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NEWEST EUROPE

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# NEWEST EUROPE

BY

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WITH THREE MAPS

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## INTRODUCTION.

SPACE has dictated the limits of this book. Yet I hope that the reader will find, if not an exhaustive study, one in which the chief political movements of Modern Europe are stressed and clearly outlined. With this end in view, it has seemed best to omit certain countries and to concentrate on those others which play a more active—sometimes a less happy—part in European affairs. Despite their historic past, Sweden, Holland and Portugal have thus been excluded from this edition. **In their place** are the Baltic and Balkan States which are relatively new strains in the Leitmotif of our continental symphony.

With a like wish to bring out the most **important** characteristics in contemporary Europe, **I have written** at some length on Fascism **and Bolshevism**, while **emphasising Germany's** endeavour to reconstruct along more traditional lines. **Of France, I say little.** **The French** are showing how prosperous

are the people who have no history.<sup>1</sup> And Europe is still largely the " French world " which it was in the eighteenth century. Not only do the educated classes still speak and understand French almost as they did in the times of which Sorel wrote; but the classic background of international relations has preserved the spirit which France inherited from Imperial Rome. For this reason, the national standpoint is so much more the European than that of the League of Nations. Our Europe may benefit from these international organisations; they are the mutual gifts of the mother-continent and the children of a world-wide State-system. All the same, her life is lived between the seas and the steppes; as full of spiritual fecundity and material poverty as it was when she bore modern civilisation.

<sup>1</sup>Rivarol—"Discours sur L'Universalite de la langue Franaise."

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## ERRATA.

- Contents, p. vii, *for "Balkan" read "Baltic"*.  
Through Chapter I., *for "Bloc Nationale" read<sup>M</sup> "Bloc National"*  
P. 63, footnote, *for "1919" read "1918"*.  
P. 69, 1. 22, *for "Magistratina" read "Magistratura"*.  
P. 72, delete footnote 2.  
P. 75, footnote *s/w«W raw\* "1870-1914"*.  
P. 82, 1. 3 from bottom, *for "Iver" read "Tver"*.  
P. 88, 1. 7 from bottom, *for "Mirva" read "Aurora"*.  
P. 88, 1. 2 from bottom, *for "Gatchena" read "Gatchina"*.  
P. 109, 1. 17, *for "Balkan" read "Baltic"*.  
P. 113, 1. 2 from bottom, *for "Turcoman" read "Svecoman"*.  
P. 145, 1. 20, *for "Korfarty" read "Korfanty"*.  
P. 170, 1. 13, *for "Kramer" read "Kramar"*.  
P. 196, 1. 5 from bottom, *for "Melloff" read "Moloff"*.  
P. 208, 1. 11, *for "Yugoslav" read "Yugoslavia"*.  
P. 210, 1. 12, *for "Sogostar" read "Yugoslav"*.  
P. 210, 1. 15, *for "Krstick" read "Krstic"*.

the main stems of Lrauls and Germanic Franks there are Normans, Flemings, Bretons, Germans, Ligurians, Catalans, even Basques and Arabs within the French frontier. They have become one race, more solid than any other because they are united not by race-conquest, but by the acceptance of a **"common** Latin culture, whose essence is unity, and

centralisation, with a popular spirit which makes it acceptable to every class.

Geographical conditions facilitated the making of France. The sea forms an adequate boundary in part to the north and south, wholly to the west. In the east and south are ranges of big mountains which complete the so-called natural frontiers on all sides save that of Belgium, where the invaders broke through in Marlborough's campaigns, the first after the creation of modern France by the wars and centralising policy of Louis Quatorze. The absence of hills or other geographical obstacles, in the considerable tract of fertile land so adequately protected, has simplified the work of unification. So, too, has the existence of long navigable rivers easily connected by canals. Most of these run from east to west, but the Rhone flows from north to south. And many good roads have blended the Languedoc, and the Languedoc: the latter has shared in the nineteenth-century revival of provincial literature, but not fostered a separatist movement as that of the Catalans in Spain, nor maintained the local jealousies which so long kept Italy and Germany in division.

Lastly, the French are so homogeneous because they are predominantly a peasant people. Twenty-one out of less than forty million of them work on the land. As most of these are peasant proprietors, conservative in outlook, they form an alliance with the less numerous, but intellectually and politically more powerful bourgeois, and so maintain a state of affairs which is never "ultra" or Socialist. **French** politics veer from Right to Left, but they

are inevitably Conservative or Liberal, in keeping with the old-fashioned outlook on life and a too common lack of courtesy which have always characterised this middle-class Third Republic.

## I. THE GOVERNMENT OF FRANCE.

### The Constitution.

France is a Republic with a bi-cameral system and a President at the head of the State. In comparison with his contemporary in the United States, the French President has little power. But his position is not merely that of a figure-head. Elected by the national assembly for seven years he occupies his office for a time considerably longer than that during which the majority of French Cabinets are in power. Thus he possesses a more intimate knowledge of the political affairs than most other politicians and gains all that comes from experience. Also, the President has a real influence over Party politics, as it falls largely to him to influence the choice of whichever coalition rules France. From later discussion of parties it will be seen that the Government of this country is almost inevitably a coalition. Acting with the President is that Conseil des Ministres, a Cabinet chosen from the two Chambers, which forms with him the Executive of the country.

Of the Chambers the Senate or Upper House has less power than the Chamber of Deputies. As its members must be at least forty years of age, it tends to act as a brake on the Lower House. **Besides** men of distinction and means who **have not**

taken previously an active part in politics, it contains previous deputies. The Senate has the right to amend financial legislation as it wishes, this fact helps the Chamber, properly so called, to consider its wishes elsewhere. In general, the two houses act together; but the Senate is a permanent conservative force, while the Chamber changes its political complexion. There are 314 Senators, who are elected in numbers from two to eight in the departments, according to their size, in electoral colleges composed of the deputies for the department and local authorities.

The most powerful factor in French politics is the Chamber of Deputies. It has probably more influence over France than the House of Commons has over England: where the lower and the higher grades of the Civil Service and the Cabinet tend to monopolise actual control of the situation. There is no female suffrage in France, but the Chamber is elected by all men of eighteen and over through a system of Proportional Representation. Most important to note is the fact that the French Chamber sits four years irrespective of the fate of ministries. Hence it is often out of sympathy with the Government, a factor leading to confusion.

There are 626 deputies. The P.R. system under which they are chosen varies between *scrutin d'arrondissement*, similar to the British electoral areas, instead of the *scrutin de liste*, or system of large constituencies,<sup>1</sup> with the difference that the voter balloted not for self-chosen individuals, but for a whole party list. This led to over-representation

<sup>1</sup> Such as those in the Irish Free State.

of the larger parties and gave an undue majority to the Right in 1919, and to the Left in 1924. In general, the present system—*Scrutin d'arrondissement*—is the most just.

### The Party System.

To the Englishman or American, the considerable number of French parties will appear strange. It confuses the issues in France itself. The many political groups are divided often by the merest shades of opinion, though by intense personal jealousy. Parliamentary life is older in England than elsewhere, and a wider experience has enabled Englishmen to realise the nuisance of many parties. It was otherwise in the eighteenth century. French Parliamentary life is much the same as that of England in the days of Fox and North: it is just as inconsistent.

Two large groups have appeared since the war, with a result that the situation is less confused, the life of ministries being longer and their policies bolder and more coherent. These groups are the *Bloc Nationale* on the Right, and the *Cartel des Gauches* as its name implies, on the Left.<sup>1</sup> Of these the *Bloc Nationale* was formed of an alliance of Conservatives with moderate Radicals, about the same time as Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition Government in England. It was composed of similar people

<sup>1</sup> Right and Left are common names in European politics. Respectively, they correspond to Conservatives and various grades of Radical-Socialism. In most Continental Assemblies members sit in a semi-circle facing the Speaker. These "handles" Right and Left come from the position of **members**.

with the primary aim of winning the war. There was the atheist demagogue Clemenceau, the academic politician Poincare, and the clever chameleon-Jew, Millerand. The *Bloc* helped to bring the war to a successful conclusion, but failed to effect as crushing a peace, as it would have liked. In a series of sabre-rattling actions, which culminated with the Ruhr occupation of 1922-23, the *Bloc* frightened Europe and finally disappointed France, though many Frenchmen approve of these actions which attempted, if they failed, to secure what is regarded as a just and not too severe peace. More recently the *Bloc* has taken up a less intransigent line, particularly in foreign policy where the indispensable and liberal-minded M. Briand has been supreme since 1925.<sup>1</sup>

The policy of the *Bloc Nationale* is what would be expected from an intelligent Conservative Party. It favours women's suffrage and adequate military defence, it supports industrial reform and opposes the eight-hour day ; it stands for private as opposed to State enterprise, and insists on a rigid execution of the Versailles Treaty, which it considers as a very humane verdict for Germany. There is a topical side to the *Bloc* which opposes the income-tax, always unpopular and very low in close-fisted France. Again, a country with a stationary population likes the idea of plural votes for heads of large families, and a party of respectable middle-class tinge, in the full flood of post-war religious

<sup>1</sup> Except during the three-day Herriot Government of July, 1926.

revival, lays the stress on a favourable policy to Catholicism as expressed in a general policy of toleration. The *Bloc* likes to see a French Ambassador at the Vatican, and has done much to put an end to the hostility between Church and State, which dates from the days at the beginning of the century when Combes was "President en Conseil" (Prime Minister). The monks and nuns have gone back to France. Deputies of the *Bloc Nationale* wish to support their numerous schools in common with those of any other religious denomination. At present State aid is given only to secular schools ; in these the proportion of atheists among the teachers is high.

The Liberal "*Bloc*" in French politics is known as the *Cartel des Gauches*. Formed to defeat the Conservatives in May, 1924, it was successful, and came into power under M. Herriot, whose Ministry lasted ten months. Dissensions spread among its members; there is a certain individualism among Liberals which prevents them from thinking long alike. Since 1925 the *Cartel* has seldom been powerful, but it has succeeded in terminating the Chauvinist period of *Bloc Nationale* supremacy, and recent French Governments have been far more moderate than they were before 1924. The *Cartel* has suffered undoubtedly from the cloud of popular disapproval which still hangs over one of its most brilliant members, M. Caillaux, who was accused of complicity with Germany during the war, and condemned in 1920 to lose his political rights for five years. Caillaux had been acquitted on the charge of complicity and received not only an

amnesty, but the Portfolio of Finance from the Herriot Government of 1924, but he has remained *persona ingrata* with the majority of Frenchmen. On the other hand, MM. Briand and Herriot have taken office in a subsequent Poincaré Government. The *Cartel* has lost united action, though it might easily combine again in the face of a more reactionary conservatism.

The policy of the *Cartel* is as typically Liberal as that of the *Bloc Nationale* is Conservative. It stands for short military service, a higher income-tax, less power for the Upper House and more power for the State against the Church. The anti-clerical policy of the *Gauches*, in particular their attempt to separate Church from State and suppress religious teaching in the schools of the regained provinces, that has given rise to the Alsatian movement for autonomy. As regards industry, this party favours the eight-hour day and wishes to extend State control at the expense of individualism.

Outside the *Bloc* and *Cartel* *sue* many smaller groups, of which the most interesting are the Extremists, the devotees of Royalism and the Communists. The cause of Royalism has never been dead in France, which pardons many vices for the sake of glory. No President has held the position **in the hearts** of the French which belongs to Henri Quatre and the first Napoleon. Already before the **war**, Liberal neglect of the Army in the face of the German menace led to a Royalist revival, directed by **the capable and witty Leon Daudet, son of the author Alphonse Daudet, who edits the paper "Action Française,"** round which is grouped an

organisation bearing the same name. Unfortunately for the Royalists patriotic Republicans founded about the same time the *Bloc National*, which gathered to it demagogic heroes like Qemenceau and Millerand, who were becoming more conservative and patriotic as the result, of middle-age and good living. These people took the bread out of Daudet's mouth. They won the war and did not lose the peace sufficiently to enable him to do more than form a powerful organisation which had considerable influence over the *Bloc* between 1920 and 1924. Street-fights between Communists and the Camisards (night-shirts) du Roi, as the young Royalist bravoës are called, together with much personal bitterness and the violent death of Daudet's son, prevented the *Action Franfaise* from capturing the moderate support which it needed for complete success. Finally the Vatican placed the " Action " on the Index as a return for concessions from the French Government. In 1928 Daudet was arrested and imprisoned. But native wit was still with him. A bogus telephone call caused his release by the governor of the prison, who did not realise that Royalists were at the other end of the wire in the Ministry of the Interior. After many adventures Daudet reached Brussels, where he lived in exile for nineteen months until amnestied at the reauest of individual politicians from all parties in the New Year of 1930. Apparently, Royalism has shot its bolt. If Leon Daudet were claimant to the throne instead of the admirable but less forceful Orleanist princes, the story might be different.

Communism of late has had a less spectacular

history. It exists in all its violence among the citizens of Paris, Marseilles and other great towns. But France is predominantly peasant and bourgeois. The railway enabled the country to defeat the town in the shape of the Paris Commune of 1871. No longer is Paris able when it will to stampede France into Revolution. Of its leaders, Cachin and the ex-naval officer Marty have both been in prison. Henri Barbusse, one of those authors who served as a private soldier in the war, and afterwards found plenty to write against it, has found more popularity outside his own country, where his political views are generally considered odious. France is still fearful of military attack: Communism stands little chance so long as it is pacifist and international.

### Some Politicians.

French politics may be enlivened and better understood when something is known of the men who direct them. Personalities still count more than movements in France. There are not so many aristocrats as in England, nor individualists and generals as in German politics. The French politician is usually a middle-class man with a flair for journalism, and either atheist or clerical leanings, until recently, the Church was the under-dog; but the situation has changed with the post-war religious revival.

At the **head** of the State is M. Gaston Doumergue, **one** of those capable men not quite in the first-rank who tend to become **Presidents** or **popes**

because their more brilliant contemporaries have a plethora of foes. Indeed, the chief claims to rarity which can be advanced for M. Doumergue is that he is Protestant and a bachelor. No previous President of the Republic has been the former and very few the latter. Otherwise, Jie is a barrister by profession, an ex-colonial magistrate and an ex-President of the Senate.

There were until towards the end of 1929 four outstanding personalities in French politics. Two of these, MM. Poincare and Clemenceau, belonged to the Right ; the other two, MM. Herriot and Briand, to the Left.

Raymond Poincare was born a Lorrainer in 1860. A Doctor of Law and a Scholar, he has always been the pedagogue in politics. His clarity of thought, his energy, and the right degree of narrow-mindedness for his middle-class electorate might, however, have landed him nowhere had it not been for his fierce patriotism. Reared in a province dismembered in his boyhood by the Germans, he had a bitter hatred for that country. The unswerving sincerity and directness of purpose made him a second "oon Lorrain." But it led Raymond Poincare into a series of cruel and stupid acts which Joan of Arc could never have perpetrated. Certain that Germany was not paying enough, he marched French troops into the Ruhr coal-field in 1922. Consequently the mark crashed and the franc began to follow upon its downward path. Germany was less able than before to meet her creditors. It was largely to the credit of Poincarf, who is himself a very capable financier, that the

fall of the franc was stayed. The defeat of the *Bloc Nationak*, in 1924, made it unnecessary for him to undo his own bad political work. But Poincare has all the virtues and vices of modern France to whom his clear but short-sighted policy belong. For this reason he is loved and understood in his own country, but rarely loved and generally misunderstood beyond its frontiers.

Georges Clemenceau was more comprehensible. He had not the finish of Poincare but was free, too from the latter's pedagogy and reserve. A Ven-  
deen, full of animal spirits, ready wit and a habit of breaking down opposition, Clemenceau boxed the political compass in the course of his career. He lived from 1841 until 1929, and was in the centre of affairs almost from his election as Mayor of Montmartre in 1871, the solitary gap being between 1892 and 1898, when the Nationalists drove him out of public life for the supposed complicity in the financial scandal of the Panama affair. Clemenceau started his career as a Socialist. He opposed French colonial expansion and made his name when he returned to politics by his successful championing of the Jew, Dreyfus, who had lost his commission, suffered imprisonment and been made the scapegoat of anti-Semitism by bitter clerical and military groups, helped by friends in the Chamber. Clemenceau turned the tables on his opponents by proving the innocence of Dreyfus. Then came the Combes laws which separated the Church from the State, and banished the religious orders from France.

In 1906 Clemenceau became " President du Con-

seil " (Prime Minister). Greater knowledge of affairs, old age and the fierce patriotism which has filled French Radicals of a certain demagogic type from the Revolution onwards combined to bring out Clemenceau as the spokesman of a Party which said that war was imminent but that France was unprepared for it. The period of military service was lengthened, and the *Entente* bound more closely together. Clemenceau was not very like Lord Roberts : he more resembled Mussolini who, an atheist-Socialist in his youth, emerged as a leader of the new nationalism. The war found Clemenceau editor of " L'Homme Libre," later to become " L'Homme Enchaîne." His vigorous demand for vigorous methods brought him to the front of both politics and journalism. Clemenceau combined the roles of Northcliffe and Mr. Lloyd George.

Only Clemenceau carried into the Peace that same intransigent spirit which had carried him through the war. It was inevitable. England and the U.S.A. had secured their main ends with the destruction of the German Fleet and the crippling of German commerce. France, a land power, four times \* invaded from the east in the course of the century, demanded guarantees even at the sacrifice of the now sacred principle of nationality. Actually the Versailles Treaty of 1919 dealt out stiffer terms to the conquered than the Paris Treaty at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. And in **each case, a new**

<sup>1</sup>1814, 1815, 1870, 1914—the first three occasions on her own provocation.

Government in the defeated country had put forward a plea for mild treatment in order to popularise its pacifist rule. But Clemenceau was no Metternich. He had all the ignorance, the short-sightedness, the revengeful spirit of the demagogue. By this time he had come to glory in his nick-name of "Tiger." President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George tried to make him moderate his demands, but he looked on them as traitors who would desert France, the real victor,<sup>1</sup> after their own ends had been secured. Clemenceau was heard to speak of his difficulty in working with two men, "one of whom thought he was Napoleon and the other Jesus Christ." In his whole attitude there was something straight and virile, if dangerous and stupid, which won him popularity all over France, and sympathy outside. Clemenceau made and kept personal friends throughout the world. He lived to make an unhappy lecture tour in America, which has seen through Lafayette, and to see the failure of the Ruhr occupation. When he died it was as an atheist, with the desire to be buried erect in unconsecrated ground down in his own province of the Vendee. But the chosen spot proved to be so rocky that he had to be laid to rest like other men.

After these Chauvinists, the bland M. Herriot appears a soothing figure. He smokes a pipe like Mr. Baldwin, whom he resembles, too, in his affec-

<sup>1</sup> Every belligerent nation, including Germany, looks on its Army as primarily responsible for winning the war. And quite a good case can be made out for all. /

tion for his own part of the country. Even when "President du Conseil," M. Herriot spent two days a week in visiting his native Lyons, of which he has long been Mayor. As leader of the *Cartel des Gauches* Herriot was responsible for that defeat of the militarist *Bloc National* in 1924, which helped to keep the peace of Europe. Since then, he has served under Poincaré. Herriot is a moderate of the Left with a considerable knowledge of tactics, the hope of many years of life before him, and the probability of a great future. The difference between Englishmen and Frenchmen appears in the different way popular opinion views the rather vulgar idiosyncrasies of its great men. Mr. Baldwin's pipe has sometimes been his saving grace; but the pipe and shirt-sleeves of M. Herriot have, outside the Lyonnais, earned him something of the contempt which fell on poor Louis Philippe, the first French monarch to carry an umbrella and send his sons to a public school.

All these politicians come and go with the constant change of Parliamentary politics. But France has in Aristide Briand, one whose supreme knowledge of the situation makes him the indisputable Foreign Minister of every Government. In seven of the eight most recent French Governments, Briand has held this position—and the Herriot Ministry from which he was absent, lasted only three days. It is nearly twenty years since Briand first became a Minister, and besides his long **rule over** Foreign Affairs, he has been "President du Conseil" ten times. **An old Radical and anti-Clerical, Briand has mellowed. His chief care is**

the League of Nations. Critics have said that, in the first place he was not its sincere champion as he now is. Undoubtedly Briand has done tremendous service both to France and to Europe by bringing French foreign politics into more peaceful ways, and b) i) destroying the legend that France had succeeded Germany as the sabre-rattler of the Continent.

Before taking leave of French politicians it would be well to mention a fifth whose career has been finished, not as in the case of Clemenceau by death, but during his own lifetime. Alexandre Millerand has one of the subtlest minds in France. He is a Jew, and went through the political iEneid from Socialist to Conservative more quickly than most of his colleagues. In 1920 he became President of the Republic and soon showed his desire to make that office one of greater personal power, to change its ornamental position for something like the more real power of the American President. During 1922 one of the all but innumerable Allied Conferences was being held at Cannes. A Cartelist Briand Government was in power but forced into resignation by President Millerand, whose avowed dislike of its principles brought him out as a champion of the *Not Nationalt*; a departure from the tradition of unbiased, impotent Presidents. The ambitions of Millerand developed for two years, at the end of which time he presented through the Marsal Government a petition to the Chamber which was defeated. M. Herriot came into power. At once the resignation of the autocratic Millerapd was forced. He had been in power barely four years,

instead of the statutory seven. The incident shows the power of the democratic spirit still existent in France.

## II. DOMESTIC PROBLEMS.

### **Antiquated Bureaucratic Methods.**

In England the Civil Service is a name which still inspires a respect which is almost awe. It infers Whitehall, and not the village Post Office, though it contains both. The most brilliant products of public schools and universities continue to prefer it to Callisthenes: the State is preferable as a bore to the individual.

In France the Civil Service is something much more extensive. Democracies incline to breed bureaucracy. In France it has meant numbers of offices, overfilled with underpaid clerks. They are the black-coated middle-class workers who, with the peasants, form the backbone of the Third Republic. Their poverty often drives them to dishonesty. Inevitably, it needs that thrift which approaches meanness and has become such a disappointing, dominant element in the French character. Yet the French bourgeois looks upon a post in the Civil Service with almost the same reverence as the Irish peasant has for a son who has become a priest. Both are eminently safe "jobs/" The French bureaucrat may be underpaid, but he is secure for life in a respectable position. Realising this, the Government tyrannises its employees. Big business firms and financial houses do the **same**. **They can afford to do so. In a recent strike of**

clerks, the banks managed to carry on with one-third of their staff.

It is the existence of a considerable well-educated but impoverished middle-class which tends to keep down the birth-rate in France. No doubt the legend of French decadence is not without truth. But the fact that both Bourgeois and peasants wish to hand on to their children undiminished their small savings is the primary cause. The danger of a stationary or receding population to France lies in the rapid growth of the population in Germany and Italy, two countries lacking in suitable colonies for their surplus which they want to keep. Hence arises another war-scare, for France has suitable colonies outside Europe and provinces within her own frontiers which may be reasonably claimed by the nations concerned.<sup>1</sup>

The third grave domestic problem in modern France is linked up with foreign policy. This is the Alsatian question. The province of Alsace with its mountains, its valley and the Rhine is one of the most beautiful in Europe. The people are kindly, simple and hospitable. Strongly Catholic in religion, they are of Germanic stock, akin to the Borderers on the other side of the river. Down to the time of Louis Quatorze, Alsace was part of the Holy Roman Empire. It was annexed as the result of war by France, as an invaluable buttress to the Eastern frontier, and a gate into Germany. The Alsatians are an easy-going people, and took little heed of the political change so long as there

<sup>1</sup> See, p. 20, *infra*, on Foreign Policy.

was no interference with local customs. All went well until 1871 when the provinces of Lorraine and Alsace were handed over to the new German Empire as the result of the war of 1870-71. Lorraine was definitely French in sympathy and could not have easily been satisfied with German rule; but the Alsatians might easily have absorbed had they been allowed to control their own affairs, or even been governed by their kinsmen in South Germany. However, the mistake was made of forming the two provinces into a Reichsland (Imperial) territory: this meant unsympathetic Prussian rule. There were disturbances out of which French politicians and journalists made capital. Undoubtedly the general public of the Allied nations looked on Alsace as a purely French province which longed for nothing more than French government.

It is doubtful whether there was any such desire outside French circles in Strassbourg and certain other towns in Lower Alsace. No doubt glib promises made in November, 1918, caused the hungry and war-weary Alsatians to welcome French rule as the emancipation which it had meant in 1782. But the story goes that the French soldiers who entered Strassbourg at the head of the victorious army were embraced by girls brought from Paris for that purpose.<sup>1</sup>

Disillusion soon came. The French Government was not particularly to blame for the high

<sup>1</sup> This need not be taken too seriously. There were plenty of Strassbourgeoises with or without political sympathies willing no doubt to perform such a task at such a time.

cost of living and the depreciation of the coinage, evils which the Alsatians would have suffered to a greater extent had they remained German. But attempts by the Cartelists to separate the Church from the State and to stop religious teaching in the Alsatian schools, as it had already been stopped elsewhere in France, led to an Autonomist Movement which views, too, with distaste the centralising tendency of the Republican Government. Before 1871 the Alsatians had been part of a Catholic Imperial France. They have now to deal with a Republic which is still anti-clerical whenever the Left is in power. Recently the situation has been improved as the result of assurances that the local privileges of Alsace will be respected and by the release of certain imprisoned autonomist leaders. But the threat to the schools remains, and the position is far from satisfactory. Alsatians do not wish to return to Germany; rather would they prefer Home Rule or union with the other small States which border the Rhine in a confederation which would recall the old mediaeval empire of Lothair, whose disappearance has removed the buffer-State between France and Germany, and so made many wars.

#### . FOREIGN POLICY.

There is an historic continuity about French foreign policy. It has had the same aims and tried to secure them by similar means since French nationality came into being. Modern history begins with the collapse of the mediaeval world and the discovery of the New. Constantinople fell to the

Infidel, and Rome had to surrender Northern Europe to the Protestants ; in return there grew up nationality, the source of most of the wars during the subsequent four centuries.

France did not make the most of early opportunities. She became a nation as early as any in Europe, except England and Spain, both of which had ambitions across the Ocean. But she became entangled in useless Italian undertakings and was then overtaken by her own Wars of Religion, so that only with the seventeenth century came expansion towards the natural frontiers. Henri Quatre, typical and yet pioneer Frenchman as he was, added the first provinces—Bresse, Bugey and Gex on the Italian frontier.<sup>1</sup> Assassination stopped him from making war on the Emperor, but Richelieu did so and Mazarin secured the southern frontier by the Treaty of the Pyrenees. Louis Quatorze added Alsace ; Louis Quinze, Lorraine; and Louis Seize, Corsica. The Napoleonic Wars were only an empty glory, but Talleyrand saw that Europe of the Vienna Treaties should have no great power in the Netherlands. Napoleon III. won in Nice and Savoy more territory of permanent value than his uncle had done, and the French Republic has regained the Rhine provinces which he lost. On all sides except the North, France has reached the natural boundary of river, sea and mountain behind which she can feel secure. And the North

<sup>1</sup> During the reign of Henry II. at the close of the Italian wars, France had secured the three bishoprics of Metz, Toul and Verdun. But this was a mere flash and not the beginning of the continuous period of expansion.

is safe because Belgium is friendly to France, and England will always help both of them to keep a country so near her shores out of the hands of a great foreign power. This was the primary cause of her struggle with Philip II., Louis XIV., Napoleon and William II. The thumbscrew, the guillotine and the scrap of paper were all very plausible excuses.

At present then France is in possession of the European territory which is her vital need. Her gain has meant the loss of Germany and Italy, two young and growing Powers who, moreover, have no colonies of great value for white men to settle. In Algeria a new race of Frenchmen is growing up which has already made that province more French than Brittany or Alsace. Again, the African colonies provide France with that reserve of man-power which she needs to bring her Army up to the numerical strength of her more populous neighbours. But German or Italian submarines could prevent the transport of African troops to Europe. France has to adopt other means, and here she has at her disposal a policy which goes back to Francois Premier. *Round her rivals she makes a ring of allies.* In the old days Sweden, Russia and Turkey were generally ready to attack the Empire from the East. Now the Little Entente of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia has been formed against aggression which some of its members expect from Germany, some from Hungary and others **from Italy, francee** is behind this alliance. At times it has seemed that she was its chief **member.** **A change has come since the improvement of Franco-**

German relations, since the fall of Poincare and the German recognition of the French right to Alsace and Lorraine. Germany is primarily interested in the East, where the Polish Corridor hurts her moral sense and perhaps material prosperity more than any other loss she has sustained.. Were France to surrender her Eastern allies as a price for Germany's final recognition of the *status quo* in the West, history would have turned an unexpected corner. But that is still very unlikely. When Louis Quatorze in his pride neglected this traditional policy of encirclement, he laid the way for a coalition against himself. Albert Sorel charged him rightly as one who "*denatura le systime das si que*" of French foreign policy. This Conservative, middle-class republic is not likely to take so bold a step. It is left to kings to be young and to handle Fortune roughly.

Modern France has the safeguards of a good frontier and the largest standing Army in Europe. She will not surrender them to the League of Nations in whose goodwill she is more ready to trust than in the competence to hold back the invader. After all France has been invaded four times between 1814 and 1914. Frenchmen rarely see the case against themselves, and do not remember that in 1814, 1815 and 1870 they brought war on themselves.<sup>1</sup> So they rest confronting old problems in old ways, almost the only surviving children of the Old Europe, and outspoken, not altogether unjust critics of the New.

<sup>1</sup> The question of war guilt in 1914 is a harder question.

## CHAPTER n.

### GERMANY.

INEVITABLY Germany is in the forefront of any contemporary study of European politics. First as the "*enfant terrible*" of the Continent, then as the powerful antagonist of the grandest alliance since Napoleon's time, and finally as a new voice in the Concert of Europe she occupies the centre of the stage. Europe and England have dreaded Germany, fought with her, defeated her armies and come to fraternise with her people in their new-won freedom. Industrious, yet loving leisure, strong bodied and soft souled, friendly, inquisitive, often false, the German with his smartness and his ill-cut clothes is one of the riddles of Europe.

Probably Germany's youth as a nation has done much to settle the course of her recent history. United three centuries after England and France, she found herself not only kept from the profitable colonial possessions enjoyed by such Great Powers, but even from similar privileges in the hands of a Spain, a Portugal, a Holland. Germany was young, ambitious and conscious of her strength. Also like most youthful nations and individuals she was certainly lacking in experience. Her desire to develop

was natural. It had been felt and realised half a century before by Great Britain and France, who between them held most of the colonial world. But Germany had grown up too late. She was made to pay the penalty of her misfortune—or mistake—at the hands of a world coalition in which Great Britain was allied with her old enemy America, and Frenchmen fought for the same cause as the Russian Army which had broken the power of Napoleon. After more than four years of struggle in every Continent, with unparalleled ferocity, the Germans were beaten.

Since then (1919-31) they have been paying for their defeat. Land, money, cattle, people, together with new toys, like stocks and percentages have gone to foot the bill. By the London Agreement of August, 1924, Germany's reparation payments were graduated, rising from 1000 million gold marks (£50,000,000), in the first year, to 2500 million gold marks in 1928-29. All this is apart from payments in kind, cattle, ships and rolling stock, and, too, from Germany's upkeep of the armies which were occupying her Rhineland.

The considerable success with which the German Reich<sup>1</sup> has overcome its tremendous difficulties, bears evidence to the thrift and courage of the people. There are profiteers and bad subjects in Germany as elsewhere, but the honesty and loyalty of the people have made themselves most apparent in this successful effort to save the integrity of Germany and to keep the peace as long as they were able to

<sup>1</sup> The name is maintained under the Republic. It means Empire, but need have no monarchist significance.

do so. Certain moral principles are for ever emphasising their presence in post-war Germany, their importance must be realised before any accurate picture may be obtained of the German mind. First of all comes the insistence that Germany is free from any special war guilt, free that is to say from any greater responsibility for the catastrophe than that of any other Power. So far as the German people goes, this claim has plenty of substantiation. Moreover, the fact that they obeyed their Government and went obediently into war might be urged against any belligerent country. The attitude of the German Government is more obscure. Undoubtedly the Army chiefs wanted war. But when after a long period of peace, have they not done so? Not until the archives of the British and French Foreign Offices have been fully opened to the public can we rightly apportion war guilt: at present with the papers of Imperial Russia, Imperial Germany and Imperial Austria before us, we can only say that there is plenty of blame to be attached to all concerned.

Believing that they are not unduly to blame for the war, Germans look on the Treaty of Versailles as particularly unjust. They assert that they laid down their arms on the understanding that the Peace would be fair, made in accordance with President Wilson's Fourteen Points. The fact that their Army, short of artillery and old soldiers, **would in every likelihood have received a crushing defeat in the field had the war gone further into the winter of 1918, is overlooked or denied by Germans, who see only the hypocrisy of creating a new Alsace**

in West Prussia and a misuse of the plebiscite in Upper Silesia. Reparations, too, came very heavy to a Germany suffering from economic as well as from moral and physical exhaustion. However insufficient they seemed at one time to a certain section of the Allied Press, their enormity was continually stressed by the German newspapers. And in Germany as in England the papers are still read, and trusted.

Modern Germany has tried to set her house in order. The Emperor has gone and with him his satellite Kings. The Reich (Empire) remains but it is at the same time a Republic. Socialism has been the most powerful force in Germany since 1918. It is the natural reaction from the failure of fifty years\* militarism. Of course, Conservatism has not disappeared. Actually, it is very powerful, able to draw the economically unsound picture of a Republican Germany inferior in wealth and prestige to its monarchist prototype of 1914: the war has left this and all other whole-time belligerent Powers poorer than they used to be. All the same it is blatant that modern Germany contains millions of new poor, and easy to mock at the republican cock crowing on a dunghill. But new forces have come into being which German Conservatism, with its narrow if successful devotion to old-fashioned tactics, hardly knows how to face. The German Youth Movement calls for treatment at greater length than this introduction allows ; **it has made a fresh revelation of the German soul, something vast and indefinite, with a plethora of virtues and mistakes quite beyond the comprehension of**

the narrow, exact intelligence of the older school of German thinkers.

### **The Revolution.**

Revolution came not on the Western Front, but at home. For a long while, the sailors of the High Sea Fleet had seen no service. They cleaned and manned the ships battered at Jutland in the safe waters of the Hamburg harbour and the Kiel Canal. Naval disparity was sufficient to make an onslaught on the British Fleet sheer suicide. But the German Naval Command would seem to have neglected the danger from an inaction which left their sailors a ready prey to agitators and too conscious of the want which England's "hunger blockade" was making prevalent in Germany, particularly in the industrial areas. The cold spell of 1917-18 has been called the Ruben winter from the swedes which formed the staple diet of the people at the time.

The General Staff made a well-planned and final attempt to break through the Allied lines in France and Flanders during the summer of 1918. Ludendorff said, "If my offensive at Reims succeeds we have won the war." It very nearly was successful, but fell short of completion just as the attack on the British in March had done. The arrival of thousands of American troops, the prospects of millions more, the conversion of the British force from an amateur into a professional army, and renewed optimism in the ranks of the French; all these combined to add a moral superiority to that possessed henceforward by the Allies' in artillery,

aeroplanes and other war mechanism. The Franco-British counter attack on 8th August was called by Ludendorff the "black day of the German Army," three weeks later Austria announced her intention of making a separate peace, Bulgaria and Turkey collapsed. November saw the German Army in retreat from Belgium and France, though intact and apparently capable of putting up a strong defence along the powerful line of the Meuse and the Ardennes.

Meantime the Government at Berlin had changed. Defeat in the field suggested liberalism at home as a prelude to peace. The new Chancellor was Prince Max of Baden, intellectual pacifist and well intentioned, but hardly the Minister for the crisis which was coming. It came first with the Fleet. Attempting to revive public spirit which had become depressed by the Army's retreat the German Admiralty ordered the High Sea Fleet to attack England. A blow was to be struck at any cost. But the sailors, realising the odds against them, refused to attack; they were ready to defend their German coasts against attack, nothing more.

Mutiny soon followed. It began on 28th October. The first blood was shed at Kiel exactly a week later. More astonishing still the Imperial Government, which had successfully defied the greater part of the world for four years, collapsed in a few hours before its own proletariat, which had never been allowed its say in affairs of State.

Revolution spread rapidly through Germany. **The** industrial towns, largely situated in the north, proceeded to occupy the factories with Workmen's

and Soldiers' Councils. Railway communication between Berlin and the Front was interrupted. On 7th November, within three days of the outbreak of the Revolution, the Emperor William abdicated his throne, the Crown Prince surrendering his own claims on the following day. A Republic was set up which included all the Imperial territories. Ebert, a saddler from Heidelberg, and leader of the Majority (Moderate) Socialists, came to the head of the new State.<sup>1</sup> Negotiations with the Allies led speedily to an Armistice on 11th November, 1918.

### **The Threat of Social Revolution.**

Political revolution had been effected with considerable speed and success. Social revolution was soon attempted and failed. Primarily the cause of the diversity of result lies in the fact that, whereas the former was necessary, the latter was not. Level-headed Germans condemned political autocracy, but had no wish to do away with the capitalist system. The fact is significant, as Germany at the time was hungry, impoverished and aggrieved, all of which maladies she had good reason to ascribe to the mistaken attitude of the aristocracy who had controlled the nation in 1914. Common sense, good nature and equally good education have all been ascribed as reasons for this discrimination between the political failure and economic merits of the ruling classes.

<sup>1</sup> His election as President of the Republic did not take place until 1919. During the last two months of 1918, the Government was in the hands of a Council of the Deputies of the People.

German Communists had, of course, the example of Russia to encourage them ; there, military breakdown and naval had started off a revolution which overthrew not only the existing political system but landlords, clergy and capitalists of every kind. In Germany, the Communist leaders had, however, not the ability of Lenin and Trotsky. Liebknecht, a typical demagogue, and Rosa Luxemburg, a well-intentioned woman editor, were the chief of them. Their party was called Spartacist, after the leader of the rebellious Roman slaves. The first Congress of their Workmen's and Soldiers' Councils was held in December, 1919. The name recalled Bolshevism. Nothing else followed the Soviet model. Actually the moderate Socialists took control of affairs. However, Communist propaganda in Army, Navy and Police made it apparent that insurrection from the Left Wing would be difficult to crush. It was determined to remove the danger before it became too grave. A force of middle-class volunteers was raised and placed under the command of Noske, a Socialist and a patriot, who said, " Somebody must be the bloodhound : I won't shirk the responsibility." The power of the Spartacists was broken after some riots in January, 1919, both Liebknecht and Luxemburg being killed in questionable circumstance when under arrest. There was an outcry against their deaths among both moderate and extreme Socialists, but that did not prevent a big majority in the January elections for " the party which Noske served." The Majority (Moderate) Socialists showed their determination not to let private sentiment triumph over the exigencies of

public policy. Actually, Communist risings have occurred since then in the Reich, but they have never had any considerable hope of success. The failure of Bolshevism to make Russia prosper and the nationalist turn which a prolonged occupation of the Rhineland has given to German politics have combined to limit Spartacist power.

Meantime, while the application of Soviet principles to German economics has failed, the capitalist system has taken a new lease of life.

### Stinnes, Rathenau and the New Trusts.

"It is economics not politics that matters," wrote Hugo Stinnes. In these words he summed up the new generation's contempt for the flatulent sterility of democratic politicians, who were unable to save Europe from the disasters subsequent to war. In Italy and Russia this complaint has led to a shelving of democracy, self-government has been sacrificed to government by experts. On the other hand, republican Germany has adopted democracy but allowed chief interest to shift to the sphere of economics: here and not in the political world are fortunes to be made in the bankrupt state; the great men of the present generation tend to be industrialists not Ministers of State.

The development of German industry is largely associated with that of the Trust. When the close of the war brought economic disaster and the fall of **the** mark German business men found strength in unity. Private firms coalesced. At first **these Trusts were** only "horizontal," unions of businesses

of the same kind, firms employed in selling or producing similar goods. It soon became clear that a further degree of assimilation would allow bigger profits and cheaper costs of production and sale, because overhead expenses could be greatly reduced by firms which controlled gril the materials necessary for their produce, from start to finish. The first move in this new direction came with the union of two important organisations representative of the heavy and finishing industries into the " Reichsverband der deutschen Industrie."

The progress of this new economic revolution is principally associated with the names of Hugo Stinnes and Walther Rathenau. Stinnes came of a well-known Rhenish industrialist family. His grandfather had founded the firm which grew rich in much the same way as did many a big business house in Victorian England. Industrial revolution in Germany came rather later than in this country, but otherwise there was little difference: the Stinnes' were the kind of people written of by Herr Mann and Mr. Galsworthy. During the nineteenth century the Stinnes firm had been previously interested in coal and in river navigation. Trie first steam tugs on the Rhine were supplied by grandfather Stinnes. At the age of twenty-one grandson Hugo entered the firm. Very industrious, very intelligent, born and bred in the business, he did actually learn all that was to be learnt within two years. His father and uncles having taught **him** what they could, he took out his **modest** fifty **thousand** marks share of the **capital** and **with it** **founded his own business.**

Hugo Stinnes' appointment as head of the Deutsch-Luxemburg Trust was his first big advance. Proceeding to organise the business along "vertical" lines, he bought means of production for his goods from start to finish. The fall of the mark and the collapse of many firms in the Rhineland, subsequent to the Allied occupation, enabled Stinnes to buy up cheaply and so extend the branches and interests of his firm. Two Hamburg companies sold him their ships, so giving him the chance of developing maritime commerce along his own lines of personal control. Reparations and inflation had some ill-effect on Stinnes, who saw half the property of his Deutsch-Luxemburg Company ceded to the French, but he was in no way so severely hit as his individualist rivals from whose financial difficulties he derived great profit, buying up two companies whose effects were added to Deutsch-Luxemburg. His move to world possession and world fame synchronised with the collapse of many an old German business house. There were plenty of the inevitable difficulties to snare the footsteps of this Fairy Prince's rivals.

Meantime Hugo Stinnes increased his giant strides with magic speed. He took over Siemens-Schuckert, the second electro-technical business in the world.<sup>1</sup> Czech coal-mines, the Austrian metal industry and a Hungarian bank came under his control. National enmity meant little to this man who shared his Hungarian financial interests with the English and had some control over the French

<sup>1</sup> The A.E.G. being the first..

armament firm of Schneider-Creusot at a time when the French military occupation had brought Franco-German hatred to its most bitter degree. While Stinnes did not allow himself to be bothered by national differences, he became popular in Germany owing to his triumph over the enemy's attempts to produce national impoverishment, and hated at Paris as a supposed type of the sham-poor Reich which was for ever declaring its inability to pay reparation claims. Stinnes added hotels, fisheries and paper mills to his Trust. He realised the value of the Press. Perhaps he aimed at political dominion, though this is unlikely : Stinnes neither understood nor liked politics as Rathenau did. He seemed to buy for the sake of buying, to increase his territory whimsically like some nation rich enough to bid for prestige when the needs of sustenance are satisfied. It was said that he owned one-third of Germany's wealth, and that he intended to take over her railways. His thousands of employees were working hard on good wages and the goodwill which Stinnes had won from the Trade Unions. Then quite suddenly and rather mysteriously Stinnes died in 1924.

Rathenau came to die with more tragic quickness. His wealth and activities were more extensive even than those of Stinnes. But the man himself was different.

Stinnes was a great captain of industry. Rathenau was that and more. His philosophy, his taste and wealth of political conception made him perhaps the most brilliant German of the post-war period. The business triumphs of the family were due to

the father, Emil Rathenau, a middle-class Jew of great talent, who developed company after company, and eventually founded A.E.G., the greatest electrical combine in the world. As a young man, Walther Rathenau proved himself an inventor, an artist, a chemist of the first class. When he became head of the firm its activities developed, its international connections dwarfed those of the Stinnes group. Anglo-Dutch capitalists, Schneider-Creusot, and German-American shipping were all closely connected with Rathenau. The A.E.G. merged with Krupp and the Otto Wolff banking concern. No man in Germany was more powerful than Walther Rathenau. And he was a Jew and a Socialist. Actually, industrial development seems to have been more the concern of Rathenau's business allies than of himself. He was looking for a way to abolish the "proletarian condition" by better education, revision of the property laws, and a strict limitation to inheritance. A realist, he hated idle Socialist talk, and deplored the conceit of the Revolution as much as that of the old Government. Rathenau lived in an eighteenth-century villa with decorations by Gilly: he was the dandy Jew. Stinnes had generally made his home in a dingy hotel room. Rathenau confessed to liking the Kaiser; both men hoped to revive the old Liberal Germany. Rathenau was no "posein," he was ahead of his time, a versatile creature, with the world at his feet, who wished chiefly to save the world. But ex-officer organisations saw in him only a "dirty Jew," one of the traitors who had signed the Treaty of Versailles. He was shot by two of them under positively brutal

circumstances on 24th June, 1922. His death rallied the new Germany. It has been said that never since the murder of Lincoln had a nation been so stirred.<sup>1</sup>

### The Youth Movement.

Very different from the vertical Trust is the German Youth Movement (*Jugendbewegung*). Yet its cause is the same national crisis which led to the reorganisation of German industry, and it embodies another but equally typical side of the German character, whose genius for music and lyric poetry is as great as for industry and commerce. Except for the Anglo-Saxons the Germans are the greatest travellers the modern world knows. In the air or the charabanc, speeding swiftly across the Atlantic, climbing the Dolomites, trudging to Andorra they may be found queerly clad and cheerful with a sacred love of adventure. It was almost all that remained to them after the war. Too poor to go abroad, too much hated in most European countries to make such travel possible, seeking reaction from the pitilessly efficient and bankrupt organisation which had suppressed their individuality for three generations, the Germans of 1919 sought for peace and recreation in their own lovely hills and forests.

Love of nature is strong in the German mind. It explains his kindness, his temperamental passions, even his uncouth appearance and his unsophisticated charm. In nature the German finds that freedom of thought and expression which is **typical**

<sup>1</sup> Count Harry Kessler, "Walter Rathenau."

of him. Not the fifty years of Prussianism but the fifteen hundred years of frequent spiritual greatness and continuous national division form the true expression of this people's spirit. No doubt now the unity which Prussian methods have instilled into them will remain : it is worth while to Germany and to Europe that it should, but the time is ripe and has arrived for a return to that inconsequence of action which is a good breeder of genius and humanity.

Poverty and freedom from routine, together with love of travel and the will to walk drove Germans of all classes and youthful ages into the countryside during the spring of 1919. With each year, the number increased. Wearing little, and dressed much like one another in shorts and open shirts, boys and girls would go out sometimes only for the day, at other times for tramps which would extend beyond the borders of the Empire to Sweden or Venice. In general, there was little political activity at first in connection with these young people who roamed together, ate together, and sang together with a town nag at their head, stout sticks in their hand, and a pipe or violin to keep them cheerful on their way.

The movement dates back to years before the war, when Karl Fischer gathered round him in the Gymnasium of Steglitz many of his pupils who **felt** a **need** of greater freedom in their lives, which Prussian homes **and** State education had only **too carefully planned**. This was 1896. Eight years **later**, the **WandervSgel (Wandering Bird) Association** was **founded**. The **organisation spread far and with**

speed. Youth at that time inevitably rebelled against routine: now that democracy is triumphant, it so often clamours for the order of State control. Fischer's young men and women had begun by country tramps and folk songs, they went on to a more or less innocuous protest against mechanism, materialism and artificiality of all kinds. In the year before the war there was a great meeting on the Hohe Meissner, near Kassel. But war came, the Wandervogel fell into line to protect German freedom, and the movement slept for four years, despite an occasional meeting, such as the rally on the Lorelei Rock in 1917. The primitive spirit of the Youth Movement remained intact.

It lacked the wider interpretation which defeat and easier virtue brought in 1918-19. A strange mixture of emotions went to make up this new phase of the Youth Movement. There was vague talk of a new race seeking a new manhood through association with the soil, there was some pan-Germanism intent on intensive physical training, and there was a good deal of crankiness, preaching, long hair and no meat or tobacco or alcohol. But behind all this, revolt of heart against head was the means of good health and high spirits: largely to the Youth Movement must be ascribed the change of outlook to be found to-day in Germany which has made that country moderate and pacific in outlook at any rate so far as Western Europe is concerned.

There is, indeed, a considerable spiritual endeavour in this movement. So varied and comparatively immature is still the *Jugendbewegung*

that it is difficult to generalise about it. But undoubtedly these young Germans looking on the world as a place of striving, have come to realise its dynamic element. Religion, if not always Christianity, is beginning to find a warmer place in men's hearts, and there is a revulsion from the agnostic realism of men like Bertrand Russell and the school of liberal atheists. Of course, the movement takes on the form of hundreds of different organisations. Many of these have a political character. Just as Fascist and Bolshevist alike have found the value of Boy Scouts, so every large German political party has its youth wing. The Stahlhelm, the Wehrwolf, and the Jungdeutsche Orden are Nationalist (Conservative), the Arbeiter Jugend and Kommunistische Jugend are Socialist, and there are several clerical groups. Apart from these are the older non-political "Bünde" of which the chief are Pfadfinder, Wandervogel, Adler und Falken, Deutsche Freischar and Grossdeutsche Jugendbund. The practical side of the German character is shown by the care taken to provide clean and cheap board and lodging for their young travellers, who find a bed and meal at the cost of a few pence in any of the numerous shelters (Herberge) up and down the country. Generally the food is of the plainest and the bed only a wooden shelf, but youthful enthusiasm appears to welcome hard living in Germany.

## THE CONSTITUTION, THE PARTIES AND THE PRESS.

## The Constitution.

More about Germany can be learnt from the study of her people than from that of her Government. Like so many in post-war Europe/this last has been made in moments of crisis and marks a breakaway from the earlier type. It is not the result of many centuries' peaceful evolution as in England, there is no sign of ripe experience in Germany as over here, although the constitutional work is well done, as is only to be expected of this cultured, thorough people.

In general a dual motive appears to run through the German constitution. It is democratic in so far as autocratic have been made to give way to popular powers : it is centralised so that federal and often individual freedom have been diminished. The State has more power than it had before the revolution: it uses this power mostly for democratic ends.

The power of the President of the Reich is rather more than that of the French, but less than that of the American President. The fact that he holds power for seven years gives him almost inevitably a longer continuous experience of office than have the ministries which govern under him. In case of dispute between the Reichstag (Parliament) and Reichsrat (State Assembly),<sup>1</sup> the Reich's President

<sup>1</sup> These terms are loose, they are used here to make explanation more easy. Later they will be more fully described\*

has the right to decide the question through a referendum—by referring the dispute to the electorate. Actually, a man of considerable personality, like President Hindenburg, can exercise far greater powers than those officially assigned to him. On the other hand, a mediocre President would be only a State figure-head.

Legislative and administrative powers are in the hands of the Reichstag and the Reichsrat, the former being a one-chamber Parliament checked in power by the latter, a State Assembly smaller in numbers but considerable in power. All men and women over twenty years or age have a right to vote in the Reichstag, which contains 493 deputies. The Imperial Chancellor approximates in power to the British Prime Minister, though he tends to stand more above his Ministerial colleagues than is the case in this country. Through standing committees the Reichstag maintains its control over foreign and domestic problems during the recess. Deputies are elected for four years. Seats are allotted according to a P.R. law of April, 1920, by which the total votes cast for party lists are divided by 60,000, one seat being allotted for each of these quotas of votes. By means of a national list of seats other votes are added and seats filled: here the political "ace" scores heavily and often brings success to a list of "safe" mediocrities.

There is no Senate nor House of Lords in Germany, but a brake on the Reichstag exists in the Reichsrat, a State Assembly of sixty-six members elected on the method of a member per State and per million inhabitants, which has the right of

preliminary sanction of and protest against a Reichstag Bill. In case of a clash between the two bodies the President may sanction a referendum. If more than two-thirds of the Reichstag are in favour of such a course the President *must* concur with their wishes by referring the matter to the electorate.

Perhaps the most interesting novelty in the German Constitution is the Reichswirtschaftsrat or Imperial Economic Council which examines social and economic measures before their presentation to the Reichstag. Employers and employees are alike represented on its board, as too are the experts and the all too frequently neglected consumers. The service of this body has been quite invaluable despite a certain tendency to kill ideas by wrangles. Twenty standing committees are attached to the Reichswirtschaftsrat which has sessions every two months. In this economic element will be seen democratic Germany's recognition of the principle that the economic side of Government should be treated by experts. It is the problem which Italy and Russia have tried to solve at the cost of democratic institutions.

### Parties.

The Party system is by no means so important in Germany as it is in England. Perhaps this is because there are too many parties, perhaps because there is not enough difference between their views, or even that the history of Parliamentary government in Germany is so young that we must look back to the numerous groups of Restoration England for

a parallel. Indeed the critic will find considerable difficulty in distinguishing between the many shades of opinion as he moves from Left to Right. There is one exception. The Centre Party (Zentrum), that of the Clericals, is the oldest and best organised in Germany, with a political machine probably still unexampled in Europe. Founded to fight Bismarck at the time of the Kulturkampf, and victorious against the man who had beaten Napoleon III. and the Hapsburgs, the Centre or Clericalist Party continues to occupy an important place in German politics. It has avoided the mistakes of the French Clericals in quarrelling with a Republican Government, and at the same time profited from the reaction against Prussianism which followed the defeat of 1918, to push the frontiers of Catholicism and of Catholic political influence into North Germany. The Imperial Chancellor, Dr. Marx, is chairman of the Centre Party, which has been associated with every Government since 1920, except in the case of the Right Wing Luther Government (1926). Observance of the Versailles Treaty, friendly relations with the Vatican, denominational education and the moderate reform of middle-class politics are the main factors in the programme of the Zentrum. As might be expected the Party is strongest in the Catholic South, though the recent decline of Lutheranism has facilitated its gain of seats in other parts of Germany.

To the Right and Left stand many Parties. On the Right (Conservative) Wing are, as in England, two Parties, one being the original Conservative Party and the other the Right Wing of die Liberal

Party which formed a close alliance with the Conservatives during the war and votes with them against the Socialists and Left Wing Radicals of the Republic. Nowadays, all Parties in Germany have popular names. The Conservative Party, though it recruits itself largely from the Die-hard squires of North Germany, is called the Deutsch-Nationale Volkspartei, although the latter word is clipped in everyday speech. Monarchist and Conservative, it had in Admiral von Tirpitz a Chairman of the Party.<sup>1</sup> More moderate members of the Party vote with the Government, which, though in general predominantly Socialist, is always to a considerable extent a Ministry of All the Talents. The Deutsche Volkspartei, or Right Wing of the old National Liberal Party, is largely monarchist but more liberal and constitutionalist than the Deutsch-Nationale. The late Admiral Scheer, a more enlightened seaman and politician than Tirpitz, supported it, and Dr. Gustav Stresemann, Germany's competent Foreign Minister since 1923, was Chairman of the Party.

The Left Wing of the Reichstag has three main divisions, the Demokratische Partei (Left Wing National Liberals), the Social Democrats and the Communists. Of these, the first two work together, and form the basis of the present Government, the Social Democrats being the more numerous and containing the more forceful personality. Ebert, the first President of the Republic, Noske who

<sup>1</sup> Consult p. 50, section on "The Elections of 1930" with regard to the present grouping of Right Wing Parties.

organised the Reichswehr (Militia), and on more than one occasion saved the Republic, Scheidemann, Bauer and Müller, the first Republican Chancellors, have been prominent members of this Party. Drawing its strength from the large towns and from democratic States like Saxony and Württemberg, the S.D.P. is powerful in itself and the most powerful prop of the new order. As for the Communists, they are more noisy than influential. Actually, the failure of Bolshevism in Russia, the improvement of conditions in Germany, and the sanguinary efforts of the Communists to promote a social revolution have all lead to the discredit of this extreme Left Party. Decline set in five years ago and shows no signs of an end. An attempt made in May, 1929, to secure martyrs by riots at Berlin, was unsuccessful. The haloes of Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg are almost forgotten outside Communist ranks. In any case, this Party has little to offer to a Germany riding the wave of new-found bourgeois prosperity.

### The Press.

Whereas the existence of many groups in German politics obscures the political issue and makes it impossible to assign papers to Parties after the English fashion, the following table will be found approximately correct. Berlin newspapers are placed before the provincial "dailies."

#### I. *Right Wing.*

(1) "Deutschnationale - Kreuzzeitung," "Der Tag," "Berliner Lokalanzeiger," "Deutsche

Zeitung," " Miinchner Neueste Nachrichten," " Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten." " Deutsche AUgemeine Zeitung," a most influential paper controlled by the Stinnes family and representative of shipping, banking and industrial interests, is National but avowedly non-party in its politics. " Deutsche Zeitung " and " Miinchner Beobachter " are prominent Nazi papers.

(2) " Deutsche Volkspartei," " Tagliche Rundschau," " Kolnische Zeitung."

(3) Extreme Conservative groups, monarchist and anti-Semite, in policy, " Deutsche Tageblatt" (Berlin), " Volkischer Beobachter " (Munich).

## II. *Centre.*

" Germania," " Kolnische Volkszeitung."

## III. *Left Wing.*

(1) Deutsche Demokratische Partei—" Demokratischer Zeitungsdienst."

The opinions of this Party are generally and unofficially expressed by the " Berliner Tageblatt," " Vossische Zeitung," " Frankfurter Zeitung," " Hamburger Fremdenblatt," and " Dresdner Nachrichten."

(2) Social Democrats (S.D.P.)—" Vorwärts."

(3) Communists—" Rote Fahne."

It should be noted that, owing to the great size of Germany the number of provincial papers and the existence of local feeling, no one paper holds anything like a supreme place in the German newspaper world.

### The Future.

Germany has emerged from a war against more than half the world, from financial bankruptcy and from a position of moral bankruptcy which seemed to hurt many Germans still more. The absence of a spirit of revenge so far as the Western frontier is concerned, the goodwill spread by athletic encounters and the kindness experienced by travellers in Germany have all helped to reinstate her people in the eyes of their late enemies. But it would be absurd to ignore the fact that problems exist which are very capable of endangering the peace of the world. Inferiority of armament as well as war weariness and the widespread pacific tendencies of the country have dissuaded Germans from rattling the sabre as a protest against their grievances. A superficial reading of German newspapers and German books will show the prevalence of these. The Treaty of Versailles may have corrected the balance or territorial irregularities so far as the Allies were concerned: in German eyes it put hypocrisy and treachery on paper when it divided Prussia and handed over a large part of Upper Silesia to the Poles. Here their case is grossly overstated. Although it is awkward for East Prussia to be separated from the remainder of the Reich by the Polish Corridor, it would be unfair to hand over to German rule the Poles who populate it so long as European boundaries are settled according to the principle of nationality. Poland with her considerable minorities cannot afford to sacrifice ground in this **area**, which is one of the all too, few **pre-**

dominantly Polish areas within her borders. But Russia and Lithuania as well as Germany have boundary disputes with Poland. Plenty such exist in the East. In fact, war on that side of Europe must come certainly, unless the League of Nations increases in power—and very rapidly at that.

Again, with German discontent over diminished territories at home goes grave regret that the Colonies have been lost. These had always seemed insufficient to contain the emigrants of a crowded and adventurous people. With the Versailles Treaty went the few foreign territories collected by a Germany come too late into the field of colonial expansion. They have fallen to England and France who are already richer in this respect than any other nation in the world. So long as Germany has no colonies, she will couple England's rapacity in this respect with French militarism as an insult to justice which must be put right as soon as possible.

But Germany is above all else a land of sentiment. Her lanes, her timbered houses and the orchards which, free from hedges, run all over the country beside road or railway make her like Warwickshire without the Americans. She is capable of great good and great harm. In the German's mind is the suspicion that middle-class Europe holds his country responsible for the war. He denies the charge. Indeed, armed with the Treaty of Versailles they allege that the Allies have committed whatever sin of war can be committed. **Hardship and the new spirit of comradeship have completed Bismarck's work of nationhood. To-day differences may separate Bavaria and Prussia, but will never**

allow either of these two or any other German State to destroy the Union of the Empire. This nation has come to stay in Europe. If it is allowed the fair privileges due to it, there is every chance that Germany will be a good European. Otherwise, there is none: the war will come. Only in that case Germany will not have to fight the world.

#### THE ELECTIONS OF 1930.

Despite the sensational growth of Herr Hider's National Socialists the Parliamentary majority of the Social Democratic and kindred Parties has not been upset by the elections of September, 1930. Government in Germany for the present is likely to be of the same mild red political hue which it has been since the war.

French " Prussianism " on the Rhine, the irksome, apparendy infinite burden of reparations, and an outburst of nationalism after the excitement of final Rhineland evacuation are the chief causes of Na2i (National Socialist) success. Herr Hitler's Party is as exact in its organisation as it is vague in its aims. These last are nationalist; further it is hard to say. Apparently, the access of the Nazis to power would be bad for Jews and profiteers and unfavourable to the payment of reparations. But how far baked and half-baked ideas will stand the test of further knowledge is hard to say : there are some of the best, young, middle-class brains in the new Party, the type feast likely to undertake a foolhardy policy. The Communists have gained

strength but by no means so extensively as the Nazis. Except for the Social Democrats and the Catholic Centre, the old Parties have lost ground, while Herr Treviranus\* attempt to found a Conservative Party was abortive.

The following table gives a comparison of figures for the leading Parties in 1928 and 1930:—

	1928.	1930.
Social Democrats (S.D.P.)	152	H3
Nazis .	12	107
Communists .	54	76
Centrum.	61	68
Nationalists .	78	41
Volkspartei (D.V.P.)	45	29
Economic Party	23	23
Staatspartei .	25	20

Hitler himself is of Austrian birth. His career has been full of adventure. Born in 1889 he was in youth a builder's labourer in Vienna from where he went to work in Munich. From this time dates his connection with Germany, and Bavaria in particular. Wounded in the war he was a prominent figure in Monarchist circles after the Armistice, though he was little known outside Germany. One of the leaders of the much-advertised " March on Berlin " in November, 1923, he shared in its failure—the march never got farther than Munich—and was captured in a skirmish with the Reichswehr, in which his colleague, Ludendorff, was wounded. Later he formed a group, half-military and half-political, which has been notorious **rather than** notable until the recent elections brought it **a** success of unexpected **magnitude as described above.**

The Stahlhelm, an anti-Communist militia now said to number a million members, contains many of the Nazis though it is not a wing of their Party, than which it is much older, having been founded in 1919 by a Magdeburg factory-proprietor who lost an arm on the Somme. Treaty restrictions prevent the Stahlhelmer from bearing arms; but he is a member of an organisation run on most efficient military lines, with its own air squadron and transport, the latter under the control of Duke Edward of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, a grandson of Queen Victoria.

## CHAPTER III.

### ITALY.

THE present situation in Italy demands more careful consideration than that of any other country ; for it envisages a revolutionary non-Socialist experiment to save society. The practical results have been magnificent and the moral condition of the people improved. No doubt there has been a loss to individualism and an expulsion of liberal ideas. But the first duty of any Englishman or American who wishes to understand other countries is to forget all about his own.

Italy cannot be expected to carry on as a happy-go-lucky resort for tourists. Actually when she did so, her trains were inevitably late, her hotels insanitary, and her streets full of beggars and pick-pockets. Nor can she be merely fodder for artists. The Cinquecento is one of mankind's most priceless gifts : it is typical of the Italian genius to make ; on the other hand, it is not a typical Italian movement which has always been rather an affair of the city or the State than of the individual. The Roman Empire, the mediaeval church, **the first European banks, the beginnings of world commerce, the first national poet, Machiavelli's**

conception of government, and Fascism, these are Italy's contributions to civilisation. The list is probably longer than that of any other people. So is the list of individuals. Julius Cæsar, Virgil, Hildebrand, S. Francis, S. Thomas Aquinas, Dante, Galileo, Lionarcto, Machiavelli, Napoleon, Marconi, Mussolini. That which must be noticed is that most of these men, all except the poets and the artist, are directly concerned with a movement. The Italian genius expresses itself best outside the sphere of individualism, which is rather the characteristic of northern people who are prevented by their climate from living so much in the open air, from walking in crowded streets, eating in restaurants open to the street, and, throughout life, from being constantly in touch with fellow-men who are cheerful, intelligent and hot-blooded.

Such a people were unsuited to Parliamentary government. It came among them, an alien product, in the middle of the nineteenth century. Verbosity, corruption, and inefficiency are written all over the history of Italian Parliamentary government. Yet, a Latin people demands primarily strong government. It sees no more moral disgrace in handing over control of State affairs to a competent dictator than allowing only a competent driver to manage its railway engines. Efficiency and not self-government is what matters. Realisation of this point is necessary for any kind of appreciation of Italian affairs. It is as unfair to condemn Italy out of hand for her abandonment of Parliamentary institutions as Great Britain for **her** **adhesion** to them. Different methods of govern-

ment like different habits of life are suited to different climates.

Secondly, there is a reason for the vigour of national feeling in Italy. Older States, like Great Britain, look on Nationalism rather as part of the equipment of the " low-brow " squire, or else of the soldier or business man who lives in it. Italy is younger and is less secure. From Roman days until 1860 she was divided, a constant prey to foreign armies. Now, she is glorying in her first successes and proud of her youthful strength. The Italians are self-confident, credulous, and ready for war, but so have all young peoples been; Tudor England, the France of Francois Premier and Soviet Russia. Quite different is the criminal seeking of war which overcame, if not the German people, at least their rulers between 1870 and 1914. Here the surest preventive is that the Italian people are their own governors; for Fascism is essentially a popular affair. There is no quarter for the minority, but the majority undoubtedly get what they want; no visitor to Italy can long remain in doubt of the almost universal popularity of the Government.

### The Beginnings of Nationalism.

The kingdom which Victor Emmanuel founded in 1860 was at first rather a collection of provinces than a national State. It might have remained little else, as Spain did until recent years. Actually, the Government was carried out largely by the northerners who were more competent in such affairs

than the Neapolitans and other individuals. Parliamentary life was full of jobbery and incipient republicanism. The Pope had broken off relations with a kingdom which had annexed his States and turned the Quirinal into a royal palace.

There was some attempt at colonial activity ; the work of Crispi who is to-day honoured by the Fascists as the pioneer of Greater Italy. At the time he met with little support and finished in popular disgrace when the Abyssinians mutilated their prisoners after they had routed the Italian army at Adowa (1896). Then followed the final abandonment of Tunis to the French, who insisted on the attendance of Italian children at French schools and forced their own economic domination on the parents who formed a majority in the State.

Hatred for France drove Italy into alliance with her traditional enemy Austria and her ally Germany, the solitary European Power to have no Mediterranean interests and therefore no quarrel with Italy. But the spread of Teutonic influence over the Balkans and Levant checked Italian aspirations there, while friendship with Turkey hindered the annexation of Libya, the only part of North Africa still out of the hands of the Great Powers and so available for conquest.

Gradually Italy veered towards France and England. Meantime, outside ministerial circles, **there** was a **popular demand** for colonial expansion. The society of Dante Alighieri was its spear-head. Membership doubled between 1905 and 1914. An **Irredentist Society** was founded in Trieste and **in the Trentino, Austrian** provinces where the **Italians**

formed a majority. Politicians, professors and scientists came together to convince Italian youth that they had a lost heritage to regain. All this time there was very little talk of Nice and Savoy, of Corsica and Malta. Austria was the foe. Turkey was beaten in the war of 1911, the task was not hard : the Nationalist appetite was whetted. When the Great War broke out the Italian people were unwilling to help their Allies and waited only to see how fortune went before commencing their own attack on Austria.

Now, too, intervention was actively demanded by a quarter which had opposed the African adventure. Benito Mussolini combined at the same time the qualities of Socialist, Nationalist and anti-Imperialist. Born near Forli, in Romagna, on 29th June, 1883, the son of a blacksmith and school-mistress, he inherited strength and intellect. The father was well-to-do, but a Socialist, and Mussolini was a rebel from early years. On leaving school he taught for a time, but after six months gave up the post as not having sufficient scope for his ambition. Poor in money, rich in optimism and ideas he wandered abroad. As a Socialist he was expelled from France and Switzerland, where Lenin and his circle were then living. Later he had to leave the Trentino under the orders of the Austrian police because of his nationalism. Yet he opposed the Libyan War as an Imperialist adventure which could do no good to Italy and hindered the freeing of her children from economic and moral impoverishment.<sup>1</sup> The State was unsympathetic and sent

<sup>1</sup> Sargetti, " Benito Mussolini."

Mussolini to jail for several months as the organiser of a general strike against the war. On trial, Mussolini made a touching speech in which he made clear his difficult position as a Socialist and yet a "good Italian."

The beginning of the war found Mussolini as editor of the Socialist "Avanti." In his denunciation of the Triple Alliance the Socialist Party was with him, but it expelled him from the Party (31st October) when he advocated a declaration of war against Austria. Mussolini founded the "Popolo d'Italia" in November, 1914. Little groups (fasci) of young men all over Italy had begun to demand war. The Government was inclined to be willing so long as it had Socialist support. Mussolini was young, but as the editor of the most important Socialist paper his opinion carried weight. At the moment of his expulsion from the Party, the future Duce had said: "You are going to strike me to-night with ostracism in the squares and streets of Italy. Very well, I wager solemnly that I shall still speak, and that in a few years the masses of Italy will follow and cheer me when you will no longer speak nor be followed."<sup>1</sup> The words were prophetic. Their immediate realisation seemed far off. Mussolini enlisted as a private soldier, became a corporal like Napoleon, but moved no further, for wounds caused him to be invalided out of the Army and **peace** found him again at his editorial desk.

<sup>1</sup> D. Russo, "Mussolini et le Fascisme."

### From the Versailles Treaty to the March on Rome.

The morrow of the Versailles Treaty found Italy full of angry disillusionment. The result was largely due to the diplomatic trick played on her by the Allies, also to the fact that she had allowed herself to be duped by a host of journalists and demagogues. Italy had driven a hard bargain before she entered the war. She was to get the Trentino, Istria, with Trieste and Dalmatia at the inevitable victorious peace. But Dalmatia had been promised also to the Yugoslavs who form a vast majority except in the coast towns which are predominantly Italian. Dalmatia has an historic connection with Italy, having formed part of the Venetian Empire. No doubt England and France were unwilling to strengthen Italy more than was necessary, as they did not want another Great Power in the Mediterranean. President Wilson, too, with a partiality for small nations outside his own continent, backed the Yugoslavs. In consequence Italy got only Zara, though she was allowed to find her natural frontiers in the South Tirol, and so annex a large slice of Austria with hundreds of thousands of German-speaking peoples.

Dalmatia rankled. So did the sinking of the German Fleet, without compensation to Italy, and her lack of colonies. She did have a chance of securing part of the coast of Asia Minor, but was so full of hatred for England and Greece—the English pawn in Levantine affairs—that **she allowed** this and a large **number** of guns to go to Turkey in return for suitable remuneration. **All**

sections of the community blamed the weakness of the Italian Government at Versailles. High cost of living, unemployment and bad trade, the common but unexpected complications of war convalescence added to the unpopularity of the Government. Socialism began to turn into Bolshevism. Until the days of Fascism pictures of Lenin appeared on the hoardings, and the walls were covered with anti-nationalist satire in word and caricature. Red flags were waved, slops emptied on men in uniform and war-memorials broken up. The ex-soldier was temporarily at a discount. On the other hand, there were middle-class movements ; the Squadrists who had formed to demand Italy's entry into the war and the Arditi of d'Annunzio at Fiume who first "marched on their goal and were the first also to wear black shirts."<sup>1</sup>

In " *Politica* " older Nationalist leaders like Rocco pointed out the difference between the real motives and supposed ideals of the war. This hypocritical ideology was usually ascribed to the French Revolution, with more courage than learning, Nationalist writers placed Dante, Machiavelli and Vico on the same pedestal and declared that Italy must get back to their ideas. Gentile and other Fascist ideologues wrote for " *Politica* ." Mussolini in the " *Popolo* " was not slow to express the same thoughts in crude, more popular language. He wrote: " We want to convince Italians that as well as the vile stinking plague-ridden Italy of the politicians who are sitting

<sup>1</sup> Other Nationalists wore blue shirts and the liberals grey. It was a revival of the colour factions of medixval Italy, eg. in Savonarola's " *Florence* ."

in Parliament—really only foul parasites on the nobler blood of the nation—there is another Italy : one which makes the foreigner sit up and take notice, the Italy which toils, prepares itself, strives for life and victory, the Italy of to-morrow, which will fill the sky with speedy airplanes and the sea with mighty ships." <sup>1</sup>

The iull-blooded "Popolo," under the direction of Mussolini, put itself at the head of the Nationalist movement which tended to become synonymous with the Fascist Party founded in 1919 largely among ex-soldiers, by Mussolini himself. It should be noted that Fascismo was for a long time not homogeneous but took on local colour, being for the Church in one district and anti-clerical in another, for or against Annunzio, predominantly Mussolinist as in the Romagna and along the Po, or not so much so in the more distant parts of the country. At first Fascists were bound by little beside a common opposition to Socialism.

Meantime Italy was on the verge of Revolution. Riots had resulted in deaths, railwaymen held up goods trains in order to bring down the price of foodstuffs in their towns, Soviets were set up. The trouble came to a head at Bologna in September, 1921, where a Socialist Town Council bullied local shopkeepers, threatened to fly the red flag from the Town Hall, and finally allowed the killing of an ex-soldier in a street fight. Fascist bands marched into the town, and seized control of affairs. They

<sup>1</sup>" Diuturna," p. 264: A collection of Mussolini's editorials in the "Popolo," published by Imperia, Milan (1924).

burnt the Socialist Hall and beat up a number of reds. The tide had turned. All over Northern Italy black shirts flogged, dosed and sometimes killed reds and the clericalist whites. In Cremona an ex-railroad worker, Farinacci, became all but despotic—for a while Mussolini could not interfere with him. He was the most typical "ras," an Abyssinian word for chieftain which suited the situation. Successful attempts were made to bring down the price of foodstuffs; Fascists went into the market-places and generally met with ready success, for the peasants were quick to realise that they meant to restore order and that they were not a "class faction" as had been at first suspected. Similarly, the seizure of big estates was stopped: this had been rife in Sicily and the Romagna.

During the worst period of the crisis, Giolitti, the aged and cunning Liberal Prime Minister, was on holiday. Undoubtedly the country needed and awaited strong government. Fascism had a big programme to carry out, but was in danger of disintegration at the hands of the over-mighty "ras" if swift action were delayed. So Mussolini left his editor's chair for the field. The move was not sudden except in its final stages. Throughout the spring and summer of 1922, Mussolini had hinted at a Fascist seizure of the Government. Politicians still spoke condescendingly of the black shirts and ignored their strength. The people were divided and apathetic. On 20th September, the anniversary of Victor Emmanuel's entry into Rome in 1870, Mussolini raised the cry "On to Rome." His Fascists had just broken up German organisations

in the Tirol without interference. A demand was now presented for the dissolution of the Chamber and immediate elections. The Government offered Fascism full representation in the Ministry. Now began a series of Gesarean gestures on the part of Mussolini. He declared that "Fascism would not come into the Government by the service entrance." A military rally was held at Perugia, a grand conference at Naples. Fascism was made to appear more national than Parliament which had always neglected the South. Large forces of the Fascist Militia gathered outside Rome. The Pope was not unwilling to see the Imperial State humbled: the King refused to sign the Prime Minister's last-minute appeal to the Army, perhaps because he saw it would be fruitless, perhaps because he did not want civil war. So Mussolini travelled by train from Milan to Rome. He found his black shirts already in peaceful occupation, mounted a horse and arrived, travel-stained as though after a campaign, before the King in his Quirinal Palace to assure him of the devotion of his victorious Italians of Vittoria Veneto.<sup>1</sup> The King had asked Mussolini to form a Ministry—"To-morrow Italy will have not a Ministry but a Government," the new Prime Minister publicly announced.

It was an Italian who wrote that fortune loves young men who use her roughly. Napoleon and centuries of Condottieri found the maxim true of Latins. So Mussolini gambled and won. On the morrow of his march on Rome Fascism had

<sup>1</sup> The Italian break-through in 1919.

become the political creed of all save a handful of Italians: place-hunters and the fashionable world were already eager to join the Party. In the words of Mr. H. W. Schneider, whose book "Making the Fascist State" is invaluable to any student of modern Italian problems, the "rush for the bandwagon" had begun.

### **The Fascist Idea in Practice.**

The work of Fascism will be dealt with in a later section; this is concerned with its appeal, its rivals and the causes of its success. Youth is the key-note of the movement to be found in the young men who form almost entirely its militia, in the hymn "Giovinezza" and in the optimistic bold inexperience of its early policy.

In fact, Fascism is just another manifestation of the spirit which makes young Russian Communists and young Germans who cannot get at arms, Wandervogel. Youth has an age-long grudge against age. The war has given it something to grumble about. Parents in England and America have in reality escaped lightly with just cocktails and an independent spirit: their children might have taken over the government and turned the country upside down. In Italy they have done so, with good effect. Like the Irishman, the Italian never quite ceases to be a child. He rallied naturally to Fascism against the Anglo-Saxon Liberalism and International Socialism opposed to it. No doubt the natural conservatism of a race largely peasant and bourgeois helped: the artisan population in

Italy is small. But it was the pioneer spirit of Fascism which counted most. And among the bombastic trivialities of these scuffles and victories must be realised the two tremendous achievements of Fascism, a regenerate Italy and the solution of an economic problem without resort to Socialism.

The only political rivals of the Fascists were to be found in the Partito Popolare. This was a Clericalist Party, free like Fascism from the bad past history of the older politicians and directed by a clever Sicilian priest, Don Luigi Sturzo. Had Mussolini lost touch his rival would almost certainly have succeeded him as the only other untried experiment in Italy. But Fascism succeeded. It brought better conditions to the hitherto neglected South, where incidentally the clerical Partito Popolare was especially strong. Again, by its friendly policy to the Papacy, it deprived Don Sturzo of his most important support. The Pope believed that Fascism could effect the reconciliation between Church and State which was his especial aim. So the Partito Popolare, like the Action Frangaise, was thrown over. Don Sturzo retired to London and his Party fell to pieces.

Left in possession of the political arena Fascism proceeded to complete the work of risorgimento. It became a total conception of life very different from that of the nineteenth century Liberals who had set Italy on her way to unity. Here is an extract from Professor Gentile, sometime Minister of Education and one of the ablest scholars in the Fascist movement: "Life is toil, effort, sacrifice, **and** hard work, a life in which we **know there is**

neither matter nor time for amusement. Before us there always stands an ideal to be realised; an ideal which gives us no respite. We have no time to lose. Even in our sleep we must give account of the talents entrusted to us." Or again: "Fascism is war on intellectualism. The Fascist spirit is will, not intellect. I hope I am not misunderstood. Fascist intellectuals must not be high-brow" (free translation).<sup>1</sup> This reads like Napoleon's remark that it was the fault of the Minister of Education if there was no contemporary native literature. Fascism welcomes writers and artists so long as they do not flaunt the serious spirit of the country. The damage to individual genius is great, but it must be remembered that Italian liberty had deteriorated into licence and that the present is not the final stage of Fascist ambitions but merely a time of spiritual training and self-denial to allow Italy to regain her health as a nation.

#### The Work of Fascism.

Impoverished, war-worn, and disillusioned, Europe judges nowadays by the results of enterprises. Fascism emerges from the test with credit. National confidence began to recover soon after the march on Rome. Savings bank deposits increased by 4000 million lire in a year, consols rose from eighty to ninety-five, and the fall in the lire was checked. Exports, too, began to overhaul imports. The Italian figures are in striking contrast to those of Bolshevik Russia where the

<sup>1</sup> G. Gentile, "Che cosa e il fascismo."

Communist Revolution had taken place. In 1925 eleven million tons of grain were produced as against an average of eight-and-a-half million between 1919 and 1924. Silk, textiles and other industries showed a similar improvement. When Admiral Pagni laid the foundation-stone of the new dry-dock at Genoa in April, 1925, he was able to state that the port had grown larger than Marseilles.

In Finance the first act of the Fascists was to remove the heavy death duties and capital levy which were throttling industry. At the same time a promise was made to improve working conditions. This was realised, so soon as the situation had become more settled, as will be seen from the section dealing with the Carta del Lavoro. Meanwhile better economic conditions were effected by the funding of Allied debts and a masterly Budget which turned the deficit of 2900 million lire of '22-'23 into a balance of 2268 millions in '25-'26. Besides the skill of Fascist finance this was done by the removal of a number of inefficient and corrupt Parliamentary methods. Later the Duce, de Stefani (Finance Minister) and Count Volpi, his successor, stabilised the lire. Cost of living in Italy was for a time high because the Italian rate was fixed unduly high: it flattered national prestige to have the lire worth more than the franc.

Industry and agriculture have profited tremendously from Fascism. This is particularly true in the case of agriculture which had been neglected by previous Governments. As has been said already the South had too little influence in Italian affairs during the Parliamentary period. Piedmont and the

North had unified Italy, and the South contributed its part by subsequent political impotence, as did South Germany and as Croatia was meant to do by the " liberator " Serbs. Fascism has changed all that. Farming has been developed with State aid in Sicily, Sardinia and the southern parts of the mainland. Malaria and the brigand maffia have been suppressed, the former in part, the latter in entirety. A " Militia of the Land " was formed by the Government. It consists of young farmers and state agents who spread new ideas on farming among the older men. There are also a wealth of technical schools and three hundred itinerant professors who spread scientific teaching up and down the country.

Industry pays its way. Better and more punctual trains have helped. So has the restoration of foreign confidence in Italy and the new will to work inside her boundaries. The artificial silk trade has had an immense development in recent years, so has the carrying trade. The acquisition of Trieste, Pola and Fiume, together with the Austro-Hungarian merchant fleet increased Italian possibilities and gave new scope for trade which has, however, been obstructed by Yugoslavia whose possession of the hinterland on the Eastern shores of the Adriatic makes particularly disadvantageous her hostility to Italy. However, Italians now control nearly all the trade between their own country and the Near East. Telephones have been leased to private firms.

By **1926** the situation was normal enough **for the reorganisation of industry promised by Fascism. Rebate of taxes had been chiefly in'favour of the**

captains of industry, for Mussolini felt that they must have scope to develop their businesses in national interests. The income-tax limit had been lowered so as to include more people of moderate means, and there had been a general addition to indirect taxes ; though those on sugar and a few other staple products had been reduced, the lower classes had so far lived largely on promises. But they had benefited by the revival of trade and in country districts by a policy of land-purchase or rather of leasehold, for it was soon found that peasant proprietors preferred the safe policy of tying up their savings to that of spending them on the land.

The new policy is defined by the Syndicalist laws (*Legge Sindacale* of nth March, 1926) and by the " Charter of Labour " (*Carta del Lavoro*) published in April, 1927. Italian industry was organised on the gild system. Employers, clerks and manual labourers round themselves in different syndicates which were to discover common interests. Disputes, when they arose, were to go before a Labour Court (*Magistratura del Lavoro*) consisting of three Judges from the Court of Appeal and two experts in the branch of industry concerned. Strikes and lock-outs are forbidden, though the State is careful to respect individual rights ; judgment, for instance, was given in favour of the individual at the end of the first test case under the new law, the defendants being some workmen from Tivoli who had refused to make an overtime journey with their grain-carts.

It looks at times as though the Duce intends to carry further his great experiment and control the country through a parliament of gilds. In January,

1927, he announced a "corporate year" and hinted that an economic parliament might take the place of the "worn-out" political assembly. But nothing startling has occurred. Industry has thrived under the new system, though at first Doth employees and employed needfd the occasional persuasion of Fascist officials before they fell into line.

The Carta del Lavoro provides for the leisure of workers in the new Corporate State. Its organisation of Dopolavoro (after work) is directed by the prescient and industrious Secretary of the Fascist Party, Augusto Turati.<sup>1</sup> With its provision for the technical and general education of workers, games, illness, maternity and unemployment benefits, beside the social halls for purposes of amusement, Dopolavoro has provided for the workers of Italy as no other workers in Europe are cared for except in the case of a few benevolent firms in England and Germany, and of Soviet Russia, where even there life is miserable.

It should be remembered that the State is supreme over the syndicates in Italy, and can interfere with the affairs of these latter whenever it will. As yet there is no likelihood of a clash between the two: new Italy has hardly got accustomed to itself.

No description of the work done by Fascism for Italy would be complete without reference to its cultural side. The people are encouraged to take pride in themselves by a realisation of the great races from which they are sprung. Visits to

<sup>1</sup> In 1930 Turati was succeeded as Secretary of the Fascist Party by Giurati.

museums are made cheap and encouraged. The City of Rome has been beautified and brought nearer to its classical self by the clearing away of slums around the Largo Argentina and exposure of the interesting sites concealed by them. It is proposed to make a broad straight road from Rome to the sea at Ostia where most fruitful excavations have been made. Herculaneum, the buried town whose canopy of lava has defied eighteen centuries, should yield up its treasures before many years are over. New railways have been built and great care is taken about the cleanliness of trains and towns, a blessing to most foreign travellers if not to those who have been fined for placing their feet on the carriage-seats. Something of the meticulous work carried on by the new Government in all departments may be gathered from a speech of the Duce when he cited as accomplished during the past year—" 566 town works, 337 schools, 399 hydraulic works, 65 humanitarian, 63 maritime, 79 sanitary works, 371 public buildings and 860 opere varie e molte altre minori."

A rigid economy has accompanied this extension of public works. Already by August, 1923, the sixteen Ministries of State had been reduced to nine. Many Communes were suppressed; the remainder passed under State control. The Guardia Regia was disbanded—except on such State occasions as the marriage of the King's eldest son in January, 1930, the Fascist Government has set its face against ceremonial display. It will fete handsomely for the country's honour and not otherwise.

An electoral law in November, 1923, provided

for the maintenance of Fascist power. Proportional Representation was abolished and two-thirds of the seats in the Chamber given to whichever Party had obtained at least 25 per cent, of the votes in each of fifteen large constituencies. The P.N.F.<sup>1</sup> stood to gain by this and did so in the elections of April, 1924, when 375 out of 500 seats were obtained by it. By 1925 a return was able to be made to single-member constituencies: the vote was given to all over 25 years of age. It was back to 1919 but with a larger franchise. Matteotti had been murdered in the meantime, but Italy was regenerate. No doubt remained that a free election would still give a considerable majority to Fascism.<sup>2</sup>

#### The Roman Question Settled.

The kingdom of Italy had only been unified at the cost of a bitter quarrel with the Pope, whose personal possessions had many of them been confiscated by the royal Government which made its capital out of the traditional seat of the Church. So long as liberal agnostic Parliaments stood for the Kingdom of Italy there was no hope for a change. The Papacy had exchanged its petty temporal for a world-wide spiritual dominion. Catholicism thrived in the post-war religious revival. But the renewal of good feeling between France and the Vatican was alarming to the Italian Government. The newly-discovered national enemy seemed to be about to take the place of Austria as Counsellor,

<sup>1</sup> Partito Nazionale Fascista.

<sup>2</sup> Succeeded (1930) by Giurati.

an evil counsellor at the Vatican. The cry went up that "Italy's place at the Vatican was doubly lost.

Yet in the early years of the pontificate of Benedict XV. (1915-22) a change was foreshadowed, the Pope announcing that he looked for a solution of the problem not by arms but through the good sense of the Italian people. After all the Pope and most of the Cardinals were Italians, and their country seemed heading for a Communism which would know how to put its agnostic ideas into practice. France might be preferable but Italy was all around the Vatican and could not be ignored. In 1920 by his Bill "Pacem Dei Mundo," Benedict withdrew his ban on the visits of Catholic sovereigns to the Quirinal. His successor, Pius XI, specially and rightly thanked the Fascist Government for its police-work during the Holy Year, 1925.

Indeed, the advent to power of Fascism had completely changed the face of affairs. In the place of liberal atheist Governments stood a movement which could hardly justify its Nationalism except by friendly relations with the Church to which most Italians belonged. It must be remarked that since the Roman Empire, Italy had never been one State till the middle of the nineteenth century, but her possession of Rome and a majority in the Cardinals' College gave her instead a spiritual ascendancy in Europe which for long helped her to forget her lack of national government.

Mussolini and many of the other ex-Socialist leaders of Fascism had been agnostics. But their religious views had come round like their politics. They did not make any servile submission. There

was no journey to Canossa, but a display of readiness to make peace with the Vatican. Religious teaching was revived in the schools. The Pope, on his side, forbade Don Sturzo to take any further part in politics, and so freed Fascism of its most dangerous political rival. Freemasonry and divorce, chief enemies of the Pope, were proscribed by the State. A Committee was formed to discuss bases for negotiation. Pope Pius XI, a lover of Alpine sports, a much-travelled man and a wise scholar, was eager to settle a question which was dangerous but archaic. There were, however, old men in his counsel, who remembered the earlier march on Rome when the quarrel began. The Pope had to state that the Clerical members of the (Committee were unofficial. Mussolini showed the mailed fist. A beginning was made with the dissolution of the Catholic Boy Scout Association whose members were to find adequate training in the Fascist Balilla.<sup>1</sup>

The Papacy has always seen the force of circumstance in politics. After a reasonably short discussion the Lateran Treaty was signed on 11th February, 1929. By its terms, the Papacy received first a tiny sovereign State, the Vatican City; secondly, a compensation for lost territories 0/750 million lire in cash and another thousand million in 5 per cent, bonds; lastly, the promise that school instruction should be in keeping with the Catholic view of marriage and the Catholic religion.

This last was the most important point. The

<sup>1</sup> Fascist Boy Scouts, named after a Genoese youth who threw stones at the Austrians in the eighteenth century.

Papacy is not poor and the *size* of its new territory, only a little larger than under the Law of Guarantees,<sup>1</sup> is absurdly small. In any case the Pope has found his power in spiritual and not temporal sovereignty since the Decree of Infallibility was promulgated. It is in the clauses which promise tatholic teaching that the Papacy has gained most. Here, too, Fascism relinquishes ground with least readiness, as it cannot bear ideas other than its own, although, like Napoleon, Mussolini recognises that the Church is one of the surest and healthiest of moral forces. Bickering has already begun. The Vatican has been reminded that religious instruction is confined to primary and secondary schools : it does not extend to the university. The Vatican, while upholding its bargain that bishops shall swear fealty to the State, does not cease to criticise some of the less Catholic actions of the Government. The Italians are an old race, used to driving hard bargains. For that reason, this question cannot be treated as finally settled ; we are left to wonder at the skill with which peace has been made and can appreciate the goodwill shown by both sides to preserve it.

i.e. 1860-1914.

## CHAPTER IV.

### RUSSIA.

LARGEST in area and population, Russia is also the least comprehensible of the greater European countries. To some extent contemporary politics are to blame. But behind these is the riddle of the Russian mind unanswerable to the majority of Europeans. For the Russian is really an Asiatic, at one time or another influenced by Western civilisation but always oriental in outlook, and to-day more than ever, eager to escape from the ideas of London, Paris, and the rest. The Bolsheviki were only voicing the opinion of the majority of Russians when they moved back the capital from Western Petersburg to Moscow, the truly Slav city with its gay colour, its grim fortress, dirt, narrow streets, and all the essentials of popular Russian life.

The lack of physical comfort and vitality of intellect never seem so much part of one another as they do in Russia. Here is perhaps the one people in Western Europe which will make itself uncomfortable to put ideas into practice. That is what makes their country so hard to understand. The Western critic will condemn the revolution because the restaurants of Russian cities are squalid, and family life, or its counterpart, is back in the herd-

stage. Communists, while often regretting this fact, feel that their experiment makes all this worth while. Again the numerical minority of the new ruling class in Russia matters very little in a country which has always been governed by minorities. It is only in that natural course of events, which no revolution can alter, that the better organised, more powerful workers should pipe, while the peasants dance to their tune. Only, the dance goes unwillingly, and the peasants, as they grow more intelligent and refuse to shelve the land question, are the most real danger to Communism which evidently cannot survive in Russia if overthrown by the Russian people. The future lies with the peasants who number 90 per cent, of the Russian people. Only their triumph must be delayed for some time, since a parallel majority of power, initiative and intellectual superiority lies with the artisans. "O thou great Russian Sphinx, it is not easy to be thy (Edipus," wrote Turgenev. His judgment is still true. The situation is made more easy by a realisation of Russia's difficulties and her own native method of facing them.

### **Causes of the Revolution.**

The Tsarist Empire collapsed under the strain of the World War. Earlier, in 1905, the less severe struggle with Japan had brought about a revolution which failed. Decline had gone further and the inevitable had arrived by 1917. A glance at the map is sufficient to make clear the inadequacy of the Russian railway system even in peace time.

After a few months of war and the military disasters of Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes, which led to the invasion of Russian Poland, demoralisation set in and the loss of important rail-heads led to further confusion in the transport system. Similarly, in 1915, the Austro-German victory of Gorlice in Galicia disorganised the southern battle front. Russia, richest of European countries in food and fuel, passed a cold and hungry winter with a noticeable decline in *morale*. Revolutionary organisations gained especial strength in the towns where they were most easily hidden and where want was most apparent. The Russian Empire, now unable to support itself, had sent eleven million tons of corn abroad before the war. Fuel supplies were 40 per cent, short of their tonnage in 1913.

Meanwhile, at the Front, the Russian inferiority in guns and ammunition became more marked. Quite frequently, men outnumbered rifles by three to one, and this in opposition to the most formidable of continental armies. Trench warfare had never definitely set in on the Eastern Front. Resistance to the Austro-German armies was hard to offer. The Russian armies grew more demoralised as they fell back across the Polish plains with their hostile villagers who saw with unfeigned delight the tyrant's disaster. Stories of corruption in the higher command at the base and in Petersburg, had plenty of foundation. The "shocker" novel is probably wrong in making chief culprits of Rasputin and the Tsarina, both of whom were ignorant people who made too much of the safety of the throne but

were not traitors, although they allowed themselves to be victimised by treacherous influences. German espionage was alive and successful in Court and Government circles where the national vice of extravagance made ready money particularly useful. It should be remembered that the lafided aristocracy of the Baltic provinces was primarily German in race. These families, more vigorous than the Russian nobility, lived near St. Petersburg and had for two centuries played a dominant part in the higher grades of civil, military and naval services. Their patriotism was in most cases unquestioned, but they remained a spear-head of German civilisation which might, and did, furnish an easy means of penetration, in times of crisis, for the Berlin Government. Sturmer and Witte may have fallen under German influence, but so did Protopopoff and numerous Russians in the Tsarist Government. Prince Lvov and the Liberal Bourgeois Party, together with the just if brutish Grand Duke Nicolas Nicolaievitch, openly charged these people with responsibility for the military defects which were largely occasioned by lack of supplies. Lord Kitchener's death was also laid to their charge. The people became a proletariat largely because they learnt to despise their rulers. And this contempt was taught them, as it had been taught to the mob in the French Revolution, by the aristocrats themselves. A surfeit of workers in Petrograd, where they had increased from 200,000 to 400,000 largely at the demand of munition factories, **made living there particularly difficult.** The well-intentioned suppression of **vodka helped to unsteady**

the mind of the poorer class who were unfit for such a moral reform at this time of hunger and war. Agitators were quick to take their cue from the hypocrisy of a ruling class which could afford the wines beyond the purses of the poor. Incidentally, the vodka measure cost the Exchequer seventy-five million pounds in loss of taxation.

The war made the obvious heavy increase in expenditure. At the same time, loss of foreign markets for Russian products increased the deficit, while industry was prevented from making the most of its home market and the nation's need by absence of machinery which could no longer be imported from Germany and was effectively impeded elsewhere by the submarine blockade. So imports lost an invaluable one-fifth of their pre-war total, while exports fell to one-ninth ; the adverse balance was serious.

Political revolution grew its seeds swiftly in such favourable soil. Not only did political revolutionaries number Russians, people very prone to be ideologues, but also a host of Poles, Finns, Ruthenes, and Caucasians, who had Nationalist ambitions and were all the more dangerous because they stood outside. Such men were more effective than the common revolutionary class. Governmental policy in the years before the war had attempted dangerous and ineffective measures to Russianise the Duma at the expense of other nationalities. In 1907 the capable Stolypin had practically disfranchised Central Asia and the Transcaspian steppe. Asiatic Russia had only fifteen representatives, naif of whom

came from the region east of Lake Baikal and were nominees of the Cossack armies.

Incompetence in the governing classes made them an easy target. The Tsar's letters show him as devoted to his family and ignorant of State affairs. His wife was a more neurotic and dangerous edition of her husband. Their son was a degenerate, suffering from incurable disease. Of the Ministers, Gorempkin, the President of the Council of Ministers after February, 1914, was an old man whose only claim to fame was his destruction of the first Duma. Protopopoff, half-mad and inevitably corrupt, named incompetent friends to high Army commands. Sturmer owed his position largely to his sycophantic friendship with the Tsarina. Trepov was perhaps the best of a mediocre band : he was very weak in decision.

There was no Mirabeau in the Tsarist Councils and no Parliament to give constitutional monarchy a fair trial. Reactionary purges had made the Duma impotent: by 1914 it had even lost the will to be an instrument of reform. Society was divided. Outside the Court circle there was little love for the Tsarina and the Ministers, but most Russian aristocrats desired to be of that circle. French was still the language of society. Nationalism was uncouth Liberalism, inspired but ineffective, at best the Trianon charade of Tolstoyism; the middle classes scarcely existed in this undeveloped, rural Empire. Probably the strongest force in the old Russia was the hard-living, boorish but politically clear-headed group of military landowners around the Grand Duake Nicolas Nicolaievitch, the most

popular of Tsarist Generals, who had been relegated to the Caucasus command by a jealous Government. He would knock down a private soldier in anger, and kept the love of the old Army in all its moods and his own.

But weakness was chiefly characteristic of Russian institutions on the eve of the Revolution ; this was not only the case of the Government. Democracy, an alien plant, had never taken healthy root in an Empire which was still too near to serfdom to give a chance to those qualities of personal dignity and political honesty which are its requisites.

There was no party in the Duma which combined with a democratic programme the capacity to put its ideas into practice. A limited number of liberal institutions existed in the sphere of local government. Among these were the Zemstvos<sup>1</sup> of which one existed in each province, an administrative Board subject to the Governor, but with its own powers and a Council drawn from all sections of the community. The work done was considerable. Education in Russia owes much to the Zemstvos whose pioneer efforts have ripened under the Soviet rule which draws from them a borrowed laudatory income. Although illiteracy was still predominant in the backward provinces of Russia, it was the Zemstvos who made literate nine-tenths of the recruits in 1914 from the provinces of Moscow, Iver and Yaroslav. More schools were provided and many more planned. Indeed the educational policy of Tsardom stands in a more favourable

<sup>1</sup> Zcmski—local.

light if it is realised that whereas only 3 per cent, of the schools had been finished by 1914, 60 per cent, needed just five years more for completion.

Besides their work of instruction in the sphere of elementary education, the Zemstvos had done great good to the country through their schools of agriculture and medical service. Farms and technical institutes had been established, purchasing bodies formed, stores built, and stocked. Russia with its primeval style and vast scope for colonial development thus received its first lessons. The Peasants learnt slowly. Not even the Bolsheviks have persuaded them to shed their suspicion and archaic methods of husbandry. But the reforms planned by the Zemstvos had some effect, and assistance was given to the farmer by means of loan banks, of which 239 with a balance of over £10,000,000 had come into being by 1913.

Undoubtedly the Zemstvos were handicapped by their suggestion of "noblesse oblige." They were managed by liberal aristocrats and by middle-class humanitarians. As such, they were out of sympathy with the Socialist movement which had in it the drive of revolutionary violence. The co-operative societies might at one time have effected a peaceful settlement of the problem of government. They were democratic and contained many who had left the purged Duma as a hopeless, blind, political avenue. There were 20,000 co-operative societies in Russia by 1914, most of these having been founded since the Revolution of 1905. But the Tsarist police looked with disfavour on the mild tinge of Socialism which characterised many of the

co-operatives: by stopping the safety valves the servants of the old regime ensured its violent fall. The comparative failure of the co-operative societies is all the more regrettable because the peasants in many areas had come to trust them; the co-operative Moscow Bank had a capital of one million roubles, most of which came from the people's savings, and so had brought nearer that intelligent but still conservative peasantry with which lies the hope of Russia's salvation.

Trade Unions were never powerful. Political motives were found in them when possible by the inevitable police, and these made grounds for their prosecution. Strikes were legalised after 1906. They were frequent and bitter enough to seem at times like civil war. Towns in Russia were few. The fact that the Bolsheviki passed so long and disagreeable a minority has been largely responsible for the excesses practised by them in their new-found power.

Last but not oldest of these foes of democracy must be mentioned the Mir, that ancient survival of peasant commune inherited from the days before Tsardom, which continued to play a part in local government. In it the peasants preserved the relics of a tradition of control over their own affairs.<sup>1</sup>

So, there existed something of a democratic movement in Russia. Constitutional ways were too often barred by a stupid Government. The country was

<sup>1</sup> Experience gained from the war enabled the Russian peasants after the Revolution to effect on their own a division of the confiscated lands which was in general both just and successful.

too young to work the highly developed democratic system under which Englishmen live and which they are too ready to believe applicable all over the world. There were plenty of causes for the unpopularity of Tsardom. Under the stress of war its end was hastened, in the end\* it found itself bankrupt of money and ideas, and deserted by the Army, whose force was its ultimate guarantee.

### **The Course of the Revolution.**

The following table of dates may be found useful in tracing the confused history of the Revolution.

#### **1917**

12th March (February, old calendar). Outbreak of the Revolution in Petrograd.

July. Abortive Bolshevik Revolution.

August. Kornilov Putsch—a failure for the Right Wing.

7th November (October, old calendar). Successful Bolshevik Revolution.

#### **1918**

March. Peace with Germany signed at Brest-Litovsk.

Autumn. Czechs withdraw from Volga Basin. Loss of Poland, Finland and the Baltic provinces.

#### **1919**

Defeat of Koltchak, Denikin **and** Judcnitch makes the Soviet victorious in European **and** Asiatic Russia. Failure of attack on Baltic States.

1920

Allies withdraw from Archangel. Wrangel driven from Crimea. Failure of Bolshevik invasion of Poland. Conquest of Caucasus.

1922

Japanese withdraw from Vladivostok. Far Eastern Republic joins U.S.S.R.

Imminent for years the Russian Revolution came eventually with a suddenness which showed the exhaustion and unpopularity of the old system. The myth of the Tsar as "Little Father," as a semi-divine King remained only as food for consumption in Western Europe. Nicolas II. resigned his throne on 2nd March, nominating as his successor his brother the Grand Duke Michael, who gave up his claim without delay. The new Government, an experiment in constitutionalism, was well meaning, incompetent and irresolute. It was directed by the liberal intelligentsia who were the most respectable alternative to Tsardom. The soldiers and workmen, whose union in the Petrograd streets had brought about the downfall of Tsardom in a muddled, comparatively peaceful, and not spectacular way, were not represented in the new Government. Their inclusion would indeed have been difficult in any bourgeois Cabinet, as they were quite unskilled in the fine art of parlour politics. Also, beyond bread and peace, they had no programme.

The principal leaders in the new Government were Prince Lvov, M. Miliukov, and M. Kerenski. Of these Prince G. E. Lvov was the creator and

presiding spirit of the bourgeois-Liberal AU-Russian Congress of Zemstvos, Full of ideals he was unable to bring about the state of affairs essential for their practice. Still better informed and more methodical in a studious way was the able Paul Miliukov, an historian and practised politician who, however, lacked "verve" and inspiration. These valuable accomplishments were possessed, however, by A. F. Kerenski, the saxophonist of this political orchestra. Capable of winning his audience and as eager for Allied victory as Mr. Lloyd George, Kerenski had the misfortune of having to face the hard facts of hunger at home and disaster in the field. As the cold Russian winter grew nearer, he lost power before lack of food and fuel and the casualty lists. His offensive in Galicia came to a standstill. Petrograd the self-named "hero of the Revolution" assisted itself. Kerenski, at first Minister for Foreign Affairs, had come to the head of the Government in July, on the resignation of Lvov and the Liberal Cadet Party before a demand for autonomy from the Ukraine. He succeeded in suppressing a precocious revolution planned by the majority Socialist (Bolshevik) leaders who had recently come into Russia after crossing Germany with the aid of the Imperial Government in a sealed railway-coach. But an attempt at Tsarist restoration by General Kornilov caused public opinion to swing round again to the Left. Russia at the time meant Petrograd and Moscow, just as Paris in 1792 stood for France. Actually Kornilov's victory might not have been unpopular if he had shown that strength which was



devotion, and ruthlessness who resemble rather the Jacobin in the " Dieux ont Soif " of Anatole France than the bloody revolutionary of the melodrama. It is interesting to note that assassination is condemned by Bolsheviks though mass killing of the bourgeoisie is approved : the ethics depend on the presence or absence of the individualist factor.

Lenin was the quintessence of Bolshevism. Mean in stature and with the lively, cunning face of a small Tsarist official, the profession of his father, he had all the qualities of energy and cause-loyalty which make a great revolutionary. Vladimir Ilich Ulianov was born at Simbirsk in 1870, just before the Communist outbreak in Paris. His father was a district inspector of schools. Lenin came into touch with revolutionary organisations as a student at the Petersburg University. The execution of his favourite elder brother, who attempted to assassinate Alexander III. in 1887, gave him a personal motive **for** revenge on the capitalist system. Vladimir Ulianov became Lenin. Most of the Socialist refugees had various names, and tended to be known by some short easily remembered, almost patent **term**, as their political ideas veered towards the " Americanisation " of Russia and the Russian language.<sup>1</sup> In Siberia Lenin wrote his first book, the " Development of Capitalism in Russia," which saw in the abolition of serfdom a mere capitalist **trick to** depress the peasant by making of him a

<sup>1</sup> The Bolsheviks have already suppressed the least necessary letters in the cumbersome Russian language. The abolition of the Cyrillic alphabet in favour of the usual Latin equivalent is likely.

There a slightly larger Bolshevnik force blocked his way. The new Revolution spread rapidly through Russia. It offered peace, land and bread, everything the people needed. Troops at the Front shot their officers and flocked home to take their share in the new Paradise. For weeks Moscow was crossed by trains crowded inside and out by happy mutinous, defeated soldiers. Western ideas of honour were forgotten in the older land-hunger of the peasant. Kerenski himself escaped, but most of his colleagues were thrown into the fortress of SS. Peter and Paul. On 7th November (26th October, old style) the Soviet of Peopled Commissars took over the Government of Russia.

#### Leaders of Bolshevism.

The Bolshevnik is the enemy of individualism. His aim is to produce mass development. Not only must the capitalist class disappear but the manual labourers must reach a level necessarily at first one of mediocrity but later of excellence. Such a creed is not likely to have leaders of distinction. Intellectually, Russia looks to the American policy of mass production, and is as unlikely to turn out exceptional men as Mr. Henry Ford is to build a Rolls by error in his popular line of cars. But for the sole distinction made between the manual workers who govern the country and the remnant of the disfranchised persecuted and supposedly drone bourgeoisie, there is none in Soviet Russia.

The leaders of Bolshevism are much what would be expected from such a movement, m&n of energy,

devotion, and ruthlessness who resemble rather the Jacobin in the " Dieux ont Soif " of Anatole France than the bloody revolutionary of the melodrama. It is interesting to note that assassination is condemned by Bolsheviki though mass killing of the bourgeoisie is approved : the ethics depend on the presence or absence of the individualist factor.

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<sup>1</sup> **The Bolsheviki have already suppressed the least necessary letters in the cumbersome Russian language. The abolition of the Cyrillic alphabet in favour of the usual Latin equivalent is likely.**

wage-slave. Later exiled in Switzerland, Lenin fell under the influence of Plekhanov, a brilliant teacher and philosopher, whose cheery method of expression and lack of practical habits prevented him from leading the ljoivement of which more than Marx he was the father brain, and Trotski came to the head of the movement because with ideas they combined a power of expression rarely found in Russians : Lenin's case is the more remarkable because he was a Slav while Trotski is a Jew.

The slogan of " Peace and Bread " was Lenin's own. It satisfied the need of the hungry men, and weary people tired of the Liberal polemics of Miliukov and Kerenski. Lenin was not a brilliant orator, though he was one of the most successful in history because of his skill in understanding and making his ideals synchronise with its needs. Thus he would frequently repeat single phrases. Rating argument as a waste of time, loving action and great enough to confess his mistakes, even to the extent of starting all over again when he realised that Russia was not yet ripe for unadulterated Communism and needed stul a modicum of capitalism, Lenin's sincerity established for him in Petrograd and Moscow that same unique popularity which **the** " incorruptible " Robespierre had held with **the** Paris mob.

It was **the absence** of this singleness of **purpose** which kept the more brilliant Trotski from **the same pedestal**. Trotski, whose first name was **Lev Bronstein**, was **bom in 1879**, the son of a Jewish farmer. **Author and pamphleteer** he was also **arrested at the age of twenty-nine**. **During the**

war he edited a pacifist newspaper in France, being banished in turn from that country and Spain. He came into Russia from America after the February Revolution, and soon became invaluable to his friend Lenin to whose decisions he lent "flair" and the advantages of a most quick and versatile mind. Trotski was first Commissar for Foreign Affairs but resigned as unwilling to sign the humiliating Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany. In time he organised the Red Army, been People's Commissar for Army and Navy, and Food Controller. There is a Napoleonic streak in Trotski's actions. He starved out the mutinous Kronstadt garrison by blowing to pieces the ice which was their link with the mainland. Also in the Civil War, having plenty of rolling stock but an insufficiency of railway lines at his command, Trotski had the trains driven over the railhead to make way for those behind and avoid a transport block.

Lenin died in 1924, and there ensued a period of struggle between Trotski, who may have had ideas of autocracy, and the more orthodox Stalin;<sup>1</sup> his anti-Semitic policy purged the Soviet Government of Jews, so enabling him to isolate Trotski whose banishment in 1927 followed an accusation of disloyalty to Communist ideals. Denied the posthumous glory of martyrdom Trotski passed two precarious years of exile in the confines of Turkistan, and was finally allowed to leave for Turkey in February, 1929.

<sup>1</sup> His assumed name Stalin signifies the steel-man, or the safe implacable Bolshevik.

Trotskyism has a latent if proscribed force in Soviet Russia now dominated by the third great Bolshevik figure, that of Stalin (Joseph Djughashvili). Born in 1879, the same year as Trotski, this man is of Georgian and aristocratic stock. He is cunning, of limited intellect, but sound horse-sense which keeps him to the *status quo* of Bolshevism. The more active members of the Party have been led by their actions into pitfalls of more or less imaginary counter-revolutionary policy, while Stalin, whose power has short-circuited even the notorious G.P.U. or secret police, is supreme over the rump of the Bolshevik Party. So long as the work of re-organisation is incomplete, and it may be so for a long while, and so long as the peasants contrive to be incapable of concerted action and not quite goaded into rebellion, Stalin is likely to retain the position which a great deal of political craft has won for him.

Other sincere Bolshevik leaders are Bucharin, the evangelist of the political creed, whose idealism has at last led to his enforced resignation, though he is still editor of "Pravda," and the Pole Dzerzinski, now dead, who organised the "Tcheka" and the "Terror." A group of former aristocrats centred round Tchitcherin, the frock-coated diplomat *de carriirty* whose Socialism made him in youth the black sheep of an old Russian family; the clever engineer, Krassin, whose daughters were at Cambridge,<sup>1</sup> and Lunacharski, the graceful if windy People's Commissar for Education, who has met and

<sup>1</sup> One is now a French princess.

charmed so many foreigners. Of these Krassin is now dead, and the others have lost their power. More proletarian are Rykov and Tomsky, very popular the one as champion of the peasants, the other of the Trade Unions, whose defeat has been a masterpiece of Stalin's skill. Kamerfev, Zenoviev, Radek and Rakovski all terminated their political careers when Trotski fell. Indeed, the only important relic of the former Communist regime is Voroshilov, the Commissar for War and Navy, whose popularity with the forces has deterred Stalin from removing him.

#### Life in Bolshevik Russia.

In all, it is half-way between what the "Daily Herald" used to say and what the "Morning Post" has always said. From the material point of view Bolshevism has been an obvious failure. In the great cities, the mass of the people are still often too hungry and cold, while agricultural development is hampered by the unsolved transport problem and the myopic sincerity of a Government which refuses to treat with capitalism even when this means good farming. On the contrary, it is easy to see that a new aignity has come to a proletariat which until recently bore all the marks of serfdom. These people are neatly if shabbily dressed, and for the most part are more scrupulous about habits of cleanliness, at any rate in trains and trams, than they used to be. But the feeling of suspense, even of fear, is that which comes first to meet Western Europeans who visit the Soviet

Union. Except by the main Warsaw line, where bourgeois tastes have been studied, the search at Russian frontiers is of a thoroughness and length surely unequalled in the civilised world. Some of the acts, such as turning on the taps in the lavatory basins to enshure that they hold no smuggled letters or contraband, suggest a primitive people which has got hold of civilised toys whose use it scarcely understands. At Kingisepp, on the Estonian frontier, I have seen large water melons opened in the same exhaustive search. Significant, too, are the Mongol faces of many of the soldiers, and their great coats, long as cassocks; here is a people which is both oriental and of the far North. Arrival at Leningrad or any other big town except Moscow, which is nowadays cosmopolitan, made evident the absence of road transport, all that is usually available being the shabby ill-sprung droschke which was already out-of-date before the war. Taxis, when available, demand exorbitant prices; it must indeed be owned that their drivers and the street pedlars who represent apparently the nucleus of another capitalism are the most voracious at the foreigner's expense, although the Government ban on the introduction of Russian money from abroad, together with its establishment of an unjust, low rate of exchange for foreign currencies, is the fundamental cause of the high cost of living. Some idea of the effect of this may be judged if prices in France were calculated on the strength of a pre-war parity of twenty-five francs to the pound.

Shops belong for the most part to the Government, though they are occasionally in the hands of

Nepmen or private traders. Little attempt is made at window display, and the absence of private competition is apt to make the shopkeepers apathetic, but they are generally courteous and honest in advice. The old method of paying at one desk before purchases can be received at another fills the shop with queues which are tiresome and give an exaggerated idea of the business being done. Streets and country roads have hardly ever a macadamised or concrete surface. Even in the Nevskv Prospect huge pot-holes are to be found. All round crumbling plaster is the only decoration of the fine bare houses which have proved quite unsuitable for communal use. Strangely enough the idea of a common kitchen, adopted as economising rooms, has proved popular. Education and Museums play a large part in the Soviet programme. The latter are invaluable object lessons to a people still largely illiterate. Moscow, Leningrad, and many of the smaller towns have museums where scholarly and attractive arrangements are a lesson to most of us. Cheap excursions are run from all over the country, the Hermitage being visited even by Siberians among the crowds herded round by the lively guides, for the most part girls with red handkerchiefs over their heads. The position of the schools is not so good. There is still a great deal of spade-work to be done in them, and the situation is further complicated by the indiscipline of the children who are too full of the new spirit of rebellion, and have suffered morally from the breakdown of family life. The Bolshevik Government has done good work in **spreading ideas of the**

importance of hygiene. Posters and propaganda trams are used more for this than for political ends. Cheap tickets to theatres and cinemas are part of the provision for the workers' leisure. There are many fine medical clinics, though there is much in the accusation that the Soviet Government takes trouble about spectacular effects while it neglects village nurse or doctor. However, science is not hampered as are the humanities by a restriction on freedom of thought which cramps the work of the Universities.

The worker's life is organised and watched by a benevolent despotism of a Government which is supposed to be himself. Nobody else has rights of citizenship. Perhaps it is merciful that so few of the old professional classes survive, their children have generally become Bolshevik; superior intelligence giving them a chance to rise high in the Communist Party which is all-powerful and ever ready for enthusiasm. Indeed it is the pioneer strain in the new Russia which gives it optimism—underneath the people are still the most unpractical in Europe.

#### Soviet Constitutions.

The Government of Soviet Russia is complex. Such a vast territory could not easily and never has been unified. The Soviet ideal is to strengthen local authority while inspiring it with a common policy. Reality falls far short of theory. There are eight Soviet Socialist Republics, all of them in different stages of civilisation with vastly different citizens born by race and outlook. The Soviet

Socialist Republics which go to make up the Union (U.S.S.R.) are composed of the four original members: Russia properly so-called, Ukraine, White Russia, and the Transcaucasian Federation, with more recent additions, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, the Tadjik, and the Far Eastern Republic. Besides these are certain "autonomous regions" and republics, most of them controlled by the most loyal and Russian R.S.F.S.R. which, like the Central Government, has its seat at Moscow.

The population of the Soviet<sup>1</sup> Union is approximately 150 millions, as large a number as its density to the square kilometer—only seven—is small. Of these about 100 million, with a density of five to the square kilometer, belong to the Russian R.S.F.S.R., that is to say, the largely Russian but fully cosmopolitan Great Russian Government.

Probably the real rulers of Russia are the Communist Party. This is not unlike a select Club so far as difficulty of entry goes. It is possessed of very considerable powers, as its half-million members are all sincere Communists and for the most part hard-working intelligent people who are fitted to carry out the enormous work of this complicated bureaucracy. The Communist Party has been frequently purged. Lenin reduced its numbers to 600,000, since when it has increased by about one-sixth, though Stalin has carried out numerous expulsions. For instance, he had to dismiss on one occasion all the Communists in the Department of State Trade, as unscrupulous and dishonest. It is

<sup>1</sup> In Russian, S.S.S.R. Soyus—Union.

interesting to note that only some sixty thousand peasants are Communists and that the majority of these are paid officials.

There are three assemblies which theoretically make government democratic in the Soviet Union. These are the Union Congress of Soviets, the Federal Council and the Council of Nationalities. The Union Congress is elected by all citizens over eighteen years of age. Elections are public, the Communist list being drawn up officially by the Communist Party. Its success is almost inevitable. But failure, when likely, is provided against by the authority which the Gubernial (provincial) Commissar has to annul the election. The Union Congress chooses from its members the Union Central Executive Committee (Z.I.K.), whose two chambers are the nominal but not actual rulers of Russia. A considerable degree of power rests with the Presidium of twenty-seven and its eight chairmen, one from each Soviet Socialist Republic, which is a Committee of the Z.I.K. consisting of whatever is the dominant party in Soviet politics. Here Stalin is supreme. He is also Secretary of the Communist Party, so holding the two key positions to power. This Presidium meets frequently, the Union Z.I.K. only three times a year.

The Federal Council and Council of Nationalities are sops to the principle of popular government. They are without that importance. The former consists of 450 members elected according to the population of the various republics in the Union while the latter has 135 members, five coming from each republic or autonomous region.

Such is the Executive Government of the U.S.S.R. Administrative and legislative power lies with the Union Council of People's Commissars (Union Sovnarkom). Each Commissar works with a Committee or Advisory College. Abbreviated names play strange pranks here with the Russian language. Among famous Committees are the Gosplan or State Planning Committee and the Glaukonriston or Councillors' Committee.

Local government, after going through a complex departmental course of history, is firmly controlled by Moscow. The lowest rung in the ladder of local government is the Volost or Rural Districts Soviet which all villages of over 300 inhabitants possess. Above these are the Circle Soviets, chosen over areas which may be roughly compared in area to an English county by rural district and town Soviets, and by small factory electorates. Higher still are the Gubernial Soviets which contain delegates from the Soviets of large towns, from extra urban factories (factories with over 3000 workers), and from the circle Soviets. Fourthly comes the Republican Congress of Soviets in which delegates from the largest towns are added to the Gubernial delegates. This is the supreme administrative authority in each republic. An All-Russian Congress of Soviets is the apex of the system. Two most important factors should be borne in mind. First, the town workers more than make up for their numerical inferiority by the undue amount of franchise power given to them. The towns have one representative per 5000 inhabitants as against one per 60,000 in the rural areas. Also they have

additional representation on the higher Government institutions. Secondly the system is controlled throughout by the Communist Party which in turn is dominated by Stalin and his group.

Apart from the hypocrisy of the popular theory of Russian government, there is a good deal to be said for the efficiency of the present system which, like Peter the Great, insists on the development of the country and has done an enormous amount of work. Foreign capital is needed for the opening up of areas immensely rich in minerals, in timber, and agricultural possibilities. But capitalism is virtually hostile to communism and unwilling to help a very dangerous rival.

However, while the autocratic control of the hundred-per-cent. communist Stalin continues, the state of the country is more normal with recent years. The notorious Cheka or secret police has emerged in the G.P.U., less powerful now that the period of military communism is over and checked by a Government which is afraid of giving it too much independence. During the French Revolution the Executive Committee of Public Safety was generally at loggerheads with the Police Committee of General Security. The situation has repeated itself. Stalin, with his usual craft, avoided a frontal attack on the G.P.U. but appointed a Central Commissar to whom he transferred many of its powers. Actually much of the work of the secret police **has been** completed with a terrible thoroughness. **Dzerzinski, organiser of the Cheka, told his police, " In order to execute the enemies of the country it is enough to establish their identity;**

their destruction, not their punishment is needed/' Peters, who succeeded him, laid down the axiom that " a victim's fate was to be decided not so much by what he had done as by his class, profession, education, and upbringing, and emphasised the necessity to kill every one on the other side of the barricade." Actually numbers of the younger generation of former professional and propertied classes are devoted Communists, their youth and native idealism have been captured by the new need. Hardly any other vestiges of the old aristocracy remain. You will find them in the cafes of the Old World, perhaps even in the quick-lunch bars of the New.

### Clouds on the Horizon.

Whatever happens, the old Russia of big estates and a depressed working-class is unlikely to return. History rarely puts the clock back. The Russian " Whites/" with their many virtues, have so far shown no signs of that political sanity which alone will give them a chance of success. If the land was left to the peasants, Communism might be overthrown. Until that happens, the Soviets will contrive to work out their huge experiment, unless they, too, invoke the resistance of the country people. For the peasants, ignorant, divided, and without organisation as they are, still form 90 per cent, of the population of Russia. Theoretically the land belongs to the State, but actually the Soviet Government has winked at peasant ownership which

has been in existence all over the country since 1917. Recently, Stalin has made the offensive required by the urban Communists who dominate his Councils. He has dispossessed, imprisoned and shot many of the kulaki (tight fisted) or richer peasants, and he has attempted to set up State farms (sovhoz) and co-operative farms (kolhoz). The experiment has failed, as the peasants have been unwilling to work it and imported townsmen have proved incompetent farmers. The peasants are avowedly a dark people ; they have been frightened by radio propaganda which enters villages through the new reading-rooms, and they have also been brought up against the bayonets of the Red Army. Conscription and newspapers bring the peasants under Communist influence. But the opinion is general that the Soviet has brought freedom and ownership at the cost of hard times, and that " we are for ourselves, they are for themselves," the two being " railway lines " which run together but never meet. Deterioration in farming has followed the break-up of the big estates where money was sufficient to provide adequate machinery and where there was the advantage of a superior organisation. Before the Revolution 4,500,000 tons was supplied annually by the pomyeschiki (squires) and 11,000,000 tons by the kulaki, now the State farms produce 600,000 tons and the kulaki 2,000,000. The peasants neglect to produce much more than they need for themselves, as they dislike the townfolk and fear new taxation if prosperity is shown.

**The second danger which Bolshevism has to face is one more shadowy but fraught with anxiety,**

more grim for Russian than that of its own peasants. Politically, the Soviet is an United States whose territories stretch over the greater part of Europe and about half of Asia. Actually the control of affairs is in the hands of the more civilised European Russians and until recently in those of the Great Russians who have always directed the energies of the country. But Nationalism will inevitably raise its head. It has done so already in the Ukraine, in Georgia, and in Bokhara where Enver Pasha was killed while leading a Pan-Turanian or Turcoman movement. The Moscow leaders were able to confuse the issue with those of the civil war and suppress the Nationalist as a bourgeois movement. But the Bolsheviks have had to develop federal ideas; they have gained support because they manage the Soviet Union by a promotion of local interests and not as a purely Russian concern. Nationalism is only latent and will rise sooner or later not only where it has done already but also in Siberia, in reality a Russian Colony with a people as sturdy as those in the British Dominions. Stalin himself is a Georgian, and there are at present a large number of South Russians in the Government. Their policy has been to satisfy local interests, even where these go against the pure Communist idea, as in Turkestan, where ecclesiastical titles have been restored to the Moslem priests. **But the decline of trade has affected these distant parts of the Union, and the diet of political privilege and propaganda will scarcely last for ever. Firm though the Soviet Government is at present, it is faced with dangers within and without which are as peculiar**

as itself and far more formidable than the worn-out cause of the Tsarist exiles.

### The Five-Year Plan.

When Lenin's N.E.P. resulted in a revival of individualism and the weakening of the Communist idea, its increased prosperity was more than discounted. Stalin and the Left Wing abandoned it. Their solution to the problem of Russia's poverty lies in the Five-Year Plan, a colossal scheme which will at the same time magnify the output and develop a collectivist spirit throughout the States of the Soviet Union. The scheme began to work in the autumn of 1928. It treats the whole country as a single economic unit controlled by Gosplan (the State Planning Commission) under the control of Tsik<sup>1</sup> and Sovnarkom. Profits from one industry or farm may be transferred to another. All workers, agricultural and industrial, are placed on rations for food, clothing and all commodities. It has been decreed, for instance, that the urban population shall receive 155 eggs a head, against 72 for each rural worker in 1932-33.

First care is given to the development of transport, agricultural machinery, fertilisers, housing, and forestry. The collection and export of grain is looked on as supremely important, as this is one of Russia's few ways of securing foreign capital: Soviet credit is too weak to attract big loans. In fact, the Five-Year Plan is the Communist system on trial in an unexampled way. If it is successful,

<sup>1</sup>ZXX.

a country of 8,000,000 square miles with immense mineral reserves and farming capacity will be organised and made efficient for production in a manner elsewhere impossible. On the other hand, failure may well mean the fall of Stalin, if not of Bolshevik rule.

Spring, 1930, saw revolts of the peasants against this final death-blow to private property. A halt was called. Collectivisation has already advanced a long way : the remaining small farmers are to be squeezed out gradually by heavy taxes and a slow policy of confiscation. But a peasantry which numbers more than 90 per cent, of the population will surely object when its pocket is not pinched but emptied. The moujik is slow-witted: he lacks organisation and is opposed to a most efficient system which keeps its finger on the pulse of all Russia. But the future would probably be dark for Bolshevism even were the Five-Year Plan to succeed. A mechanised collectivist countryside would need barely a million rural workers. Others could be absorbed into the towns. But what would happen to the vast majority of the 120,000,000 Russian peasants who would have nothing to do ? Machine-breakers and Luddites of the British Industrial Revolution provide a grisly warning.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE BALTIC STATES AND POLAND.

THIS is perhaps the least-known part of Europe. Fishermen go to Norway, novel-writers and brigands have given a bad name to the Balkans, while Russia has become a standing dish for the daily paper. But the little States around the Baltic have put their houses so well in order and lie so remote from Cook's Europe that they are still unknown land to the majority of West Europeans.

Perhaps enterprising steamboat lines and the development of air traffic may one day work a change. Since the nineteen-twenties Tallin and Riga have been visited two or three times in the summer by northern capital cruises. But the countryside is so free from ruins and so rare in its charm that it is hardly likely to attract the common run of tourists, while others find it clearly too far away. Also the development of national languages has set back German, the old international language of north-eastern Europe. English makes progress in the new elementary schools but is scarcely evident outside them, and all five official languages between the White Sea and the Bukovina are alike in their extreme difficulty. Swedish does, indeed, maintain something of an official position in Finland, but

its knowledge is restricted to certain western and southern districts of that country. French and English are little known. Russian and German are on the decline. Nowhere more than in the Balticum do political developments look like countering scientific invention as a facility for the traveller.

Yet these new States have a peculiar significance for Europe. They have once more assumed the part of bulwark against the infidel which the Teutonic knights gave them in the Middle Ages. The Balticum opposes a solid front of peasant proprietors and sound capitalist finance to Bolshevik Russia which has renounced God and European ways : it is the heritage of Spain in the twelfth, of Poland and Austria in the sixteenth century.

But though the Balkan States are creations of the Versailles Treaty, they hold at the same time much of what is oldest in Europe. Lithuanian may be mentioned among the earliest of European languages. The people who speak it lived beside their river and in their forest clearings before the Germans came into Europe. Less primeval, the Estonians embody Gothic words in their daily speech. Russia, too, has, until recendy, ruled these lands. For the most part Russians and things Russian are more hated here than among most neighbours. But a long period of Slav rule with intermittent periods of intensive Russification have left their mark. In the Baltic States I have found less knowledge of contemporary Russia and more knowledge of the Russian mind than in any other non-Slav countries of Europe. A sanitary cordon is maintained

eagerly by both sides over plains and through forests which offer no natural frontier. But Estonia and Latvia are the natural outlet for West Russian produce. Sooner or later, Russia must make an attempt to open far wider her now all but closed "window over Europe." Even if political antipathy for the West remains, economic necessity will in the end get rid of the shibboleths. The Baltic States hold Europe's gate: this position is all the more vital because it is defensive.

It is hard to settle the limits of the Balticum. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania fall certainly within its borders. Finland, probably, too, especially since that country's attitude has become less Scandinavian. I have chosen to include Poland as well, for Polish interests are very largely Baltic, her Russian danger is similar to that of her northern neighbours, and the unfortunate quarrel with Lithuania is perhaps the gravest menace to Baltic unity and peace. Of course Poland has other problems, many of them more Balkan than Baltic, but geography and history combine to give her a predominantly northern orientation: the German and the Muscovite are still a danger to her, which the Turk has ceased to be: the long Polish frontier is least ill protected by Nature in the south where the Carpathians and Peipet marshes, together with the Rumanian *entente*, help to make it secure.

Danger from Russia is the link of necessity between Baltic countries. It is felt least in Lithuania, whose hostility to Poland and disagreement with Germany over Klaipeda (Memel) has led her to **seek** Soviet sympathy. Estonia's reasonable frontiers

fill her with particular antipathy. On the other hand, Poland, with large Russian areas even with French aid, Latvia who has an Achillean heel in Latgale, and Finland with unredeemed nationals in Karelia, find a great deal to dislike across the border. Moreover, each Baltic State realises that an ordered Russia with national and economic ambitions and the means to achieve them, would want an outlet which would harm each one of them. Herein lies the need for joint action among the Baltic peoples. It might have ripened into federation, but for the lack of a statesman big enough to bring about such unity, the existence of a Vilna question and the heyday of Nationalism ever reaching from and threatened by a red close.

#### FINLAND.

Finland is the most northerly of the Balkan States. It was the last to pass under Russian rule, which it did at the Treaty of Frederikshamm in 1809, after many centuries of Swedish rule. The Finns come of the same stock as the Estonians who live on the other side of the same gulf. They are akin also to the Hungarians. All these peoples have in them a strong Asiatic strain. Yet they have absorbed European ideas with zeal and thoroughness so that the Hungarians are among the most devout Catholics and chivalrous aristocratic races in Europe, while the Finns are noted for their athletic prowess, **and** their stubborn democratic spirit.

Quite clearly such a people as the Finns **were not likely to be absorbed or attracted by the backward,**

obsolete tyranny of Russia. Swedish culture, for long the greatest influence of this kind in Northern Europe, had left ineradicable traces in Finland, where the intelligentsia throughout the country and the bulk of the population along the western seaboard were predominantly Swedish. Actually, Russia did not trouble Finland much during the greater part of the nineteenth century. A Grand Duchy, with a Russian governor, but preserving its own local privileges and freed from the military burdens borne by the rest of the Empire, Finland did not have a hard time, so long as the Tsarist Government was occupied in the grab for Silesia and a dash for the " warm water " of South European seas. Meantime a national movement grew up. It showed itself in the revival of the Finnish language and the reconstruction of Kalevali, the patronal epic. It should be noted that henceforward Finland became more and more associated with the Finns, properly so-called the impoverished majority, and not with the better educated West European Swedes, who built the fine buildings at Abo and Viborg.

Towards the close of the nineteenth century Russia began to digest the huge meal of territory which she had eaten during the past hundred years. An intensive policy of Russification set in throughout the non-Russian parts of the Empire. In Finland this policy was chiefly associated with the Governor feobnkov and with von Plehve, President of the Russian Council of Ministers. Trouble **centred around an attempt to conscript the Finns for military service. Finnish judgps refused to**

sentence their nationals who disobeyed this Imperial edict. Many of them were removed from office. But Bobrikov and von Plehve were removed by assassination. Finally, encouraged by Russia's military defeat in Manchuria, the Finns declared a national strike in 1905. No trams or cabs worked; gas was turned off; banks, schools, universities, and all save provision shops closed. After five days the Tsarist Government capitulated, a very different conclusion from the sanguinary end of the armed insurrection in the Baltic Provinces. Not only were the Finns exempted from military service but a democratic constitution was granted, and the old semi-feudal chamber of four estates suppressed.

In 1908 Stolypin began a second attempt at Russification. His efforts, not confined to Finland, were as wide as the Russian Empire; he was the last efficient Minister of the old regime, a capable statesman with an eighteenth-century mind. It was Stolypin who withdrew from the Finnish Diet all legislation touching Russian interests, doubled the military tax—he did not dare to enforce military service—and took twenty million roubles from the Finnish Treasury to meet additional expenditure. Stolypin met assassination in an opera box at Kiev; for he had other foes than the Finns, but his successors carried on his policy with the pettiness and stupidity of lesser men. Meantime, Baron Seyn, a friend of Bobrikov, was Governor of the Grand Duchy. Then the war came. Russia still did not dare to conscript the Finns. Turcoman and Finno-man were alike watched, petted and hated. The

Grand Duchy became a garrison for Russian troops, while the Swedes and Finns hoped for the downfall of Tsardom, without having any positive reason for their pro-German tendencies.<sup>1</sup> Nationalist leaders were\* persecuted, Svinhufvud and others being sent to Siberia ; for Russia was only ready to spare those who took no active part against her. Political life came to a standstill, for the Diet was forbidden to assemble. The 1916 elections registered an increase in strength for the Socialists who won 103 seats as against 97 for the bourgeois Parties. If revolution threatened, it was in accordance with history's axiom that a people rebels when its bellies have been empty and are fuller, for Finland was prosperous during the war, her farm produce being in demand for the Russian armies.<sup>2</sup>

With the Russian Revolution Finland's nationalist leaders returned from Siberia. Proclamation of independence, however, only came after the Bolshevik Rebellion in November, 1918 ; the Soviets were shrewd enough to see that they could best serve their proselytising cause by generosity to Nationalist movements. Very soon, in consequence, Finland became the prey of fierce civil war between

<sup>1</sup> In a similar way British submarines abstained from sinking Swedish vessels which were carrying supplies to Germany. Sweden looked on Russia as a traditional foe and might have entered the war on Germany's side, if sufficiently provoked.

<sup>1</sup> Thus the French Revolution broke out when the people were better off than they had been under Louis Quinze. Also, the American Colonists rebelled when Britain had removed the danger from French and Indians; the Boers after the Zulu War.

Reds and Whites. Lenin's policy of moderation was the support of those Finnish Nationalists who were Socialists, just as Bismarck had won the support of South Germany by his abstention from a policy of annexation after the Seven Weeks' War. Bolshevik gold, unemployment, and the trade slump following the Russian Revolution, together with a political amnesty which set hundreds of rogues and adventurers free, all led to the Second Finnish Revolution which brought about the establishment of a Soviet in 1918.

But Finland possessed elements of social security which Russia lacked. A sturdy race of yeomen farmers, a powerful middle-class and an educated people were sufficient to stop the rabble of Russian and Finnish ne'er-do-wells whose excesses disgraced the name of the Red Army. White Guards were organised under a former Russian, General Mannerheim; German reinforcements, set free by the collapse of the Eastern Front, hurried to the help of the Finnish Whites with whom they were on the best of terms. After very fierce fightings, the Finnish Soviet was suppressed. Mannerheim took few prisoners and dealt savagely with the Bolsheviks. The influenza epidemics of 1918-19 caused further havoc in the concentration camps into which most people suspected of Communism found their way. Finland's German orientation had intensified since freedom had been won with the aid of von der Goltz's troops. So the wishes of the Berlin Government that Prince Karl of Hesse should be asked to accept the throne of Finland met with approval by the Finnish. But the Allies were

alarmed; for they feared that Germany would establish an ice-free port in the White Sea, secure a new basis for food and fuel supplies and a potential ally. However, the Armistice came before the new Finnish kingdom had come into existence. Finland saw that London and Paris were to be the new arbiters of bourgeois Europe. Prince Karl lost his chance of a Crown; but the effects of his two years' struggle with the Finnish language were, it is to be hoped, not wholly wasted.

Hard-headed and clear of sight, the Finns came rapidly to good terms with the Allied Powers. They had need of friends, for they were faced with foreign difficulties to east, north and west. In the last of these directions, trouble centred round the disputed Aaland Islands. Sweden had lost this territory, as she had lost Finland, by the Frederikshamm Treaty of 1809. The islands were principally inhabited by Swedes, but strategically form rather an outward portion of Finland. So soon as the German Army of occupation withdrew, the Aaland Islanders voted reunion with Sweden. Finland objected and brought the case before the League of Nations which awarded her the islands.

Relations with Scandinavia were improved by an amicable settlement over the Norwegian boundary. Finnish claims on Russia were more extensive and not so successful. When the Germans had been in Finland and had entertained hopes of dominating this " lone " province, they had encouraged Finnish ambitions to secure the whole of the Kola Peninsula with the ice-free ports in the White Sea. But Soviet Russia had equal need of these advantages,

wished to preserve the Murmansk Railway for strategical purposes, and had the armed strength to get her wants. Finland had eventually to rest content with the Petchenga district which gave her an outlet only on the Arctic Ocean. Unsuccessful attempts have been made to widen the narrow sea-window through the purchase of the Varanger Fiord of Norway.

The Finns met with a similar lack of success in their attempts to include within their boundaries kindred peoples in Eastern Karelia and Ingria—these very backward races lived outside the frontiers of the Old Grand Duchy; they were retained by Russia chiefly because the vital strategical railway from Leningrad to Archangel passes through this territory. So Finland has an inveterate and a national enemy; this all helps to keep her in touch with the "bourgeois" Governments of Western Europe and North America. Credit for peaceful settlements in 1920 of the quarrel with Sweden and Russia must be given largely to Rodolf Holsti, the then Finnish Foreign Minister.

Domestic problems resolve themselves into one struggle between capitalist and Communist; another between the Finnish and Swedish elements in the country and the settlement of the land question. Capitalism in peasant dress has triumphed, so have Finnish national ideals, though the Svecomans (Swedes), an intelligent, powerful, and virile minority, contrive quite patriotically to exercise considerable power. Finally, in 1922, the Lex Kallio, so-called after the then Prime Minister, divided up **the large estates among a land-hungry peasantry.**

This increased bitterness among the Swedes, among whom were the majority of the landed gentry. The election of a Swedish Finn, Relander, as Prime Minister, in 1923, eased the situation. Still Finnish attempts to enforce their language throughout the Republic are a constant source of anxiety to the Svecomans. Common fear and hatred of Russia keeps the rival factions together. The Finns are a proud, dour race. During the Olympiad of 1928, local victories were announced through loud speakers from every large shop in Helsinki. And at night, one of the strangest processions of young people marched up and down the streets in column of route, with a flag at the head, but without any sign of joy except one-armed clapping, a sound more impressive in its eerie restraint than almost anything I have heard in contemporary Europe.

### ESTONIA.

To many Western observers this is the most pleasing of the Baltic States. The Estonians have the sterling qualities of the Finns, but are a more southerly, milder people whose country possesses a varied infinite charm. Tallin on its rock is, with Stockholm, the most striking of Baltic seaports; indeed, it surpasses in some ways the Swedish capital, for it has in the open sea a frontispiece. Narva is Russian. Tartu's University was founded by Gustavus Adolphus. Valk is half Estonian and **half** in Latvia, while the variety of Estonian towns is well maintained by Petseri which may well be

the most Russian place of the old order left in Europe.

Estonia is the nearest of the Baltic States, properly so-called, to a great Soviet nerve centre. Riga is a greater outlet for Russian trade than truly Estonian town, but Narva is only a couple of days' march from Leningrad. And unlike Finland it is part of the main body of Europe. Hence, partly, the more severe treatment which the Estonians received. The Finns benefited, too, from the greater measure of autonomy, dating from Swedish times, which the Russians were unable to remove. In Estonia, foreigners had always held the upper hand. The Baltic Barons were the landlords, Sweden, Poland and Russia were sovereign Powers. Of these the first were the best. To the Swedes Estonia owes its university. Swedish architecture is visible in many of the finest buildings, and the name of Sweden is everywhere respected. The Russians and Baits, on the other hand, built their power on an ignorant, depressed peasantry. Readers of such books as Madame Kallas' "White Ship" will know how grim their role could be.

The Baits, descendants of the German Knights of the Sword, held two-thirds of the land in Estonia at the outbreak of the war, although they formed less than one-half of 1 per cent, of the population. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, when Tsar Alexander II. liberated the serfs, it was impossible for Estonian peasants to hold land. Later they did so, only at exorbitant rates. The Qvil Service was full of Russians, no Estonian could be sued in the law courts and the Russian Navy was

not allowed to receive Estonian recruits, lest they should become too formidable in the Imperial Fleet. On the other hand, Estonians were conscripted for the Army, among whose serried millions they were easily hidden.

All the same a national movement was visible in the province before the war, though no Zemstvos were allowed there and everything possible was done *to* check the movement. Government lay with the Tsar or with local councils of nobles which kept the German name of Landtag. But the stubborn spirit of the Estonians not only kept alive a national movement which came here as elsewhere in the nineteenth century, but was cool enough to preserve in the more conservative and middle-class Democratic Party of Tonisson more strength than was given to the Radicals led by Pats.

Tonisson and some of his Party had been members of the Duma. In 1912 Poska became the first Estonian mayor of Reval (Tallin). But only a handful of Estonians had experience of Government when the Russian Revolution left them masters of their house. Kornilov authorised the formation of Estonian regiments. However, before the Estonians could control the situation, German troops occupied the capital and took possession of the country. In view of the danger from Bolshevism and the necessities of bulwarks to Western Europe, it was perhaps the best thing which could have occurred, though bitterly resented by the **Estonian** people.

This does **not pardon the riotous and unjustifiable pillage carried out by the German soldiery**

here as elsewhere in the Balticum. They had hoped to found in Estonia a colony of German followers. This was part of their scheme for the Ober Ost—East European development—which was to develop German political influence and find homes for two or three million of the population.

By the time of the German evacuation, British warships and Finnish volunteers helped the Estonians to keep out Bolshevik forces who were at the time particularly keen to get into Western Europe; for a revolution had already started in Germany, and the Allied countries were beginning to see the economic hollowness of this victory. General Laidoner proved himself to be a capable military commander, though the losses of the little Estonian Army were heavy. The British captured from the Bolsheviks two gunboats which became the nucleus of the Estonian Navy.

Land reform was necessary if the peasantry were to be dissuaded from the specious enemy argument that they were foolish to fight for fields which were not their own. The Agrarian Bill became law on 10th October, 1919. Except for cemeteries and communal properties all land became the property of the State. All legal impediments to partition and the remnants of feudal servitude were abolished. In the redistribution of land, preference was given to war veterans, but care was taken that as many landholders as possible should be established by the restriction that no family could own a bigger farm than could be worked by the family and two horses. Meantime the establishment of a land bank facilitated the peasants' purchases of tools and

machinery. Forests and products of the sub-soil were reserved by the State for its own use.

In the early years of the Irish co-operative movement, a pamphlet by A. E., the poet economist, asked the question ^Jkwhether the stimulus of a new Nationalism would cause a Pericles to spring from Patrick's loins. Rhetoric is not a strong point in the Estonian character. But ten years have provided them with a race of peasant holders second to none in Europe for industry, pride and reliability. English capital has interested itself particularly in this little country. One distinguished Englishman has been attached to the Estonian Treasury; interest has been taken in the development of the oil-shale works and pork export traee. British officers have been attached to the Estonian Army and have stayed in Tallin to learn Russian from one of the little group of families on the Dom rock. Paradoxically the smallest and most easterly of Russia's new neighbours seems to be the most flourishing, the most normal to Western observers.

It was not always so. At first the Allies were largely to blame; for their policy of support to the " White " Army, gathered near Narva, drew on the Estonians Bolshevik forces which chased the incompetent Judenitch back from Gatchina and across the border. The story was that this White Army contained more officers than men, and that **the** Generals were almost as numerous as the rank **and** file. It was commanded for a time by an Admiral. Judenitch himself led a life of **amusement** **when he might have captured Petrograd.**

**After the land reforms the Estonian Government**

was almost as much detested by the Whites, most of whom were Baltic barons, as were the Soviets themselves. Hence peace between the Tallin and Moscow Governments was not so difficult to make. It was signed at Tartu on 2nd February/1920. The great Lake Peipus has formed an excellent natural frontier which has been further improved by the facilities afforded to the population to opt for whichever nationality they preferred. Estonians live on both sides of the frontier, but some have for many years been in touch with Petersburg or Pskov rather than with Reval. No warships are kept on Lake Peipus.

Party politics in Estonia have been peaceful. Communism was at first powerful, for the Estonians living around Petrograd had spread it among their more orderly kinsfolk. But excesses committed by the " Reds " during the Civil War, Strandman's agrarian measures and the exodus of many Communist leaders to Moscow after the Tartu Treaty have led to its rapid decline. The Soviet Consulate in Tallin is heavily staffed, its huge red flag hangs across the main street, but more interest is shown in the captured Russian banners in the military museum. Bolshevism is not helped by old memories of Muscovite cruelty. No chapter on Estonia should close without a tribute to the capable diplomatic staff maintained by the small Republic. Such Ministers as M. Kallas in London may well excite the envy of great nations. As to the Tallin Press Bureau, it is as charming as the old Bait palace in which it lives. And that may be the most beautiful office building in Europe.

## LATVIA.

There is no natural barrier between Estonia and Latvia. The frontier has been carefully drawn, but Nature offers no help and a certain dangerous over-care is apparent at times. For instance, the town of Walk has been divided between the two States. Estonia and Latvia are themselves to blame for haggling over the possession of roods of territory held by the mixed frontier populations. In time of war each would be more secure behind a frontier offering greater facilities for defence. No doubt such a boundary would be hard to find. Moreover, the Baltic States have lived peaceably enough side by side since those first bitter days when the nationhood was born.

Latvia has its paradoxes. Geographically nearer to Western civilisation than Estonia, it shows less signs of a cultured heritage. This is very largely due to the fact that Latvia had not the same benefits of mild Swedish rule as her northern neighbour. Southern Livonia alone of the Latvian provinces was under the Vasas. Elsewhere Poland, the Baltic Barons and the Russians kept the native population in a state of servile ignorance. The Latvians come of a primitive Aryan stock, related to that of Lithuania, though Protestantism, often enforced by the Germans, has made them harsher and more independent than their kinsfolk in the south.

Commerce, too, has affected the Latvian character. Riga is the biggest town in the Balticum. It has suffered considerably from the severance of its closer connection with Russia, for it is **the**

natural outlet of thousands of square miles of territory, now under a different Government. Many Germans, great captains of industry, have left since the power of the Baltic Barons has been broken, and the under-dog Latvians have been given that control over affairs to which a numerical majority entitles them. Industrial classes, so near to Russia, have been inevitably susceptible to Communism. Russians, too, find Riga more sympathetic than Tallin. White exiles and Red agitators are both to be found there. Bolshevism is more of a force in Latvia than in the other Baltic States. Too much has been sometimes made of the support given to the Bolsheviks in the early days of the Revolution by Lettish regiments out of hatred for the German landlords and propaganda based on false information.

The Lett has an old reputation for savagery. Even to-day his disposition is cruel and unfriendly to strangers, though he is intelligent and capable of loyalty and sympathy to those he knows well. Parts of Latvia were among the most backward parts even of the Tsarist Empire; Latgale, in the south-east, only saw in 1905 the grant of lands to peasants who belonged neither to the Orthodox nor to the Lutheran Church. On the other hand, Riga, with a population of over three hundred thousand and highly-developed industries, is the richest and most historic city in the Balticum.

The greater number of Latvians are dark haired (44 per cent.), the remainder being blonde (33.5 per cent.), or brown haired. Physically they are strong and of middle height, taller than the Poles or Eston-

ians but not so tall as the Swedes. The average age of a Latvian is sixty years. Their language is one of the oldest Aryan tongues and of the oldest speeches in Europe. It is akin to Lithuanian, Old Prussian, and such extinct Baltic dialects as those of the Jadvigs and Galinds. It has nothing in common with the Slav or Ugro-Finn groups of languages. In various German universities<sup>1</sup> exist special institutes for the study of Latvian.

Nationalism took a course in Latvia similar to that in Estonia. There was no movement of independence here as in Finland, prior to the emancipation of the serfs. The Latvians were too poor, few and oppressed for any such movement. Revolutions spring from half-filled, not from empty bellies; that is one of history's truisms. Tsarina Catherine I. had been a Latvian girl, but she set the example to her Romanov successors in oppressing this people. Serfdom was abolished throughout Courland in 1817, two years later in the greater part of the country, and as late as 1861, in the more Russian Latgale. Two forces, one literary, the other economic, built up the Nationalist movement. The big development of Latvian journalism occurred in the second half of the nineteenth century shortly after emancipation; Latvian song festivals, a Latvian ethnographical exhibition and a growing popularisation of the people's language which had been degraded to a servant dialect, helped to strengthen the hold of a new patriotism. Meantime on the economic side, the work of Waldamaras

<sup>1</sup> At Kiel, Leipzig and Königsberg.

(1825-91) was of supreme importance. He persuaded Russian officials to develop Latvian ports, the country increased in wealth and recovered enough vitality to want more autonomy or complete independence. However, three-quarters of the population were still landless, a factor which led to the active participation of Latvians in the Revolution of 1905, which followed on Russia's defeat in the Japanese War. Repression was savage, for the Baltic Barons were as zealous as Russian captains to stamp out this agrarian and political rising. Many Latvians went to an exile in England and America, where they learnt democratic methods. A new State existed in skeleton beyond the national frontiers.

Then came the war. Latvia suffered : Latvians formed a considerable section in Rennenkampfs army which met with severe reverses in East Prussia during the first two months. Later, Courland was over-run and the Germans reached Riga itself. Permission was now given by the Russian High Command for the Latvians to organise their own forces. Military units 182,000 strong were raised. Of these 32,000 laid down their lives. After the Revolution and the dispersion of the Russian armies, German troops occupied the whole country. Indeed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk seemed to confirm them in their hold of it. The Latvians had formed National Councils of which the Baltic Barons and German occupation troops made bogus copies from among the German and certain servile Lettish inhabitants whose Landcsrath offered first the Duchy of Courland and then the

throne of a central Baltic State to William II. No heed was paid by the invaders to Nationalist claims. It was at this time that many Latvians, seeing only a period of revival and more efficient social and economic tyranny before them, turned Bolshevik. Lettish regiments stranded in the middle of the Soviet Union had been already affected by Communism. Wiser heads sent the veteran Shakste and the brilliant young Meierovics, destined to be Latvia's first Foreign Minister, out to seek recognition from the democratic Powers. Great Britain gave provisional recognition to an independent Latvia on the very day of the Armistice in 1918.

When it arrived, independence came as suddenly as a northern summer. No long Risorgimento attended it. But the early years of the new Latvia were full of glorious escapes from danger. Latvia's difficulties were in a way greater than those of Estonia because she had to face not only the Bolsheviks but a German invasion. Von der Goltz's army of occupation still remained for the most part in the country. It had no official significance, but Europe was too occupied elsewhere to take much note of it in the months immediately following the Armistice. Really an adventurer called Bermondts took over the remnant of the German troops. His aims were obscure, though the plunder he took was considerable and real enough. Perhaps Bermondts had ideas of a principality for himself; he was probably in league with Ludenvitch, the leader of a forlorn White Russian cause on the borders of Lake Peipus.

The year 1919 was hard. Bolsheviks took

control of Riga, so that the new Latvian Government had to retire to Libau under the guns of Allied warships. Von der Goltz actually succeeded in kidnapping the Latvian Cabinet. Baits and Germanophil Letts, under the leadership of one of those German Lutheran pastors who were the props of landlordism in the north, formed an unrepresentative Government. But the Allies intervened. Von der Goltz had to withdraw; his successor, Bermondts, was little better than a brigand. Latvia rallied; but the struggle lasted until February, 1920, five months longer than in Estonia. Finally, the Treaty of Riga confirmed the new country's independence.

As throughout the Baltic States, peace meant constitutional government and land reform; large estates, most of them here, too, in German hands, were divided among the peasants. Some kind of prosperity returned. Hemp, linseed and rye are prolific in Latvia, which is astonishingly fertile for so northerly a land. Industry is not so promising, nor so far advanced. Except for the rough elements of cement there is little industrial wealth in the country, nothing to compare with the rich prospects of Estonia oil-shale. The Letts are an intelligent people, but they have not that dogged tenacity which has led Finns and Estonians to be compared with the Japanese. Dairy produce and farming in general are on the up-grade, but Riga is still a stricken city. The tiny offspring of Versailles is not endowed with Great Russian trade, which made Riga so rich before the war, when five million eggs were exported every day, passed by their loads of

coal for the Moscow area. Railways are few and good roads still fewer in Latvia. For strategical purposes the Germans built 760 miles of railway in Qmrland, but Livonia and Latgale are underdeveloped ; while a difficult political situation has strangled communication with Russia, insufficient use is made of whatever lines exist.

Latvia has a President and a Chamber known as the Saeime, to which all adults send the 100 representatives. Politics have produced a host of Parties, but the luxury of keen, inconsequent Party life has not yet developed. All have had to face the German and Communist danger. In the early years of the Republic valuable service was rendered by the Foreign Minister, Meierovics, who might have become a statesman of European renown had his life not been cut short by a motor accident.

## LITHUANIA.

To the traveller, and to most historians, this is the most attractive country in the Balticum. Northern forests are more broken and less severe in Lithuania; the Niemen, too, has more vivacity in its surroundings than other rivers and a wealth of folk-history. The Lithuanians are a very old people, settled in this part of Europe before the arrival of Germans and Slavs. Other tribes akin to them, like the Borussians, who gave their name to Prussia, have disappeared before the greater vigour and higher civilisation of the invader. Protestantism and German colonists changed the character of the Letts.

But the Lithuanians, secure in their primitive forests, have preserved a racial distinction, strengthened by a famous, if short-lived period of mediaeval Empire, and by their position as an outpost of Roman Catholicism which immediately suggests comparison with the Irish at the other end of Europe.

Like Ireland, Lithuania in her national revival has produced more great poets than politicians. In Valdemaras she has found as intransigent a pedagogue as Eamon de Valera. Unfortunately, her political security has not been ensured so thoroughly as that of the Irish, at the hands of the competent Cosgrave Ministry. Vilna remains an open wound, the whole future of the Polish boundary, not to speak of the dubious frontier with Germany and Russian designs, is insecure. Nowhere does the *status quo* of the Balticum seem less safe than in this country which is the oldest State of all.

Not only circumstance, but national character has much to do with the difficulty. There is as much paganism beneath Lithuanian Catholicism as there is in States nearer home. Carved horses guard the housetops along the Niemen against Thor's bolts; they are to be found all along the North German plain, from the Westphalian border, but they are nowhere so numerous as in Lithuania where plain and forest merge. The river, too, is widely looked on as a guardian spirit of the country. Women sing to it as they wash clothes, and Niemen comes in an unconscionable number of Lithuanian songs. Paganism was made a pretext for political invasion

by the Poles in the eleventh, and by the Knights of the Sword in the thirteenth century. Indeed, the threat to Lithuania which followed on the conquest of the Letts and Borussians by German knightly Orders was the actual cause of that union of tribes under Mindangas (1248) which saved the country and became the prelude to a mighty Empire founded by a series of Lithuanian Grand Dukes,<sup>1</sup> who not only conquered White Russia and such important centres of Slav civilisation as Novgorod and Pskov, but exercised a vague sovereignty over Poland, the Ukraine and Podolia. At one time the Lithuanian dominions extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

Nor is this a mere historical fluke. Lithuania, like Poland and Sweden, exercised a dominion over the vast north whose resources were insufficient to make it durable. The Grand Dukes, like the Vasas, kept their stock price for a century and a half, after which time the absence of worthy successors led to a decline in State prestige. Intermarriage between Jagello, the *de facto* ruler of Lithuania, and Hedwige, Queen of Poland, began the connection which was to be so disastrous to the husband's country. Jagello had murdered the Grand Duke Keistutis, his uncle, and imprisoned the latter's son Vytautas. However, this Polish marriage was unpopular in Lithuania, where Vytautas was proclaimed Grand Duke, though he later acknowledged his cousin as sovereign of both Poland and Lithu-

<sup>1</sup> The most i  
(1391-1430).

ania. The solution at the time was the best for which Jagello could hope, as he had to face both Tartar and German invasions. Vytautas, who was perhaps the most brilliant of a line of good Generals, finally broke the power of the Teutonic Knights in 1410, on that same battlefield of Tannenberg which five centuries later was to witness the rout of Russian might in the Balticum. Vytautas, too, rendered the Poles invaluable service in defeating the Tartars. History plays curious tricks. Vienna was saved in the seventeenth century by the Poles, whose land her rulers ungratefully dismembered less than a hundred years later. But already there had been a parallel in the salvation of Poland by Lithuania to whom the Jagellons dealt as harsh measure as did ever the Hapsburgs to the successors of Sobieski.

In the end Vytautas was bound to lose. He left no competent heir. Moreover, the Poles had the Church on their side, for Jagello had promised to complete the conversion of Lithuania, now more than ever desirable, for the advance of Greek Orthodoxy made it seem as though the country was only to pass from paganism to schism. Incidentally, out of protest against the Polish Government, Lithuania remained predominantly Orthodox until the Counter Reformation, when King Sigismund and the Jesuits succeeded in Catholicising the country. Also the success of Jagello's Polish policy was furthered by certain Lithuanian nobles who felt that their ambitions would be more furthered in aristocratic Poland than nearer home where the primitive democracy of the Nordic forests still prevailed. This

tendency received encouragement from Casimir, Jagello's son, who heaped favours on the Lithuanian nobles when they recognised his rule. By 1569 the Poles were strong enough to force on their weaker neighbours the so-called Union of Lublin, which joined the two countries by a constitution under one king, the Polish choice. Actually, many of the nobles became Polish. Higher civilisation conquered. Moreover, Lithuania was too small to stand alone and had to face the alternative of an even less agreeable surrender to the growing power of Russia.

The sixteenth century was a turning-point in the history of Vilna. Originally this city had been not only the Lithuanian capital but a sacred city, founded by Grand Duke Gediminas on the spot where his life had been saved. To-day the miraculous Byzantine image of Ostro-Brama preserves for the city a peculiar sanctity among both Roman and Greek Catholics. After the Union of Lublin, Polish officials and an aristocracy which, whatever its origins, became altogether Polish in language and sentiment, combined to remove any traces of the Lithuanians from the governing classes. Meantime Jews and White Russians formed the bulk of the populace. The Poles were always particularly severe on the middle classes which had proved the successful opponents of the aristocrats in the political struggles of seventeenth and eighteenth-century Western Europe. Burgesses were not common products of Lithuania, they were forbidden to hold land; in the year of the Declaration of American Independence all municipalities were

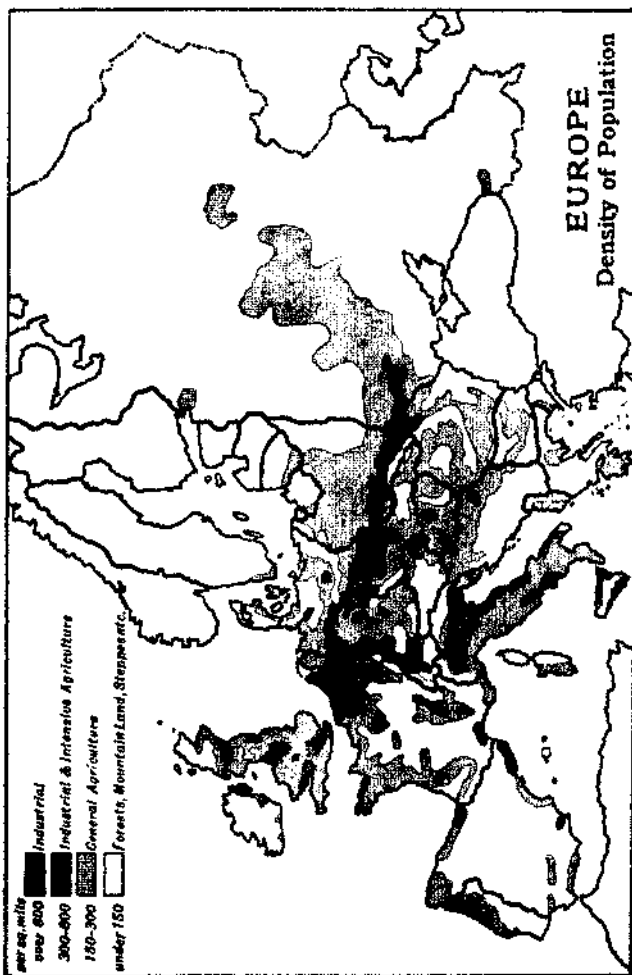
suppressed. Vilna and Kaunas became largely Jewish cities, for the Jews were ready legal and secretarial creatures, of the wealthy but intellectually incompetent aristocracy. What remained of Lithuanian memories was confined to the peasantry, among whom it was fought by the priests, some of whom were Poles and all of whom were presumably enemies of paganism with which it seemed inextricably confused.

Away from the main roads of civilisation (one ran to Danzig and another to Riga, these two ports being joined by sea), Lithuania remained backward and out of history during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Napoleon crossed it on his way to Moscow (they show one at Kaunas the house where he stayed), but he left very little impression on the country. When Muraviev began his campaign of Russification in 1864, he had only to deal with a peasant people, though these clung so tenaciously to their folk-lore and nationality that he had little chance of success. On the other hand, a Lithuanian revival was fostered, partly from exiles in America and partly across the border in East Prussia, where the aboriginal population was akin to the Lithuanians in stock. Especially after Bismarck's fall, when the " telegraph wire " between Berlin and Petersburg had broken down, did the Germans play with this embryo Nationalist movement across the frontier.

During the twentieth century Lithuania went through a stage of international events by now familiar. After the 1905 Revolution concessions were made, the national **language being taught in**

the schools. To this succeeded the Stolypin period of repression. But the movement in the manifold expression of all kinds of societies, agricultural, artistic, literary and economic, had gone too far to be suppressed. Politically the Lithuanians countered the Tsarist jerrymandering of constituencies by making common cause with the Jews. Before the war, the Duma gave the future rulers of the new State a political training which found its corollary in the economic sphere through the medium of co-operative societies and land-banks.

The war brought a speedier occupation of Lithuania than of the northerly Baltic provinces which were more remote from the frontier. Revenge for Russian pillage in East Prussia during August and September, 1914, was visited on the unhappy Lithuanians. Much cattle was seked and many buildings destroyed, including the handsome modern church of Zapiskis. This devastation is still remembered in a country where poverty has made restoration a long and peculiarly costly affair. So speedy and complete was the German occupation of Lithuania that the triumphant soldiers haa their way, and the pre-war Teutonic theories of a new State across the Niemen faded out of politics. A descendant of the Lithuanian Grand Dukes was discovered in Wurtemberg; at best the country could hope for a vassal subservience on the Reich. Certain Liberals in Germany pressed a revival of the old freer theories, in this they were supported by Roman Catholics. The Papacy looked on Lithuania as a valuable outpost in the north. But only **German defeat effected** such a **change of plan**.



**Prince Max of Baden, the last kingly and Imperial Chancellor, admitted the Lithuanian claim to independence at the audience on 20th October, 1918.**

However, quiet on the West Front meant a new conflagration in the East. Baltic provinces had become Baltic States only to find causes for another war, either among themselves or with Germany and Russia, prostrate in revolution. Lithuania was farther than Estonia and Latvia from the Bolshevik danger. On the other hand, German troops passed through her territory on their way from the north. Much damage was done by the disbanding soldiers, used to living as conquerors and quick to snatch the fruit of last minutes' mastery. Escaped prisoners caused trouble. Worst of all was the irregular force organised by the adventurer, Colonel Bermond, which did immense damage both in Lithuania and in Latvia. Fortunately for the Lithuanian Government it was still at Vilna and not Kaunas. The Poles were hard-pressed by the Russians at this time. Peace with the Bolsheviks had been secured at Moscow (July, 1920) on advantageous terms by the Lithuanians, who, indeed, have always been favourably treated by the Russians on account of their hostility to the Poles. Nothing but politics lies behind the alliance; for the Lithuanians **are** the most religious and antipathetic to new social ideas of all the Baltic peoples. In October, **1920, the agreement of Suwalki gave a very favourable southern frontier to the Lithuanians, the Poles agreeing to leave Vilna in their hands. But already victory over Russia, secured by the Treaty of Riga in the preceding month, had led to a recrudescence**

of chauvinist feeling in Poland regarding Vilna. While the main body of the Polish Army stood, apparently in a peaceable enough manner, between the principal Lithuanian forces in the south and the capital, an irregular force under General Zeligowski drove the slight Lithuanian forces from the city in October. The raid, parallel to that of d'Annunzio on Fiume, could not be officially recognised by the Polish Government as it was an infringement of international law. It was aided by that Government, opposed by the people, and finally led to the recognition of Polish sovereignty over Vilna by the decision of the Council of Ambassadors in 1923. General Zeligowski himself, like d'Annunzio, was decorated by his Government. Meantime, the Lithuanians had lost much sympathy by an equally unscrupulous act on a smaller scale—the seizure from the disarmed Germans of Memel which they needed as a Baltic port. Later the stabilisation of Poland and the chauvinism of Lithuanian leaders has led to a reaction of opinion in Western Europe which was at first almost entirely in favour of the Lithuanian Government which had barely escaped in safety from its own capital.

In consequence of the Vilna episode foreign politics have continued to play chief part on the Lithuanian stage. Until 1929 the broad-minded, versatile President Smetonas was generally overshadowed by Professor Valdemaras, a historian with considerable linguistic ability and personal charm, hidden behind a square **body and** face dominated by hair *en brosse*. **Valdemaras became to all intents and purposes dictator of the country,**

**after** a *coup d'etat* in 1926 which superseded Parliamentary government on the assumption that "strong" rule might somehow bring the lost territory back. Vilna is no longer the cross, but the curse of the Lithuanian people. Money and energy have been expended in troops which are all too few, and propaganda which is useless if meritorious. In Kaunas itself a nightly war-memorial service, thronged in the vilest of Baltic weather by the populace, keeps the sore open. On a cairn of stones the cross is illuminated by electric light and a pagan fire of twigs lit by man's hand. Wounded soldiers lead the procession to the memorial, and afterwards return to the museum which they tend. In the latter are dummy figures of Lithuania's four enemies; the German Bermondts, a Bolshevik, a Pole and the Devil.

So far as internal affairs are concerned, the most important event in post-war history has been the land settlement, which has been milder here than elsewhere, though the greater part of the big estates has been divided among the peasants. Like other Baltic States Lithuania has adult suffrage for men and women, and one Chamber, the Seimas. Roads and railways are insufficient, the service of the latter being particularly hampered by the closure of the Polish frontier which makes the journey from Kaunas to Vilna by rail one of 600 instead of less than 60 miles. On the other hand, the Metropole at Kaunas is the best hotel in the Baltic States. **It has been built at Government expense and is in the same building** as the Foreign Office. **JCaunas, too, is the only European capital with a horse-tram line.**

Unimaginative students in an excess of patriotism have already turned the car over and are pressing for its abolition. Taxis of Gargantuan size have been introduced. A monthly bulletin of Lithuania affairs is published in English. This is the work of Mr. Harrison, the able head of the Press Bureau of the London Legation. Certainly this sad and lovely if pathetic country is well served. Miss Avietanaite of the Kaunas Press Bureau, with her Irish accent from New York, is likely to win over to her country's cause any West European who makes the never too long journey to the Lithuanian capital.

#### POLAND.

Strictly speaking Poland is not a Baltic country. Not only has she Czech frontiers, but also one with Balkan Rumania. Yet problems with her most powerful neighbours Germany and Russia, above all her Vilna strife with Lithuania, make her so interested in Baltic affairs that it is at least apt to treat her with the Balticum.

Excepting the barren northern provinces of Finland the Poles have a larger territory, and in any case twice as many people, as the other States together. Their history is more famous, and their part in the fortunes of Europe more prominent than that of the more northerly States. It should never be forgotten that behind the legend of Poland's eighteenth-century incompetence lies an invaluable service to the West rendered by these guardians of the Eastern gate of European civilisation against Muscovite, Tatar and Turk invaders.

The Poles are Slavs, but they differ considerably from the other races. A more noteworthy history has given them that aristocracy and vision of government which the Czechs and Slovaks have not had until modern times. They were civilised long before the Russians and Ruthenes. Also their fervent adoption of Roman Catholicism, dating legally from the Counter-Reformation, has distinguished them from the other Slavs; though the Latin Cross led to their long political and spiritual crucifixion at Russian hands. Poland herself has a record of toleration remarkable and early; Jews and Protestants found refuge in her territory during the persecutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At the same time the European character of the people, in contrast to the Asiatic or Byzantine outlook of their eastern and southern neighbours, cannot be overstressed. Polish poets and *literati* flourished during the Renaissance; the lyrics of Z&morowicz of Lwow, who died at the age of twenty-five, before his genius had fully ripened, have been compared with those of Herrick. The Reformation was brought to Poland partly by refugees, partly by scholars who returned from Germany; many went there, for Polish education was backward. The Polish Church was as sluggish and corrupt as any other in Europe before the Council of Trent. "Pint-pot" Latuski and Peter the Wencher were bishops whose type existed until the Counter-Reformation arrived. Then Poland, like Ireland, became one of the most devoted daughters of the Church. In 1683 it was Sobieski's Army which saved Vienna, and perhaps Western

Europe from the Turks. Fine baroc buildings, the fruits of a leisured, too mature age, decorated Polish towns in the eighteenth century.

Then came the catastrophe.<sup>1</sup> Sorel wrote of anarchy as the "normal life of the State"; Mably, in an open letter, described the *seigneurs* as lacking the spirit even to manage their own houses.<sup>2</sup> The partitions took place in 1772, 1793 and 1795. Under the three robber Governments the Poles developed in very different ways. After a series of vicissitudes not only the Eastern provinces but Warsaw itself fell into Russian hands at the Treaty of Vienna. Most of the territory concerned was pasture or marsh land; but the Lodz coal-fields and historic towns of architectural richness, like Warsaw and Vilna, were in this territory. Under Tsardom, the people had not only no share in the Government but were stunted and oppressed in every way. Anarchy and discontent were everywhere in Russian Poland: occasionally, as in 1863, they broke out into revolution which was savagely repressed. Prussian Poland included the Silesian coal-field, and Posen, industrial districts, admirably developed by the Reich. Though the people here were allowed no political privilege by the centralising Berlin Government, their social status was very fair. Posen was a city replete with modern conveniences before the close of the nineteenth century. Tolerant Austria had Galicia with the free city of Cracow. The Poles learnt the wiles of Parliamentary

<sup>1</sup>"L'Europe et la Revolution Franyaise," I., 508.

<sup>2</sup>"Du gouveracment et des lois de la Pologne" (1781).

government in the Vienna cafes. To-day these ex-Austrian subjects are the best prepared to rule in the new Republic. For a long time Vienna backed their interests and gave them a free hand with the Ruthenes of Eastern Galicia, a bid to entice the rest of Poland, which bore fruit in the early days of the war when Joseph Pilsudski, a refugee from Russian Poland, and to-day, Marshal-President of the Republic, led a raid into Russian territory, bidding his fellow-Poles mistrust the Tsar's promises and rally under the eagle of the Hapsburgs.

Meantime there had been conceived various schemes whose end was to work Russian Poland into the German State system. Army commanders favoured division of the territory between Austria and Prussia. The Emperor, with a backing of politicians and professors, had a more elaborate scheme. Those provinces nearest the German frontier, to a large extent those lost by Prussia to Russia after the Napoleonic Wars, were to be annexed by Germany; the remainder being allotted to a vassal king whose State would be neither Polish nor democratic. Some Germans even favoured the Austrian solution of annexation by that country. Their motive was that any increase in the large non-German population of the Dual Monarchy would emphasise the dependence on Germany of the Austrians properly so-called. In this way the bold idea of a German "Mittel Europa" might be advanced, by the economic if not by a political union.

A temporary solution along Teutonic lines was made possible by Russian military defeats and by the

obscurantist rule of the last Tsarist Ministers whose actions belied any hope which might exist that Petersburg had caught democracy from its Allies in the field. On 5th November, 1916, the Germans and Austrians had occupied enough of Russian Poland to set up a vassal kingdom of considerable size. The ruler was not immediately chosen, search had to be made for a German princeling with sufficient hereditary right to spoof his Gotha-ridden sponsors, but sovereignty was vested in a Council of twenty landowners. Polish Nationalists were frankly hostile to this travesty of freedom. Actually the November Manifesto had an adverse effect on Prussian Poland and Galicia; in the former, strife was shifted from the economic to the political plane, while the Austrian Poles at last had their eyes open to Germany's true intentions: it was Berlin and not Vienna which mattered.

During 1917 Pilsudski in Galicia, and the Silesian Korfarty, came to the front as Polish leaders. The former was now hostile to the Central Powers. In July he resigned his place in the Council of State, and in the same month was imprisoned by the Germans, while many of his legionaries were interned. Alive at length to their chances the Allies prepared to recognise the futility of trust in Russia, and to bid for a new friend in the East by recognising Polish independence. Germany tried to forestall them by nominating three Poles to the Council of Regency established in September. But Imperial Governments could not make the wholesale capitulation to democracy which alone would satisfy the Nationalist leaders; they persisted

in looking at Poland through eighteenth-century glasses. The way was scarcely avoidable, for Berlin and Vienna could hardly hope to keep down their own Socialists, if they flirted with those of so near a neighbour as Poland.

Germany's failure to placate the Poles in the autumn of 1917 marks a turning-point in the relations between the Central Powers and the Polish National movement. Henceforward a number of pin-pricks helped the Poles along their way to dependence on the Allied Powers. Germany and Austria bartered away to the Ukraine part of the Cholm region. They favoured Lithuania, whose embryo Nationalists were already putting forward claims to Vilna. Polish forces in the Allied Armies increased. They began to play a considerable part in the Western Front which was at last awakening to a German defeat. Czechs and Yugoslavs helped at home and abroad. Then came November, 1918. Pilsudski returned from his prison in Magdeburg. Happily for the middle classes he was the hero of the hour. Hunger, war and Russian spies had spread Bolshevism throughout the country. At Lublin, Austrian Poles had established a People's Republic on Soviet lines. Pilsudski played the card of national aggrandisement most sure to prove tasty to the Poles. He showed them that the nation must stand together and away from Bolshevism if it was to win the big prize at Versailles. Paderewski, a good pianist, no politician and a friend of the Western frock-coats, was elected President. **Poland entered the peace campaign in a way worthy of her traditional brilliance. Again she had donned**

Crusader's uniform to appear as the protector of Western flesh-pots against Asia.

At the Peace Treaties Poland did uncommonly well. As one who could turn the flank of Germany and Russia, she was likely to receive good terms from the Western Powers in the moment of victory. The Corridor to the Baltic and Eastern Galicia were secured, though the latter had to be settled finally with Russia. An agreeable solution to the Upper Silesian problem was certain. Only the Vilna question remained unfavourable to Polish aspirations. For a time there was, it is true, ill-feeling with the Praha Government over the boundary line across industrial districts, but this did not long remain in a dangerous condition, and it was the Poles who gained Teschen.

Already in 1918 the attack on Bolshevik Russia had begun. Not only Great Russia, but also the Bolshevik Ukraine which had good claims on Nationalistic grounds to Eastern Galicia was the object of Polish offensive. Allied with the White Armies, the Poles entered Kiev and Odessa. But after the White collapse, fortune changed. Expelled from Russia the Poles had to face a Bolshevik drive on Warsaw. It was the campaign of 1920, described with a crude liveliness in Babel's "Red Cavalry." The arrival of an Anglo-French military mission at Warsaw and the counter offensive victoriously conducted by the Polish Army under direction of its military adviser, General Weygand, changed the situation once again in a dramatic way. **The much vaunted Red Army was ill-disciplined and ill-armed, though brave enough and possessed of some**

first-rate Cossack cavalry under General ex-Sergeant-Major Budenny. Chased across the Beresina the Russian consented to make peace. This time the Poles wisely left the Ukraine alone, though they occupied Eastern Galicia to which they had a historic claim. But they included in their Republic purely Russian districts of Volhynia and Podlesia, and farther north near Minsk, Bolshevism had been hurled away from the danger-zone of hungry, defeated Germany. But Poland had weakened her exposed Eastern border for the sake of glory. She has 2500 miles of frontier, more than 300 of them with Russia. Only along the Baltic and in the Carpathians has she any natural protection. Of her 28,000,000 people between a third and a half are alien. Goodwill in the Concert of Europe counts for much. The Poles have begun to show a finer art of government. But one would scarcely write " *Mole sua stat* " round their Statue of Liberty.

Internal reconstruction has been more complex in Poland than in the Baltic States. Not only is the population larger and more varied, but the existence of an aristocracy has prevented the establishment of one of those peasant democracies of which Estonia is so stout a type. Class-warfare has been kept away from Poland largely because Socialism means Russia, the national foe. After many vicissitudes, an aristocracy has been set up, though the dictator is even after four years of rule still to a large extent the nation's hero. The aristocracy preserves its social privileges and landed wealth, but most of the ambitious younger men have scrambled out of the rut into one of the many

bureaucratic or military jobs which the new State provides. Calmer times, national development and easier money have brought about a state of affairs which scarcely seemed possible ten years

The approach was difficult. With the Bolsheviks at the gates of Warsaw, Grabski's Ministry found it necessary to promise land to the peasants in order to keep their loyalty. But the danger passed. Polish landlords who had not suffered such a vital economic loss even when the Russians took their political privilege away, succeeded in keeping the measure in abeyance. Disturbance in the former Bolshevik possessions of Eastern Poland led to the passage of a very mild Land Purchase Bill in 1924. The only settlers to gain considerably have been the farmers, many of them beginners, planted in East Galicia and round Vilna, in order to make their land Polish.

The years **1919** to **1924** were those of constitution-building. On the top of traditional Polish conservatism came the dread of the Bolshevik whose recent invasion had been marked by excesses of every kind. Hence the new constitution had a touch of Jagellon times in it. Unlike the **Baltic States** Poland has added to its Lower House an aristocratic Senate. The power of the President was not considerable until the *coup d'etat* of **1926**.

Meantime the two chief questions which troubled **the** domestic history of the country **were** **minorities** **and** **the** position of Pilsudski in **the** State. In an attempt to **Polonise** the Eastern frontiers, **Ukrainian** and **White Russian** schools were closed and papers

**suppressed.** In 1924 Chicherin complained of **this** treatment: he suggested that in so doing Poland was breaking promises made at the Treaty of Riga between her representatives and those of the U.S.S.R. But the Poles urge that their internal affairs are their own concern. Discontent of the peasantry who, when Russian subjects, had partitioned the threat estates at the Revolution and now have to hand them over to soldier-colonists almost led to revolt in 1924. Conservative peasants had been shocked by the forcible conversion of several Orthodox into Roman Catholic churches: mindful of their century's oppression, the Poles have revenged themselves on the Church which was always Tsardom's spiritual ally. Grabski made rather ineffectual efforts to alleviate the difficulty. More recently arrangements have been made with Jews and Germans, but the Lithuanians, White Russians and Ruthenes (in Volhvnia and Eastern Galicia) remained discontented.

Pilsudski has been in turn the saviour, the danger, **and** least likely the sound man of Poland. His exploits as the deliverer of his country from the Russians made him a national hero. Being a Pole, one who could exploit hero-worship, it was hard **for** him **to** find his modest place in a democratic Republic. But the Parliamentary experiment was hampered largely by its own inefficiency; it **failed to placate the minorities and got out of step with the Locarno spirit of the year 1926.** The world-wide difficulties, with their repercussions on Polish trade and finance, accentuated the problem. **Primfc Minister Witos, a personal enemy of Marshal Pilsudski, ap-**

pointed another General<sup>1</sup> to the War Office. Within twenty-four hours Pilsudski had marched on the capital with the henchmen who had already done speed-raids for him in other parts of the vast troubled dominions. Three days later he took control of Warsaw and the Government. A university professor was appointed to be President, for Pilsudski felt that this office did not give sufficient scope to his powers. Instead he became Prime Minister and Minister for Military Affairs.

Democrats in Western Europe viewed with alarm the advent of a new Dictator. On the whole their attitude has been pleasantly disillusioned. The Marshal has a temper and distrusts constitutional methods : but he is just, sound in judgment, and alone among his compatriots in uniting the confidence of his countrymen to his own sense of patriotism. A less representative Government still maintains 20 per cent, of minority Nationalists among its deputies. Danger of revolt in the German and Ruthene provinces was removed by a mixture of force and redress. The fall in the zloty was stayed; national stability, and with it national prosperity, established. Poland has secured a semi-permanent seat on the Council of the League of Nations : her friends, Czechoslovakia and Rumania, have temporary seats. The military alliance with France is useful, but has perhaps scarcely counter-balanced the hostility of Germany and Russia. Probably the turning-point in Polish fortunes was that stability of affairs which led Europe and

<sup>1</sup> Maiczewski.

America to discount Poland's "playboy" reputation. To-day, even those who feel that Vilna, Lemberg and the Pripet marshes are not the property of their rightful owners—according to the current nationality roles—are unwilling to disturb the peace of Europe and the efforts of a new State which is making a brave effort to succeed in a sick part of Europe.

## CHAPTER VI.

### CENTRAL EUROPE.

THE Dual Monarchy of pre-Treaty Austria-Hungary collapsed because it was antipathetic to the prevalent Nationalism of 1919. In its place have arisen a number of new States, most of them rarely far from bankruptcy, although situated in the heart of Europe, with admirable facilities for trade. Nowhere else has the policy of Balkanisation had wider and more grave results. No doubt Hapsburg tyranny has disappeared. While keeping sovereignty in the hands of the two most powerful peoples in the old Empire, this system was something far more mild than the Imperialism practised to-day by most of its enemies. Poles who were former Austrian subjects find their political education far ahead of that of their fellow-citizens from the old German and Russian dominions. So far as the health of Europe as a whole is concerned, there is little doubt that a large Empire is more beneficial than many small States, liable to disastrous experiments of government. Hungary **and** Austria have both suffered from Communist outbreaks: the former has since endured a military dictatorship. History will show whether some federal solution **can bring prosperity to Central Europe without**

disturbing racial claims. Meantime the dragon has become a hydra whose heads are most ready to live on one another.

### AUSTRIA.

From her position as metropolis of the Holy Roman Empire, Vienna has become the capital of a second Switzerland. The new Austria has the mountains, tourists and sturdy peasants which are typical of the Swiss landscape. There are rather more citizens in the new than in the old States, but the population to the square mile is less, despite Vienna, which accounts for nearly two of the six-and-a-half millions.

When the Peace Treaties destroyed the framework of the old Empire, Austria lost her markets and her favoured position. There ensued a period of plague and famine, the time when newspaper sellers found their piles of almost valueless banknotes bigger than their stock of shrunken journals. British capital (Anglo-Bank) and League of Nations' loans helped to save the Austrian Republic from bankruptcy. A new optimism has made considerable improvements in a position where economic prospects are by no means hopeless.

Extensive forests help the timber and paper industry, while 45 per cent, of the old Imperial iron supply still remains within the boundaries of the new Austria. There is brown coal in the Burgenland, though it has little real value. Vienna is at the same time **a powerful asset and a grave danger to the State.** Still the most powerful cultural

force in Central and South-Eastern Europe, Vienna has not the prosperity which may well be hers when her Slav neighbours become more civilised. To-day her newspapers are better than any east of the Danube, but their circulation is comparatively small because they are above the heads of their potential readers. Austria survives, though her position is so bad that it can only be temporary: still the German stock is the "cement" which keeps the "bad bricks" together.

The young Republic has been saved a weakening struggle for frontiers. In the south, Klagenfurt's plebiscite, decisive in maintaining connection with Austria, was accepted by the Yugoslavs. There has been a certain amount of difficulty with Hungary over the Burgenland, a small but rich and strategically important district, which was first ceded to Hungary and later restored to Austria, in order to relieve the economic situation in the latter country. But there has been none of that bitter disappointment over boundaries which has darkened the political horizon of Germany or Hungary herself. In consequence, Austria's relations with the so-called Succession States<sup>1</sup> have been tolerably amicable.

The Revolution inevitably brought the Social Democrat Party to power in Austria as in Germany. They should have been in a particularly favourable position to bargain with the victorious Allies, as their past history was a record of opposition to the chauvinist war-lords of the old

<sup>1</sup> Such States as Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Poland and Yugoslavia, which have succeeded to the heritage of the Dual Monarchy.

Empire. But no Talleyrand appeared to convince Lloyd George or Wilson that they were punishing the innocent and robbing the new democratic Government of its main chances of success when they saddled it with an impossible economic situation. Moreover, Austria lacked an outstanding political figure of any kind. Seipel was to appear later. A socialist paper, the "Arbeiter Zeitung," was the chief force. It was so intent with setting the national house in order that it paid no heed to foundations.

A year after the stern Treaty of St. Germain, elections led to the triumph of the Clerical Christian Socialist Party, which increased its representatives from sixty-nine to eighty-two, while the Social Democrats declined from seventy to sixty-six. Union with the German Party increased the Catholic and Nationalist flavour of the Government; its Socialism was diluted. But there was still no leader capable of leading Austria to prosperity: during the winter of 1920-21, millions went hungry and many people starved to death. State anaemia became pronounced, and Vienna was a dead city in which no hope remained. Oudying country provinces, which had bread and firewood if litde else, voted for union with Germany. Tirol and Salzburg took this step. When Styria threatened to do the same the Allies intervened, for they did not want any addition to the Reich which was still regarded as Europe's bogey.

Some improvement now took place. A competent business-man, Schobcr, became Chancellor **in January, 1921. In** addition to the **financial assistance**

of the League of Nations, loans from England were secured and no more was heard of the Styrian plebiscite. Later, by the Treaty of Lana (December, 1921), Benes lent 500 million Czech crowns in return for commercial privileges. Perhaps it was only an outcry from the German Party which led to an Austro-Czech Alliance. Hunger had driven hate out of Vienna, but in the country districts there was still enough spirit to resent a supposed alien bondage of the despised Czechs. Relations with Praha remained good, but ail need of economic dependence was removed by the successful European tour undertaken by Dr. Seipel, the brilliant young Jesuit, who succeeded Schober as Chancellor. Seeking and getting financial aid from Germany, Czechoslovakia and other less interested nations, he restored foreign confidence in Austria by a vigorous policy of economy. Particularly, Seipel succeeded in two directions. Despite Great Britain's eagerness to follow the American lead away from a bankrupt and bellicose Europe, he raised considerable funds in Europe. Also, he overcame an Italian hostility which threatened war in case Austria should allow herself to become the catspaw of either Germany or Czechoslovakia. In this latter case, the value of a Clericalist, with influence at the Vatican, becomes obvious.

Seipel, too, improved Austria's relations with the Balkan peoples. He led a party of monarchist squires and burghers, democratic **radical peasants**, **and** priests who cared most for the **advancement** of their Church. Yet, his policy was **always** vigorous **and** effective, **and** he **was** chiefly **responsible for making Austria the adopted child of Europe.**

Without the means or will to attack, he could not restore the glories of the Empire. All the same, he must be ranked among the greatest Austrians. In September, 1929, Dr. Schober again became Chancellor of a Clerical pan-German-agrarian coalition. Austria is making the best of her humdrum existence. With some slight return to prosperity the country is shedding its Communism, though red flags are plentiful enough on May Day, which is a national holiday. Few Austrians would like to think of their present boundaries as permanent; but they are an easy-going people and have no desire for military adventures. Civil conflicts between Fascist and Communist militia have occurred, and on more than one occasion have threatened to develop into civil war; but the situation had become much more calm by the summer of 1930, owing to the resolute action of a Government which refuses to be stampeded by the hotheads of either faction.

#### HUNGARY.

The Hungarians are an Eastern people rescued for Western religion and Western civilisation; Hungary is an outlying portion of the Eastern steppe saved by the Carpathians to nourish the defenders of Western Europe. Like the Poles, the Magyars have held the gate of our civilisation against invading barbarians, and like them were ungratefully repaid by eighteenth-century despots. When the Ausgleich of 1867 gave Hungary equal rights with **Austria, she came** into a ready-made aristocratic system built on subject, for the most part Slav

racés. Actually, the lands ruled by Budapest contained most of the territory lost at the Trianon Treaty. A large number of Hungarians were then handed over to the not too tender mercies of the peoples they had dragooned. It should be realised that this harsh conduct was quite in keeping with the moral code of the Hungarian who is perhaps the most gallant and kindly of all Europeans, *where his equals are concerned*. Southern Slavs and Rumanians were, to him, inferior races outside the pale of human relationship. Of the Slovak, he said, "Tot nem ember" ("the Slovak is not a man"). A fine fighter, a courteous gentleman, and a born ruler, the Hungarian has for centuries left his commerce to Jews and his drudge work when possible to one or other of the subject peoples. Count Keyserling quotes a German proverb which sums up the Magyar view of life : "Verstand hat jederman. Vernunft, Husar und Edelman. Aber Witz—nur Magnat und hohere Geistlichkeit."<sup>1</sup> Aristocratic in a democratic age, Hungary has been mishandled and misunderstood by Europe.

This is a country people. With the exception of Budapest, the towns are not large villages so much as collections of huge farms which stretch over a wide area. The national river is not the Danube (that fills the place of the sea), but the Theiss, with its tempestuous floods, its banks prolific in corn, sugar-beet and tobacco, and its position in the centre of ethnographical Hungary.

<sup>1</sup> Every one has understanding ; the hussar and peer have common sense; but wit, only the magnate and the higher clergy.

After the war Hungary's agony was more acute if not so long-drawn as that of Austria. There was economic distress in both countries : if famine did not prevail in Hungary, the condition of that country was inflamed by the severity of the Trianon Treaty which placed more than a million Hungarians under the rule of peoples of inferior culture. It should not be imagined that there was any considerable desire to maintain the Dual Monarchy; Hungary wanted a more complete control of her own affairs than that system could allow her. Even Count Tisza, the most influential Hungarian to defend the old system, declared before his death that the dynasty could last no longer. No doubt Hungarian Nationalism would draw its own frontiers in conflict with those claimed by Yugoslavia, Rumania and Czechoslovakia; for so genuine is the feeling that it is immoral to subject Hungarian minorities to the rule of these three peoples, that no boundary line drawn in accordance with strict ethnographical principles will satisfy Budapest. The sense of injustice with its complementary desire for revenge is stronger just now, in Hungary, than anywhere else in Europe. The willingness to proclaim Lord Rothermere as saviour in return for his sympathy, the posters of a Magyar lion pierced by three arrows, and the prevalence of the slogan, "No, no, never," are all signs of times which are very much as they should not be.

The first Hungarian National Council, in October, 1918, was formed by Count Michael Karolyi. He was the best, perhaps the only possible, **man** to fill the gap. A noble, but a liberal, one who had

been continually on the look-out for an early peace, Karolyi had been in touch with the French defeatists during the war. He was, all the same, unable to get any but the most drastic terms from the Trianon Conference. And there was no patient middle class in Hungary to back Karolyi in his difficult task. The men of commerce were Jews who filled their habitual roles as fervent supporters of Monarchy or Communism. For a time both ex-King Karl and the Socialists flirted with the Karolyi Government, whose leader showed his sincerity by the division of his vast estates among the peasants. He took his stand on the planks of trial by jury, a free Press, and agrarian reform ; but these were not the necessities of life to a famished, angry people.

Bela Kun arrived. Of Jewish parentage, this man had been an instructor at Kolozsvar University before the war. He took a commission in the Austro-Hungarian Army, was captured by the Russians and became a Bolshevik after the Revolution. Bela Kun was one of the political boomerangs which returned to Central Europe from Russia, disastrously affected by the famous sealed waggon that had carried Lenin across Germany in 1917. Returning to Hungary at the end of the war Kun's ability as orator, organiser and man of action enabled him to make the most of a hungry, desperate people. Imprisonment gave him popularity. In Budapest, with its considerable Jew and artisan population, he became a leader, the darling of the most public opinion. When the Allies further humiliated Hungary by ordering her troops out of the Theiss Valley before the invading **Rumanians**, Kun secured

power in a night. Karolvi's Parliamentarians went down in a few hours before the Hungarian Soviet Republic. A nation which could neither persuade nor conquer its oppressors spat in their face. Hungary joined Russia, as Germany appeared to be going to do, as a pariah of Europe. At last, she alarmed Europe : Bolshevism was too epidemic to be ignored.

For Kun it must be said that he was no hireling of Moscow. His Communism was more democratic than that of the Russian Soviets, his constitution was more systematic and his franchise more extensive than anything previous in Hungary. Also he made no attempt to waste the national forces on a Communist crusade. Enforced withdrawal from Slovakia, where he was attempting to regain the Hungarian districts, brought about Kun's fall. Trade Unions were promised food by Allied agents if the Soviets were overthrown. Peasants and landowners flocked to the White Army formed by Admiral Horthy and Count Stephen Bethlen at Szeged. The Rumanians marched on Budapest, subjecting the country on the way to a wanton pillage ; they had the war devastations of Mackensen's Army to avenge. Bela Kun took the field, attempted to lead a Nationalist resistance and was defeated (July, 1919). There was a week's interlude of feeble constitutionalism under Peidl, a compass-boxing politician, while the Rumanians kept order in Budapest. Melodrama came in, against a background of skin and bones. The Chief of Police arrested Peidl during a Cabinet meeting. He resigned forthwith. The Archduke J6seph tried to

come back. He would have preferred to do so in his true colours, though he was prepared to be the leader of a democratic Government. The Succession States would not have him at any price. So, when the Rumanian Army marched out of Budapest, Admiral Horthy led the White soldiers into the capital. Hungary's new ruler had no Navy ; she was a kingdom without a king, the least happy paradox in Europe.

After a purge of Communism, severe enough to win for his Government the name of " White Terror/" Admiral Horthy has setled down to stop a constitutional gap which has spread over eleven years and is not yet closed. With considerable tact like Hindenburg, another warrior turned statesman, he has kept order and pursued a middle path. For he suppressed Karl's attempt to regain the throne in 1921, as decisively as he suppressed the Communists. Exiled to Madeira, the ex-King-Emperor died in 1922. His son was a minor, which fact, combined with the frank declaration of the Little *Entente* that they would regard a Hapsburg restoration as a cause of war, has helped to keep the peace. Prince Otto, Karl's eldest son, came of age in 1930. King Carol of Rumania has been mentioned as another claimant to the Crown\* Although ruler of a hated foreign race Carol's accession would at least bring more **favoured** treatment to the Transylvanian Magyars **and offer** economic benefits to **Hungary whose Danube enters** the sea through Rumanian territory.

The logical nature of **Hungary's monarchism** needs to be stressed. Many supporters of Prince

Otto do not like the Hapsburgs, who they regard as foreigners and the tyrants of '48, but feel they must support their lawful kings. And they do so with fervour. The day on which a coronation takes place in St. Stephen's Church will have been unequalled as a spectacle of personal allegiance since the body of the great Napoleon was laid in the Invalides.

There are three principal Parties in Hungary. National Unity and the Christian Economic are patriotic Parties with conservative social tendencies. In Hungary the Church supports Toryism, while across the frontier in Austria she is Socialist in sympathy. The fourth Party, that of the Social Democrats, did not go to the polls in January, 1920, as a protest against the monarchist character of the Government. Franchise is restricted to citizens over thirty years of age who can read and write. Perhaps the most important measure of the Horthy regime has been an Agrarian Bill which has given land to competent farmers. Ex-soldiers had preference in the distribution; all supporters of the Karolyist and Communist Revolutions were barred.

### CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

This most westerly of Slav States might be a thrust at Europe's heart. For the Czech and Slovaks are alike in so far as they have no part in the racial entity of that part of Europe. Happily, they show little likelihood of being a danger to Western Europe. The Czechs, in particular, live in one of the oldest trade-centres; they are more likely to cany

a millionaire's stylo than a field-marshal's baton in the pocket. Their old kingdom of Bohemia was only tricked out of its independent existence by the centralising tendencies of the Hapsburgs. The Slovaks, whose country used to be called Moravia, have a larger percentage of peasants in their population, and the most easterly group, the Ruthenes, are a very backward country-folk. Out of a population of rather over 13 J millions, just over 8| millions are Czechoslovaks. The Republic is 600 miles long and only 160 wide. Its central position is of immense importance. More the geographical core of Europe than Switzerland, and more varied in race than Austria,<sup>1</sup> Czechoslovakia is a meeting-place of east and west. Actually, trade-routes have run rather along the river valleys of the Danube and the Silesian Oder than through those of the Republic which are of little value; the Elbe is navigable through its Czechoslovak, but not along the entirety of its German stretch. Strategically, the new State is imperilled by its long frontiers, the hostility of its German and Magyar neighbours, the extent of its minorities and the lowness of the mountains in the north-west, where mining villages in the Ercgebirge are joined to Germany by good roads. The Elbe Valley provided an historic back-door entrance to the former Austrian dominions on more than one occasion; together with the Neumark Pass in the Bohemian Forest it is a source of strategic weakness to Czechoslovakia. The quality of the Army is

<sup>1</sup> Czechoslovakia holds over three million Germans, besides Magyars, Jews, Poles and Ukrainians in considerable numbers.

uncertain. Czechoslovak legions fought their way out of Bolshevik Russia after the Revolution, but neither Germans nor Magyars have a high opinion of the Czech's military qualities.

Religion is different in each of the three main divisions of the country. The Czechs are Roman Catholics. They are generally on bad terms with the Papacy, and indeed kept their faith largely under compulsion after the Battle of the White Mountain. The Slovaks are mainly descended from Protestants who fled out of Bohemia after this defeat. In the Carpathian area, the Ruthenes are Orthodox; they tend to be pro-Russian and were closely akin to the population of the Ukraine.

By preserving their Catholicism, the Czechs maintained their hold on the agricultural and mineral wealth of the Bohemian plateau. The extent of their industries may be judged from the fact that the area covered by the Republic produced 100 per cent, of the porcelain and the majority of the gloves, sugar, glass, paper, cottons, woollens, boots and chemicals of the old Austria-Hungary. To-day, insufficiency of rivers and remoteness from the sea has been to some extent made up for by a good canal system and the foundation of a Czechoslovak Custom House at Trieste.

It should be borne in mind that the Czechs through their Protestantism have old affinities with Northern Europe, though they differ from it in race. Hus, like Wycliffe, was a pioneer of the Reformation. Defeat in the Thirty Years' War compelled many Czechs to abjure their new faith, though they retained its habit of mind; commerce

assisted this and formed another link with the Protestant North. The union with Austria came late. Some kind of connection united Bohemia and that country in the thirteenth century, but there was no personal union before 1526, and no close relationships until the drastic system of land confiscation and rigid Austrian Government which followed the defeat of the part-religious, part-Nationalist Bohemian movement at the White Mountain. The reforms of Maria Theresa and Joseph II. gave the Czechs greater freedom, but emphasised Vienna's position as the source of government. All the same the lot of the Slovaks was far worse. Ruled by Hungary they were more heavily oppressed after the Ausgleich. Slovak schools were abolished in a century of reform and the authorities took whatever steps were possible to suppress the language and religion of the subject people.

There was then a culture gap, besides differences of religion and language between the Czechs and the Slovaks. Leaders of the National movement were born in Moravia, but the driving force came from Bohemia. Union has been largely directed by the fact that neither Czechs nor Slovaks were numerous enough to stand alone.

But the peculiar character of this National movement lay in the considerable part the Czechoslovaks played in securing their own freedom. Conscription made it easy for the Austro-Hungarian War Office to nullify embryo Nationalist movements among subject peoples in 1914. **But** Masaryk, **Benes** and Stefanik escaped from Bohemia and formed a Provisional Government which organised

a Czechoslovak Legion from Russian prison-camps. That disintegration of the *morale* of Austria-Hungary which would have enabled a more competent Russian Army to break through in 1915, and contributed to the final victory, was largely due to the subversive tactics of the Czechs. Just as Cavour's soldiers were able to say that they were making a new Italy out of the Crimean mud, so Czech legions fighting in France were responsible for convincing Allied leaders of the needs and existence of their country. When peace came to be made, the independence of Czechoslovakia was a certainty, the indebtedness of the Allies becoming more considerable with the resistance offered by the legion to Bolshevism, and by its heroic march across Siberia. Literally, the Czech tricolour had been taken round the world.

The new Republic was fortunate in having from the first three men of European reputation at the helm. Two of these, President Masaryk and Foreign Minister Benes, are still, in 1951, in charge of the offices which they have held since the first days of independence. The third, War Minister Stetanik, met with an untimely death on his return to his freed country. All have done great things, but the success of Czechoslovakia, like its creation, must primarily be ascribed to Masaryk. Born in **1863**, the son of a coachman on Hapsburg Imperial **lands in Moravia**, his childhood was marked by his enthusiasm: he dug potatoes for **the woman who taught** him to read and write. As a boy, too, he **was** maimed by a blow from a runaway horse. **The beast did not disfigure him as a bull did Danton,**

though it left the marks of the country on him. He was brought up a Catholic. His first taste of polite society was from the remains of hunt luncheon-parties, thrown to himself and other peasants by the proud servants of the great. An intelligent boy, Masaryk worked his way up in the educational world. He visited Germany, became a Protestant and Professor Extraordinarius at Prague University in 1891. The capital of Bohemia gave him admirable chances of displaying his Nationalism. Characteristic energy and devotion brought him to the secretaryship of the Realist Party, and made him a powerful influence over the Nationalist newspaper "Pas" (Time). Masaryk took a bold, anti-Russian line. The easiest, popular way of achieving freedom seemed with the help of Tsarist bayonets. Masaryk's democracy would have none of this : he said that liberty of this kind would only mean the rule of "champagne and French mistresses at Prague." It was generally felt that he would be the first man to be hanged if the Russians entered the city.

With extraordinary boldness, Masaryk visited Vienna on the outbreak of war. In conversation there with Koerber, a previous Prime Minister, he became convinced that a victorious Austria would develop the centralisation and Germanisation of her Government; there would be no reform. On 17th December, Masaryk fled from Prague; he returned four years later, almost to the day, as President of the Czechoslovak Republic.

Influential friends and his own brilliant qualities enabled Masaryk to make a profound impression on

Allied statesmen. Meantime, he studied and acquired knowledge everywhere. In England, he would travel on the tops of 'buses, not only because he was poor, but in order to watch and learn. We hear of him finding signs of British prosperity in the well-polished brass-plates of London business houses.

Under Masaryk's leadership, the Czechoslovak Government embarked at once on a policy of reform. It was necessary if neither Communism, nor Slovak Separatism, nor the old enemies of the new State were to disrupt it. Between October, 1918, and July, 1919, the Kramer Ministry distributed land among the peasants. No estates of over 250 hectares was left; Communism was kept off. The Government lent money for land-purchase and improved the education of the Slovaks. A vindictive spirit was shown in the suppression of German schools. Kramer gave way to Tusar, who brought in a franchise scheme, peculiarities of which were compulsory voting and a system of minority representation exemplary to other countries : sections of the population as scanty as one-third of 1 per cent. were given the vote. Stability among deputies was made more likely by an age limit of thirty. There was enough of the medieval unwillingness to represent to make necessary the inclusion of a clause insisting on their service.

After some flirtation with Hungary, the Ruthenes became patriotic Czechoslovak citizens, but the Slovaks were harder to manage. They had a strong Particularist feeling. Also many of them were Roman Catholics who were susceptible to Hun-

garian influence and looked aghast at the Gallican tendencies of the Czech Church. Poland, too, played a part in keeping up Slovak local feeling: disputed possession of Teschen had set her against the Prague Government. However, the second Tusar Ministry did much to allay minority fears. Improved education, the formation of State agricultural organisations and care for public health all helped to unite this varied people. Prosperity covered up a multitude of ills. A Communist rising in December, 1920, was abortive. After a period of rule by the Petka (Committee of Five) and a Benes Ministry, the Agrarian Svehla came into power (Oct., 1922) and remained Prime Minister until compelled to resign by ill-health early in 1928.

His supreme function was to unite Czech and German parties in a common front against the Socialists. During the Svehla period trouble with the Vatican came to a head. The Czech Catholics, long accustomed to associate the Papacy with Austria and Hungary, and suspicious of its part in the Slovak movement, formed a National Church. In 1925 the Papal Nuncio left Czechoslovakia, and the Czech Minister was recalled from the Vatican. Latterly the situation has improved: Father Hlinka sided with the Government in 1927, agrarian benefits and higher stipends for clergy having been granted in the previous year. The *rapprochement* between Czechs and Germans has, too, caused the Vatican to modify its anti-national attitude. There are difficulties to make uncertain the future of Czechoslovakia, but the realist democratic intellectuals who rule her have made the present bright enough to be **full of hope.**

## CHAPTER VII.

### SPAIN.

#### Land and People.

LIKE a great aeroplane in granite and sandstone, Spain has for centuries stood apart from Europe. Astonishingly scarce in passes, the Pyrenees separate Spain from Europe in the north; to the other sides are the ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. The character of the people has been definitely influenced by this isolation. Their national traits are distinct from those of the rest of the Continent. Pride, courtesy and a rule of life which is religion at one end and an all-embracing social caste at the other, run quickly through the varied possibilities of the national kaleidoscope and still have much which cannot be found elsewhere. Spain is perhaps the most difficult country to understand in Europe—since the rest of the Continent has ceased to understand the Middle Age with which Spaniards have always remained conversant. In ascribing to this people a too-frequent use of the word "to-morrow," critics forget that the Spaniard is thinking of yesterday. He prides himself on his caste, "casticismo," which he extends to all *his* own race, but denies to outsiders; usually, the tourist figures bear

witness, these are infidels and heretics: it is no social, but a chronological distinction. No number of motor roads or radios can alter the fact that the Spaniard thinks differently from other modern Europeans; and very much like talking to their ancestors of five centuries back.

The coast is useless. There are few harbours and plenty of dangers which approach too near the mainland. Spain resembles Africa rather than the friendly shores of Western Italy. High above the seashore rises the Meseta or tableland which occupies the whole country except for the fertile but not extensive valley of the Guadalquivir. One of the few political virtues which the vast isolated plateau might have been expected to bring was unity. Yet nowhere else in Europe are local jealousies and privileges so strong as in Spain. The country was reconquered from the Moors piecemeal over a period of three hundred years. As each new province came under the rule of the Catholic kings it received immigrants and constitutional rights various as the times and circumstances under which they arrived.

Severity of summer heat and winter cold, together with the brevity of the temperate seasons, combine to make farming difficult on this stony Spanish soil. Heavy taxation, frequent wars and civil strife have all increased the handicap. Two valuable ways of communication with the outside world, the Tagus and Guadiana valleys, were laid waste by Alfonso I. to keep out the Arabs. Incidentally, this desert belt has increased the Meseta barrier which keeps apart Spain from Portugal. The oceanic outlook

of the latter, and the strong strain of negro blood in the modern Portuguese have helped to increase the difference between the two peoples.

The harshness of the Spanish climate is extreme. But one must not allow it to hide the infinite variety and colour of Spain's landscape. In the north-east, Galicia with its balmy breezes, its luxurious woodlands and its ubiquitous harvesters, resembles other North Atlantic countries ; Andalusia is still largely Africa, rather the Africa of four centuries ago, whose Arab culture placed it at the head of the Mediterranean Empire; Murcia is the sun-scorched, poverty-stricken Barbary steppe; Valencia is sub-tropical, too, but rich with its harbours, its silk-worms and its tobacco. Catalonia, on the contrary, is northern. Her people are more akin to those of Languedoc than they are to the rest of Spain. They are busy, noisy and prosperous. Castile and Aragon are still the lordly, stern, poverty-stricken lands which they were when Ferdinand and Isabella united them in the hegemony of Spain before Granada was taken or America discovered.

The people are as marked in characteristics as the land. Here is another difficulty in making them feel as one nation. Yet there are certain traits common to all, such as the spirit of independence, the sense of social equality (one does not simply address each Spaniard in the third person, but treats him as though he was as good as his more fortunate fellow-men), and an accompanying sense of courtesy which causes these people not only to be ready with advice for the stranger but to accompany him on his way, often until he has found what

he is seeking. Illiteracy is general. In 1921 the province with the smallest number of people who could neither read nor write was Santander, with 26\*1 per cent, of its total; Murcia had 82.5 per cent.; towns ranged from Burgos, with 5 per cent., to Lorca, with 51 per cent. But the intelligence of the people is high. They are not only a race of conquerors, but one whose character has been developed by Stoicism. Rightly enough, Seneca himself was a Spaniard. This is the people which produced the Jesuit Order and sacrificed its Empire to fight the battles of its Church. There is everywhere the savage human resignation and life of the Middle Age. During the American War, a mob in Barcelona stoned the Columbus statue in that city. Mr. Havelock Ellis, in what may well be one of the most penetrating books on any European country, instances the survival of what is not only the spirit but the letter of medieval camaraderie, when he talks of dogs resting before the high altar and a cat which strolled about in front of the *capilla mayor* at Gerona Cathedral during the Mass. It is so different from the rest of South European religion. At Rimini, on Italy's Adriatic coast, I witnessed a strange intrusion: it was a man on a bicycle who pedalled into the church, rested a few moments against a pillar, and then rode out again.

Of course, there is the medieval contempt of hygiene, so shocking to the northern mind. Sanitary northerners complain of the dust-bins and overcrowding of Madrid. There is a high **rate of infant mortality**, an **excess of beggars with a great deal of indiscriminate charity**. Always, the Spanish

people accepts destiny with African fatalism and a belief in redemption worthy of its Church.

### Problems.

Since 1600 Spain has been in decline. Her Empire, her prestige as a first-class Power, and her often-exaggerated artistic eminence have disappeared. AH came from a people of individualists who followed a certain code, their religion which other nations despised, and so surpassed them on the way of material prosperity. There were magnificent futile efforts. Philip IV. tried to remove the national debt by changing the courtier's starched for unstarched collars. One branch of nineteenth-century politicians looked for the panacea in Parliament, another in a series of more or less military dictatorships. Near our own time, two important developments have occurred. The defeat of Spain in the American War, 1898, removed all that was valuable of the rump of Philip IV's colonial Empire. During the Great War, Spain as the most prominent European neutral, gained enormously in wealth and prestige. She sold at fancy prices to the combatants, and rendered them inestimable services by providing inspectors of prison camps and guarantors for the non-military character of hospital ships. Once again, the historical adage proved itself that nations voice their grievances in action, not when they are most miserable, but when they taste for prosperity and hope for more. The French of 1789 who set the revolutionary ball rolling were not as oppressed as almost every other people of continental

Europe; the American colonists rose after the removal of their French and Indian menace; similarly the Spaniard in 1919 was infinitely better off than his fathers and more determined than they to put into effect his disapproval of the Government.

Not only the Socialists were angry. The successful movement came rather from those bourgeois who were impatient with the corruption, ineffectiveness and unsuitability of Parliamentary government. Southern Europe had taken long to discover that the remedies of their English patrons were unsuitable outside the fogs and playing-fields of the far-side of the Channel. Accustomed as we are to a general level of good intention in our political life, we find it hard to understand the clique of badness to which Spanish Parliamentary life had sunk. An English democrat<sup>1</sup> quotes from "La Voz" of 24th May, 1921, a typical passage: "The Minister of Education has gone to Burgos, where he was received with a 'Te Deum,' a procession and other signs of public rejoicing, just as if it were 200 years ago; and just as it will be in 2000 years. Why does Burgos show such joy? . . . Because the Minister is a native of that city, and the city will profit in some way, says Burgos to itself. Sometimes, indeed, cities gain by having a son as Minister, by the provision of a school-house without master or enaowment, a bridge which improves the property of some personage, a road leading to the same property, a present from public funds,

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Frank B. Deakin in "Spain To-day" (Labour Publishing Company).

etc. All this on condition that the register is kept at the disposal of the Minister and that a statue is erected to him."

The evil spirit of nepotism bred a lack of energy and efficiency. There was more uncultivated than cultivated land in Spain; fertile Andalusia, which had declined from its fourteenth-century prosperity, was going further downhill. The population to the square kilometre stood at 43, in contrast with 73\*9 in France and 131 in Italy. Assuredly, poor farming and the burdensome " fueros " or local feudal taxes did much to hamper agricultural development, but official neglect was also largely to blame. Jerrymandering and nepotism played a grim part. The gentry still found their chief employment in the Army, which was kept huge and busy, even if the Empire was lost by civil disturbances, the Separatist movement in Catalonia, and the chronic guerilla warfare in Morocco.

These two latter, especially the last, were final nails in the coffin of Spanish Parliamentary government. Both are unhealed wounds. Even if the Catalan Nationalists are not so purely Latin and the rest of Spain so gipsy as many of diem declare, there is undoubtedly a difference between the north-east province and the rest of the peninsula. Nf\*N only race accounts for this. Industry visualised through industries makes Catalonia more prosperous, more hygienic, and less spiritual than Castile. One of her ancient provinces, Roussillon, belongs to France. There is Catalan spoken in Sardinia. Such a sturdy Nationalist plant has been fed by the usual exorbitant, local publicists and the wooden-

headedness of Spanish statesmen, who have refused to allow local rights in that one part of the peninsula where they may be really inevitable. There has been the inevitable duel of bombs and censorships. To-day the situation is obscure: recent systems of Government at Madrid have changed so vastly and with such suddenness, that practical Barcelona has not given up all hope of a change in the traditional Spanish attitude. The Catalan is neither so medieval nor so African as the Spaniard, but his claims to Valencia, the Balearic Islands, based on medieval geography, are as dodo-like as Poland's claims to the Black Sea. His clear-headedness comes from a good business training, and not from a double portion of French logic. Professor Madariaga<sup>x</sup> tells the old tale of the Catalan Communist who looked forward to comfort in the autumn of his life on the strength of what he would *get* from an equal division of property plus his house in the country. It is typical, but it belies his later statement that the Catalan is a "Spaniard who lives on the shore of the Mediterranean."

There is another regional problem. It is that of Galicia, Spain's Atlantic province on the borders of Portugal, where a movement has grown up during recent years. Its ends are rather literary and artistic than political, but Galleganism is an issue to be faced, one which might be a link with Portugal or further cause of disruption in Spain.

However, the last naif in the Parliamentary coffin

1" Spain " (Modern World Series), by Professor Don S. de Madariaga.

came from colonial, and not domestic politics, from Morocco. It was part of the war-measles which attacked outlying parts of Europe after the Great War fever had passed. Spain had grown both in wealth and prestige during the years 1914-18.<sup>1</sup> There was the inevitable squabble over profits : it voiced itself in the General Strike of 1917. Vested interests were flourishing, and Socialism had no followers outside a few big towns. Again, the Spaniard is no sociable commonweal type like the Russian: he is one of Europe's most hardened individualists. Also he has not lost his religion. Bolshevism had little hold in the peninsula. Meantime the Government spent money freely on wiping out the national and industrial debts, and over the construction of new roads and railway. Still far behind the rest of Western Europe in communications, Spain has made considerable progress, though it is typical of her species of monarchy that she excels only in the comfort of her first-class carriages and the surface of her motoring "pistas."

The end of the war brought Germany's loss of colonies : in particular, her disappearance from the scramble for Morocco. Spain made an attempt to extend her territory in the barren Riff lands. The movement which had started as a crusade was becoming a rather sordid war for colonial development. Unhappily for the Spaniards, their opponents, who were largely of Indo-European extraction, proved themselves adept in the use of weapons readily sold them by armament firms left

<sup>1</sup>*Sampra*, p. 176.

overstocked by the close of the Great War. Foreign adventurers helped Abd-el-Krim, the Riff leader, to put up an excellent display of guerilla warfare. In July, 1921, a large Spanish force was annihilated at Anval in a way unequalled since the Italian defeat in Abyssinia at the close of the preceding century. Silvestre, the commander, settled his own fate : he committed suicide. But Spanish public opinion was outraged with this insult heaped on the nation, as the result of an incompetent higher command, by the traditional foe of its religion and its race. By the spring of 1922, Maura had resigned his office of Prime Minister. More was needed. In the triumphant recovery of Italy, Spaniards found encouragement and an example which they determined to follow. It was this belief that the right man and right intentions were necessary, together with Mediterranean contempt for Parliament as something which was both a bore and a failure—two unforgivable sins in Latin eyes—which led to the general desire for a dictatorship. At the same time, no Spaniard probably looked upon such a system as lasting, nor did he realise that only a Mussolini could make the experiment a success, but this touch of personal genius was lacking. Spain has had no Fascism. She has simply listened to a strong man who promised to right chronic wrongs.

There is a good deal of confusion about the foundation of the dictatorship : this chaos seems to be the one constant factor in the case. The Government wished to recall Primo de Rivera, captain-general in Catalonia. The suggestion, probably

correct, was that he intended to seize power by one of those *coups de main* familiar to Spanish history. The King refused his signature to recall the General. So the Prime Minister resigned. His place was for a few hours unfilled. Eventually a long palace talk between King and Generals resulted in the announcement that one of the latter, Primo de Rivera, would form a Government. In fact he did more : he became the Government. But the King was blind in the beginning, the duration and the end of his system. At present it is hard to say to what extent the dictatorship lived on Alfonso's goodwill: that is a task which future historians will find fruitful. As for General Primo himself, it is not fair to say that he was only first " of Rivera " and " secondo di Mussolini." Here is Count Keyserling's shrewd estimate of him:—

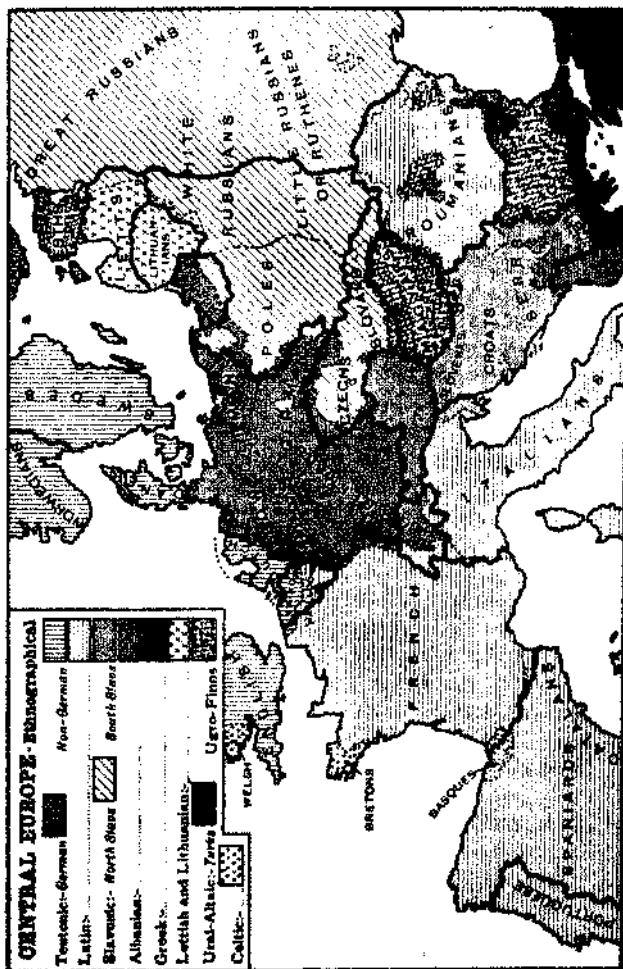
" But when, however, Primo appeared, I was astonished: not only did an Andalusian cavalier stand before me instead of a harsh Castilian—what he actually resembled was the plump, lady-loving policeman of French vaudeville. . . . I understood immediately why it was impossible to overthrow Primo: kings and presidents are overthrown, but policemen never. And as I saw further not only what delightful mother-wit, but what sound common sense and how warm a heart animated him, then I understood also, that this man, damned by all the intellectuals of Spain, whose attitude towards clever men and things of die spirit has been fantastically dense, who is quite primitive and fundamentally mediocre (to be compared with that Russian who ordered "put up a tenth' when he only found

nine muses in the museum of which he had been nominated curator) has perhaps done more for Spain than most of her rulers during a good hundred years. . . . Primo de Rivera is the complementary portrait to the eternal Don Quixote. And who is that?' the no less eternal Sancho Panza. In a chauffeur-age, the latter is quite in his right place as ruler. So Primo de Rivera, too, belongs to everlasting Spain. And so, too," goes on Count Keyserling, "does Alfonso XIII." But he is not Don Quixote: that niche is reserved for the literary, liberal Unamuno. It has often been said that the King has torpedoed the idea of a Republic by announcing his intention of standing for a presidency to which he would probably be elected. A King since birth, probably the best chauffeur in Spain and a quaint mixture of idler and astute statesman, Alfonso XIII. has played a political game at times not unlike that of the English Charles II. Primo was his choice, his nominee. Only 1930 is not 1680: it is difficult even in Spain to build up an autocracy on a policy of indolence.

What cannot be too much stressed is the difference between Italian Fascism and the Spanish dictatorship. The latter had the same **work of cleaning-up and cutting-down to do as the former** on taking office. And in each case, **one man was at the head of affairs. But there was no intellectual movement behind the Spanish dictatorship. Almost there was no idea in it at all, while there was a great deal of upper-class guidance: in Madrid the Front doors of Government offices remained closed to**

**the** proletariat. It is doubtful whether Primo de Rivera imagined or wanted this system to be permanent. Professor Madariaga has rightly compared him with the "pronunciamento" generals of nineteenth-century Spanish history, military gentlemen who seized power to suppress, each in his own way, that social anarchy into which the country was continually falling. The good sides of the dictatorship are better roads, new railways, and a genuine attempt to tighten up national morals by the creation of a new spirit of self-respect. Greedy collaborators in the 1923 coup were pensioned off: Primo meant the Government to be honest if stupid. In foreign affairs the blunder of Abd-el-Krim, whose conceit led him to invade the French zone in Morocco, gave the dictatorship an unexpected chance of bringing this costly adventure to a successful conclusion. The whole of the lost territory was regained, the tribes disarmed, and Abd-el-Krim sent a prisoner to Madagascar. If only there had been a royal family in France there might have been a Family Compact. But French republicanism, neighbourly jealousy, and the opposition maintained by the Quai d'Orsay to Spanish claims for Tangier, hindered such an alliance. On the other **hand, the** dictator visited Italy, now emerging as **France's** Mediterranean and African rival. If nothing **came** of alliance rumours, goodwill **had been established between** two resurgent nations **with** common interests and a common **rival**.

**But die** dictatorship was hopeless. **It could not overcome the vices of nepotism, indolence and political dishonesty which are the curse of Spain.**



Too much has been made of political repression, an inevitable weapon in Mediterranean life. The rigid Press censorship is a method bred often by the landed aristocracy and clergy which has its counterpart in the ruthless policy of land confiscation practised by bourgeois liberal parties. Still, the fact remains that Primo failed where Mussolini has succeeded in making his movement one capable of attracting men of all parties and classes. Influenza passed and democracy came back. The peseta fell and life grew dearer. Meantime the Army, which might have kept the dictatorship indefinitely supreme, was made antagonistic by the laudable attempts of General Primo to limit the powers of the juntas or officer committees. In 1929 Revolution seemed imminent. It was avoided by the resignation of the dictator before the storm broke. Probably King Alfonso played just as big a part in the winding up of these affairs as he had all through the dictatorship. Certainly the Revolution was directed against him and the throne rather than against Primo de Rivera, who was looked upon as honest if limited in ability. Public opinion enjoyed the laugh against the wealthy and moralising Liberal leader, Count Romanones, when he was fined an enormous sum in pesetas for attacks on the Government. Ibanez and Unamuno, writers with perhaps an undue reputation in their own country and outside, have heaped abuse on the dictatorship from across the border. Their attitude disgusted many good Spaniards. But resentment towards the oppressive, blind-fdley regime which persecuted them was still more powerful.

Almost friendless and quite suddenly, the dictatorship came to an end in 1929. Primo de Rivera died suddenly in Paris a few months later. Promises to restore the constitution have not been fulfilled, and something of a censorship still remains. Whenever it has been removed, the King has had to face the same kind of yellow Press abuse as repaid Napoleon III.'s liberal gestures before the catastrophe of 1870. Perhaps the King wishes to become dictator, but he is not strong enough to hold the position even if he can seize it. Perhaps there may be a Republic ; only those in favour of it are not yet a certain majority. Political exiles have returned to Spain and Spanish investments fled abroad. The peseta is falling. Life gets dearer and strikes more frequent. The only sure thing in the situation is its danger. Spain has carried on crusades for centuries: herself, she cannot save.

## CHAPTER V m.

### THE BALKANS.

THE Balkans are still Europe's political volcano. That rise of Russia and orientation in the foreign policy of Austria which began Turkey's eighteenth-century decline opened the primitive, long-neglected Balkan people to the captions of democracy and nationality. At the price of much blood, Russia and Austria have been kept out, Turkey all but cleared out, of the peninsula. And a host of quarrels separate the Balkan States; Yugoslavia, Greece and Bulgaria all dispute their land frontiers. Yugoslavia has trouble, too, with Italy, Hungary, Albania and Rumania; the last of these countries has one extensive frontier dispute with Hungary, another with Bulgaria, and the certainty of war with a resurgent Russia in the future over Bessarabia. Greece is in the happiest position. She has abandoned Asia Minor to the Turk.

Doubtlessly, the demoralising influence of five centuries of Ottoman rule has had very much to do with the troubled condition of the Balkans. The Turk was no active oppressor; trouble lay in the fact that he was not active about anything. An old proverb has it that "grass never growp where Turkish foot has trod." Tribute **was** taken, **and** the

Balkan peoples left to govern or misgovern themselves much as they liked under the debauched eyes of Turkish beys. Actually, the tradition of political graft was an inheritance of Byzantine days : in the long run the slow poison of the Eastern Empire killed the Government at Constantinople a second time. That is why the Ghazi has moved his capital to Angora.

Geographically, the Balkans form a composite whole. A series of valleys and mountain ranges, they lie between the Save River, the Carpathians, the Danube Delta and the sea. Most of the peoples are mountaineers, the exceptions are the Attic Greeks, the Latinised Dalmatians and the part-Latin Rumanians. In all the Balkan peoples there is a more or less strong Slav admixture. Earlier Greek and Albanian strains remain in the south; there is Mongol blood in the Bulgarians. These last have perhaps the yellowest faces and the "whitest" hearts in the peninsula. Racial and Nationalist quarrels are accentuated by religious differences. While the Orthodox Church is by far the strongest in the peninsula, it takes on Nationalist forms : there is no Rome. Islam is still powerful in Bosnia-Herzegovina, in Albania, and in parts of Bulgaria; the Adriatic coast is largely Roman Catholic, as are most of the territories secured by Serbia and Rumania in 1919 as a result of the **Peace** terms. Proselytism is encouraged, for a convert gained by the National Church will generally **become a food citizen. Yet the fact that of the whole peninsula, only Constantinople remains in Mohammedan hands shows that the crusading spirit no longer**

lives. To a large extent it died with Tsarist Russia.

## RUMANIA.

From its humble pre-war condition, Rumania has become possessed of an extensive territory and a population of seventeen and a half millions, the sixth largest on the Continent. It has remarkable natural frontiers, for though these have been pushed beyond the Transylvanian Alps, it is still well protected by mountain and river. Moreover, both the new territories and the Regnat or Old Kingdom are particularly rich in cereals and minerals. But the country is split by racial and Party divisions, and the people, often brilliant, are unstable. Queen Marie and King Carol have focussed public opinion on their country, only to create the general impression that Greater Rumania is still Ruritania.

The origin of the Rumanian people is obscure. Many of them claim to be descended from the Roman legionaries who defended Dacia. Hungarians say that they are of mixed Greek, Gipsy and Slav stock, a people who were taught a Latin language in the Middle Ages by Transylvanian princes to keep them apart from the Slav mass which had all but encircled the Holy Roman Empire. **Turk and Greek rule have had their effect on Rumanian political life: magnificent Government offices exist to-day in a Bucarest palace presented by the Cantacuzene family. Nomad gipsies (Kutzo Vlachs) of Rumanian speech are still to be found in parts of Macedonia and Northern Greece. They are**

only not so numerous as before, since the Greek Government has shown unwillingness to house foreign citizens and the Rumanian has offered homes in the Dobrudja to attract back what few citizens it had abroad.

It is perhaps the existence of aristocratic Greek families with long tradition in Government which give to Bucarest more the appearance of a capital city than either Belgrade or Sofia possess. The clever royal family has never become absolute. There have been always two powerful Parties: before the Peace, the Conservatives under Take Jonescu, and the Liberals under Jon Bratianu ; both had leaders of great distinction. To-day, the latter under the less able Vintila Bratianu have become a Conservative bourgeois Party, while chief power has shifted to the Peasants' Party, of which M. Maniu is leader. There are German, Magyar and Bessarabian Parties, and a group on the extreme Right led by General Averescu.

Recent political events in Rumania may be said to date from the year 1927. Then, in July, King Ferdinand died. His eldest son, Carol, had abdicated his rights to the throne and left the country. Jon Bratianu's Liberal Government opposed Carol's return, and secured the proclamation of his boy son as King, a regency being appointed consisting of Prince Nicolas the Patriarch, and M. Buzdugan, a famous judge. Before the year was out the new system suffered a heavy blow from the death of Ion Bratianu, who left an old and incompetent brother to lead his Party. Queen Marie grew more and more opposed to the regency, as it became

apparent that she could find no place in its triumvirate. Buzdugan's death in 1929—he was the most competent and trusted of the regents—and the fall of the Liberal Government, which could secure little credit abroad on account of its arbitrary methods and oppression of foreign minorities, prepared the way for a change. In 1929 the present Party, under Maniu, took office. The new Prime Minister looked his part of an able school teacher. He is a capable tactician. With him were the delightful Mihalache, Dr. Vaida Voivod, Professor Madgearu and Professor Iorga. It was a powerful team, though not so purely intellectual as, for instance, the Government at Prague. Professor Iorga, with his medalled chest, just missed by a powerful beard, is a noted historian whose friendship with Carol has enabled him to contribute to events of the present as well as to a better understanding of the **S**ist. Of the rest Mihalache is the most impressive, he wears peasant dress without the sacrifice of peasant common sense which that so often means. A very competent Minister of Agriculture, with a strong following in the country, Mihalache supported Maniu in his willingness for the return of Carol. Russian threats to Bessarabia and the confused Court-Regency situation after Buzdugan's death had led to the need of a man at the head of the State. Carol's sudden return by aeroplane in May, 1930, can perhaps be ascribed to his unwillingness to depend entirely on Parliament for his throne. After a certain amount of discussion, M. Maniu has consented to reform the Government, which was likely to become a Ministry of All the Talents, sup-

ported by General Averescu and by a section of the Liberals.

In the Balkans the people themselves are still more interesting in their political and economic movements. It is striking that though these countries are at least fifty years older than those formed after the war, they are more backward already in material and moral reconstruction. Even Bulgaria, which has spent much on education, has too big handicaps in the way of climate and the legacy of Turkish domination to reach the standard of Estonia, Finland or Czechoslovakia. The Rumanian peasantry is perhaps the most picturesque in dress throughout Europe. Excellent local museums, especially that at Cluj in Transylvania, show a wealth of lovely costumes. The predominant colour is white ; the dresses are always elaborate in their embroidery. Historical monuments make up in variety what they lack in quantity. Bucarest has little, but the Genoese casdes *in* the Dniester, the baroc gates of Alba Julia, the cathedral at Curtea d'Argesh, and above all the German Siebenburgen (seven Strong Places) are all quite remarkable.

While much latent wealth is still hidden in Balkan soil, there is nothing to rival Rumania's galaxy. The richest oil-wells in Europe are round Ploeshti, there is a wheat prairie on the Wallachian Plain, hundreds of miles of timber in the Carpathians ; also salt, coal and gold. The population of seventeen millions contains a million and a half Magyars, nearly half a million Germans, together with Russians, Bulgars, Turks and Jews. There is an alien fringe round the generously drawn frontiers,

though the bulk of the Magyars and Germans live well within Rumanian territory, on the slopes of the Transylvanian Alps. Geographically the frontiers are very strong. Even Bessarabia, which could hardly be held indefinitely against Russia in arms, is protected not only by a broad river, but by a cordon of garrison towns situated on hills which command the surrounding steppes.

### BULGARIA.

This little country is still crippled by the Peace terms which saddled her with a reparation debt of ninety million pounds, nearly one-half of the sum levied in France after her defeat in the '70 war. France was immensely wealthier, more populous, and more highly cultivated than Bulgaria; yet Europe stood aghast at the severity of her treatment. Territorially, Bulgaria under the prevalent nationality test had little to lose. The Yugoslavs took some purely Bulgarian enclaves to strengthen their Eastern frontier, Rumania maintained her hold on the Southern Dobrudja, and Greece took away the all-important access to the Aegean Sea. Besides this irritanda, Bulgaria lays claim to Macedonia, which is predominantly Bulgarian in population so far as the Yugoslav section is concerned, although the ethnological parentage of the province is very uncertain.

Bulgaria has been severely criticised for her attack on Serbia in 1918, one which brought an end temporarily to that country, and put an end to her gallant fight against superior Austro-Hungarian

forces in the north. The attack was, however, simply payment in kind for a stab in the back, dealt by Serbia to Bulgaria in the Second Balkan War, one which led to Turkey's recovery of Adrianople and the partition of most of Macedonia between the Serbs and Greeks. Yet the most sinister part in the tragedy must be ascribed to no Balkan people, but to the Coburger, King Ferdinand, who was primarily responsible both for the Second Balkan War (he over-estimated his capacity of dealing with a Serbo-Greek combine) and for Bulgaria's alliance with Germany, a policy unpopular with very many of his subjects. Like all the other enemy countries, Bulgaria has suffered from her inability to produce a Talleyrand, a post-war statesman who could persuade the victors of the unwisdom in visiting the sins of their fathers on a younger generation which itself regretted paternal follies.

Like Rumania, Bulgaria has considerable commercial possibilities, though these are not so extensive as in the northern country and are hampered by lack of capital. In general, Bulgarian products are Levantine. There is fine tobacco, rice, silk, fruits and so many roses that a valley near Kaianlik, from which much of the attar is distilled, bears the name of the Valley of Roses. Imported goods cost so much that well-known wines and liqueurs have their Bulgarian equivalent. The few restaurant cars win show this, as also the fact that scarcely any Bulgarian can afford to travel first-class. The Sofia hotels are comfortable in the ample, polite ways of Edwardian times : running water is practically unknown and cabarets still less common.

Outside **the** capital and the ports there is a complete absence of modern conveniences, though the traveller will receive great courtesy and favoured treatment in his choice of the three-bedded rooms.

The country has been too poor to enjoy Parliamentary Party strife of the Anglo-Saxon type. There has, however, been a Communist movement which led to civil war and the mining of a cathedral at Sofia, an incident in which more than a hundred people lost their lives. The long Black Sea coastline cannot be sufficiently patrolled, so limited are Bulgaria's armed forces by treaty regulations. In consequence, the landing of Soviet agents, by motor boat, is no hard task. Less powerful since the murder of their leader, Stambulisky, during the critical struggles of 1923, the Agrarians have also been forcibly purged of their Communism, which is now illegal. But proximity and blood kinship with Russia makes the Bulgarians favourable to Bolshevik ideas which are little understood, though commended by a progressive people for their spirit of reform. Here the situation is affected by the similarity of the Russian and Bulgarian languages: the Cyrillic alphabet was given to Russia by SS. Cyril and Methodius, who had previously worked in their native Bulgaria.

The two most prominent members of the leading political section are Prime Minister Liaptcheff and Finance Minister Mdloff, both very capable, sympathetic and well-informed men. During 1930 their Government has been reorganised to take in **M. Malinoff, the leader of the other wing of the Democratic Entente. More purely a politician, with**

a reputation for great ability, Malinoff has at times had personal differences with the Liaptcheff wing\* A most valuable service is performed to Bulgaria, both at home and abroad, by the young Tsar Boris. Certainly one of the most accomplished sovereigns in Europe, Boris III. has a wide circle of friends, considerable literary and political knowledge, and the ability to drive a railway engine. As a measure of economy, he has never been crowned. This country is indeed democratic: there has been no coronation ceremony, and there is no Upper House, neither Senate nor Lords.

#### GREECE.

Probably it was the Sun-god who killed the old Greeks. Those actinic rays which are so powerful in the peninsula withered as fiercely as they had brought to perfection the most brilliant of ancient civilisations. Over the mountains came the barbarians, but they fell upon a moribund race incapable of holding its own superb natural fortifications. The northern sprung Hellenes declined after a few score dry summers and insufficiently keen winters. By the time of Plutarch all Greece could hardly furnish 2000 soldiers.

Slav and Albanian invasions, malaria, which had been brought back from the Egyptian wars, and the growth of the mosquito scourge from the stagnant waters of mixed cities, all helped to make a fire of the new Nationalism. **The Parthenon has retained its glory even though it had served and suffered as a powder magazine. In a similar way,**

**the** Greek people, living in a country and among a tradition which has not changed, still possesses many of the qualities of its classic forerunners. If these are more commercial than artistic, that is the fault of the spirit of our times: politics are as popular as ever.

Since the war Greece has become more Mediterranean and less Balkan in outlook. Her interests have always been maritime; the islands were the backbone of the independence movement, and provide the best human stock. But the transfer of population, with its consequent abandonment of Asia Minor, and unprecedented Hellenisation of Macedonia and West Thrace, has given Greece a population whose 99\*1 homogeneity is phenomenal in the Balkans. Perhaps the Athens Government still requires Constantinople, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia may bid again for Salonica, but the frontier problem is less acute here than it has been for a century. Greece is primarily occupied with the settlement of her refugee population and the capture of world trade.

Famous Asiatic Colonies have been transplanted to the plains of Attica and Macedon. The growth in population has been enormous, from under three million before the Balkan Wars, to four and three-quarter million in 1914, and seven million to-day. By this time the new villages are mostly equipped with model houses and schools, while there is plenty of work: the Greeks have brought with them **the carpet and tobacco industries of Turkey. For a time it was otherwise; the conditions of New Ionia, outside Athens, seemed at first to 'the Western**

observer only little less squalid and miserable than ruined Smyrna itself. To-day, owing to British and American help on Commissions, the Greeks have made a wonderful move forward. But grass is said to be growing in the cities of Asia which they have left. Despite the power and skill of Kemal Pasha, Turkey is threatened with the state of Spain after the banishment of the Moriscoes.

While the property of Greece is increasing, it is worthy of notice that the refugee immigration has accentuated the urban character of the Greek. Many new farms have been started in Macedonia, but incapacity to effect big changes in the land-tenure of Old Greece and the fact that the refugees had to leave their cattle behind them, tend to make the proportion of town-dwellers larger. As a result, Greece has fallen further behind the other Balkan States, so far as valuable live stock goes. In 1923 the figures per hundred of population was : Cattle, Yugoslavia, 49; Rumania, 32; Bulgaria, 30; Greece, 12. Sheep: Yugoslavia, 63 ; Rumania, 74; Bulgaria, 18; Greece, 12. Pig: Yugoslavia, 22 ; Rumania, 17; Bulgaria, 11 ; Greece, 6. On the other hand, Greece has as many goats, rather more donkeys, and three times as many mules as the other countries together.

Besides the carpet and tobacco industries, the refugees have improved fisheries and vastly developed silk-breeding. They have also bettered the sponge-harvest.

Political affairs have too become more hopeful of late, but only after a very difficult time. The Greeks have had war later than other European countries;

in fact, their chief struggle came after the termination of the Great War. The situation was embittered by a fierce civil conflict between Venizelos and Constantine, republicans and monarchists, which outlasted the Turkish War. The Armistice of October, 1918, gave apparently complete justification to Venizelos' policy of intervention on the side of the Allies. Greek troops occupied Salonica, Macedonia, Thrace and the Islands. Possession of Constantinople seemed likely, for both Russia and Bulgaria were now unpopular with the *Entente*. Early in May, 1919, Greek troops landed at Smyrna after an invitation from France, England and the United States. It is hard to ascribe primary responsibility to either Party. Summer saw the conquest of the Smyrna vilayet and the predominantly Greek areas. On 25 th October, King George died as the result of a monkey-bite. Events followed in quick succession. The General Election of November resulted in a royalist victory.

Fearing the return of his declared enemy, Constantine, Venizelos resigned and left Greece. His departure was followed just before Christmas (1920) by the return of the King. With spring weather a new offensive began, and the Greeks, encouraged by early successes, refused Allied mediation, and marched into the Turkish homelands. Kemal and Ismid Pasha had now reorganised the forces of a people which was at last fighting on its native soil. The French and Italians sold arms to the Turks: they disliked the spread of Greek influence. On 8th September the Turkish counter-offensive began. Within a week they had the Greeks'on the run.

Fighting stopped in front of Eski Shehir, **the** important junction of the Angora and Taurus railways, to the next year. The Turks took up the attack again and drove the Greeks into the sea. Smvrna, together with many smaller places, was sacked and burnt, as a reprisal for Greek excesses on Turkish soil.

Once again Constantine lost his throne but saved his life. Ministers and Generals, held guilty of a crime for which they were not altogether responsible, had to face the executioner. Great Britain protested: most of Europe regarded her as the instigator of Greek militarism, though she here intervened on behalf of politicians hostile to her favourite Venizelos. However, sentence of death was carried out: among others on Gounaries and Protopapadakis, two ex-Prime Ministers, and on the Cbmmmander-in-Chief, General Hadjianestis.

During four years events were very confused. More or less impotent Prime Ministers followed one another. Admiral Koundouriotis appeared when the plebiscite of April, 1924, declared for a Republic, and against a monarchy by **758,742** to **325,332** votes : he became Provisional President of the Republic. But General Pangalos seized the Government. Supported by bayonets, he **scorned** constitutions and **raled** as self-appointed **Dictator from January-August, 1926.**

**But Europe's new fashion in Governments had come and gone too often, during Greek history, to promise long duration on this occasion. Pangalos Fell before another and more representative Army movement. He saved his head, but languished some**

time in jail. Finally, after one or two further experiments in Premiership, Venizelos returned. He had done so for two months in 1924. Now his stay was to be longer, indeed, to-day sees him still at the head of affairs.

Perhaps Venizelos serves his countries most in two ways. As a Cretan, he represents the new Greece at a time when some such influence is particularly valuable for State building. Bismarck and Cavour were both hampered by their citizenship of the dominating German and Italian State: they were supposed to be too partial. But it is the tremendous influence which Venizelos has over the statesmen of the Allied Powers which gives him an unexampled position. Greece can find few friends except through him, and he can find too many: he has war-service and knows how to make use of it. Superior in experience and diplomatic skill to any other Balkan statesman, Venizelos has increased his popularity sufficiently during the past few years to appear not only the greatest Greek statesman since classical times, but even more popular than the champions of the ancient cities who had more foes than friends in a country which none could unite.

#### YUGOSLAVIA.

Serbia has united the Southern (Yugo) Slavs. **The** new nation is experiencing the same growing pains as did Germany and Italy sixty years ago. Only the situation is more acute, because Yugoslavia is **more in danger from foreign enemies and because the Serbs are less** civilised than the **Croats, who**

resent their hegemony. King Alexanders Government is centralising but not territorially partisan. The greatest justification comes perhaps from the resentment felt towards it by those Serbs who wanted the new country to be not Yugoslav but Greater Serbia. But unpopularity comes too from the Croats, Hungarians, Germans, Bulgarians and Albanians, whose local privileges have been curtailed. Very often the change has been in the interests of reform: this is especially the case with the more backward peoples. But that does not lessen the feeling of resentment. It was not good intentions which saved Joseph II. or Amanullah : reform itself is a sin to people not yet State-minded.

Indeed, the present royal dictatorship in Yugoslavia rests primarily on force. With it are a number of more or less disinterested and highly patriotic Yugoslavs who are working for the unification of their race and its delivery from the feuds and pettiness of Balkan provincialism. Otherwise, the only areas in which the new system seems popular are Montenegro, now again the seat of a kind of Government, and the Slovene districts, where the astute Dr. Koroshetz has bought local autonomy at the price of political support.

Chief opposition to the Belgrade Government comes from Zagreb, the capital of **the Croats, a people kindred** in race to the Serbs, **but separated from** them by history, culture and religion. **Since the Carlowitz Peace of 1699, Croatia has been under Austria or Hungary, while the Serbs were under Turkish rule. Thus, the former have learnt the meaning of education and commerce, with their**

consequent opportunities for pleasure and politics at a time when the Serbs were still neglected barbarians. During the war, Croat patriots hoped, if not for an independent State, for one which would put them on equal terms with Serbia. There were some who would have been content with the federal agreement with Austria-Hungary, a tripartite settlement which nearly came into being after the 1848 Revolution. Submission to Belgrade was unthinkable. Yet this is what nearly came about, and is still the case in most Croat minds.

Latent hatred flared up when a Montenegrin deputy, inspired according to the Croats by the highest Serb authorities, shot Stefan Raditch and other leading Croat deputies in the Belgrade Parliament. Since then Zagreb has refused to have further political dealings with Belgrade, and the Croat deputies have withdrawn from the Skopshtina. Refusal was given to the offer of Serb officials to be present at the funeral of Raditch. The murderers plea that he had been insulted by the man he had killed was held sufficient to exonerate him from the death penalty. Yet according to the Montenegrin code of honour this was probably a reasonable decision. More recently, the trial of Dr. Machek, the next Croat leader, on a charge of treason has kept the feud alive. Machek was acquitted, but several lesser men have been tortured and imprisoned.

It is only fair to the Serbs to state that the Croats have throughout taken up a difficult attitude, and used their superior Parliamentary craft to put the Serbs in the worst light before western observers.

Raditch was more of a Wilkes than a Hampden. Mob oratory was his strength : he would sit in his Zagreb shop window to counsel and impress his working man personality on his supporters from the Peasant Party.

Raditch had often spoken bitterly about the Serbs, in a country where recrimination generally means hard knocks. Owing to the favourable opinion his Croat supporters have been able to fina with the English Liberal Press, which labelled the bugbear Serbia instead of Austria, the facts of his hotel murder have hardly been viewed in the right perspective. Fortunately for its plush and its pockets, Manchester is not Belgrade. The worst way to look at Balkan politics is to feel that they are at all like English politics. Fair-play in the political world is about as unknown as cricket, and as unlikely to prevail.

Croatia is a domestic trouble ; Dalmatia is almost entirely foreign. Except for the Italians, who must perforce keep quiet, the coastland population is enthusiastically Yugoslav. Yet both nave in common a certain, not prevalent but forceful Church influence. Rome, ecclesiastical and secular, hates Belgrade, which has broken Catholic Austria and is the toe of Catholic Italy. The Serbs have not enough religion to proselytise, but they have sufficient patriotism to persecute: the Vatican cannot look with favour on the rule of orthodox Serbs over Catholic Croats and Dalmatians.

However, the chief opponent to Yugoslav rule along the East Adriatic is the Italian Fascist State. The province of Dalmatia is **more than 200 miles**

long and less than forty wide. It supplies Yugoslavia with her only, and a considerable, outlet to the sea which is being developed by the newly-constructed Ogulin line to Split and Šibenik. But this long coast, afforded a remarkable degree of protection by its barrier of islands and limestone ranges, lies opposite to the flat, exposed Adriatic shore of Italy. In case of war, the Italians would be in grave danger of attack from any one of the best series of naval bases in Europe.

Also the Rome Government has its claim to Dalmatia, partly on the historic grounds of its possession by Venice, which lasted until the close of the eighteenth century, and partly because of the Italians, who form a majority in the population of most Dalmatian towns. The countryside is almost entirely Slav. Actually, the boundary would be impracticable if drawn along ethnological lines ; the Ital [ians would have towns without the necessary markets of the hinterland and dominated by artillery from the neighbouring high mountains. The position of the Italian oasis of Zara is difficult enough : even the foreign visitor, though he may live chiefly there, finds it hard to connect with any other place in Dalmatia. Communications in the province are still scanty : there is not enough water, the limestone karst presents formidable barriers to the road or railway maker, and the disafforested nature of the country has made the effects of the climate more severe. On the other hand, the *bora* does not trouble Dalmatian waters, while it is very troublesome to the Italian coast. It is remarkable that the **Slav** population of this province shows a love of the

sea **rare** in their race. It was these men who formed most of the crews of the Austro-Hungarian Navy, and were largely responsible for Tegetthof's victory with wooden ships against the Italian ironclads off Lissa in 1866.

Albania is modern Italy's answer to a Yugoslav Dalmatia. Bordering Serbia, shutting her off from 200 miles of the Adriatic, Albania hampers the economic development of the country by her control of the lower reaches of the Drin, and can trouble the disturbed political waters of Old Serbia and Macedonia in which there are Albanian families. Italian money and enterprise have to some extent opened up the country. Much more, they have made of it a most powerful oversea bastion of Italy. Gibbon's statement that Albania is less known than the interior of America is even more true to-day than when it was written, although it lies within sight of Italy. The people fall into the main divisions of Ghegs and Tosks, separated from one another by the course of the old Roman Via Egnatia, the way from Italy to Salonica. The Ghegs are probably descended from early Aryan invaders or Europe—they are **a** haughty, stern, trousered people; the Tosks seem to be pre-Aryan Epirotes whose **name** may be "Tuscan," some of them are still found in Southern Italy; they are **a** lively, **wild race** which wears kilts **in** its **native** mountains. These people have the loyalties **and** **lack** of civilisation which the **rest of Europe had in the Dark Ages**. **Some of them are Moslem; in general, the Ghegs are Roman Catholic and the Tosks Orthodox. King Zog, Albanian by birth,**

has succeeded in bringing a considerable degree of unity to the country, which is becoming more prosperous with Italian money and the suppression of brigandage due to an efficient police force under English leadership. Almost impenetrable mountains, heavy snowfall and malaria hinder progress; but the country has always exported corn, and has prospects of a rich export trade in timber and tobacco. Also there is hidden mineral wealth. Albania may become more than a thorn in the Yugoslav side.

Besides Italian and Croat hostility, the Belgrade Government has to face the opposition of its German and Hungarian population, whose superior culture and contempt for a Balkan people is likely to make them impossible to assimilate. There is jealousy with Rumania over the Banat, with Greece over Macedonia, and more than jealousy with Bulgaria, a nation which knows how to nurse its slow anger, and will certainly take its opportunity to win back the purely Bulbar enclaves if not the Macedonian regions annexed in 1915-19.

In the extreme north-west of Yugoslav, the Slovenes show an unusual devotion to the Serbs. Their priest leader, Koroshetz, has secured for them the preservation of local privileges. Laibach has had plenty of money to spend on public works since it became Ljubljana. Slovenes realise that the measure of freedom they have secured depends on the Serbs, to whom they look for the liberation of **the** half-million of their races now under Italian rule. **In a similar way, the Dalmatian Slave** are loyal.

**On the other hand, a change of opinion, hostile**

to Belgrade, has occurred recently in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These provinces are still largely Moslem. They remained under Turkish suzerainty until 1908. In Serajevo and Mostar the women wear veils, the muezzin sounds, Turkish cemeteries and windowless houses cover the cool hill-sides. These people hated the new masters, who were certainly guilty of a desire to reform and were suspect of proselytism. If actually the work of Bosnian Serbs, it is significant that the murder which started the World War took place in Moslem Serajevo.

Almost inevitably the Belgrade Government fell foul of the Begs, the Turkish landowners, who continued to exact a tribute, sometimes amounting to one-third of the yearly crop, from Christian tenants. This practice was stopped and Bosnia-Herzegovina brought into line with the rest of the kingdom. But the Begs had become used to living on their poorer neighbours. Poverty now faces them. Meantime the younger generation, encouraged by the success of Turkish Nationalism, has demanded a Turkish University and the teaching of Turkish in the schools. These younger people are often hostile to the Moslem priests, whom they regard as responsible for the ignorance and backwardness of their race. The hadji (Bosnian priest) has shared the impoverishment of the Beg, mosques are empty, and few are outside when the cry comes from the minaret in Serajevo except foreign tourists. Actually, the Serb Moslems were never very devout, they would always seek dispensation from fasts when possible, although they have clung to a faith

to which their ancestors were converts only four centuries ago. The simplicity and fierceness of Islam appealed to these as to some of the Albanian mountaineers, while it made few converts in Bulgaria, and scarcely any in Serbia or across the Danube. To-day there are many Bosnians who are Turk by race, attracted so far north by the sympathetic religious atmosphere. Very many of the Moslems are Slav, though all are locally known as Turks.

The opposition in Bosnia and Herzegovina to the Sogostar idea is nothing like as violent or antipathetic as the Croat movement. Dr. Mehmed Spaho, the Moslem leader, held ministerial office in the Government. A Bosnian Christian, the genial Dr. Krstick, is one of the buttresses of the dictatorship and at the same time the popular hero of Serajevo, to whose needs he pays plenty of attention. There is every chance of a successful solution of the needs of Bosnia-Herzegovina in a Yugoslav State, if care is taken to respect the whims as well as the needs of a proud and backward people.

Rumania's queen, Greece's prime minister, and Yugoslavia's artist are of European reputation. Born in a Dalmatian village (1883) Ivan Mestrovitch is one of the greatest of sculptors. Himself and his work may be seen easily in Yugoslavia. There is the splendid figure at Belgrade, Bishop Gregory at Split, King Peter on the walls of Dubrovnik, and the mausoleum, just outside, at Cavtat. But it is chiefly in Zagreb that the artist's work can be studied. There he has a house and is rector of the art academy. A school is growing up

round him. The warm southern sea has nourished yet another renaissance. For early Serbian work, so far as it has escaped destruction at Turkish hands, shows that rare artistic promise exists in this peasant race. Poetry as well as pigs have been their products for centuries. But statesmanship needs to be added. The murders of Alexander and Draga, of Francis Ferdinand and his wife, and of the Croat leaders is an ugly record, even when centuries of Turk domination is made to share the blame. Gunman rule evokes first the interest and then the hatred of society. When practised by a Government, it is suicidal.

The Enlightened Despots were revolutionaries, regicides, breakers of treaties. But even the old agricultural Europe crashed when the Lord's Anointed threw mud at one another. The State commands obedience because it stands for certain principles. When it breaks its own laws, it can no longer exist in a civilised community. *Mole sua stat.* Right degenerate in abuse, the fall of the old Europe, is the theme of the greatest work of the Great Sorel.<sup>1</sup> On the capacity of Balkan rulers to learn this lesson rests the fate of their countries and the peace of Europe.

<sup>1</sup> "L'Europe et la Revolution Fraogafee."



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