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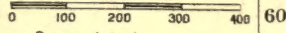
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- Tundra
- Coniferous Forests
- Woodland, Grass & Cultivation
- Sub-tropical Trees & Shrubs
- Steppe & Grassland
- Semi-Desert
- Desert

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THE STRUGGLE FOR
POWER IN EUROPE



THE STRUGGLE FOR
POWER IN EUROPE
1917-1921. An Outline

Economic and Political Survey of the
Central States and Russia. By Dr. L. HADEN
GUEST, M.C., M.R.C.S., Author of "The New Education," etc.

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CHAPTER I

THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN EUROPE

1917-1921

THE result of the European War 1914-1918 has been to sweep away the old boundaries of states, of political parties and of social classes. New States have arisen, old States have changed their character, and tendencies to social change, long germinating, have become suddenly active. And all this has happened before the wreckage and débris of the field of battle has been cleared away. The changes are marked enough in Great Britain, so that some despair and others rejoice. But the changes which have occurred here are less in extent than in almost any other country with the exception of the neutral States. In England it seems to us normal that the King should still be at Buckingham Palace, the Guards still parade and mount guard there, Parliament and Government offices continue their routine, social events and racing take place much as in pre-war days, and the traffic of Piccadilly, the Strand, the City or the Docks be relatively unchanged. But on the Continent the idea that the life of Great Britain, its capital, its county towns and villages, and its countryside should be so little changed

excites amazement. It is almost incredible to many people in Russia and in Central and South-Eastern Europe that such things can be. And by a curious twist of circumstances they fix on the strife and turmoil of our mining and industrial areas, which to us seems portentous, as something normal, by means of which they can still feel related with us. We look out from our relative stability and tranquillity, and have difficulty in comprehending the strain and confusion of much life in Continental Europe: they look out on our island from revolution and war-swept countries, and can hardly believe that the conditions of England can be real. Every Peace Treaty or Trade Agreement which is signed, every through railway service from country to country which is re-established, and every extension of exchange of press information or of books helps to improve understanding. But at the time of writing it is only a year ago since Soviet Russia was a sealed book, and it will be long before the complete picture of what has happened in Russia and the rest of Europe will be open to us.

This book is an attempt at a general survey, which will act as a guide to the main lines of change in Russia, Central and South-Eastern Europe, and indicate the new forces which are striving for mastery. A complete economic and political survey could hardly be made by any one individual, unless he were content with a mere presentation of statistics. But what I have hoped to do is to give an account of some of the bigger changes which have come about since the war, and

in particular indicate the new social and political groupings which have displaced the old. In speaking of these changes it is necessary to speak not only of the industrial workers, not only of the peasants, nor of any one group of the population, but of all those who toil or labour on the land or in the factory, in the office or as scientific specialists, all those who make up the actively living people of Europe, the democracy. And the word democracy is employed throughout this book as more definite than people and as including both industrial and peasant proletariat as well as other groups which these latter descriptions exclude.

Big changes in any part of Europe affect us all because Europe is a small continent, actually smaller than the United States if Russia be excluded, and is not only an economic entity but very definitely a political and social entity also. If Englishmen cherished any delusions on this subject before the war, the war itself and its consequences in the various Peace Treaties should have put an end to them. We are bound intimately to Europe, firstly by our trade, secondly by our alliance with the Entente Powers, thirdly by our participation in the League of Nations, and lastly by our responsibility for the various Treaties of Peace which bind us not only to Germany, but to the other Powers of Central Europe, to the States of the Balkans, to Russia, and indeed, directly or indirectly to every State in or near Europe. We cannot, if we would, repudiate our connection with Continental Europe.

No doubt this book is biassed against the

scholarship of the older universities and against diplomacy of the old school, because it has seemed to me that the old scholarship, if it had knowledge, was incapable of democratically useful action, and the old diplomacy certainly had not knowledge and was only capable of helping on the course of events which ended in the great European War.

And I venture here to explain my own point of view because I want to appeal to the new rulers of Europe, the new democracy becoming conscious of itself in all countries against the old rulers of Europe, the various types of governing class who in one form or another are still striving to cling to power. It is quite certain that in knowledge many of the old scholars and the old rulers are superior to those who, like myself, speak for the new order, but it is equally certain that the old pre-war order, taken in the average, failed to see, to know and to act in matters essential for our human welfare in this country as in every other country of Europe. And this because they did not know the life of the ordinary man and did not realize its importance.

Before the war much of my life was spent in intimate and personal contact with a very poor part of London. As a school doctor inspecting schools of the London County Council, as a clinic doctor treating men, women, and particularly children in a very poor district of London (Lambeth and Southwark), I came into personal contact with many thousands of ordinary citizens. I watched a whole generation of children grow up from babyhood in poverty, through school life in poverty, to

be ready for employment at wretched wages at 14 years of age, and be ready at later ages to fill places in some mill or factory in one of the many individually meaningless jobs in the industrial machine.

“Infant mortality” to me has not been an abstraction of statistics, but a struggle to rescue little wailing atoms of misery from the clutches of poverty; “the feeding of school-children” has not been a question of dialectics, but a fierce desire to save individuals from weakness, deformity and disease; and “problems of hours of work and wages” have been translated for me, not into figures only, but into the lives of the bright girls and boys I have known going into the industrial machine, and having brightness and joy taken out of them, suffering illness and hardship, and paying their toll in premature death and disablement.

It seemed inconceivable to me, then, that men and women could know of the conditions of life of the great majority of their fellow-countrymen who lived in industrial areas and not wish to change them. But many not only did not wish to change conditions, they actively resisted any change, and apart from this, many politicians, statesmen, economists, all kinds of well-instructed and learned people deliberately and intentionally shut themselves off from personal knowledge of the life conditions of their fellows. So that many who, like myself, placed human considerations before all others, who believed in the value of ordinary human individuals (of democracy if you like) because we knew them, formed themselves here and there into groups, Socialist societies, Labour clubs,

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Trade Unions, and other working class organizations to definitely fight politically for the emancipation of the mass of the population, the workers by hand or brain, against the ability, the executive capacity, the scholarship, and the power of the ruling classes, who were misusing their rule. That realization of solidarity with the working population is stamped so deep into my consciousness, that distrust for all knowledge and learning which is not first of all human and democratic is so essential a part of my make-up that it is only reasonable to state it here to give the reader his orientation.

This feeling of solidarity, this consciousness of a common humanity, this sense of spiritual equality with all—criminal, outcast, oppressor and oppressed even—is the foundation of the great democratic movement of Labour in this country. It expands to include not one class but all classes, it steps over national boundaries and race boundaries, it can finally be content with nothing less than the affirmation of the solidarity of all humanity. And since I have travelled a good deal in Europe and studied conditions in many different countries, it seems to me that the whole democratic movement in Europe is essentially one with ours. I feel that as our democracy, often blindly and unconsciously, has reached out hands to grip those of its fellows here and build a strong and conscious organization, so in the near future democracies of all countries will stretch out hands (fortifying links already existing) and build strong and powerful an organization for Europe as a whole.

* * * * *

Travelling about Europe from one country to another one discovers with surprise the simple fact that we live on a very small continent. It is possible at the present time, calculating existing inconveniences of travel, to visit all the countries of Europe and spend a little time in each country during a period of three months. And despite the many languages of Europe one can get about and talk freely with people if one can command English, French and German. If Russian is added to these three basic languages the range extends further still. Unfortunately my Russian is negligible and my German doubtful, but even with only English and French one can go a long way. Yet in Europe, which is so easily accessible to us, there are probably more undiscovered political problems than in India, Africa, Egypt, Australia, or Canada.

And travelling about our small continent one finds that the old Europe has gone. No country has as yet found itself since the war. No country knows exactly where it stands. Emperors and kings have gone, social classes have gone, institutions, political parties and old ideas have gone.

The change from the old order is most marked in Soviet Russia, where social disorganization and physical privation underline as it were the main characteristic changes. There the Tsar and the Court and the old bourgeoisie have gone; large scale privately controlled industry has gone, and, what makes a great mark in the towns, the shops have gone. In the cities the old-time poorer people have moved into the houses and flats of the old-

time wealthier people. In the country the peasants have taken the land and divided it up amongst themselves. But although in Soviet Russia the changes are most sensational, changes of the same general character operate practically everywhere else. Rationing of housing and rooms is in operation in Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Sofia and other towns. Classes have changed their old relations nearly everywhere. Peasant movements to expropriate land and re-distribute it to small proprietors exist in practically all countries of Europe.

The old order has gone. Soviet Russia is merely the extreme example of tendencies traceable everywhere. And that not because Soviet Russia is leading a European revolution, but because Soviet Russia is herself one of the States of Europe participating in the general European changes.

But it is not in fact the disappearance of the old order which is so startling in Europe as the coming of the new order. The idea of Central Europe prevalent in England—that it is in a condition of terrible physical distress and privation—has apparently obscured the truth of the vigorous new growth which is occurring everywhere. The new Europe is very much alive and very vigorously adapting itself to the new conditions. The democracy of Europe has begun its labour of building the new order, and knows that it is so building.

The titanic rise of the democracies of Europe into consciousness is the overwhelming fact of the present European situation ; its strenuous insistence on human value, on the value of the ordinary man, is a fact everywhere, and the future of Europe

depends on the possibility of the new democracy getting itself equipped with the necessary knowledge for its gigantic tasks.

The consciousness of this fact has led the new democracies everywhere to lay great emphasis on education. Soviet Russia is making efforts to overtake the neglect of generations; more fortunately placed countries are making most interesting progressive experiments, among which the Social-Democratic Kinder Freunde Schools of Austria deserve imitation. And this impulse to educational growth expresses itself in increase of schools, increase of teachers, specialization of schools, as for agriculture, and the foundation of universities. There have probably been more universities founded since the Armistice than in the five years previous to the war.

It is realized everywhere that the old university knowledge of the old ruling classes will not suffice. In the one department which was left almost exclusively to this class in every country before the war, that of foreign politics, in that department the most terrible crimes and blunders have been committed, because the power of democracy was not able to make itself felt. For no democratic organization of international scope was of any practical value in preventing the outbreak of war in Europe, all were so poor in material resources and so weak in knowledge and executive powers that the diplomatists and the ruling classes of Europe held the field to themselves, and their only method of settling the affairs of Europe was by precipitating a war of world-wide dimensions.

The fact that the new democracies everywhere demand not only peace and material well-being but, above all, education, is one of the deepest significance. It means the realization that where the great leaders of thought have stepped there the democracy must follow. It means the conviction that the way of social and individual progress and security is the way of the scientific ascertainment of truth, the seeing of things as they are, the following of law scientifically ascertained.

This demand for education is also the acknowledgment that it is education which has created democracy, and its leaders inevitably found their philosophy on the scientific view of the world which was the inspiration of the educational movement in the past as it must be its leader in the future. It is not, however, education in the formal sense only which has created democracy; the press, rapid communications, travel, the aggregation of men in industrial areas, a rising standard of well-being, the use of political power, the secularist movement, religious reform movements, the Socialist movement and the spread of cheap scientific and socialist literature have all played their part.

The economic theories of Karl Marx have shaped the expression of many of the strivings of the unconscious giant and have had great influence, but Darwin, Huxley, Haekel, Weismann, to mention only a few outstanding names, have had an even greater influence. Modern Socialism is only the most definite and most clearly expressed statement of the wants of the new democracy, but at best it is not a complete expression, and in its present form

probably a temporary expression. This is seen clearly enough in England and in the British Commonwealth of Nations, where professed Socialists form only a small fraction of the total Labour movement. It becomes very much clearer when one surveys Europe as a whole. Broadly conceived scientific conceptions are the real leaders of Europe to-day. And it is of the first importance to realize that the rise and emancipation of the democracy is to be understood not by reference to some arbitrarily conceived industrial or capitalist system—which does not touch most areas of Russia or Central and Eastern Europe in any intimate way—but by reference to the education and emancipation of the million minds of individual men and women and the realization by these millions of minds of their own value, their own human dignity, and of their own splendid part in the life of their country, of Europe and of the world.

The reason of the importance of this realization is clear. The new democracy is advancing to take over control and direction of the world of things in the interest of the ordinary man and woman. This control and direction are to be over realities, not over theories or abstractions, and only a clear scientific study of the facts of life can be the basis of a knowledge of realities. Karl Marx has raised a scaffolding to help us in the building of our house, but the scientific minds, the great naturalists like Darwin and Huxley, the great physicists and the great chemists—the great men of the exact sciences in a word—are those who must give us

our precise knowledge of nature, of ourselves and of the means of controlling and using nature and getting the best results out of our own humanity.

The overwhelming importance of science and of the scientific mind to the new democracy is not, so far as I know, consciously realized in its true importance anywhere in Europe. You cannot put the *Origin of Species* into a political programme as you can *Das Kapital*. But science and the scientific mind are cardinal factors of the situation.

The profoundly interesting experiment of the Bolsheviks in Russia has brought out one point with unmistakable clearness—the importance of the trained mind, the doctor, the engineer, the manager, the administrator, in any constructive Socialism. It was Lenin who pointed out at a recent Communist conference addressed on technical matters by the engineer Lomonosoff, the importance of this constructive side of life. And there is no doubt that the future of Russia depends very largely on the number and quality of the trained men she can get to help her in the next few years. But so does the future of Roumania, of Bulgaria and of Tchecho-Slovakia, for examples. Everywhere in Europe where democracy is getting to work two questions have to be put: (1) What has got to be done? and (2) Who is going to do it? In essence our own problems in England revolve around the same questions. The question for and against socialization of industries is fought over the ground of who is going to do the actual administrative work. Is it to be that vague entity “the State,” is it private capitalism, is it the Guild,

is it some form of co-operative enterprise? A recent controversy still echoing asked the question "Is Labour fit to govern?"—in other words has the democracy of England got the trained men necessary for the complicated and responsible business of carrying on the affairs of the nation?

The fact that problems of the new democracy are so usually expressed to-day in the terminology of Marxist Socialism, even by non-Socialists, tends to obscure this central fact of the all-importance of scientific thought and of the scientifically trained mind. The Russian Bolsheviks, brought face to face with the reality of their dependence on science and scientific training, accept the fact but do not acknowledge the central importance of science and the scientific mind because they are clinging to an economic theory.

That the democratic movement in Europe cannot be fully explained on the lines of Marxian Socialist theory becomes plain as soon as one examines, for instance, the actual political and social life of a typical European country. In our own country the issues are obscured by an altogether false appearance of homogeneity given by our electoral system to the political parties who are their representatives in Parliament. And yet even in England, where our Labour Party is most homogeneous, it also least conforms to the revolutionary requirements of the Marxian hypothesis by being frankly not revolutionary (in the Marxian sense) at all.

And that is quite simply because our democracy is the result of many hundreds of years of political

experience plus a great recent advance in education, and is not the result of economic evolution as conceived by the Marxian school.

But to take another example, that of Tchecho-Slovakia, political opinion here is divided up amongst nearly twenty different and distinct political groups representing national divisions, Socialist divisions and occupational divisions. These divisions can be understood if they are conceived as distinct and definite efforts of the democratic mind attempting its emancipation, but which simply do not correspond at all with purely economic Marxian theory.

There are, for instance, Tchecho-Slovak Social Democratic parties, German S.D. parties in Tchecho-Slovakia, Magyar S.D. parties in Tchecho-Slovakia—there are Right, Left and Centre divisions of these parties. There is the internationalist Communist group, and there are definitely Socialist but definitely national Socialist groups; there is also a national Socialist Progressive group; beyond this there are peasant groups of Tchechs and of Germans and of Magyars divided on racial lines; there is a Clerical People's Party and a number of others. It would puzzle any class-conscious Marxist to decide exactly where in this medley the lines of the class cleavage and the class war come in. A substantial majority of the deputies profess Marxist principles, but at the time of my visit in February, 1921, the difficulty of party control with such numerous factions had forced on the country a form of government by non-party officials merely engaged—very efficiently it appeared—in carrying out the

work of the country without any relation to the theory of politics at all beyond those of the general democratic trend.

And in practice I found everywhere that in the different countries of Europe the movement of the democracy was not expressing itself along lines of a clearly marked class conflict—although the Marxian language was often used in describing the position of affairs—but along lines of practical reconstruction and objectively realist study of actual problems. And amongst all the different parties three main tendencies stand out conspicuously. In towns and industrial areas democracy is more and more tending to express itself through the formulæ of Socialism. In practice, whatever its professions, this is a Socialism trying to get to business at once, and not a Socialism trying to produce a revolution of the Moscow pattern. A great deal of its energy is spent on municipal work, for instance. The Socialist parties of the town are trying to bring about socialization of industries and the like on a programme of a Fabian type.

In the country areas the democracy expresses itself through the Peasant Party (and there are nearly as many sub-divisions of this party as there are of socialists), who, while generally willing to assent to socialization or municipalization in towns or social control of industry, are practically universally in favour of peasant proprietorship of the land and free trading in commodities. The third big influence is that of nationality, which is strong enough to vividly colour and divide Socialist and Peasant parties, and finds frequently an expression of its

own. There are, of course, in addition to these three main groups, parties and opinions representing the old régime and the old governing classes. But these last groups, while in some countries they represent only the normal resistance to change, the normal amount of inertia present in all communities, in others are actively hostile to all democratic interests, and carry on a continuous campaign in favour of a policy tending to bring back or justify the pre-war régime. They are, however, by no means homogeneous groups nationally. In any particular country they are usually cut up and subdivided according as to whether their interests and ideas are predominantly town, country or national. And this inertia section of the population has not got any international organization as such; but it is nevertheless very powerful, particularly in connection with foreign policy.

Another great influence in European politics is difficult to place—that of religion. In one country the clerical party is purely nationalist, in another purely a landlord party, in a third the party of reaction and superstition, being for instance opposed to education pure and simple. Christianity in politics has very little influence as a definite creed. The organized Christian Church too is generally losing its social influence, but this seems to me not because the populations of Europe are becoming non-Christian, but because the essential ethics and spiritual teaching of Christianity are leaving the cramped quarters of the churches and living under the open sky with the democracy.

There is often, for instance, much more of the ethic and spirit of Christianity at a Labour meeting than in a West End church.

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Why the smouldering fires of democracy have burst everywhere into flame since the war, and what prevented the same assertion of democracy in Germany, in Austria, in Hungary, in Russia and in other countries before the war I do not propose to examine in detail.

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Partly, no doubt, the experiences of England were paralleled everywhere and the democracy in war time found itself having to undertake a task for which its superior classes, its rulers and Governors, were unfit. For it is quite certain that if the battle of Waterloo was won in the playing fields of Eton, that the war against Germany was won on the playing grounds of the elementary schools of London, Edinburgh, Dublin and Cardiff. Democracy in the war realized its own value and it also had the opportunity of using executive power and power over material resources, and so gaining confidence; and, further, it crammed into a few years a great deal of enlightening experience of foreign peoples and of great multitudes of other men and many strange and unknown places. France during the war was the meeting-place of all the races of the earth, from West African Negroes to Maoris, from tribes from the far north-west border of India to men from South America and the South Sea Islands. Chinese were there, Japanese, Norsemen, South Africans, Canadians, Australians, many races of Indians, many races of Negroes, French,

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Italians, multitudes of many tongues and many colours. And they were all men, they fed together, worked together and were ill and wounded in hospital together. The illusion of the fundamental difference and separateness of the races of men received a deathblow. Men from all the earth, from all outlandish places, came together and found they were just men. Differences enough, goodness knows—but an essential likeness not to be explained away, the essential humanity of man. Even our enemies the Germans were—just men.

We blew them up with shells, gassed them and bombed them, and then made prisoners of them and gave them cigarettes and coffee, and went out into No Man's Land to pick their wounded up.

We sometimes had an amused contempt for "Jerry," we sometimes—unpleasantly often—had a respect for his qualities as a soldier, and even now and then found ourselves rather liking this or that man of the "enemy."

If we learned something of the humanity of our enemies we learned it even more about our friends. The war experiences of many nations were a tremendous demonstration of humanity to humanity, of men to men.

It is sometimes suggested by those to whom the physical "horrors of war" were especially painful that the democracies of Europe have been so outraged by the wounds, death and bloodshed of the war as to have revolted against it permanently. Probably this sentiment only affects a limited number. War is grisly enough—but only a more acute form of the industrial war in which many

millions of soldiers fighting had been living. Being slowly drained of vitality in a factory or at a sweated trade where one gets tuberculosis is more horrible than any wounds or death in the field of battle. Being killed or wounded by a shell is no more terrible than being killed or wounded in a coal mine, on a railway or at a dock side, or in some gigantic, clanging engineering works. And at any rate in war one got decently fed and clothed, one's wife got a separation allowance and one got leave sometimes—it was a man's life. I feel sure the "horrors of war" are overstressed from the point of view of democracy. Wounds, suffering, death, are too much the commonplace of all large towns to be of themselves remarkable. And in any case the attitude of the normal man to these things is widely different from that of the minority who were so appalled by "horrors."

What roused democracy in war was not the horror but the stupid waste of it all, the thwarting of human instinct in it all, the obvious incapacity of the leaders (the brass-hatted staff), and so among the beaten nations revolutions occurred, and if we had been beaten the same reaction would have happened to ourselves, because being beaten made the incapacity of leaders so glaringly obvious.

And revolutions were made because the democracy had realized its own capacity, its own dignity, its own value, its own humanity, and hated and distrusted the incompetence and pretence of governing classes.

And it is significant that in countries so diverse as Germany, Austria, Tchecho-Slovakia and Rou-

This is a point of view which is not shared by all who are interested in the struggle and to see that it is not the only system

mania, the revolutions have not only swept away kings and princes and constitutions, they have also swept away titles and distinction.

Where kings remain there is a strong tendency for them to be only hereditary presidents—with an unfortunate predilection for strengthening their king-clan influence by only marrying within the pale. (If kings are to remain inter-royal marriages will certainly have to go.)

* * * * *

One often hears à propos of the conditions of Central Europe, of the revolutions and civil wars which have occurred, that we have come to the end of the period of "capitalist civilization." They say that "capitalist civilization is breaking down."

The question I want to put is: Did capitalist civilization ever exist? Is this "capitalist civilization" the "Mrs. Arris" of politics?

It is true that in Great Britain (but much less in Ireland) there has been intense exploitation of certain natural resources and a hideous outgrowth of big industry; the same thing has happened over large areas of Germany, of France, and over some parts of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire and Italy. But there was very little of such industry in Russia, very little in large areas of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, and extremely little in Roumania, Bulgaria, Turkey-in-Europe, Greece and Serbia. Alongside of this industrial development there has been going on for many years (often very much neglected politically) a great peasant agrarian movement.

The first aspect of the matter that thrust itself

on the attention of England was the refusal of the country of Austria to feed the town of Vienna and the refusal of the country of Hungary to feed the town of Budapest. Then there was the peasant movement in Bavaria and the plan of the peasants for checking Communist *putsches* in the town by enforcing a food blockade. The same state of affairs arose in Switzerland. Then in Italy great numbers of peasants took over the latifundia. In Russia the peasants took over the big private estates, and the Crown estates, and divided up unduly large rich peasant holdings, the Bolsheviki aiding and abetting for their own reasons but by no means controlling. In Austria, in Hungary, in Roumania, in Poland, in Tchecho-Slovakia, drastic plans of redistribution of land to small proprietors are now being put into operation. What has this peasant movement to do with the "capitalist civilization"? And the answer is that the great peasant movement in Europe is just the peasant side of the waking of European democracy into conscious political life as the Socialist movement in the towns is that of the industrial side of democracy. It is not a case of the breaking down of "capitalist civilization" at all, but of the emergence of the power of the educated mass of the people.

This is very clearly seen, indeed, in Bulgaria, where there is very little industry indeed, and where the whole country has been for some time almost entirely one of peasant proprietors. The standard of education is as a rule high—there are numbers of secondary schools in the villages—and the peasants are in power. And M. Stamboulisky, the

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peasant Premier of the peasant Government (the King is of the hereditary President type, and there are no upper classes for practical purposes), has declared "the dictatorship of the peasant" and is engaged in organizing a "Green International" of peasants in opposition to the "Red International" of Moscow and the other diversely coloured internationals which are a good deal more numerous than people imagine. It is already clear that in the future of Europe the two great powers will be the Socialists of the towns and the peasants of the country, both representing sides of the new democracy and both exercising a great influence in practical affairs.

But although Socialist or Labour movements of industrial areas and the towns and the peasant movements of the country are both anxious to develop "international" organizations, it is abundantly clear that a vivid and conscious nationality in most countries is of the essence of European life. In London, Paris, or Berlin, it is possible to so mix in an international kind of society as to delude oneself as to a wide-spreading internationalization which will override all frontiers and weld the whole human race into "one great international fraternity." The war, however, showed that even in these large and greatly industrialized countries national feeling was one of the chief political and social factors. In countries like Tcheko-Slovakia, where the emancipation of the country has been achieved under the nationalist banner; in Poland, where nationality is almost a religion; in Hungary, where it is an intense glare; in Roumania, in

Bulgaria, in Serbia, in Greece, in most of the countries of Europe in fact, the idea and ideal of nationality shapes to a large extent all political and social development.

Nationality is very obvious in Soviet-Russia—its so-called internationalism is merely a sort of intense national feeling, and for many purposes the famous Third International is merely a Russian institution for imposing Russian ideas. The song of the Socialist international, "The Internationale," has become the Russian National Anthem.

In Bulgaria the Communist Party, who are affiliated to Moscow and "Internationalists" by profession, nevertheless hope that the application of the theory will be delayed in their case until Bulgaria has got back her "Ethnic frontiers." Even the Internationalist Bolshevik government in Hungary was really one of the avatars of the Hungarian nationalist spirit, hoping in this disguise to get the support of the Russian Red Army and reconquer the "historic frontiers" of Hungary. Generally speaking, in Central Europe at the present time an "international" political movement is the accepted camouflage of a malcontent minority wishing to unite with some adjoining state to whose people they feel kin and attempting to get away from the State they are in because they feel alien.

There is indeed no country in Europe at the present time where national feeling is not conscious and very vigorous and increasing in vigour. One hardly needs to mention Ireland. And even Scotland, Wales and England are becoming more nationalistic.

The confusion of the cultural Irish/Celtic/Welsh nationalism with the economic nationalism of Central Europe and the British Empire is typical of the dishonest half-truths about for which the Labour Party is notorious.

The expression of nationality is indeed one of the effects of the emergence of democracy everywhere, just as the Socialist and Labour movement of the towns and the peasant movement of the country is an expression of democracy. It is shown the world over, in fact—in India and in Egypt as in continental Europe.

To understand present-day Europe it is necessary therefore to study the political and social movements of the democracy in the towns and industrial areas, the peasant movements in the non-industrial areas and the national movement everywhere.

The democratic movement is only able to give a partial conscious expression to its unconscious struggle, and it is having to fight against minorities in all countries in whose hands is power and knowledge. But the minorities in the different countries do not constitute any international entity. The ruling classes of Hungary and of Roumania are, for instance, as bitterly opposed as those of France and Germany are bitterly opposed, as those of Greece and Turkey are bitterly opposed. "International capitalism" exists to a limited extent, but international banks have constantly to fight, and fight hard, against national institutions, and while, for instance, international organizations for exploiting and trading in oil exist, their influence (strongly combated by national organizations) is much less than is often imagined, less important also, and in any case one which is susceptible of control.

Neither the national nor the international picture of Europe to-day corresponds with the luridly drawn vision of a capitalist civilization coming to

an end. But conditions do correspond with the picture of a democratic Europe very vigorously moving a stage forward, and beginning a great period of development.

Part of what is called a breakdown is a purely local and temporary dislocation of production and exchange which, while inconvenient or even disastrous, often profoundly so, is only causing a limited breakdown in individual countries. The present chaos of the Foreign Exchanges makes a hash of all pre-war habits and customs. Inside Hungary, as in some other countries for instance, it is having the effect of reducing the official and professional classes to a very low economic level. In Bulgaria it is this class—newly proletarianized so to speak—which is the backbone of the Communist Party. But although the economic conditions of classes and their political interrelations have changed and continue to change, stable new relations are being created inside national boundaries which secure social order, good nutrition, and good education for larger masses of the people than was previously the case. In other words, the European nationalities are becoming more democratized and the average condition of their people is improving.

It must be noted, too, that much of the suffering of Central Europe which has excited the pity of the world is the suffering, not of countries, but of certain town and industrial areas in those countries. When children were dying in Vienna for lack of food the children in country villages in Austria had an abundance. When Budapest was without bread

there were large stocks of grain within a few miles of the town. And these two examples, while clearly indicating a breakdown of the kind of arrangements for feeding towns which existed prior to the war, do not indicate a failure of life and vitality in the country as a whole.

Indeed to regard a breakdown of this nature, together with the breakdown of exchange arrangements and of pre-war business arrangements for export and import, as a breakdown of "capitalist civilization" is using an exaggerated form of words to describe a distorted conception of the facts. It would be truer to say that the pre-war arrangements for the feeding of town populations, for international trade, for exchanges of currency, for export and import generally, were so extraordinarily casual and slipshod that they only worked because no one took the trouble to push the whole affair over and because there had accumulated a wealth of reserve of material resources in most countries at a time when the general standard of life was rising.

It is no part of the intention of this book to enter into a historical research as to the foundations of European civilization—but it was certainly not founded by capitalism. The civilization of Europe is a Roman and Christian civilization. It is established not in one or half a dozen cities or countries, but in all cities and in all countries. Ideas of methods of administration and government, central and local, are spread over Europe as fields of corn are spread over its valleys and plains. Ideas of man's place in nature, his individual worth and dignity, are spread as widely as the Christian Church.

Ideas of man's power over himself and over the physical resources of the world are spread as wide as schools and universities. The great problem for individual states to solve is how to control natural resources and accumulated capital in the interest of man instead of allowing man to be exploited in the interests of a mechanical system out of which a few profit. The civilization of Europe is not dependent on the capitalist organization of the production, distribution and exchange of commodities between different states, but upon the social and political traditions of the separate states and on the level of physical well-being and education of the people of those states. Civilization in Europe has a million roots, and the lessons which are now being learned in strike and revolution, in coalition governments and class-war governments are those of the practicable methods of cooperation of individuals, of communities and of states and the practicable methods of government and administration applicable on the one hand to communities and on the other to the exploitation of material resources.

The Socialists of the town wish to solve the question one way, the Peasants of the country propose another. But the whole democracy is agreed that man must be free from exploitation, and to the solution of that problem all energies are being bent.

For Europe as a whole the great question is how the states of Europe are to combine for purposes of international action. And all the nations of Europe are moving in the direction of closer federation

along the lines of the League of Nations: the movement towards a generalized internationalism, with obliteration of national and racial boundaries, has practically no support even among professed internationalists.

In order, then, to get the consideration of the questions here referred to on to a basis of objective realist observation, I propose to describe conditions in Russia, Poland, Tcheko-Slovakia and some other states and then return to the consideration of the forces operating in the different countries so as to be able to consider the problem as a whole from the standpoint of general European policy and the future of component states of Europe. And in describing conditions I shall do so chiefly from the standpoint of one within the country concerned, and one looking for the signs of progress and constructive growth. In many cases this means that Foreign Politics are for the time left on one side, and that the evil and reactionary influences in a nation are not emphasized. To the consideration of these aspects of the matter I shall return later.

But the evil aspect of political and social affairs can be too much stressed. The great constructive, progressive forces which have spread physical well-being, mental education, moral and religious culture over the whole earth, and those influences which have extended ordered government over the bigger part of all the continents of the world, cannot be lightly and cynically dismissed by comparing the faults and imperfections of the average civilized man of to-day with his prototype in Rome or Greece.

The history of the past 2,000 years in Europe,

despite all that mars it, is a history of a great constructive building of civilization, which can only be denied by those who compare men as individuals and do not think in terms of social development.

For those to whom the solidarity of the human race—its brotherhood if you will—is a fact influencing conduct, there is no doubt of progress. Evil forces are powerful and obvious, but the forces of progress and constructive building are more powerful, they are the forces which have prevailed with man's civilization as in the history of evolution they have prevailed with all nature. Therefore, in considering the countries of Europe, it is to the forces of progress and constructive building one must look, in them is not only the hope and promise but the way of the future.

CHAPTER II

REALITIES OF RUSSIA

ONE of the grave evils of the blockade of Russia was the making of that country into a mystery land inhabited either by angels or by devils. The truth is much more humdrum. The great differences between Russia and England are not moral differences at all. The marvellous "Red" legend of a country on which the sun of Communism is rising is as untrue as the "White" legend of a country in which civilization is drowned in blood and horror.

The vast majority of Russians are an unlettered and very ignorant peasantry spread over a gigantic area of Russia and Siberia, as compared with our educated population living in towns or in a thickly populated countryside. The whole of the area of Great Britain and Ireland would pack comfortably into the Ukraine and leave an area of the rest of European Russia still about as big as the rest of Europe, without mentioning Siberia at all. And yet in all that vast country now under the sway of the Bolsheviks there are only 125,000,000 people, as against our own 46,000,000. Great areas of Russia are inhabited very sparsely or by wandering tribes. There are more than fifty different languages spoken.

There are great Moslem and Buddhist populations. There are some pure Pagans. Industry only began quite lately in Russia, and is confined to towns such as Moscow and Petrograd and to certain definite areas, as in the Ural Mountains.

The first difficulty, therefore, in making any study of Russia arises on account of its great area, the relatively bad communications and the diversity of languages and populations within it. The second difficulty arises from the fact that the first 1917 Revolution swept away the old Czardom and the old aristocratic order and intensified a confusion which had been coming to a climax since Russia entered the war against Germany in 1914. In this confusion it was very difficult to see exactly what had happened. But broadly speaking one can say that in 1917 the old rotten autocratic régime in Russia collapsed into the mud, and that a vigorous new Socialist life at once began trying to build up again on the new lines of a Socialist democracy. It is not the business of this book to attempt to appraise the failures or successes of the Kerensky régime, because it is one which has passed, and the rapidly succeeding changes in Russia since that date have introduced new problems.

In October, 1917, the Kerensky régime was replaced by a so-called "dictatorship of the proletariat" proclaimed by the Bolshevik party and carried out by a military *coup d'état* which broke up the Constituent Assembly. Thus in Russia there has been a more complete breach with old institutions than in most other countries; not only has the old reactionary régime been destroyed, but an

incipient Socialist-Democratic régime has been destroyed. But these changes mean less in Russia than they would in a Western European country.

The active political life of Russia was always that of a small minority of people; the vast mass of the population, illiterate and uninstructed, were passive and unheeding except in so far as their individual lives were touched. The Czardom was rule by a minority, the revolutionariés opposing it were a minority, the intellectuals and their supporters forming the Kerensky régime were a minority (but a minority which took the world-significant step of endeavouring to become a democracy by calling a Constitutional Assembly and beginning a programme of education and emancipation of the people), the Bolsheviki are a minority and the Counter-Revolutionary White Guard element are a minority.

Leaders in every country are in a minority, of course, and it may be thought that Russia is not unlike other countries in being so ruled. But a minority of leaders acting through a democracy is a very different thing from a minority of leaders acting as dictators through organizations which are themselves minorities of a gigantic and passive population. It is this latter case which is that of Russia.

The dictatorship of the Czar and his circle was the dictatorship of a small group of a few hundred thousand people at most, and it is the remnants of this group who have lately been known as the leaders of the disastrous series of interventions against Russia from Kolchak to Denikin and Wrangel.

The dictatorship of the Czardom collapsed in February, 1917, on account of its inefficiency. The attempt to build up a democracy by the Kerensky Government was defeated by the Bolshevik *coup d'état* of October, 1917.

The Bolshevik *coup d'état* was a return to the rule by minority and the suppression of democracy, and has inevitably been a rule by force and by the Secret Espionage Department (the old Czaristic Okhrana and the new Extraordinary Commission), but with a new object, viz. the introduction of Communism, which was held to justify the "temporary" dictatorship. In the present, therefore, the study of Russia means the study of the theory and practice of the Bolsheviks, the study of the modification of their theoretical conclusions by the impact of experience.

My own observations on Russia were made in 1920, when a Labour Delegation from England went to that country by invitation of the Soviet Government and travelled over a great deal of its area. This was the first responsible body of men and women to officially break the information blockade of Russia, very little being known of the practice of Bolshevism at that time. As Secretary and Physician to that delegation I had remarkable opportunities for collecting information. It was part of my duty to arrange interviews with leading Russians of all parties, collect documents and draw up programmes of investigation. All the People's Commissariats were open to our investigation, all Institutions also. We interviewed most of the People's Commissars, and although no doubt we

were "officially" shown the better instead of the worse places (which would happen equally in London or New York), we were able unofficially to see just as much as we had energy enough and *nous* enough to see for ourselves.

A part of what I saw and of the conclusions I drew is recorded here, attention being concentrated on the political form of government, the Soviet system and the position of the peasants in Russia, because those factors are so predominantly important for Russia.

Russia is incredibly more primitive than a Western European can easily conceive. In the last years it has been near to a complete collapse of all ordered government, including local government of villages and conditions of elementary personal security. Even now (Spring, 1921) in parts of the Ukraine a condition of destruction of all civilized forms of life and degeneration into violence seems to have taken place. And this is not the violence of the primitive tribe, but the violence of the slum-fight—a degeneration of partly civilized man. The Bolshevik Government is fighting against this, but with great difficulty. But despite this, and taking Russia as a whole, the Bolsheviks have the country under their rule.

The reason for the Bolshevik success in imposing their Government as against the Kerensky Government and the White Guard is not the superiority of their theory, but the superiority of the discipline of their organization. The so-called Russian Communist Party is a military brotherhood of believers in a certain set of dogmas. Their strength is in the

organization which took power by force and has ruthlessly used power and "terror" based on power to preserve it.

The difficulty in understanding the situation in Russia is the difficulty of penetrating behind the camouflage of Socialist and Communist wording of Bolshevik statements to the crude and naked verities of the struggle for power behind that screen. The reality is that a small group of men, with certain fanatically-held materialist beliefs (held with all the intensity of religious conviction), have seized power and imposed on their adherents a nominal allegiance to their theories. These men have made out of the theories of Karl Marx a new religion—a religion of a crude sort of materialism which excludes ordinary scientific theories from practical consideration as it does religious and spiritual theories. The Bolsheviks insist that biological conceptions must give place to their economic determinism, that art and music must be taught on Marxian lines. Metaphysics they do not allow to be taught, just as they do not allow the word God to be mentioned in their schools.

Lenin is best understood if he is thought of as a Central Asiatic Mahomet sending out the cry of his new materialist religion from his high tower of the Kremlin in Moscow, and calling to the millions of the Russian and Siberian peasants to work, fight, and die for the new conception, as against the errors and evils of the Western democratic world. And this "new conception" is already very stale in the Western world. It is the kind of materialism that speaks of mind as "an excretion

of the brain, as bile is an excretion of the liver." It is the kind of materialism that expects to find in a man's economic circumstances a complete explanation of his character and beliefs. In a word, it is the crudest kind of materialist fatalism.

And Lenin and his helpers have all the marks of the zealous propagandist in the missionary zeal with which they seek to impose their views on other nations. The "conditions" of adherence to the Third International sent out to Germany, France, and England, in 1920, all lay stress on the need of subordination to Moscow and the need of implicit obedience. Like Mohammedanism, too, the new faith is militant—its good is to be carried everywhere by fire and sword, "heavy civil war," and terrific struggle. The democratic side of Socialism, the liberal ideas implicit in Western Socialism, such as free speech, free meeting, free and secret elections—all these disappear in the Russian conception. Lenin declares "liberty is a bourgeois superstition." Democracy is said to be a pretence to fool the workers. And Bolshevism is declared to be salvation. What the reality is, apart from theory and apart from prejudice, is already very clear. In the hope of making it still clearer, I give extracts from my notebook of conversations with leading Bolshevists in May and June of 1920 and also extracts from documents of the Bolshevists and other Russians.

* * * * *

The Kremlin is the citadel dominating Moscow, and enclosed within its walls is a great courtyard, where many battalions could parade, and mar-

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vellous churches and cathedrals, looking more Oriental than reality, with great blocks of buildings, now used by the Soviet Government, and formerly used by the Imperial family, the Imperial Government, and the State Church as palaces, arsenal, Senate House, barracks, and convent.

Lenin has done well to choose the Kremlin for his headquarters. To begin with, it is well guarded and only to be entered at gates in the high wall, where a pass must be shown; but, secondly, it is symbolic. An old saying has it, "Above Moscow there is only the Kremlin, above the Kremlin there is only God."

Lenin received us at 1.30 p.m., and at that time we had climbed up the many stairs to his high-up office, past sentries with a sergeant's guard at call on each landing, and assembled in a waiting-room. There was no one with us and no noise of talking or movement outside. The whole place had a quiet chill effect morally and physically, while a dampening of disinfectant on the wooden floor and the faint smell in the air reminded one of the prevalent typhus, feared even here. In a few moments a secretary came and conducted us to a large, light room, furnished chiefly with large desks and chairs, where Lenin stood ready to greet us. Lenin is a short man, nearly bald in front, and his hair is slightly ginger; his English is fairly good, but his French is better. The face is high as to cheekbones, and the eyes are somewhat slit-like, the colour of the face is very sallow, its general appearance definitely Asiatic. Lenin smiles often, but without geniality.

We began the interview at once by asking about raising the blockade and getting peace.

Lenin : It is perfectly impossible to get a Capitalist Government to raise the blockade. The English Government states it is not helping Poland, but this is not true. English Liberal newspapers acknowledge that help is being given by England to Poland. The League of Nations is a Capitalist conspiracy.

In answer to a question as to what was the obstacle to a League of Nations Delegation to Russia :—

Lenin : The League of Nations is France and England waging war against us—we are not at peace.

In answer to a question as to how we could help to get peace :—

Lenin : More resolutions are a little help. But only real help can come from the British revolution.

In answer to a question as to how we could get Socialism in England :—

Lenin : I am a pupil of English Socialism. It would be childish to say that all our institutions must be copied. The Left Communists in England are making blunders because they are too much copying the first forms of the revolution in Russia. I am in favour of Parliamentary action. We had 25 per cent. of Communists in the Constituent Assembly, and this was enough for victory. In your country 15 per cent. might be enough for complete victory.

In answer to further questions, Lenin suggested sending a message to the British workers (the one published in England in 1920).

In answer to other questions :—

Lenin : I do not believe the blockade can be lifted with a bourgeois Government in power in England.

With regard to the Terror :—

Lenin : The Red Terror has been infinitely smaller than the White in Finland, Hungary, Egypt and Ireland. We are firmly for the Red Terror against the capitalist class. We are firmly convinced that the capitalist class will use every means of violence against the proletariat.

In answer to a question about the Communist Party :—

Lenin : It would be good to form a Communist Party in England. I hope Henderson comes into power with the Labour Party ; it will be a lesson to the workers.

Concerning direct action :—

Lenin : Direct action in a bourgeois democracy is the beginning of Socialism. The Soviet can be developed consciously, but the movement to Communism is unconscious and is an international movement.

In answer to a question about free speech :—

Lenin : Freedom for which class and for which use ? We have freedom only against the capitalist and bourgeois. We have been in war against counter-revolution. *A la guerre comme à la guerre*. We wage a ruthless war.

Cadets were united with French and German Imperialists. Some Menshevists were members of Koltchak's Government. The bourgeois press is not free. It is venal, especially in the United States. When the former oppressors cease their opposition then we will get freedom.

Lenin then went on to talk of freedom as to sale of corn (a matter not raised by us) and said :—

We force peasants to give up their corn. We have given land to the peasants, and the workers are starving in the towns. We do not admit free trade in corn; the peasant is obliged to give corn in exchange for paper. If the peasant refuses, we send armed workers to the village.

Lenin explained in passing that "the paper money costs us nothing; we only print it," and was very amused at making the peasants accept this worthless paper by the use of force; he laughed as he explained it.

Lenin: The peasant is a small capitalist. Therefore the dictatorship of the proletariat means the Government of Russia by the towns. We do not recognize equality as between the peasant and the town worker. The ratio of voting power of peasants to workers is as 1 to 5. Land is nationalized in Russia, but the peasant has the right to the use of land, and no one can dispossess him if he works it. Peasants who "speculate" (i.e. carry on private trade) are severely punished administratively, judicially, and by military force;

direct application of force has been used. I expect free co-operation between the peasant and the worker.

We found that the facts are that, although land is nominally nationalized and cannot be alienated, not only can the peasant not be removed from his holding, but in practice it descends to his son or daughter at death.

In answer to another question:—

Lenin : Who says class struggle says civil war.

It is seen that in this interview Lenin was quite frank about the need for civil war, and quite cynically wishing success to Mr. Arthur Henderson and the Labour Party, because he believes that they would be incapable of carrying out any serious programme, while 15 per cent. of Communists could carry out a Bolshevik *coup d'état*. It is also significant that Lenin carries his fanatical adherence to theory so far as to believe it impossible for a British Government to make peace with him. It was clear at the interview that Lenin was quite out of touch with English affairs and the English mind, a point made still clearer in his letter to the English workers. Lenin's attitude on freedom, too, shows the same tendency, and it is noticeable that Lenin avoided saying why the whole Socialist Press—as well as the bourgeois—was suppressed in Russia. The same is true about meetings. Lenin's attitude to the peasant, regarded as an inferior kind of being, is as typical of Bolshevik opinion as is his airy dismissal of the financial question of paper money by saying "it costs us nothing, we only print it."

Since the time of this interview in May, 1920, Lenin has been compelled to very much change his policy; not only has Peace been made with various bourgeois Governments, but the peasant proprietor position of the peasants has been recognized and freedom of trade been allowed.

On Foreign Policy we interviewed Tchitcherin, Commissar for Foreign Affairs, who is a thin, sandy-whiskered man, with a little voice, sometimes rather piping, and a nervous handshake; he comes of a Russian noble family and was a diplomat under the Czar's régime. Tchitcherin began the interview by asking us to contrast the simplicity in which he conducted business at the former Hotel Metropole in Moscow (the mania for taking over hotels was by no means exclusively a British phenomenon) with the pomp and state of Ministerial offices in bourgeois communities. Beyond the fact that, as we expected, we were shown straight into the Commissar's room, the contrast was not obvious. Tchitcherin was well known to a good many English people in London during the war, as he was in close and friendly touch with a number of leading pacifists, and he speaks English very well and with facility. The interview began by Tchitcherin describing to us the frontiers of the present Russian dominions.

With the Ukraine there was a close federation, and a Special Commission of Russians and Ukrainians was defining the details. Military federation Tchitcherin described as a necessity, and said, "Now when the Ukraine is attacked by Poland unity of command is a necessity," and instanced the

difficulties which arose when Denikin separated the Ukrainians from the Russian Army. Unity of supplies is necessary in Soviet Republics because there is no private trade. Unity of railways is also necessary, as, for instance, Ukrainian railways cannot exist without fuel from the north.

The Don Cossacks form part of the Russian Republic, with a very large measure of autonomy. Tchitcherin here stated: "The Soviet system is very flexible because it is based on the local Soviet. It can imply an enormous number of forms." As an instance was given that of the German colonies on the Volga, who now have their own limited form of autonomy, "a kind of alliance of Soviets."

On Poland Tchitcherin said: "No territory which is purely Polish will be touched. Questions will arise about White Russia. No indemnities will be demanded. If the Ukraine is quite free from Polish troops we will then see how we can leave the Ukrainians entirely to themselves. We cannot desert the Ukraine in face of the enemy. There is no intention by Russia to take over the Ukraine."

A question was here asked about British prisoners in Russia, and Tchitcherin explained the different departments which were concerned, and said that the O'Grady-Litvinoff agreement applied to all except those sentenced for grave offences, of whom there were not more than ten. A batch of civilian war prisoners were still awaiting exchange. "Soldiers had full freedom of movement. Officers had not the same freedom, as they belong to the bourgeois class; they were kept in concentration

camps. Prisoners got more food than the ordinary population. Most British citizens are not confined."

Tchitcherin said that the question of seeing prisoners must be referred to the Extraordinary Commission and Espionage Department, and said, "North has been returned to England, although involved in an espionage affair connected with Paul Dukes and the Judenitch conspiracy.

With regard to relations with the British Government Tchitcherin said that negotiations were hampered because the British Government considered the Soviet Government not stable, but their desire for peace was "absolute," as they wished "to get on with their internal reconstruction."

"If," said Tchitcherin, "we are attacked by the British Government, then our hands are free" in the East or elsewhere. The question of Constantinople was raised, and was answered, "We do not recognize the international status of the Straits as from the Entente, but only from the bordering states."

It will be noticed that during this interview Tchitcherin expressed none of the doubts about the possibility of making peace with a bourgeois Government which were raised by Lenin.

Any hope of escape from the disastrous conditions in which Russia now finds herself towards reconstruction on even mildly Socialist lines, depends on peace. Trade, too, depends on peace, for to create credit Russia must pledge some of her resources. And those who are interested in Russia's financial policy and Russia's external debt would

do well to remember Tchitcherin's words, "The measure of our concessions will depend on our situation at the moment." Those who are still foolish enough to "hanker" after intervention should realize that not only international justice and humanity demand peace, but international financial prudence also.

The report of the British Labour Delegation to Russia refers to the prevailing feeling of terror under which people live in that country, and which is evoked especially by the Extraordinary Commission.

The Extraordinary Commission was established in December, 1917, "to carry on the merciless struggle against those trying to overthrow the Soviet System, against sabotage, banditage, espionage, and speculation," to use the words of the vice-chairman in our interview with him on May 27, 1920.

The Board of Control of the Extraordinary Commission consists of fifteen members, all of them belonging to the Communist Party; the President is Djerzinsky and his Chief Assistant is Xenofontov, whom we interviewed. The powers of the Extraordinary Commission are not defined and are indefinitely great; its methods of action are extra-legal. We were told at our interview that the Extraordinary Commission had no longer any right to give sentence of death, with the exception, apparently, of towns placed under martial law.

The Commission has published a special pamphlet to give information as to its operations during the two years, and in this pamphlet a large number of

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statistics are given with regard to executions, imprisonments, and so forth. Their statistics, however, only apply to twenty governments of Central Russia, whereas there are fifty-two, and apply further to a period of nineteen months, so are admittedly far from complete. An interesting statement in this document is that in 1918 there were 245 risings against the Government which were suppressed, and in seven months of 1919 there were ninety-nine. During these risings there were 3,057 persons killed, according to official statistics, but this is probably a great underestimate.

The list of persons shot for various crimes is as follows :—

	1918.	1919.
Spying	56	46
Rebellion	2,431	651
Membership of counter-revolutionary organizations	1,637	387
Inciting to rebellion	396	59
Speculation	39	32
Banditism	402	241
Desertion	39	63
Crimes by office-holders	157	49
Miscellaneous	1,173	561
	6,330	2,089

The total number arrested in 1918 is given as 42,254, and in seven months of 1919 44,639. A special series of figures is given for the Petrograd Extraordinary Commission. There are stated to

have been shot in 1918 and 1919, for spying, 46; counter-revolution, 565; speculation, 36; banditism, 438; crimes by office-holders, 115; for forging money, 6. The figures for Moscow for the same period are: Counter-revolution, 6; banditism, 194; crimes by office-bearers, 3; forgery of money, 29; anarchism, 2. The Kief Extraordinary Commission is stated to have shot 825 people in 1918 and 1919.

These figures are given not because it is thought that they are accurate, but because of the interesting light they throw on the operations of the Commission. When it is realized that the Salvation Army was closed up as being "a counter-revolutionary organization," and that the Social Democratic Party was stated to form part of another counter-revolutionary organization, it will be realized that there is practically no person opposed to the Bolshevik Government who could not have been brought within the net of some accusation of counter-revolution. The accusation against the Social Democratic Party (Menshevists) was made to us by Xenofontov on behalf of the Extraordinary Commission. It was flatly and explicitly denied next day by the Menshevists, in a letter which described how "the bloody crimes of the Extraordinary Commission dishonour Revolutionary Russia."

On their own showing the statistics of the Extraordinary Commission apply to less than two-fifths of Russia, and presumably to the two-fifths in which it is easier to collect statistics. The most conservative estimate of the number of executions

in Russia must therefore be several times that supplied by their official spokesman.

It is, of course, merely idle to expect a revolution to be carried out without a great deal of violence and bloodshed. The danger of the Extraordinary Commission in Russia is not that they have made use of violence and shed blood, but that there seem to be the very greatest obstacles in the way of its abolition. There is no doubt that this body has not only inherited the worst tradition of the old Russian Secret Service, but has also inherited a considerable number of the old Secret Police. During our voyage on the Volga we were accompanied by a somewhat supercilious French-speaking gentleman wearing an eyeglass, who was specially put on to watch the proceedings of a journalist with our party; this man had been a member of the old Russian Secret Service. It was admitted by the Extraordinary Commission that they had 4,500 officers scattered up and down the country. We also discovered that the Extraordinary Commissions which are attached to all provincial governments, to all the subdivisions of these governments, and to villages, are not under any local control, but are directly appointed by the Central Extraordinary Commission in Moscow. This control is absolutely autocratic. It was also stated to us that, in addition to the officials regularly employed, every member of the Communist Party would consider it his duty to give information to the Extraordinary Commission. As this very thorough-going espionage system has not only these powers at its disposal, but also a private

army of its own, specially paid and specially rationed, it is very difficult to see how it is going to be disestablished.

It is quite true that fairly recently the Extraordinary Commission gave up its power of inflicting the death sentence, but this does not mean that the death sentence is abolished in Russia. I discussed the matter in detail with M. Sverdlov, who described the Extraordinary Commission as a "kind of Secret Service making preliminary investigations." This service has its own prisons, which it employs extensively. Sverdlov also described how there was a special Extraordinary Commission for the Transport Service, over which he himself, although Minister of Transport, apparently had not much control. It was described to me how, after the preliminary investigations, cases would be sent either to the Revolutionary Tribunal, to the People's Court, to the Military Tribunal, to the Railway Tribunal, or to the Navy Tribunal. All of these bodies, with the exception of the People's Court, had the right of inflicting the death sentence for a very large number of offences, including "speculation" and drunkenness.

Lenin declared at our interview that the Bolsheviks were firmly for the Red Terror. The Extraordinary Commission is the instrument by means of which they carry it out.

It seems to me that the Extraordinary Commission is condemned, not by the fact of any atrocities which may have happened—because no war and no revolution is free from atrocities—but because it is actually being used at the present time as a

means of oppressing and tyrannizing over the people of Russia, workers and peasants, as well as the hated bourgeoisie, in the interests of a small group of people who have got power in their hands.

* * * * *

The official description of what used to be the Russian Empire is now the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, and the Red Flag with R.S.F.S.R. stencilled on it in white is a commoner object in that country than the Union Jack in England. The Russian Government is commonly called the Soviet Government, and Soviet and Bolshevik are considered almost interchangeable terms. The facts are that the Soviet system dates its inception from a period long anterior to the 1917 revolution, and the Bolsheviks, far from having created and fostered Soviets, have gone a long way to suppressing them altogether. Prince Kropotkin in his letter to the Western Democracies published in July, 1920, in the Press of Great Britain and as an appendix to the report of the British Labour Delegation to Russia, has called attention forcibly to this policy. A document recently brought from Russia, *The Soviet System*, by F. Dahn, a leader of the Menshevists, puts the matter still more clearly. Dahn writes as follows :—

“Theoretically the Soviet régime is an ideal form of democracy of the labouring classes. In the hands of the Soviets are concentrated all functions of legislation, administration, law, military affairs and economic policy ; all officials are elected and dismissed by the Soviets, and are fully under the Soviets’ jurisdiction. The very

members of the Soviets may be recalled by electors and replaced by new representatives at any moment ; in other words, the Soviets should reflect like a mirror all shades and fluctuations of the people's will.

“ ‘The Soviets represent the present day of democracy, whilst the most perfect representative institutions of other kinds are the reflection of yesterday,’ said Trotsky at the time of Bolshevik agitation for the downfall of Kerensky's Government. It is true this ideal democracy is only for the labouring classes and the Soviet elections take place, not in definite territorial divisions, but among groups connected with some process of production or labour. Non-working, parasitic elements, and exploiters of labour, so far as they still exist, are deprived not only of elective franchise, but also of any definite political or civil rights in general. Meanwhile, the labouring classes enjoy complete political freedom and, in addition to this, the State provides them with all the means for the realization of such freedom, such as premises for their organizations, halls for their meetings, printing offices and paper for printing their publications, etc.

“Such is the Soviet system in theory.

“In the constitution of R.S.F.S.R. things are a little different ; it was necessary to take into consideration the various needs of a centralized State machine on one hand, as well as the endeavours to secure the realization of definite party and communistic policy on the other. Soviets are no more the contemporary reflections of the will of labouring classes ; they are elected for definite periods (true, for very short periods of three or six

months). The Soviets become a disintegrated organism, submitted hierarchically to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets with the Central Committee at the head. Soviets have their formally elected Executive Committees, which, in their turn, form smaller bodies called Præsidiiums.

“This is one side of the question. But the other side, too, found its way into the Constitution.

“Workers, soldiers, and peasantry in large masses followed the Bolshevists’ call in October, 1917, but not because they had been imbued with the spirit of socialistic revolution. At that time, perhaps, only the proletarian masses believed that their salvation lay in immediate and complete communistic revolution. Soldiers looked to the October revolution for peace, and hoped that they would repay their sufferings in the trenches by means of appropriations of riches hoarded by the bourgeoisie. Peasants were very keen on expropriating the land belonging to the landowners immediately, without waiting for the decision of a distant and problematic Constituent Assembly. Soldiers and peasants followed the Bolshevists, but not as a party of Communists; for them it was a party of immediate peace and immediate abolition of private landownership. By way of gratitude for peace and land wide masses of peasantry, small owners of land, were quite ready to allow Bolshevists to have their own communistic programme and to deal as fiercely as they liked, not only with the large and medium, but also with the small town bourgeoisie, so far as the interests of peasants themselves were not touched.

“But soon it became clear that this was impossible. The State possessed industries already half-ruined by the war and nearly completely paralysed by thoughtless and precocious communistic measures. These industries could supply the peasantry with nothing in exchange for the bread necessary for the towns, and the continuation of the world-war at the beginning, and the blockade afterwards, destroyed every chance of getting goods from abroad. So the State, having given the land to the peasants, was immediately forced to lay its hands on the fruits of this land. So the civil war soon demanded from the peasantry the same sacrifices in the way of men, cattle, machines, products, as the imperialistic war which just came to an end.

“Peasants became discontented. They became ‘unreliable’ in the eyes of the Communistic Government. This fact was at once reflected in the Constitution—the labouring people from the country (peasants, labourers, etc.) were given five times fewer representatives than the labouring classes of the town.

“But the discontent had sprung up and was spreading among large proletarian masses, disappointed with the results of the régime, which had promised them happiness and wealth, but instead brought them to starvation, cold, and destitution.

“The growing discontent of the working classes could be suppressed neither by the sentiment of satisfaction at the fact that the most essential part of the State mechanism was transferred into the hands of the working classes, nor by the sentiment of class hatred at the sight of chastisement inflicted

on the class of the bourgeoisie. The Russian proletariat could be no more fed on executions instead of bread than its Paris forefathers at the time of Robespierre.

“Being disappointed in the policy of the Bolsheviks’ Communism, the working masses began to listen with more and more interest to those Socialist groups and parties to whose warnings they had been turning a deaf ear in the days of the October *coup d’état*. But at the same time the greater part of the working classes and working organizations as well as the peasants turned ‘unreliable.’ And in the Constitution there appeared the well-known Clause 35, according to which any group of labouring people may be deprived of all political rights if its activity should be considered dangerous for the revolution.

“Thus, contrary to the theory, the Constitution itself laid the first stone of the division of power and, concentrating it in the hands of bureaucracy, broke away from its principles of democracy, complete freedom, and equality of rights of all labouring people. It legalizes the split of the labouring people into two groups, a privileged one, possessing all political rights, and a non-privileged one—deprived of them partly or fully.

“As a result of this, the severance between the practice of the Soviet system and the Constitution of R.S.F.S.R. is still wider than the gap between the Constitution and the Soviet theory.

“Soviets as elective bodies practically ceased to be in existence, not only as means of State management, but also as legislative bodies.

“The overwhelming majority of the most important decrees and fundamental laws are passed independently not only of the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, but also without the knowledge of the Central Executive Committee.

“Without its knowledge take place the most important acts of exterior and interior policy.

“Very short sittings of the Central Executive Committee, when by way of exception some important bills are introduced, are reduced to a couple of speeches and to pre-arranged voting (unanimously) of a resolution already composed outside the Central Executive Committee. The Central Executive Committee is simply a kind of decoration. Some importance is still attached to the local (provincial) Soviets, but only as purely municipal bodies. But here, too, all questions are decided exclusively by the bureaucracy of the Executive Committees and Præsidiums. General Meetings of Soviets here, too, have only decorative functions.

“For this reason the Soviet organizations are dying out. Soviets assemble rarely and irregularly ; their sittings are more like a public meeting than a business assembly. The highest Soviet institution, the Central Executive Committee (C.E.C.) does not meet for half a year and more. Even now (i.e. May, 1920), when, after the decision of the Seventh Congress of Soviets, the Central Executive Committee was to meet for a short session every two months, this decision has not been observed, and from February, 1920, the Central Executive Committee met only once for three hours in order to vote for the declaration in answer to the

League of Nations and to sanction the text of an appeal to the nation in connection with the war with Poland.

“So ‘the power of Soviets’ has changed in reality into the centralized power of bureaucracy over the Soviets, and the concentration in the hands of this bureaucracy of the legislative and executive power of Soviets. This bureaucracy utilized the members of the Soviets for insignificant administrative functions.

“But the degeneration of the Soviet system does not stop here. The less reliable, from the point of view of Bolshevist Communism, becomes the elector of the labouring classes the more often the exclusive measures are introduced and the Soviets are replaced by so-called revolutionary committees (revcoms). The new general elections become more rare, and still more rare the election of Executive Committees and Præsidiiums. The elections take place under heavy pressure from the Government, and the heavier this pressure the greater becomes the number of revolutionary and Socialist groups and their followers, masses of working people and peasants, who are forcibly deprived more or less of political rights, and forcibly precluded from participation in the election for the Soviets, etc., as ‘counter-revolutionists.’

“At the present time all Socialist parties, excepting the Bolshevists themselves and a few adhering insignificant groups, devoid of any political importance, such as the Maximalists, Revolutionary Democrats, etc., exist in an illegal, or in the best case a semi-legal, hardly bearable, state.

“In fact, the dictatorship of the proletariat is accomplished by way of the dictatorship of the Communist Party over all workers.

“The Bolshevik Party, represented by its establishments from little Communist groups at the bottom to the Central Committee of the Communist Party at the top, is the master of the very same bureaucracy, and more particularly its military and police branches, which is in its turn the master of every State establishment, trade union, co-operative institution, club, or any Soviet organization, from lowest to highest.

“This party has the exclusive use of printing works, paper, halls for meeting, etc.

“However, such a state of affairs renders all disagreement or hesitation inside the Bolshevik party extremely dangerous; this is why to the dictatorship of the party over Soviet Russia is added a dictatorship of especially reliable and trustworthy Communists over the party itself, including even its Central Committee.

“Soviet Russia is ruled in fact by the so-called political ‘five’ (Lenin, Trotsky, Staalin, Kamenev, and Kristinsky); its decision is absolutely final. This ‘five,’ hampered neither by the control of any representative institution, nor by any action of an independent democratic organization, nor by criticism of a free Press or free speech, are indeed omnipotent. But such revolutionary absolute power shares the general sad fate of every absolute power. Omnipotent as far as the masses are concerned, omnipotent with respect to the workman or peasant as well as any bourgeoisie, it is impotent as far as

bureaucracy goes, and again particularly its military and police services, on which the 'five' are forced to rely for the fulfilment of their dictatorship. None of the best intentions of the men in power can be here of any avail. Absolute power at the top automatically creates absolute power of the worst kind at the bottom. And one must acknowledge that all kinds of arbitrariness, violence, bribery, and simple robbery bloom in Soviet Russia. Desperate efforts of separate groups of honest, true Communists are drowned in this endless sea of militaristic and police corruption.

"Such is, in short, the real aspect of the theory and practice of the Soviet system.

"We are not doctrinaires of formal democracy at all costs and under any circumstances. During the period of revolution and civil war we have not stopped and shall not stop before depriving of political rights those social classes and groups with which we have a death struggle.

"On the other hand, we have always remembered and always shall remember that destruction imposed upon the principles of true democracy are a period of a relative weakness of the revolution; the more it is necessary to increase the number of those deprived of political rights and adopt dictatorial measures of State management, the more it is necessary to exercise caution in the introduction of social and economic changes.

"But to us Socialists, the unconditional rule of democracy in the midst of workers themselves is the fundamental condition, the very principle of revolutionary tactics.

“Finally, the protest against a system of violence of a minority over a majority of workers is the reason why we remain to be a party in opposition on principle to the contemporary Bolshevist régime.”

This description of the Soviet system by Dahn is, in my opinion, a reasonable and moderate statement of the actual position in 1920 and puts *in extenso* Mr. Bertrand Russell's summing up of the position, “The Soviet System is Moribund.”

CHAPTER III

THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT : BREAKDOWN OR COMPROMISE

THE Volga is the greatest river in Europe ; it is so broad near its mouth in the Caspian Sea that at many places one cannot see across its width. To sail down it is to have displayed before one a panorama of the greatness and history of Russia. My own voyage on the Volga began at Nijni-Novgorod (the desolate empty shell of the once world-famous world-fair) and extended right down to Astrakhan on the Caspian. We began at Nijni in a temperature of English spring on a catarrh-creating day, and arrived at Astrakhan in a temperature worse than Egypt and a climate much more oppressive. Perhaps the fact that the level of the Caspian is about sixty feet below that of the Black Sea makes it worse. It was an inferno of heat, black flies, mosquitoes and midges, and seventy-seven different kinds of dusty filth. From Astrakhan we sailed up again to Saratov, where I disembarked and took train for Moscow, Petrograd, and the blessed lands of Northern and Scandinavian folk. During a large part of this journey of about 1,700 miles I lived, breakfasted, lunched, dined and supped with Mr. B. M. Sverdlov, Acting People's Commissar for Transport and Communications, and had numerous

very frank talks with him. Trotsky is the nominal head of the Transport Department, but as he also holds the portfolio of War he has in practice no time to devote to transport, and all is done by Sverdlov personally. Sverdlov is a man with the Trust magnate point of view without the desire of the Trust magnate to accumulate personal gain. But, then, he has most things such a man can wish for without money.

The ship we sailed on, the s.s. *Bielinski*, was specially at Sverdlov's disposal for his ministerial inspections, he had a guard of the Red Navy and the crew of the ship and men and women servants were at his orders. With Sverdlov sailed his own technical staff; one delightful old man as "adviser" was the former proprietor of a great part of the Volga shipping; two very competent private secretaries, one speaking excellent English and another excellent French. There were also managers of railways, political officers, and others, not to mention a staff of typists and subordinates. The boat carried a motor car for Sverdlov's own use, and he had but to ask to get a jolly little sailing yacht if he wanted sport. We had a delightful sail at one place with sailors who talked of nothing but the form of favourite yachts and great sporting races of the past before the war. The cuisine of the boat was quite good and food easily obtained on Government requisition from villages we passed *en route*. Ice is get-at-able on the Volga and we even had ices on one or two special occasions as a great treat.

Sverdlov had not only power which he well knew

how to use, and the instruments of power, which he chose well, but even some of the amenities of power. When he travels on the railways he has his own special train and a special cook who would certainly do very well if he set up a restaurant in London.

Sverdlov is a little man, usually dressed in a blue coat buttoned up to the neck; he stands very straight, his face is dark and very pale, his hair is smoothly brushed—very dark, the eyes dark, with glasses, the nose straight, his face clean shaved. Sverdlov's English obviously hails from the United States, where he was trained in railway work. His manner is quick and alert, he is impatient, and prefers the reports of his staff all reduced to charts and diagrams with the minimum of words so that he can take everything in at a glance. In punishment he is severe, to his men he is kind, allows them privileges if he can either by looking after them or—at the proper time—looking away. His staff admire him immensely and stand very straight when he speaks to them. Sverdlov can certainly command. In the counsels of "The Party" (i.e. the Communist Party) Sverdlov has been the chief opponent of workers' control, which he regards as a dangerous fallacy.

My first real talk with him was on this point.

Two English shop stewards had smuggled themselves into Russia after many stowaway and police adventures and were with us part of the time on the steamer on the Volga. With these two men I was one evening discussing workers' control, my view being that it should be a matter of arrangement on the basis of experience, the maximum con-

trol being given to the workers by negotiation. The two stowaways preferred, apparently as a matter of principle, that control should be "taken." We were both, however, emphatically agreed on the general principle of devolution of power in industry and association of the workers ever more and more closely with control of industry in all its branches. Sverdlov listened to our discussion and then immediately afterwards came up to me and said vehemently that "workers' control is a danger" and proceeded to demonstrate from Russian experience the fatal effects of confiding control and management to the working man. Sverdlov's plan is "one-man management," and he told me how he took one man for each special railway and made that one man individually and personally responsible for the success of the undertaking. The particular man he instanced was on board with us, a former engine-driver under the Tsar's régime and a man who had gradually climbed up the ladder. Under the Bolsheviks he had climbed more rapidly. But all "democratic" considerations Sverdlov simply swept on one side.

The discipline on the railways and river transport is severe. Alcohol is of course prohibited throughout Russia. If, however, a railway worker does get some illicitly and gets drunk, then, said Sverdlov, "he is shot without mercy." The transport system has its special extraordinary commission and its special railway tribunal, apart from this Commission, for dealing with offences of all kinds, and is armed with powers of life and death.

Sverdlov's views on "one-man management"

have prevailed in the counsels of the Communists, and this policy is now officially adopted for the whole of Russia. "Workers' Control" has been modified out of existence.

The rapid tendency to the centralizing of power and the sweeping away of the "democratic lumber" of the early stages of the Revolution is nowhere more marked than in the Soviet system itself and in the methods of government actually in use. The views of the Mensheviks on this question as expressed by Dahn have been already quoted. Sverdlov's statements to me confirm them in essential particulars and amplify them as regards the actual weakening of power which, as one of the chief Commissars, Sverdlov is, of course, in a position to know from the inside.

As far as possible, I will give Sverdlov's statements to me in his own words as I took them down during our conversations on the *Bielinski*. There were many conversations, and all confirmed what my notes state in black and white.

It must be explained that the Central Government of Russia is carried on by an annual Congress of Soviets from all Russia of some thousands of persons who discuss questions and elect a Central Executive Committee of 300 persons.

This Central Executive Committee (C.E.C. it is usually called) is the Parliament of Russia (and its members have the privilege of wearing a special enamel flag with C.E.C. on it as a badge of their position) and is elected by the congress which is itself the result of a series of indirect elections. The C.E.C. is thus much less directly in touch with

the people of Russia than the British Parliament with the British people. It is, perhaps, rather less in touch with the Russian people than are the indirectly elected Port of London Authority, Water Board, or Metropolitan Asylums Board in touch with the people of London. And I never met anyone yet who was fired by a burning enthusiasm for the Water Board.

This indirectly elected C.E.C. in its turn elects the People's Commissars (Narodny Commissars), who are the Cabinet Ministers of Russia. (It is important to distinguish between the really important "People's Commissars" and the horde of ordinary officials, many of whom are loosely described as Commissars.)

The People's Commissars, the Acting People's Commissars, and the Members of the High Economic Council make up the Soviet of People's Commissars or Cabinet Council, presided over by Lenin as President. Sverdlov stated "People's Commissars are not necessarily members of the Central Executive Committee." "The law of Soviet Russia is embodied in the constitution as confirmed by the Central Executive Committee and the All-Russian Conference of Soviets in 1918. This is amplified and added to by decrees of the Soviet of People's Commissars."

In order to understand the next point it should be remembered that the Central Executive Committee is theoretically responsible to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the Soviet of People's Commissars is theoretically responsible to the Central Executive Committee.

Sverdlov : “ Decrees which are to be issued by the People’s Commissars are usually issued without reference to any other body, but if any member is dissatisfied the question is transferred to the Central Executive Committee, where a final decision is taken.”

“ In a matter affecting only one Commissariat a decree may be issued by one Commissar alone.”

It is thus quite clear that the whole power of the Russian Government is in the hands of the Cabinet, the Soviet of People’s Commissars, who legislate, without reference to any other body, and whose decision is final ; but *Sverdlov* also told me that “ from the Soviet of People’s Commissars is formed a Soviet of Defence and Labour.”

Formerly this was called “ Soviet of Defence ” only, and corresponded in constitution to our own Council of Defence, but had practically absolute instead of limited powers.

This Soviet of Defence and Labour consists of Lenin, Trotsky, *Sverdlov*, *Rekoff*, *Stalin*, and *Tsurupa*. It is these six men who hold the great territory of Russia in their hands. It is they who take the great decisions and dispose of the fate of 125,000,000 people without appeal.

Whether the tendency towards concentration of power will go farther still, only the future can say. We are, at any rate, a long way off from the “ Bourgeois Superstitions ” of liberty, constitutional democracy, and workers’ control. How near we are to a Napoleonic era is a matter of speculation, but not one of great importance for the people of Russia, as it would probably not much change the

present method and effects of Bolshevist rule. I was interested in the personalities of the commanding men, and I asked Sverdlov to tell me something of their history, and what kind of persons they were. Here is the list of some of the cabinet:—

Name.	Occupation.	Remarks.
Kristinsky .	Lawyer	Bolshevist. Secretary, Executive Committee Communist Party.
Stalin . .	Professional Revolutionary: many times in prison and in Siberia.	Bolshevist.
Avanesoff .	Doctor	Formerly a Menshevist.
Tzurupa . .	Agricultural Engineer	Bolshevist.
Brukhanoff .	Agricultural Engineer	Bolshevist.
Rekoff . .	Professional Revolutionary	“Old established Bolshevist.”
Milutin . .	Lawyer	Old Bolshevist.
Sklansky .	?	Bolshevist.
Vladimirsky	Doctor	Bolshevist.
Xenofontoff	Working man	Bolshevist.
Lunacharsky	Journalist	Bolshevist.
Pokrovsky .	Professor of History or Law at Moscow University	Bolshevist.
Tchitcherin.	Diplomat	Noble family. University degree.
Korachan .	Journalist	Armenian.
Vinokuroff .	Doctor	—
Kursky . .	Lawyer	—

To these must be added, of course, Lenin and Trotsky, journalists, Semasko, doctor, and Sverdlov himself, engineer.

It will be noticed that only one of the persons here mentioned is described as a “working man,” and the nearest touch with the peasantry is in

the two agricultural engineers. A more important point, and one to which I attach significance, is that many of these People's Commissars are men who have suffered punishment, imprisonment, and exile to Siberia.

It is a Cabinet of tortured men. Some of them have obvious marks of illness caused by their sufferings in past years. One at least carries on his work propped up with a strait jacket to counteract his tuberculous disease of the spine, the result of sufferings in Siberia. Physically and mentally they are not normal. They are men of great, sometimes devastating energy, but they are fanatics and they are tortured souls.

An important and interesting question is that of the distribution of parties and how it affects the Soviet system. Certain facts are outstanding: the basis of the Soviet system is the Soviet of the village in the country on the one hand and the Soviet of the workshop in the town on the other. Eighty per cent. of the Russian population is in the villages and 20 in the towns. The disparity of voting power between town and country is variously given as 5 to 1, or 3 to 1. Taking it at this lower figure, there should be a considerable representation of peasants in the final Central Executive Committee. Among the peasants all observers agree (see especially Report of British Labour Delegation and Appendices) that there are practically no Communists. Out of 5,000 or 10,000 inhabitants there may perhaps be half a dozen members of the Communist Party, but not more; the majority are non-party. But in the Central

Executive Committee there are 285 or 290 Communists and 10 to 15 Mensheviks. The peasants are practically not represented at all. How this remarkable result comes about can only be understood by studying the organization of the Communist Party itself, for it is in the last resort the real ruler of Russia.

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Any conversation in Russia is spoken against a vague, dark background. It is not only that people are afraid to speak what they think—that is the commonplace and negative aspect. But there is so much looming vaguely, shapes not seen or fully understood. Out of this background every here and there in talk flashes a mention of “The Party.”

I asked a woman on one occasion whether So-and-so was a Socialist. The answer was, “I suppose you mean is he a member of the Party.”

On another occasion, on being introduced to a very intelligent person, the man who introduced me said that he had told the friend “to speak without any question of Party discipline.” As we went round the chief Commissariats we found that the People’s Commissars and their assistants were almost without exception members of the Communist Party.

On the trade unionist side of the State organization, again, the chief men and women were members of “The Party.” In the executive committees of Soviets and their inner bureau or Præsidium, there were also members of the Party. In hospitals there were not only the doctors, but political officers representing “the Party.” At the Central School of Physical Instruction for Teachers I was

taken round by the "Political Commissary" (a very charming young man), a member of "the Party."

In Great Britain, in France, in Austria, or Hungary, one is used to examine the political and social structure of those States and consider how political parties affect them. At the worst, when the parties appoint their own agents wholesale, when they control the Press—unless they repress free speech—there has always been a degree of liberty left, there have always been at least groups of people fighting against the oppression of the time.

But in Russia, although I began by studying the social and political structure of the Bolshevist régime, I was driven to realize that there it is "the Party" which is in control and to study how this Party is affected by social and political realities outside its scope.

Probably this is only possible in a backward country like Russia, where there is only rudimentary constitutional and economic development.

When I spoke to Sverdlov about the Communist Party he was entirely frank. It is the Communist Party which rules Russia. Nor is there, indeed, any real concealment of it anywhere. The report of the Ninth Congress of the Communist Party, published in the Appendix to the Report of the British Labour Delegation, makes it quite clear that "the Party" is a disciplined semi-military brotherhood which rules with an iron hand. References to "iron" rule and analogous expressions are a feature of its wording.

Before I began my detailed conversation with Sverdlov on the Communist Party as such, he had

already told me that "all the People's Commissars are members of the Communist Party" and that "all the 300 members of the Central Executive Committee except ten or fifteen are members of the Communist Party."

This all-powerful body is supposed to hold conferences at least once a year, but while the Soviets' meetings tend to diminish in frequency the Communist Party meetings tend to increase, and it was the Ninth General Conference which was held in April, 1920—nine meetings in two years. The procedure at this Conference is that questions of policy are discussed and the Central Committee elected on lists. At the last conference there were considerable divergences of opinion "on the question of government by personal responsibility of individuals or by collegiums. It was decided in favour of one-man control by a large majority." Sverdlov then went on to give me the names of the members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, which are as follows:—

- Andreef . . . A working man.
- Boukharin . . . A student of law and philosophy.
- Kamenev . . . A journalist, Chairman of Moscow Soviet, late Russian representative to England.
- Kristinsky . . . Lawyer, Secretary of Party, Commissar of Finance.
- Lenin . . . A journalist, President of Council of People's Commissars.
- Priobrajensky . . . A professional revolutionary.
- Ruzutak . . . A Lettish working man member of High Economic Council.
- Radek . . . A journalist, Secretary of Third International.
- Stalin . . . A professional revolutionary, People's Commissar.
- Serebriakoff . . . A working man.

- Tomski . . . A working man, leading official of Government Trade Unions, old-time pupil of Bolsheviks.
- Trotsky . . . A journalist, Commissar for War.
- Zinovieff . . . A journalist, President of Third International.

It is noticeable that there are here three "working men" out of thirteen, a larger proportion than among the People's Commissars. It is also noticeable that neither in this Central Committee of the Communist Party nor among the People's Commissars are there any women. And while there are five doctors among the People's Commissars, there are none in the Central Council of the Communist Party. A scientific training does not fit in with the creed-dogma of the Bolshevik evangel.

But the Communist Party is not a party like the Labour or Conservative Party over here. It is a close corporation. To get into the Communist Party a man or woman must be proposed and seconded and may be refused. If the candidate is accepted he is put on six months' probation, and is known as a candidate for membership, this being apparently recognized as a definite status. A full member has to abide by strict rules, one of which is implicit obedience to orders. When our party was leaving Moscow for Nijni-Novgorod Dr. Saalkind (a man who was Under-Secretary at the time of the Bolshevik break with the Diplomatic Corps in Petrograd, and who interviewed members of that body) was to have come with us, and he and his wife were at the train with all their luggage. At the last moment he rushed up to me and said he had been ordered to remain—"orders

from the Central Committee, no appeal"—and he bundled out his luggage just in time. Subsequently I met Dr. Saalkind on my way back, and he told me his orders were to prepare a Mission to go to Persia. He added: "You will see me there pursuing a bourgeois policy, and I am taking my wife; that will be not only a touch of Russia, but a touch of European civilization." (Mme. Saalkind is a very charming Parisienne.)

Members of the Communist Party are like soldiers in the ranks of a picked corps, they get considerable privileges (all bear arms, for instance) and are expected to volunteer for dangerous or disagreeable duty.

Through the members of the Communist Party so disciplined, the Central Committee rules the country. It is their declared object (see report of Ninth Congress of Communist Party) to have "Communist factors" in every Soviet, in every co-operative society, in every trade union, in every factory and workshop. The last Congress laid down in considerable detail how this is to be done. And further, to quote Sverdlov's own words:—

"Members of the Communist Party are appointed to all official positions by the Party, as it is in power."

And these positions extend from those in the villages where there may be six Communists in a population of 5,000 or 10,000 or more, to the chief offices of State.

In practice it is in the Executive Committee of the Communist Party that all decisions are taken.

The Commissars of the People carry out "Party decisions." If there is debate in the Central Executive Committee, speeches, procedure and votes are arranged beforehand by the Communist Party.

In the same way the All-Russian Congress of Soviets is stage-managed, and all the other pseudo-representative institutions of what Trotsky called "the democracy of to-day." And as the Report of the British Labour Delegation expresses it, "all possible means are used to secure the dominance of the Communist Party in the elections to Soviets."

What these possible means may be, let actual examples show, which are given on the authority of leading opponents of the Bolshevist régime, based on their statements at an interview in Russia in May, 1920 :—

(1) In many towns opponents of Bolsheviks are forbidden to put forward candidates.

(2) In 1918, in the *Izvestia* of July 15, there was published an order prohibiting candidates belonging to Socialist Parties other than the Bolshevist being elected to the Central Executive Committee.

(3) Similar incident at Witebsk in December, 1918.

(4) In April, 1920, the Menshevik fraction elected to the Soviet at Witebsk was excluded.

(5) There was a similar instance at Tashkent, on the grounds (1) that the minority fraction had not collaborated with the Bolshevist revolution ; and (2) because the revolution in Hungary was said to have been betrayed by Social Revolutionaries.

(6) At Tula, Briansk, Bersitzka, and Yaroslav

whole Soviets have been dissolved because they were not Communist.

(7) At Nikolaieff the Menshevik fraction was excluded from the Soviet because they abstained from voting on the motion to make Lenin honorary chairman.

(8) At the February, 1920, elections in Moscow, there was no possibility of bringing forward an opposition list of candidates, except in a few shops and factories, owing to arrangements made by the Communists. No posters or election literature and no public meetings were allowed for the opposition. Open pressure and threats of closing of factories were used to influence voters.

It should be remembered that all voting in Russia is in open meeting by show of hands. These meetings are arranged by the special Electoral Commission appointed by the local Soviet, and are presided over by an appointed chairman, and a record of proceedings is taken by an appointed secretary. The arrangements give the fullest opportunity for the exercise of electoral pressure.

With such an organization ruling with an "iron discipline," the Bolshevists control the whole of Russia and Siberia, and use as their instruments a great bureaucratic machinery created by the People's Commissars, the bureaucratic trade unions, the bureaucratic co-operative organization, and, for local purposes, the executive of local Soviets. Their great supports are the gigantic secret police service established under Djerzinsky, of the Extraordinary Commission, and the great army under Trotsky.

But despite this stranglehold on the country, their organization and administration are bad for (1) want of materials; (2) but most important, want of skilled and experienced men.

To what a condition the want of skilled men for government and for technical work has reduced Russia, the general description of existing conditions bears witness. And during 1920 and 1921 graphic descriptions of conditions in Moscow and Petrograd have become available, and brought home to men's minds some realization of what has happened. In order to convey a concrete idea, however, I give here an account of conditions in Astrakhan on the delta of the Volga on the Caspian Sea, which I visited on the s.s. *Bielinski*, when my conversations with Mr. B. M. Sverdlov, previously recorded, took place. During this voyage I had charge of one of the members of the Delegation, an invalid, and this explains some of the references.

The conditions considered in detail are chiefly public health and administration, and give a good idea of the average work performed in Russia now. The Medical Service, under the able and humanitarian Dr. Semasko, is one of the best services in Russia, so that the picture is not unfavourable. Like the other "specialists," only a very few of the doctors are Communists.

On approaching Astrakhan I was struck by the complete absence of all measures to prevent malarial infection. The fact that I insisted on fitting up the invalid's cabin windows with mosquito muslin was evidently a revolutionary proposal—copied, by the

way, by all the staff who could obtain the very scarce material. Conversation on this subject led Mr. Sverdlov to ask me to undertake an inspection of Astrakhan and report to him on the hygienic measures necessary to prevent malaria and improve health conditions generally. I accepted this suggestion after some demur (on the ground of poaching on the Russian doctors' preserves), for two reasons: (1) the wish to assist in any way I could with suggestions for improving the demonstrably lamentable conditions, and (2) the desire to see for myself the actual conditions from the medical inspector's rather than the medical tourist's point of view. On arriving at Astrakhan I had a conference with the chief medical officer of the town, Dr. Mishkin, and his assistants, Drs. Sandler and Saccal, and got from them a great deal of general and also of precise information in answer to a questionnaire which I had previously drawn up. On June 6 I made an inspection of the town in general, including the surroundings, the two large rubbish deposit areas, and the hospitals. On June 7 I inspected the waterworks and some other parts of the town. I was informed that Astrakhan had only recently come under civilian control, having been up to about three weeks previously in the hands of the Red Navy, who, I was told, had done pretty well what they thought fit.

The town contains about 150,000 inhabitants, and is built on the delta of the Volga on marshes, and surrounded by marshes. Ferry steamers—which were busy and crowded—are necessary to connect parts of the town which are separated by

arms of the river. At the time of our visit the temperature was over 120° Fahrenheit in the shade, and the place extremely oppressive. The streets themselves are very dirty. No water carriage system for sewage exists, and the sanitary service of refuse-collecting carts for the conveyance of rubbish and fæces to the dumping-grounds outside the town has been suspended for over a year. In many streets there were long, continuous heaps of refuse and fæces, about two feet high, dried into a compact mass all the way down the middle of the roadway. Very many houses had been partly destroyed by severe aeroplane bombing, and in one street practically every house was gutted, the outer walls alone standing. The dump-grounds for refuse had been untouched for about a year and were deserts of drifting dust. The waterworks was in such a state of disrepair that the pumping-engines spouted water from the joints of the machinery at each stroke, and the large iron store-tanks had to be plugged with matchlike bits of wood wherever the water pressure broke through their thin crust, and the sand filter was simply not working. The sand filter also leaked into the road—a very broad although squalid avenue—in front of the works, and formed a little lake about an acre in extent. Nevertheless, the water-supply to the town is still maintained, and the engineer in charge (a man with the typical appearance of chronic malaria) was of opinion that the water in the pipes was purer than that in the Volga. It was less discoloured, but the filter was quite useless against bacteria. Another defect of the waterworks is

that its intake was in the region of the Astrakhan docks in the Volga, about fifty yards from the bank, and, on the day of my visit, immediately behind the stern of a steamer apparently engaged in trade with Baku in the Caspian.

Not only are the streets dirty, but pools of water are common everywhere—at the roadside, in the gutters, on bits of waste land where holes have been excavated, in the middle of the road, and, in fact, wherever a depression in the ground exists. One of the first things to attract my attention on leaving the boat and walking out of the dock gates was a little stagnantly-moving gutter-stream covered with a green water-weed into which a large bright-eyed frog plopped on my approach. This little gutter stream meandered out from under a wooden paling higher up the road and no doubt went on to the Volga. In many of the near-by streets there were large pools in the road. The basements of the gutted houses previously referred to were flooded with water. Round the town are wide expanses of shallow water covered with picturesque whispering reeds—six to ten feet high—with little creeks creeping up to the house walls and winding into the town itself. On going into the matter in detail with Dr. Mishkin and his assistants I found that seven-tenths of the area of the town is water surface. When I asked what was being done about the flooded basements, the pools in the streets, the gutters, and the accumulation of water on waste land in the town, I was told that it would dry up later on in the year. Meanwhile nothing was done. When I inquired what was being done about the

picturesque lagoons of reed-shaded waters creeping right up to the town, I was told they were too extensive to tackle. It was a case of "Nitchevo" (Never mind)—a universally employed Russian expression embodying the spirit of that passive non-resistant acceptance of adverse conditions of hardship and evil which is characteristic of Russian people.

Under these conditions I was not surprised to learn that malaria is universal and distributed over all sections of the population. Fishermen, who live in extremely picturesque wooden shanties on the edge of the river or on islands only an inch or two raised above its surface, suffer most. The population on a little hill—or rather mound—in the centre of the town, on which the local fortress (Kremlin) is built, suffer least. The outskirts of the town are more affected than the centre. When I pressed the importance of these facts and asked why at least drainage of pools and stagnant water in the town itself was not carried out, I was told that it had been discussed, but that there was a lack of labour and materials. Both of these statements were true in general, but nevertheless it was possible to get labourers from Persia for the docks (Mr. Sverdlov arranged this while we were in Astrakhan), and a good deal might have been done with no more implements than a few shovels and picks.

When I suggested that there was an unlimited supply of oil available at Baku (connected by railway and steamer lines) for spreading over pools, I was told that this was not done for fear of killing

breeding fish and injuring the fish industry and caviare industry of Astrakhan. But however valid this reason might have been for certain water areas, it did not apply to the mosquito-breeding grounds immediately round and in the town, which were mere stagnant pools or waste expanses of water. The treatment of malaria in Astrakhan was no more satisfactory than the prevention. There was no attempt at the isolation of cases, no material for isolation, and a practically complete absence of quinine. I did not have time to examine individual cases at Astrakhan, but I did so at Saratoff, where I saw two malaria cases untreated with quinine with spleens extending to below the umbilicus, a condition I was assured was common. Most of the cases of malaria in Astrakhan are said to be benign, but there had been ten malignant cases lately with sudden coma as first sign of illness. The mortality from malaria was stated to be about 20 per cent., "probably more." Eight-tenths of all cases of illness in the town were malaria. The last year for which statistics are available is 1914, when 16,180 cases of malaria were registered out of a population of 140,800. The largest monthly number of cases were registered in August and December. Men were most affected between 20 and 40, women between 15 and 30.

The public health organization for dealing with these conditions was not adequate. The town was divided into six districts, and for each of these areas a sanitary medical officer was appointed. But each "sanitary medical officer" held three, four, or more other appointments of a clinical kind

and had, in consequence, very little time to devote to his sanitary duties. Also, each sanitary officer had only two men to assist him in each district (who were paid and rationed on a low scale) and no transport of any kind.

As I was asked for suggestions, I made those obvious ones connected with drainage, treatment by oil and removal of rubbish, familiar to all with any experience of anti-malarial work, and, in addition, suggested that the "sanitary medical officers" should be relieved of all other work but paid the salary for all appointments relinquished; and, further, that the sanitary personnel should be largely increased (to 24 for each district), supplied with transport, and paid and rationed on the Red Army scale, and selected from those having knowledge of sanitary matters, or, failing these, from people of education who would appreciate the importance of sanitary work. I also suggested that a small fee should be paid for notification of infectious disease by doctors, sanitary service men, or representatives of the trade unions. Other detailed suggestions were made regarding general cleanliness and for dealing with and preventing cholera and plague. Mr. Sverdlov travels with an advisory medical officer on his staff of experts, and this officer (a woman, Dr. Dmitrieff) entirely concurred in my suggestions.

The existence of Astrakhan as a centre of malarial infection is serious enough (I was glad to get all my own party away without any of them falling ill), but when it is realized that it is one of the chief places from which cholera and plague spread it is

difficult to exaggerate its importance. In 1919 there were 600 cases of cholera in Astrakhan and a very limited traffic on the Caspian Sea and on the Volga. In 1920 a great many cases were expected, and there is much traffic on the Caspian sea and the Volga, while the condition of the waterworks can only be described as admirably arranged to spread an epidemic. From Astrakhan the cholera will spread up the Volga and through Russia. A map, issued by the Commissariat of Health for educational purposes, shows the probable routes of infection from the East and up the Volga. How near it will come to Western Europe remains to be seen. I was told that cholera comes to Astrakhan from up the Volga, that it increases in virulence in Astrakhan, and then spreads up the river again. Poster propaganda is undertaken by the Russian Government and the illustrations show the path of infection in cholera through food and drinking water and reinforce the lesson by showing a cholera patient receiving intravenous injections in hospital. There was no plague in Astrakhan or on the Steppe to the east at the time of my visit, but if it comes there is nothing to prevent its spread. Amoebic dysentery is also very serious in the town and neighbourhood, and there had been 100 cases of operation for hepatic abscess during the last twelve months.

Typhus and relapsing fever had devastated Astrakhan last winter as every other place in Russia, and I was told a story of the marching out of a Cossack army toward the Caucasus and the finding of some thousands of unburied bodies on

the ground a day or two's march from the town, where an epidemic had stricken the army down. No really reliable statistics over a long period were available since 1914, but I give here the number of cases of actual illness of certain kinds on June 7, 1920, as stated to me by the chief medical officer, and which do not include malaria or dysentery.

Cases of Infectious and other Serious Illness at Astrakhan in Hospital on June 7, 1920.

Scurvy	642 cases.	Typhoid fever	14 cases.
Relapsing fever	306 „	Smallpox	6 „
Typhus fever	196 „	Indefinite fevers	29 „

There were stated to be "casual cases" of diphtheria and "quite a number of deaths" from measles. Vaccination (in contradiction to what I was told at the Commissariat of Health in Moscow) was said not to be compulsory; it was also said that there was a lack of vaccine and that the practice of vaccination had slackened during the revolution. Propaganda in favour of vaccination is also being done by poster: the upper part of one shows the effects of smallpox, while underneath is a picture of a doctor and nurse vaccinating children brought by their parents.

Hospital accommodation was both insufficient and bad. Immediately outside the window of one of the main wards of the chief hospital was the edge of an oozing mud of fæces from the hospital cesspool, which covered a large area of the garden. I was told nothing could be done, for the familiar reasons. It was another case of "Nitchevo." The ward was full of flies, which, of course, swarm everywhere.

The general arrangements of the hospital were not good, it was dirty and untidy, and there was an almost complete absence of drugs and dressings, including chloroform and ether.

A certain amount of soap is made locally from seal fat and fish fat. It is a repulsive compound with a strong and nasty smell. Some of it was on sale in the market, dark brown in colour and looking like a greasy half-brick.

The state of affairs revealed in Astrakhan is dangerous, not only to that town and the Volga basin, but to the whole of Russia, and through Russia to Western Europe. Astrakhan is the chief port of the Caspian Sea and is connected by important trade routes with Persia and the Near East through Enzeli and with Turkestan and the further East through Krasnovodsk. Through Astrakhan flows the great river traffic up the Volga with direct river connections reaching to Petrograd and Moscow. Both by railway and sea Astrakhan is also connected with Baku and Petrovsk. It is thus of the greatest importance that Astrakhan should be put into a sanitary condition at the earliest possible moment. At present the town is a fortress or headquarters of disease from which it may sally at any moment to invade the rest of the world. I have reason to believe that the Soviet Government would consider the question of receiving a foreign sanitary commission to put matters into good order, and among the first tasks of such a commission would be: (1) extensive anti-malarial measures; (2) provision of special hospital accommodation for malaria and other infections; (3) general

de-lousing and disinfection campaign ; (4) repair and improvement of waterworks ; (5) general cleanliness campaign ; (6) provision of system of medical inspection of steamers arriving and departing and of travellers arriving by boat, by train, or otherwise.

I have dealt with Astrakhan in some detail because it is the town I have most detailed information about in Russia and because of its own individual importance, also because I believe it to be typical of the conditions now existing in many provincial towns in Russia. Streets are very commonly extremely dirty—the streets of Samara were as dirty as those of Astrakhan, although those of Saratoff were much cleaner ; general housing conditions in the villages are described as very bad by the Commissar of Public Health. Vermin infection is excessively common. Statistics supplied me at Saratoff show that parasite infections increased by 1,500 per cent. between the middle of 1918 and the middle of 1919. The morale of the medical personnel has suffered seriously in the long war and revolution, and some have given up hope of change for the better. Also nearly all doctors are overworked. In many places there are no doctors at all. In the whole Astrakhan province outside the town I was told that there was only one doctor. And there is an almost complete lack of medicines, dressings, disinfectants, and soap. Despite the great and heroic efforts of the Commissariat of Health, the organization of civilization is literally, as at Astrakhan, crumbling to pieces.

And this description of Astrakan shows, above

all, how helpless a people is if it has not the men to do its skilled work, and if the general average education of the population is not high enough to enable them to appreciate the need of co-operation.

It would, of course, be grossly unfair to compare conditions in a Russian provincial town with those in an English provincial town and put down the difference to Bolshevism. The differences are due to something much more difficult to handle, viz., adverse natural conditions, the inertia of uneducated people, and the deficiency of skilled help.

The preceding description of Astrakhan was written in 1920 from observations made in June of that year; the present famine and disease conditions are only the terrible logic of necessity. On June 7, 1920, there were 642 scurvy cases in hospital, now there are thousands dying of hunger. The organization of civilization, attacked by a great drought, has crumbled. And one turns from the study of this picture to the consideration of Russian militarism with a foreboding of danger.

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One of our first experiences on entering Soviet Russia was being ushered into a special train made up of carriages of the International Sleeping Car Company, with dining-car and kitchen attached. This train was not only profusely decorated with red bunting and green boughs, but also guarded by a number of very smart officers of Bashkir Cavalry, beautifully dressed, and with flowing blue silk pelisses over their backs. At our first stop in Russia we were received by a guard of honour, and our party inspected this guard while

it stood at attention. It was interesting to hear a military band playing the "Internationale," while all the officers stood at the salute and all civilians stood with uncovered heads. The "Internationale" has become the National Anthem of Russia. One of our strongest first impressions of Russia was that it is a military power.

In Petrograd, shortly after we arrived, we inspected a tremendous military and naval parade in the Place Ouritzski, near the Winter Palace. The sailors were under the command of M. Zelenyi, a former Admiral, with whom I had a little talk, and he told me that he was "chief of the Baltic Fleet." There were about 2,500 sailors in this parade; their physical condition is good, they march very well, their clothing is good, and they are armed with rifles. The sailors are the pets of the Revolution, and those who complain of them say they do no work, but live on the fat of the land. A considerable number of the old officers are still serving with them.

After the sailors came two companies of well-equipped soldiers wearing the Grenadiers' cap with a Communist star in front. The next detachment was a battalion of the Labour Army, about 1,000 strong, of what we should call the B2 type in England; a Labour Army detachment of 500 following them were not quite so good, but most of them were B2. After the Labour battalion marched six companies of infantry, well clothed and booted, properly armed, of the B1 type. The next two companies, well clothed and armed, were of the A1 type; the next three companies

were A 1 men also. The chief noticeable feature with regard to the battalion was an occasional variety in their uniforms and in their equipment. The companies following immediately afterwards as they passed I classified as B, A, A, and A 4, that is to say, boys undeveloped. The tail end of the procession was brought up by a large number (some thousands) of trade unionists, who, I was told, were marching by order.

This parade in Petrograd was by no means the last military adventure. We reviewed another big military display at Moscow, where again we stood at the saluting point on a raised platform decorated with bunting, accompanied, by the way, by a diplomatic representative, a Turkish general, from the Turkish Nationalist Government. This typical Turkish officer expressed his desire to do his "utmost for humanity."

On another occasion in the Grand Theatre at Moscow Trotsky came into our box, and we had the opportunity of talking over the situation with him. There is no doubt that Trotsky is tremendously popular; when he appeared at the front of the box at the beginning of the third act he received a great spontaneous ovation. I had a little private talk with Trotsky about the Army, and he told me that the Political Commissar who is attached to each body of troops has taken over and extended the functions which were formerly discharged by the priest. Everything which in our Army is done by the Y.M.C.A. by various canteens, by concert parties, or by the chaplains is done in the Russian Army by

the Political Commissars, who undertake in addition the political education and the Communist propaganda among their men.

When on the Volga I had the opportunity of discussing military matters with General Baltiski, who was an officer of the Russian Guards and of the Russian General Staff. General Baltiski told me that about half of the old officers were now in the present Army. He explained the defeat of the White Armies of Koltchak, Denikin, and others by their bad administration and by internal political dissension which tore them to pieces.

Baltiski himself commanded the Volga area, which was a large reserve and training area, and included the Governments of Samara, Saratov, Astrakhan, and five others. It was perfectly obvious that Baltiski was not only an officer, but a Guards officer; he was well dressed, beautifully shaved and his nails were manicured. I am prepared medically to testify that he was in very good physical condition. It is perfectly clear that the Army, being to a large extent master of the situation, looks after itself. It is, indeed, admitted that the Army comes first in consideration of rationing and clothing.

The extent to which militarization has gone in Russia was in evidence everywhere, but two instances struck me particularly, one a review of a large number of school children under 14 who are enlisted in Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, and who took part with some thousand of young persons over 14 and under 18 in giving a great

display of military exercises at Moscow. Another incident was at the Theatre in Moscow where, during the interval, when we went out to buy lemonade and little cakes at fantastic prices, I saw a number of smartly-dressed soldiers with charming young women and, in particular, one very well-dressed young man with a Sam Browne belt on and various insignia of rank accompanied by one of the prettiest and most delightfully dressed women I saw in Russia. One was reminded inevitably of England and France during the war.

The Red flag is being overlaid with gold embroidery and military inscriptions, the primitive simplicity of revolutionary fervour is giving way to the glory of military decorations, insignia of rank, smart belts and all the rest of the familiar paraphernalia. The more we hammer Russia the more her military spirit increases, for whoever suffers first it is the Army which suffers last. And the Army, which is one of the great pillars and supports of the power of the autocratic Council of Commissars, is becoming welded into a great military power with a tremendous reserve on which it can draw for reinforcements. Every month and year which goes by keeping the Army in the field and the military spirit going strengthens the forces making for autocratic government and rule by force.

Those who hope from this a reaction in favour of Tsardom are building on delusions. The peasantry, who form 80 per cent. of the population, will never consent to go back to a regime which

might deprive them of the land they have expropriated. If a new Russian autocracy is to arise it will be on Napoleonic lines. If, however, peace is made now Russia's own tremendous power of development will probably turn away from militarism, which is repugnant to the national spirit. But the danger of the militarism of Russia is one of the perils of Europe.

* * * * *

But opposed to the power of the Communist Party, opposed to the power of the Extraordinary Commission and to the Army, suffering from the want of manufactured goods, bearing the brunt of diseases, and accepting the Soviet's regime as it has accepted others, is the great inarticulate mass of the peasants—it is they who are the great reality of Russia. The fact that in a population of 125,000,000, 90,000,000 are peasants, dwarfs everything else into insignificance. Even those who live in the towns and are engaged in industry have still their roots in the country-side. In England men are cut off from the land, not only by their work in cities, but by the tradition of town life, and by the generations of men intervening between them and any touch with rural existence. In Russia, if a man starves in a town he can always walk out of it into the country, back to the village where he has connections. If the whole industrial and urban life of Russia were to be destroyed to-morrow Russia, as a great community of peasants, would still continue.

One of the great results of the war which has

not yet been noticed sufficiently is that it has tended to destroy the towns all over Europe and strengthen the position of the peasant proprietors. This fundamental social change is occurring in many countries and does not depend on the form of their government. The peasant movement in Southern Germany, in Tchecho-Slovakia, in Austria, in the Ukraine, in Russia, is a movement of the permanent elements of the population as against the less permanent. If the life of the towns of Europe—of Vienna, of Budapest, of Warsaw, of Petrograd—if the life of these towns went up in a mist of fire, the slow peasant, living on the earth, bowing his head beneath the sky, would still go on. The real strength of the Russian Revolution lies in its alliance with the agrarian movement of the peasants, which has taken the land from the big landlords and divided it up amongst peasant proprietors.

So long as the Bolshevists can arrive at a *modus vivendi* with the peasants, the peasants will allow them to be as much Communist as they please in the towns. If a reaction on Napoleonic lines or otherwise is to come in Russia, it will come because the centre of gravity of power will be shifted by the small group who hold power in their hands, from the interests of the urban proletariat to the interests of the peasant proprietors. The peasants who lived under despotic Tsardom passively and almost uncomplainingly will go on living under any Government if it does not too much interfere with their own lives. The industries of Russia might go, the civilization of

the towns might go, and yet the Government, still holding its seat of power in Moscow, but supporting itself upon a great peasant mass, might still play a part in the policy of Europe.

Whether under these circumstances the enlightened policy of the Bolsheviks with regard to education would continue is a matter of doubt.

We could find no one in Russia willing to say that he considered that the peasants were, or would become, Communists. Lenin spoke of them with contempt as of inferiors. Losovsky, a well-known trade union leader, spoke of them in the same way, and suggested that more than a generation must elapse before communal agriculture could make any headway at all. Sereda, the Commissar for Agriculture, considered that only a slow process of education, based upon a careful study of peasant psychology, offered any hope of Communism spreading amongst the peasants.

When we visited villages on the banks of the Volga it was clear that the peasants themselves were not interested in politics, were not interested in Communism, but were very much interested in the provision of agricultural machinery, agricultural implements, manure, seeds, and clothing for themselves and their families.

At a large meeting in one of the villages, a Communist endeavoured to get the crowd to sing the "Internationale." I stood on the high balcony of a house and looked over a crowd to see only a very few singing, but a revolutionary Volga song was at once taken up by hundreds of people. It is quite clear that the peasants at best only

passively support the Soviet Government. It is quite certain, however, that while they will resist intervention because they fear that their land will be taken from them, they will also insist a very short time after real peace is established on a great modification of the Bolshevist methods of government. At present the peasant is not properly represented in the Councils of the Soviet, he submits because he can do nothing else, but there already exists an intelligently led, if small, party, one of whose leaders I interviewed, Oustinov by name, whose simple programme is to demand equality of representation as between peasant and town worker. This simple reform would change the whole Bolshevist regime.

In any case as soon as real peace is established the peasant will demand more representation than he has at present. Many peasant representatives of village Soviets at present are very simply disfranchised by being refused a permit to travel from their villages to the meeting-place. No one in Russia is allowed to move at present without a special pass, and the Bolsheviks, holding all transport in their hands, are very easily able to control all movements of the population. But the natural richness of the country will, when it is no longer despoiled by requisitions from the towns and by requisitions from the Army, create a tendency towards trading which will probably be much stronger than any regulations the Bolsheviks can make to stop it. Even in 1920, when private trading was irregular and branded as "speculation," it was possible to buy almost any kind of

agricultural produce in the market at Moscow if you were willing to pay the inflated prices.

The Bolshevist arrangements for providing food for the population at Moscow broke down in 1920. There was sometimes no bread available for more than a week at a time although the staple diet of most Russians is black bread and millet seed. Yet it was possible to get in the market milk, bread, eggs, vegetables, and fruit, and in point of fact Moscow lived on the market conducted by the peasants instead of on the Bolshevist rations. If this was so in 1920, with the Extraordinary Commission in full vigour and with the Central Government in possession of almost unchallenged authority, it is difficult to see how a very large expansion of private trading could have been prevented, even if the Bolshevik food regime had not been abandoned in March, 1921.

The reality of Russia, therefore, is that the whole situation is dominated by the Bolshevist failure to deal with the land problem, and their failure to convert the peasants to anything like an acceptance of their theories. It is quite true that in theory the land is nationalized; but the peasants pay no rent or taxes, they cannot be turned off their holdings so long as they work them, and in case of death the holdings descend to their children. That is to say that no economic machinery whatsoever has been created for the purpose of distributing the wealth of the land, while the system of land holding is one which emphasizes individualist production to its utmost extent. The only link between the town govern-

ment and the peasants is the theoretical link of the exchange of commodities (at present a delusion owing to the failure of town production) and the real link of physical force with which the soldiers from the town take the products from the peasants.

Russia is often referred to as the Soviet Republic, but the Soviet form of government does not exist in practice in Russia at the present time. What does exist is a pretended government of Workers' and Peasants' Councils and an actual government of the inner ring of the Communist Party. And while the Bolshevists have been unsuccessful in their tackling of the land and have in practice suppressed the Soviet form of government, they have been equally unsuccessful in tackling the practical problem of socializing industry of the towns and providing for the physical needs of the town dwellers.

When Prince Kropotkin says in his memorandum published in the Appendix to the Report of The British Labour Delegation to Russia that the experience of the Bolshevists shows "how Communism cannot be introduced," he is expressing the view which is driven upon one by an impartial survey of the facts of Russian life at present. I have heard M. Kameneff say that at the present time there is neither Socialism nor Communism in Russia, and I fail to see how, with their present methods of government, which rely on a dictatorship of the powerful members of the Communist Party, it is possible for them to introduce Communism or Socialism.

The negative work of the Russian Revolutions

has been to sweep away the rotten old Tsaristic regime. At present there is a relatively clear field for rebuilding. If peace is now made, and all men of good will in Russia are enabled to work together and the regime of force and violence ceases, there is a hope that a great State may be built up out of Russia, because her people are a fine race, and have a splendid artistic gift with which to help the world.

A friend in Russia described the situation by saying that the Russians are "a nation of artists ruled by brutes." The Bolshevists are by no means brutes, but they are fanatical dogmatists who are so certain that they are right that they are prepared to make other people conform by force to their theories. Perhaps only the terrible failure of their experiment could teach them. Force and violence can never build up, and force and violence applied from the outside to Russia can only call out a response of more force and violence from within. Those who wish to help Russia to find herself must take the difficult course of offering every kind of help and assistance and friendship. Russia has been wounded very badly indeed; what she needs is a healing, and the expression of a feeling of a real international fraternity which will help her as she wants to be helped, and not as we think she should be helped.

Since 1920, when the foregoing descriptions were written, a good many things have happened to Russia. Peace treaties have been concluded with Poland and other States and a trading agreement

signed with England, and although the military party is still very powerful, as witness their recent wanton over-running of the Republic of Georgia in the Caucasus, the period of possible reconstruction has set in. The military party certainly needs watching; there have been at least "hankerings" in the direction of an invasion of Egypt with a great army of Cavalry under Budenny, going via Persia, Syria and Palestine, and dealing a serious blow at the hated British Empire. But the power of the peasants is growing and has obtained the acknowledgment of peasant proprietorship and freedom of trade in the products of the land over a certain proportion taken as a tax, and there is already a great deal of resentment at the long-continued mobilization. The increasing power of the peasants will certainly bring about great political changes and may become the basis on which internal order, a stable code of law and political freedom will assert themselves. The problem for any far-seeing Socialist in Russia at the present time is quite simply how to prevent a peasant reaction right away from any Socialism at all. And as Lenin and some others of the leaders have proved themselves far-seeing and adaptable, this will probably lead to some plan of consolidation of all socialist forces (Bolshevists and others) in Russia with perhaps even non-socialist democratic parties co-operating. In any case an arrangement on these lines is inevitable in Russia if the advantages of the Revolution of 1917 are to be preserved and the leadership of Russia to remain in the hands of

the intelligentsia. There is very much to do in Russia, and we shall probably see in the next few years ex-Red Communists and ex-White officers working together in modified Soviets for a new Russia. Any big military adventures in the West would prevent any such peaceful reconstruction and is therefore not likely to take place, but there is still the possibility of military action on a smaller scale, which would not involve so much disturbance, to get control over outlying bits of Russia. The economic relations of Russia, Finland, Esthonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland will probably become much closer in future than they are at present, but the process need not mean even a small war, more especially if Russia and Germany are both in the League of Nations, and if it both exercises its power and authority and speaks for Europe and the world.¹

¹Since the above was written the Famine in Russia has revealed its great extent. The breakdown in the Volga provinces, of which Astrakhan is typical, has occurred. With the exception of minor changes of tenses and of grammatical corrections, what was written earlier is left substantially as it stood, for at present the Russian disaster cannot be measured.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW POLAND

POLAND in 1921, before the result of the Silesian Plebiscite, before the ratification of peace with Russia and before the formal solemnization of the constitution, was a country still quivering with the echoes of the conflict in which it was born. There was a tremendous lot of history being talked and being written in newspaper leaders and not a very stable foundation for that history to stand upon. But despite the history, despite the intense historical nationalism that colours all things Polish, the new Poland was trying to be a modern country, a democratic country, and should be considered not so much in relation to its tragic history of the past as in relation to its democratic hopes for the future. And Poland seems to have been extraordinarily misunderstood in Western Europe, and particularly in Great Britain, because presumably it did not fit into any easily-understood formula, and because it lent itself to the policy of the interventionists who desired to destroy Bolshevism by force.

Poland, the real Poland, did not wish to fight Russia—but it was very definitely afraid of Soviet Russia. And when Bolshevik troops are just across

your border and have been within ten miles of your capital—nearer than the Germans got to Paris—this is easy enough to understand.

But the problems of Poland are not those of a choice between "Imperialism" and "Socialism": they are those of the efficiency of administration, of economic organization and of the land.

The Polish Diet is a body (now meeting in the St. Marie School, a former Academy for young ladies) in which peasant interests are in effective majority, with Socialist representation next in importance. The Premier is (March, 1921) a genuine peasant. The peasants, with the aid of the Socialist parties, have carried into law a project of expropriation of the big estates and division of land among the peasants. But the big landlords of Poland still have considerable fighting power, and wish to delay or prevent the carrying out of this law.

In all matters the difficulties of the effective majority of the population of peasants and workers putting their will into operation are very great. To begin with, Poland is not sure of her boundaries except in the West, and even there the Silesian question has flamed up in ways dangerous to Poland itself. But beyond this Poland had no uniform plan of government for the three constituent parts—the old Prussian part, the old Austrian part, and the old Russian part. Methods of local administration, railway administration, food administration, education, and everything else were different in all these three parts of Poland. How great the differences were was realized when one came to a customs house frontier where

baggage is examined inside Poland, between old German Poland and old Russian Poland. One felt it too when one discovered that in order to take or send food or other things from old Austrian Poland to another part special permits were necessary. As though one had to get special permits to send cotton goods from Lancashire to London, and had a customs barrier between North and South at Birmingham.

To the casual observer the most striking sign of the lack of unity in conditions in Poland was the difference in prices between, say, Posen (old Prussian Poland), Warsaw (the capital, and in old Russian, Poland) and Cracow (old Austrian Poland). Prices in Warsaw were as much as ten times those in Posen and six times those in Cracow. And while there was a good supply of many things in the shops at Warsaw—at high prices—the shops of Cracow were badly furnished, but prices were much less.

This disunity of administration in the three parts of Poland came out clearly too in the question of the Army. The Polish Army in 1920 was made up of the three sections with different uniforms, drills, methods, and traditions. Three bits of the old German, Austrian and Russian Armies had to be welded into one.

And the people dealing with these difficulties were men who had had no independent political existence for over a hundred years, and whose traditions were those of military glory and extreme individualism of an old-fashioned, aristocratic type. These Polish qualities make it inevitable that the new Polish national feeling should express itself in mili-

tary metaphor. Marshal Pilsudski was not only a leader, he was a symbol, but it was no accident that he is a Socialist. For the Poland that is becoming united by its strongly thrilling national feeling is a new democratic state which is settling down to work on new democratic lines and which will, if tactfully helped, solve its industrial and agrarian problems in a way satisfactory to its people.

The Poles made a terrible mistake in their attitude to Russia. That was a serious error. But so did many of our own people, and our own statesmen here, and without the excuse of lack of experience, without the scare of immediate neighbourhood with the Russians. The Poles made a mistake about Zeligowski and Lithuania. Agreed. But they had just as bad a claim to Lithuania (the old Poland was really Poland-Lithuania) as some of the claims operative in connection with the Peace Treaties. And now they have made another blunder about Upper Silesia.¹

To understand the blunders, it is necessary to remember the violent nationalism of Polish feeling, and the confusion of Polish Government and administration, which allows the big land-owning and business classes to have an influence in affairs, particularly foreign affairs, quite out of proportion to their numbers. These reactionary classes want more territory and more industries, for simple predatory reasons, and are enabled to delude the mass of the population by an intense propaganda on nationalist lines. There is also little doubt that

¹ The problem of Upper Silesia is not so much a Polish as a European, or rather, Franco-German problem.

the old Polish governing class is intensely dissatisfied with the socialist and democratic trend of the present Government, and is ready to mix in any international intrigue with other powers which promises a strengthening of their influence. The general confusion of affairs, intense national feeling, hatred of Germany, fear of Russia, and distress caused by insufficient food and epidemics of disease create a witch's broth, out of the steam of which all kinds of phantoms can be conjured. Whether Poland in her new democratic incarnation will be able to cleave a way to a sane national existence through the difficulties some of her own citizens create for her, is a matter for the future. At present Poland seems doomed to make herself suffer severely for lack of a firm direction of affairs or a realist view of her foreign relations.

The only rational policy for Poland between Germany on the one side and Russia on the other is a policy of Peace. And democratic Poles know it and wish to follow it, because they wish to develop the social programme of reconstruction to which they have set their hands. It may be that anti-democratic Poles engineer disturbance and war for the same reason from the opposite side, and are willing to put their national existence in peril to safeguard economic interests.

But the Polish reconstructive programme is one of great interest, and even if the Polish frontiers were seriously modified, to the disadvantage of Poland, by her mistaken foreign adventures, it is only probable that these socialistic tendencies would be accentuated. Whether the autocrats like

it or not, the new Poland must be a People's Poland.

The Witos Government showed its intentions clearly in its labour and in its land legislation, which was of a drastic character. The land legislation proposes to cut down the maximum holding of land to a small amount, varying according as to whether it is near a town and according to the character of the soil, so as to allow a huge increase in the number of peasant proprietors. And undoubtedly this land legislation will be carried into effect if the Poles receive sympathetic support from Western democracies in the inevitable administrative difficulties which are sure to occur.

This great land reform of Poland is governed by two laws, (1) "The Land Reform Act" voted by the Polish Diet on July 10, 1919, and (2) "The Law Concerning the Application of the Land Reform" passed on July 15, 1920.¹

Art. I of the 1919 Law states :—"The agricultural policy of the Polish Republic should be based, above all, on sound, strong peasants' farms of different types and acreage, capable of intense production, and based on private ownership. . . ."

Art. II. The owners of the land may only be persons who will work themselves on the farm or their heirs, with the exception of that land which will be placed at the disposal of the landless proprietor and which is exploited by Municipal or Rural bodies.

¹The translation from the Polish was made by an authority on Social Questions in Warsaw, and has been left almost entirely unchanged in order not to risk an unintentional alteration of meaning.

Art. III confides the carrying out of this policy to the State; and Art. IV details the land to be used as follows :—

(a) Land belonging to the State (Crown land and entailed property of former Russians);

(b) Land which formerly belonged to the reigning dynasties or members of their families;

(c) Land which belonged to the Russian Peasants' Bank, and the Prussian Commission for Colonization;

(d) Church land (after signing an agreement with the Holy See) and land belonging to Public Institutions;

(e) Land which has not finally been cut up into small holdings which formerly was Church land (after the signing of an agreement with the Holy See).

(f) Land which was purchased during the war from monies resulting from profiteering, and land belonging to speculators in land;

(g) Land belonging to private individuals, by means of forced expropriation, for a sum which will be fixed later. The order of expropriation will be the following :—

(1) Estates with bad cultivation,

(2) Estates destroyed by the war,

(3) Estates on which disputes regarding forests and rights of pasturage with peasants have not been settled.

The maximum of farm land which each individual person will be allowed to keep, and the maximum of land which would be left to each person in the different parts of the Polish State, will be fixed later.

Art. V. In the neighbourhood of large towns and industrial centres the necessary land should be acquired by the State for the establishment of colonies and gardens for workers and employees. Should it be impossible to form such a reserve, the State will have the right to expropriate for this purpose all suitable land, and the land should be handed over to workmen or workers' associations.

In Art. VI it is enacted that a proprietor will only have the right to keep one farm "on which he or his family are farming" and "In principle the maximum of the land which will not be subject to expropriation according to the districts will be from 60 to 180 hectares (148 to 444 acres). The lowest figure will refer to industrial and suburban districts. In the former German and Austrian provinces, in exceptional cases, this figure can be temporarily increased to 400 hectares (988 acres)." This is a more drastic reduction than it may seem when applied to a country where estates are reckoned in millions of acres—there is at least one estate in Poland of about 18,000,000 acres.

Arts. VII and VIII deal with the taking over of Forests.

Art. IX specially reserves estates "the speciality of which is the production of seeds or which specialize in cattle or horse-breeding, or are connected with fishing, also estates closely connected with industry, the maintenance of which is absolutely necessary for the State and agriculture as such."

In Art. X it is laid down that expropriated land will be distributed "to landless peasants or to

those who do not possess enough land." The amount is not to exceed 34 acres, and is to be distributed in the following order :—

(a) Farm labourers who, owing to division of estates, will lose their situations;

(b) Owners of insufficiently large units;

(c) Soldiers of the Polish Army returning from the war;

(d) Landless peasants who have no trade, but who are fit for farm work.

Art. XI deals with the formation of model farms, experimental stations, agricultural schools, "and other indispensable institutions," and power is taken to lease state farms to "agricultural co-operatives and in exceptional cases to private persons possessing the necessary qualifications."

Art. XII deals with the valuation on "rentability" and payment which will as a rule be in cash, but "landless peasants and owners of small holdings will receive a long term credit."

The rest of the Act deals with the making of this change of the land system permanent, protection of agricultural workers, creation of a Land Administration Department, and the setting up of a Government Land Bank.

The last sentence of the Act refers to an interesting possibility: "Persons who seize land will be deprived of the right of purchasing it."

Owing to the unsettled state of the country and the war against the Bolshevists it was impossible to carry this law into effect at once, but the law of July, 1920, definitely placed many of the categories of land mentioned in the 1919 Act at the

disposal of the Land Administration Department (Central Land Office).

Art. II states that there is to be expropriated the following lands as well as other land of former Governments, etc., which is definitely taken over in any case.

(a) All the surface over 60 hectares of landed estates situated in industrial and suburban districts, as well as all surface over 400 hectares of landed estates situated in certain parts of the former Prussian Poland . . .;

(b) All the surface over 187 hectares of landed estates situated in all other parts of the Polish Republic.

Art. VII states: "Before proceeding to the expropriation the District Land Office (a branch of the Central Land Office) shall notify the owner of the estate of the proposed expropriation, allowing him a delay of thirty days during which he may voluntarily sell the estate to the Government." If an agreement is not come to then Art. X states: "The decision of the District Land Commission, which is to decide whether the estate is to be expropriated and how much land is to be left the owner . . . shall be given in an open session of the Commission." There is a right of appeal by the owner to the Central Land Commission for thirty days after decision of local commission. Compensation is to be paid according to valuation by a commission on which big and small landowners are represented by experts, and the owner or his agent has the right to be present at the valuation. Buildings and improvements are to be separately

considered. Cattle and agricultural implements will not be subject to expropriation.

In case there are debts secured on the estate, the State takes these over up to the value of the sum paid and debits them against the owner. Until the estate is fully paid for the owner will receive interest at 4 per cent. on his money, dating from the day when possession is taken.

The distribution of the estates is to be undertaken by the District Land Offices on a plan which they will have to draw up, and which will be closely scrutinized by the Central Land Office. Land "in the vicinity of towns and industrial localities" is to become the property of the towns. In the case of Warsaw this is defined as land within a radius of 15 kilometres from the centre of the town.

An interesting feature of the legislation is that the new small farms created by this land law are made indivisible in any event for a period of twenty-five years and transfer or mortgage can only take place with the permission of the Land Office.

An extremely important matter, left in some doubt in these laws, is how the "long credit" promised to agricultural labourers and poor peasants is to be provided.

Art. XXXII states that credit will be granted "Subject to authorization, guaranteed by mortgage, the law about the State Land Bank will contain further regulations on this account."

The difficulties of such a drastic plan of land reform are obvious, the possibilities of the obstruction by the landowners very considerable. But there is at least the possibility that some of the

landowners will rise above small personal considerations, and seeing the possibilities of the greatness of the new country, will help the land changes instead of hindering.

The fact that the land legislation is taking the form of peasant proprietorship instead of nationalization may be deplored by Socialists, but it is a present fact of European history that the movement of peasant ownership is going on all over Europe, and Poland has of course been strongly influenced by Russia.

It is interesting to contrast the land proposal of Poland with that of Russia, and to note that the final result aimed at and now being achieved is very much what Russia will come to by a different route, except that the land system in Poland seems likely to be more efficiently managed. The reason for the difference is very simple—the Polish land legislation keeps in mind the paramount importance of agricultural production, and places this first, and does not upset the basis of private trading and agricultural production, whereas in Russia land hunger was satisfied without regard to necessities of agricultural production, and the State endeavoured to suppress private trade altogether, with a consequent disastrous fall in productivity.

Land reform in Poland will certainly go on because there is no way of resisting it except by sheer reaction, and as the peasants have the support of the socialist town workers, the two wings of democracy are united.

When one turns from the peasants to the town workers one finds that already the industrial organization in the old Russian Poland has made

great strides and is remarkably efficient, especially when one remembers that in old Russia Trade Unionism was not allowed. Now the workers and employers in all industries are nationally organized, and their representatives meet regularly to discuss and fix wages and agree on all other matters concerning the industry. An interesting feature of the arrangements is that employers are compelled to join the employers' organization and accept the conclusions of joint meetings with workers, on penalty of boycott and the black-list, and as an earnest of their good intentions have to deposit a "caution" of some hundreds of thousands of marks, which becomes forfeit in case of non-compliance with agreements arranged.

Thus collective bargaining and national arrangements are universal and compulsory. The workers have no control over purchase of raw materials, machinery or marketing arrangements, but the workers' organizations exert strong influence in all matters concerning engagement of labour, and the tendency is for workers to be engaged through the Trade Unions except in the case of quite small factories.

How drastic the arrangements with regard to wages are will be seen from the following translation of the agreement come to in the Metal Industry in January, 1921.

TRANSLATION OF AGREEMENT

Polish Syndicate of Metal Manufacturers

The balance-sheet drawn up on December 31, 1920, showed that the provisional budget, according

to the basis of the Commission attached to the Head Statistical Bureau, in December was 47·36 per cent. higher than in November. As part of the ration of bread and perquisites was not forthcoming, the percentage amounted to 47·4 per cent. The percentage for workers who are not in receipt of perquisites amounts, for this reason, to not more than 31 per cent., in view of which the daily wage and food bonus has to be raised as from January 1st by 47·4 per cent. in comparison with the December rate fixed in accordance with an agreement made with the Metal Workers' Union on January 14, 1920, and which amounts to:—

	Minimum daily wage— 8 hours.	Food bonus for one whole day.
	Polish mks.	Polish mks.
(a) Artisans, married	184.80	133.80
" unmarried	184.80	83.60
(b) Skilled assistants, married	138.80	138.20
" " unmarried	138.80	86.80
(c) Outside workers, married	120.40	133.20
" " unmarried	120.40	86.30
(d) Women with family	97.20	129.50
" unmarried	97.20	80.90
(e) Apprentices, 1st year (from 15 to 18 years of age)	40.80	40.40
" 2nd year inclusive	64.40	40.40
" 3rd year	100.40	41.70
(f) Youths (from 15 to 18) doing the work of unskilled men	81.60	40.40

As the percentage increase changes every month, the Board of Administration considers it advisable

to leave the daily wage and food bonus (for December) without alteration and to add a lump sum under one item at the end of the balance-sheet, viz. percentage increase on the sum owing to the different workers according to the December rate.

With regard to piece workers, the same kind of calculation shall be made, viz., first of all the piece-work wages must be reckoned according to the daily wage-rate fixed for December, 1920, and which should normally give the possibility of earning 25 per cent. to 50 per cent. more than time-workers. To this must be added the food bonus for the number of days worked (according to the December rate) and from January 1, 1921, 47.4 per cent. on the daily wage and food bonus.

According to the above the daily wage and food bonus for January amounts to :—

	Daily wage.		Food bonus for one whole day.
	From	to	
(a) Artisans, married	272.4	370.0	197.2
" unmarried	272.4	370.0	123.2
(b) Skilled assistants, married	204.6	253.8	203.7
" " unmarried	204.6	253.8	127.2
(c) Outside workers, married	177.5	216.8	203.7
" " unmarried	177.5	216.8	127.2
(d) Women, with family	143.3	180.2	190.9
" unmarried	143.3	180.2	119.2
(e) Apprentices, 1st year	60.1	71.6	59.5
" 2nd year	94.9	120.1	59.5
" 3rd year	148.0	186.2	61.5
(f) Youths doing the work of unskilled men	119.7	150.2	59.5

This conference, like the similar conferences which meet in connection with the other industries, is guided in its decisions as to wages by the findings of a special statistical commission of national scope, on which workers and employers are represented, and which has as its duty the definite ascertaining of the cost of living. Wages follow cost of living practically automatically.

But this table of wages indicates not only the nature of agreements which operate in all trades, but also the very great fluctuation in the value of money which disorganizes the whole country. These fluctuations are largely due to illegitimate speculation by business houses and by banks.

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The town and industrial workers in Poland are divided into three camps, Polish Socialist Party, Communist Party and Christian Workers' Party. Trade Unions are organized on a political party basis. The most popular party with most adherents is the Polish Socialist Party, second to that comes the Christian Workers' Party, and smallest of all is the Communist Party.

Although the Trade Unions are divided among themselves on religious and political grounds, they all unite for conferences with the employers.

The Communists were not strong, even in the spring of 1920, when elections to Party Committees took place, only managing to secure a small minority of votes. But since then there has been a Bolshevik invasion with the result of weakening the Communists still further. The Communist organ-

ization, although openly supported by funds from Moscow, is not able to command any important influence in either political or Trade Union affairs, and some purely political strikes called in the spring of 1921 were conspicuous fiascos.

An interesting feature of the work of these Polish Socialists is that they see clearly the need of a local administration and local government, and are pushing legislation towards this end. Where municipal and local administrations already exist the Socialists are actively concerned in their working, and in such places as Lodz (Poland's Manchester), where they command a majority on the Municipal Council, they are following the thoroughly progressive line of caring first for children, as one expects a socialist body to do.

Labour legislation in Poland is simplified in one sense by having the generally good German model, as applied in old Prussian Poland, to follow. But Poland is not content with this and is endeavouring to get into operation a unified series of enactments for the whole country which shall bring its labour legislation considerably in advance of what previously existed. The eight hours' day for adults, the limitation of work of children and young persons, the safeguarding of pregnant women and nursing mothers already finds a place in the statute book. There are also in operation schemes of insurance against sickness and accident, including a medical service. These examples show the direction of reforms which are influenced on the one side by German practice and on the other side by changes announced in Russia by the Bolsheviki. The pro-

jects of the Ministry of Labour now in course of realization make up a comprehensive programme embodying Protection of Labour, Social Assurance, Labour Exchanges and Emigration, Social Assistance and the necessary administrative bureaus.

The two strong parties, peasant and socialist, were until the early months of 1921 in actual coalition, but in February M. Daszynski, the leader of the Socialists, withdrew from the Government owing to pressure of the left wing of the moment. But the Government remained essentially one of compromise. The Socialists supported the peasant demands in connection with the land in return for support in connection with labour and industry. And whether the compromise is expressed by means of a definite Coalition Government or in the form of the shaping of a policy does not matter very much for the future of the country. The crucial fact is that in Poland the irreconcilable class-war policy of the Bolsheviks is finding very little support. And that Russia has come to a compromise with the peasants is a circumstance which will also have its effect.

But the difficulties of Poland are not only those of political arrangement. Peasants and Socialists may agree on a policy which will keep the reactionary elements in the country out of power. But they cannot suddenly create the trained experts, engineers, doctors, geologists, agricultural experts, managers, accountants, and so on, whom they require. Just as one of Russia's greatest difficulties has been that of finding the men to do the work, so it is one of Poland's. Nor is it only a question of

University training. You can qualify an engineer in a University, but he has got to learn to deal with men outside. And some of the greatest difficulties of Russia, Poland and Central and Eastern European countries generally is to get men with the right training. What is wanted is the man who in the widest sense of the word is the scientific-minded man—the man whose mind is awake to the greatness of scientific discoveries of life and the meaning of Evolution and to the possibilities of scientific discovery, as applied to human affairs, and who adds to that a grip on himself and on the every-day facts of life that makes him a man whom others will follow and obey. These qualities are partly due to deliberate scientific education and partly due to the formation of character in certain schools of experience and certain communities.

Poland has not got enough men of this stamp, and must get them either from England, America, France, or the Northern Teutonic nations. Under existing conditions it is inevitable that a very large number should come from Germany or from those parts of Poland where Austrian and German trained men are found.

The problem of getting the right type of trained men with the right type of initiative and force of character is one of the most urgent problems of Europe. It is a question to which we shall have constantly to return, for the supply of such men conditions the possible rate of political and social progress.

The weaknesses of Poland are partly legacies of the world war, partly legacies of the Bolshevik

war, partly discontinuity of method and policy as between the three sections of the country, and partly the sheer lack of administrative and practical experience and of trained personnel just referred to. Because of these difficulties, those representatives of the old regime who, within Poland and without Poland, are enemies of the new democracy, can play a more important rôle than their numbers warrant on account of their superior education. Sabotage of the land reforms is easier for the landed interests than it would be in a more developed country, and it will be best defeated by the expressed sympathy and support of Western democracies.

The economic situation in Poland was improving in 1921. There was certainly not enough food in Poland for every one, but even then workers were better off than under the old Russian regime, and children—thanks to English and American help, both of which have been considerable — got food better than adults. At various schools, institutions and feeding centres I saw in Warsaw and its neighbourhood, the condition of the children was better than that of many in Berlin. Incidentally the organization of this feeding, as far as practical superintendence and all detail was concerned, was almost entirely in Polish hands and was well done.

But the same difficulties of world markets affect Poland as they affect the rest of the world, and the repercussion of these difficulties in Poland is more difficult to deal with there than it would

be in England, owing to the lower degree of social stability of the new country. No serious unemployment was however anticipated, as the total number of persons engaged in industry is much less than those on the land; and the social welfare and insurance provisions of the new laws—including help in unemployment—will minimize any difficulties which may arise. The health conditions of Poland were also improving, the typhus epidemic was very greatly reduced, and it seems possible that it will be stamped out in the immediate future.

Perhaps the worst organized, or most disorganized, part of Polish life at present is that of commercial affairs and banking. Polish banks are often highly unstable concerns, making money by speculation on the Exchange, and otherwise in ways which would be thought extraordinary in England or in France. An English merchant I met who had a sum of money remitted from his bank in London to a bank in Warsaw in the summer of 1920, was not able to get any payment on it until February of 1921, and was then offered payment at the rate of exchange current in the summer, or about one-third of the actual value of the draft.

Bribery, too, is not less prevalent than under the old Russian regime, and while it is sometimes quite impossible to get railway wagons for goods, even with a signed ministerial order in one's pocket, it becomes at once possible if one gives the appropriate cash bribe to the inferior officer concerned. It is clearly useless to expect that these evils will disappear quickly or suddenly,

but it is also clear that until Polish banks have a greater stability than they have now they will be a hindrance and not a help to their country. The Government is fully alive to these evils and is endeavouring to combat them. They represent a black spot in Polish life.

But so eager is Poland to go in for trading that a very considerable amount went on illicitly over the frontiers of Russia even before the signature of peace. And, according to reliable reports which I heard, not only was Russia importing through Poland such articles as boots and shoes and clothing, but also exporting. One well-authenticated story was particularly interesting, as it concerned a sugar refinery just over the borders of Bolshevik Russia, formerly the property of a man now in Poland, in which the old steward of the property was still left in charge by the Bolsheviks, and allowed to continue to manufacture and export to Poland.

The actuality of trade was vouched for by the fact that not only were Tsarist and Kerensky (Douma) Roubles quoted on the Exchange, but on the "Bourse Noire" even the Soviet Roubles. The day I noted the Exchange the Tsarist Rouble was nearly as high as the Polish Mark (then at 3,000 to the pound sterling) and the Soviet Rouble was 5.5 Polish Marks for 100 Soviet Roubles—or at the rate of 60,000 Roubles to the pound sterling.

It is to be hoped that the resumption of trade with Russia will help to reduce the number of unemployed Jews in Poland. Many Jews pre-

war were either engaged in small trade with Russia or were engaged in small factories in Poland manufacturing for use of Russia. The opening up of Russia, and the more liberal policy of the Bolsheviks towards the peasants' demand for the right to trade, will enable a great many of these Jews to be employed again.

But what the relations between Poles and Russians will be it is very difficult to prophesy. The old historical antagonism is certain to be much modified by the great changes which have occurred in both countries. In any case it seems very unlikely that there will be any spread of Russian Communism.

The Bolshevik destruction and requisitioning of property during their invasion has naturally not endeared the Communist regime to the peasant. The Bolsheviks appear to have taken away all the good horses, and it was very rare to see in Warsaw any animal which was much more than skin and bone. But it was nevertheless noticeable that the Poles are sympathetic towards the Russian people. This was shown to me once or twice when, on seeing prisoners in the streets marching to and from work, I asked if they were *Bolshevik* prisoners. I was told they were only poor Russian peasants, "decent fellows," compelled to fight by the Bolsheviks.

Many of the Poles, while deploring the results of the Bolshevik invasion, frankly say that it had its good side. It brought the people face to face with Bolshevism in action, it destroyed the illusion of a wondrous Utopian Republic in

which the workers and peasants were all in all. It showed the Polish people an army of ill-clad, often miserable-looking men who were living in no Utopia, but were only unfortunate peasants driven out to fight in the traditional Russian manner. I have heard Poles say that to them Russia has not changed as much as it appears to have changed to us in England. The Central Government has a new name and new slogans. But the essentials are the same. And although one cannot agree with this too pessimistic view, it is easy to understand that the Poles are obliged to judge by results on their immediate neighbours, and while the sweeping away of the old rotten Tsarist tyranny creates the possibility of a new and better order, the conditions in Russia up to date are worse than those in Poland and with less promise for the future.

The Russian Soviet leaders are fond of speaking of Revolutions as a school in which learning is very rapid. And the lesson the Poles are learning from Revolution, from their own state, and from that of their Russian neighbours just over the fence, is the lesson of the superior importance of constructive over destructive work, but whether they can learn how to escape from the clutches of their own reactionaries is still a matter for the future.

One of Poland's greatest advantages over Russia is in the large number of men of German race, or German training, which Poland has. It is significant that at the most dangerous period of the Bolshevik invasion, when the hand

of Trotsky was reaching out to clutch Warsaw, it was German trained divisions from the German part of Poland which turned Bolshevik victory to Bolshevik defeat.

From the Jewish population, also, Poland will get expert help in the future. The feeling against the Jews appears to be dying out very much, but cannot disappear until both Poles and Jews are educated to a much higher level. Ignorant people steeped in superstitions cannot live harmoniously side by side. But even now they are living peaceably, and at a time when the number of the Jews, their poverty and economic competition, make things harder for the Poles. It is fundamentally a question of nationality. The Jews who feel they are "Poles by nationality, but Jews by confession," will be able to get on with other Poles. The Jews who do not accept the Polish nationality—not as a form but as a reality—will not.

Polish nationality is a real and vital thing, and not the less real and vital because it may sometimes be unreasonable. The Polish workers and peasants, strongly imbued with nationality, are working hard to get their country into order; they are trying to build a real democracy.

The workers and peasants of Poland have the future of the country in their own hands if they use their present opportunity. And one thing is certain—that the workers and peasants of Poland have made up their minds that the way of democracy is the way of ordered and progressive change, and they have shown by land legislation that

they are not afraid to make these changes very great and the rate of progress very swift.

The evils that face Poland are lack of practical experience, lack of inner co-ordination in the country, lack of efficient experts and technicians and the existence of the reactionary influence of the old feudal classes and of corrupt business interests.

And the success of the democracy of Poland will depend on the possibility of hammering out a policy which unites peasant and town workers and which keeps them united. The people of Poland do not divide themselves into classes along the lines of the Marxist theory, although this does not however prevent the terminology of the Marxist theory being extensively used. But if the use of this terminology does not prevent the two wings of the democracy working together—and it will no doubt be modified in the light of experience—then Poland will contribute to the study of the organic growth of democratic nations a new series of social experiments. If the use of this terminology causes difficulties in the working together of peasants and workers this will advantage either the landowners or the business interests, or both. In any case Poland deserves the help of European democracy.

It has only one possible Foreign Policy if it wishes to maintain its present status, and that is peace. It needs to develop its industries and to work closely with both Russia and Germany, otherwise it cannot be strong. And despite an intense nationalism and the intrigue of its feudal

and business classes in international politics, it is probable that the economic necessities will prevail over the political preferences. But Poland is still hesitating between progress and reaction.

CHAPTER V

THE REPUBLIC OF TCHEKO-SLOVAKIA

THIS new State, founded on October 28, 1918, lies right across Central Europe, shaped like a banana, with its thick end embedded in the side of Germany and its tail vanishing to a point between Poland and Roumania, and it has within itself all the problems and all the possibilities of Central Europe and the Balkan States.

Tcheko-Slovakia lies like a sample section cut across the continent. The old Bohemia, the Tchek part of the country (with which Moravia and Silesia are now included), represents the level of education and social development of Germany.

The Slovak province, chiefly made up of the Carpathian mountains and their foothills stretching down to the Danube, is much more backward, as it was formerly a part of Hungary and Slovak culture was suppressed. The three Ruthenian provinces right in the tail of the country are at the level of Russian backwardness.

And out of this country, with its differences of cultural level, with its fear of Poland on the North and Hungary on the South, the statesmen of Tcheko-Slovakia are making a modern democratic nation.

One glance at the map is enough to convince anyone that the external politics of the country must be based on a policy of peaceful relation with neighbouring States. An invading army from either North or South could cut the country into two in a very short time. One of the important East and West railways runs through Teschen, and half the town is Tchecho-Slovak and half the town is Polish. And while communications from the military point of view are good from North to South, they are bad from East to West.

But it is not only the military considerations which impose peace on Tchecho-Slovakia: it is also a real statesmanship.

More than any other of the new countries does Tchecho-Slovakia give the feeling of being an ordered country under definite leadership. It is the leadership of Masaryk and Benes and the men they have gathered round them. It is a leadership founded on a nationalist and revolutionary propaganda which goes back hundreds of years, and which is cemented by the story of many great actions. Tchecho-Slovakia found herself in the war, and the great story of the fighting of her troops across Russia, from the Volga across Siberia to Vladivostock (and Masaryk was in Siberia too), has yet to be written. English troops went far enough afield in the war, but none went farther than the Tchecho-Slovak legions, who went not only across Russia and Siberia, but came back to Europe across the Pacific Ocean, across America, across the Atlantic, and across France and Switzerland again to reach their home.

And somehow they managed to bring to Prague six Siberian bears, a valuable collection of furs, and many millions of crowns' worth of copper ore. Englishmen who "won" various goods in the war will raise their hats and respectfully salute this transport achievement.

The influence of the Tchech legionaries is a big factor in politics, and because they have had experience of Soviet Russia and many of them been prisoners of the Bolsheviks, it is an anti-Bolshevik influence, and one making for real popular control.

But the biggest factor of all in politics is the Masaryk leadership. It is not only that the portrait of the President is everywhere—often accompanied with that of ex-President Wilson—but that his influence is everywhere. Masaryk is known and felt to be "above politics," to be the incarnation of the new democratic republic, and during his illness in 1921 the universal anxiety—anxiety not only for the man but for the country if it should lose him—was a very real thing.

This leadership expresses itself in many ways; in foreign politics it seems to stand behind the admirably balanced views of the Foreign Minister, M. Benes, who has done a great deal to break down barriers between the different States and get Central Europe working again—but it also seems to stand behind all government and administration. In Poland, despite its nationalist ardour and democratic conviction, there was a sense of confusion, in Tchecho-Slovakia there was a sense of order. Prague is a strikingly clean city and

a well-handled city. All capitals in Europe are overcrowded, but Prague is the only one in which I have found a special "Foreigners' Office" which rations hotel accommodation. Previously to my arrival at Prague I had wired to secure a room at an hotel, but found that none was vacant. In many capitals of Europe this is the usual prelude to a fantasia of bribery—until one finds the sum at which the hotel porter will let you in. In Prague one turns at once to the Foreigners' Office, where polite clerks, speaking all chief European languages, take particulars of your name and description from your passport and give you a card entitling you to accommodation in an hotel. My own visit to the Foreigners' Office occupied five minutes. I was charged two crowns (about $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ at current rate of exchange) and was at once given my room at the hotel.

And this rationing of hotel rooms is only one of the activities of the control of housing generally. A town housing commission rations all houses and flats in the same way. At Bratislava (Pressbourg), the capital of the Slovakian province, the rationing of hotel rooms, carried out in an office in the Carlton Hotel, was equally efficient and expeditious. One realizes too that the train service is punctual and comfortable, that meals in railway restaurants are clean and reasonably cheap in price, that people are well looking and comfortably dressed, that one is in a country in fact which is going steadily and surely about its work.

And detail investigation only confirms the general

impression. Tcheko-Slovakia is getting its house in order so rapidly because it is led by a great statesman whose creed is the simple one of using intelligence to help his country.

On the face of it the political and economic position of Tcheko-Slovakia is very complicated. It has its serious problems of national minorities. In Bohemia there are strongly-represented groups of Germans who are nationalistic Germans. And anti-German feeling is widespread. I found it in curious little ways. I asked a barber to shave me and spoke in German; he shaved me with starched politeness and did not say a word. On paying him I spoke in English and his starched attitude dissolved into curves and smiles and affability in a remarkable way. And then he prattled German to me—as he knew I was not a German—quite freely and pleasantly. In Slovakia there is a very strong Magyar group, among the Slovaks themselves there is an independent Slovak group led by the priest Glinka, and there is besides the difficulty of the Ruthenian provinces.

And apart from these national divisions there are social and economic divisions. The chief powers are those of the town workers united in various socialist parties and those of the peasants united in various predominantly peasant groups. That there is a wide diversity of opinion in politics is shown by the constitution of the parliament, and that this diversity reflects the opinion of the people is accounted for by the fact that voting at elections is compulsory. At the last parliamentary election old nuns in Slovakia, who had

never quitted their convent for many long years, went out to the polling booths to register their votes.

Parliament consists of two houses, a Senate of 150 members and a Chamber of Deputies (the important Chamber) of 300 members, of whom there were still seventeen to be elected when I was in Prague in February, 1921.

The parties were as follows:—

Tcheko-Slovak Parliament.

Chamber of Deputies (300 members).

Party.	No. of Representatives.
Tcheko-Slovak Social Democrat (Right) .	. 48
" " " (Left) .	. 22
Affiliated with this left group—	
German Social Democrats (Left) .	. 3
Magyar Social Democrats (Left) .	. 1
Tcheko-Slovak Social Democrats (Centre) .	. 4
Nationalist Socialist Party . . . . .	. 24
National Socialist Progressive Party . . . . .	. 3
German Social Democrats . . . . .	. 28
Magyar Social Democrats . . . . .	. 3
Tcheko-Slovak Agrarian Party . . . . .	. 40
" Burger Party . . . . .	. 6
" National Democratic Party . . . . .	. 19
" People's Party (Catholic) . . . . .	. 33
German Agrarian Party . . . . .	. 13
" National Party . . . . .	. 12
" People's Party (Catholic) . . . . .	. 9
" Liberal Party . . . . .	. 2
" National Socialist Party . . . . .	. 5
Magyar Christian Socialist Party (Catholic) . . . . .	. 6

The seventeen members still to be elected were those by (1) the Legionaries, (2) Teschen, (3) the Ruthenian districts, and four other districts.

It is perhaps not surprising to find that with

this complicated division of opinion ordinary party government broke down. And it broke down so completely that when the original coalition of Socialists and other parties which worked for some time was ruptured by the Socialist refusal to continue, it was only possible to appoint a Government of officials with the Socialist party in the background as the strongest influence. That was the position in April, 1921, and it was working satisfactorily.

The arrangement was worked satisfactorily because there is so much to do on the great questions which have to be decided that there is not time for ordinary party politics. And the big questions fall naturally into four classes : (1) those of foreign relations, with which one may group the Army ; (2) administrative policy ; (3) those of the position of the town workers ; (4) those of the position of the peasants and the land.

The land question is being solved in Tcheko-Slovakia, as in Poland and most states of Europe, by a policy of compulsory acquisition of the great estates and a division of land amongst peasant proprietors.

The basic principle of the land legislation is enunciated in the law of January 30, 1920, which is concerned with land division, and states:—
“ Land shall be given in the first place to those able to cultivate it.” The first law on this subject was passed in November 9, 1918, i.e. within the first fortnight of the State's independent existence. Compensation is paid to former owners except in the case of former reigning families, enemies

of the State, or those guilty of offences against the State.

But the local land commissions formed for the purpose of doing the work locally are being formed of members in the proportion in which political parties are represented locally, an arrangement which does not appear likely to work very smoothly in practice, unless a great share of authority is in fact given to impartial agricultural experts.

Questions of foreign politics are being dealt with by a wise policy of conciliation. The Army, which like that of Poland is being trained under French officers, is small but efficient and only likely to be used—as was lately threatened—against a reactionary attempt such as that of the ex-King Karl of Hungary.

Tcheko-Slovakia has a great national sympathy with Russia as the big brother of the Slav peoples, but is very unlikely to adopt Russian Bolshevism. Indeed, the more one sees of adjoining countries the more one realizes that the Russian Bolshevik politics is contrary to the general democratic movement, is indeed in one sense a reaction towards reliance on mere force and a rule of violence.

The much talked of Communist *Putsch* in Prague in November, 1920, was a disastrous fiasco. About 2,000 of the rank and file of the Communist party, including no doubt some merely disorderly elements, went out into a large square to meet constituted authority with force—but the leaders remained in a Committee Room of the Houses of Parliament, no doubt discussing

the strategical and technical aspects of the situation. The first result was the creation of a growing distrust of the Communist leaders. More recent so-called Communist outbreaks in Slovakia during the early months of 1921 have been really disguised attempts by other national groups, German and Magyar, to discredit the Tcheko-Slovak rule.

The future of the Communist party in Tcheko-Slovakia seems likely to follow German precedent and become a strong opposition party, actively criticizing any Government in power and stimulating "industrial action," and will no doubt follow the Russian lead if that makes for a more constructive programme, but it is very unlikely that it will attempt to reproduce the Russian "military communism."

With all the sympathy in the world for the Russian people, Tcheko-Slovakia sees Western European realities too clearly to follow any such disastrous lead. And President Masaryk puts the position of Western Democratic Socialists very clearly in an interview given to a Prague newspaper after the Communist fiasco in 1920.

The following translation was made for President Masaryk, and I have left its wording practically unchanged:—

"The Russian Bolsheviks are for revolution at any price, the Western Socialists, and especially the Social Democrats, are absolutely against Russian revolutionism. Therefore the Bolsheviks violently attack the Social Democrats, whom they reproach with their reformism and their inability to recognize the necessity and justified claim of an armed

revolution, and their refusal to undertake such a revolution. Lenin himself, as well as Radek, and others bestow their special attention and animosity on Kautsky. Besides Kautsky and Bernstein, almost all the eminent socialistic leaders of the whole world are now on the Bolshevik index, not only the Russians, such as Plechanov and Martov, but also Otto Bauer, Fr. Adler, Hilferding, Ledebour, and others, not to speak of Scheidemann; among the French, Longuet; among the English, the whole Labour Party and, of course, the Fabians; among the Italians, Turati; among the Americans, Hillquit—in fact nearly everybody. Lenin condemns them all as opportunists and social patriots, accusing them of having perverted Marx's teaching by making out of his revolutionism a middle class reformism. Often he reproaches with cowardice men who have risked their lives in fighting against Tsarism, who have spent years and years in prison or in Siberia. (I do not register his torrents of invective.)

“Marx and Engels were convinced, it is true, that the final revolution and collapse of capitalism would arrive very soon: in the Communist Manifesto they declared that Germany stands now in face of a revolution of the middle-class which will be followed immediately by that of the working class. Similar prophecies were pronounced later on, but they misunderstood the world's situation; the proletarian revolution was put off to a later date, until the prophets themselves abandoned this view. Revolutionism was given up more and more by Marx and by Engels. At last, in

1895, it came to this, that Engels, shortly before his death, bequeathed to the German proletariat the sum of his political wisdom, advising them, in Marx's spirit, to abstain from armed revolution as the only and surest means, and to fight instead all the more obstinately by means of the ballot-paper, in order to obtain a majority in the country and Parliament, and thus bring about a temporary dictatorship of the proletariat.

“Engels' development proceeded simultaneously with Marx. In 1883 Engels expressed himself absolutely clearly in a letter to Bernstein that the Socialists may and must await a middle-class Republic; so saying he expressed definitely the evolutionist point of view. As an introduction to the fifth edition of the Communist Manifesto, Engels wrote in 1890 the following often-quoted words: ‘In order to bring about the final victory of the sentences presented in the Manifesto, Marx relied exclusively upon the intellectual development of the working class as a necessary result of united action and discussion.’ And in his critique of the Erfurt Programme (adopted in 1891) he teaches us that in those countries where the people is fully represented and has the majority in Parliament—as in England, America, France—the old mode of Government may calmly be substituted by a new one. In this connection he declares the democratic Republic to be the specific form of the proletarian dictatorship. We see that Engels repeats exactly Marx's views, until in 1895 (in the Preface to Marx's *Class Fights in France, 1848–1850*) he gives an analysis

This is a misleading formulation of 'Die Klassenkämpfe in Frankreich,' which is of course, 'The Class Struggle in France,' a different proposition altogether.

of the revolution and declares himself for parliamentary tactics.

“In 1848, during the period of reaction following the revolution, Marx was also a revolutionary romanticist so far as he did not become Socialist ; but when he had himself worked up the scientific Socialism, he viewed the revolution otherwise than he had done in 1848 and in the first volume of his *Capital*.

“This is precisely the difference between the first and the following volumes of the *Capital*. The way the Bolsheviks refer continuously to Marx of the first period is not scientifically exact. In his political and scientific maturity, Marx thought it possible to realize peacefully a social revolution, at least in some countries, such as England, America, Holland. This is what he expressly declared in his Amsterdam speech in 1872, *nota bene* after the Paris Commune.”

With regard to its importance I quote the original text :—

“ ‘Some day the workman will have to hold political power in his hands, in order to found the new organization of labour. He must overthrow the old system of politics which uphold the old institutions, if he is not to be deprived of the realm of this world, just as the ancient Christians were, who had neglected and despised this realm. But we have not affirmed that the ways leading to this aim are the same everywhere. We know that the institutions, customs and traditions of the various countries have to be considered, and we do not deny that there are countries,

such as America, England, and, if I knew your organization better, I should perhaps add Holland, where the workmen may attain their aim in a peaceful way. But this is not the case in all countries.'

"Lenin, it is true, expects the final collapse of capitalism in the whole world, but precisely on this point he is mistaken; his whole point of view concerning the evolution of mankind and of the various nations is utopistic, his philosophy of history is erroneous. Lenin and his adherents prognostigated several times, and each time wrongly, the date of the final catastrophe in Europe—by and by, they adjourned the day of the predicted crash, but up till now they refer their partisans and themselves to the future. It is true that Lenin sometimes speaks more realistically. In his politics with the radical Communists, he uttered a warning against taking hold of political power, until the proletariat has attained a certain degree in its struggles; this degree is different in the different countries and according to the different conditions. He says: 'This degree can be rightly recognized only by thinking, experienced and expert political leaders of the proletariat of the respective countries.' And he goes on to say: 'The tactics must rely upon a sober and strictly objective deliberation considering all social classes of the respective State (applying the world's measure), of the neighbouring State, and the experiences of the revolutionary movement.'

"2. The Bolsheviks lose themselves in revolutionary romanticism and mysticism; revolution

is a revelation to them, to the majority of the Bolsheviks it is real fetish. This goes hand in hand with their lack of intellectual and moral development. Revolution therefore represents to them an aim in itself; they do not know how to work administratively, they yearn to perform great deeds, or perhaps only make great gestures and pronounce great words. This explains their continuous struggle with the counter-revolution arbitrarily defined.

“The Bolsheviks are Russians, and these, according to Lenin’s ever-repeated declaration, are unable to work as the Western nations do; in this Lenin is righter than he thinks: The Russians still stick to the old aristocratic standard, attaching no value to work and laboriousness; the Bolsheviks fully represent this lower degree of civilization overruled by violence. This marks the difference between the programme of Marx-Engels and the Bolshevistic actuality.

“The Bolsheviks’ armed revolution, viewed from the European standpoint, was unnecessary. As soon as Tsarism had come to an end, and the socialistic-liberal government had set in, as especially the Constituent Assembly, chosen by 36,000,000 electors, had a socialistic majority (of 703 deputies 630 were Socialists), the Bolshevik minority could be content with parliamentary, administrative and educational work. They could organize a parliamentary opposition. It is true that Kerensky’s Government committed mistakes, but this does not justify Lenin’s mistakes—‘a thousand mistakes’ (Radek).^x The Bolsheviks,

x Radek has since paid for his mistakes.

however, did not and do not know how to work ; they know how to force others to work, the Bolshhevik régime has introduced the slavery of the middle-class, mark you—a middle-class very arbitrarily defined—and therefore also the slavery of workmen, they know fighting, killing and dying, but they do not know working diligently, continuously, untiringly. Therefore their revolution was and is still a political one, not a social and economic revolution.

“The necessity of every revolution is finally decided upon by one or several political leaders. This final decision is not only a historical question (whether or not the right moment is chosen at the given time), but also a question of conscience, for to decide on a revolution means to decide over life and death for many people. For this final decision there is no other rule than the conviction that the revolution is really the last, the only and therefore absolutely necessary means of defending liberty and developing a better future.

“For many years before the war, I studied the problem of revolution ; I was often reproached with discussing over and over again a purely academic subject. The reproachers were mistaken, it is to-day’s problem, as the present development of circumstances clearly testifies. By the continuous discussions on revolution from the ethical point of view (the last time in my book on Russia) I have given the proof that my judgment of the world’s situation was right ; I have been expecting changes and revolutions, and I have felt that

finally I myself should have to decide and justify the necessity of a revolution. And this I have done—I have organized our national resistance and conducted our revolution.

“To decide for revolution has not been an easy thing to me, as I have said more than once. I have suffered tortures, for I had to decide, whether our revolution would be successful under the given circumstances, and whether the success would counterbalance the sacrificed lives. Add to it the anxiety of a leader, forced to avoid personal danger, that his adherents might not be deprived of advice and direction. I felt for my family, and the idea that they would be persecuted during my absence was not so much of a burden to me; I reckoned with it, and took my decision without flinching.

“A strange destiny brought me into the very centre of Bolshevistic revolution at Petrograd, Moscow, and Kiew; more than once I found myself amidst a hail of projectiles; I stayed in Moscow in the Hotel Metropole, constantly fired on. At Kiew, too, bullets and pieces of shrapnel beat against my shutters—I was and am not afraid for my own person, as I was able to convince myself during that bloody experience; but the idea that I had decided over the lives of others tortured me by day and by night, especially when I got the news of the death and martyrdom of my faithful soldiers. Thus I can speak of revolution not only as a theorist but also as a practical partaker therein.

“The life of others must be holy to man; man

must respect the personality and life of his fellow-men. That is the basis of the whole life of individuals as well as of society; it is this humanism that must determine the principles of revolution and wars. A revolution must be undertaken only to defend one's people, and not out of despotism and greedy aggression; it must sacrifice only the smallest number possible of lives. This is precisely the point in which the Russians with their primitive culture differ from us Western people; in war and in revolution they squandered lives. The Bolsheviki stand on a very low level in this respect.

"I have seen with my own eyes horrible deeds done by Bolshevist revolutionaries, showing in fact barbarian brutality, often even bestiality; but the greatest moral horror filled my soul, when I thought of the manifest superfluosity of all these deaths. Moreover, the Bolsheviki do not understand that Russia being uneducated, backward, is unripe not only for Communism but also for a scientific Socialism, and that this maturity is not to be attained by revolution. We here in Europe are riper for radical social changes, and need no armed revolution in this respect, least of all such a terrorist one as in Russia."

I have quoted the article very fully because it so admirably sums up the pros and cons of Bolshevism and of democratic Socialism by one who is not only one of the greatest, if not the greatest authority on Russia, but one who has been a diligent student of revolution for years and

has himself brought the Tchecko-Slovak revolution to a successful conclusion.

One understands the success of Tchecko-Slovakia with such a leader as Masaryk when he states: "The life of others must be holy to man, and man must respect the personality and life of his fellow-men . . . it is this humanism that must determine the principles of revolutions and wars. A revolution must be undertaken only to defend one's people, and not out of despotism and greedy aggression——"

It is this note of a broad humanism coupled with an objective study of actual problems that is the basis of Tchecko-Slovak politics.

The summary of legislation passed since the inauguration of the State shows how intense the activity has been. The most important of these laws have been perhaps those dealing with land and already referred to. Other laws have been necessary measures establishing governmental and administrative machinery. On December 10, 1918, all titles of nobility, orders and distinctions of all sorts were abolished, and on the same day a law was voted for payment of benefit to unemployed.

In December, 1918, laws were passed creating special educational institutions, and creating a fund for training of secondary teachers. The eight hours day was also made legal in the same month. During 1919 laws were passed dealing with education, including the founding of Universities at Brno, and at Bratislava respectively, with municipal administration and taxation, and

a whole series of labour laws dealing with unemployment, wages, conditions of labour, insurance against accidents, rationing of housing, employment of ex-soldiers, etc. A very important law deals with the establishment of a State enterprise for supply of electric power (July 22, 1919).

On February 29, 1920, a Constitution was adopted. All power is in the hands of the people, who elect their representatives by universal, equal, direct, and secret ballot by proportional representation. The day of election must be a Sunday. The Senate is elected in the same way by the same electorate, except that candidates must be older and electors must be 25 instead of 21, as in the case of the Chamber of Deputies.

The Constitution guarantees individual freedom, protection of minorities, freedom of the press and meetings, and freedom of conscience. It is particularly interesting to note that Civil Servants are not only not debarred from politics but if elected to the Assembly have leave granted to them automatically and can continue to draw their salary minus an amount equivalent to what they may receive as members of Parliament.

An important paragraph in the Constitution states that private educational establishments are only permitted under conditions laid down by law, and that the control of all education belongs to the State.

Looking through the summary of legislation one cannot but be struck with its vigorous character. Tchecho-Slovakia has taken some firmly planted steps on the way to Socialism. And when

one comes to study the trade union development one finds the same spirit. The Secretary of the Tchecho-Slovak Federation of Trade Unions reports that :—

“The labour organizations of Tchecho-Slovakia have taken a prominent part in the work of organization which enabled the country to win freedom and join the ranks of European democracies upon the dissolution of the old Austro-Hungarian monarchy. Even under the old regime the unions had made a successful fight for their independence and defended their right to autonomy before trade union congresses.

“The Tchecho-Slovak Federation has always observed the principles of the international labour movement, as shown by the programmes and resolutions of its conventions, and expects to work with increased vigour for the interests of the working classes now that Tchecho-Slovakia has been freed from the Austrian yoke. The progress of the Federation is well illustrated by the following data :—

Year.	Central Bodies.	Local Unions.	Members, total.	Women.
1897	68	22	7,102	502
1914	50	1,135	55,175	5,268
1916	49	735	23,932	3,239
1918	50	1,178	161,247	23,824

“At the end of June, 1919, the reports of 42 groups showed a membership of 450,896, including 98,150 women. It may therefore safely be esti-

mated that the total membership of the Federation exceeds half a million.

“Other Tchecho-Slovak labour organizations, not affiliated with the Federation, are of less importance as they usually pursue certain political or religious ends.

“The Federation includes 95,130 metal workers, 90,000 agricultural labourers, 49,654 miners, 42,262 railway employees, 35,656 helpers, 29,616 textile workers, 12,009 bricklayers and stonemasons, 14,769 woodworkers, 12,500 glassworkers, etc. The largest numbers of women are to be found amongst the agricultural labourers—50,000, textile workers—17,321, and helpers—7,996.

“The income, expenditure and assets of the central bodies are shown in the following table :—

Year.	Income. Crowns.	Expenditure. Crowns.	Assets. Crowns.
1897	125,398	110,021	85,428
1907	737,744	629,954	563,512
1912	2,344,080	2,969,296	2,039,661
1916	638,226	738,931	1,833,664
1917	898,797	779,885	1,907,246
1918	2,544,846	1,828,903	2,875,077

“The unions assist the unemployed, the sick, the strikers, and pay out other benefits in special cases. In the last five years, 1914–18, the unions paid out 2,281,506 crowns in benefits, of which 865,525 crowns went to the unemployed and 616,189 crowns represented sick benefits. The remainder was expended for the support of invalids,

demobilized soldiers, widows and orphans, and for death benefits: strikes were not frequent during the war, and the amounts paid out for strike benefits were consequently reduced. In 1912, for example, 536,716 crowns were paid out in strike benefits; in 1915 only 916 crowns. No benefits were paid in 1917, but 38,003 crowns were disbursed in 1918.

“The unions pay special attention to the education of the workers. In 1918, for example, 234,265 crowns were spent for books, trade journals, lectures, and instruction.

“In 1918 the unions were publishing thirty-four trade periodicals, including two weeklies, ten bi-weeklies and twenty-two monthlies and other periodicals. Their combined circulation was 175,360 at the end of the year. The Federation publishes an official journal, issued twice a month, for the discussion of social economics and other questions affecting the labour movement. A special journal, with a circulation of 17,000, is devoted to the interests of the working women.

“The federated unions seek to raise the economic level of the worker and to protect him in his struggle. They have succeeded in concluding many agreements, collective in their nature, which contain provisions regarding hours, wages and obtaining employment for unemployed workers. The purpose of all these agreements, whether concluded with single establishments or trade groups, is to establish basic wages which are graduated according to the length of service and the individual qualifications of the employee.

“Piece-work is also a subject of these agreements. They contain provisions regarding arbitration, while in certain establishments we endeavour to institute the practice of having a representative of the workers on the board of directors. In other agreements we limit the employment to members of the unions.

“Collective agreements were negotiated even during the war, but were not as numerous as in the pre-war days. For example, we concluded 373 collective agreements in 1913, only 119 in 1914, 21 in 1916, 66 in 1917. With the reduction in the number of agreements their scope has extended, and some have been concluded for large groups or even for the whole Republic. Thus in the sugar industry we have an agreement affecting all the workers in Bohemia and Moravia, and in the building trades we have a contract for the whole Republic. These agreements are supplemented by details concerning wages and local matters by the district organizations, for the major agreement covers the basic principles only.

“The Federation is striving to safeguard the workers through legislative enactments, and its programme includes the following demands:—

1. A unified labour legislation.
2. Extension of the jurisdiction of the special trade courts to all trades.
3. Prohibition of night work for women and children. The protection of women and children.
4. Legal approval and acceptance of collective agreements and wage committees.
5. Extension of insurance provisions relating

to old age pensions, accident, sickness, and other insurance.

“Some of these demands have already been satisfied.

“By law the eight hour day has been introduced in all industrial, commercial and agricultural establishments, both for labour and officials, and we expect the enactment of laws instituting shop committees and wage commissions.

“The Tcheko-Slovak Federation of Trade Unions is guided by the principles of International Socialism. On August 30, 1919, the convention of delegates adopted the following resolution :—

““We insist on the expropriation of privately owned means of production, as we consider such private ownership a constant menace to a healthy development of our economic life and the true cause of social inequality. For that reason we shall support all systematic efforts tending toward Socialization.

““By Socialization we do not mean merely State ownership of industrial and other establishments, but their collective ownership and operation in a form which will guarantee to the working classes equal rights in the control of production, and thus avoid the evils of bureaucratic management or one-sided fiscal policy. The industries which we consider ripe for Socialization include mines, iron works, light, heat and power works, in the first place.

““Such establishments should be declared the property of the nation, but their operation should, according to their character, be entrusted either

to the State, or the municipalities, or to special corporate bodies in which the State, the workers and the consumers should be represented. In establishments operated by the State or the municipalities the employees must be represented on the governing bodies. The expropriation of large land holdings should be carried out as soon as possible, and the industrial establishments connected with the landed estates should be expropriated at the same time. We also recommend co-operative societies as instruments of Socialization in proper cases.

“‘In all establishments not nationalized the employees shall be given a voice in the hiring and discharging of workers and in the control of working conditions; they shall be represented in the managing bodies and have a right to share in the profits. Shop committees instituted for these purposes shall be recognized by the law. They shall be made obligatory for all establishments employing at least twenty persons. The law shall guarantee a basic wage schedule as negotiated by the unions or established by committees of the parties interested.’

“This brief summary of the history of the Federation will show its general tendencies and aspirations. The war has seriously endangered the economic life of the young Republic; the number of unemployed is still large, and the work of reconstruction is difficult. The trade unions, working for an equitable social order, are naturally co-operating in the work of reconstruction while endeavouring to establish industrial

democracy through which political democracy will also be strengthened.”

Talking matters over with the very highly competent officials, Ministers, Socialist leaders and Trade Union leaders, and studying the literature of the Publicity Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, one got the impression that it was almost too good to be true. But a number of personal experiences convinced me that a real combination of idealism and practical ability has been achieved in Tchecho-Slovakia, and from these I select two or three. One of these was a lunch in the President's beautiful apartments in the castle overlooking the city of Prague. Here, in delightful parquet-floored rooms, furnished sparsely with Empire furniture and having beautiful tapestries on the walls, the love and reverence of the Tchecho-Slovak people has made a worthy home for their President.

The day I lunched at the house the President was ill in bed; his daughter, the head of the Tchecho-Slovak Red Cross, presided. The President's son, Jan Masaryk, was present, and another daughter married to a Swiss doctor; there was also an American nurse and one or two family friends. We talked of the influence of religion on a nation, of the need of a new simplicity of manners for the new States of Europe—a real republican simplicity, so to say. We talked of Education and Infant welfare work. And we spoke of the new Tchecho-Slovak Republic and what it hopes to achieve. The Masaryk family mean fine things for their country, and they are working to bring them

about. There was a quite admirable directness about the household of the President which looked at difficulties tranquilly as things to be overcome, and which neither expected too much nor—more fatal error—too little of people, and they live in the atmosphere of big ideas. One had a glimpse of a new kind of rank or grade in the new democracies, one not of wealth or position or title, but of idea. Just as there is rank in imagination as between great playwrights and the little playwrights, so there is rank among Statesmen. From where you stand what is the range of your vision?

Another impression was gained on a visit to a less advanced part of the country, certain valleys in Slovakia which I chose because they were backward and because the difficulties were sure to be very great there and therefore a measure of the Republic's efficiency in dealing with them.

In the Slovak valleys the policy of the Tchéco-Slovak Government was being carried out in a reasonable and logical way; there was certainly no Utopia existing, but there was the sure foundation of good State and social building.

Much of Slovakia is occupied by the Carpathian Mountains, and the valleys I visited were in those mountains—beautiful, rugged, with side valleys branching out and turning round forest-covered hills, or great masses of rock cliff. Up one valley—that from Rouzomberok to the village of Dubowa—there were few houses on a space of three or four miles, the road, a good military road, winding upwards between pine-covered hills, where my

guide told me it is not safe to wander for fear of bears, although as we went up in the snow the bears were all asleep. There was a little cultivation on comparatively level patches near the road—shown by manure heaps laid ready for the melting of the snow—but not room for much because of the rugged ground. At Dubowa there was a limited space of cultivable ground about the village where the mountains stood back a bit, but not a big space, and the village is small. But the houses were charming one-storied dwellings, clustered around a fork in the main road, with shining clean white walls and roofed with tile-shaped plates of wood, covering them in with overlapping scales and projecting in great eaves over the little pair of small, nearly square windows set side by side, which all the houses seemed to have. The village is said to be a very poor one, and the children in the school looked only very moderately fed, but this for a curious reason. The men of Dubowa are electric linesmen by trade; before the war they were to be found climbing up telegraph poles in all parts of Europe and mending broken wires. Now there are difficulties. The men still ply the trade, but there is no longer the same ease and facility about existence. The men themselves need more money to live while away at their work. There are postal difficulties, passport difficulties, exchange difficulties, and so a little mountain village in the Carpathians has less food to eat and its children are not so well-grown or so ruddy cheeked as they should be. (Many villages in the Carpathians resemble Dubowa

in that they are villages of men of one trade—apart, that is, from the farming.)

Dubowa is a village of peasants who wear the peasant costume in all its picturesqueness—the high felt boots, now 200 kronen a pair, the peasant-woven coarse flannel out of which the men's tight embroidered trousers are made, the embroidered clothes of the women and the short sheepskin coats with skin outside and wool within which are stained dark brown and embroidered too—and all that is very good. I hope for my own part Dubowa will keep this part of its peasant tradition, but will learn to open its windows. Nor am I sure how often the picturesque clothes are removed. The atmosphere of the schoolroom which I visited about the end of the morning session was—unhygienic. Windows were certainly not opened there, and had not been open for some little time. Part of the children's under-development and anæmia which I noted was due to lack of air. Another part was due to what appears to be widespread in Slovakia—a lack of knowledge of cookery and of the values of food. There is no over-abundance of food in the country, and some complaint of an insufficiency of flour (which is imported) in the mountain villages, but there is enough except in special districts and for special people. But good use is not made of it. Some of the valleys in Slovakia seemed to have food traditions more like those of London slums than those of the country-side. And many of the valleys—again like certain London slums—are very seriously tainted with hereditary

degeneration. There is a good deal of syphilis, feeble-mindedness is common; there are also the diseases of cretinism and of goitre—I saw the largest goitre in my experience in the neck of a woman rocking a baby in her one-roomed house—and a good deal of drunkenness. Rum is the spirit favoured, but methylated spirits is not despised; and when you come to methylated spirits you must have the taste for alcohol somewhat fully developed. These slum characteristics can only be eradicated by education, and up to the end of the Hungarian regime the Slovaks did not even get effective schooling because it was denied them in their own language.

Education has been up to the present at a low level, and I found that only 2 per cent. of Slovaks become doctors, lawyers, or take up any of those duties or professions open to the “intelligentsia.”

This deficiency in trained and scientific-minded people is, of course, a very great handicap. And unfortunately the conditions just described exist over a large part of Slovakia. I visited in detail other villages near to Cacda (pronounced Chazda) in the Trencin district and found much the same conditions prevailing. A campaign to popularize infant welfare work in the villages is being undertaken. Miss Masaryk is its most enthusiastic supporter, and the Ministry of Health and Local Authorities are doing all they can to help in the experimental stages of the work which is being conducted by the League of Red Cross Societies through the intermediary of Lady Muriel Paget's

mission. But actual conditions put many difficulties in the way. Near Cacda, which is one of the centres from which this infant welfare work is being organized, I attended a conference with the English doctor in charge of a large area and the Tchech Government doctor in charge of the district of about 14 miles square with 50,000 inhabitants and nurses, and welfare workers.

But when all possible means had been discussed, and the district raked over in detail, as it were, it was, in practice, found impossible to find anyone among the 50,000 people capable enough and honest enough to do the simple work required, that of serving on a Clinic Committee.

The doctor told stories of the peasants' ignorance which had quite a homelike sound—they were just what the most ignorant people in England do—how one mother complained that her baby did not get well although she “shook it up well” before giving it the medicine, and how another patient nearly died of poisoning after swallowing a liniment meant for rubbing and rubbing powders on a knee instead of swallowing them. There were the same stories, too, of petty frauds practised by people able to pay in order to get treatment free.

Another problem which is being tackled is that of housing; the peasant houses are not as sanitary as they are picturesque. The interiors of the peasant houses do not smell so sweet as the mountain air—and they are overcrowded. But even here a process of education has already begun and will extend under the present régime.

But the houses want improving badly. Sometimes they contain only one room and they are furnished with beds, cooking space, spinning-wheel (all peasants have this) and a pole slung across a corner from which a baby dangles in a shawl tied like a hammock and rocked perpetually by pulling on a cord, long enough to stretch across the room, if need be, so that rocking always goes on. The inside of the houses is reasonably clean but extremely fusty, although I am assured that it is much better than formerly, when it "knocked you down." Not unnaturally all kinds of colds and catarrhs are common and tuberculosis of the lungs is common also. Infant mortality is high. Chickens, pigs, dogs and other creatures all come inside. On one bed was a baby at one side and a hen sitting on its eggs at the other. And with these primitive customs goes a primitive superstition and sometimes a primitive callousness.

But the Government is tackling these problems. Good schooling, good medical care, infant welfare work, and above all improved economic conditions should do wonders.

The policy of the Government in dividing up big estates and giving agricultural education will rapidly change the peasant's economic position, although one hopes that there is no need for the peasant to be industrialized in the Western model.

I found indeed when I dipped below the surface of urbane political and social discussion and got down to the actual homes of the people that the same problems existed in Tchecho-Slovakia as exist

for us in Great Britain, and I found that the Government were fully alive to those problems and were trying to solve them in ways which I feel sure will be successful. It was a happy augury too for the future of international relations that a good deal of the preliminary work was being done with English help. It is the kind of internationalism that counts for much more than resolutions passed by meetings and congresses.

But Slovakia (with Ruthenia) was certainly the most backward part of the country. In Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, the Tchek division of the country that is, conditions were much better. The difference came out clearly when educational statistics were compared; the percentage of people over 10 returned as able to read and write in the Tchek area (taking the three divisions of the country together) was as high as 96·6 per cent., being highest in Bohemia and lowest in Silesia; it was only 72·3 in Slovakia and in Ruthenia only 40·1. More important than these educational statistics, however, is the fact that while in the Tchek districts political and trade union organization was allowed when under Austria, in Slovakia, under the Hungarians, nothing of this kind was permitted. That there is now a very vigorous trade union movement in Slovakia is a sign of great working class vitality, but it is obviously too new to have any practical experience to fall back upon and therefore takes up its position on rather theoretical grounds, and trade unionists are divided into different organizations, according not to craft or industry but political faith.

At Rouzomberok, in Slovakia, I visited the Cotton Mill and the Paper Factory, selecting them as two typical industries in a backward part of the country, and found that wages are paid partly in money and partly in kind. The Cotton Mill has a large store where the workers purchase goods at a low price—often considerably below cost. At the Paper Factory I got precise figures and found that workers were paid (men) about 1,000 to 1,200 kronen per month, working on piece work, and women about 800 to 1,000, but that in addition they were able to purchase at cheap rates flour, meat, fat, sugar, potatoes, salt, vegetables, clothes and shoes, and if there were children in the family, also milk. This meant in practice an average supplement of 330 kronen per month per worker, calculating the cost of food and other goods at Government ration prices. And in addition to this there was lodging or lodging allowance.

A large proportion of the workers are also small proprietors; some men and girls in the Paper Mill were in peasant costume, and it is usual for such small holders to be away for a week at a time to cultivate their ground. They may also do this in the yearly holiday which is provided for by the arrangements between workers and employers. In case of unemployment due to lack of materials for work all workers get four weeks' unemployment pay at full rates from the employer; if the unemployment is due to lack of sales, the subvention (at a rate not yet fixed, as there has been no unemployment locally) is paid by the State.

Many experiments are being made in industrial organizations. One factory at Krompach, in Slovakia, has been completely taken over by the workers and run satisfactorily, until lately, by distribution of the profits as wages, but apparently without creating a reserve fund, so that a fall off in sales has compelled the workers to apply to the State for a loan of half a million kronen. Another factory in Slovakia is being run on co-partnership lines. And co-operation is growing very much, and may soon extend to productive enterprises.

My visits in Slovakia confirmed what I was told in Prague; the theory was being carried out in practice. But political and economic arrangements alike are hampered by want of experience.

The problems in front of Tchecko-Slovakia are very great, but they have not only the courage and the idealism, they have also the practical capacity to solve them. To take two extremes, their foreign politics is wise and their treatment of infant welfare questions is wise. And this new country is a nation in command of its own house: what is decided in Parliament is carried out in the homes of the people: there are difficulties and dangers but the nation is meeting and solving them.

The political difficulties of Tchecko-Slovakia will be those of reconciling the interests of peasants and town workers, combating the ignorance of the people in the backward parts of the country, and attempting to reconcile extremist demands with the actual possibilities of the situation. Of this ignorance reactionary parties will take full advantage. An Irish friend I met in Slovakia was

pessimistic, as she said Slovakian politics were too much mixed up with religion in a way which reminded her fatally of Ireland. But Tcheko-Slovakia is ruled by its own Government and has established a full democracy, and it is led by men who have a clearer idea of what their country wants and what it can get than most statesmen in Europe.

The economic difficulties of Tcheko-Slovakia, which has about four-fifths of the old Austrian industry, will be those of management and administration. The State is already contemplating a big plan of Socialism: railways, oil, and electric power are already under State control, and this implies (1) a large staff of expert technicians and managers, and (2) a workable plan of labour organization. Neither technicians, experts nor Socialist organization can be created at a moment's notice, but Tcheko-Slovakia is in a position to educate and train the specialists and technicians and to create the Socialist organization with the help of her trade unions and her Socialist parties.

Tcheko-Slovakia should make a big contribution to the socialization of Europe. And the democracies of Europe can be sure that when the day comes that they ask for enlightened co-operation from other countries, Tcheko-Slovakia will be one of the first to step forward ready for a new advance.

CHAPTER VI

AUSTRIA

THE world-wide sympathy with the tragedy of Vienna has been one of the signs of a real active humanity in the world during 1919 and 1920. Through that sympathy and the help it has invoked from nearly all European States and from America many thousands of Viennese citizens, mostly children, have been saved from disease or death or from being crippled as the result of disease. Fortunately, however, in 1921 the food situation seemed to be definitely improved, although there was still need of help.

But the consideration of this distress has perhaps caused the Austrian question to be looked at out of focus, with Vienna too much in the foreground and the country districts of Austria and other towns too much out of the picture.

The town of Vienna has suffered so intensely, because it was not only a big industrial and business metropolis but because it was a great Imperial Court and the home of a very numerous Civil Service and all the population accessory to them. To suddenly reduce this city to the level of the capital of a small agricultural state was bound to cause great suffering. And yet it is very difficult

to see how this reduction of the status of Vienna could have been avoided. It was not the Entente Powers who divided up the Austro-Hungarian Empire, it was the peoples of that Empire themselves. The Hungarians wanted their freedom and the Tcheko-Slovaks wanted their freedom.

Vienna had symbolized to them the domination of an alien régime, and when they threw off that domination nothing but sheer reaction could have brought them back under the shadow of the seat of the Hapsburgs.

The condition to which Vienna was reduced in 1919 was an acute example of a similar condition which affected many cities, including other towns in Austria, as a result of the war and economic disorganization. Budapest, in Hungary, suffered very much. But Moscow and Petrograd, in Russia, suffered too, and many towns in Germany. In one sense all industrial centres suffered from a paralysis of the normal pre-war methods of production, distribution and exchange, while country districts alongside of them did not suffer to anything like the same extent and some not at all. It was, for instance, remarked in Germany that while the population of the towns showed very clear signs indeed of the shortage of food and general deprivation at the end of the war, the standard of life in many country districts had been maintained.

The starvation, misery and deprivation of the towns of Europe at the end of the war and in the two succeeding years was in fact a disease of the town system of Europe. This system largely depended for its vitality on the continuance of a method of

industrial production and distribution, part useful manufacture and part parasitism on the life of the community, a system of an extremely arbitrary and unstable character.

The amount of conscious human direction of production of food, clothing and goods of first necessity was very little indeed before the war. Distribution was, and is, left to be the affair of individuals who at best cannot see very far away from where they stand, and from the narrow circle of their own interests, and at worst can be very harmful, as for instance as food profiteers. This is not to say that a better system can be immediately invented. It is, however, to say that under these conditions a dislocation of the arbitrary unstable and largely futile arrangements on which production and trade depended before the war was bound to cause tremendous suffering because the arrangements, so called, were not capable of being immediately put right. It was also bound to cause a demand for change, for a greater degree of conscious control. And immediately after the war "control," national and international, local and general, broke out like an epidemic. And on the whole control was very useful and prevented very serious evils. But despite all steps taken to mitigate the effect of the disease of the towns, the effect on the men, women and children living in them has been very terrible.

Vienna may well stand as the type of these evils. What this disease of the towns has cost Vienna in physical deterioration, in life and health, cannot be expressed in figures, and the full results will not

be available for a generation. We shall need to wait and see what the men and women lately born will become. But we can take note of certain vital statistics and try to translate these into the human terms of physical and moral suffering.

In 1912 there were 39,800 births in Vienna, in 1919 the number had fallen to 24,347 (but the population of still-births had risen by $17\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., because of underfeeding and overwork of women), and this fall occurred the year after demobilization, when a high birth-rate was to be expected, and among a large population which included a great many Eastern European refugees of a normally very fertile stock. And the children born of these underfed and overworked mothers were themselves at once subjected to conditions of severe privation. Of a large number of school children medically examined in Vienna in 1920 no less than 53·1 per cent. were seriously affected by mal-nutrition, 32·4 per cent. considerably affected, while only 3·7 per cent. of children were not affected at all. Of infants whose mothers attended feeding centres to purchase ration food 80 per cent. were found to be suffering from rickets, many of them of a very severe form.

Examining statistics in detail one finds that conditions of life were most fatal to young children, to adolescent girls and to persons of both sexes over 40.

By the year 1919 the death-rate of females over 5 years had risen 60 per cent., in comparison with 1912, but the mortality of adolescent girls, taking this group alone, had risen no less than 85 per cent. And if we take all causes of death together it appears

that the total death rate from famine and hardship was twice as deadly as the deadliest epidemic on record in recent times.

Taking certain special diseases we find that the death rate of tuberculosis (consumption) excluding meningitis (because this figure remained fairly stationary owing to the decrease in the child population) rose by 91·9 per cent. And among children and young persons the mortality between 10 and 20 was rather more than doubled.

And in addition to the ordinary diseases afflicting all populations in greater or less degree, the conditions in Vienna created a medium favourable for the flourishing of new diseases. Among these Hunger-œdema and Bone Softening (Osteo Malacia) may be specially mentioned. Hunger-œdema is caused by a lack of foods and of a proper proportion of foods, a disease, one may say, of a body soaked in unhealth and where the tissues swell and become grossly flabby, like those in a dropsy. Bone softening is a disease also due to food deprivation, in which the very bones themselves are dissolved to keep the body going and give, snap and break under the slightest strain such as that of walking, lifting a weight, reaching over a table or performing some such ordinary customary act.

Not only does death strike men dead in these cities smitten with the blight of misery but death as it were dissolves the bodies living. For many under such conditions it must be more fortunate to die: the fact that in 1920 there were 100 more deaths a week than births in Vienna is a part of the irrefutable logic and mercy of nature.

But many children do not die and Vienna is having to legislate, according to Dr. Foramiti, the Chief Medical Officer of Austria, for a future population of 30,000 severely crippled persons out of 2,000,000 inhabitants. That, too, is part of the logic of nature, and the cripples will show it in every street and square of Vienna for many years to come.

A faint idea of what this mass of suffering means was gained by the workers of the English Committee for bringing Austrian Children to England. Many other countries, including Italy and Holland, had already engaged in this work on a much bigger scale than anything contemplated for England. But even then there were so many applicants, when the project became known, that the office of the doctor examining to discover "suitable" cases (i.e. those bad enough but not hopelessly bad) was mobbed by a surging, hysterical crowd and had to be closed, every one turned out and the examination postponed to another time, with a rigidly limited list, before any work could be done.

Mothers in Vienna are like mothers elsewhere and prefer to keep their children with them, but the conditions were judged so bad, by the people themselves, that anyone advertising that he was prepared to take children for a holiday of two, three or six months, or even a year, as the English Committee did, was literally overwhelmed with applications inside twenty-four hours. People were ready to send their children away at two or three hours' notice. I personally knew of cases where this happened.

Although I said earlier that we could take some of the statistics of Vienna and translate them into human terms of physical and moral suffering, it is an incredibly difficult translation. But looking at the figures I have quoted with the picture of Vienna in my own mind and with concrete little vignettes of workers' "houses" I have visited before my memory, it seems to me almost impossible.

I think of one "home," a small room about 10 feet long by 5 or 6 feet wide, entered through another "home" belonging to another family. The room was nearly all taken up by a bed, a large chest of drawers and one or two chairs. The mistress of the house was an old woman, bent and dirty, clothed in blouse and skirt hanging raggedly on her, as they might have hung over old tins, bottles and *débris* on a city rubbish heap. The mattress and clothing on the bed was brownish grey with dirt and speckled with little black marks and with spats of blood where vermin had been crushed. And on the bed was a child with big eyes and forehead wrinkled with pain, its arms stretched out in front of it, its belly blown up to a great size by tuberculous disease, its skinny legs drawn up to its body and its breathing rattling uneasily—between the bouts of a sobbing, whining cry—with acute wheezing and bubbling of bronchitis, probably also of a tubercular nature. How can one translate statistics that mean hundreds and thousands of cases of this type with every possible human variety of suffering more or less, with dirt more or less, with death more or less near. Can

one imagine it, not for Vienna alone, but for Budapest, for Moscow, for Petrograd, for Berlin? In Budapest I have another little vignette—in a hospital well ordered, beautifully arranged and terribly short of necessary things. And there were many cases of consumption, too.

To nurse these cases of consumption came a voluntary worker, a sturdy-looking, fresh-faced girl of 18 with long flaxen hair. But the sickness of the town system of Europe had stricken her before she came and in six weeks the hard work of the hospital had brought on acute consumption. The kind and pitiful doctor who was looking after her took me into the separate little room where the girl lay. She had recently had a hæmorrhage and had to keep very still. As we entered the room and the sister with us said some kind word, the girl—not yet used to the Angel of Death—turned her head a little on one side on the pillow—her yellow hair covered nearly all the other side—and the tears flowed slowly down her cheeks out of the closed eyelids.

Between an individual case of human suffering in Vienna, Budapest or London there is perhaps not much difference. But I know of no method of addition by which one may add “case” to “case” and not go mad with terror or horror—as indeed many have gone.

To attempt to form a sympathetically coloured conception of what has happened in Vienna and many other cities is indeed a task beyond human faculty. But one can know arithmetically as it were the result as it affects a whole population, one can

discover the causes that have brought it about and do one's own individual part to alleviate evils and prevent the operation of those causes in the future.

And the world response to the suffering of Vienna and other parts of Europe has been one of the striking signs of the existence of a world conscience. If the evil has been terrible the organized humanitarian response has been on a scale greater than any known in the world up to the present time. And the political and social response to this suffering has only begun and seems likely to go on and change the face of Europe; it is at least one of the forces behind the new democracy.

But if Vienna is a type of the evils resulting from the illness of the town-system of Europe it is fortunately an exaggerated type. Some other towns may have suffered as much, but for shorter periods; the only towns fully comparable with Vienna are probably some in Russia of which the full story has yet to be told.

And Vienna is much less important as the capital of the new little Austria than as the suffering centre of the old Hapsburg Empire. For part of the tragedy of Vienna is that not only are many people dying but many dreams, and some of these great dreams, are dying. There are about 2,000,000 people in Vienna, and the new Austria cannot support a capital with such a great number. And Vienna will not realize this. When Dr. Benes, the Tchecho-Slovak Foreign Minister, says that Vienna must be reduced to 1,000,000 inhabitants, as he did in May, 1920, this is construed as an attack on Austria. Mr. Lloyd George is also re-

proached with having expressed the same views. Unfortunately those most intimately acquainted with the problem of relief in Vienna incline to agree with them. Dr. Hilda Clark, Chief of the Friends' Relief Mission in Vienna, who has worked so unsparingly and been the means of doing so much of the relief work, writes in her account of the Mission work about the Middle Class: "There are, to begin with, too many of them—Vienna possesses the officials of a large empire and every profession is overstocked. Moreover, they are a proud class. . . ." Other authorities with whom I spoke agreed also that the population of Vienna is too big.

Those who will not accept this painful fact argue that Vienna is one of the greatest industrial and commercial cities of Europe. Others say Vienna must remain great as the European centre of Music. Others speak of making it the home of an exalted international idealism, "the spiritual capital" of Europe. But even if Vienna remains, as one hopes it will, the home of a most splendid Opera and of divine music; if it remains a great centre of ideas and a great banking centre and a great trade exchange for South-Eastern Europe; if, in addition, it develops fully again the luxury trade, for which it is famous, and the engineering and other trades which used to flourish there—even then it has not need of more than a 1,000,000 population. And as a large number of surplus people are highly trained people of the professional classes, there should be an indefinitely large number of openings for them in other parts of the New Europe. Russia

alone could absorb a large number of the technical experts, and South-Eastern Europe is badly in need of just this type of man and woman.

And we must remember, too, that the resistance of Vienna to reduction of its population, and of its standing among other cities, is not only due to dreams of a noble nature, it is also due to the sheer inertia of the established thing (everything created, even if it be but an *ad hoc* committee of a local authority, fights for its existence) and to certain dreams which are very dangerous. Chief of these is the Hapsburg dream. One cannot walk about the old Imperial quarter of the Hofburg without feeling the power of this dream. It has literally acres of solid masonry to support it. It has no doubt very many thousands of people amongst the Viennese, who fitted into some little corner of its fabric and were directly or indirectly connected with the Court, who are ready to say a good word for it. It has all the evil reactionary influences of Europe behind it, those who know that their knell has sounded and are willing to help it to re-establish itself, if only for a brief space.

To an Englishman the Hapsburg Empire, although it has only just passed away, is almost incredible. Under its degrading shadow grown men and women used to kneel in the mud to kiss the hem of their master's garment in the year 1914. The Hungarian aristocracy, preserving its worst traditions, still consider it dishonourable to work.

In the Schönbrunn Castle, another immense pile used by the Hapsburgs in the suburbs of Vienna, a castle with a garden modelled on Versailles, I

visited a proletarian school established in the former apartments of a royal grand ducal family. The rooms were gloomy and badly lighted, very inconvenient from the standpoint of service, very numerous and having only one bathroom for the tremendous suite. The proletarian school has had to put another bath in. It was not, I discovered, that the royal people did not wash, although one may wonder how much, but that they had countless slaves to fetch, to carry, to do this or to do that because life and labour were so much cheaper than plumbing and the sort of arrangements one would get in any ordinary suburban London house. One hopes that at all costs Vienna will remain staunch to its republicanism and defeat any attempt to bring back that dark and smothering dream of human arrogance and stupidity.

At present there seems little likelihood of any such reversion to mediævalism. The same great tendencies of democracy as are expressing themselves in other countries are experienced in Austria too. In the Parliament of about 180 members there are about 70 Social-Democrats, 90 Christian Socialists (Peasants) and about 20 German Nationalists; there is also Herr Ottokar Czernin, formerly Count Czernin before titles were abolished. And the representation is sharply divided: Social-Democrats, towns; Peasants, country.

The new small Austria is made up of provinces each with its own local government, and here the peasants are in the majority again. So that Austria is now governed, and is likely to continue to be governed, by peasants, with Vienna and cer-

tain industrial towns as active centres of Socialism. Wiener Neustadt, for instance, is actively Socialist and very efficient; the bourgeoisie of Vienna speak of it as Bolshevik, but it is quite definitely Social-Democrat and, indeed, Bolshevism has very little hold indeed in Austria. On the one hand the peasant influence is predominant, and on the other the Social-Democrats are men who have had so much experience in local government, Parliament and trade unions that they no longer consider problems can be solved by giving them new names.

Social Democracy in Vienna has cut itself off from the Second International while refusing to join the Third (Moscow) International. It was at Vienna that in February, 1920, the conference of the 2½ International was held. This was inspired by the Austrian leaders Bauer and Adler and is important as a rallying point of Socialist groups whose position is at present indeterminate. The new group, however, does not prevent the Austrian Party being generally democratic, despite its talk of dictatorship.

But the problem for Socialism in Austria is a very serious one. The peasants want estates all divided and a régime of peasant proprietorship. But Vienna, at least, fears the danger of starvation under these conditions. Had the peasants been willing to supply the town of Vienna during the early days of the Armistice, conditions of misery and food deprivation would have undoubtedly been less severe than they were. But the peasants were afraid of "Red Vienna" and spoke of it almost as if it was "Red Petrograd," and then, owing to

political pressure, a set of fixed prices for agricultural produce was fixed by the town which every one knew were impossible. On one occasion, for instance, the Austrian Government in Vienna advised certain relief workers to go and buy milk for their work in the Vienna hospitals illegally (*schleich-handlung*), because at the town price (which they themselves had fixed below the cost of production) it was impossible to get it.

The first revolutionary Government in Vienna was Social-Democratic, then came the coalition—which many observers say was the most efficient—later the Government was frankly Peasant, mitigated by a Socialist opposition. But the bourgeoisie of the towns hardly count. The opposition of parties and the “class conflicts” are those between peasants and town-workers.

In effect the policy actually pursued is a compromise, but as all questions in Austria are overshadowed by the need of getting certain industries fully at work, the exact direction of that compromise is not yet obvious. Probably it will be in the direction of Municipal Socialism plus Nationalization of certain big industries plus a very active movement of co-operation which is already developing.

The foreign relations and possible foreign policy of Austria do not and cannot change the fundamental economic orientation of the State. The reactionaries who wish to see the Hapsburgs restored represent the classes which the new conditions and the depreciated value of money is destroying. The official classes, the pensioners, the

rentiers and the former landowners are dying out. The Social-Democrats stand for union with Germany. A union with this great industrial country would of course be of advantage to the prospects of Socialism. Certain peasants also want union with Germany in the hope of escaping from the conditions of chronic insolvency in which Austria stands. But for the immediate future the only policy for Austria is the recognition of herself as a largely agrarian state and the playing of her part in this condition.

The policy of a Danubian Federation, on alleged economic grounds, is only a camouflage for the Hapsburg idea.

If Austria is thought of as a small Switzerland-like State with certain industries added one gets a much better idea of it than thinking of it as Vienna with certain provinces attached.

The struggle of Vienna to survive as the old time Vienna is not only a moral tragedy, it is the cause of very definite physical tragedies. One can go to the Opera and hear the most exquisite music played to a packed house, and come out of the Opera and go into one of a hundred cafés crammed to the doors. And both in the Opera and the cafés a large proportion of the people are not Viennese but are visitors, come for pleasure, from lands where their money is worth so much more than Austrian kroner that they are temporarily rich. Or they are visitors come for trade, to speculate in foreign exchanges, to buy and sell with representatives of other lands, to arrange smuggling trips into neighbouring countries—some of them, one

suspects, are something like disguised agents of the white slave traffic.

I heard Richard Strauss conduct his *Rosen Cavellier* one night at the Opera, a piece of exquisite golden tracery of sound that held us all enchanted, and as I came out and walked down the Kärtner Strasse I was accosted half a dozen times in a dozen yards. There must be many thousand women selling themselves in Vienna as often as they can find buyers. Hotel accommodation is seriously short and the problem seriously aggravated by the setting apart of certain places as "Stunden Hotels" (one hour hotels) to which men and women can resort. Cabarets flourish and here the "artistes" who drink with the visitors receive percentages on the amount of the wine bill. Champagne at thousands of kroner a bottle is drunk freely. The normal monthly salary of a well-paid black-coated worker would easily go in one night's visit to such a place. And of course it is not the Viennese, it is those who are kept by official duties, or who are feeding on Vienna's distress, who patronize these places. And all the while poverty stalks everywhere like a leper. Practically no one is paid enough; typist girls do not speak of a salary, they say they receive "two pairs of stockings a month." And nevertheless they are clothed and fed. Business men point out that they cannot live on the salaries they are supposed to earn—and nevertheless they live. Every one in Vienna is selling something; whether it be body or soul, the need which drives is the same. And while these conditions continue Austria cannot take

up her new place among the States of Europe. For many in Vienna life is delirium swaying between utter misery and intoxication of forced pleasure.

The statesmen of Europe who have looked on and been so helpless may well be proud of their work.

But Austria is not Vienna; the tide of the evil effects of the War and the Peace has already turned in the provinces, before long it will turn in Vienna too.

And once Vienna and Austria together are on the upgrade, they will be one of the strong influences making for a united, economically federated Europe.

CHAPTER VII

HUNGARY

IN every State of Europe at the present time the two wings of the democratic movement—the workers of the town and the peasants of the country—are attempting to take in hand the rebuilding of their countries. In all the States, too, the old order represented by the old governing class or classes and groups parasitic on the old order are trying to resist the democracy. In Hungary this reaction is being successful.

The revolutionary changes which swept over Europe in 1917 and 1918 found their expression in the separation of Hungary from the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the proclamation of its independence as a republic. And a peasant coming into Budapest after this proclamation put the psychology of much of the country into a phrase when he said, "It is very nice to have a republic, but where is the king of the republic?"

From the English point of view Hungary in 1914 was a mediæval state varnished over with an appearance of modernity.

Real power was in the hands of the great nobles, and the smaller landowners, and the great landlord ruled on his estate with almost unfettered

authority, having his own court of justice where his own peasants would be tried and condemned for acts offensive to his rule. It was customary to consider and to treat the peasants as an inferior species of creature with whom the only arguments which would avail were blows. "Liberal" and "educated" Hungarians of the aristocratic classes never thought of seriously turning their liberalism and education on to the affairs of their own country. The privileged class had all the dress, manners and appearance of civilized Western Europeans, but on their estates feudal homage was paid to them, their peasants were kicked and flogged like—peasants, and in the town of Budapest the industrial workers lived in some of the foulest slums which, so far as I am aware, exist in Europe.

If the agricultural workers were treated for practical purposes as serfs, the town workers were no less in bondage. Trade unions or any form of combination to alter the conditions of work or wages were forbidden by law. Purely benefit societies for burial and sickness were tolerated. No workers' political organization, except illegal secret organization, was possible, and no representative of Labour has ever up to this day been a member of the Hungarian House of Parliament.

It should not be denied that a weak, well-intentioned paternalism had created certain institutions designed for the use of the people. Budapest has two workers' lodging houses (People's Houses) which are well arranged, in some places beautifully decorated, but only providing for an insignificant handful of those needing

accommodation. Before the war also a colony of workers' Model Dwelling-houses had been built in the outskirts of Budapest, and in connection with industries various blocks of barrack dwellings had been erected to house the necessary "hands." Workers' insurance against disease and accident was also in operation and possesses a good organization and a fine treatment centre for disease, which I saw working in 1919. There are in Budapest excellent hospitals and excellent organizations for the care of a part of the children. And when one turns one's attention to science and the Universities, Budapest has a fine set of model institutions, museums, galleries and exhibitions.

But this is the varnish of paternalism. These good things are the creation of officialdom and a condescending aristocracy more concerned for the look of the thing than the reality behind it.

And what that reality is anyone choosing to visit Budapest and go behind the façade of its social, diplomatic and international hotel life can easily discover.

In 1919 I visited schools in Budapest and the houses from which some of the poorest children came. These "houses" were in blocks of dwellings made up of little flats built round a courtyard and three or four stories in height. Externally the house was not more dilapidated and dirty than many similar places in London, but inside was a condition that no English municipality could tolerate for a moment. Some of the flats were above ground and consisted of one entrance-

room and one room through this, the first room having no light or ventilation except the two doors and sometimes a stove pipe in a chimney at one side. Many flats were of only one room, and almost all were grossly overcrowded. The average number of persons to a room was about five. On the ground floor some of the "flats" were one-roomed and without light except that from the door, and without ventilation except that given by the stove pipe fitted over a tiny stove. In one such room, so dark that I could not see whether it was furnished or not, and with a floor so dirty that I do not know whether it was mud or wood, five persons were sleeping nightly. The place was like an ordinary suburban coal-cellar, and of about the same size, but without the light which might have come from the coal-shoot opening into the street. On this particular visit I was accompanied by the then Minister of Health, who informed me quite calmly that 40 per cent. of the inhabitants of Budapest lived under these conditions. And even the best circumstanced workers lived under conditions which in England would be on the verge of legal overcrowding and without the conveniences which any ordinary model dwelling in London—even the poorest—gives as a matter of course.

Nevertheless the conditions in town and country were a great improvement on those of about fifty years ago—when the first phase of the democratic movement (analogous to that which showed itself in Russia after 1905) had begun to affect Hungary. Schools, and good schools, were in opera-

tion in the towns and villages and had made so much progress that well before the war the clerical party had made a deliberate attempt to hamper their action if not to destroy them.

The flowering of this movement in the 1918 revolution and republic was, however, premature. The worst traditions of aristocracy still prevailed, the upper classes thought it as dishonourable to work as to refuse a duel (an archaic observance still quite common), and, worse still, they had a blank ignorance of social duties towards those they regarded as inferiors which was almost pathetic. Even that belated sense of responsibility which leads many English men and women of the upper classes to go in for "slumming" or settlement work or work of the Charity Organization Society was hardly in existence. Even in 1919 and 1920, when a good deal of foreign help was being given to aid the starving and suffering in Budapest, practically no personal assistance was given by any Hungarian aristocrats. They would use "influence" and give "patronage," more rarely small sums of money, but active personal help did not enter into the region of their consciousness.

The good institutions of Hungary—limited as their scope is, however—have been created by a mixture of official action and aristocratic patronage. But there does not seem to exist in Hungary more than a trace of that feeling of *noblesse oblige* which has made the English county and aristocratic family a real power in English life. The old Austro-Hungarian aristocracy has been ready

to take all privileges of its position but not to return duties. Consequently, when the 1918 revolution threw a great weight of responsibilities on their shoulders, they were unfit for that responsibility, and Count Karolyi, although he has been vilified for handing over the Government to Bela Kun, and the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," was only giving symbolic expression to the general incapacity of his class. Incidentally it may be noted that Hungarian aristocrats manage their own estates very badly.

There was also another reason for the Communist interlude. Hungary is profoundly Nationalist, and the nation hoped that a Bolshevik régime in Hungary would ensure the help of a Red Army from Russia, with the assistance of which they could get back to their old-time frontiers and break through the strangle-hold of the Peace Treaty.

When Bela Kun's Government came into power he was supported not only by the better educated workers (the slum dwellers of Budapest were largely apathetic, apparently) but by the bourgeoisie, the peasants and the educated classes. If at the beginning of his régime he had held elections for a Constituent Assembly he was practically sure of a large majority. But because to hold such an election would have been displeasing to the Soviet authorities in Russia, as a compromise with the formula of the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat" the opportunity was let slip. The failure of a Red Army to materialize, the hardships of Budapest, the economic failure of industry

and the increasing resistance of the peasants to requisitioning would have brought about the failure of the Hungarian Bolshevik *coup d'état* in any case. The Roumanian invasion, more like an old-time Highland cattle foray than a war, merely pushed the top-heavy edifice over a little earlier.

Since that time, with the negligible exception of a coalition Socialist Government, largely built up by the distinguished correspondent of an English Conservative newspaper, sheer reaction has reigned.

At the time when I visited Hungary in 1919 the Roumanians had just arrived in the capital and were in military control, and the Government was that of the Minister President Friedrich. During that visit I attended a gala performance of the Opera, the first performance since the Bolshevik revolution, and heard the Hungarian patriotic Opera *Bank Ban*. Ministers—nearly the whole Cabinet—were in their boxes, the British naval representatives were there in uniform and a crowded audience filled the stalls and the other tiers of the theatre. As Friedrich—a tall, pale, handsome man of about 35—came in, the audience rose, cheered, and sang lustily the Hungarian National Anthem, while he stood and bowed as slightly as any military dictator. It was “a great scene of spontaneous enthusiasm,” only it was spoiled for me, as the gentleman who had arranged it all and allotted the seats to “reliable” persons was in my box telling a cabinet minister’s wife how it had all been done and talking across me to do it. One was irresistibly reminded of

Mr. Anthony Hope and the *Prisoner of Zenda*. When I visited Budapest in the spring of 1921 Friedrich was under arrest, and having been once tried and acquitted by a civil court on the charge of aiding and abetting in the murder of Count Tisza, was to be brought before a court martial on the same charge but under military law.

This rather melodramatic incident gives the key to Hungarian politics. It is an affair of minorities; the great mass of the people have been given the vote, but as yet they have not been allowed to use it freely and their power is much less than that of small, powerful social groups. The last election, at which the present Parliament was elected, was conducted under such conditions of military intimidation that no Socialist candidate could even have the remotest chance of success; certain candidates were arrested and the party abstained from taking part in the fight. A few liberally-minded men were elected, but even Liberals had the greatest difficulty in putting their claims forward. And since the election the reactionary influences have been strengthened, the "White Terror," which was carried out as a reprisal against the Communists and those suspected of assisting them, was a very cruel and bloodthirsty business, a good deal worse than the Red Terror it avenged. But worse than that is the fact that, although the excesses of the White Terror have passed, the country still remained under martial law in the Spring of 1921; all newspapers were censored, and severely censored, no

free speech was allowed (the needed licence being refused, for instance, to a congress of the Social-Democratic Party but given to Anti-Semites) and, although a political amnesty had been declared, prisoners who were released were often re-arrested and many were not released at all. In effect the Parliament in the early months of 1921 was a sham. On one occasion Count Teleki, who was then Premier, having been refused a vote by the Chamber, calmly walked out, observing that in that case he would carry out his policy without a vote and the President (or Regent), Horthy, supported him. The real Government of Hungary in the Spring of 1921 was that of Admiral Horthy, the officers and ex-officers who supported him, the official classes and the big landlords. It is really a Government of desperation, the officers and officials hanging precariously on to their own positions and the big landlords hoping to stave off the land reform which Hungary, in common with surrounding countries, has been compelled to legislate for by the economic pressure of the peasants.

The composition of this block of reaction is interesting; the officers and ex-officers are of course in the same unfortunate position as so many of their colleagues in other lands. They think, quite rightly, that they who endured so much more of the hardship and suffering of war than the civilian should be in some way provided for. For the most part any small private means they had have disappeared in the economic *débâcle* of Europe, and the fluctuation of the Exchanges,

and they are left as soldier-adventurers with little but their swords to sell and few buyers. Some of these ex-officers accepted service with the Roumanians and actually took part in the invasion of their own country. A large number of the others are now in the employ of Admiral Horthy who, at the beginning of his régime, had whole battalions exclusively composed of officers. It is the Black and Tan problem in Hungarian dress, and one may meet it in nearly all the countries of Europe.

The officials are more unfortunate even than the officers. Their salaries were never high and were in 1920 and 1921, owing to the fall of the value of money, practically negligible. Judges of the Courts in Budapest, for instance, were only getting (in 1920) the equivalent of a few shillings a month. Also Hungary has shrunk to a small country, but the officials remain, and there are three times as many officials as the present Hungary needs. The position of the big landlords is not so pathetic but still simpler. Bolshevism scared them to absolute frenzy, which found its expression in the White Terror when opportunity offered. But it also bred fear, and in order to make themselves secure against a return of Bolshevism they sought to bribe the peasants by a liberal policy of land division and peasant proprietorship which was passed into law in 1920.

But universal suffrage gained by the revolution plus a peasant proprietor land programme, forced by fear of Bolshevism, has made the peasants

into a very strong power and much stronger than the landowners bargained for.

Some of the best observers in Hungary think that future politics for years to come will group round the fight between big landowners and peasants over the land. All other politics will depend on that. The question of the return of the Hapsburgs is only a move in this contest, for, to the big landlords, the Hapsburg family represents the old régime, as it does to the old military class who support the policy of return, because, without it their own orders and distinctions no longer have the same value and importance. Anti-Semitism is only a move in this contest, easily to be explained when one learns that the Church is one of the greatest landlords in Hungary and one of the most worldly.

The Catholic Church as a whole is held in very little respect and exercises very little Christian influence. The method of estimating the position of a priest in the hierarchy in common use is one of which Boccaccio might have made a good story. Individual Catholic priests are, however, notable exceptions and the standard of the Protestant clergy is much higher. And Anti-Semitism is easy to arouse because, the better educated Hungarians regarding work as dishonourable, business and the professions are largely in the hands of Jews, much land is mortgaged to Jews and their importance and influence is out of all proportion to their numbers. Add to this that many Bolshevik leaders were Jews, and the count is complete. Opinion mobilized against Jews is

opinion mobilized on the side of the Church and the Church's interest, hence the glaring Anti-Semitic placards and the sign of the double cross everywhere.

And while Admiral Horthy can continue to exercise a veiled military dictatorship, pretended to be justified as a precaution against Bolshevism, the powers of the Parliament can be reduced to insignificance, time is gained for Royalist intrigues, and any real reforms are delayed.

The Hungarian Parliament (Hungarian National Assembly) consisted in 1921 of 208 members, of whom 96 belonged to the Peasant Party, 65 to the Christian Socialists and the remainder to smaller groups, 20 of them being near to the two main groups, 6 belonging to the Friedrich Party (Christian National Party), 5 to the Liberals, 4 to the National Democrats, and 12 to Independents of various denominations. Of the 9 Ministers in office in March, 1921, 3 were not members of any party (Finance, Foreign Affairs and War), 2 were members of the Peasant Party and the remainder were Christian Socialists or nearly related to that party. Since that time there has been a change, and Count Andrássy has become Premier of the reactionary block, thus forsaking his previous Liberal record.

Even with the existing Parliament it is clear that the peasants would be the ruling factor unless the country were ruled by Horthy. Once get free meetings and a free press, with all the Liberal feeling—not to speak of Socialist feeling—of the country on the side of a forward policy, and the

old régime would have to fight much harder than it has to do at present.

Another tremendous force cleverly used on the side of reaction at present is that of Nationalism. Hungary has been reduced by the Peace Treaties to a fraction of her previous extent. And since that reduction was known she has been carrying on a propaganda, against this partition, of a very intense character.

In Budapest in 1921 the hoardings were plastered with a poster showing a man, representing the Hungarian nation, stripped to the waist and chained to a wall for flogging, his agonized face turned in appeal to the passer-by. In schools I visited a map of the present Hungary was on the walls with the territory cut off from her by the Peace Treaty marked in black. And I am informed this map is in all schools. National poets and national musicians have already composed nationalist songs recounting the wrongs of the dismembered country, and pledging all true Hungarians to fight against the mutilation of their country. And thousands of school children are now singing them. Opinion is being systematically kept at fever heat. "Give them the opportunity and every man, woman, child, dog and cat will march against the Roumanians," said a friend to me in Budapest. "Hungary is a lunatic asylum full of nationalist maniacs," said a friend to me in Vienna.

A big propaganda literature is printed in Hungarian, English, French, Italian and probably other languages and embraces every kind of appeal

which can be made. A set of about fifty picture post cards gives lurid expression to the nationalist feeling. One card shows soldiers rising from their graves: "We cannot rest in the land of Bondage"; in another the peasant is keeping off howling wolves (Hungary's neighbours); in another three assassins (Hungary's neighbours again) congregate round a man (Hungary) bound crucified to a tree at "The Armistice." Another shows the Dove of Peace stricken to death by an arrow while perched on the broken shield of Hungary. Gestures of agony, hands stretched out to claw away bits of the country of Hungary, and in many forms, with many pictures the refrain, "Nem, Nem, Soha" ("No, No, Never"). One very effective card shows the four separated pieces of Hungary removed from the centre and each piece a glowing fire. "Do you want four Alsace-Lorraines?"

This great nationalist propaganda, while it serves the great landowners very well, is in part at least justified by the folly of the Peace Treaty. And this justification quite obscures the fact that it is the big landowners who would stand to gain so enormously by a restoration of the old frontiers that their disinterestedness can be at least questioned.

Much of the propaganda on behalf of Hungary speaks of her history of a thousand years. When I put the question to a distinguished Hungarian "When did Hungary really begin?" he answered smilingly, "Perhaps in 1918." And at any rate the historical claims of the Magyars are exaggerated

while the same claims to have been the defenders of Europe against the "heathen East" are made by other adjacent countries.

And when one asks the question "What is a Magyar?" the answer is rather complicated. A Magyar stream did come to Hungary at one time and, in the opinion of the best authorities, was very freely diluted with the Turkish race *en route* and freely amalgamated with a Slavonic race previously inhabiting the country when it reached it. The aristocracy and upper classes, on the other hand, are largely Teutonic in origin. The Gypsies are an altogether alien race, regarded in Hungary much as negroes are regarded in the United States of America, but probably mixing to a limited extent with the main body of the people. The so-called Magyars, then, would be much better considered as a composite race formed in the country than an invading people. And there are considerable differences in the Magyar language from one part of the country to another.

The distinction of race, even if it is unconscious, between the Teutonic landlords and the Hungarian peasants, intensifies the economic conflict and is one of the factors in Europe pointing to the very great importance of race (as apart from nationality) which the future has got to take into consideration.

The next stage of the political struggle in Hungary will be the getting of power into the hands of Parliament and the restoration of popular liberties. Once that is done any repetition of the Hapsburg adventure of April, 1921, can be ruled out. Of the population of Hungary it can be said that

the majority are Monarchist but anti-Hapsburg, for if the great landowners wish for their restoration because they still hope for the return of the "good old times," the mass of the population are for the same reason opposed to this. Well qualified observers in Hungary estimate that 90 per cent. of the people are anti-Hapsburg, but probably all factions, even including the Social-Democrats, would acquiesce in the choice of a non-Hapsburg King. For he would bring them into closer and more friendly touch with the powers of the Entente, and is wanted for the same general reasons which appeal to Englishmen in regard to the position of a King-Emperor in the British Empire—he is the link that holds discordant elements together.

Even the reactionary elements, however, so far feel that they cannot postpone a democratic régime for Hungary, that they somewhat unwillingly predict its coming. The progressive elements are united on a common programme of restoration of civil liberties and economic reconstruction. Count Apponyi insists that Hungary is essentially democratic—but also insists on the need of the democracy being led by the aristocrats to "keep the link with the old order." It is to be noted that many of the progressive-minded people in the country are Protestants, a large number of them being Unitarians, and this imports into the political field an element of difference of religion which several authorities considered much like that in Ireland. Politics, indeed, repeats itself all over Europe.

The democratic future of Hungary is not that

of an industrial state. The industry in pre-war Hungary was largely artificial, being spoon fed with subsidies, and the total industrial population is a small proportion of the whole. The future belongs to the peasants, who are a healthy race, who are already getting education and whose education will improve. The nature of the future of the country depends on the degree of the culture of the peasant, with whom a small gentry (an important and politically Liberal class) will presumably assimilate.

What the final influence of the Communist interlude in Hungary will be no one can yet judge. But certain modifications of social structure have already occurred. One of those is the shattering of the illusion of aristocratic superiority. A second, more concrete, is an improvement in the condition of the peasants. For, much as the peasants disliked the requisitions of the Bolsheviks, the Communist Government improved their position by considerably increasing the wages which they received in kind. And no succeeding Government has dared to try and diminish this improved standard of payment. Another trace of the Communist régime is the Budapest Housing Commission for the rationing of houses and rooms, which was so useful that it continued until 1921. A third was a small matter I came on personally in the house of some friends, who were inveighing furiously against the Bolsheviks having billeted proletarian families in their delightful, and spacious, mansion and thrown open their garden to proletarian children. But I noticed that they had kept on

some of the proletarians, and their explanation was that "the poor people had nowhere to go." This was no doubt true—but it was just as true before the Communist Government thrust the fact on the attention of the comfortable classes. And perhaps this rough, if not brutal, thrusting of certain facts of primary importance on the notice of Hungary has awakened slumbering forces which, if they do not make for Communism or Socialism, will at least make for decent human conditions for those whom Hungary has, up to the present, so much neglected.

And if the future of Hungary is to be, not industrialism pure and simple, but industrialism developed under a Peasant Government and serving the needs of the country, not exploiting its resources, with the unemployed problem non-existent because of the absorption of workers in agriculture, there may be a way out of the industrial impasse unknown to Western economists and politicians.

But Hungary cannot settle down until there has been a reconsideration of her frontiers, and again this must be done, not by the Entente, but by a European Conference in which all nations are on a footing of equality. Hungarian opinion is strongly on the side of the League of Nations; she needs it to protect her national minorities in adjoining countries, and such a European Conference might lead to a peace instead of being a preparation for war.

Nevertheless the mere ratification of the Peace Treaty by England and France in 1921 will have

an effect in Hungary analogous to the lifting of the blockade and reversal of the policy of aggression against Russia.

In 1919 to be inside Hungary was to be inside a hot and overcrowded room where one stifled. No Hungarians—except such high dignitaries as emissaries to the Peace Conference—could leave the country. The Hungarians were shut off from the world and not only did not know what their own future was but did not know what had happened to the world outside. Budapest did not even know what Vienna was doing and had the wildest ideas about England and the rest of the world. On one occasion on returning to my hotel I found that a distinguished politician had been waiting an hour in my bedroom to communicate to me the news of a plot for Jewish world dominion—based on an obscure report in some small provincial paper of a debating society meeting at which a young Jew was alleged to have made some remarkably foolish statements. And it was judged so important that this distinguished politician had copied it out with his own hand.

At a private meeting at a friend's house a business man, whose life is privately given to severe scientific-religious study and who lives under a severe personal discipline of the austere Christian life, said to me with apparent calmness that "there is no solution of the Jewish Question but to kill them all." Another friend came up to me and asked in an awed voice whether it was true that Mr. H. G. Wells had headed a successful Communist Revolution in London. These things are by no

means the trifles they may seem. Men's nerves were racked to pieces. One of the chief police officers of the town visited me to get word of his daughter—in England—from whom he had not heard since 1914. And as he told me of the difficulty he had in getting food and the fact that he could not sleep, he had to turn away his head because his eyes were full of uncontrollable tears.

At the hotel at which I stayed there were Roumanian officers in the lounge carrying on an orgy, singing weird songs of plain and mountain to the tune of Gypsy music up to six o'clock in the morning. The latest I stayed up was 2 a.m., when while some officers were drinking with partly-dressed women at one side, others were betting on the prowess of two page-boys perched on piled-up tables opposite each other and challenged to drink wine out of long-necked bottles one against the other. It was as though the minds and souls of men had wrenched themselves free of all guidance of calm wisdom and the spirit and were gyrating in murder, hatred and debauchery to an appalling destruction.

Under such conditions and in such an atmosphere, with the background of the terrible misery of the people in their foodless slums, no clear judgment was possible. And although that is now nearly two years ago, the ground-swell of that agony and terror still surges in the mind of Hungary. The coming of a firm Peace which will allow the resumption of normal relations with the world will give this tremendous energy

an outlet. And an effort to bring the new boundaries of Hungary into closer accord with the rights and necessities of all the people concerned will bring healing to the wounds of a proud people whose splendid virility has hitherto only shown its worser side as it has writhed in pain.

CHAPTER VIII

ROUMANIA

ROUMANIA is one of the most primitive and least developed of European countries and presents many close parallels with pre-revolutionary Russia. And yet it is following the same line of economic and political development as other States under stress of the same pressure of democracy. The outstanding fact of its economic life is the change in the land system now being introduced, the change from big proprietorship to peasant proprietorship.

In general Roumania largely shares the economic fate of the countries allied to the Central Powers, because, although a partner of the Entente, she was in fact a beaten power, armies over-ran her territories and years of enemy occupation inflicted defeat upon her. During the time of defeat, when the Germans were in occupation of Bucarest and her capital was at Jassy, the essential revolution of thought and feeling occurred and Roumania guaranteed to her people not only universal suffrage but also division of the land. From that point she cannot recede.

The electors to her Parliament have returned a solid block of the so-called People's Party, over

200 in number, with an opposition of about 130. The Government of 1921, under General Averescu, and the People's Party supporting it, is pledged to carry out land reforms and generally looks to the peasants for support, but there are in addition 61 Peasant Party members who are in the opposition, together with 19 Socialists, 21 Transylvanian National Party (representing the country taken from Hungary), 10 representing other Ethnical minorities, 4 Independants, and only 10 Liberals. As previously to the election the Liberals (the Bratiano party) were in power, this is a sweeping change of their position.

What the precise future relation of parties will be no one can say. The Liberals have the Intelligentsia of the country in their party, doctors, engineers, administrators, and officials belonging to them, and they are in consequence very strong in propaganda.

The different political parties have their own journals, which frequently have an *Eatanswill Gazette* tone about their leaders, but which have at least one virtue, in comparison with many English papers, that they give more news of the different countries of Europe in four pages than many of ours in whole main-sails of type.

Politicians in Roumania know that the affairs of Russia, Hungary, Poland, Tcheko-Slovakia, and the rest are matters which concern her very nearly. Roumania knows by experience that she is a State of Europe, and for all her primitiveness in some ways can give many English politicians a lesson. But the political parties carry matters

further, and they have their own banks and commercial institutes. Industry and Commerce are regarded as instruments in party warfare, which is a fight not only for political but for economic power, not on a class basis but between partisans; both banks and industry are largely in the hands of the Liberals.

The reason for the defeat of the Bratiano (Liberal) Party was the reaction against them as authors of the war policy and the people responsible for bringing Roumania in, when she did join, without sufficient supplies of arms, ammunition and other necessities.

A marked feature of the Parliament is that there is no single representative of the old Conservative Party. In Roumania, as elsewhere, the democratic move forward has left the reaction to be represented by people who a few years ago were regarded as the advance guard. There is now a tendency in the opposite direction, but a modern democracy cannot go back to the political level of a pre-war State. The small Socialist representation—which includes two Communists—will not increase very greatly, as the bulk of the country is so largely peasant, and industrial workers are estimated at not more than 300,000 and perhaps less.

What the general level of the country is must be considered from three points of view: (1) that of the capital, Bucarest; (2) that of the peasantry of Old Roumania; and (3) that of the lately annexed provinces which formerly were parts of Hungary, Russia and Austria.

Bucarest, with a population of about a million persons, is unduly prominent in a traveller's impression of Roumania and gives, like many capitals, a wrong idea of the country itself. It is very insistent on being a "Latin" town; it speaks of itself and thinks of itself as "a little Paris," and the Roumanian thinks of himself as the Frenchman of the East. One of the chief virtues claimed for Bucarest is that it is so "sympatico" (sympathique), which can only be translated into English by a long paraphrase describing the warmth of the heart, or at any rate somewhere near the heart, diffused after a good dinner, in well-lighted, warm and not too responsible surrounding.

One of the advantages of this "Latin" claim at any rate is that the chief political daily papers are published in French and most of the educated classes speak French. It adds a special charm to journalism in that the opposition papers are very disdainful of the others' "patois supposed to be French."

The town itself is of the type, seen so frequently on the coast of the Mediterranean, with houses built low and walls very white. In the main streets of the town one might be in some parts of Alexandria, without the weight and obvious wealth of Alexandria, but these streets with their made-up roads, regular side-walks and lines of tramways shade off into a wide, scattered, straggling collection of little hutments which would not excite remark in an Arab village. The majority of the streets are unmade and untended, and the

people of Bucarest often apologize for their dirty condition—"the war." The poorer quarters of the town are very overcrowded, and the conditions of life of the population are not good—infant mortality reaches about 50 per cent.—but food is plentiful, and relatively cheap, and other goods are obtainable. Much of the shopping is done in a big open-air market which looks like a market in Russia. The shops themselves are numerous but small, very few are more than one room—in some ways they are like those in French provincial towns, but the general effect is rather more Eastern.

To find one's way about Bucarest is not easy for a stranger and made no more easy by a habit of dragging the street names into politics and labelling them with the names of heroes of the hour or rather of an hour or two ago. The use of street names and street statuary as a kind of political Ikons seems to be one of the characteristics of the place.

An up-to-date map of the town was not of much service to me, as the names on the map did not correspond with those in the streets and, if one gave a cab-driver the direction of the street by its official title he would scratch his head and ask a comrade what was meant. Possibly drivers, many of whom belong to a curious self-mutilating sect of Russians, have a street nomenclature of their own. In their charges they show a close resemblance to drivers in other countries.

The best-known street in Bucarest is the Calle Victoria; it is about as wide as a narrow London street and almost as crooked as a country lane.

In this street, or just near it, are found the chief cafés, the chief shops, the King's Palace, the main hotels, and the business quarter. Through this street in the afternoon passes a packed crowd of foot passengers and carriages and automobiles almost as difficult to get through as the crowd coming away from theatres at night in London. And hotels are full, restaurants are full, cafés are full, there is no appearance of dearth in Roumania and there is every appearance of a thriving prosperity. That there is enough food as a general rule and an abundance for some is certainly true; the national prosperity exists, but it is not founded on a very secure basis. For the State has been made the pawn of political parties; no stable organization of central or local government has been built up, and the newly-enfranchized millions come to the reconstructive work of democracy without the needed preparation and without the instruments ready to their hands.

One very simple matter drives this home—that of roads, railways and other communications. In England and in Western Europe generally we are so used to the hard metalled road that we accept its presence in remote little country lanes as a matter of course. Even to find an asphalted track winding between country hedgerows is so usual in some counties as to not excite remark. And visitors from cities walk on hard macadam roads, with a good camber and carefully arranged drainage, between mossy banks (made) on which grow well-trained hedges, between fields, in which there has been continuous cultivation for hundreds of

years, breathe in the sweet fresh air of the country, listen to the song of larks or blackbirds and rejoice that they are away from the sophisticated town and alone with the simplicity of nature.

In Roumania one gets nearer to that simplicity. Main roads are not made or even rolled: they are, at best, cleared tracks on the surface of the ground, at the sides of which drainage ditches have—as a great improvement—been dug. The surface of the roads is as God made it, except where a cartload or two of river gravel, small round stones, has been dumped down without rolling, binding or stamping in. At the sides of the roads are no hedges, but the lands of peasants or big estates begin. These main roads consequently vary delightfully with the seasons. Frost and snow, rain and heat, all change their character and make any expedition an adventure of discovery. It is true the direction of the road is fixed (although side tracks diverge over the land to avoid particularly bad places), but what the surface will be and what the possibilities of travel from day to day is a matter of experiment. And the experiment is often like driving over a shell-pitted road in France in a cloud of dust so thick as to be a dangerous cause of collisions.

A large part of the country of Roumania proper is flat, and this is fortunate, as the roads are merely separated parts of the natural surface. One realizes there that the sweet simplicity of England is the result of great labour and great riches, that the simplicity of English nature is not that of the wilderness but of a garden.

And the bridges are as primitive as the roads. Going out of Bucarest in any direction a number of wide streams and dongas have to be crossed. The bridges over these are few and those which do exist are, for the most part, wooden structures on which planks are laid, which rise and rattle as car or carriage passes over them. One bridge is of iron but incomplete, being joined at one end by a temporary wooden structure so feeble in character that a motor lorry had fallen through it shortly before my visit and had hung suspended by its back wheels. Any heavy traffic is impossible over these bridges, even if the roads could stand it.

Yet the railway communication is almost as bad. A guide to the whole railway service of the country occupies space on the back page of a daily paper equivalent to about one column of *The Times*. Only about fifty locomotives are running, and in March, 1921, there were only three trains a week between Hungary and Roumania, a service which had started quite recently, and was the only connecting link since the Roumanian invasion of Hungary in 1919. A difficulty of another kind exists in the Bessarabian province, where the railways are of the broad gauge Russian type, over which of course Roumanian rolling stock cannot run. The military significance of this hardly needs emphasizing.

As an example of the difficulties of travel, even on main routes, one may cite the journey from Bucarest, the capital of Roumania, to Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. In order to pick up the

connections it is necessary to leave Bucarest by the train in the afternoon for Giurgiu, the frontier town on the Danube, and there is only the one train daily. At Giurgiu one remains all night in a doubtful "Hotel" and next morning passes through customs and passport formalities in time to take the ferry-boat at 9.30 a.m. This then sails obliquely across the Danube to Roustchouck, the Bulgarian frontier town, with more customs and more passport formalities, and a wait of several hours for a train, which finally leaves at 1 p.m., arriving at Sofia the next morning. Bucarest to Giurgiu is a two hours' journey by train, add one hour for the Danube crossing and seventeen hours from Roustchouck to Sofia and we have a twenty hours' journey which occupies an afternoon, two nights and one day. And this is First Class Express passenger traffic. The goods traffic is very much slower, and months elapse before goods delivered at a Roumanian port reach their destination in the country itself.

As for the ordinary postal service, no one who can find any other means of distributing mails uses it.

These disadvantages of communications are a tremendous handicap to the new democracy. But this is only the beginning. The greatest difficulty is the lack of education and the illiteracy of the mass of the people. It is true the dominant political power is in the hands of the peasants, but they are only enfranchized since the war, they are not politically organized, they have not yet produced their own leaders, and still have memories

of serfdom. And these peasants live in primitive villages.

Villages in Roumania are very large aggregations of people, and are either spread over a considerable area or stretched for miles alongside one of the roads. The houses are almost universally one-storied shacks, sometimes shingle roofed, very often crudely and untidily thatched, sometimes roofed with flat tin plates and more rarely with tiles. Some of them are not much bigger than the little huts one sees put up on patches of allotments in England. The furniture is simple, the floor is of earth, and animals and fowls share the amenities of the dwelling.

Passing a village a little way off the road one gets the same impression of picturesque dirt and thatched disorder as in a primitive Arab dwelling-place near the coast in Palestine. The water supply is from wells, there are no made streets, houses are scattered everywhere with picturesque irregularity, and there is apparently no sanitary system of any sort.

In every village there is a large inn with a big dancing-place in front of it, and here each Sunday the peasants dance, decked out in the village costumes, which are still very largely worn and very picturesque.

As I passed through villages at night I noticed, among the trees and shacks, little fires burning up here and there by the road-side, but whether for cooking or for mere play I could not find out. Some of the peasants were very dark and some very fair; there is much Turkish blood in

the country, and perhaps some Gypsy, although the Gypsy tribes keep very separate. One passes their little wigwams now and then with little naked brown children waving their hands and shouting at the dust.

The peasant life is a vigorous one and the future of the country depends on its development, but the Bucarest oligarchy know very little about it. Nor are there any signs of more than the first beginning of local government. The important people of the village are the mayor and the schoolmaster. Even in Bucarest there is very little municipal government worth the name: education and public health, for example, are both outside the scope of local activities.

The food of the peasants is not good, probably because they have not had the opportunity of eating well in the past and have not yet acquired the habit. Cooking is bad, and the staple article of diet is a kind of dry pudding of coarsely ground maize meal, which is very cheap. The peasants call it "Marmelika." Ordinary bread is regarded as a luxury. A typical meal of a workman is Marmelika, an onion and a bit of turnip. The physique and temperament of the peasants show the effects of this diet: their bodies are slight and spare and, while capable of good work for a short time, such as that of the harvest, they are not capable of very prolonged exertion. A Roumanian doctor, who knows the villages well, informed me that very few of the peasants have fat under the skin—a deficiency which is one of the signs of chronic malnutrition. It is necessary

to qualify "Roumanian doctor" by "who knows the villages well," as many of the governing and expert classes do not.

One result of this separation of villages and capital is that there is very little political organization belonging to the old political parties which touches the villages, and the new Peasant Party is too new to have made much headway. Another instance which I came across was the example of an official in charge of a large district, for which he received a salary and the use of a motor-car, who was unable to say anything of the villages, or even indicate their correct position on a map, because he had used his car only for promenades in Bucarest and not troubled to visit his district at all. And he was characteristic and not exceptional.

It is common for the upper classes of Bucarest to describe the peasants as being "like animals." A true story is told of carters who come to the gates of a certain works at night to wait for admission at dawn, and who lie down in front of their oxen so that when the gates open and the beasts move forward, they are sure to be wakened up. Another story I heard relative to the terrible overcrowding of trains in the days shortly after the Armistice (when not only carriages and foot-boards, but buffers and tops of carriages were clustered with human beings like flies or bees in a swarm) said that "the peasants had to be beaten off the carriages with sticks like beasts."

This attitude and this behaviour to the peasant are on all fours with that of pre-war Hungary and pre-revolutionary Russia, and indicate—at

least—a deficiency of human understanding. For the Roumanian peasant is naturally intelligent and learns quickly, and although only about 10 per cent. of soldiers can read and write, large numbers of children can do so and elementary education is extending. If one wants to be sure of finding a literate person in a village it is best to call up a child.

On the whole it is probable that the Bucarest oligarchy considerably underestimate the human qualities, the intelligence and the capacity for political organization of the peasant. And the ruling class are so prone to regard politics as a game of moves in which one group or another (Bratiano, Margillomane, Take Jonescu) gets into or out of power, place and profit that the coming into existence of a new class is at present chiefly regarded as a factor of the game. But in one way the peasant gets a big share of attention.

A peasant revival with peasant costumes and peasant fêtes is the “dernier cri” of the little Paris. I attended a delightful fête in the National Theatre at Bucarest (with boxes at Covent Garden prices), where the ladies came in village costumes of the different districts of the country and danced the typical village dances. The King was present in his box, his hand tapping time to the peasant music, the British Minister and other diplomatic representatives were present (most of their ladies in “National” costume), the ladies of the Court were present, and the ladies of the great rival political parties, and many very good-looking girls.

There were even a few peasants.

This fête was certainly a very charming fancy dress ball and the national dance, the "Hora," is much more graceful than the modern dances of London or Paris. A journalist in a Roumanian paper puts it (I translate freely), "Returning from this beautiful fête at the National Theatre I still retain the feeling of simplicity and woodland art, of natural happiness; I still feel that harmony of movement, that balance of expression, that beauty of colour which enchants the eye and lights up the soul. In their white linen costumes, gleaming with brilliant embroidery, those simple and becoming costumes which distinguish each province, the Roumanians dance like the supple swaying of a garland which the music of the 'Hora' throws outwards and draws in."

And although this National fête was one of sophisticated Bucarest, it gave a true echo of the beauty in the heart of the peasant. One wonders why they have been left so long without assistance and without education, and why they are considered by so many now "like animals."

Many millions of the democracy of Europe want to ask that question of the governing class of Roumania as of other governing classes—"We know the beauty in the heart of the peasant because we know the peasant is a man like other men and beauty is part of the normal heritage of man. But did you fine and well-educated people only find this out when the peasants got votes?"

The greatest difficulty which faces the democracy in Roumania is the lack of capable and trustworthy experts, technicians, managers, directors, and

specialists. One of the reasons why there is so little industry in Roumania is the difficulty of getting people capable of doing the necessary organizing, technical and administrative work. With every desire on the part of the governing classes to keep the exploitation of Roumanian Oil in their own hands, it is in fact the foreign companies who have achieved good results and the Roumanians who have not. And let there be no thought here of a mysterious conspiracy of capitalists to exploit Roumania. As far as the Roumanian governing classes are concerned it is a serious restriction of the possibility of their exploiting Roumania to have to give rights to foreigners. They have nearly all the cards in their own hands—control of the State, power of the State to give concessions and power of the State to financially support Roumanian enterprise—but one card is lacking, namely the power to organize, technically use and properly administer a large industry. And because of this lack of the intelligentsia Roumania is bound to rely on English, American, Dutch, French, and German assistance.

A marked example of the need of this foreign expert assistance was that of the Electric Company which supplies electric power to the oil fields. During the German occupation the plant worked continuously in a very efficient way. (Incidentally it took the Germans only three months to get the oil fields working, despite the great destruction carried out by Allied order before the evacuation—this to the marvel of the Roumanians.) But since the evacuation there has been a progressive deteri-

oration. In Roumania this is put down to German sabotage, of which there is no evidence at all, as the concern was handed over in perfect running order. The real explanation of the Electric failure is the lack of men who know how to do the work.

The effect of this handicap in preventing the attempt to put in hand big reconstructive schemes is obvious—the example of Russia, in addition, has made it even more clear. And it is bound to affect every department of life and government.

The first big work of the democracy in Roumania is, as has been previously noted, the division of the land among the peasants. This is regarded in Roumania as being an act of mere justice, as witness the following extract from *L'Orient*, the Bucarest evening paper which I have heard roughly compared with *John Bull* in England. "In the agrarian problem . . . there are two questions, one moral and the other economic, which are as follows : does the expropriation of large properties constitute an injustice to the big proprietors, and will not the division of lands among the peasants have an unfavourable influence on agricultural production. As for the first question the expropriation of large properties is only an act of elementary justice towards the rural masses. On the authority of Rosetti, who has studied this question most profoundly, it is clear from the evidence that at the beginning of the 19th Century nearly all rural property, within the limits of what is now called Greater Roumania (i.e. present boundaries of the country), was in the hands of peasantry. The rulers and their following of Grecianized Boyars

(*N.B.*—The word cannot be translated Hellenized as this is too polite) succeeded by means of a whole system of tricks and of violence, and with the support of the easily corruptible Turkish Government, in plucking from the peasants little by little all their goods and reducing them to a mass of serfs like Russian Moujiks. It is with the sweat of the agricultural proletariat, brutalized by alcohol and systematically kept in the deepest ignorance, that the class of big proprietors supports that class of parasitic politicians whose latest somersaults still weigh so heavily on the country. The revolts of 1907, which cost the life of 11,000 peasants, was a first notice to the oligarchy, which continually promised expropriation but had definitely decided to put it off as long as possible. It is only under pressure of the events of 1917, the retreat in Moldavia and the Russian Revolution, that our ruling classes decided to yield to the inevitable and make a virtue of necessity.” I quote this article for the same reason that a certain eminent English Statesman used to ask one of his friends what he thought of his proposals—to get the view of the ordinary man in Roumania. In the conclusion of the article a diminution of production is anticipated, as is its solution by co-operation. A sentence about the Church is worth giving. “We must not conceal the fact that the ignorance in which the peasants were kept in the old kingdom is one of the principal obstacles to intelligent cultivation of the soil. The evil influence of the Church shows here as elsewhere. The clergy have done nothing for the education

of our people, but, completing the system of oppression of the oligarchy, have made the peasant into a being superficially religious, superstitious and lazy. Religious fête days are innumerable, and for nothing in the world will the peasant consent to do any work on such a day. We must then proceed not only to the schooling of our peasants, amongst whom there are 68 per cent. of illiterates, but to a radical remaking of their mentality, above all of those of the old kingdom of Roumania; as for those of Transylvania and the Bukowina, or even of Bessarabia, they are superior to them at all points. A definitely agricultural education, at school, and by means of specialist advisers, must complete the elementary education of the masses. Many years will be needed before this object is attained, perhaps a generation. Until then we should not look for an increased return from our agriculture."

There is evidence on all hands that the ruling classes in Roumania are now realizing the existence of the peasants—the new power. But until the beginning of 1921 they were still trying to put off the inevitable restitution of land to the peasants, the decree on the subject not being confirmed as law and being allowed to fall into abeyance. But events in Bessarabia made this course very dangerous, if not impossible.

Bessarabia is a link with Soviet Russia. Prior to its union with Roumania it had been an independent republic and had solved its land question on Bolshevik lines, by confiscation and distribution to the peasants, without the payment of compensation. The Roumanian Government later on

persuaded the Bessarabian province to pay compensation, but in March, 1920, Bessarabia enacted that no holding of property should exceed 100 hectares. The Roumanian law allowed as much as 500 hectares, but it was obviously impossible to have two standards in the same country (more especially when the one with the more popular standard was on the frontiers of Soviet Russia), and clearly impracticable to get the Bessarabian peasants to agree to allow a holding of five times the amount they had determined. The law of Roumania has consequently been brought into line with that of Bessarabia. The landlords are fighting the application of the law on the question of rate of compensation, but there are only 4,000 of them and the proposal to pay them at a high rate involves plainly a taxation of the whole country for the payment of those whose title to land is regarded as very poor. But while this financial matter is capable of adjustment, the real difficulties of land reform are administrative and technical.

One very great difficulty is that there has been no land survey. I heard, for example, of one village where there were 10,000 people and it was discovered there was only land for 5,000. But this particular difficulty is not so great as the difficulty of lack of knowledge and lack of training in administrative matters. The land problem by the beginning of 1921 had got into the condition which combined the disadvantages of large private ownership with those of peasant proprietorship without the advantage of either. Owing to difficulties about land survey, and also one imagines about

division of the land, it could not be distributed to the peasants. It had therefore been taken away from the large proprietors and handed over to what were called Committees of the Villages, but which were in fact the Mayor and Schoolmaster. These persons held the land in trust for the villages as a whole with the intention of farming it as a whole, until the division could be made. As, consequently, no one knew whether he was working on a piece of land which would become his own or some one else's, he had not the individual ownership incentive to work, and as it was certain the land was to be divided, there was not the corporate incentive. It is not extraordinary that under the circumstances the agricultural production has fallen. How far it falls is very important for the country as a whole, because the recovery of the Lei, or franc (the normal rate for which is twenty-five to the pound sterling), depends on agricultural export to allow it to return from its present level of 300 Lei to the pound. And of course, with the Lei at 300 to the pound, it is very difficult for Roumania to buy the manufactured necessities she requires, more especially for agriculture, and this creates still more difficulties for the administration.

The purely industrial problems are, "in principle," being solved in the same way as in any modern progressive country. There is projected legislation for regulation of hours, wages, conditions, etc. But in a country so badly administered it is doubtful whether any such legislation would be effective against the resistance of the employers.

How industrial organization is developing is shown

in the following extracts from a report on one of the biggest industries in Roumania. The extracts are translated from the original German of the manuscript and refer to the resumption of normal Roumanian life when the Germans evacuated the country in 1918.

The document is headed—

“Report on Roumanian Labour Conditions, especially in the Engineering Industry, since the Autumn of 1918,” and brings the consideration of the labour problem up to 1920.

“A few days after the return of the Roumanian Government, in December 1918, the workers of the biggest metal factories re-entered employment.

“Through mass demonstrations of the workers the Government was induced to compel the employers to give the workers a substantial increase of wages and an eight hour working day.

“The wages consisted of :—

	1916. For 10 hours.	Jan. 1, 1918. For 8 hours.
<i>Skilled Workers.</i>		
Minimum	Lei 7	Lei 20
Maximum	„ 7	„ 26
<i>Workers' Assistants.</i>		
Minimum	„ 4	„ 16
Maximum	„ 5	„ 19
<i>Labourers.</i>		
Minimum	„ 3	„ 13
Maximum	„ 3	„ 13
<i>Apprentices, 1st year</i>	„ 0.50	„ 4
„ 2nd „	„ 0.50	„ 6
„ 3rd „	„ 1	„ 8

“In September, 1919, the workers of the big engineering factories again handed their directors a memorandum; this was accompanied by a stoppage of work until the reply was given to them. The demands were, amongst other things, for (1) increase of wages; (2) work paid by the week and not by the hour; (3) obtaining food and clothing through the employer at reduced prices; (4) the Workers' Council to decide and carry out all disciplinary measures; (5) the Socialization of the factories if the demands were not fulfilled; (6) payment during the strike. The manufacturers could not accept these demands, as they were not purely economic. The strike continued. Meanwhile the day appointed by the Governor-General Vaitoianu for the election drew near. Knowing that in the interests of the Government the strike must end before the vote was taken, the Minister of Labour on October 22, 1919, called (without its having been requested by either party) a meeting of employers and employed. The result of this was the publication of an order which both parties had to obey. The factory owners were informed that if they did not attend the Government would feel obliged to disinterest themselves entirely in their Works. After six weeks' strike the principal conditions of the Government's compulsory solution were: (1) working day forty-eight hours a week; (2) strike days unpaid, the workers to receive advances that should be returned in small weekly payments; (3) the premium system to be given a trial in the factories, special prices being paid for special work according to the time taken; (4) the

Government pledged itself to remove all the obstacles which hinder the carrying on of work, but which are outside the control of the factories; (5) the workers to receive 30 per cent. bonus as follows :

	1916. For 10 hours.	October, 1919. For 8 hours.
<i>Skilled Workers.</i>		
Minimum	Lei 7	Lei 28
Maximum	„ 7	„ 33.80
<i>Assistant Workers.</i>		
Minimum	„ 4	„ 20.80
Maximum	„ 5	„ 24.70
<i>Labourers.</i>		
Minimum	„ 3	„ 16.90
Maximum	„ 3	„ 16.90
<i>Apprentices, 1st year</i>	„ 0.50	„ 5.20
„ 2nd „	„ 0.50	„ 7.80
„ 3rd „	„ 1	„ 10.40

“On March 9, 1920, the workers of the three engineering works handed the Factory Directors a new memorandum which contained the following principal demands :—

- (1) Rise of wages.
- (2) Skilled workers, Lei 400 per week.

Assistant workers „	320	„	„
Labourers „	250	„	„
Apprentices :			
1st year „	60	„	„
2nd „	90	„	„
3rd „	150	„	„
- (3) English 44 hour week. Holidays paid for.

(4) Support of employee by employer during sickness.

For the first 3 months—full wages,

For second 3 months—half wages.

For further period of sickness by arrangement between Workers' Council and the employer.

(5) Introduction of the Workers' Council, to which all account books must be given over for the control of industrial production.

(6) Strike days to be paid for by the employer.

“All the manufacturers, as well as the owners of small workshops, agreed in a body to reject the memorandum on every point. For strategic reasons the workers' syndicate determined to give an ultimatum of forty-eight hours to one of the factories (The Vulcan) for the acceptance of the memorandum. At the end of this time, and on hearing the answer of the manufacturers' association, the workers in the Vulcan Factory declared a strike. The Vaida Government was no longer in a position to enter into a contest, because on March 13 the administration was transferred to General Averescu.

“From statements of the Government it was apparent that they had the interest of the workers at heart and meant to support the rebuilding of industrial life by intensive work, and to meet the conflict between labour and capital by establishing a Court of Compulsory Arbitration. The parties in conflict were asked to take up their work immediately and to obey the Government, who intended to use force to make their decisions respected. A

Ministry of Labour was formed and the following points were in the programme :—

- (1) It should be organized in the interest of the rebuilding of the country.
- (2) Make regulations to safeguard the workers against the exploitation of capital.
- (3) Inaugurate a workers' insurance scheme.
- (4) Make regulations for health of workers.

“The laws respecting the above regulations that the Labour Ministry was to put before Parliament were as follows :—

- (1) Legal recognition of the Trades Union.
- (2) Law for establishing Boards of Control consisting of workers and employers.
- (3) Law for Court of Compulsory Arbitration for conflicts between capital and labour. Obligatory acceptance of the decisions of the Court of Arbitration, which would be composed of employers, workers, and a Judge as President.
- (4) Law for fixing of minimum wages.
- (5) Law for profit sharing with the workers.
- (6) Law for obligatory collective contracts.
- (7) Law for establishing special schools for workers, trades schools, workers' homes, workers' stores, and workers' credit banks.

“The present conflict in the metal industry cannot be solved by these laws, which are only now in preparation. The Government however has found a way out by a proclamation to both parties, appointing a Judge of Appeal, whose decision shall be upheld by the authority of the State. The difficulties of the conflict lie in the fact that the

workers, led by the Socialist Party, insist on an increase in wages for the forty-four hour week and on the refusal of all piece-work or premium systems and on the introduction of a Works Council, whilst the employers insist on a minimum of forty-eight hours, payment for industrial performance in the interest of the building up of the country and the concentration of discipline in the hands of the employer.

“In the year 1918 the workers’ movement began with a not altogether economic character in the national railway workshops in Moldavia. After the retreat of the German troops and after the introduction of the Roumanian State organization, the first signs of discontent were visible in private industry. The falling off of production assumed tremendous dimensions. Because of the impossibility of the previous Government supplying the workers with suitable food and of unemployment in the workshops and the continuance of war conditions, the workers showed weariness, and at the same time a passionate belief that with higher wages and the concentration of power in the hands of the workers their sufferings would cease. The battle-cry was therefore Socialization, and the demand for workers’ councils recurs again and again in the workers’ demands. That particular firms had carried on industry in the interest of labour was quickly forgotten, as was the subsidizing of workers’ families during the war, the organization of workers’ canteens and the distribution of food and fuel. The workers’ cry was ‘Socialization must come and will come.’ The problem of the Rou-

manian Government lay in the question, how could this torrent of socialistic demand for power be turned into harmless channels and how could the untiring energy of work (*arbeits energie*) be aroused in individuals.

“*April 29, 1920.* The attempt of the Labour Ministry to end the conflict between the workers and employers through a compulsory Court of Arbitration had no result. On the grounds of principle the workers refused to be bound by the decisions of a compulsory Court of Arbitration, and informed the Labour Ministry of their attitude through their meetings. In order to obtain their demands the workers in various factories agreed to institute passive resistance; orders were therefore given to do a minimum of work for the wages received, and by these means to compel the employer to increase wages in the interest of increased production. The passive resistance began at the beginning of April, at the end of April the employers found that under these conditions the working of the factories was impossible, and therefore in particular factories, as also in the factory of X.Y., all the workers were discharged.

“In consequence of the agreements between the Labour Ministry and Directors of the factory X. Y., which led to the workers agreeing to cripple production in the factory by passive resistance, and owing to the fact that the workers had introduced into the factory one of their colleagues who in accordance with the existing laws had been dismissed by the employer, the workers were notified as follows:—

- (1) Dismissal of the workers of the factory under Article 60 of the Workers Insurance Act, the dismissal holds good from April 25, 1920, at 5 o'clock in the afternoon.
- (2) Payment for the eight days as under Article 80 of the Workers Insurance Act and for the hours worked up to April 25 to be paid at 5 o'clock in the afternoon in the office of the factory,
- (3) The workers who state that they want to build up the business of the country by
 - (a) Working a week of forty-eight hours,
 - (b) Acceptance of piece work,
 - (c) Acceptance of the principle that the technical and administrative direction of the factory shall remain in the hands of the owner, will as far as possible be re-engaged in the factory.

“In the meantime the Ministry passed a law on April 23 by which the technical services of the Army, and also the specialists, handworkers and professional workers, could be employed in the fullest measure for the building up of the country. In this way the civil authorities and private enterprises were able to have assistance of military units. Through the War Ministry the civil authorities and private enterprises could have military or special military personnel put at their disposal so as to accelerate the building up of the country and hinder speculation.

“The following were particularly to receive the support of the Army :—

- (a) The authorities who deal with the construction of the trains, bridges and roads.
- (b) The authorities who carry on the Roumanian State Railways.
- (c) The shipping companies who look after transport on rivers and on the sea.
- (d) The companies that carry out transport undertakings to other countries.
- (e) The companies that undertake the re-building of villages and towns destroyed by the enemy.
- (f) Water, gas and electrical works, etc., so that in the event of a strike the strikers can be replaced by military units.

“And further, the law states that those undertakings in whose activity the State interest is bound up can be supported by military units. In case of necessity all the elements which belong to a military unit can be mobilized for industrial undertakings, whilst those elements of industrial undertakings which do not belong to the Army or who are not Roumanian subjects are subject to the laws requisition. By these measures the Government intends to make the best use of the technical ability which exists in the Army for rebuilding the country. Furthermore, through the aforementioned measures these undertakings which must be continued in the interest of the State are safeguarded against unjust strikes by the workers. The military personnel who are engaged in the aforesaid manner will have their industrial services reckoned as full time service and benefit by all technical organizations in the service of the coun-

try and have all the privileges resulting from being absolved from military service.

“The above laws for safeguarding industry have naturally called forth opposition from the Socialist Party. At the same time the Government have firmly decided with the help of these measures to use all technical elements of the country for its economic restoration.”

Thus the end of the labour conflicts has resulted in the bringing into existence of a military régime which has very obvious dangers for the stability of the country and the future of industry. But the process of reciprocal education of employers and employed is not yet over, and the result up to the present is to strengthen the worker's consciousness of the need of organization, and to interest him more fully in the details of productive work.

It is noticeable how, in this picture of the industrial conflict, there is no hint of the existence of the millions of Roumanian peasants outside Bucarest, where the metal works concerned are situated. Nor is there any hint of the existence of industry elsewhere, while the panic of the Government is to be explained, not by the dominance of industry in the country, but by its dominance in the capital, Bucarest, and the fear of a repetition of the events of Russia during the revolution in Petrograd.

The chief legislative result of the conflict has been a law for Compulsory Arbitration in disputes between Labour and Capital.

This law is probably really intended to be put into operation, as by one of its chief clauses (Section

3, Article 16) (Bursa, Bucarest, September 12, 1920) "Arbitration is compulsory, and any collective stoppage of work is forbidden in all enterprises or institutes of the State, district or commune, whatever their description, as well as in undertakings outlined below and of which the stoppage places the life and the public health of the country or the economic or social life of the country in danger.

- (a) Transport undertakings by water, road or air, including personnel loading and unloading.
- (b) Wells, distilleries of petroleum, mines of combustibles.
- (c) Gas and electricity undertakings.
- (d) Water distribution and water power.
- (e) Mills, bakeries and slaughter-houses.
- (f) Hospitals.
- (g) Removal of refuse and street cleaning.
- (h) Public health service."

That is to say, practically all employment of any kind. Article 27 provides for penalties for employers or employed who bring about a stoppage of work, and other Articles provide against sabotage, etc.

Other legislation goes in the same direction, and the attitude of mind of the governing class to labour was shown clearly in September, 1920, when a general strike was broken up by mobilizing the railway workers and arresting the leaders, five of whom, including Moscowitch, the Communist, got five years' imprisonment. In March, 1921, "political offences" (which by definition in Roumania include participation in strikes) could be tried by court martial. There is a censorship

of the Socialist and Communist papers and the English *Daily Herald* is not allowed in the country.

The small Socialist group in the Chamber is split into Right Social Democrats, Centre and Communists, and it is significant that the more industrially and socially advanced parts of the country, namely the newly annexed districts of Bukowina (formerly part of Austria) and Transylvania (formerly part of Hungary) have cut themselves off from the Bolsheviks.

The Finance of the country is best described when one notes that the Budget presented in 1921 is the first since the war. Previous to this Budget expenditure had been left to the discretion of Ministers. The present Budget, like that of many European countries, has been forced to a heavy indirect taxation and a levy on capital, particularly of that of war profiteers. Roumanians themselves point out that income tax or other direct taxation would not give a good yield owing to the low standard of truth-telling, which makes a great difference between taxation in England and Roumania. It was said quite frankly that Roumanians would not make a true return, or approximately true return, of their income, and the sources of information about incomes which exist in Western countries simply do not exist there. This question of honesty, especially financial honesty, is a very serious matter in Roumania. Bribery is rampant and the business conditions very much resemble those in Czarist Russia. One can only come to the conclusion that this is a sign of primitive civilization and general lack of development.

People who ought to be responsible simply play with money, and whether it is their own or some one else's seems not to be a matter of importance.

The more one investigates Roumanian conditions the more one is driven to consider the peasants as the only source of possible stability. While ordinary business is speculative and corrupt, the peasant co-operatives go on steadily increasing and improving. At the end of December, 1920 (the latest figures available and which only apply to old Roumania), there were 3,114 Peasant Banks with a total capital of Lei 243,363,256, being an increase of Lei 57,324,766 on the previous year, and a membership of 678,061, of whom 615,443 were agriculturists, 17,061 educational workers, 6,334 civil servants, 11,030 merchants, and the rest landowners, teachers and clergymen. During the year loans were granted to the extent of Lei 250,169,276 to Co-operative Societies and to members (668,660) for purchase of cattle and agricultural implements, foodstuffs and for land purchase, etc.

Only 6 per cent. is paid on capital borrowed, which is even lower from the Roumanian point of view than it would be in England.

One of the most interesting features of the movement is that the Co-operative Societies themselves have organized schools for instruction in co-operative work for members, and during the period 1910 to 1919, 1,700 peasants passed their final examination. In 1919 a special Academy of Co-operative Studies was founded in Bucarest and attended by 120 of the most promising graduates

of the Co-operative Schools. And these figures of co-operative effort in education are of especial importance in view of the fact that the 1921 national Budget does not include any additional expenditure on education, as compared with normal, at all.

The Co-operative Societies in Roumania will probably assume an increasingly important rôle in the future in view of the small amount of industry in the State and the very feeble development of trade unions. The small but vigorous Communist party which acts under orders from Moscow will probably increase in strength, and because of the fact of the disorganized condition of Roumania, the severely restrictive labour policy of the governing classes and the difficulties of the agrarian question, Roumania must be regarded as a particularly fertile field for Bolshevik propaganda. The possibility of a considerable Communist increase of strength in Roumania is very much added to by her recent annexations. The old kingdom of Roumania has swollen prodigiously to the new Greater Roumania. Bessarabia has already had great influence on Roumania in the land question, as already shown. And Bessarabia may bring other Soviet influences also. But the chief difficulty of the Greater Roumania will be that of administration. There have already been serious difficulties in Transylvania, where the Roumanian personnel has had to be changed at least once and where the administration is conspicuously inferior to the Hungarian. Nor is the Bukowina contented, nor is Bessarabia. If Bessarabia repented of her former

decision and declared for the Soviet form of government it is very unlikely that Roumania could prevent her adherence to Russia. And were military operations attempted there is at least the possibility that the Bulgarians would advance to the Danube and thus recover their "Ethnic frontier," and the further probability of trouble in Transylvania.

It seems that Roumania has bitten off more than she can chew.

If Roumania wishes seriously to take in hand her greater territory it will have to be by having a less local policy and looking at problems from a European standpoint. She will also have to cure the "Calle Victoria Fever" from which so many of the Intelligentsia suffer, the disease which brings engineers away from the oil-fields—where they should be at work—to move in the society of Bucarest and *flâner* in the Calle Victoria, which in the world of the little Paris is more important than visiting and studying the country. And Roumania also will need to call on all the experts she can, Austrian, German, French, English, Dutch, to help her, for with her unaided resources she has very little chance of maintaining the security of her people in the present boundaries of her dominion.

CHAPTER IX

BULGARIA

TO cross the Danube from Roumania to Bulgaria is not only to cross a frontier and to change a language, but to enter a new mental atmosphere. Roustchouk, the frontier town on the river in Bulgaria, is not only different from Giurgiu in Roumania because the signs are written in Russian characters instead of Latin, but because if the Roumanians think of themselves as French, Bulgarians might well think of themselves as Scotch. As a matter of fact they think of themselves as Bulgarians, and their national feeling is a rugged reality you can count on as you can upon their Balkan Mountains.

Journeying across the country one sees the villages, well ordered, clean, and with houses predominantly tiled—not thatched or tinplated. There are made roads, too. In the fields many people are working, and there are the signs of much work lately done. In Sofia, despite its mosques, relics of the Turkish régime, and huge Public Baths in a building like a palace for size, one has the sense of being in a northern town. It is not beautiful, perhaps, although the mountains near are austere fine, the architecture is utilitarian rather than

ornate, and it is small, but it is hard and solid like the rocks. How small Sofia is I did not realize until I stood at a window of my hotel and looked easily all around the outskirts; its population (December, 1920) is only 154,415. In the town there are theatres, including a good opera, cinemas, and even a cabaret, but as a traveller from Turkey told me, it is not like the cabarets in Constantinople, for "you are not allowed to invite the artistes to come and sit with you." Sofia, in fact, is a rather sober and moral place, where even its own mild dissipations are regarded with none too favourable an eye. It is not "simpatico." And the Bulgarians are honest. I heard a good deal about the reparations demanded from Bulgaria, and although of course Bulgaria has been much impoverished by the war, I heard no suggestion in private conversation that the Bulgarians would not or could not pay, nor any complaint, but merely the sober statement that the amount demanded would mean a lot of hard work.

And while England has talked of profiteers and passed Acts of Parliament and repealed them, Bulgaria has imprisoned war profiteers, and they are now serving their sentences. As an example of the sentences given by Bulgarian courts martial I give that of a merchant of Plovdiv found guilty of being concerned in bringing about the national calamity of the war and sentenced to three years' imprisonment, and over £13,000,000 of fine (calculated at present rates of exchange).

Bulgaria, too, is in earnest about "war criminals," but in a way which might be very uncomfortable

if applied in Western Europe. The present (May, 1921) Premier, M. Stamboulisky, spoke out very vigorously against the war, and was sent to prison while it continued. Now the tide has turned and the Cabinet which entered into the war is being prosecuted for this action, which is considered to have been a crime against the country. The arrangements for the trial were being discussed with thoroughness when I was in Sofia in March, 1921. Each group or party in the Parliament had time given to it in which its opinion on the matter had to be expressed by its appointed spokesmen. I attended a part of the debate in the Parliament house—which looks rather like a big lecture theatre ornamented with pictures of the Czar Liberator and the Czar of Bulgaria—and hard hammer-blows were being given; there was some uproar at one point, but it was deadly earnest. It is said that the Bulgarians are cruel in war—perhaps they take that in deadly earnest too.

* * * * *

The change which has come over Bulgaria since the war, while less striking than the change in Russia, is one likely to have an effect in Europe of a very far-reaching character. Russia has proclaimed a Red Communism, that of the town workers, Bulgaria proclaims a "Green Communism," that of the peasants, and is aspiring to lead the peasant masses and form a Green International just as Russia is attempting a Red International. If one compares the total area and population of the Russian State with Bulgaria any equivalence in political movements originating

from them seems difficult to realize. But if one compares Moscow, Petrograd and the few large towns where Bolshevism originated with the Bulgarian peasant population, then the two numbers are more equal; but if one compares the total peasant population of Europe with the total industrial, then it is the peasants who have the numerical advantage.

But the power of political movements is not determined in any such simple mathematical ways, but depends on the economic and political rightness of their theoretical position, and the economic and political rightness of their programmes, and whether men and women can get the satisfaction their conditions demand from those movements.

The new movement of Green Communism, then, deserves attentive study, the more so as it is being not only preached but acted upon by a Government of a country naturally sober, hard-working and realist.

Bulgaria in March, 1921, was the typical peasant Government of Europe; its Premier, M. Stamboullisky, is a peasant and the members of the Cabinet are peasants.

Bulgaria is a country peculiarly adapted to such a Government. No aristocracy exists and no titles exist except that of the young King Boris, who if he were not King would be elected President, and who is the most democratic of sovereigns. This absence of a hereditary governing class (a foreign diplomat said to me, "There are only eighty families one can visit") is a great advantage and great source of strength to the country, and as

there is very little industry, the hereditary is not replaced by an industrial ruling group.

One clear advantage is seen in the Army, where the officers rising from the masses by merit are good soldiers in comparison with the officers of Roumania and of pre-revolutionary Russia, who came from an upper class and were out of touch with their men and with their profession.

The Bulgarian Parliament consists of 225 Deputies, of whom 107 are Peasant Party, 55 Communists (Moscow International), 10 Social-Democrats (the so-called broad Socialists), 8 Radicals, who are the left of the Bourgeois parties, and 63 others divided up as Democrats 30 (a Bourgeois party), Nationalist Progressive 30, Conservatives and Liberals 3, the remnants of the Radoslavoff party who entered into the war.

M. Stamboulisky himself is a man of 44 years of age, and a huge man, "as big as a bull" people say of him. The son of a peasant, he studied Agriculture at Halle University, and subsequently earned his living as a schoolmaster. The rest of the Cabinet are men of a similar type.

In Russia Lenin said that the dictatorship of the Proletariat meant the Government of Russia by the towns; the opponents of M. Stamboulisky in Bulgaria say that his Green Communism with its "dictatorship of the peasants" means the despoiling of the towns by the country. An opponent of the old régime put it that the peasants were taking from the towns because they had the power while keeping private property for themselves, and that they would damage industry.

And although industry is not very important—one estimate put to me by a former Minister was of 20,000 industrial workers exclusive of those on the railways—it is necessary for Bulgaria to have some industry of her own. A recent census, December 31, 1920, gives the number of “industrial establishments” as 1,999, and the number of workers as 35,102. But while the theory of Red Communism involves a dictatorship and denies democracy, the Green Communism definitely accepts democracy, although the Bulgarian Government finds it necessary to keep the country under a kind of martial law. Even, however, under these circumstances there is more freedom than in Hungary or Soviet Russia. A press censorship was in force, meetings were under control, and although speeches in Parliament are free and vigorous, they are not allowed to be printed if they criticize the Government too much. But the measure of freedom can be estimated from the freedom allowed to the Red Communists, who are allowed to hold public demonstrations, publish literature, take part in elections, and in general lead an active existence. No comparable freedom for opposition parties exists in either Hungary or Russia.

The composition of the Red Communist party is a typical example of the effect of post-war economic conditions. The fall in the value of the leva, normally about the same as the French franc, from 25 to the pound sterling to over 300, has naturally had disastrous consequences for those who occupy official positions and whose income is fixed. And these people, such as teachers,

officials, ex-officers, and ex-N.C.O.'s, have largely become Communists. This black-coated proletarian fraction is so much more important than the manual working proletariat that it gives an altogether special and idealistic character to Bulgarian Bolshevism.

Russian Bolshevism began by being against the Intelligentsia, whereas Bulgarian Bolshevism largely consists of Intelligentsia. To these people must also be added the large number who have suffered from the war, "desperate people" as a leading official put it. Another interesting point about the Red Communists is that, although they are professedly internationalist, yet they are as anxious as any other party in the State to get back to their "Ethnic frontiers," and, while hoping for a general European Soviet Republic in theory, hope that in practice this will not come about until the national aims of Bulgaria are satisfied.

As Red Communism spreads it is bound, like other economic and political theories, to become diluted, and the Soviet theory is so nebulous that it may well give scope for national sentiment just as in practice it is not found incompatible (in Poland) for certain Red Communists to be Anti-Semitic. It is not, however, anticipated that the Bulgarian Bolsheviks will attempt to put their theory of the capture of power by force into practice unless the Russians should advance into Roumania, in itself an unlikely event unless Bessarabia becomes a serious centre of disturbance. And it is further expected that as conditions become more normal the power of the Communists,

whose practical programme is one of repudiation, of reparations and reduction of prices, will decline. There is indeed very little scope for Bolshevism in Bulgaria (prices incidentally have begun to go down and the reparations demand is accepted), and any bourgeoisie there are in the country are so thoroughly in the power of the peasants and the Socialists that the "class conflict" disappears in favour of what amounts to an adjustment of claim as between town and agricultural workers. Bulgaria indeed shows clearly what is coming to be recognized more and more all over Europe—that future politics depend on an agreement (or a fight in lieu of agreement) between town and country, and that once the democracy is enfranchised the power of the bourgeoisie can be overcome at the ballot box. But Bulgaria and Tcheco-Slovakia and even Soviet Russia (although force was substituted for ballot in this case) show that when the power of the bourgeoisie is overcome, then the real practical and technical problems of reconstruction arise. Whatever the theory—and I wonder sometimes why Marxists do not claim to have got through an economic revolution so as to be able to begin a new epoch—Europe is now at the stage of concrete change on a big scale which gives special importance to the demands of the peasants. In view of the importance of these demands I give here a slightly abridged translation of a series of articles which appeared in the official *Echo de Bulgarie* (March 28, 29, and 30, 1921), a paper appearing in French in Sofia and expressing the policy of the Stamboulisky party. The Conference

of February referred to was the Conference of the Bulgarian Peasant Party, which may well prove to have been an event very important for the whole of Europe.

“BULGARIA AND THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF
PEASANTS.

“Across the vista of human progress there runs, like a white thread, the history of a class which everywhere and always has had to submit to bad treatment. This class was predestined to toil upon the earth, to drag riches from its entrails, and was plunged in a limitless misery, unable to claim any of the rights of human dignity. Their oppressors used them, as they thought fit, to serve their own ends. This was the class of peasants, of cultivators of the soil.

“What condition is this class in at the present time ?

“Is there a great change from the social point of view ? Has that progress of which civilized countries are so proud had any influence on the peasant population ? Alas ! this class in our days still occupies the situation of a pariah, there is no great assimilation by it of the benefits of civilization with which Humanity is endowed, and it continues to furnish material for mockery.

“This class is exploited and oppressed.

“Ordinarily when one speaks of civilization it is of progress in the sciences and arts, the development of humanity, the mastery of natural forces and their use for the benefit of man. But what share have the peasants in present civilization ?

Do they not still continue to toil upon the earth in bad conditions and with rare exceptions by primitive methods? What do they know of the progress of the Sciences? Can they even understand anything in the theatre or in painting? Did not Goethe complain that his fame would be only amongst a limited number of idlers whilst amid the great masses of the population no one even spoke of him.

“What do the peasants know of Plato, Sophocles, Virgil, Cæsar, Dante, Michael Angelo or Shakespeare? All these names are but the articulation of syllables, which are usually not even properly pronounced, by peasants living in the same stables as their beasts and entirely absorbed by the petty cares of their daily life. As a rule, if it does happen that they learn something, they owe it to their direct contact with nature.

“The advances of civilization are not available for the peasants, that is why the forms of social life suitable to the needs of an insignificant minority of the population cannot satisfy them. From this point of view the peasant movement has a revolutionary character, it demands radical change in the social relations between men.

“The peasants insist first of all on a reform in taxation, which up to the present has been chiefly placed upon their backs. And, further, they make work the chief duty of life and demand that this shall be shared in a manner just to all. The peasants wish to break the chains of slavery in order to secure the adoption of the idea of the sovereignty of the nation as an unassailable prin-

ciple in communal and national affairs. They demand the acceptance of private property obtained by labour of which the principle is that no one shall possess more than the ground he is capable of working, and that he shall be master of the product of his labour. And finally they demand that Education shall be made accessible to the masses in order to achieve their complete emancipation. For these reasons the peasants, being convinced that their conditions have remained the same for centuries, have turned away for ever from the different bourgeois parties to themselves take the direction of public affairs and the organization of social life into their hands.

“In this struggle the peasants of all countries feel that they are brothers, despite the frontiers which separate States and despite the difference in religion and of the level of civilization of their peoples. Their efforts in this way show an international character, and that is why one of the first tasks of the movement is the creation of an International Peasants' Union. It is necessary, independently of national peasant organizations, to create an international organization which will approach and begin the solution of the great problems which interest the rural masses, closing up the ranks of the fighters for the coming battle.

“What object should such an organization have, and how would it be welcomed at the present time? Is it possible to constitute it? But the fact that the peasants are attempting to constitute it is a sufficient indication that it comes at the right time. And it will be possible because it was only on the

morrow of the world war that the peasants of many countries were able to get to know each other, to approach each other and realize their actual situation.

“They have understood that they were only instruments in the hands of others, and that they have only served alien interests and nothing more. The chauvinistic and imperialist classes have led them in flocks to throw them into the gaping jaws of the ogre of war, leaving their wives and children to their unhappy fate. Then they attempted to console them by recounting that their dear ones who were gone had fulfilled a sacred duty toward their fatherland. Laurels were wreathed, poets sang and monuments were erected to their memory while they, viewing this spectacle from the height of heaven, wept bitterly, as formerly on earth, for lost youth, for the source of life besmirched, for their separation from their near ones, and cursed those who had made them lose their happiness.

“The world war opened the eyes of the peasants and enabled them to see the real relationship of men, that which escaped the ‘Khans of Ivailo,’ the Jacquérie and the men of the peasant war in Germany.

“In what does the power of the peasant movement reside? In order to minimize its importance its detractors attribute to it a class character and stigmatize it as ephemeral, not long lasting. But they know quite well that it is not a class movement in the normal acceptance of the word, but they pretend to believe that the peasants would only be concerned with their own interests to the

detriment of other economic groups. This is precisely what is the great misunderstanding. If the peasants were a small number, as for instance is the case with lawyers or with capitalists, then the peasant movement would have no reason for existing. But the men of grinding toil, the peasants, form nearly everywhere the majority, and in many countries they make up four-fifths of the population. Under these conditions the peasants could not and would not carry on a class war. They need the products of industry, of professions and of public institutions. The growth of agriculture in a country brings in its train progress in industry and in the professions. But all the acquisitions of civilization, thanks to the peasant movement, will be of value to every one. Looking at the matter from this point of view one comes to the conclusion that there do not exist any democratic principles which cannot be accepted by the peasants, who are the supports of a real national sovereignty, whose interests include those of the nation.

“A handful of lawyers and capitalists, assisted by journalists without faith, patriotism, morality or pity for the masses of the people plunged in poverty, have up to the present fooled the rural population of millions and exploited them at their pleasure, that is to say in the way most suitable to their own private interests.

“This tiny group of oppressors of the nation, well organized, supported by the clergy and relying on the brutal force of militarism, drenched the earth with the working people’s blood while all the time talking of humanity, equality and liberty. The

peasants have understood, particularly on the morrow of the world war, the hypocrisy of their former rulers and have decided once and for all to throw off the insupportable dictatorship of a minority. It is not a class struggle but a national struggle that the peasants are carrying on to improve their future, and all their hopes lie in this struggle.

“The peasant movement is neither ephemeral nor due to chance. Who is unaware of the struggles of the peasants of Greece, of Rome in the Middle Ages and of our own days? The peasant movement of to-day marks the end of an evolution of which the beginning goes back to the historical epoch when the nomad tribes ceased wandering from land to land, in search of pasture for their cattle and for rich booty, and devoted themselves to the cultivation of the earth to mark the beginning of a new life. Thanks to frequent wars, a great many prisoners treated as slaves were forced to cultivate the land of military chieftains, and to heap up incalculable riches for them. It is in slavery that one must look for the beginning of agricultural work. But one must regret that that slavery still exists in our days; that is why the struggle for the emancipation of the peasant must continue. The struggle of the peasants is not the result of a general discontent on the morrow of the world war, but it is the fruit of a tree of human life which blossomed long ago.

“It is the war which has opened the eyes of the peasants, but that is not to say that their condition before the war was better. The war did not create the movement but only stimulated the peasants

to attempt to carve out their destiny themselves.

“The power of the peasant movement resides primarily in its economic foundation, in the international community of peasants’ interests, in the rôle of regenerator which it must play in the sphere of root and branch reforms of the relations of men.

“In the sacred struggle for right and liberty the peasant movement encounters two serious antagonists, the bourgeois reaction which tries to maintain the old régime with the advantages which it had, and the destroyers of the benefits of civilization, those abandoned human creatures who are pursuing a policy of destruction because they have been disgusted by the world’s iniquity. The peasant movement does not propose destruction, it will try to render available to all the benefits of culture, for they have been created by great efforts and in large part are the fruit of its labour. The peasants will put a term to the dictatorship of minorities in order to create the conditions suitable for a real democracy.

“In opposition to bellicose Bolshevism and to a Communism thirsting for blood, the peasants follow a policy of peace and concord with all peoples. It is exactly that which is the great moral value of the peasant movement, that it is in its nature opposed to all ideas of antagonism between peoples, and opposes all kinds of imperialism. The pacifists, good people enough, but naïve, will behold the realization of their plan of international solidarity when the peasant movement has formed a powerful international union which will be the most powerful factor of peace, social justice, and radical change

as well as the best guarantee of the League of Nations.

“By the intermediary of the League of Nations, the peasants of all countries will hold hands and the grandeur of their union will bring salvation to all humanity, as agriculture makes it happy by giving food, without which no single human being could continue in life, could work, or could develop himself.

“It is for the triumph of the most sacred principles of justice and social morality that the peasant movement works, and not for taking away the advantages of a tiny class or their suppression in the name of vengeance and with the thirst of blood and class hatred which has distinguished the Bolsheviks of Russia, Austria, Hungary, and everywhere else where they have succeeded in setting themselves up in the temples of civilization and acted like hyenas and brigands.

“The peasant movement is well aware of the terrible struggle between labour and capital, but does not approve of the destructive method which the Bolsheviks use, for all destruction has a terrible reaction on the life of the nation, and principally on the masses of the workers.

“The struggle of the proletariat has a great importance because it is a struggle for the emancipation of an eternally oppressed class ; but the peasant cannot approve the dictatorship of the proletariat towards which Communism and Bolshevism tend.

“From their point of view the dictatorship of capitalists is to be condemned just as much as that of workers.

“Bulgaria is above all an agricultural country. Large industry will one day begin here, but we know that conditions suitable for agriculture will always exist in Bulgaria, and that whatever industry does our agriculture will continue to prosper and will never cease to employ the largest number of workers. The principal task of the Government is to assure the prosperity of agriculture. This has been so up to the present, and will always be so. Agriculture may easily be industrialized, but its socialization as conceived by the Socialists can never be realized, for its very nature is opposed to it. The grandiose theories of Karl Marx encounter insurmountable difficulties in their application to agriculture, for the genius of this intellectual Colossus made a too rapid generalization on the basis of the facts of capitalist production in industry and would have applied these to agriculture also.

“Apart from this Karl Marx showed himself very careful in this application, but he was followed by disciples who tried to complete the theories of the great master.

“But these attempts remained fruitless because they are destroyed by contact with reality.

“Thus the socialization of agriculture remains a point of dispute between two camps of Socialists which gives rise to serious conflict—the one side defending and the other side furiously attacking the socialization of agriculture.

“With us these two theories have long ago lived out their life.

“As for the activity of the Peasant Parliament,

it does honour to the Bulgarian peasants, and will be an example to many countries.

“Just as at the time of Ivailo, when the peasants were in advance of the Jacquerie by 80 years, and the peasant war in Germany by 150 years, in our days our peasants are in advance of their brothers in other countries in making themselves masters of (political) power.

“The bitter consequences of war have done much to make the peasant more discerning, but it is not only there that we must look for the causes of the agrarian movement in Bulgaria, because the Peasant Union has existed since 1900. Nor is the idea of an international union of peasants of recent date: the community of peasant interests was already underlined by M. A. Stamboulisky, President of the Council (of Ministers), in his important book *Political Parties or Co-operative Organizations*, published before the war. This book, which is an honour to twentieth-century literature, methodically examines and considers politically all questions concerning the agrarian movement, including that of an international union of peasants. His theories were acidly criticized by our politicians. But time has proved M. A. Stamboulisky right, and a great many of the predictions made in his youth have been completely realized. He has often had occasion to explain this great question in his many speeches in this country as well as abroad.

“Nevertheless the idea of an International Union of Peasants became for the first time definite at the historical sixteenth Congress of the Bulgarian Peasant Union in February last (February 13,

1921). We reproduce below the complete text of the resolution of the Congress on this subject, for we believe that this resolution is at this moment the best contribution towards the foundation of an International Peasant Union.

“ ‘In all countries the peasant classes have for centuries been oppressed, exploited and despised by the bourgeois classes, and the great landed proprietors. The heaviest taxes have always been placed upon them. They have only been manure for their ruling classes.

“ ‘To-day the peasant classes everywhere are waking from their sleep and throwing off the yoke of exploitation, establishing work as the supreme principle of the general well-being, and breaking once and for all the terrible and insupportable yoke of political and economic slavery and of ignorance, replacing these by the sovereignty of the people, the prosperity of labour and the most widespread education.

“ ‘The Congress of the Bulgarian Peasant Union invites the peasants of all nations to organize in the name of their common interests and to take political power into their hands when they are in a majority. Peasants thus organized have need of a powerful International Peasant Union. And this Union will play a great rôle in the rebuilding of humanity. The Union will have to struggle for the complete emancipation of the peasants against the menacing wave of reaction, against the anarchic power of the Communists, which would destroy all that the war spared, and fill the world with new wars of which the result

will not be social equality but the most abject misery.

“ ‘The International Peasant Union which is on the eve of its foundation will be the most powerful factor making for peace. It is this Union which will solve the thousands of questions which await solution. We send our fraternal and enthusiastic greetings to all peasant associations, let us soon begin the building of the splendid edifice of the new era.’

“What are the prospects of the foundation of this International Peasant Union? They can be foreseen from now on. The hour has sounded, the work must be built on a solid base. The peasants in the conquering countries seem still to be plunged in their worldly dream. But it is not so with the peasants of Bulgaria, Italy, Austria, Bavaria, Hungary, Spain, etc., where the peasant movement is on its way to achieve grand results. The International Union of the peasant masses of all countries will be founded, and listen to the peasant word which has too long kept silence. This Union is a great event of the new era and the importance of understanding and relationship between peasants will have a vast significance in international relations. We wait for this with joyful heart, and nurse the hope that the Union will much improve the hard fate of the peasants of the world.”

Perhaps it will be thought in Western Europe, and particularly in England, that the language of this manifesto is exaggerated and insincere.

But any attempt to minimize the real importance

of this document is to be deprecated, it is the authentic voice of a party in control of a Government and conducting its affairs with a certain severity but with very definite ability. It is a Government which does not hesitate to act, and is responsible for two measures of far-reaching importance—Government control of foreign trade and compulsory labour, both of which are being made to work efficiently. Land legislation is devoted to a division of big estates—although the majority of Bulgarians are already small proprietors. Labour legislation for protection of labour is on modern lines, and municipalization of public necessities is carried out. The Government control of foreign trade is carried out through a Consortium, which is a kind of specially created business organization for the trade in question. Thus there is a Consortium for export of cereals, and there is another for the import of medicines and other medical stores, and both are attached to Government departments.

The compulsory labour is perhaps the most interesting of all experiments apart from the land, because it can be compared with that in Russia. One great difference emerges at once. Compulsory labour in Bulgaria is for a period of ten days only. It cannot be performed by a substitute or replaced by a money payment and applies to all citizens whatever their occupation, and to school children as well as adults. The reason for the compulsory labour is a simple one—an accumulation of work to be done and a shortage of labour to do it. On March 27, 1921, I saw the first day of the Sofia mobilization of children and young

people, and one met parties of them carrying forks and shovels, or buckets, brooms and dusters about the streets. All were very merry and evidently enjoying the fun, nor were any of them that I saw working unduly hard. An official report, however, shows that a good deal is being accomplished.

“The pupils of the Sofia schools go each morning to the compulsory work, and since yesterday there have been attractive scenes in the streets, groups of young girls and boys, with various implements in their hands, fill the neighbourhood of the town and its squares with their shouts. The girls go in groups to the schools, where they scrub the floors and sweep the yards; the boys are employed in the parks or gardens or in the making of roads. Much work is going on in school gardens. The pupils of the first Gymnasium are working on the roadway in the neighbourhood of the railway station. The pupils of the second and third Gymnasiums are cutting wood near Kniajevo. A part of the pupils of the School of Commerce are engaged on the road leading to their College, others are working on the square St. Alexandra Newsky.” In the region of Troyan 80,000 pines have been planted (by adult labour), and in Kustendil 17,000. Pupils of the Mehomia school cut down thirty-five trees and cut them up into planks for the purpose of making a fence round the school playground. Work is also going on at Varna, Roustchouk, Haskovo, Harmanly and in other places. In order to do the work groups of people are called up together, at Sofia ten groups, at Varna three, and these groups are divided according to age.

The Government is carrying out work by means of this compulsory labour which would otherwise have to be put on one side for lack of money and labour power to do it. In principle the reform is like that of a levy on capital, a draft on the resources of the community for the benefit of the people in general, and appears to be carried out in such a way as neither to interfere with the normal work of the country, nor its capital resources. It is indeed a direct addition to the wealth of the community by organizing the use of spare time and surplus energy which would otherwise remain unused. It remains, however, to be seen whether the executive ability available for the direction of the plan in the country as a whole will be able to carry it out without disturbance.

The effect of the peasant government of Bulgaria is, however, not limited to its own frontier, even apart from the propaganda of the Peasant International. It is bound to be an object lesson for all neighbouring States, Yougo-Slavia, Greece, Roumania, Hungary and Turkey. And it is likely that one of the States to be most influenced will be that of Yougo-Slavia, because there is so great a similarity in the general economic conditions of the two countries. Yougo-Slavia at present is still under the control of an old régime type of Government with a very complicated problem of organization and administration of its newly annexed territories to solve. Up to the present this Government has not been conspicuous for its wisdom, and its trade restrictions, for instance, have reduced export and import to a very low level. The

Peasant Party of Yougo-Slavia needs both leaders and programmes, but if it can find them has the opportunity of stepping into a very powerful position at the next election, if not into control of the Government, either alone or in coalition with other left parties.

One of the great handicaps of democracy is lack of confidence in its own powers. The effect of the Stamboulisky Government is to give this confidence to other Peasant Parties, not only in his own country, but elsewhere, and particularly in countries immediately adjoining Bulgaria. And already one finds Serbian newspapers speaking of the "old parties" who "have lived their day," and who are now "on the way to decomposition."

What the future relation between the Bulgarian Peasant and the Bulgarian Communist Parties will be is not easy to prophesy in detail, but while the parties may retain their complete independence of each other, the inevitable tendency will be toward a coalition. And the present development of Russian affairs will help in that direction.

The future evolution of Bulgaria will be looked to with particular interest in England, to whose Liberal Party Bulgaria owes so much. But the interest is not only one of an older nation for a younger, but of a man following a beaten track for one branching off on a new exploration. Bulgaria may be taken as the type of what an educated peasant community will do (and incidentally an educated Slav peasantry), for the country is well educated, equipped with good primary and secondary schools and technical colleges which are superior

in some respects to those of more advanced countries. It is therefore very significant to find that while the tendency in government is towards a severe control of capitalist operations, the tendency in domestic affairs is towards a sober morality, and that one of the cardinal points of the peasant programme is the widest possible diffusion of education.

CHAPTER X

PROGRESSIVE BUILDING OR REACTION

IN the foregoing chapters particular stress has been laid on different aspects of social and political problems in the countries concerned, but in all countries, at least partially, all the currents of change are represented. Throughout Europe the peasant movement goes on its way, taking its local colour from Russia or Bavaria or Bulgaria, as the case may be, but essentially similar in all. And while in Russia the Bolsheviki have government in their hands and in Roumania they are out of power altogether, the general trend of the social movement with reference to industry is in the same direction in both cases. The tragedy of Vienna, taken as an example of the decay of the town-system of Europe, can be paralleled here more closely and there farther away in towns in Hungary, Germany, Bulgaria, Italy and many other states. If one goes farther afield than we have yet explored and considers conditions in detail in Germany, France, Great Britain and Italy as well as the smaller countries of Europe, one can find in them the same new powers struggling for life as exist in the smaller countries.

The Nationalist and Agrarian movement in Ire-

land, the Labour and Co-operative movement in Great Britain, the Social and Peasant movements in Germany, the Socialist and Nationalist movement in France, the Socialist and Peasant movement in Italy and in Spain group themselves in the same way as allied movements in countries we have considered. And in all countries the essential features of the struggle are the same—the rise of the democracy into power—the effort of the democracy to get political and economic control into its hands in order to save itself from exploitation, in order to secure for itself a larger share of life. How far the struggle of the democracy will be successful or how far reaction will triumph is not a matter which can be predicted in detail.

But that the democracy will triumph in general is certain, not only for the reason that its power is established in the constitution of nearly all countries but that it is the form of political organization which enables more of the human resources of a people to be used than other existing systems. Speaking broadly and considering the question nation by nation, one finds the human material in the different countries is of the same average value in all classes. Aristocracy and class divisions do not correspond to differences of racial stock so much as to economic differences. Given therefore that the conditions of good nurture and good education are universal, the average capacity and efficiency of a nation will enormously increase in comparison with nations not so favourably situated—and it is at this result that democracy is aiming.

This is probably true with practically no qualification at all for Great Britain, France, Germany and the northern Teutonic countries. But with regard to other nations actual racial differences need to be discounted. Thus there are great differences between the Russian peasants, who have a strong mixture of Tatar blood, and the northern Teutonic races, English, German and Norwegian for example. In South-Eastern Europe there are great differences between men of Roumanian, Greek, Turkish, Slav or Teutonic origin. And these racial differences complicate the problem in many European States.

But when one comes to considerations of a more detailed kind, any positive forecast of the method of the triumph of democracy is doubtful. But certain negative predictions can be made with confidence. The European situation is much more complicated than the condition of any one country and is much too complicated to be fully explained by any simple political or economic theory. Its solution therefore cannot be simple, for there are so many factors in the problem and it cannot conform to any one theory.

If one examines the Socialist movement in any country it is found to be everywhere divided, and while the general aims of the fractions remain the same, in practice the differences may go even to the length of civil war, as in Russia and in Germany. The differences between the Socialist fractions are fundamental, the extremist group of the Communists desire revolution by force or *coup d'état* and urge their followers to prepare

for civil war and a dictatorship. The right Socialists consider that Socialism can only be brought about piecemeal as experience enables one industry or service after another to be socialized, and that democratic control is essential. And there is every degree of colour in the Socialist spectrum, from the bloodiest red to the palest pink.

The distribution of parties in Tchecho-Slovakia has been already referred to and shows an extraordinary divergence of opinion. Similar divergences exist in all other countries. As politics moves to the left, or rather as it advances and leaves older parties out of the march altogether, the importance of these Socialist differences becomes greater and greater, as is now the case in Russia. And much of the political fighting of the future seems likely to be between Socialists and about methods of socialization. That is to say that the extremist view of the collapse of a capitalist civilization and the victory of a class-conscious proletariat by revolution is very unlikely to come about. Civil war there may be, and Communist labels may be gummed on the different sides in the war, but that is not the same thing. The fact is that as the proletariat becomes educated and emancipated it thinks for itself and thinks quite outside the limits of the Marxist hypothesis. In an educated Western democracy a civil war is conceivable as part of an economic conflict badly mismanaged, but it would not even then be a Class War. And a Class War dividing classes across national frontiers on a European scale seems, in view of the existing form of National,

Peasant and Socialist organization, to be an impossibility. Many people consider that the existence of Russia as a Federative Socialist Soviet Republic brings the possibility of a European Class War definitely within the bounds of probability. But if Russia did make war on Europe, and there were risings in different countries in support of Russia, that would still be a Russian war and not a Class War. The army of Russia is not a Class army, it is a conscripted army, and the rising in aid of Russia would not be Class risings but risings of political groups. War there may be in the future, but Russia is much less dangerous from that standpoint than other States not so professedly advanced in their views. For Communism can no more be propaganded by aggressive means than it can be killed by them, as the history of armed intervention in Russia shows, and it is not improbable that Communism will shed its bloodthirsty stage of development before many years have passed. There is good ground for connecting the Russian Civil War as much with the general recrudescence of violence in Europe since 1914 as with Communist theory, and one may trace it back perhaps to the brutality with which the Russian peasant and the Russian political prisoner were treated by the old régime rather than to the Communist Manifesto. But once violence is started the most improbable people find they like it, as happened to very many in the years 1914 to 1919.

As parties move forward they go indeed not as class armies but as very various divisions of

intellectual opinion. And as Socialist parties go forward Peasant parties march abreast with them, equally desirous of freedom from exploitation but having a formula, that of peasant proprietorship, which is in flat contradiction with Socialist principle.

When one realizes the numerical preponderance of the peasants in Russia and most of Central and South-Eastern Europe, any idea of a class war on Marxist lines finally vanishes and any possible civil war must be regarded as one more likely to be between town and country than between expropriator and expropriated.

The Marxist theory does not in fact correspond with the realities of the European situation, although it may remain a useful hypothesis in discussing industrial proletarian conditions. And in this it shares the fate of many other scientific theories which—like that of the wave transmission of light, for example—are thought to be complete until profounder research shows their deficiencies. No scientific theory stands quite unaltered by time, and it would be in the highest degree remarkable if it did not become generally recognized that the Marxist hypothesis has now served its purpose and must give way to a more realist explanation of political and social life. Economic organization is as artificial and as much subject to control as the manufacture of bicycles.

The questions which are of first-rate importance now go deeper than any mere economic theorizing; they are biological and vital rather than economic, and have to do with physical and mental growth, with health and disease, and with vital statistics.

And in practice it is recognized, even in Russia, that the task of Socialism is not to carry out the plan of an economic theory but to create the organization necessary to carry out the social control of industry and public services, and that the value of Socialism will be judged by the superiority of this organization to that already existing. Much of the fight of Socialism up to the present has been the fight of industrial workers to enable their class to have its fair opportunity in the democracy. The fights for the vote, for free speech and free press have been as essential as the criticism of property and of capitalist institutions, and in some countries are not yet won. But the criticism of capitalist-controlled industry and of the institution of property have to a large extent already done their work in the world of ideas, and in all countries various degrees of expropriation of wealth, ranging from income-tax, death duties and capital levy to complete expropriation of industry, as in Russia, have taken place.

There is no country in Europe where the idea of absolute property, without obligation or service to be rendered, would be seriously defended at the present time. The power of democracy is only now, however, having the opportunity of showing its full intentions, and is not amongst them being shackled by economic or political shibboleths. The divergence of Socialist practice from the Marxist theory shows this clearly, and can be seen not only in the division of Socialist opinion but in the fact that Socialism is throwing itself into all kinds of practical experiments and enter-

ing into all kinds of coalitions in Governments. In Germany, Belgium, Sweden, Poland, Tcheco-Slovakia, Austria and Hungary, not to mention more disputable examples, there have existed or do still exist Coalition Governments in which Socialists have taken part. Russia itself seems very likely to have a coalition of Socialist and peasant parties before very long, and is, *par excellence*, the country in which the attempt is being made to introduce Socialism piecemeal, by stages. It has on many occasions been made clear by Communist leaders, as I once heard Kameneff, the one-time Soviet Envoy to England, say, that "There is neither Socialism nor Communism in Russia now." This was in 1920, and conditions were not much changed in 1921.

That is to say, that the problem of Socialism in Europe is more and more that of individual constructive problems and less and less that of the wholesale application of a theory. And the rôle of Russia in Europe has been not that of showing how Communism can be introduced by revolution, for, as Prince Kropotkin said, what Russia has shown is that Communism cannot be so introduced, but of stimulating and inspiring democracy to dare action on a great scale. This influence of Russia is by no means ended. And this great symbolical example of a proletariat defying the great powers of the West, establishing itself on a field for Socialist experiment, has been one of the great factors in giving confidence in themselves to obscure and oppressed men in many lands. For the most part, indeed, it is doubtful

whether any clear distinction is usually made between Russia shaking off the chains of Czardom and establishing itself under the Provisional Government and Russia of the Bolsheviks, for men do not reason about symbols. Nor are the evils of the Civil War in Russia so impressive as they might have been before the sensitiveness of the hearts and minds of men was blunted by the world war, with its mountains of dead and its armies of ailing and crippled casualties.

The example of Russia is plainly shown in the Socialist experiments which are being attempted in the industries of neighbouring countries. But the influence of the Russian peasant movement has been greater still. This influence is by direct propinquity, as in the Baltic States, in Poland, and in Roumania. For there is nothing theoretical in the peasant seizure of land; its essence consists in the action and the accomplished fact. And the peasant movement all over Europe has certainly been very strongly stimulated by the Russian example. Now that M. Stamboulisky in Bulgaria is urging on the formation of the Green International, there seems a probability of creating a very strong international movement which will lead the peasants as Moscow aspires to lead the town-workers and with more probability of success.

A survey of the divisions in the Socialist party, the existence of working arrangements of Socialist and non-Socialist parties, and the existence of the peasant party would be of itself sufficient to show that the way of development in Europe must be one of constructive building and not of

class-war revolution, even without any consideration of nationality. But nationality is a fact which will not be ignored, for more and more men are grouping themselves according to nationality and refusing to group according to class. Nationality is a bigger individuality in which a man finds expression for much of himself which is otherwise incapable of expression, and because of this man clings to nationality. The new Europe is being built not of horizontally-superimposed strata of classes, but of very rugged, uncomfortably-shaped nations who take a pride in every craggy spur and every curve of their erratic frontiers.

And this is true despite the growth of international organization on a big scale. There are very many more internationals than is usually imagined. There are, to begin with, the Second, Third, and Second and a Half Internationals of Socialist and Labour movements; then there are Trade Union Internationals, the new Peasants International, a Co-operative International, Religious Internationals, Brotherhood Internationals, Red Cross Internationals, Relief Work Internationals, University and School Internationals, Agricultural, Medical, Scientific and many other Internationals, not forgetting what has been called the Diplomatic International of Foreign Offices and their social circles, and the League of Nations.

But these internationals do not take the place of nationality; they supplement it. And just as no man is a worse father of a family because he is a good citizen of his town, so no man need be a worse citizen of his nation because he belongs

to an international organization. Indeed, he will probably be a better nationalist, as he will know more of how his own nation stands in relation to the outside world.

The way of democracy into the future world therefore seems to lie along the line of a compromise between Socialist and peasant policies, and with much of Socialist experiment in the towns and industrial areas, the development being carried out inside national boundaries and strongly coloured by national character. Added to these developments the strong tendencies to the formation of international organizations for specific objects will probably increase, and these will be essentially of the nature of loose federations.

The present position of the Third International of Moscow is an apparent exception to this, as it is attempting to form a supra-national organization, in which nationality sinks into relative insignificance. It is doubtful, however, whether this movement is even now so rigidly organized as it could desire. All adhesions to its programme of twenty-one points are by no means without reserves in practice, and reserves in important questions. As an example, one Communist party in 1920 reserved the question of the need of armed revolution, and proposed, for its own country, a compromise with the peasants on lines later adopted by Russia. As communication between Russia and the rest of the world becomes more regular and more normal, and as the solution of Russian interior problems comes more into line with the rest of Europe, it is probable that

this Third International will also come to partake more and more of the nature of a federative alliance of national units and less and less of a supra-national organization.

The possibility of reaction still remains to be considered. It is true that when one compares Europe of 1921 with Europe of 1914, one of the striking differences is the prominence of Socialist and peasant statesmen now and their absence then, but this of itself does not guarantee permanence to the present orientation of politics. But the general emergence of Socialism and of peasant policy into power is no temporary accident. All over Europe there have been revolutions or changes of revolutionary nature, in which much of the privilege and power of the governing classes has disappeared, and in which the democracy has obtained power. And not only is this so, but the general impoverishment of Europe, which has so greatly changed the position of the middle classes, drives them more and more to support Socialist policies, instead of any return to the conditions existing previously to the war, and so deprives "Liberal" and moderate political parties of their most influential adherents. In fact, right Socialist or Labour parties are everywhere attracting the support of those who formerly would have been much less advanced, and Communists get much help from middle-class victims of economic dislocation and the fluctuations of the exchanges, many of whom find themselves in the position of the "submerged tenth" of before the war. In Germany, in Vienna, in Buda-

pest, in Roumania and in Bulgaria—not to cite other examples—there are many men and women formerly well-off who are now reduced to the kind of poverty which in England comes under the control of the Charity Organization Society. The professional classes in Vienna have had to organize soup-kitchens for themselves, where they eat more wretchedly than many English tramps.

To realize the difference made by the fall in the value of money, one has to think not of money fallen to less than one-half its purchasing power as in Great Britain, but to less than one-tenth as in Germany, to less than one-hundredth as in Austria, and in Russia to less than one-thousandth, and this without any corresponding rise of salary. Often, of course, it means physical starvation.

Some actual figures will show clearly what this fall in the value of money means. The figures with regard to Germany are from the report of the American Friends Service Committee.

SALARIES AND WAGES IN GERMANY, 1920.

	Salary or Wages.
Professional men and officials	18,000 marks per year.
Skilled labour	5 marks per hour.
Unskilled labour	4.50 " "
Women, skilled	3.50 " "
Women, unskilled	3.00 " "

SALARIES AND WAGES IN GERMANY, 1913.

Professional men and officials	8,000 marks per year.
Skilled labour	0.60 marks per hour.
Unskilled labour	0.50 " "
Women, skilled	0.35 " "
Women, unskilled	0.35 " "

That is to say, salaries of professional men and officials have increased by 150-450 per cent., wages 600 per cent. to 900 per cent. for full-time employment, but an average 75 per cent. of members of German Trade Unions are employed less than three days out of four, while about 60 per cent. are continually on half-time only.

But the cost of living has risen 1,000 per cent. to 2,000 per cent., as the following table shows :

	Price 1914.	Price 1920.	Increase.
Potatoes .	3 Pfennigs per lb.	40 Pfennigs per lb.	Per cent. 1,333
Peas & Beans	25 " "	M. 4.0 "	1,700
Rice . . .	25 " "	M. 6.50 "	2,600
Eggs . . .	6 " each	M. 2.10 each	3,500
*Meat . . .	90 " per lb.	M. 12.50 per lb.	1,388
*Butter . .	M. 1.20,, "	M. 18.75 "	1,562
*Bread . .	10 " "	M. 1.15 "	1,150

* Rationed foods.

There is, besides the rise in prices, a deterioration in the scale of living. For instance, it costs a workman's family a minimum of 25 marks a day, but if he lived as well as in 1913 he would need to spend 85 marks. In 1913 it cost a worker's family 8 marks to live, but what he now uses would have only cost 1.50 marks.

This deterioration in the standard of living applies to averages, and does not give an indication of the worst poverty, but in any case it is bound to revolutionize the habits of life of the professional and official classes as well as of the

workers, and brings many professional and official people definitely on to the level of great poverty.

The social reactions of this are likely to be permanent, and one of the greatest is perhaps the loss of the feeling of security, which does a good deal in normal times to keep the machinery of society running without friction. When the children of officers, high officials, and professional people have to be fed on charity, as I have seen, and when their clothing is, as described by the American Friends, "made out of father's or brother's old uniform or from a portion of the parlour curtain," there is not much feeling of security left. And the report goes on: "Underclothing is shabby or frequently lacking altogether, and shoes are infrequent, even in the big cities."

The conditions in Vienna, already referred to, are sufficiently well-known to need no more elaboration, but I may mention the case of a princely family, relatives of the Hapsburg house, who are not able to have meat more than once a week, and consider themselves particularly fortunate in the possession, almost by an accident, of a little house and peasant holding near Vienna, where they will be able to live as peasant proprietors.

In Budapest, Hungary, one relief agency alone has had to help 700 teachers and 100 judges (magistrates) to keep them from literal destitution, while workrooms have been started to employ the "middle-classes" in remunerative manual work. Another indication of the pressure of economic conditions in that town is that in nine months of 1920 there were 1,192 attempts at

suicide, 20 per cent. of which were fatal, and that this has necessitated the setting up of a special suicides bureau. It is also psychologically interesting to note that while there has been this large increase in Hungary, there has been an actual decrease of suicides in Vienna.

In some cases the changed conditions with regard to the value of money inflict serious physical sufferings on members of the professional and official classes, but even in countries like Roumania and Bulgaria, where this class is certainly not suffering more than manual workers, they have nevertheless suffered a diminution of their standard of life, which brings them as a matter of daily life and ordinary experience within the orbit of circumstances of the proletariat. Thus in Bulgaria prices have risen, by thousands per cent., in a way which it requires the imagination of a careful housewife to adequately visualize. That the psychological effect of the conditions must be great can be judged by the results we have felt in England in consequence of a very slight degree of the same kind of changes.

The tremendous economic dislocation which this implies has thus thrown a large class of the best educated and most technically-skilled men and women on to the side of Socialism, by convincing them, through hard personal experience, of the wrongfulness of the existing economic system.

While, then, these and other facts cited militate against the likelihood of a general European reaction, so that one may say confidently that it will not occur, it is otherwise with local reactions.

Local reactions will certainly occur, although it is unlikely they will take us so far back as the 1914 political level. Some of the reasons for this can be stated quite shortly. There have been great extensions of the franchise to women and to men. The financial legislation of all the States of Europe is being more and more pressed in a Socialist direction—the capital levy is a commonplace—Labour legislation is definitely moving forwards, and if there are temporary successes in various countries in an attempt to lower wages it is certain that these will produce political effects making for more Socialism. But one great danger remains, that of militarism, and one which is as operative in Soviet Russia as in reactionary Hungary.

The persistence of military control of civilian life is a European phenomenon. In the spring of 1921 Great Britain was under the Emergency Powers Act, and Russia, Poland, parts of Germany, parts of Tchecho-Slovakia, Hungary, Roumania and Bulgaria were all under some form of military control. And the danger of this condition is not so much that this military control will be used to fortify "capitalists" as against "workers" as that it will lead to a recrudescence of war between nations. For military control, to the extent now prevailing in Europe, means military preparedness if not actual mobilization and, more important still, means that Governments are being more and more carried on by Executives and less and less by Parliaments. Silesia was an object lesson no less than Ireland. For in war

reaction may see its opportunity—as, for instance, the restoration of monarchy. The danger of reaction in Europe lies indeed not so much in conditions inside States as in the conditions of the relations of States with each other, that is to say, in their foreign policy. For while the energy of democratic parties—Socialist and peasant—inside national boundaries has been thrown into the struggle for internal reconstruction, foreign policy has largely remained in the hands of the older type of politicians, the members of the Diplomatic International. It is indeed a marked feature of international relations that the old habits of thought still remain operative. The old illusions about “Austria” doing this or “Poland” or “Russia” that are still bandied about without any effort, apparently, to get at the reality behind these vague personifications of nations. Mr. Lloyd George thunders at “Poland” as if it was a wicked creature in the dock, Tchitcherin radios to the world proclamations about British and French “Imperialism” as though these abstractions were living creatures, “Hungary” talks about “Roumania,” “Bulgaria” about “Greece.” The biological, vital or human way of regarding other nations has hardly come into the consciousness of statesmen, who are often singularly ignorant of everything but phrases and methods of political contest. And while this is going on the very small groups of diplomatic and military people, who know exactly how Foreign Policy really works, pull the necessary strings and make the democratic politicians jump.

Democracy at the present time is less in control of Foreign Policy than of any other department of European affairs. Secret treaties are still made, alliances of Kings and Princes are still "contracted," the governing classes of pre-war days still rule in this most important sphere and the nominees of democracy are being "trained up" in the old traditions by representatives of the old régime. This has happened in Germany, in Tcheko-Slovakia and in many countries—even in Soviet Russia the Foreign Office employs a considerable proportion of old-time officials who certainly pull their weight in the taking of decisions, and Tchitcherin is an old-time diplomat. It is indeed a striking fact that the professed opponents of the old type foreign policy and secret diplomacy are themselves its victims in so far as they still talk and think of other European States as if they were pieces on a chess board instead of the very mixed bag of human qualities and defects which, for instance, we know our own country to be.

The States of Europe may be compared with chemical atoms, each of which has so many hooks (or valencies) by means of which it can attach itself to other bodies. The old type Foreign Office view of other States takes account of perhaps three or four of these valencies, those concerned with family connections, with royalty, with the army and with high finance. But the European States, unlike the chemical atoms, are not simple but very complex bodies, and the number of ways and the number of points

in which and at which they can combine mount up to hundreds. To speak of "France" or "Germany," as is commonly done, as if they could only act in two or three ways with regard to foreign policy is to perpetuate the old evils of the aristocratic exclusivism of Foreign Politics which refused to regard anything outside of a certain orbit as of importance. And Foreign Policy will not be democratically controlled until we get rid of these fictitious personifications of other countries and treat them, as they are, as groups of very diverse human beings able to unite with us in a thousand ways, able to fight with us in perhaps the same number, but on the whole, citizen for citizen, no more wanting to injure us or each other than we want to injure the inhabitants of adjoining counties of England.

A broad-minded encouragement of the many internationals which unite nation with nation will go some way to obviate this possible reaction. And the greatest possible help to the League of Nations ideal will go further still.

* * * * *

Travelling in Europe I constantly came across criticism of the Peace Treaties, and there is no doubt that injustice has been done in some cases. And if the criticism of the Treaties is one of principle and on the ground that they do not follow pre-armistice declarations of the Allies and America, the full weight of the criticism must be considered justified. But on details of attribution of territory and drawing of frontier lines the matter is different. It is very doubtful whether any conceivable settle-

ment would have been satisfactory. Some of the claims which clash are quite definitely irreconcilable. History will probably be more dissatisfied with the principles of the Peace Treaties, but less dissatisfied with the detail arrangements than are we at the present day.

But the addition of the Covenant of the League of Nations to the Peace Treaties is a step the magnitude of which it is difficult for us to realize. And for this one thing alone the name of President Wilson will go down in History as the human instrument of one of the decisive changes in the world.

It has been the habit latterly to refer to President Wilson's defects of personality, his unbending rigidity, his lack of touch with American opinion, his compromises on essential matters of principle, but these defects, great as they may be, weigh very little indeed against the achievement of the League of Nations.

The influence of the idea of the League of Nations may be compared with the influence of Bolshevism in Russia—it is not the details which are considered, but the inspiration of its central idea. It has meant very much to the world that at the Peace Conference, which has been described by almost every epithet from Thieves' Kitchen downwards and upwards, the great constructive idea of the League of Nations has taken definite shape.

Perhaps in America and Great Britain the League of Nations does not seem to mean very much. But in Germany and Poland, in Tchecko-

Slovakia and Hungary, in Roumania, Bulgaria, Serbia—indeed in practically all the countries of Europe, it means a very great deal. To all nations who feel themselves injured and oppressed the League of Nations stands for the possibility of Justice and Right.

The League stands for the only possible way out of our European difficulties.

After travelling through most of the countries of Europe interviewing publicists, statesmen of all parties, diplomatists, representatives of business, and many others, and hearing their views on their frontiers, their rights, their wrongs, and their wishes for their own countries, it is clear to me that there can be no final solution of the many vexed questions except that of war—unless we find a way, not of national, but of general European agreement. It is not that the Peace Treaties are wrong or unjust, but that no conceivable treaties could satisfy Hungary, Tchecho-Slovakia, Roumania, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, and Austria—to mention no other countries. Europe is full of Alsace-Lorraines. There are only two possibilities for Europe, which are either to keep peace by force of arms (an expedient we all realize must eventually lead to more war) or to make peace for Europe by the States entering definitely into a confederation under the League of Nations. This means, of course, a United States of Europe and Russia.

It is towards this federation of Europe that events are pushing us at the present time. We have already made experiments in the European

control of certain economic resources, and a great degree of economic federation and control of money exchanges will be necessary to get Europe working harmoniously again. European control of transport and communications is already partly prepared for by postal arrangements, international railway agreements and the recent (1921) Transport Conference in Spain. European control of armaments is being carried out as part of the arrangements under the Peace Treaties.

A European federation would necessarily be largely a matter of economic arrangements and need not affect the forms of State government in the individual countries, but it would solve the problems of the many Alsace-Lorraines by providing for them a European solution instead of a local solution. And in the structure of this European Federation the numerous internationals already existing would fall naturally into place. We may even see a European Constituent Assembly, accepting the business organization of the League of Nations for its routine work, deliberating on an economic constitution for Europe. We are nearer to this international of internationals than is perhaps imagined.

And all great European events must push us still further in that direction. The Peasants' International and the Workers' International will there find one of their great opportunities of influencing public affairs, while the smaller national groups will find in European federation the only real hope and possibility of living their national life and developing their national culture. Apart from

such federation there is no guarantee whatever that the boundaries of States will remain fixed as at present. Inside a European federation small boundary questions would not be serious, but outside it they become at once matters of national life or death.

From the standpoint of the future of Europe as a whole it is more important that progressive tendencies, where they occur, should have the opportunity of development, than that they should occur inside particular national boundaries. Silesia as an independent State can contribute as much to Europe as if part of Poland or Germany. Or if any existing State were to show herself nationally so incapable of government and administration as to be unable to survive as a nation, it would not prevent progressive tendencies inside that boundary being useful if the nation broke up. But the present insecurity of national boundaries is the opportunity of reaction, because it is the opportunity of war in which power may be seized and used by small groups for their own ends, such as monarchist or aristocratic restoration, with perhaps the right to exploitation of land, natural resources and the labour of the population in the background, as the motive force.

What, then, are the conditions necessary for the success of the democracy in a European State ?

For all States the first necessity is peace, because war gives the opening for reaction. A reaction might come in Russia through some military coup. So might reaction fortify itself more in Poland, Hungary, Roumania, and in many other countries.

But, apart from this one main condition, the necessities of States depend necessarily on the nature and complexity of the organization of their life. It is not possible to have a democratic State progressing along peasant lines or along socialist lines unless there is competent central and local government organization, competent business organization, whether it be of socialized industry or under private capitalism, and a fair standard of efficiency in the rank and file of the population. A State which cannot command the services of men and women qualified for government and for business organization will inevitably be in constant danger from those who will wish to exploit it for their own personal ends. If a country is not run by the scientifically-minded man it is in great danger of being run by the politically-minded crook. Russia is in such danger now, as are other States in Central and South-Eastern Europe. And the first condition for the success of democracy is that it finds the "man for the job," or if it cannot find him that it sets out to create him by education. It is noticeable that the general prosperity and civilization of States before the war was in proportion to the degree of education of their population. In countries like Russia and Roumania, where the standard of education was very low, the number of men and women qualified for great government or business service was very small, the general efficiency of the population was low and the level of prosperity and civilization at a corresponding level. In England and Germany the reverse conditions existed. And it is no accident that while

the natural resources of England and Germany have been thoroughly exploited, those of Russia and Roumania have only been scratched. And a similar parallel holds when Governments are compared or when scientific work is compared.

If the first condition necessary for the success of a democracy is Peace, the second is the finding of the trained men and women fit for the nation's service—and this means a high standard of education.

The third essential, equal in importance with the other two, is that the people should be adequately fed. Lack of very simple medical knowledge prevents many economists and politicians from knowing that the vast majority of human beings in Europe never get the proper amount of food or the proper conditions of work and life. These are facts provable by comparative statistics of heights and weights and visible to any trained observer in any poor quarter of any European city or in any European country-side. A vast multitude of men and women have lived always on the verge of starvation or at least chronically underfed. This elementary evil must be abolished, or no State is secure, or can be called successful. Some of the terrible conditions of Central Europe which have wrung the hearts of sympathetic men and women all over the world are but the exaggerations of the normal, lime-lighted into a glaring publicity. It appears to have been a great shock to certain English politicians to discover as a result of medical examinations made for military service that England had a "C 3 population," a politicians'

exaggeration of the fact that a very large proportion of men were unfit for military service. The facts, however, have been known for long to medical science, and the reality is worse than that, for in the same sense we are a C 3 Europe and even below C 3 in many places.

It is on the basis of good education and good nutrition, obtained in the past for a part of the population in Western Europe by means of political and industrial struggles, that another essential factor is built up, namely experience of political, social and trade union organization. In countries like England, France and Germany, where conditions in the last fifty years have allowed of general education and political and industrial organization—i.e. of training for the work of a democratic State—the prospects of democracy are very much better than in countries like Russia and South-Eastern Europe, where these conditions have not obtained and where physical conditions have been very bad. For while the democracy may have voting power, and in virtue of its numbers actual economic power, it is trained educated men who use that power, a small minority of the whole population, and this gives reaction the chance it uses in so many countries when it can pull political strings. But the economic upheaval of classes in Russia and Central Europe has thrown many of the trained educated men into the arms of the Socialist and Communist Parties, thus giving the industrial workers' wing of the democracy more intelligentsia than it has itself developed. Hence the contrast between Western Socialist and Labour Parties largely led

by men trained in the school of Trade Unionism, and often actual manual workers, and the Russian and Balkan Socialist parties predominantly led by intelligentsia of other classes, as, for instance, the Bulgarian Communist Party led by one journalist and two lawyers.

The conditions of success of a democracy are, then, certain essential things just recapitulated—Peace, Education and adequate Nutrition—without which any power gained by political development or by revolution may be lost again. For on the basis of these essentials democracy can get to work, if it wills it Socialism may be built up, or the peasant State may be built up, and the many social experiments the future holds in store may be carried out. But while these essentials are being gained—and democracy everywhere is trying to gain them—something yet more fundamental must be done. Democracy must find its leaders and must find its beliefs. For the beliefs which democracy holds as to its life and its purpose and the leaders it chooses are the factors which determine success or failure.

CHAPTER XI

LEADERSHIP AND DEMOCRACY

THE question—what does democracy believe? —is not answered by pointing to the political programme of socialist, peasant or other democratic parties. The programmes are only general outlines, suggestions of the political and social structure of the future, which the individual fills in with detail and colours for himself. And the peoples of different countries have strikingly different ideas on detail even when they agree to accept a common formula—as that of International Socialism—for general use. Or perhaps programmes may be regarded as sign-posts indicating directions—“To Socialism,” “To the Peasant Proprietor State” or, more generally “To Peace, Freedom and Emancipation.” Or it may be that political parties represent a form of that mass action which led in pre-historic and earlier historic times to the movement of great bodies of men, women and children from Asia into Europe and India, pouring out the modern European and Indian nations in waves of humanity. Men in masses can no longer surge over continents, for the claims are already staked out, but they can surge along one line or another of political and social action and, when great uniting impulses grip

them, they are ready to follow very crudely expressed directions. Russia surged into Bolshevism behind the programme of Peace, Bread and Land. Great Britain at the 1918 General Election rallied into a nationalistic bloc behind the programme of Hang the Kaiser, Make Germany Pay and Exclude all Aliens.

But more and more the great uniting impulses which grip and sway democracy tend to be informed by and controlled by clearly worked out plans of political and social action based on the study of facts.

The workers of towns and industrial areas may be said in this sense to be more and more believing in Socialism with the proviso that the more ignorant, politically inexperienced and uneducated they are the more will they incline to "go the whole hog," and follow extremists, and the more informed and educated they are the more they will incline to go from one definite stage thought out in detail to another.

It is well known that the leaders of Russian Bolshevism have been surprised at the "Social Revolution" breaking out in a country so educationally and industrially backward as Russia. But it is precisely because Russia was uneducated and industrially backward that her uninformed masses were ready to follow their impulse without thinking and "nationalize" land, "socialize" industry, and "expropriate" the bourgeoisie, without conceiving or apparently attempting to conceive what these words meant in detail. And because these things cannot be done by a magnificent gesture and a

proclamation, land is not "nationalized," but is in the hands of peasant proprietors, industry is not "socialized," but to a limited extent under national control, to a large extent destroyed and to a very great extent put up to auction among non-Russian capitalists. Nor are the bourgeoisie "expropriated," but merely deprived of their houses and their money and often of their lives, with the result that frantic endeavours have had to be made, under the guise of employing "specialists," to organize the services of the bourgeoisie for the national advantage.

In Europe generally Bolshevism is strong in the backward and ill-educated countries, Ruthenia, Bessarabia, parts of Slovakia and parts of Poland for instance, and constructive Socialism is strong in the advanced and well-educated centres in Great Britain, France, Germany, and Western Europe generally. The possibility of Bolshevism changing its character, under the influence of events in Russia and the influence of the adhesion of newly proletarianized intelligentsia in politically inexperienced countries of Eastern and Central Europe, may present us with a programme which is in reality reformist while still breathing fire and slaughter in phrases of Russian violence. But apart from the new proletariat, Bolshevism has another great support in Europe—that of the newly enfranchised young people whose lack of experience, individual enthusiasm and perhaps natural leaning to violent action, ranges them on the side of the fine gesture and the big scale programme.

While Bolshevism, then, will continue to get

support from certain sections of the population and, if it becomes more constructive, may become very strong among certain groups of the population, various types of constructive Socialism will get more adherents among the politically experienced and better educated workers of Western Europe.

The democracy of towns and industrial areas will believe more and more in Socialism, but will express their beliefs more and more in the form of various and contrasted practical projects. These divisions of democracy are more questions of opinion than of class, and with the improvement of education these divisions of opinion must become more marked. The division of opinion among the workers of the same "class" in Tcheko-Slovakia have already been noted. There are similar differences in Germany, where not only is the representation of the 466 members of the Reichstag divided up between 113 Social Democrats and 83 Independent Socialists and Communists, but there are working-class representatives in the Centre party representing the Catholic Trade Unions and separate parties representing peasant and agrarian interests. The divisions of French politics are well known and do not follow class lines, despite the attempt of the new Communist Party to get itself accepted as the only true and authorized exponent of working-class sentiment. In many countries indeed there is a cleavage of working-class opinion on religious grounds (Belgium, Germany, Poland, Austria, and Hungary, for instance). But behind all these divisions the great masses of the workers of town and industrial

areas believe in the need for the application of Socialism to the problems of their own lives because they see in this their only hope of escape from present evils.

That, however, which unites the democracy is not a programme but something more fundamental, a belief in human solidarity, a belief in human brotherhood which, while based on a primitive instinct, owes its force not only to definite teaching of solidarity by socialist and democratic leaders, but to our Christian civilization. It is this feeling of solidarity which is at the back of Socialist "class conscious" appeals and appeals to the peasants, but it is also behind such anti-Socialist organizations as the Facisti, it is a great part of the life of every army, and it is the foundation of that nationalism which is so marked a feature of Europe to-day. This feeling of solidarity, which among men in early historical times only embraced in its realm a limited number of people (the whole of English and other history is a record of the growth in extent of the size of the group who feel this solidarity with each other), has been tremendously stimulated in recent years. And in the Labour movement, in religious movements, in relief movements, there is a real feeling of international solidarity. I have tested it in the most diverse places: in public meetings near the Elephant and Castle in London, in meetings of peasants in villages on the Volga in Russia, among the intelligentsia of Egypt, among relief workers in Budapest and at Geneva, and amongst officers at a Brigade H.Q. Mess 800 yards from the front line during operations in

France. International solidarity is not yet as vivid in men's consciousness as is the feeling of nationality, but it is very widespread. It is more than a dream: it is an inspiration to action, not clearly recognized, not always realized, fluttering still in the penumbra of the unconsciousness of man's mind, but growing more alive with every spread of communications and with every deepening of knowledge of the world. The war against Germany and the years following have been a great education in internationalism, and its influence as an idea and a motive in political conduct must inevitably grow.

It has been remarked that while there never has been such a world war as this last against Germany, there never has been at the conclusion of the war such a tremendous effort to heal its wounds. The gigantic international humanitarian work carried out by our armies in Vienna, in the German occupied territory, in Palestine, Syria and elsewhere, together with the work of the English Friends and other English philanthropists, the Americans under Mr. Hoover, with contributions coming from all parts of the world and all classes, some sending very large sums, has been a manifestation of practical internationalism quite unparalleled in history. And when one adds to this the Covenant of the League of Nations and the great movements which are going on in support of this ideal, we can actually put on paper concrete figures of men and money that in the world of ideas stand for much more effort and influence than in any other field of human endeavour.

This growth of international consciousness is one of the great examples of the feeling of human solidarity. But as primitive as this feeling of solidarity among men is the need of leadership. One can express the struggle for power in Europe not only as a contest of social groups and social needs, but as a contest of leaders. The present great democratic movements in one aspect are the turning away from the old leaders and the searching after new ones. Russia turned away from the corrupt mass of the Tsardom and of Russian aristocracy to follow first the Provisional Government and then the Bolsheviki, often unwillingly and under compulsion perhaps, but they did follow, as the failure of armed intervention showed. One can indeed think of Russia as a great organism, about to undergo new growth and new subdivision, extruding from itself these elements which are no longer of use. And although there were elements of high endeavour and that nobility which attaches to lost causes on the side of the forces of Kolchak, Judenitch, Denikin, Wrangel and the rest, for the most part those armies fighting against Soviet Russia were led by men incapable of good military and social organization and utterly out of touch with modern democratic feeling. They were leaders who no longer knew how to lead.

An examination of the Tsar's private diary, captured in the revolution, showed an almost incredible aloofness and apparent indifference to the people. On the day of "Bloody Sunday," when an unarmed crowd marching up to the Winter Palace to ask audience of the Tsar was fired on

with machine-guns, the Tsar records his lunch, the bare statement that he was asked to see the people and did not wish to do so, and a card party. There is no word of the tragic butchery of unresisting and unarmed people. It used to be said of the Tsar that he was "a weak man, but a good man," but no leader has the right to be such a weak man and to be so hopelessly out of touch with human realities.

The new leaders of Russia are men much more closely in touch with human realities than any in the old Tsardom, they are men too with a much wider outlook on national and international affairs, men trying to follow science and rejecting superstition, men who have dared to write up on the side of a church in Moscow "Religion is the Opium of the People," not, as so many have thought, a terrible blasphemy, but a statement of what they considered, in connection with the Greek Orthodox Church in Russia, a profound religious truth. We may object to their fanatic materialist religion, we may conceive it cruel and think there is much evil and error in it, but it is a religion of courage and of strength.

In Germany the new leaders have not yet come into their own, for in that country, as in France and Great Britain, the immense complexity of the national organism makes it difficult for new forces to get control. It is much that the old militarist Germany has received such a staggering blow as the defeat of 1918, and that now Social-Democrats and other plain men are occupying the places of rulers. It means very much to men, accustomed to the jack-boot of military oligarchy, that Presi-

dent Ebert, an ex-saddler, sits in the seat of power of Kaiser Wilhelm the Second, the believer in the divine right of his house. It means much, too, that in the present State of Bulgaria, M. Stamboulisky, a huge man "like a bull," is taking great destinies upon his shoulders and dominating by his size, consumed by a fierce energy, vivid in speech, is leading towards a new International. He has courage, strength and the power of vision; he commands.

Another great leader is President Masaryk, whose impressive statement on the ethic of revolution I quoted earlier. "The life of man must be holy to men." He is a professor, he looks like a professor, and yet he has known how to conduct himself in revolution and in war with the courage of the simple soldier. He, too, has vision. And men of these types sway the minds of millions.

Democracy demands of its leaders not only strength and courage but also vision and practical ability, and it will choose its leaders from amongst Socialists, trade unionists and peasants because it has turned from the old governing classes with disgust.

The failure of the old governing classes was that they accepted privileges without accepting duties. The aristocracy of Europe who have had the opportunity of leading Europe any time the last few hundred years have thrown it away in exchange for security, comfort and luxury. They have expected the nations of men to work and toil and have not looked after their elementary needs. As though officers should fail to secure for their men rations

and supplies and expect them to fight. The Russian aristocracy and the Austro-Hungarian aristocracy remained in power until 1914 and not only neglected their social and political duties, but do not, many of them, to this day, see that they had any. To excuse their apathy the aristocrats invented the fiction that the rulers and ruled were different kinds of men, and the ruled incapable of culture—a brazen, if aristocratically comforting lie.

But can democracy in Europe find within its own ranks the men able to be leaders? This is a question closely bound up with one raised previously on a number of occasions—can the democracy find the men capable of doing the work of government, central and local, the work of management and administration, the work of technical experts?

These two questions may seem far apart in Great Britain, where democratic leaders and the scientific-minded expert-type of man are relatively far apart. But in Great Britain we have not yet begun to tackle the kind of questions such as are dealt with in Russia, or even such as are dealt with in Germany, Poland, Tchecho-Slovakia and Bulgaria. But the leader and the expert will approach each other ever more and more closely, because in all countries the questions of politics and the questions of statesmanship are becoming more practical problems and less theoretical. More and more is it necessary for the political leader to be informed in detail of the task he is dealing with. And in most countries of Europe it is the expert professional type which takes the place of a discredited

aristocracy. This happens even in such a reactionary country as Hungary, where the outstanding leaders since the war have been all several steps down the hierarchical ladder of precedence. M. Friedrich was a small industrial, an engineer, Admiral Horthy, a representative of the smaller gentry, and M. Szabo, a member of the Cabinet, is a genuine peasant, while other professional men have been given office. In Russia the scientifically trained expert is coming into a position of great power, in Sweden and in Tchecho-Slovakia there have even been Governments consisting of experts. And, more important still, many of the scientific-minded men of Europe are fitting themselves to become, not technical advisers, but actual democratic leaders. Professor Masaryk is perhaps the best example of this, but the tendency is fairly universally at work. And the increasing insistence on the importance of education will emphasize this tendency, which is of paramount importance for democracy. For its task is to deal not with political fantasies but with human realities. Therefore the urgency of the question whether democracy chooses its leaders rightly. Its corollary is, do the leaders understand their task and their opportunity?

One may put the matter from one aspect quite simply. Old aristocracies and governing classes have failed—is the democracy now to choose another aristocracy and another governing class? The danger of this in Russia has already been indicated. But it is a danger everywhere. The extremists in Germany already refer to Noske and

Scheidemann of the Majority Socialist Party in terms which would not have been regarded as unfitting for typical Junkers in pre-war days. And what of the Presidents and the Staffs of permanent officials? Are Presidents Ebert of Germany, Masaryk of Tchecho-Slovakia and Pilsudski of Poland to become social lions and impressively make and return calls on crowned heads? It is true Ebert was a saddler, Masaryk the son of a peasant, and Pilsudski an exiled revolutionary. But blacksmiths' aprons have become royal standards before now and revolutionaries have become emperors.

Is the need of democracy for leadership always to be exploited in this way? That the danger is a real one is seen by the tolerance extended to kingship by peoples otherwise of a very democratic type. There are kings in Roumania, in Bulgaria, in Greece, in Serbia—and, on the whole, popular kings. The democracy not only needs leadership but likes to confer marks of distinction and superiority on those who embody its idea of leadership. The leader is the symbol of the group feeling of solidarity, of that larger life in which the individual is so much more than one. It is futile to attempt to get rid of the difficulty by denying it or evading it.

The relation of leader and led in human society is as fundamental as the relation of two parts of the brain in the human individual. The most recent attempt at social organization, that of the Soviet system, has, if anything, more deeply underlined this fundamental human fact; leader and led

are more distinct in Russia than in almost any other European country. And it is a danger, and one from which there is no escape except by increased wisdom on the part of the democracy, and profounder philosophy and higher ethic on the part of the leaders. It may be that the philosophy and ethic, the religion of the leaders will be that "of all wise men," a religion which "wise men never tell," or it may be more simply founded upon Christianity. It cannot be any orthodox form of Christianity, because the Churches are so out of touch with modern life and thought as to have left its forms encumbered with a mass of error and superstition such as no scientific-minded man can tolerate.

Leaders of democracy must be scientific-minded men, because of the conditions under which they are chosen, but not many of them in any country are professing Christians, although many accept the ethic and the spirit of the religion at its best. They may, in addition to being scientific-minded men, be fervent Marxists or fervent nationalists, for instance. But when questions arise for decision, in which their particular isms are not involved, they will solve them by attempting to get at the facts, arrange them in proper order and, drawing conclusions from their survey, take action in accordance with these conclusions. It is remarkable that in one vital matter, where real knowledge is available, public health changes of parallel character are occurring in all European States. There is no serious dispute possible as to the advantage of proper care, feeding of infants, proper feeding of

school-children, proper feeding of adults, regulation of hours of labour, special regulation of the labour of mothers shortly before and after childbirth—in fact, the whole range of questions where the physical well-being of men, women and children is directly concerned. And tremendous changes of revolutionary significance are being made by public health activity in Soviet Russia, in Germany, in Tchechoslovakia, in Roumania, in Hungary, and in many other lands. And that is because medical science is available and its main conclusions are indisputable. And wherever this happens political strife vanishes in the face of knowledge.

Gradually, I believe all departments of human affairs will be conquered by knowledge in the same way, but some of that knowledge is a very long way off at present. Nevertheless, we are tending in that direction. But what in the interval is to prevent democratic leaders joining the company of “hard-faced men who have done well out of the war.” Fortunately, in most countries those men have not got elected to parliaments—the legislative assemblies of European States are full of new men, shabby men, intelligentsia and peasants, men of keen faith and men of vision. In Soviet Russia the war-profiteer is dealt with drastically, in Bulgaria he is in prison, and in many States he is subject to penalty and specially taxed on a high scale. But even if, as is quite feasible, these conditions change with increasing prosperity, the Socialist and peasant parties cannot choose other than men of much the same type as at present, unless, that is, they give up their aims and completely

change their constitution, when new runners will take the lamp from their hands.

This problem of leadership wants to be clearly thought about and defined, for it is not only important for the democracy to have good leaders, it is also one of the strongest points of the old régime that it occasionally produced great personalities. It was most clearly seen as a problem during the war with Germany, when the door to leadership was wide open and the man capable of leadership earnestly sought for. If it be objected that this was purely military leadership, the objection must be met by saying that there is only one kind of leadership, and whether its task be simple or complex, easy or difficult, the essential leadership problems are the same.

The qualities of leadership which told in war were, above all, courage, cheerfulness, intelligence, and care for men. A good leader was a man who was not only first over the top with a laugh or a shout, but the officer who was careful of the supply of rations, of the build of dugouts, of the supply of fuel, of the supply of comforts, of baths, of good rest billets, of the hundred and one little details of a soldier's life which make all the difference between efficiency and good discipline or the reverse. In a Second Lieutenant the problem of leadership was a limited and a simple one. In the Statesman, head of a democratic State, the problems are immensely complex and difficult. But the same human qualities of courage, cheerfulness, intelligence, and care for men are required. The Second Lieutenant in the front line cannot escape from

realities if he will—the great Statesman has often a difficulty in discovering the realities of problems requiring solution, because they are so wrapped up in phrases and tangled in interests that their simple human foundation escapes him. And the Statesman has temptations. In the front line it was essential to live hard. For statesmen it is very easy to live soft, to absorb more of the luxuries and amenities of life than are one's due. May the statesmen of Europe long remain poor men and shabby men if they are to be saved from many dangers.

But much may be done by fully acknowledging the reality of leadership and the need of this relation for democracy, and frankly discussing the conditions which should attach to this duty. This was one of the subjects I discussed with the family of President Masaryk in the Castle at Prague; it was one of the matters discussed with leaders in Soviet Russia and in other countries, and there is no doubt of the answer to be given. The life of a leader must have about it a certain austerity, but this need not be intrusive or obvious, and if he is compelled to have privileges to further the carrying out of his work, as is probable, they must attach to the office and not to the man, and not be hereditary. Leadership must mean extra work without adequate material reward; only in this way can the door be shut against men who are not leaders but mere political careerists. It is perhaps on this question of leadership that the men who fought in the world war may bring a great influence to bear. They have a gospel. They know that the

leadership of one and the devotion of many can go hand in hand with no question of superiority or inferiority outside the work in hand. They know too that men demand leaders, and that, in matters of real responsibility, many individuals are afraid to assume the responsibility of leadership. But it is so much a truth that men demand leaders that the whole democratic movement might be wrecked if leaders could not be found. Socialism will not be always satisfied with leaders chosen from a Trade Union Secretariat; some of such men are leaders, but the training in caution of the official is not the training needed. And so men like the Bolshevik Chiefs strike the imagination and capture the devotion of men who want to be led as kings, and princes, and great soldiers catch the imagination—they stand out from the ordinary run of men, they embody the individual's secret aspirations of his own personality. And if democratic parties cannot supply leaders, then more reactionary parties may do so.

Does democracy know enough to protect itself? Do leaders care enough to give the service needed without taking advantage of the trust reposed in them? If the ex-Service man can help in this way, either by helping the discrimination of inexperienced men or by himself volunteering services of leadership needed, he can much ease the passage from the old Europe to the new. And there must be millions of men in Europe who have known personally that strong loyalty of man to man—deeper than the love of woman—that men knew when facing wounds and death. And there must

be millions of men, too, who knew the pride of being one fragment in a great entity of many millions, an army living, in action, united battalion to battalion, division to division, and commanded—an instrument keen and supple as a sword. A democratic State cannot be an army, and its work is creation and maintenance of life, not infliction of destruction and death, but if it can get from the lesson of war but the echo of that great loyalty and devotion and of that spirit of instantly ready action, it will lift us out of many petty difficulties. Russia organizing armies of work, Bulgaria arranging compulsory civilian service, are both making use of great psychological realities.

The old order of Europe has gone, old classes have gone, old political parties have gone, and in the process there has been much suffering, and Death has been as swift in peace as he was in war. But the ending of the Great War is only clearing the battlefield for greater conflicts. The struggle for power in Europe that began with the tremendous shock of the Entente and the Central Powers only ended a first chapter with the Armistice of November, 1918.

Since then there have been many minor wars, and the great drama of Bolshevism begun in 1917 has been playing itself out.

Revolutions, not yet concluded, were the second stage of the struggle, the emergence of the people grasping at power, grasping to wrest it from the hands who for so long abused their trust.

Now the fight of ideas still goes on, a guerilla warfare on a thousand battlefields, a war fought out

over details—a strike—a riot—the suppression of a paper—a political project of Socialism, intensified by glaring clashes of interest like the Hapsburg incident in Hungary, the war in Silesia, and others no doubt to come.

Always, too, there is the menace of greater war, the menace that men who have fought for the Crusades, who have fought for kings, who have fought “to make the world safe for democracy,” should now be deluded by yet another form of the cry and called on to fight to make “the world safe for the dictatorship of the proletariat.” What a great Napoleonic dream come true it might be. And there must be men outside and inside Russia whom the dream lures on. For the temptation of the leader is not only security and ease, but power. To mould the world! To span continents with railroads and with roads. To call up industries out of quiet mountains and peaceful rivers. To see the peoples of the world going hither and thither in ways only dreamed of first, and now beaten into roads and causeways and streets of cities.

And opposed to this is the democratic vision. Europe made free of exploiters and oppressors, interconnected every part with roads and railways, and economically united for commerce and for industry—and a Europe of the common man moulded into something better than we have yet seen, a Europe ruled and governed by leaders, yes, but men who are the servants and not the masters of the people.

And Europe cannot stand alone. Were all

Europe peaceful there is still the possibility of war from the East or from the West. But while there are now possibilities of war and conflict in Europe, while there may still be great changes and rearrangements of frontiers, there are also everywhere most vigorous signs of growth. War there has always been in the world, but the possibilities of democracy are new.

If Europe is like a battlefield it has been cleared for the greatest of all purposes, that of the building up a federation of democracies who will use the power of the sciences as creative instruments of a European civilization.

Old classes, old privileges, old institutions have been destroyed. Can the leaders of democracy rise to the greatness of their opportunity?

Since, in the almost infinite deeps of time, the evolution of life began, which has gone on in uninterrupted chain to this moment—an evolution whose grandeur is only guessed at in our philosophies, our sciences and our theologies—there has always been the possibility of man consciously controlling his circumstances and his own life. Other civilizations in the past have offered this opportunity; it has been grasped for a moment and let go, and left only some memory in a pyramid, a carved inscription, a temple, or a manuscript. Is it possible democracy can take that opportunity now? Our widespread education, our great scientific knowledge, the recent sweeping social changes may help us. But it is here the world war may help us, too. Very many men found, in facing death, a new and splendid zest in life—the poets of the war have given it

expression. But it was in essence something almost incommunicable, a kind of initiation into a new state of consciousness. There was a peace in battlefields not found in cities. And many men, not ordinarily religious, and perhaps exasperated by the wrappings of religion, found their way to spiritual certainties which have little enough to do with the personal but everything to do with man and with the life of the world. That vision of the great life and purpose of the world must be brought into our common life—into the world of field and factory, of home and office, of parliament and municipal chamber. It is essentially one with the vision of democracy; with its help man must grasp the opportunity of the present and learn to command and consciously control the material surroundings of his life and that life itself. Europe swept free of the old, a great opportunity for new building—that is the opportunity of the present. Is the hand of democracy strong enough to stretch forth and take it?



D Guest, Leslie Haden
653 The struggle for power
G8 in Europe.

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