jews toward Lithuanian nationalism was suggested both by what they said and by some of the literature of their Press Department. In one pamphlet, for instance, given me principally for its statistics on the Jewish population in Lithuania, there was a scathing arraignment of Lithuanian claims to independence, including the observation that Lithuanians, "next to Albanians, are the most primitive people in Europe." The young man who had given me the pamphlet explained with a faint smile, when I had called his attention to it, that the Jewish author hap-

pened to be very Germanophile, and that the pamphlet was published during the German occupation of Lithuania, when present developments could scarcely have been foreseen.

Another summary of the economic situation of the Lithuanian Jews spoke of the comparatively good times enjoyed during the occupation. "In 1917 the situation began to improve. The compulsory work introduced by the Germans was transformed, as the occupation grew milder, into public works. War-contracts for the German army led to a certain concentration of capital in the hands of the Jews, especially of those who supplied provisions and wood. The presence of the army, and the material prosperity of the native population led to a great demand for the products of Jewish handicraft. Certain sections of the Jewish population gained a foothold in the lower divisions of municipal and state service, and on the railways. Large groups of Jews engaged in agriculture, leasing the estates abandoned by owners in their flight." Since Lithuanian independence these footholds have not infrequently been lost. "Thousands of Jewish workers have been dismissed mostly on the ground of their ignorance of the Lithuanian language . . . Jewish handicraft lost most of its customers when the German occupation came to an end. During the war the village populations began to supply themselves with their household requisites."

Along with these regrets were reports of growing Jewish strength. The educated class had returned from its war-time flight. Lithuania was covered by a network of democratically elected committees. Popu-

lar banks were being organized with the plan of ultimate consolidation with a "central bank which shall enjoy the support not merely of the Jewish population in Lithuania, but of large Jewish institutions abroad."

That the rather easy-going, agricultural Lithuanians might fear commercial submergence and the formation of an embarrassing state within the state, seemed natural, yet most of those with whom I talked appeared to have no such misgivings. Some remarked, rather whimsically, that they expected that when Russia opened up, the Jews would repair thither, or if not, that they would emigrate to America. Others said that all possible dangers had been considered before the autonomy was granted, and that there were always ways in which a governing majority could protect itself. Government monopolies already restricted the available field of profitable enterprise; if necessary, pressure of this sort could be extended.

While such measures can scarcely be regarded as "normal," nor permanently desirable in healthy states, no one familiar with Eastern European governmental customs since the war, need be surprised to find a racial majority looking forward to using them. These majorities can and therefore they do, and anyone assuming the contrary is likely to have his fingers burned.

The permanence of this "cultural autonomy"—in the granting of which expediency and the aim of uniting Lithuanian strength against the Poles had a part—remains to be seen, of course, but there is an experimental interest in the fact that the Jews have here what they would like to have in Poland and elsewhere,

and what the Poles are determined they shall not get. There are more Jews in proportion to the population in Poland than in Lithuania; the Polish majority is much more sophisticated and politically conscious, and the struggle between the two groups is correspondingly more intense. But the remarks of Captain Wright in his personal postscript to the report of the Sir Stuart Samuel Commission, applies wherever "eastern" or Orthodox Jews are found in large numbers in the West.

"The civilization of nothing less than half the Polish Jews," he said, "is not only far from European, but it is also very primitive. It is the civilization of the age of Ezra and Nehemiah. . . . Their very antiquity made the Orthodox Jews the most interesting race in Poland, and their Rabbis were venerable with all the dignity of the East. . . . Nothing could be more impressive than the preservation of this old Semitic culture, which is not only older than European civilization, but older than the civilizations, Latin and Byzantine, now long extinguished, from which European civilization is itself derived. The ridicule and contempt affected for it by the Poles and many Jews who are not Orthodox, is shallow and ignorant. But nothing could be more difficult to associate with than a people, who, physically, morally, and mentally, are, and whose conception and way of life, is, so very different. . . ."

The wall between the Jewish minorities and the citizens of the countries they inhabit; the complexity, social and economic, of the whole problem as it exists in Poland, and to a less extent, in such neighborhoods

as Lithuania, is little understood in the West, where Jewish immigration has been at least roughly assimilated. Most foreigners, after visiting these countries, find their original preconceptions a good deal modified. It is not a mere matter of deviltry and pogroms, but a problem comparable in difficulty with that of our own negroes or of the Irish in Ireland.

CHAPTER X

IN THE REAL LITHUANIA

THE Prime Minister was a country-doctor from the little town of Mariampole, in southwest Lithuania—a tall, arrow-straight, aquiline man of middle years, with an "Old Hickory" suggestion in his bearing and slightly sardonic humour, and a wisdom that came from supplementing his professional observations of the human animal with adventures into the somewhat more abstract regions of practical politics.

It was after a week of shabby old Kovno; its noisy cobbles, smelly drains, fly-specked pastry-shops and curious post-Russian mixture of aspiring Lithuanian nationalists and scracely less aspirational Jews, that Dr. Grenius took me down to Mariampole for a breath of the country and a glimpse of the "real" Lithuania.

Along with the War Minister, in a big military car apparently left over from the German occupation, we whizzed for an hour or two between comfortable fields and unpainted, weather-worn gray cottages with nothing much to mark the land as Lithuanian, except the tall, wooden crosses, turned gray-black by rain and wind, each with its crucifix at the crossing of the arms, rising at frequent intervals along the road. Once we passed a funeral procession—priests at the head with holy banners, family and friends trailing behind in the dust, singing as they walked.

Beside a bit of forest, full of huckleberries and the wood strawberries which the peasant women were bringing in to Kovno by the basket-full every morning, we stopped to mend a tire, and as the repairs went slowly, finally strolled across the fields to gossip with a peasant family and see what might be found for lunch. The family of husband, wife and two children, owned their fifteen acres, and with a horse, a few sheep, cow and chickens, contrived to make a living. Their log house was characteristic of the poorer sort of peasant cottages—a combined entry and store-room led into its one common room, into which was crowded the brick-and-plaster stove and oven, beds, table and chairs, a spinning wheel, and a loom on which was stretched a bolt of half-finished linen.

While the Minister chatted with the husband, the wife wiped off a table outside the house, some plates and three wooden spoons, and gave us the best she had—black bread and a big crock of thick, sour milk. The *yaouert* of Turkey; the *prostokvasha* of Russia; the *fil* of Finland; this klabber is one of the standard articles of diet all over this part of Europe, and very good food it is too, and will, as every follower of Dr. Metchnikoff well knows, make you live to be a thousand years old. With the latent satisfaction which this thought gives, we gripped our porringers and lapped up our quart or two apiece and resumed our journey toward Mariampole.

Its church tower showed presently above the trees, and we drummed down a long main street, lined, as most such village streets in Lithuania are, with shops bearing Jewish names, to find the village guard drawn

MARKET ON THE QUAY AT HELSINGFORS [*Chapter I*]

PEASANTS COMING FROM CHURCH AT MARIAMPOLE

up to receive their distinguished fellow townsman. The guard presented arms, the Doctor saluted, the Jewish merchants looked on with that curious detached air of theirs, and we drove on toward the big white church in the trees, and the little, low, vine-covered house across from it which had long been the Doctor's home and office.

A delegation of black-coated village notables from the local council or Tariba, with which the Lithuanians are taking their first lessons in self-government, came to pay their respects, and after meeting them and trying without much success to talk to one young man who remembered a few words of English from the America he had left as a boy of nine to return to the old country, I went out to look at the town.

The service was over, and not only Mariampole, but all the countryside, was gathered under the big lime trees about the church. Older men, with long pipes, smoked and conversed gravely; sunburned peasant girls, their healthy faces framed in spotless white kerchiefs, huddled in little giggling convoys, shy as birds. One sat alone on the grass in the full sunshine, hands in her lap, her feet straight in front of her, her calm gray eyes, under wide level brows, staring into space. She had not stirred when I happened to pass again a quarter of an hour later, but still sat there, with that air of a cow in the meadow, or, if you prefer, with something of the unhurried dignity of rocks and trees. The whole churchyard, and the place in front of it, was busy as a picnic—only a few of the older women lingered, more conscious of their sins than the rest, and kneeling close to the white-

washed wall of the church, prayed and told their beads there, as if something holy and healing were disengaged from its very stones.

They were rather fine-looking peasant faces. Some of the more enthusiastic Lithuanian nationalists make much of their long straight Greek noses, and certainly one seemed to see them here, and fine wide brows, and the noses often made with the forehead a rather strikingly "classic" straight line. I saw peasant faces of what seemed to me precisely the same type in Poland between Warsaw and Lodz, and whether this proves that the Lithuanians are Poles, or Poles Lithuanians, or proves nothing at all, I must leave to someone wiser in these matters—good looking they were, at any rate.

In New York, the winter before, I had seen a play entitled "In Lithuania," in which a family of particularly sodden peasants chop up a rich traveller guest with an axe, only to learn that he is their son returned after years in America. It was one of those adventures into supposedly primitive emotions in which the sophisticated mind occasionally likes to indulge, and the author evidently took it for granted that Lithuania was a region so remote from civilization that one was safe in assuming that anything might happen there. Nothing that I saw in Mariampole that day, from the churchyard, to the play given by the young folks' literary society that evening, suggested that his realism was particularly real. The Lithuanian peasants are backward, to be sure, but the faces of those in the churchyard that morning, seemed, at any rate, to fit less with the play than with the tales of Lithuania's heroic past, and it was not impossible to imagine

that the preoccupied young woman on the grass was humming over one of the old *Dainos,* the poems in which the earlier Lithuanians used to tell of the loves of their pagan Gods and of themselves. One of them according to a French translation, goes like this:

> "The Moon, in the month of dreams, wedded the Sun, whom she, faithless one, quitted after his splendid rising.
>
> "Strolling along alone, she met a beautiful Star, and he became her lover.
>
> "But Perkunas, seeing them, with one stroke of his sword cleft the star in twain, and threw him out of the heavens.
>
> "Why, O faithless Moon, did you deceive the Sun, only to win a Star. . . . She went on her way, sad and alone. . . ."

I left the church and walked down along the river. It was precisely the sort of river that such a village ought to have—big enough to swim and wash clothes in, not so big but that the ducks could float easily from bank to bank, and the little girls, by wrapping their one-piece slips about their shoulders, or taking them off altogether and carrying them on top of their heads, could wade across. Half a dozen of them were, indeed, so doing, scrambling into and out of their dresses, screaming and laughing, as they followed each other over in single file and then turned round and came back again. A bit further along a young soldier and two peasant girls were sunning themselves on the close-cropped grass by the edge of the water. The boy and one of the young women took turns flinging themselves over, after the fashion of puppies at play; the other young woman, with well-mannered indifference, sat calmly at her sister's side, watching the water. The tall green rye came down on the other

side of the stream almost to the water's edge, and above it, on the shoulder of the low ridge, two Dutch windmills were slowly turning. . . .

The Doctor, meanwhile, had been receiving all sorts of people, including several who couldn't get over the habit of thinking of him as their physician instead of Prime Minister, and when I got back to the house one of these callers was laying down the law with particular emphasis. He was the son, it appeared, of a Lithuanian who had been sent to Siberia sixty years ago by the Russian Government. The father's farm had been confiscated and turned over to a Russian colonist. The son now wished the Lithuanian Government to take the farm away from the son of this colonist and give it back to him. He had written already to the Ministry in Kovno, demanding that historical justice be done, and received no reply, and he now very emphatically wanted to know how about it.

It was characteristic of the land hungry wrangles going on all over eastern Europe. And in so far as it showed that there was genuine land hunger, it should have encouraged the Prime Minister, for it is on this foundation, and the land that may easily be made available to satisfy it, that the solid future of Lithuania must be built. If the peasants in Mariampole churchyard seemed good stock for such building the intelligentsia in Kovno suggested what this stock might grow into if it had a chance, and taken together they left one not without reason for confidence in the ability of the Lithuanians to govern themselves.

The peculiar difficulties in the way of Lithuania's

permanent independence—her position squarely between Russia and Germany, and the active opposition of the Poles—are impressed on the traveller who continues his journey southward into Poland itself. Aggressive nationalists of the type of Ramon Dmovski, the organizer of the conservative Polish National Democratic Party, simply brush the suggestion aside. Lithuania, they say, if left to herself, must inevitably drift under Russian or German influence. For the safety of Poland she should be included within the Polish customs' frontier with a good deal of home rule. I spoke to Mr. Dmovski of the Lithuanians' fear of being overshadowed and absorbed in a federation; of being drawn into military adventures in which they were not interested; of their notion that their rich little agricultural country, with its population of comparatively hard-headed peasants, might do better economically alone; and I mentioned the returned Lithuanian-Americans and their enthusiasm and belief. Dmovski nodded rapidly.

"Certainly, certainly!" he agreed. "They are all those young men who have gone to Russian universities—(he might have been thinking of Dr. Smetona) —and learned to hate Poland. You'll find that they all speak Polish. Let me ship 500 people out of Lithuania and the national movement would disappear"—he snapped his fingers sharply—"like that! I assure you—500 would be quite enough!"

Pilsudski, Poland's Chief of State, whom the nervous, "realistic" Dmovski, described as "a medieval figure—quite of the Middle Ages!" meaning by that, I presume, that the Polish hero had qualities of the

old time barbarian chieftain, rather than of the matter-of-fact, modern man of affairs, also feared that Lithuania could not be completely independent, but in his case Polish nationalism was tempered by attachment for the land of his birth. For Pilsudski, like many other influential Poles, comes from Lithuania and is of Lithuanian descent. His position is somewhat like that in which Mr. Lloyd George would be were Wales trying to assert its independence of Great Britain. His bushy brows knitted and he became exceedingly grave, when I asked him, during a chat in Warsaw, what was to become of Lithuania.

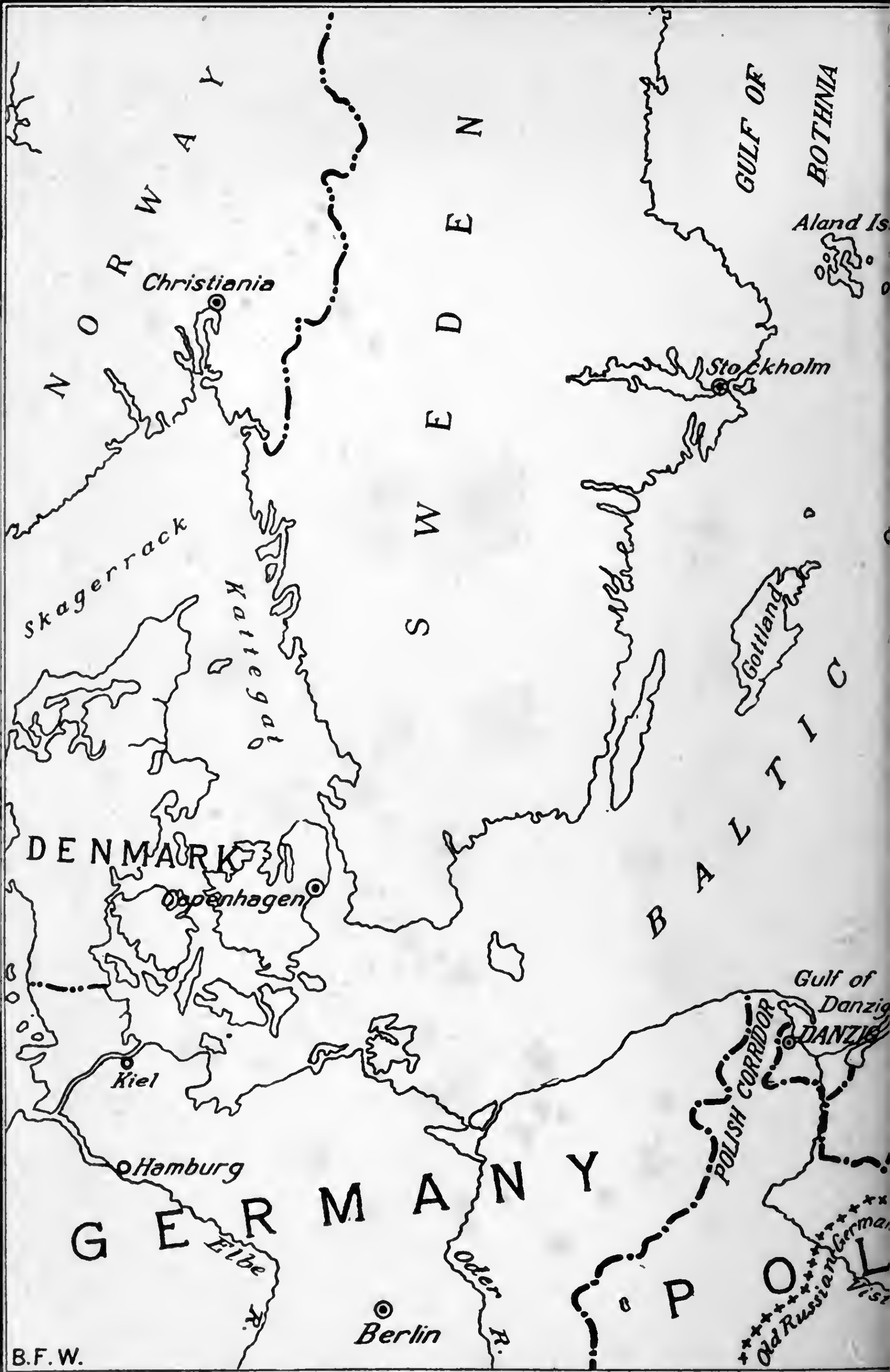
"I am so fond of my native land. It is,"—he hesitated, smiled, and opened his hands with a gesture of helplessness—"a weakness of mine!" (You would have had to sit in that vast room in the Belvidere Palace, and seen the adjutant coming in from time to time to whack his heels and salute with the air of one addressing Jove himself, to have caught the precisely delightful flavour of that deprecating "*c'est mon faiblesse!*") "I have such a profound feeling for my own country that it is hard to discuss a problem so difficult and painful. A federation would be the natural solution. But the Lithuanians do not want that. You can not make them want it. Alone they have not the strength permanently to resist Russia or Germany. Yet we must protect ourselves and prevent Lithuania from falling under the influence of one or the other. It is very difficult, indeed."

I suggested a resemblance between the situation here and that which used to exist between Russia and Finland before the war.

"No, it is very different. The Finns had for a long time lived a practically separate life. I never saw a Finn who was not thoroughly Finnish, who was Russianized, I mean. The Lithuanians have not lived in modern times such a separate life. Wherever they are they quickly become nationalized. Now I was born in Lithuania. I do not think of myself as Polish in blood. My temperament is different, my very face is different. But in culture, I am Polish. The great Polish poet, Miczkiewicz, the great Kosciusko, were both Lithuanians."

Pilsudski spoke of the long and friendly federation between Poland and Lithuania. "I never even heard Lithuanian until I visited the estate of a relative of ours. It was not spoken on our place at all." He soliloquized for a moment on the mystery of patriotism. "Why, when I was young I was actually ill if I could not get back to my country after a year away. I loved it so, I was sick for it. Those things are organic. They cannot be explained. . . . It is very difficult, indeed!"

There, for the moment, we left it. And with the future of Russia and of Poland, not to speak of Germany, still so vague, there, for the moment, it possibly may be left. If, however, the Lithuanian nationalists have a harder row to hoe than some of their neighbors, they have at least emerged from political oblivion. They have asserted their separate language and shown their determination to govern themselves, and these facts must play their part in the final settlement.



NORWAY
SWEDEN
GULF OF BOTHNIA
Aland Is.
Christiania
Stockholm
Skagerrack
Kattegat
Gottland
DENMARK
Copenhagen
BALTIC
Gulf of Danzig
DANZIG
POLISH CORRIDOR
Kiel
Hamburg
GERMANY
Elbe R.
Oder R.
Berlin
POL
Old Russian German
B.F.W.

105382

INLAND
Viborg
Helsingfors
Kronstadt
Petrograd
Gulf of Finland
Gatchina
Narva
Reval
Peipus Laka
Hapsal
ESTHONIA
OSEL
Dorpat
Pernau
Walk
Pskov
Salis
Gulf of Riga
LATVIA
Riga
Mitau
Duna or
Dvinsk
Dvina R.
RUSSIA
MEMEL
LITHUANIA
Approximate Boundary
Memel or
Kovno
Tilsit
Vilna
Niemen R.
Minsk
Suwalki
Grodno
RUSSIA
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