




POLE AND CZECH IN SILESIA

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

THE DREAM OF THE
ROAD.

COWPER AND HIS
POETRY.



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POLE AND CZECH IN
SILESIA BY JAMES A. ROY

M.A. (late Captain R.G.A.) * * *

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TO
MY MOTHER

BY WAY OF
REMEMBRANCE

WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, LONDON AND BECCLES, ENGLAND

FOREWORD

THIS little book in no wise pretends to be a chronological record of what we call objective facts. Much that is told in it was not written down at once, but afterwards from retrospect and impression. A mere chronological record of facts means nothing; you will find that of my old Division, for example, in the War Diary, compiled by Knox Gore and Pery, and by their predecessors and successors. The real happenings are recorded in the Book of Doomsday; they are seared on the memories of those who have passed through the Valley, and whose names stand written now in the Book of Life for ever. The true facts of life are the facts of experience—love and hate, joy and sorrow, laughter and tears, sinning and forgiving, friendships made and lost—without remembered date, yet fitting in ordered sequence into the little bundle of experiences

which we are wont to call life. Figures, too, may mean anything or nothing, and are never accepted implicitly by the exact student. It is, therefore, a subjective record that I shall try to set down in these pages—without elaboration or completeness. Sometimes, I think I have dreamed many of these happenings, as I seem to have dreamed so many things since 1914 and so many forgotten dreams before then.

POLE AND CZECH IN SILESIA

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February 13th.

RECEIVED orders to report to Hotel Astoria, Paris, with a view to proceeding to Lower Silesia, as Member of Inter-Allied Commission. Introduced by Colonel Cornwall, whom I knew at G.H.Q., to Colonel Kisch, who explained the intricacies of the problem of Teschen. The object of the Mission is to delimit the Frontier between the newly constituted Czecho-Slovak State and the Republic of Poland; to maintain peace between the rival claimants to the Karwin Coal Mines, to adjudicate on matters of local difference, and to ensure that a regular supply of Coke coal is delivered by the Czech authorities to the Poles. The Commission is, in fine, charged with the task of effecting active co-operation between the two newly-reconstituted Slavonic States, whose interests are ultimately identical. It

is obvious, however, in view of the importance of the Lower Silesian coal-fields, and of the multifarious conflicting interests involved, that no solution hitherto proposed will give complete satisfaction to either claimant. To attempt anything beyond a compromise on the question of the ownership of the mines would be, not only rash, but fatal, in view of the unsettled present and the uncertain future of Poland and Czecho-Slovakia.

The Duchy of Austrian Silesia comprises the two Silesian districts of Troppau and Teschen. The Troppau district is known as Upper or Western Silesia, the Teschen district as Lower or Eastern Silesia, the whole comprising an area of 2026 square miles. The Duchy is bounded on the north by Prussian Silesia, on the south by Slovakia, on the east by Galicia, and in the west by Moravia. In the Teschen district the soil is mostly poor, the climate cold and wet. The chief rivers are the Ostrawitza, the Olsa, and the Vistula, which rises in the Barania Range and flows north to the Prussian Frontier at Schwarzwasser, then eastwards to the Galician border. Racially, the Duchy is composed of three distinct areas: the German political district which forms the greater part of Western Silesia, and includes the town of Troppau ;

the Czecho-Slovak territory in Western Silesia comprising the northern part of the rural districts of Troppau and Friedek ; the Polish territory which includes the districts of Bielitz, Teschen, and Freistadt. The total population according to the census of 1910 numbered 741,456, in the proportion of 43·90 per cent. German, 24·33 per cent. Czech-Slovak, 31·72 per cent. Polish, ·05 per cent. others. The average density of population was 380 to the square mile. Such is the précis of the dry official account of the Duchy.

The history of Silesia before its occupation by a Slav race is purely conjectural. In the latter half of the ninth century the people recognized the authority of Svatoplak of Moravia, but after the fall of the Moravian Empire in the tenth century Silesia came partly under the administration of Poland, and partly under that of Bohemia. In the later years of the century the whole of Silesia fell under the dominion of Boleslav the Great, of Poland, and the following century witnessed a continuous struggle between Poland and Bohemia, and the first German intervention. On the death of Boleslav, in 1025, Silesia was reconquered by the Bohemians under Bretoslav, who was, however, compelled to do homage to the Emperor, Henry III, for Bohemia, Moravia,

and Silesia. Under Boleslav II (1058-1079), Silesia was again recovered and held by the Poles against the German invasion, under the Emperor Henry V, in 1109.

The separate history of Silesia begins with the death of Boleslav III of Poland in 1139, who, in the preceding year, partitioned his Polish territory among his four sons. The eldest, Vladislav, deposed by his brother Boleslav in 1146, took refuge in Germany, where he died in 1159. In 1163, owing to the intervention of the Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa, Boleslav IV of Poland was compelled to restore Silesia to the three sons of Vladislav, one of whom, dying soon afterwards, and his share passing to his eldest brother, Silesia became divided into the dukedoms of Lower and Upper Silesia, with Breslau and Ratibor as their respective capitals. From this time, German interests were encouraged; German colonists were invited to settle in Silesia, German methods of administration were introduced, waste lands reclaimed, and mining and weaving industries started. The Mongol invasion, under Batu, crippled for a time the agricultural and industrial expansion of the country, but by the end of the thirteenth century the greater part of Silesia was becoming rapidly Germanized; the nobility and ruling

houses were either German in origin or had adopted the German language and German customs. In the fourteenth century, close relations were established with the Luxemburg kings of Bohemia, and, as the result of serious internal troubles, coupled with the reviving power of Poland, the Province of Silesia was thrown more and more on the dependence of the German rulers of Bohemia. From 1331 to 1742 Silesia was almost continuously a province of Bohemia, and subject to the Bohemian crown.

On the outbreak of the Hussite wars, German Silesia was frequently invaded and ravaged by the Hussite leader Procopius, and on the death of the latter the Bohemians acknowledged the authority of the Emperor. The death of Sigismund in 1437, however, again created a situation in which the interests of the ruling classes in Silesia clashed with a national movement under the leadership of George of Poděbrad, who, in 1448, led an army to Prague, assumed the Regency, and after the death of Ladislav, in 1458, was elected king. Silesia was thus under the rule of a Czech monarch. In 1446 George was excommunicated by Pope Paul II, and in 1469 Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, was proclaimed King of Bohemia and Moravia at

Olmütz, and acknowledged by the German Silesians. On the death of George, in 1471, Vladislav, son of Casimir IV of Poland, was elected his successor by the National Party in Bohemia, a step which was followed by civil war between the Germans and the Poles, issuing in the temporary triumph of the former. The provinces of Silesia, Moravia, and Lusatia were, in accordance with the Treaty of Brünn in 1479, ceded during his lifetime to Matthias, who, in turn, recognized the authority of Vladislav in Bohemia. On the death of Matthias, in 1490, Silesia passed again to the Bohemian Crown, but, after the decease of his son and successor, Louis, King of Bohemia and Hungary, the Bohemians elected as their sovereign the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, afterwards Emperor Ferdinand I. Silesia thus became part of the Hapsburg dominions.

During the Reformation, the Reformed Church had obtained a strong hold on Silesia, and, for a time, the growth of Protestantism continued undisturbed. The accession of Rudolf II, in 1576, witnessed the beginning of a policy of active religious repression, but in 1609, in consequence of the revolt of his brother Matthias, Rudolf issued *Majestäts-briefe* for Bohemia and Silesia, permitting freedom of conscience, in order to obtain the

support of the Bohemians. By the Treaty of Westphalia, Silesia passed, with Bohemia, under the rule of the Imperial House.

In 1740 died Charles VI, Emperor of Germany, the last descendant in the male line of the House of Austria. Charles had in the latter part of his life promulgated the new law of succession known as the Pragmatic Sanction, in virtue of which, his daughter, the Archduchess Maria Theresa, wife of Francis of Lorraine, succeeded to the dominions of his ancestors, including Silesia. Prussia, along with the other great powers of Europe, had bound herself by treaty to respect this law, but Frederick II, in defiance of his solemn oath, determined to annex Silesia, assembled an army with all speed, and marched on Breslau, which capitulated on January 2, 1741. Glogau surrendered in March, and in April the Austrians were driven from the field at Molwitz, with the loss of eight thousand men. Brieg fell in May, and in October Maria, threatened by France, withdrew her troops from Silesia. By the Peace of Breslau, in 1742, all Silesia except Teschen and the district beyond the river Oppa and the high mountains, was ceded to Frederick. In 1744, the king made an alliance with France, and in the autumn recommended hostilities against

Maria. Prague was captured in August, but this success was followed by a retirement into Silesia. The Austrian army was, however, in its turn, compelled by the rigours of winter to retire to Bohemia. In May of the following year the Austrians were defeated at Hohenfriedberg; in September at Sorr, at Hennersdorf in November, and, before the close of the year, Frederick had made peace with Austria. The conclusion of the Seven Years' War saw the Prussians in firm possession of Silesia, with the exception of the districts of Troppau and Teschen, and since 1742 Teschen has been regarded as an Austrian and not as a Bohemian province. In 1848 the Bohemian revolutionary demands included the reconstitution of the ancient Bohemian kingdom with Silesia and Moravia, and in 1868 the National Party again asked for the restoration of the ancient kingdom. But since the suppression of the Bohemian revolt in 1868-69 the question has remained in abeyance.

The Silesian problem has, at the moment of writing, reached an absolute deadlock. The Czechs demand that Eastern Silesia, as far east as the Vistula, including the town of Teschen, the important double line of railway from Oderberg (Bohumin) to Jablunkau, and the rich coalfields of the Karwin area, shall be

incorporated in the new Czecho-Slovak State. The Poles, on the other hand, claim that the farming population in that district and the mining towns of Karwin and Freistadt are, in the main, of Polish origin and descent.

The Czechs maintain that the Oderberg-Teschen-Jablunkau railway, which connects Bohemia with Slovakia through the Jablunkau Pass, is essential, not only to ensure a strong Czecho-Slovak State, but to their corporate existence as a nation, and reject all offers on the part of the Poles to construct an alternative line of railway further to the west. The Austrian-German population, in the industrial towns, complicate the question still further. These latter demand complete independence of Czech and Pole alike. The German claim, implying, as it does, an autonomous State, is inadmissible, the Conference in Paris, being less concerned with restoring territory to the disintegrated Empire of Austria-Hungary than with the problem of handing it over to the side which can show the most logical claim to its possession.

As to the possibility of a *rapprochement* between Czech and Pole, this is for the moment impracticable. Both are incapable of thinking in terms other than local; their vision is circumscribed by urgent problems of

social reconstruction and irritating questions of boundary delimitation. There are visionaries who speak, not only of a Union between the two peoples, but who dream vast dreams of a universal Slavonic federation, but, meanwhile, these new States are as children learning to walk. They stumble and stagger; they are without strength or directive force; they have no clear idea of their final goal. They are weak politically, inadequately supplied with arms, and harassed by Frontier wars. The new Slavonic problem has created a situation in Central Europe, the issue of which it is impossible to forecast.

February 21st.

As Lady Muriel Paget, with whom I had hoped to travel to Prague, was at the last moment prevented from making the journey, I volunteered to take charge of the medical comforts which she was taking out for the Czechs.

As travelling companion I had Colonel Swifte, an interesting Irishman, who had passed much of his life in India. A number of American officers were on the train; a few Englishmen; Czechs returning to Prague, Poles to Warsaw, and nondescript commercialsin search of business wherever they could pick it up.

At the Swiss Frontier the Customs officials passed us through after the merest formal examination.

During the course of our journey across Switzerland I had a long conversation with the Swiss guard, who had lived many years in England, and was keenly interested in British labour problems. "I cannot understand," he said, "why the English workman goes on striking. He has shorter hours, higher pay, and better housing conditions than the workmen in any other country in the world. He is simply crippling capital and injuring himself, and, if he does not quickly come to some arrangement with the capitalists, England will lose her place in the commercial world." We discussed the Irish problem, which he said should be easily enough settled, but when I asked him to suggest a solution that would satisfy all parties he thought for a moment and then answered, "Monsieur must understand that I am no politician," and crossed to the open door of the goods van, while I got off the Red Cross comforts on which I was sitting, and went in search of lunch. When last I saw my conductor, he was still gazing out of the doorway, doubtless pondering the problem, while the Express lurched and staggered along to Zurich.

We had lunch as the train reached the Frontier, and entered Austria at 3 p.m. There was no customs examination. At the first station where we halted Italian soldiers, with bunches of feathers in their hats, and long grey-green capes, came and peered into our carriage, while Austrian railwaymen passed along the train exchanging "*Grüss' Dich Gotts*" with their compatriots. It must be a hard matter for these Austrians to adjust their mental outlook; to realize that their country has shrunk from a powerful empire to a mere petty republic, and to see a large portion of their remaining territory occupied by the despised and hated *Katzelmacher*, and a crop of ambitious and feeble young nations springing up amid the ruins of their own. Many of the station officials, lolling about the platform in faded uniforms, wore the new Republican cockade in their caps, but the republicanism of the Austrian is of a mild and almost reactionary character. The Austrian is, in his present misfortunes, resigned rather than resentful; stunned rather than revengeful; grieving rather over the disaster which has overtaken Germany than sorrowing over his own fate. Germany was the strong, young relation of boundless energy and character; his own country, the sick man whose day was run.

For the Austrian, the ruin of Germany is the end of all things ; the catastrophe which has overtaken the Fatherland, a disaster which has befallen the world.

At 9 p.m. we arrived at Innsbrück ; but, as it was dark and we remained in the station for a few minutes only, we saw nothing of the town.

The German papers devote much space to the discussion of the probable results of Eisner's death. It is suggested that this may be the signal for some counter revolutionary attempt. Although the progressive and advanced democratic elements have gained the upper hand for the moment, I am convinced that Germany will gradually become more conservative, and ultimately develop into a republic, reactionary in tone and imperialistic in sentiment. It is even conceivable that a Hohenzollern may one day sit on the throne of a constitutional Germany. Her immediate economic salvation lies in the adoption of some form of moderate republicanism, which will restore commercial stability to the country, and enable it to fall into line with modern constitutional development.

February 22nd.

We crossed into the new republic of Czecho-Slovakia at Herstal in the early hours

of the morning. The customs official who boarded the train—a young civilian in morning coat and bowler hat, accompanied by three soldiers in Austrian uniform wearing the Czech cockade—seemed unfamiliar with his duties, and considerably embarrassed as to the correct procedure to adopt. Beyond glancing at my passport, and muttering something in Czech, he made no further demands on my time or my patience, and his inspection of the other passengers was equally cursory and casual. It was raining when we crossed the frontier, but, as we proceeded on our journey, the rain and mist cleared away and the sun broke through on a perfect spring morning. There was still much snow in the fields and on the hills, and the coldness in the air reminded one that winter was not entirely past; but the country-side, with its valleys and gentle slopes, its noisy streams and belts of fir trees, suggested Scotland, and the illusion was further heightened by the groups of picturesque country folk wending their way to church along the narrow, muddy roads. The undulating lowlands, with their clean, white farm-houses peeping out from the trees, the quaintly towered chapels with their peaceful churchyards, the trim pasture lands of Bohemia have a character and an attraction of their own.

The Czech inscriptions at the railway stations read strangely to the unaccustomed eye, but the numerous portraits of President Masaryk, garlanded with evergreens and the national colours, remind one of the rebirth of an ancient people. *Tempora mutantur*, but the stolid-looking, red-faced Czechs have remained unchanging in their fidelity to national traditions, through the long centuries of oppression and political submergence.

We are running smoothly and lightly now, and there are indications that we are nearing Prague. We should reach the town about 1 o'clock. P., with the ready ingenuity of the old soldier, has provided me with an excellent meal of tea, bread-and-butter, and bully, which he concocted in the mysterious recesses of his own compartment. P. is 37 years of age, and has 22 years of colour service to his credit. He is stupid, faithful, trustful. As a servant he is invaluable.

"I have managed to get you a drop of hot water for your tea, sir," he announced when he brought the food.

"Good, P. How did you manage that?"

"By squarin' them two German blokes on the engine, sir, for a couple of cigarettes. They 'aven't much use for an Englishman, sir. W'y, would you believe it, sir, when I spoke to

them in English, civil like, sir, blest if they didn't answer me in German. *Me!* I can't parley their lingo, sir. Them furriners should all be made to learn English. That's wot it is, sir, that is, ain't it, sir?"

I have given up trying to explain to P. where we are going. He still associates any place outside England with the war, and his world is divided into three sorts of people, "Englishmen," "German blokes," and "them Frenchies." The terms Czech and Pole are meaningless to him. When he arrives in Teschen I can imagine him writing home to his wife something to the effect that "Italy is delightful." P. is one of the types of the old army one could not imagine as anything but a private. He wears four good conduct stripes and three medal ribbons; is civil, respectful, and clean in his person, but lacks initiative and understanding; pipeclay and buttons, the barrack square, and the canteen limit his mental horizon. But as a piece of human mechanism he is invaluable.

At the Wilson Station I was met by Professor Karl Domin, President of the Foreigners Office, and other officials of that department, to whom I handed over my consignment of Red Cross comforts. After various introductions I accompanied Dr. Domin, in his car,

to the Foreigners Office, to arrange for my accommodation during my stay in the town. The Foreigners Office, as its name implies, is an institution which exists purely for the convenience of the numerous foreigners who have recently invaded the city. Domin is, if I remember rightly, Professor of Botany at the University of Prague, and is acquainted with England, having been accustomed before the war to spend a portion of his vacation in Kew Gardens. He is a pale, intellectual-looking man, of medium height, with a dark brown beard and dark eyes. He is quiet, hesitating, almost self-effacing in conversation, and speaks English slowly and with a strong guttural accent.

After half an hour's conversation an officer was detailed to accompany me to the Hotel U Zlate husy in the Wenzels Platz. On the way thither we picked up P., who had been left at the station in charge of the baggage. I found him surrounded by Czech soldiers, who were examining his rifle and equipment curiously, and endeavouring by dumb show to elicit some information from him, as to who he was, whence he had come, and whither he was going. To all their friendly advances P. had apparently preserved a stony and silent front. When I saw him he was standing in the middle

of the platform looking stolidly ahead, with his chest thrown out, and paying no more attention to his interlocutors than do the sentinels at the Horse Guards to the curious crowds in Whitehall. He saluted me punctiliously when I spoke to him.

“ Well, P.,” I said, “ wearying a little ? ”

“ I shouldn’t mind a drop of tea now, sir, and a bit of bully. Wot about *you*, sir ? ”

“ Oh, I’m all right. Get the things in the car which is outside and I’ll dump you down at the hotel. Get one of these fellows to give you a hand.”

“ One of them Jerries, sir ? ”

“ They’re not Jerries, P.”

“ Oh, ain’t they, sir ? And w’ot may they be, sir ? ”

“ They’re Czechs.”

“ Really, sir, that’s w’ot they are, is it. Very good, sir. ’Ere you, Jerry. Give a ’and on with them ’ere things, will you ? ”

In a trice the Jerries had P. and the baggage stowed away in the car, and in a few minutes we deposited them in the *U Zlate husy*. I gave P. instructions to unpack and to make himself comfortable with the bully.

My guide informed me that he had been to London and that he had read a Scotch story, which, after much earnest cogitation, we

finally identified as *Sentimental Tommy*. He was a middle-aged, grizzled warrior, who had served in the Austrian Army, and, as he had almost completely forgotten the little English he had ever known, the conversation was a sort of patchwork—a broken tangle of Czech, English, French, and German. But it was interesting and informative because, while obviating the trouble of thinking, it gave me an excellent opportunity to appreciate in full the magnificent panorama of Prague.

It is only within the last few months that we are beginning to have a nodding acquaintance with the wonderful city of Prague. Prague, *Matička Naše Praha* (Our Dear Mother Prague), holding watch and ward over the broad Ultava, the golden, "The Hundred Towered," is a city of palaces and gardens, of parks and spires, of terraces, *loggias* and pavilions, of monasteries and churches, of monuments and endless tiers of red-tiled roofs with dormer windows and fantastic gables, of mysterious perspectives and twisting wind-swept malodorous little lanes and closes which seem to lead away from the din and clamour of the new town into the mystic land of faery—Prague crowned with the wonderful mediæval acropolis of the *Hradčany* (Castle Town) is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful cities

in the world. One compares it mentally with Nürnberg, but Nürnberg is so crowded with minute artistry that individual masterpieces are obscured by the very multifariousness of their excellence. In Prague one obtains what is impossible in Nürnberg—perspective.

“Had Ruskin not been so much occupied with Florence, Venice, and Amiens,” wrote William Ritter in a letter to *Lumir*, “he might have written three volumes with the title “The Stones of Prague,” and there would not have been on the surface of the earth a more beautiful book of history and architecture.”

Prague, the capital of Central Europe during the reign of Charles IV, and the seat of the first university in Central Europe, experienced many vicissitudes under Austrian rule. Deprived of its kings, neglected by successive governments, exposed to the repeated hazards of war, the city has more than once been threatened with the sad fate of other once flourishing European towns; but, with the re-emergence of the new Republic, and the revival of national aspirations, it has re-acquired much of its ancient importance.

The suburbs of Prague and its working-class quarters are as unlovely and as unattractive as our own. The dingy streets, with their dull and depressing houses, swarm

with untidy and unruly children. It is not a well-dressed town: the men affect rakish, cheap, and ill-cut clothes; the women, in general, have neither style nor distinction. Despite its importance as an educational and political centre, its inhabitants are provincial in their ideas and parochial in their outlook. Anyone who ventures to dress out of the common is rudely stared at, and audibly criticized; for a woman to be daintily gowned is to invite hostile, and even offensive criticism. A crowd will gather about a shop window and stare at a stranger. There is little night life, but after dark the under-world emerges from its holes and lairs, and jostles the passers-by in hideous and obscene levity.

One of the most remarkable monuments in Prague is the famous Powder gate (*Prášná Bráha*) in St. Joseph's Square, whose Gothic tower, with its marvellously attractive ornamentation, is one of the most renowned in Central Europe. The gate, begun in 1475 and finished in 1506, after the death of its Bohemian architect, Rijsek z Prostějova, formed at one time part of the defences of the old town. There is a wonderful symbolism in the tower, standing, as it does, at the parting between the old and the new towns, with the restless crowds thronging in the quaint mediæval

street beneath. There was little time in the course of our short tour for more than a mere cursory glance at the beauties of the city, but the impression left on my mind was one of wonder and delight.

In the evening I dined at Lippert's with Rawlings of the Navy, Picton and MacEwan. Rawlings, according to the Czech papers, was the bearer of an Ultimatum from Warsaw to the Czech Government, to demand the evacuation of Teschen. Popular excitement in consequence ran high; talk in the cafés and restaurants was particularly animated; and a political crisis, and even the fall of the Masaryk Government were seriously canvassed by the wiseacres. The dinner, which consisted of *pâté de foie gras*, soup, cutlets, and potatoes, and the inevitable *Torte*, cost the moderate sum of ten francs, exclusive of wines. The wine was Austrian *Vöslauer*, Hungarian *Vilyani*, and Czech *Melniker*, with Benedictine to follow with our coffee. Good wine in Prague is scarce and expensive, and the stock is entirely Austrian and Czech. Rawlings is what is termed "a typical Naval man" with a merry face, a jovial laugh, endless conversation, and an attractive and fascinating air of devil-may-care, which conceals a fund of sound common sense, and a thoroughly

practical and well-ordered intelligence. He knows a few words of Polish and a single phrase of German *So ist's*. His companion and Interpreter, Picton, a cheery round-faced little man, of infinite vitality, possesses a working knowledge of half a score of European languages, has lived so long abroad that he has forgotten how to talk his own. The chief burden of the conversation, while the diners argued and speculated as to its import, was "How do you like this stuff? Not bad, eh. Well, let's have another bottle. Here you—*Herr Ober*."

The truth is, however, that Prague is starving; Central Europe is starving. How many among the staring crowds who throng the streets could afford to dine at Lippert's for ten francs, exclusive of wines—and even if they had ten francs to spare, how many houses in the town could provide them with a dinner such as Lippert's purveyed? Prague is at the moment engaged in the domestic operation of "settling down." An immense number of Czechs have returned to the city since the establishment of an independent government; these want work, houses, and food. Under the present political conditions, until foreign markets are opened and industry re-established, trade must languish and unemployment increase.

Owing to lack of capital and enterprise

building operations are at a standstill, and houses at a premium, while, owing to such vexed questions as the regulation of the customs, sparse railway communications, and scarcity of ready money, the common people are deprived of many of the necessaries of life. The Americans have already done much towards an alleviation of the food situation. Lady Muriel Paget has devoted herself to providing Red Cross comforts for the hospitals, but such spasmodic efforts, while admirable in themselves, can do little towards diminishing the distress and misery which is prevalent among the sick and the children. Imagine an England where the children cannot get milk ; where the sick who go to hospital are admitted, too often, only to die, in the absence of medicines, bandages, surgical appliances, and skilled attendance. In the waiting-room of the Wilson Station I saw a number of soldiers lying on stretchers ; some were wounded, some were wasted of a fever ; a few lay in the coma of utter weakness. The stench in the room was intolerable—the stench of dirt, disease, and death. “ These are sick men from the Front,” my guide explained. “ We are taking them to hospital. Perhaps with your comforts—— ” he added with an expressive shrug. I suddenly realized that these wretches were being borne

to hospital in all likelihood to die, and that one, at least, would not leave the waiting-room alive.

I do not think that in England we sufficiently realize the plight of Central Europe. I question whether we care ; whether we are not so immersed in our own domestic squabbles that we have no time to spare a passing thought for the new old peoples of Central Europe—for small brave nations like the Czechs who, despite their national shortcomings, their narrow provincialism, their aggressive egotism, are struggling to their feet against difficulties and dangers innumerable from without and within. It is little wonder if, at times, even the stoutest heart among them quails, in face of the immense task of national reconstruction which confronts them, and if the workers do not murmur against the chosen leaders into whose hands they have voluntarily entrusted their destinies. The point of view of the dispossessed aristocrat is utterly divergent from that of the triumphant proletariat ; both parties aim at something which is different from the declared policy of the bourgeois Government. The aristocrat is autocratic and reactionary ; the proletariat, revolutionary and extremist ; the Government, moderate and progressive. The rulers of the country have a

difficult course to steer, and on the successful solution of the political problem depends not only the security and welfare of the Czecho-Slovak State, but of Central Europe itself. The problem of Czecho-Slovakia is the problem of Central Europe.

February 23rd.

Awakened betimes by P., whose face wore a puzzled look. He seemed eager to impart some information of a particular nature, and I noticed that in his excitement he had neglected to bring my usual shaving water.

“Morning, P.,” I said drowsily.

“Morning, sir,” he replied, beginning to roll my puttees. Then he crossed to the door to make sure that it was closed, and having satisfied himself on this point, returned to the foot of my bed, laid the puttees on the sofa and whispered impressively, “Do you know what them Germans ’ave done, sir?”

“I’m sure I haven’t the least idea, P.,” I answered resignedly, turning round in bed as if to drop off to sleep again.

“W’y, sir, would you believe it, they’ve give me a room to meself—*Me*, sir, a whole room, sir. A bed in it too, mind you, sir.”

“Splendid, P. I hope you slept well last night.”

“ Me. Oh, *I* slept well, sir. No fear of *me*, thank you, sir, but I wouldn’t sleep in one of them ’ere beds, not for worlds, sir. Not *me*, sir. Pulled off me boots and slept on the sofa. Now, w’ot can that mean, sir ? ” lowering his voice still more impressively and forcing me to turn round and meet his eye. “ W’y, last night, would you believe it, sir, a bloke came up to me and an American as I met in the street—or at least ’e’d been in America before ’e came ’ome ’ere to join up—and w’ot do you think ’e done, sir ? ”

“ What did he do, P. ? ” I asked in a low voice.

“ ’E offered me a cigarette,” with tremendous impressiveness.

“ Good one, P. ? ”

“ W’y, sir, think I took ’is cigarette ! Not me, sir. Know w’ot I done. Took and knocked it out of his ’and. Don’t you think I done right, sir ? ” with a look of great cunning. “ I’ve seen *that* one before, I ’ave, out in India, and w’ot them Germans ’aven’t done to our prisoners—— Take my tip, sir, if ever one of them blokes offers *you* a cigarette, sir, you do w’ot I done. You see their game sir ? ” Here he whispered still more solemnly. “ Pison, sir, that’s w’ot it is. Them Germans is up to any dodge you like, sir.”

I looked sufficiently shocked, and with a voice of gratitude said :

“ P., I thank you. I shall not forget what you have told me. Now, do you think you can get me some shaving water, and turn on my bath. But, make sure that the water isn't poisoned before you bring it.”

Five minutes later he brought me the shaving water, saluted, and left the room without a word. I had to roll my puttees myself.

I was afraid I had hurt him.

Called at the British Legation, where I met young Masaryk. The British Minister, Mr. Cecil Gosling, is reserved and difficult to know at first. He wore nondescript foreign hunting clothes, with shining leather top-boots and a green Homburg hat with a bunch of feathers behind. He was inclined to take a serious view of the situation in Teschen, but seemed to anticipate no immediate developments. At 4.30 p.m., however, MacEwan brought me a message that I was to proceed immediately to Teschen along with Rawlings, to assist, if necessary, in maintaining order and preventing outrage, in the event of the evacuation of the town by the Czechs and its occupation by the Poles.

February 25th.

Travelled with Rawlings and Picton in a reserved carriage, in the front portion of the train ; P., with my baggage, being stowed in a compartment in the rear. Unfortunately, being worn out, we overslept ourselves and did not waken until nearing Szolny, in Slovakia, having passed Teschen during the night. On looking out of the window we discovered that the rear portion of the train had been detached, and that the unfortunate P. and the baggage had completely disappeared. We alighted at Szolny and telegraphed to Oderberg and Teschen instructions to the effect that P., when discovered, was to be forwarded to the latter town forthwith, and left until called for. As no train was available for some time by which we could return, we betook ourselves to the waiting-room, and made a comfortable breakfast of tea and rum and black bread-and-butter. The majority of our fellow-passengers were Czech soldiers returning from leave—a frowzy lot of big-limbed, healthy looking fellows, for the most part half asleep. The Czechs are cordially hated by the Magyars who form the majority of the population in this region. We had proof of this on the return journey. When our Magyar guard discovered that we were English,

he closed the door, and gave vent to a torrent of abuse against the Czechs, whom he stigmatized in round terms as aggressors, plunderers of the weak and tyrannical bullies, and continued talking until he had utterly exhausted his vocabulary of abuse. When he finally departed, a Russian Jew, who had been hanging about the corridor, a fat-faced unhealthy looking rascal who spoke English, opened the door without as much as a "by your leave," introduced himself, and calmly requested us to procure him passports to England where, he said, he wished to rejoin his wife and family, and resume his so-called business. We spoke to him quite frankly, pointing out that he was a nondescript alien of doubtful connections and dubious antecedents; that he had nothing wherewith to substantiate his story but his own rambling statement; that, on his own showing, he wished to return to enjoy the security and hospitality of England, while our own men were being despatched to Russia to fight his Bolshevik countrymen, from whom he was at the moment seeking to escape; that his first and most obvious duty was to return and help to combat the forces of disorder in his own country; and that, in fine, he was an abominable humbug, whose presence in our carriage was both undesirable and unnecessary.

But he was an insistent rascal, with a particularly thick skin, and had in the end to be forcibly ejected, when he gave us no further trouble.

We reached Teschen before noon after a quick run through the Jablunkau Pass. We passed several train loads of troops *en route* for the Hungarian Front, where, if all accounts are true, considerable trouble is brewing. At Teschen we learned two items of vital importance (*a*) that, in consequence of a direct order from General Nicelle, supported by Paris, the town was to be evacuated by the Czechs on the following day and occupied by the Poles, and (*b*) that P. had arrived. The first thing that caught my eye was his kit stowed away in a corner of the *Bahn Kommando*. An English-speaking Czech officer informed us that P. himself had been despatched a few hours before to the hotel where the Commission was lodged, under the guidance of an orderly. It seems that P. had duly arrived at Teschen, where, as it had reached its destination, his carriage was detached. The guard had discovered him asleep, but, as he had neither ticket nor passport, and seemed neither to know whence he came nor whither he was bound, he had been asked by the officer in question to alight. P., however, had

apparently shown himself obstinate, and, as verbal persuasion proved unavailing, it had been found necessary to eject him, along with the baggage, and after a struggle he found himself marooned on the platform, and surrounded by an excited and, in his eyes, hostile crowd of military. Then his supposed enemies had carried his baggage into the guardroom, conducted himself thither, offered him coffee and cigarettes—which he had apparently accepted—and when it was daylight, packed him off in the manner already related. I found him at the hotel, seated on an army overcoat, and deep in conversation with Colonel C.'s servant. He looked sleepy and, as usual, slightly puzzled, but when he saw me he arose to his feet at once, and his first words were :

“ Thought you 'ad bin and lost yourself, sir. Better let me give your buttons a shine, sir, before you go in and see the Colonel.”

He took it apparently as all in the day's work. There must still be odds and ends of the British Army wandering about on the face of the earth, among peoples whose language is totally unintelligible to them, who have no clear idea as to where they are, why they are there, or whither they are going, but they invariably reach their destination. They

disappear for weeks—months perhaps—but eventually turn up, none the worse for their adventure, and with a vague and confused recollection of their travels. P. is a case in point. “I didn’t worry about him,” said Picton. “I knew he’d turn up all right. Tommies aren’t so common out in Poland and Hungary as all that. I knew he’d be uneasy himself, but there was no need to worry.” No doubt Picton was right—but, then, P. happened to be my batman.

After lunch Rawlings and Picton left for Warsaw, and I made the acquaintance of Colonel Coulson, the British Member of the Commission. From him I learned that the Czechs were to withdraw, on the following day, beyond a certain line of demarcation which had been fixed by General Nicelle, without consulting the wishes of, or discussing its practicability with the Commission in Teschen. As the latter Commission is, in no sense, under the orders of Warsaw, considerable feeling has been aroused among its members, whose prestige has suffered considerably through the ill-considered and high-handed action of the French general, who, supported by Paris, has arrogated to himself an authority which he does not possess. The line of demarcation, as at present defined, runs between the towns of

Karwin and Freistadt—the former being under Czech and the latter under Polish administration. By this arrangement, what is practically one town is now split into two; the Polish miners who reside in Freistadt must, in order to proceed to their work in Karwin, cross the Czech lines, where they will be subjected to exasperating delays and inconveniences in connection with revision of passports.

The Commission is, however, for the moment, fully occupied with details connected with the actual evacuation of the town which, in the case of certain units, has already commenced. The troops march through the streets to their new lines, with banners flying, singing their national songs defiantly. The transport is primitive—lorries, transformed into Red Cross Ambulances with iron wheels, jolt noisily to the station, and the steaming field-kitchens, drawn by small-boned horses, bump and stagger along behind the infantry. The town is tranquil, but the shopkeepers show considerable nervousness, fearing excesses on the part of the rougher element of the population. The Pro-Czechs, who pace the corridor of the hotel, fear the wrath of the avenging Pole, and there is a pathetic eagerness in the manner in which they dog the footsteps of the Commissioners, in whose smile they look to

find salvation. While it is hoped that the withdrawal will be accomplished without bloodshed, the feeling on the part of the Czechs, on account of what they regard as an unmerited humiliation and an unjust deprivation of their legitimate spoil, is exceedingly embittered.

February 26th.

This morning the evacuation of the town was continued, and the remaining Czech troops, with the exception of one battalion, marched to their new positions, with bands playing and flags flying, through silent crowds of Poles and Polish sympathizers, who had assembled to witness the triumph of their compatriots. The infantry battalion which remained behind paraded in the Square in front of the *Brauner Hirsch*, as if loath to see the "Jewel of Silesia" pass into the hands of their foes. The physique of the men was remarkable; they were magnificently drilled and equipped and admirably officered. They made a deep impression on the regular soldiers of the Commission, who unanimously declared that they had rarely, if ever, seen finer parade ceremonial. When the hour fixed for the final evacuation approached, and as the troops evinced no sign of withdrawing, I was ordered to request the Czech commander to speak to

Colonel Coulson. In a few moments the advance guard of the Polish cavalry would canter into the Square and, finding their rivals still in possession, it was impossible to predict the event. It was obvious that the Czechs were determined to prolong their stay to the very last moment ; their officers, it was reported, had addressed their men to the effect that they left, not as vanquished, but as conquerors, and promised them that they would speedily return, and that if the town were not restored by peaceful means they would regain it by force ; it was even hinted that they sought to pick a quarrel with the Poles. The temper of the men was dangerous ; the silence of the crowd ominous. I made my way to the Czech commanding officer, who, with his second-in-command, was pacing in front of his battalion in a nervous, excited manner, and delivered my message.

“ *Mon commandant,*” I said, saluting and interrupting his walk.

“ Blaha,” he answered curtly, returning my salute.

“ I must request you to accompany me for a moment.”

We pushed through the crowd who made way for us and watched us enter the hotel where the colonel was waiting.

“ *Mon commandant,*” he asked quietly, “ why this delay ? ”

“ *Mon colonel,*” the Czech answered, “ it was impossible to comply with your orders within the time.”

“ The time has been extended already thrice. It is impossible to extend it one moment longer. You have your instructions. It is the order of Paris and must be obeyed. *Mon commandant,* in five minutes from now you will leave the town.”

“ *Mon colonel,*” said Blaha, saluting, and left without a further word.

In a few moments the Square was entirely cleared except for the crowd of waiting civilians.

At 11 a.m. a patrol of Polish lancers rode into the Square, but it was not until 1 o'clock that the main body of infantry began to pour into the town. The enthusiasm of the spectators who lined the streets and the steep banks of the parade ground was unrestrained, as the troops, with General Latinek and his Staff riding at their head, marched along the broad esplanade in full view of the Czech forces, pacing gloomily in their new lines across the valley a mile away. Rain began to fall, but this was insufficient to damp the ardour of the crowds, and, when the band struck up the

Polish National Hymn, the vast bareheaded multitude seized the words and sent them rolling and swinging down the valley in magnificent triumphant pæan.

The Polish troops, infantry and cavalry alike, were poorly equipped, and the infantry, in particular, had a miserable appearance. Many of the latter were mere boys, clad in nondescript uniforms of various patterns, carrying a diversity of packs, and wearing rain-stained overcoats of many colours. They were wearied after their long march, and fatigued with the weight of their equipment, but, as befitted the occasion, they put their best foot forward with the determination to make a brave show. Every man in the ranks was covered with flowers, and the majority carried in the muzzles of their rifles a miniature flag of one or other of the Allied Nations. The transport was also poorly equipped, machine-guns, field kitchens, and commissariat being trundled along in small, roughly-constructed carts, which were dragged by ill-kempt, be-draggled ponies. But I could not help remembering that these ragged, goose-stepping youngsters had, during the past months, suffered hardships and misery, such as few troops would have sustained. They had borne the brunt of the bitter Russian winter cold,

ill-clad and worse shod, without a murmur. Few of them had a serviceable pair of boots on their feet ; their socks were in rags, many were without overcoats, and, when wounded, they were dressed with the mouldy blood-clotted bandages which the Russians had discarded during their earlier campaign. Now was their day of triumph. The lancers, with their blue-and-white pennons and their sheep-fleece collars, swept past amid a shower of flowers and cheers ; the foot-sore infantrymen trudged along with heads erect and eyes looking straight ahead, with a self-conscious flush on their cheeks, like men suddenly grown aware of their destiny. It was an hour of triumph for the Pole ; of bitterness for the Czech, solemnly glowering from across the valley at the nondescript army treading the stage where he himself had so proudly strutted but a short time before.

After the parade, General Latinek, accompanied by Count Puslowski, came to pay his official respects to the Commission, and to complain of the non-observance of certain clauses in the Evacuation Treaty on the part of the Czechs. Telegraph and telephone instruments had been removed ; a skirmish had taken place at Godzischau, where two Poles were killed and one wounded ; the railway line

at Pruchna and near Gollesschau had been destroyed. But such incidents were inevitable.

Puslowski, who has been appointed Colonel Coulson's A.D.C., is head of one of the oldest Polish families. He speaks English well, is diplomatic, suave, and old-fashioned in some of his ideas. He enjoys a bottle of wine and good company; is a Royalist, a devout Catholic, and an intense patriot. When his home, with its invaluable paintings and family heirlooms, was burned by the Bolsheviks, he was so stunned with the shock that he viewed its destruction with tranquillity, with the detached interest of a stranger; it seemed to him natural that this should happen, a thing he had been expecting for years. His last recollection, before lapsing into insensibility, was a vivid picture of the pale upturned faces of his terrified servants gazing in helpless pity on their master being dragged into captivity, while the jeering mob of lawless soldiery and peasants flouted and reviled the aristocrat and danced their saraband by the light of the flames.

February 27th.

The Polish occupation of Teschen is now an accomplished fact, and life is gradually resuming its normal course. The Czech, in

his methods of enforcing law and order, is more Prussian than the Pole, who has the reputation of being a *gemütlich* overlord. This very quality, however, which commends itself to a certain portion of the community, is viewed with misgiving by the more active and enterprising business men, who fear lest this easy-going tolerance should result in a loss of business efficiency and industrial energy. The application of Prussianism is dreaded by the more timid spirits, who fear that the Czech has learned his lesson only too well, from his quondam masters. The German attitude towards the Czech is one of intense dislike, mingled with fear; towards the Pole it is one of grudging admiration for his intellectual qualities, tempered with contempt. The attitude of the Germans towards the Commission is correct, polite, and dignified, if not cordial; when asked to supply particular information they do so promptly and with the usual painstaking German accuracy; while, as regards common sense and logicity, their case is as convincing as any yet presented.

The attitude of the native Silesians towards the Teschen question is one of ignorance and indifference. They lived their lives in peace and prosperity until the war destroyed the old ordered regularity of things and gave in its

place anarchy, unrest, and dissatisfaction. The Silesians are primitive and populous. A car in Silesia is as startling a phenomenon as an aeroplane in Thibet. When one appears the horses in the waggons take fright, bolt along the narrow roads, career into the garden palings, and capsize in the ditches; the cows grazing on the banks break loose and rush madly through the crops; the geese, hens, and ducks scamper screaming down the lanes; the inhabitants pour to their doors with gaping curiosity; the children, leaving their herds unattended, run across the fields as if demented the moment they hear the whirr of the engine. The villages teem with these round-headed, close-cropped little rascals, ill-clad and ill-shod, black-eyed, mischievous, stone-throwing young vagabonds, who scream their shrill witticisms in their local jargon as the Polish chauffeurs plough recklessly through their madcap bands.

The town of Teschen itself can lay claim to a very respectable ancestry. It was founded according to legend in the year 810, by three brothers of the House of Piast, and the Polish King Boleslaus Chrobry (992-1025) built there a fortification as one of the western defences of his dominions. The town is mentioned as one of the Breslau bishoprics in the year 1155,

and it remained Polish until the year 1163. The building known as the Piast Tower is ascribed to Duke Mieszko (1163-1211), first reigning Duke of Upper Silesia. The long succession of reigning dukes has only now been broken, with the expulsion of Archduke Friedrich, late Commander-in-Chief of the Austrian Armies on the Eastern Front, whose lands have been confiscated and divided among the rival Czechs and Poles. Teschen, which was during the war the headquarters of the Austrian armies on the Eastern Front, is pleasantly situated on the Olsa, and possesses an extensive public park, modern barracks, and a Schiller monument, which is by no means negligible as a work of art. It is a thoroughly German town, with German beerhouses and cafés and restaurants, German policemen in Austrian uniform, German tram-cars, German churches, German banks, German cinemas, and a German theatre. There is nothing Czech about it except an inscription above a bank, or Polish except the lace caps of the married women of the poorer classes, and the red eagle emblazoned on the grey cars in front of the hotel. A large number of Galician Jews have recently found their way to the town and settled in its meaner quarters—long-bearded fellows, with curious side-curls above

their ears, broad, flat, round hats, long black coats stretching down to their heels, high boots and unclean linen. In manners, speech, habits, dress, and thought, these Jews are a race apart. They deal in petty jobbery, smuggling bank-notes and usury, and are cordially hated and despised by Pole and Austrian alike.

The theatre is well arranged, the orchestra stalls being as comfortable and the boxes as well disposed for viewing the stage as in any theatre in London. During the season, Shakespeare and modern English dramatists are frequently played by companies from Vienna, and both acting and music are of very high quality. In addition to the performances of the professional actors, concerts and dramatic entertainments are frequently given by local amateurs, who show histrionic talents of no mean order. The opera is good, and operettas of the lighter sort are much in favour. The actors are engaged for the season, and tickets issued for that period. Since the Revolution no one dresses for the theatre, and the absence of evening-dress and of uniforms produces at first a feeling almost of depression. Polish officers are rarely seen in the house. The suddenness with which all public performances cease strikes the foreigner oddly. There is no National anthem; the moment the curtain

falls and the applause has died away, the audience seizes its wraps, folds back the seats, and streams from the building.

The majority of the young men of the better class circles are demobilized Austrian officers who have fought against us in some capacity or other, but, whatever their sentiments towards us in private, their attitude is one of punctilious politeness in public. In manner of expression the Austrian differs markedly from the *Reichsdeutscher*. His sentiments fall pleasantly on the ear, "*Hab' die Ehre*" is the common formulæ on introduction, and when bidding adieu the old-fashioned "*Mein Kompliment*" is generally employed. A gentleman will greet a lady with the cavalier "*Küss' die Hand, gnäd'ge Frau,*" and close friends offer the left hand with a "*Grüss' Dich Gott,*" while there is something in the quaintly intoned "*Jessas Maria*" which is much more pleasing than the sharply barked "*Herr Je*" of the *Reichsdeutscher*.

Costume balls are in high favour, and the scene is both effective and picturesque when the young girls take the floor, in native Silesian costume, with their make-believe Michels with heavy brogues, white shirts, gaudy waistcoats, shorts, long pipe, and green felt hats with huge bunches of feathers stuck jauntily behind.

To look at that laughter-making crowd of revellers whirling in the wildest ecstasy of waltz and fox-trot, with their elders and guests doucely beer-drinking round the tables in the recesses, one would think that they were without a care in the world. And yet, the majority of these young men are, through the hazard of war, without occupation, without prospects, without even nationality. So they dance recklessly under their new masters and sing their national songs like men singing the songs of Zion in a strange land. One may deny to a people a future, but one cannot take away its past.

The *Tanzwut* has gripped all classes from countess to serving-maid ; it has caught Pole and Czech and German alike. Helena, the little Silesian maid who sweeps out my room and makes my bed, with her dusters and clouts, with her chapped rough hands and black nails, toiling from dawn till dusk, thinks of nothing, talks of nothing, dreams of nothing but dancing. Helena is by no means prudent, however, when she goes to dances, for she dances all night, and is, in the morning, unfit for her work. But it is her one great pleasure ; a dance is one of the rare breaks in her dull, grey life when, for a few fleeting hours, she can act the princess, decked in her cheap finery and preen herself

before her admirers, in her fallals and be-ribboned shawl, with her tawdry little rings on her work-stained fingers. Next day she is the Cinderella again, but without Cinderella's romance; the poor, unnoticed, household drudge, emptying her slops, sweeping her floors, making her beds, washing down her steps, and dragging her heavy feet along the endless corridors until she is almost ready to drop from fatigue. But she has still the music of the dance in her head, and there is a touch of the pale glimmer of romance in her bleak world which lightens her weary steps. When she is made ready for the dance, there is a glow in her cheeks and a sparkle in her eye; she acquires a new elasticity of step; the untidy "bun" on the top of her head disappears and, in its stead, appears a long plait of hair, tied with green satin ribbon; in place of the untidy blouse and skirt she wears a gay-coloured bodice and short shawl about her shoulders, a dark skirt with deep blue fringe, white stockings and buckled shoes. Dance then, Helena, to your heart's content; dance while you may, for, no doubt, some one will come along one day and put a ring on your finger, and bind the badge of Polish wifhood about your head, and take you from your present drudgery to a new servitude, where you will drudge in

your comfortless home, and bear your children in sorrow and pain, when the itching will have gone out of your heels, and your dancing days be over. Dance then, Helena, and swing around to the music, in the glare of your cheap music hall. Live your romance, Helena, while you may, for, all too soon, the illusion of life will have fled, and you will emerge into the light of common day, and the grim greyness will enfold you.

February 28th.

This morning Count Lahrish appeared before the Commission. The Count is, or was, a former Austrian nobleman with large mining interests in the Karwin mines. He is a middle-aged, keen-faced, courteous gentleman, immaculate in dress, who speaks perfect English and French. He is gravely concerned over the arbitrary action of General Nicelle, which has already proved a source of irritation and misunderstanding. It appears that the Polish miners resident in Freistadt, who work in the Karwin mines, are paid in the latter town in Czech money, which has a higher rate of exchange than Polish money. As only a certain limited sum may be carried across the frontier, the miner is compelled to invest a large portion of his wages in provisions, which,

owing to the restrictions of the Czech revision, cannot be carried home. This arrangement has resulted in heavy financial loss, and must, should the troops be moved from the area, inevitably result in a serious outbreak of anarchy and Bolshevism.

The problem of Teschen is, however, not primarily economic, but political. The agitation among the miners, there is reasonable ground for believing, has been fomented by the *Rada Narodowa*, or Polish National Council, which has seized on the present unrest, in order to convince the Commission of the impossibility of Czech rule in Karwin. The policy of encouraging strikes has, however, so far, merely resulted in an immense loss of capital, discontent among the miners, distress among their families, and encouraged a defiance of law and order which must sooner or later issue in disaster. The miners are sullen and mistrustful; they are suspicious of any attempts at conciliation; jingoist speeches have inflamed their sensitive and fiery tempers. The majority of the mines stand idle and deserted, save for the Czech soldiers, lounging on guard at the pitheads, and the only living souls one sees in Karwin are the groups of surly strikers at the street corners and the crop-headed children at play round the black puddles in the streets.

The Count was entirely non-committal, but at the same time emphatic on the necessity for some strong line of action. The Polish miners have sworn, in the event of the mines being handed over to the Czechs, to throw prudence to the winds and indulge in unrestrained sabotage. There is no immediate apprehension of any serious outbreak, but the mining atmosphere is depressing and dull, as if a thunderstorm was brewing. It is becoming increasingly obvious that, since the evacuation of Teschen, the Czech authorities are adopting a definite attitude of obstructionism.

March 1st.

At 10 a.m. the Commission heard the case of Dr. Harbich, Ex-President of the County Court, deposed in favour of Dr. Bochinski, the Polish nominee. Dr. Michejda, President of the Landes—Regierung, Second Political *Instanz*, explained that Dr. Bochinski had been appointed President by Warsaw, some time previously, and accepted by the Polish authorities in Teschen. During the period of the first Polish occupation of the town, Dr. Hochelber, who had taken the oath, discharged the duties of Vice-President, continuing in this capacity during the subsequent Czech occupation, and under the temporary presidency of

Dr. Harbich. When the Poles returned Dr. Bochinski had resumed his former position as President, to which post Dr. Hochelber now aspires. The Poles claim that the original appointment of Dr. Bochinski still holds ; that Dr. Hochelber has no claim to the position ; that he was never appointed to it, and that there never was any intention of appointing him to it. Dr. Harbich sought a ruling as to whether he was to take his orders from the Czechs or the Poles. It is certainly difficult enough to know one's exact position when one goes to bed in Czecho-Slovakia and awakens in the morning in Poland. But in this instance the issue seems clear ; possession is nine points of the law, and naturally the Poles prefer their own nominee to a stranger.

In the afternoon Du Bois, the American Secretary, and myself, received a deputation of miners' leaders in Karwin. We met the men in the office of the Mine Manager of the *Johanschacht*. Their spokesman was an able, forceful fellow, who presented his case in German, logically and clearly. His argument was as follows. The Poles object to the presence of Czech soldiers in the town and at the pit-heads, and refuse to work until they are removed. No coal is being mined, and Poland is in desperate need of coal ; there is a

dangerous spirit abroad amongst the men. To add to the general irritation the Czechs have hermetically closed the frontier until the 10th of March, pending the stamping of the bank-notes. We endeavoured to explain the complexity of the situation, and appealed to the deputation to assist in finding a solution of the difficulty, promising to do all in our power to reduce the soldiers to a number sufficient for the maintenance of law and order. The men showed themselves very reasonable, and after some further discussion we shook hands very cordially and parted.

In the evening we attended a dance and reception in the Polish House, given by the Polish authorities in honour of the re-occupation of the town. Many of the younger officers affect close-cut side whiskers which give them an old-fashioned air, and does not, in my opinion, improve their appearance—which is in the main insignificant. The plain field-grey tunic with high collar and dull metal buttons, which is worn by the infantry, is on the whole unbecoming. The Legionaries are distinguished by a wavy silver band on their collar. Unpolished top-boots are usually worn, but on parade the infantry subaltern wears grey cloth puttees. In undress uniform every Polish infantry officer wears a bayonet

attached to a thin brown leather belt ; with the long grey military coat the bayonet is worn outside. The cavalry officer is more elegant than the infantryman, and wears, instead of a bayonet, a long curved cavalry sword, dark breeches, with a thin red stripe, high-polished boots and spurs. We were well entertained in the Polish House. Much food was consumed, much cognac and Schnapps and beer and wine was drunk ; and dancing was continued with enthusiasm until an early hour.

March 2nd.

The Commission as a body is an interesting and amusing psychological study. Monsieur G., the President, the Professional diplomat, has an extensive knowledge of art, literature, and music, has travelled widely, and has not merely a superficial acquaintance with the countries he has visited, but an understanding of their history and antiquities. He is cautious in address, punctilious in answering questions and meeting objections. He talks slowly with admirable clearness, drawing his conclusions with easy logic, without temper and without bias. He has a faculty for seizing on and cutting out irrelevancies, a keen sense of humour, and the gift of pointed satire. Altogether, an admirable type of French gentleman

of the older school, whose presidency imparts a peculiar air of dignity to the Commission.

His subordinate, Commandant M., is a typical French Staff officer, conscientious, hard-working, apparently mechanical and unimaginative. But, when one comes to know him, he is the most delightful companion imaginable. On occasion, he appears in a pair of brilliant blue corkscrew trousers of the French *Chasseurs*, and when he takes his walks abroad the Germans turn their steps and say to each other wonderingly: "Jessas Maria, wasis' denn das für'n Mann? Ist er Franzos oder was? Komm du, guck a mal her." (Heavens above, what sort of a fellow is this? Is he French or what? Just look here, will you.) M. has the typical, cold, detached French attitude towards the German. "The Boche is beaten," he says, "therefore he must pay. *C'est tout.*" It is an attitude devoid of feeling or sentiment, neither harsh nor vindictive, but unrelenting and purely businesslike. M. has a habit of whistling through his teeth when excited, talks rapidly, with a pronounced provincial accent, and employs a number of barrack-room terms, which are unintelligible to his auditors. He is easily amused; one has only to let a plate fall to set him off into fits of uncontrollable laughter, and, at table, he

spends his time rolling his bread into balls, which he accumulates in a little heap by the side of his plate. With the sublime arrogance of the Frenchman he speaks no language save French, and, on account of the incessant rain in Teschen, he has, in his humorous way, announced his intention, when peace has been signed, of retiring from the army, and setting up business as an umbrella merchant.

Colonel T., the Italian delegate, is an excitable and unreasonable Southerner. The least opposition is sufficient to start him with a torrent of bad French and incoherent German, but he is in reality kind-hearted to a fault. His mental agility, which renders him impatient of detail and intolerant of the slow-witted and the stupid, is usually ascribed to lack of manners. He is occasionally pettish, and has more than once been accused by the Czechs of partiality for the Poles, doubtless on account of the present attitude of his Government on the Jugo-Slav question. T. is accompanied by L., a handsome young Neapolitan, who acts in the capacity of secretary. L., who has captured the hearts of numerous Fräuleins in the town, and been the cause of infinite heart-breakings, has been, it is reported, the recipient of various challenges to mortal combat by their outraged and slighted swains. To see him in

full uniform with his yellow-striped breeches, his high-topped boots and silver spurs, his flowing blue cloak, promenading under the Colonnades with one or other of his admirers, saluting gravely, in the quaint Italian fashion, is a sight not easily forgotten. L. has introduced into the setting of the Commission a touch of Italian opera, which is highly entertaining.

Mr. C., the American delegate, is a business man from the Middle West, who is entirely devoid of any experience or knowledge of European politics or social conditions. For him the Commission is a Board of Directors. "What I would like to know, Mr. Chairman," he begins, in florid American, to an audience of whom possibly only one or two has a nodding acquaintance with English, and recollecting himself suddenly, "I mean, Mr. President." Or again, "Mr. Chairman, I should like to bring to the notice of this Board," or "Guess we'd better telegraph them at Washington about this business—I mean Paris." He elucidated the recent Czech *coup* by which the Poles were compelled to evacuate Teschen, with delightful *naïvété*, as follows: "Waa'l you see, it's like this. Them Dooks"—meaning the Czechs—"took and waltzed the other boys right back to the Vistula, and when

they were tired they quit foolin' and sat down and waited till we came along to put things right for them again." His language is a sealed book to the other members of the Commission with the exception of the English ; the language of the other members of the Commission is utterly incomprehensible to him, but so long as he appears to follow the argument he is a tower of strength to our deliberations. Secretary D. B. "puts him wise" from time to time, but it does not invariably make for harmony, when a matter is brought up for discussion again, which was apparently settled with the complete assent of the entire Commission, a couple of days previously.

B., the Aviator, is remarkable for his "gun," his appetite and his general habits ; he is the mystery man of the Commission. He is referred to by Mr. C. as the "Lootenant," and is usually to be found in a side room which is filled with Galician Jews in search of passports, a nondescript crowd of Germans in search of Heaven knows what, Czech and Polish secretaries, orderlies, and batmen, who spend their time talking or smoking, or returning from meals, or reclining on the sofa. His table, in addition to an untidy mass of papers, is embellished with rum glasses, greasy plates, crusts of brown bread, rinds of

bacon, and sausages, and cigarette ends, but, being generally invisible when in request, it has long been a point of debate as to what the Lootenant's actual functions are. It is reported that, on one occasion in Warsaw, when he was introduced to the representative of one of the most ancient families in Poland, he startled his hostess by saying, "Say, Countess, guess you're just trying to pull my leg, for you're the seventh Countess of that name I've been introduced to this day." And once, after listening for a few moments to a certain lady of noble birth, who had come to him to request a favour, he suddenly interrupted her with the unexpected remark, "Say, just one moment, Countess," and, clearing his throat he crossed to the window and spat into the street beneath, and returning with his hands in his pockets continued, "Now then, Countess, you were saying? Git along with it, will you, for I've no time to lose, I'm telling you that."

Remains C.—C. is artistic, æsthetic, mob-hating, a mimic, a musician, a raconteur, a connoisseur in art, china, furniture, a sportsman, a linguist, and an elegant dancer with a keen sense of humour and an eye for the ridiculous. He is equally at home with a Prince with an ancient pedigree or a President without one; with a Pole who believes that

aristocracy is of Divine origin, or with a Czech who believes it to be an invention of the German devil. One associates him with lace and brocade, with hoops and patches, with candles and rapiers, and powdered wigs and affairs of gallantry ; one thinks of him as having wandered by mistake out of the eighteenth into the twentieth century. He is impartial, impersonal, amused, with a touch of cynicism in his attitude, and in the coming Revolution, despite his cosmopolitanism, he will certainly be among the first of the aristos to be haled off in the tumbrils.

March 4th.

One feels that we are sitting on a powder magazine which any chance spark may ignite. Troops swarm in Karwin and the neighbourhood, to the accompaniment of much sabre rattling ; there are constant patrol encounters, throwing of hand grenades, brawls in the neutral zone, all of which affrays are invariably laid at the door of the other side. Graver incidents, such as the defacing of the Polish eagle, are from time to time reported, but by day Czech and Pole are usually on excellent terms ; the sentries stand in full view of each other, the men off duty fraternize. It is at night that a feeling of nervousness is

manifest ; rumours of impending attacks are circulated, and, for no apparent reason, machine-gun fire is opened and casualties are inflicted.

These lines are, however, not what those of us who have lived in the trenches in Flanders and in Artois and in the shell-holes of the Somme understand by lines. The so-called line is a mere theoretical line. There are outposts and troops quartered in the villages ; machine-guns concealed in the buildings and sentries on the bridges and posts on the roads, and Battalion and Brigade and Divisional Headquarters. There is make-believe on the part of the soldiers that they are at war and, occasionally, death peeps in on his rounds, and some one fails to answer the roll-call in the morning. But on Sundays, the townspeople stroll past the Polish sentries, walk a kilometre down the road, show their *Legitimation* to the Czech corporal, exchange the time of day with him, and take the air in the Republic of Czecho-Slovakia. Travelling by night exposes one to certain excitements ; a band of Poles may suddenly leap on your car from the dark, point their rifles at your breast, interrogate your chauffeur, and, when they have satisfied themselves as to your identity, withdraw and huddle round their camp fire in the woods

like so many picturesque brigands. At a short distance stand the Czech outposts, rifle in hand, showing clearly in the glare of the headlights, and again you are halted and passed under close scrutiny before being allowed to proceed on your journey. Sometimes odd things happen. At a sudden steep bend one finds that the road has been strewn with boulders which would have brought disaster on you, had you not pulled up in time, or a stone whizzes past your ear, or a cart swerves suddenly across your path, as if by accident. But these are the incidental excitements of life, and there is doubtless nothing more behind it than the wickedness native to schoolboys of every clime and race.

Provisions in the town are scarce and monotonous ; butter is unprocurable, and the ordinary well-to-do citizen is fortunate if he obtains meat once a fortnight ; cigars are at a premium, and the Czechs permit no sugar to be carried across the frontier. Milk is scarce, and there is much distress, in consequence, among the children and the sick in hospitals ; coffee is bad, tea is worse, white bread is a luxury. We are fortunate enough to procure fresh butter and country cheese through the medium of the Polish authorities. The most frequent meat dishes are sausage, pig and calf

cutlets, and an imitation of bacon and eggs. Beer is scarce owing to large quantities being despatched to Poland, and the ordinary wine is rapidly deteriorating in quality. Frogs' legs and trout are served as a luxury, or a woodcock occasionally makes its appearance. Eggs are expensive, and frequently stale and unappetizing. For dessert we have a composition called *baladschinka*, which is a thin pancake with jam inside, or *torte*, a sponge cake covered with chocolate or other icing.

Clothes are dear, and certain luxuries, such as silk stockings, are unprocurable. The young ladies of the better class, however, despite the disadvantages under which they labour, are not only well but stylishly dressed, the war having increased their ingenuity and skill as self-appointed modistes. Many of the demobilized officers still wear their former Austrian uniforms, but without distinctions of rank.

At dances there appears to be no recognized evening dress for the gentlemen, but the explanation of this is the scarcity and dearth of clothing material. On the other hand, the so-called society of a small provincial town like Teschen is, from the very nature of things, cosmopolitan to say the least of it. While

the Austrian General Staff resided in Teschen, it was the centre of the Austrian aristocracy, but with the dispersal of the Staff and the expulsion of the Archduke, the aristocratic element disappeared and left the merely bourgeois. The townspeople had, however, little opportunity of making acquaintance with the Austrian Staff who did not admit to any intimacy.

At 4 p.m. the youth and beauty of Teschen are to be seen at the fashion parade under the Colonnades. The uniform of the Polish infantry officer predominates, but, from time to time, Czech legionaries and one or other of the members of the Commission mingle with the crowd. In front of the hotel stand the cars allotted for the use of the Commission.

The chauffeurs loll and smoke and sleep in them, or tinker with the machinery when they feel particularly energetic; Czech orderly wrangles with Polish orderly, while the two untidy sentries at the door of the hotel look on and grin, and occasionally take part in the argument.

The guard-room is a little old yellow building in the corner of the Square, with heavily-barred windows, through which can be seen the men off duty, playing cards or stretched on the benches, while others of

their comrades loll in the windows or in the porch behind the sentry. Occasionally the officer for the day appears, falls in the Guard, inspects the men, and presently dismisses them with a curt word of command. The ceremony of mounting guard never fails to attract a small crowd of admiring Poles and critical Germans, who still affect to despise their present master and all his works.

The Austrian policemen, with silver number plate dangling in front of their collars and trailing sabres, pace the edge of the pavements in dignified groups; shivering little barefoot ragamuffins hang round the fringes of the fashionable crowd begging for coppers; but, before darkness falls, the young women wrap themselves more closely in their furs, their swains turn up their sheep-skin collars, the little ragamuffins make off to their haunts, and, when the lights are turned on, the Square is deserted except for the sentries and the police, and the lounging chauffeurs. And perhaps, later, if one is still awake, one may hear the faint music of the dance, the patter of occasional feet, a noisy tumult at the "Geige," the clink of equipment in the guard-room, and the remorseless numbering of the vanishing hours.

March 15th.

Samedi 14 Mars, à 8 heures du soir, aura
lieu une Soirée

à l'Hôtel du Cerf, à laquelle nous avons
l'honneur de vous inviter.

Le Comité

Forma sous les auspices
du Conseil Nationale du Duché de Cieszyn.

The Assembly was quite a brilliant affair. Count and Countess Lahrisch were invited, Count and Countess Thun with their family were present, and a number of notables and aristocracy from Cracow assisted. The company, after being received by General and Mrs. Latinek, sat down to supper at small tables arranged round the hall. The wines and liqueurs and the entrées were such as would have satisfied the most exacting gourmet. After supper the tables were removed, and the orchestra, which had throughout the meal discoursed noisy and patriotic selections, broke into soft and dreamy waltz music. Presently a couple took the floor, followed by another, and in a moment the dance was in full swing.

Dancing in Poland is a gradual thing. One is deep in conversation when, almost unconsciously, the first soft strains of the waltz catch one's ordered ideas, and set them jiggling in

rhythmic movement through the brain. It is an arresting thing music in Poland ; there is a compelling force and fascination about it which banishes logical thought and renders all attempts at serious conversation futile. When the waltz ends, the atmosphere is changed in some subtle fashion ; there is laughter and shuffling of feet, and, as if by magic impulse, couples are ranging themselves in merry confusion on the floor. There is a moment of silence, then the music crashes out in mad fantastic medley, and the dancers with merry laugh and whoop mingle and chase each other in furious whirligig. It is the mazurka, or Polish national dance, they are dancing.

The influence of the mazurka is contagious ; it is not necessary to know how to dance it ; it is a combination of waltz, two-step, barn dance, quadrille, and lancers—a dance of vigour, grace, confusion, merriment, and boisterous laughter. One dances it in a state of dazed hilarity, with a confused impression of lights and evolutions and whirlings and laughing faces, of pushing, and advancing, and retiring, and when it is over, and the company is hot and breathless and exhausted, one wants, unaccountably, to start dancing it all over again. It is impossible to resist the lure of the mazurka ; undecided couples, diffident couples,

elderly couples, couples whose thoughts are a thousand miles removed from dancing, rise from their places when they hear it, push into its gyrating circles, and are, in a moment, involved in its boisterous confusion. There is art and elegance about the mazurka, but, first and foremost, it is the boisterous expression of exuberant and joyous humanity.

Overhead the moon scuds through the drifting clouds; the wind moans dismally among the house gables and the chimney tops; the sentry, stamping his feet to keep himself warm, hums a few bars of some national chanty on the top of the ancient tower of the Piasts; the Olsa, swollen with the melting snows, brawls its noisy way through the sleeping town; the trees on its banks shiver in their first thin coating of spring buds; the Guard is changed noiselessly, and the sleepy men, relieved from their cold vigil, stagger into the frowzy guard-room with its odour of oil and sheep-skin and Russian leather, but the dancers, a merry light-hearted company, trip it home joyously, through the silent streets, with the haunting rhythm of the mazurka jiggling and waltzing through their heads.

March 18th.

Feast Day in honour of the Chief of the State Pilsudski. Telegrams of congratulation were despatched and suitably acknowledged ; a Grand Parade and March Past were held, and Field Mass celebrated at the Barracks. Since their entry into the town the appearance, discipline, and drill of the Polish troops has improved beyond belief, and this morning they created a very favourable impression. The junior officers, especially, strike one as keen and intelligent, with a firm command over their men, who marched past the saluting base with a splendid swing, keeping excellent alignment, and breaking into the familiar "Goose-step" in regular Prussian style. Their uniforms are still varied in hue and style, puttees alternating with top boots and baggy trousers, but there is no doubt as to the increased efficiency of officers and men alike. The Lancers made a gallant show, and, as usual, roused the enthusiasm of the crowd.

The Parade was followed by the inevitable banquet, without which no public function would be complete in Poland. A large company sat down to table in the Officers' Mess, where an excellent meal was served consisting of vermicelli soup, two courses of meat, *torte* and fruit, followed by coffee and liqueurs.

Light beer and white wine were drunk. During the toasts I sat with Kurnikowski and Czaczka. Alas, Kurnikowski, one of the merriest fellows living, is, like so many of our Polish friends here, about to take his departure for Warsaw, or the States, or *Weissnichtwo*. Görski, the mediæval knight-errant, a fellow of infinite jest, of endless quip and crank, talks longingly of Paris and Czaczka, sighs hourly for the fleshpots of Warsaw. But there are moments when he has other ambitions.

"Captain," he whispered to me confidentially, over his coffee, "I have been thinking——"

"I trust," I answered politely, "that the exercise has done you no harm."

"I have been thinking," he continued, ignoring my sarcasm, "that after the war I shall go to England."

"In which case," I said gallantly, "the gain will be entirely ours."

"And go into business."

Seeing I was expected to make some further remark, I ventured on a nod of comprehension.

"I shall buy a factory."

I nodded again.

"I shall buy a factory," he repeated, looking at me fixedly.

"Is there any particular kind of factory you

prefer, C.?" I asked. "Jam factory, Boot factory, Lie factory," running over in my mind the list of factories I had at my disposal.

"Aha," he answered knowingly.

"I see, it doesn't really matter what kind of a factory it is, so long as it has a chimney attached to it. C., you are the very man we want in England. With your business talent, you are simply wasted in Poland. I shall write to Mr. Lloyd George about you and tell him you are coming. He will expect you."

C. winked at me deliberately, raised his glass slowly, and drank deeply to my very good health.

After lunch the Toast of the day was proposed by the senior officer present. The following is a translation :

"The Polish people and the Polish soldier are celebrating for the first time the Fête Day of their Generalissimo who is at the same time the Chief of State. This day is all the more important inasmuch as it surprises us in the midst of a struggle against the most terrible enemy of civilization, Bolshevism, which menaces us from without and threatens to penetrate our country. Our reunion is honoured by the presence of the members of the Inter-Allied Commission, who can realize

our difficulties at first hand, and who are seconding us in the work of the reconstruction of our State, which bids fair to become strong and powerful. The Bond of sentiment between Poland and the great States of the West and America, is an historic and age-long tradition. Who has not heard, in the past, of the legions of Dombrowski in Italy, of the battles of Sommo-Sierra and Saragossa, of the fidelity of the Polish Guard to Napoleon, when the entire world had abandoned him, of the valour of Kosciuszko and of Pulaski in America? During long centuries, Poland stood as the rampart of civilization against the Turks and the Tartars; it was Sobieski who arrested the invasion of the barbarians under the walls of Vienna. So, to-day, Poland stems the onrush of Russian Bolshevism and Prussian Spartacism, and diverts the avalanche which menaces European culture. It will be the mission of Poland to maintain the benefits of the peace, which has been given by the Allied Powers, to regenerated humanity.

“ Our Generalissimo, Joseph Pilsudski, was the first to understand, even before the beginning of the war, the necessity of strengthening our power of resistance, by the creation of an army. He was the first to re-awaken the spirit of a people oppressed by a threefold

domination, and to rally around himself the youth who formed the nucleus of the Legions, which were the beginnings of the Polish army. His work and his determination to fight under the banners of the Allies, which alone could restore to Poland its independence and its past glory, procured for him a long term of imprisonment in the Fortress of Magdeburg. Although cut off from all political activity, the absence of the Chief did not make us despair, and we continued his work towards the goal to which he himself had pointed. This is why the anniversary of his Fête Day fills us with joy and with the hope that this man who is indeed the expression of strength, of work and of firmness, this Leader who enjoys the confidence of the entire country, will be long spared to us.

“This is the devout prayer of all our grateful hearts.

“I raise my glass to drink his health with respectful admiration and thankfulness. Long live Joseph Pilsudski.”

Then Colonel C. made a speech. I have forgotten what he said, but, in any case, he said it very nicely, and Puslowski, who translated it, did so, apparently, to the complete satisfaction of his audience who seemed on its conclusion to go mad, and toasted the Chief of

State vociferously for a full five minutes; Reger, the Socialist Deputy, made a forceful and moderate appeal for national unity, and Dr. Bochinski drew one of his characteristically humorous and piquant vignettes. Bochinski, who sits uneasily in his shaky seat of justice, is a black-haired stoutish man, with hair *en brosse*, a little pointed black beard, a pert little nose, and sharp brown eyes which twinkle humorously behind his glasses. He is an excellent raconteur, and, according to his own story, had been a doughty squire of dames in his Vienna days.

The subalterns of the garrison in the next hall calling on the Colonel to make another speech, he addressed a few words to them in English, which were again translated with great effect, by Puslowski. When he had finished, there was much clinking of glasses and drinking of toasts and singing of the Polish National Hymn, and when this was ended, the band played the "Marseillaise," "Rule Britannia," and finally, "God save the King," the entire company remaining standing throughout. Unfortunately, their musical knowledge did not extend to an acquaintance with the National anthems of Italy and America, but, failing this, the company toasted Tissi and Du Bois repeatedly, called for cheers for Italy and

America, shook hands vigorously all round, and called for more liqueurs.

At 4 p.m. we shook hands with as many of the company as we could reach, and took our departure. Not so the others. The day was still young, the wine was good, and—it was the feast day of Joseph Pilsudski.

March 28th.

Visited one of the Karwin Pits with Com-mandant Marschal and Harris, in order to investigate personally the alleged grievances of the miners. The great majority of the men having returned to work, the coal output is practically normal, but, owing to the uncertain political outlook, work is carried on in a half-hearted and spasmodic manner, and the trouble is by no means at an end. The pit we inspected is one of the best organized in Europe. There are excellent baths and lavatory accommodation for the men, and when they don their working suits their ordinary clothes are stored in a large, well-heated room on the following system. Each man is provided with a key and a patent lock, and before leaving for his work he hauls his clothes up to the roof by means of a pulley, which is then made fast and the key handed in to the manager's office, where it remains until the owner calls for it. When we had

complied with the usual formalities, we were provided with safety-lamps, and descended the pit with the Manager and Stadniekiwitz, a Polish engineer.

The coal seams in the pit we visited are of great richness and purity, but the technical details with which we were supplied in the course of our visit have entirely slipped my memory. The men complain chiefly of the high cost of provisions, of scarcity of milk, etc., of interference on the part of the Czech soldiery, and of their difficulties on account of the stamping of the paper money. We found them conciliatory and reasonable, and, while promising to inquire into their grievances, we explained that the question of the final ownership of the mines was entirely outside our province. The housing accommodation of the Silesian miners is superior to that in England and Scotland, sanitary conditions are better, bath facilities are more numerous, and we were particularly impressed by the scrupulous cleanliness of the entire establishment. The coal pits are owned either by companies or private individuals, and, until the recent political upheaval, the miners were a contented community and strikes unknown.

March 31st.

Cracow is essentially non-European. The atmosphere is of the very essence of Slavdom ; the city is the centre of Conservative Polish sentiment ; mediæval in mentality, aristocratic by tradition ; exclusive in its social intimacies, and distinguished by its ancient culture and its brilliant intellectualism. The uniforms of the military are handsomer than we have been accustomed to in the Silesian town ; the tunics of the officers are well-cut but, to the English eye, somewhat garish ; the soldiers are smarter and the formality of saluting is observed with the German punctiliousness of pre-war days.

The most prominent feature, however, in the streets of Cracow is the Jews, the majority of whom, the day being Saturday, wore a peculiar flat round hat with a thick band of fur. The Jewish population, which has recently been largely increased by an influx of refugees from Lemberg, has overflowed the Ghetto, and now swarms in all quarters of the town. One meets Jews everywhere, tragic figures moving heavily across this quaint old-world stage. They impress one with the idea of something relentless and eternal, this unchanging and unchanged race ; they are like men who are waiting and watching for some happening of which they alone have knowledge,

strangers loitering in a world where they enjoy a secret fellowship. The atmosphere of the Ghetto, with its odour of unclean linen, old clothes and Russian leather, stifled us ; the trampled snow, the blackened slush in the streets, the gloomy unkempt houses with their tarnished Hebrew signs, the strange orientalism of the faces which surrounded us depressed us. When we visited the synagogue, which was closed, we were immediately surrounded by a crowd of Jewish children, who scrambled and fought among themselves in order to follow us into the interior of the building. The opening of the door, by the unclean old hag who acted as custodian, was the signal for a disorderly rush on the part of the mob, who were only ejected, after much uproar, by a self-constituted guard of the bigger lads, whose intervention alone enabled us to examine the building unmolested. The dirt was unspeakable ; the benches and seats were thickly coated with grease ; the windows cracked and foul ; and the utter absence of reverence or self-respect, which was everywhere manifest, filled us with a feeling of disgust and melancholy. The Ghetto swarmed with children, pale-faced, tousled young brats, with their peculiar side curls, making unwholesome caterwauling ; but there was no joy in their play,

there was no merriment in their laughter ; they are old before their time, overshadowed by the great tragedy of their race.

The Jewish problem is of all internal problems the most serious which reconstituted Poland has to solve. Forming as they do 15 per cent. of the total population, and retaining pronounced national and spiritual characteristics, the Jews in Poland, during the last half-century, have been exposed to a policy of repression by which they have been largely denied political preferment and office. On the right solution of the problem largely depends the political stability of Poland.

In a sense Cracow is disappointing ; the town is dirty, the streets are greasy, the public buildings are dingy. On the other hand, a clean Cracow would lose its charm ; much of its glamour is in its dirt ; a Cracow cleansed and purified would be a Cracow shorn of the last shreds of romance, an ancient jewel set in modern filigree work. Beggars are both numerous and insistent, while wounded and discharged soldiers in Russian and Austrian uniforms, on crutches and sticks, are encountered at every corner in the neighbourhood of the *Sukiennice* or Cloth Hall. Cracow is a town of startling contrasts : palaces rub shoulders with slums ; culture and refinement

sit cheek by jowl with abject poverty and clamant destitution ; Dives and Lazarus jostle on the footway. It is essentially a city of churches, of Dominicans and Franciscans, of mediæval asceticism and devotion, of masses high and low, of prayer sayings and candle burnings, mingled with a mode of ancestor worship of the long line of Polish kings who lie mouldering beneath their heavy brass sarcophagi in the Cathedral on the hill. To appreciate the history of Poland one must view the tombs of these dead kings ; to understand this people whose spirit has remained unbroken throughout the long years of oppression and political submergence, one must climb the Kopiec Kościuszki and stand by the side of that vast monument erected by the devoted multitudes of the Hero's countrymen. The castle, with its wonderful view along the Vistula, has been sadly disfigured by the Austrian ; but the Kościół Katedralny and the Kościół Maryacki or Church of St. Mary, with their magnificent monuments, their priceless tapestries, their wonderful mediæval windows, fill one with admiration and reverence. Cracow lacks the refinement of Oxford or Cambridge ; it has neither their quiet dignity nor their repose. One misses the lawns, the ivy, the green foliage, the healthy atmosphere

of an English college. Even the old University is disappointing ; its walls are blotched and dingy and splashed where the plaster has fallen away. But there is something in the atmosphere of Cracow which is incomprehensible to our Western mentality. It is, perhaps, because we are more intimately concerned with the present and the future, while the Pole is more at home in the past. The present is scarcely real to him ; while the future is so problematical that it has barely advanced beyond the stage of abstract theory.

We dined at the house of Countess Potocki ; dinner being followed by a reception where we had the opportunity of making the acquaintance of a number of the most brilliant members of Polish society. Among those who sat down to table were Count and Countess Potocki, Princess Lutkowska, Count Puslowski, Count Tarnowski, General Count Lasnerzau-Salius and his wife, Countess Wanda Zamoyka, Count and Countess Tyszkiewicz, Count Brunski, Count and Countess Szembek, M. Zelinski. The talk was brilliant and of wide range and variety. French and English were spoken, and there were moments when one might almost have imagined oneself seated at a London dinner-table. After dinner I met General Gologorski, Baroness de Puget, and

many other guests, a number of whom, refugees from the Bolshevik Front, had lost lands, home, and everything, except what they were able to carry away with them on their proper persons. In Cracow these unfortunate people find agreeable and charming society of their own class which, in a measure, compensates them for the material losses they have suffered.

The entire company were, without exception, wonderful linguists, but it was to me matter for regret that we seemed to have so largely neglected propaganda in Poland. Even the best informed Poles are, through no fault of their own, in a state of profound ignorance in regard to England. I have met intelligent and cultured Poles, who have informed me with all seriousness that England had only a small force in the field during the recent war, that the chief burden was entirely borne by the French, and that the rôle of the British Navy was an insignificant one, and had no bearing on the final result.

The Pole in his newly-found freedom is ambitious and enthusiastic, regarding those who do not share his political ambitions as actual or potential enemies, and those who are not equally enthusiastic as indifferent, or covertly hostile. He reproaches Mr. Lloyd George as

being opposed to his legitimate aspirations, solely because the political experience of the British statesmen counsels a policy of caution. "The only people who really understand the Poles," Puslowski informed me some time ago, "are the Americans. You English have so long known political freedom that you can no longer appreciate what the word means. America gave us not merely empty sympathy, but practical help as well; America won the war."

It is, perhaps, inevitable that political questions should intrude in every circle of Polish Society. At luncheon on the following day, at Countess Shambeck's, where the company was smaller and the conversation if anything less entertaining, political matters were again discussed, with that imperfection of vision which is characteristic of our hosts. The Pole, in his haste for national aggrandisement, is apt to forget the *festina lente* adage, and that we ourselves, after centuries of self-government, have only attained a moderate degree of political prescience.

The German Pole, accustomed to a strict tutorship, has acquired habits of discipline, industry, and method, but until now he has remained in tutelage, deprived of all opportunities for the exercise of initiative, authority, and the habit of ruling; the Russian Pole,

accustomed to a corrupt administration, has developed a non-European mentality, while proximity to the Russian border has resulted in a large proportion of the population becoming imbued with ideas of a Bolshevik tendency. The Austrian Pole, who alone enjoyed almost complete equality, if not political independence, and was admitted to the government and the diplomatic service, finds the door of political preferment slammed in his face. The consequence is, that the Polish administration is entirely in the hands of statesmen who lack political experience and previous training.

Among the group of aristocrats in Cracow, no leader has as yet arisen, although there are among them certain who are attracted by the allurements of office and aspire to political fame. They are patriots and idealists, but they play no rôle politically; they represent no responsible party; they have done little towards the political and economic reconstruction of Poland. They have lost their opportunity, because they lack the driving force necessary to political success. A brilliant company dreaming, some of them, of kingship firmly ensconced once more in the stripped and naked palace of the kings; of courts and orders and all the pomp and pageantry of

vanished and evanescent royalty; with chivalrous ideals, but somewhat old-fashioned in their outlook on life, suggesting dead centuries; who study humanity from the sheltered windows of their *salons* rather than from the commonplace point of view of the man in the street; a company aglow with the sacred fire of patriotism, fanatic almost in their creed of aristocracy, with revolutionary blood in their veins, and the age-long tradition of political oppression in their memories; a pathetic, exclusive little company, tucked away in the quiet obscurity of the half-lights of Cracow and almost forgotten amid the troubled sea of democracy that rises and wells about it, and will one day engulf it.

April 13th.

During the previous fortnight no question of particular moment has arisen. The main difficulty has been to get Czech and Pole to accommodate each other. Their representatives have shown an incredible timidity and unwillingness to undertake the responsibility of decision; they are constantly running off to Prague or Warsaw under the pretence of obtaining the sanction of their respective governments. Both countries are weak and surrounded by a veritable sea of enemies

whose common object is their ultimate destruction ; both are ambitious, able, mutually mistrustful and suspicious of the policy of the *Entente*. Were our watch to cease for a moment these glowering warriors would be at each other's throats immediately. Sometimes they walk between the lines with the country girls and exchange friendly cigarettes, but presently, when evening closes in and the stillness grates on jagged nerves, there are bursts of machine-gun fire, and the citizens turn in their beds uneasily with visions of burnings and shootings and plunderings before their eyes. In a few moments there is silence again ; the honest burghers compose themselves to sleep once more, and await the coming of another uneasy day ; and nothing is heard but the wind chuckling in the garden of the *Schloss* of the Ex-Archduke, and the Olsa, laughing and tripping on its way to the sea.

The Czech impresses one as the keener soldier. The ordinary private is ignorant and provincial, but conscientious in the discharge of his duty, to the point of officiousness. His thoroughness and naïve bucolicism are attractive rather than otherwise. On one occasion, when repairing a puncture which our car had sustained, a huge loutish lieutenant, espying us, dropped stolidly from a bullock-cart which

was conveying a number of his men with their rations to the farm where they were billeted, eyed us suspiciously for a moment and then advanced slowly in our direction. It was evident from his manner that he found himself in somewhat of a quandary ; he concluded that the seeming French legionary and myself were ignorant of Czech ; to speak German he was ashamed ; he apparently knew no English, and his French was probably rusty. I could see, however, that he was engaged in composing an opening sentence, and, at ten paces distance, he halted, and demanded in a voice of suspicion :

“ OÙ allons les messieurs ? ”

“ Videk,” I said, turning to my Frenchman, “ explain to the gentleman who we are.”

Videk explained, whereupon our interlocutor saluted and withdrew with the excuse that he had received orders to interrogate the passengers in all cars. It was a matter of duty. We watched him mount his bullock-cart slowly and disappear down the lane.

Sometimes the sentry at the line of demarcation demands your *Légitimation*, and refuses passage until he receives a direct order from his corporal, who explains sturdily, “ Brother Captain, the man has received an order.” Sometimes the car is halted in the middle of a steep hill by one of these zealous custodians,

and, the brakes refusing to work, it slips to the bottom, and is in imminent danger of catastrophe. The sentry looks anxious but determined until the corporal appears, salutes and explains, "Brother Captain, the man has received an order." You point out mildly that the middle of a hill is scarcely the most convenient place to stop a car, and suggest that, in future, the man be placed either at the foot or the top of it ; but the corporal looks dubious. He, too, had "received an order." You pass the same spot a quarter of an hour later, and, again, the same thing occurs. The corporal appears ; you threaten to report the matter, but the man had "received an order." Admirable indeed this sense of discipline, but this literal interpretation of the law by no means invariably makes for the harmony of the spheres.

The patriotism of the Czech is different in kind from that of the Pole. The latter has an aristocratic tradition and an instinctive respect for birth ; the former has come into the world with no powerful relation to help him, with no particular heredity, with no particular pride of family, but with a firm belief in self-help and in his own destiny. The Czech is by instinct the bourgeois ; the Pole, the aristocrat ; the Czech is the self-made man who possesses no other asset than

character, brains, and industry ; the Pole is the gentleman born, who has once more come into his lands after a long period of attainder. There are some who argue that the past history of a country is an index of its future. The Czech looks forward with eyes set towards the West where his goal lies.

Colonel Walsh arrived on the 10th, accompanied by Mr. Howe, the new American Delegate, who is replacing Mr. Coolidge. Walsh is a quiet spoken Irishman, a soldier by profession, a sapper by choice, with little French and less German, and is in a thousand ways a contrast to Coulson, who is shortly proceeding to Prague as Military Attaché. Walsh is more laborious over detail than Coulson, who arrived at his conclusions by a sort of intuitive method. Coulson saw the droll and comic side of mankind, without bitterness and without cynicism, and, possessing the saving grace of humour, he was able to laugh at himself as well as at others. Howe is a delightful international American ; an architect by profession, a linguist, witty in conversation, and with a facile pencil for humorous caricature. Du Bois was a conscientious, hard-working official, who could deal with facts and figures with admirable precision, but incapable of handling a matter of theoretical interest. He laboured under the delusion, common to men of his

type, that the most complex questions could be settled by a heart to heart talk, and that he alone possessed the secret of true diplomacy. His chief tactical fault was "lobbying." "Guess," he would say, "if you would send me down to those miners and allow me to run this show on sound Amurrican democratic principles, with no interference from this darned Commission, I'd guarantee to solve this problem which is troubling all you boys in a week. Send along a good, sound Amurrican business man; he'll show you how to run things properly, I guess": which was precisely the game the subtle German wished the Commission to play.

A couple of evenings later, Colonel Walsh, Backovský, and myself, motored across to Mâhrish Ostrau to attend a Czech banquet in the *Hotel National*, where we were received by Commandant Blaha, Jelínek, and other Czech notables. The dinner was admirably cooked and dainty, and the wines, as usual, beyond praise. The following was the menu:—

Consommé au foi à la riz.
 Œufs à la turque.
 Filet de veau aux champignons.
 Pommes de terre hachée, salade.
 Confitures.
 Poudding aux amendes.
 Oranges.
 Mocca.

The wine list was as follows :—

Cognac.
Kontuszowka.
Crème de cumin.
Vin de Mosel.
Vin Muskat.
Champagne Cossé, Epernay.

During the meal we were entertained by the Garrison band, and by a choir of male voices, which sang a selection of Czech National and Folk songs :—

1. J. C. Drahlovský : Má vlast je maličká, muž. sbor.
Zpívá Ostravské pěvecké sdružení.
(" My Native Country is but small." Male Choir.)
(Sung by the Ostravian Singing Club.)
2. K. Bendl : Svoji k svému, muž. sbor.
Zpívá Ostravské pěvecké sdružení.
(" Compatriots, let us support one another.")
(Sung by the Ostravian Singing Club.)
3. B. Smetana : Vyzvání, z pozůstalých písní.
(" Invitation." From posthumous songs.)
4. K. Bendl. : V nejistotě. . . .
Zpívá V. Baran, člen Ostrav. pěv. sdružení.
(" Uncertainty.")
(Sung by V. Baran, member of the Ostravian Singing Club.)
5. K. Palla : České tance II.
(1. Kaplan. 2. Cibulička. 3. Okročák) muž. sbory.
(Zpívá Ostravské pěvecké sdružení.)
(Bohemian Dances II.)
(1. Kaplan (chaplain). 2. Cibulička (little onion).)
(3. Okročák (kind of dance). Male choirs.)
(Sung by the Ostravian Singing Club.)

6. B. Pokorný : Slovácké písň, muž. sbory.
 Zpívá Ostravské pěvecké sdružení.
 (Slovak Songs. Male choirs.)
 (Sung by the same.)

The usual speeches were delivered in English and Czech, and translated for the benefit of the company by Jelínek, and a queer old Professor who entertained us with an endless narrative of his early adventures in the bars and in the streets of London, half a century ago. The impression the droll old gentleman conveyed was that he had by no means confined his society exclusively to the aristocracy and the gentry of the Realm, but that he had, in fact, during his residence in the English metropolis, selected his acquaintance from among a circle of very queer characters indeed.

“ Sir,” I said to him, during a pause in his partially finished serial, “ from what you have just told me I gather that your acquaintance with London must have been both extensive and peculiar.”

“ Ah, yes, I weel tell you. It was vairy expenseev leeving in London. It has cost me much money.”

I tried again.

“ Were you living alone in London ? ” I inquired politely.

“ When I was leeving in London I was leeving with a wooman—a Scottish, who was keeping lodgers. I was a vairy yong man who was geeving lessons een Eenglish.”

I felt decidedly interested.

“ I was geeving lessons een Eenglish in the Mathematick, but I had not any pupeels.”

“ I should imagine, sir, that under these circumstances you must have found the profession of teaching a lucrative one.”

He looked puzzled, but brightening up he continued :

“ When I was leeving in London, sare, I ’av dronk much Scotch wheesky.”

On reflection I mentally decided that this was possible.

“ Do you know, sare, it has happened to me once in London, when I was walking in the street alone, a yong lady has come up to me, and she has asked, ‘ Weel you geve me a dreenk, please, sare ? ’ and when I ’ave said, ‘ My dear, do you theenk I am a pomp ? ’ she became quite angry and has called me by vairy many names and has gone away. But I weel tell you, sare, one Sondag as I was returning from the contry I ’ave found all the ’otels were closed and I would eat zometheeng, but one man with wheech I ’ave spoken has said to me, ‘ Sare, eef I was to geeve you one leetle dreenk I

should be 'evily ponished. Go way, sare.' And then, I 'ave heard seenging in a beelding, and as I was looking een at the door a man like a soldier has said to me, ' Weel you be safed, sare? Eef so, weel you please to com eenside.' There was many people in the beelding who were all shouting, but there were many who were eating at a table and dreinking café, and when I 'ave seen this I 'ave said to the soldier, ' Eef you weel saf me, first you must geeve to me sometheeng to eat.' ' Poor man,' he said, geeving me one book and a number of leetle books, ' you most be 'ungry.' And then a lady has spoken and the people 'ave all shouted again and some of them 'ave cried. When I 'ave feenished eating I said, ' Now I weel go eef you weel say to me 'ow much eet has cost.' ' It has cost nothing,' he said, ' bot eef you weel now go away you most first take the books and come once more when you 'ave read them.' I 'ave geeven the books to a poor man who has asked me for a copper and 'ave told to him that eef he would read them he could go and 'ave the meal himself. I do not onderstand the Eenglish releegion. Eet ees very fonny. But now," noticing that I had finished my cigar, " you weel smoke another ceegar," offering me one.

I thanked him and lighted it.

“And now I weel tell you, sare,” he continued.

“One moment, sir,” I said, interrupting him, “I am sure the Colonel will be charmed to hear your interesting reminiscences. Colonel, this gentleman has just been regaling me with the most delightful stories of London. I am sure you would like to hear some of them yourself.”

“I was telling the captain,” I heard him say, “that when I was leeving in London I haf dronk——”

I saw the colonel squirm, but, nevertheless, he had to hear him to the end.

They were a heavy-browed, stolid-looking lot of men, our hosts, in every variety of dress and undress, varying from evening dress to frock-coat and lounge suits, who devoted more attention to the pleasures of the table than to the feast of reason and the flow of soul. As the evening wore on, grave crop-headed councillors, prominent Socialist leaders, giants from the local *Sokols* gradually unbent and lost their self-consciousness until the dingy hall rang with guttural laugh and joke. Men talked English and French and Italian as if suddenly endowed with the gift of tongues, became intimate, affectionate, familiar, confiding. The entire atmosphere was different

from that of a similar function in Poland ; it is a matter of temperament and natural disposition. The Czech is deliberately and of set purpose bourgeois ; it is his pride and his ambition to be bourgeois. He justifies his claim as follows. " We have no Royal Line ; we have no native aristocracy. Our so-called aristocracy is an intrusive race of German invaders, who first murdered our nobles and afterwards stole their lands. Their sole interest in their estates was to extract their rents, which, until the war, they were in the habit of squandering in Vienna, Paris, and London. They recognize, as their natural head, Hapsburg Karl ; they are the boon companions of the Austrian and German aristocracy who are anti-Czech ; they are reactionary, and, consequently, not merely a potential but an actual menace to the security and well-being of the State. We have little to look for from the goodwill of the hereditary hangers-on of vanished Austrian Kaiserdom, and must find our leaders and rulers and thinkers among the ranks of the bourgeoisie." Having, therefore, nothing to look to higher than himself, the Czech diplomat possesses, in marked degree, both the virtues and the defects of the bourgeoisie. The Pole selects his diplomatic representatives from among his

native Warsaw aristocracy, who represent the highest social and cultured classes of his country.

At midnight we took our departure. The night was cold and clear, the sentries on the alert, but we passed through the lines unchallenged. There was a whiff of late lying snow from the hills, the wind was snell and keen, and there was a nip of frost in the spring air. The roads were firm and hard and white, as with the dust of midsummer.

April 18th.

Deputation of Polish Miners received, introduced by Count Puslowski. When the men had arranged themselves around the table, they were requested to state their grievances. Their leader, a big, black-eyed fellow, with dark tangled hair over his forehead, immediately began talking in Polish with extraordinary fire and rapidity. Puslowski translated the gist of his remarks into French. At first his companions maintained an uneasy silence, but as their leader proceeded he was constantly interrupted and the tide of passion gradually rose, until it was with difficulty that he was able to proceed. At times the excited voices rose almost to a shriek. The burden of their complaint was that the Czech soldiers

at the pit-heads subjected the miners to constant threats, taunts, and insults ; that every hindrance was placed in the way of free circulation between the pits where the miners worked and their homes ; that the Guards were in the habit of lounging and smoking about the pit-shafts and of firing their rifles to the constant danger of the local population. "Should the mines be given to the Czechs," the leader declared passionately, "we shall feel that we have been sold for gold like so many chattels, and sooner than submit to this we swear to destroy the pits, to wreck the machinery, to dynamite the railway bridges, and to introduce Bolshevism and chaos." This delivery was accompanied by fierce shouts from his sombre, dark-eyed companions who formed his background.

There was something sinister in the passion of these men. One was unconsciously impressed by their sincerity and earnestness, and the vast elemental dissatisfaction in their souls. Their plaint was the pitiful cry of manhood in chains, fearing lest their birth-right should be sold for a mess of pottage, and, looking into the depths for a moment, one understood the unrest which was goading them into rebellion against the established order of things.

We could only counsel patience and forbearance, and when all had said their say we shook their grimy hands as they passed noisily out.

April 19th.

The Feast of the Resurrection. The Pole is nothing if not religious—if not in the inner spiritual sense, at least in the external observance of the rites of his faith. The Church is part of his political and spiritual constitution; it bulks largely in his thinking, in his business, in his public and private life. In Poland, military ceremonial is invariably associated with the religious; and the strict observance of feast days of Saints is in keeping with a mentality, which is in certain aspects almost mediæval. It is not, however, a mere superficial characteristic, but is deeply ingrained in the national character, especially among the poorer classes. On the occasion of such festivals, the churches are thronged by crowds of the devout.

Solemn Field Mass at the Barracks, in the morning, was followed by the usual Grand Parade and march past of the troops. In the afternoon, Solemn High Mass was celebrated in the town church, at which the local clergy, the municipal authorities and the officers of

the garrison assisted. It was an imposing spectacle ; the thronged church ; the brilliant vestments of the clergy ; the sombre grey uniforms of the military ; the dark tunics of the police ; the pale faces of the people showing dimly in the semi-obscurity. After the elevation of the Host the congregation adjourned to the Square behind the church where an impressive procession was formed. The clergy, preceded by acolytes with swinging censers and followed by the *Baldachin* and a crowd of poor Polish workpeople, chanting from their prayer-books, moved slowly round the Square, and the kneeling people were solemnly blessed. When the procession had re-entered the church, a squad of infantry fired three volleys into the air while the elaborate and mystical service was continued inside. The jangling bells, the melancholy and tuneless chanting of the women, the jingling of harness, the steady tramp of troops, the firing and the murmur of the curious crowds, produced on the mind a curious effect of unreality and confusion.

At the conclusion of the religious ceremony we adjourned to the Square, where once again the troops goose-stepped past General Latinek and his Staff, and we took the salute. Then we hurried into the *Brauner Hirsch* and had tea.

April 21st.

The Entente Commission has been christened, by the wits of the town, the "Ente Confusion" (Confusion of Ducks), but the fact remains that these same gentry would, if necessary, go a long distance out of their way to persuade us to remain, if they imagined for one moment that we were packing up our traps with a view to taking our departure. Our very ignorance of local conditions compels us to rely very largely on our own common sense. Our reliance on common sense is in itself a guarantee that we are unbiased; and to be unbiased goes a long way towards being trusted. The truth is that, if Teschen is not entirely essential to the welfare of the Commission, the Commission is, on the other hand, essential to the welfare of Teschen.

In theory, the main task of the Commission is to ensure that the conditions of the Treaty of Paris are carried out; in actual practice, it is to compose local differences between Czech and Pole. Both sides are mutually recriminatory, but difficulties are, for the most part, raised by the Czechs, who are not merely obstinate, but too frequently obstructionist. Their irritation is perhaps natural under the circumstances. The master mind on the Czech side is Colonel Snejdarek, a French

Colonial officer, who, besides commanding the Czech troops in the Teschen sector, has assumed administrative control within the occupied territory. Snejdarek is a strong man of outstanding ability who, through long dealing with Arabs and such gentry, has acquired a subtlety and resource in argument which is difficult to counter, and impossible to get the better of. He is a capable organizer, and impresses one as a good soldier, a man of decision, intelligence, and great force of character. He is attractive in manner and courteous in address, the type of man who, if he once gives his word, leaves one with the comfortable assurance that it will be carried out to the letter. Now, the Commission has a higher respect for his ability, admiration for his capacity has increased, but it has lost faith somewhat in its own powers of discernment. Snejdarek is, undoubtedly, a master mind, and whatever tune he chooses to pipe the others will dance to.

General Latinek is, in every way, a contrast to the Czech commander. He is a little man of middle age, who fails, somehow, to impress on a first interview. One might apply to him the epithet *gemütlich*—a word which has a friendly but not an entirely complimentary meaning. On further acquaintance one

realizes that his agreeable and complacent exterior conceals a will of iron, and one is not surprised to hear that he bears the reputation of being a rigid disciplinarian, strict even to harshness. He talks German very slowly and deliberately, and has a habit, in conversation, of putting his head on one side deprecatingly, and spreading out his hands as if to ward something off. He enjoys good company, and when animated has a pretty wit of his own. On one occasion we invited the two commanders to lunch, when the contrast between them was a supremely interesting study. They joked with each other heartily, and were apparently on the best of terms imaginable.

“Colonel,” said General Latinek, speaking in German, “I have a favour to ask of you.”

“And that is, general?”

“That you grant me five days’ leave to enable me to go to Cracow to get a new uniform, because on the last occasion of your visit here I went away in such a hurry that I had to leave all my wardrobe behind me, and have only the uniform I stand up in.”

Snejdarek laughed heartily at the allusion to his recent exploit.

“Certainly, general,” he replied, “but on one condition—that you grant me at the same time five days’ leave to visit my wife in Paris.”

“And meanwhile, colonel, à votre santé.”

“À votre santé,” said the colonel, raising his glass at the same time.

The tradition and training of the two commanders are as different as can be imagined. Snejdarek, the colonial, trained in and inured to the hardships of Arab warfare and the desert, accustomed to administer justice and maintain order with an iron hand; Latinek, the Austrian soldier, trained in the school of Continental warfare, the diplomat, the courtier, the man of the world. If the latter fails to impress one as a man of the supreme ability of Snejdarek, the fact that he has been selected to command the Polish troops on the Silesian front is sufficient proof that he enjoys the confidence of his superiors. At the present moment he is handicapped, not merely from a tactical point of view, but by inadequate resources and insufficient reserves.

April 25th.

On the 20th, Coulson, Tarnowski, and Günther went on invitation to Cracow, where two days later Pindor and myself joined them. In the evening the whole party left for Warsaw on a semi-official visit. We were escorted to the station by Kurnikowski, who is shortly proceeding to America, and by Görski, who is

presently for Paris. The carriage which had been allotted for our use was draughty and unheated, and we had to make what shift we could with the blankets with which we were provided and our British warmers. We slept little, and towards morning the cold reached a pitch of intensity which rendered sleep an impossibility. It was snowing, and the storm continued until we were close to the Polish capital, when it was succeeded by a keen penetrating wind, with a touch of rawness in it, and the threatening of a thaw. The surfacemen, in their thick coats and heavy fur caps, huddled shiveringly together, beating numbed hands; our Polish guards pulled their great-coats more closely about them, and stamped up and down the corridor half frozen. The country looked bleak and desolate. The late snow, insufficient to cover the ground completely, had sprinkled the roads and fields, and powdered the dark fir woods, and left the tops of the low undulating hills black and bare; the villages we passed looked grey and deserted, and the few people we saw in them clung to the shelter of the walls, unwilling to be exposed to the blast. We were unkempt, unshaven, and foodless, and it was a blue-nosed shivering little company which descended stiffly when the train drew up in the station at Warsaw.

But, indeed, this melancholy is characteristic of the country ; it has reacted on the Polish national character ; for the Poles, despite their superficial gaiety, impress one as a melancholy people, whose wistful sadness is constantly reflected in their literature and their art. One finds the keynote in the poetry of Zygmunt Krasinski, whose intense nationalism and profound mysticism express the dominant characteristics of the national temperament :

“ We are the children of a mother slain,
 We who never have beheld
 How the light in mother’s eyes
 Shines as an angel’s on her child.
 Pray with me, oh, sister mine,
 Pray, kneel in humility.
 Gaze on high with piercing boldness
 As the orphaned child may gaze,
 Look upon that harp unending,
 Where the moon, the stars, the suns,
 Cling as keys all motionless.
 From its depths and highest summits
 Strings of light and strings of azure
 Quiver, stretched to space unmeasured.
 O’er those strings the spirit wanders,
 On those strings the spirit playeth,
 In that song alone it resteth ;
 That song—earth’s harmony and peace.

For so may weak men win to spiritual consolation, to the peace of God which passeth understanding. But there is more that the

poet would pray for—the restoration of the lost name of Poland :

“ When I spoke thus thou wert kneeling,
 Wailing with thy harp’s stringed wailing ;
 For thou leanedst thy snow-white forehead
 On the strings the moon made shiver
 All around in streams of gold.
 And thus kneeling thou wert sighing.
 Pray, oh, sister, with thy sighing.
 God knows well that in this day
 Sighing is thy country’s name.”

So speaks this great Polish teacher, and
 “ He who speaks truth to an unhappy nation
 is her noblest son, for he brings her life.”

One is conscious of this basal melancholy in the work of the Polish painters. There is a tragic background in Matejko’s *Kosciuszko at Raclawice* ; in Grottger’s *Waldgeist* with its sense of the Forest primeval and its mysterious haunting spirits ; in Chemonski’s *Viergespann* with its melancholy landscape, its wind-bent trees, and the dark puddles on the broad plashed roads ; it is a sadness which is too deeply ingrained in the Polish national character to be lightly thrown off ; it is the sadness of a people which has missed its destiny.

At Cracow, on the occasion of our first visit with Puslowski, we had been received at the station by the military authorities as the visit was an official one. There was much hand-

shaking and interchange of compliments ; much clicking of heels and presentations, but, as the military had not the least idea as to who we were, or why they had been summoned, and as we had no idea why the military were present, or what the proper thing was to do under the circumstances, the formalities were ludicrous and a waste of time. When, however, the ceremony was concluded, we were conducted to the cars which had been placed at our disposal and driven to our respective lodgings. The subsequent proceedings were on a similar grandiose scale. In Warsaw there was no formal reception at the station, and, owing to the press of travellers, considerable difficulty was experienced in procuring droshkies sufficient to contain the whole party. When, however, we had been accommodated, after much wrangling and shouting, we drove to the Hotel Bristol, which is the headquarters of the numerous missions, military, diplomatic and economic, itinerant and otherwise, of the various nationalities which at the moment inundated the town.

Warsaw, the political and administrative centre of Poland, possesses neither the historic interest of Cracow nor the romantic beauty of Prague ; it lacks the aloofness of Cracow and the fascination of the Czech capital. Warsaw

is modern, and yet one misses the rush and bustle of modern cities ; it is alert, but not wholly alive ; a clean city with progressive ideas, but hampered by its immediate past. Outward traces of the Russian domination are being eliminated with all possible speed ; but it has left its mark on the mentality of the people. The city is almost exotic ; it is Russian, it is Jewish, it is in a sense international, but it is not essentially Polish. Warsaw, we might say, is a town, not in its first youth, which looks forward to a business career with occasional periods of intellectual relaxation ; it is more practical, more up-to-date, more modern in spirit than Cracow, more mundane, more material. It has life, vigour, energy. Cracow has merely dead memories.

Warsaw possesses fine gardens ; the Ujazdovsk and the Jerusalem boulevard are particularly impressive ; the Cathedral of St. John dates from 1360. In 1605 Warsaw superseded Cracow as the capital of Poland ; it was captured by the Swedes in 1655 and 1656 ; by the Russians in 1764 and 1794, and in 1813 came entirely under Russian rule. During 1905-1906 the city was the scene of much bloodshed, but, at the present moment, except for the bridge across the Vistula, which was destroyed by the retreating Germans, the town

bears no outward or visible signs of war. As in Cracow, beggars abound ; but they are less intrusive, less insistent, less sure of their social status. The merriest ragamuffins of all are the newsvendors, who leap on to the step of your carriage and cling to the door with their bundle of papers beneath their arms and hurl their jests at you in their picturesque argot, mocking, tantalizing, good-humoured, persistent. The stolid droshky drivers, with their numbers stamped on little yellow gilt metal plates, which dangle comically from beneath their sheepskin collars behind, crack their whips noisily and steer their rickety conveyances along the car-lines and shout weird uncouth cries to the unwary pedestrian. Heavy jowled, thick-set fellows these, in sheepskins, who sleep stolidly for hours on their mountainous ragged box-seats, in the oddest of positions imaginable. The majority of the conveyances one sees in the streets are horse conveyances, which gives the town in consequence an old-fashioned air. Warsaw is quiet, as, owing to scarcity of coal, many of the factories have been unable to start work, and business is in a state of stagnation ; it is dull for the pleasure seeker, because by 11 p.m. all cafés must be closed and all good cits indoors under pain of arrest, if found on the

streets after that hour without a special pass.

The hotels were filled with Russian and Polish refugees, many of whom have lost their entire worldly possessions, and were living on the proceeds of any valuables or family jewels they were able to save in their flight. The entrance hall of the *Bristol* was thronged with a motley crowd of these unfortunates; with exquisitely groomed Polish cavalymen; with French officers in light blue and scarlet *képis*; with Italians in flowing cloaks; with drab uniformed Americans, and English; with Russian princes and princelets with their attendant spouses and families; with city men in lounge suits, and cosmopolitans from the countries of the Entente. We sat for a time in the lounge, watching the scene, and breakfasted off scrambled eggs, rolls, fresh butter, and coffee.

And then, suddenly, Rawlings appeared.

Now when Rawlings appears care packs up and flies out of window. One can go nowhere in Austria or Hungary or Poland or Bohemia without either meeting R. or hearing about him. He is either in the town or is just coming, or has just gone. His name is a sort of Open Sesame, a guarantee that you are a good fellow yourself if you know R. In Cracow, people

whom I met would shake my hand and immediately ask, "Do you know Commander Rawlings?" And, when I said I did, we would smile on one another in a kindly fashion, and immediately become fast friends. It was the same in Prague, in Teschen, and in Warsaw. Unfortunately, on this occasion, he was leaving in a few moments for Vienna. But he had time to say, "Laddie, have one," and we did.

The *Bristol* is not a handsome hotel, but it is the best in Warsaw, and comfortable. It possesses a buffet where, if one is so inclined, one may have the most delightful snacks and old sherry before lunch. Food is both abundant in quantity and excellent in quality, and one may obtain practically anything one desires. Butter is abundant, white bread is everywhere procurable, and meat is to be obtained in considerable variety. Good and cheap wines are more difficult to procure, but light beer is plentiful, and the Polish national liqueurs are sold in every café and wineshop. The cost of living is, in general, high, but one can make an excellent meal of soup, two meat dishes, dessert, and coffee more cheaply than in Prague or Vienna. In the Fukier cellars—the oldest and finest in the world—we drank Tokay seventy years old, and were shown wine in queer, cobwebbed, crinoline-shaped bottles,

which had been bottled during the reign of James I. It is impossible, however, for the stranger to obtain any of this latter wine, as every bottle has been allotted to the Polish aristocracy, and is produced only on occasions of particular importance in their domestic history. The album, which Monsieur Fukier presented to us for our autographs, contains not only pen and pencil sketches by some of the most distinguished modern Polish artists, but, in addition, the signatures of all the most famous soldiers and statesmen and rulers of the Central Empires. The cellars, encrusted with mushrooms, caked and hoar with age, and of extraordinary depth and solidity, presented a wonderful sight as we went stumbling from vault to vault, along twisted passages, hewn in the solid rock, lighted by a solitary candle, carried by our host Monsieur Fukier, who preceded us, and acted as cicerone. In one respect, Warsaw proved disappointing; we had been told that the town possessed the most beautiful women in Europe. We met many brilliant women in aristocratic, business, and artistic circles, but while they impressed by their sparkling wit and the vivacity of their intellectual powers, we remained unaffected by their beauty. They were graceful, charming, elegant; but perhaps we had been led to

believe that we were to make the acquaintance of the super-beautiful—and we were disappointed.

We visited the Palace of the weak, but artistic, Stanislaus Augustus, the last of the Polish Kings, who resigned his crown at Grodno on April 25th, 1795, when the final partition of the country took place. The custodian who answered our ring, after repeated summons, opened the door grudgingly a few inches, held parley with Günther, and at first peremptorily refused us admission. He was a very old doddering custodian, a toothless old servitor, obdurate and pig-headed, and trembling with the dotage of age. At length, after much energetic expostulation, he looked fearfully around at the strollers in the park, at our coachman, who was slowly walking his horses up and down, opened the door a few inches further, and, having admitted us, closed it with startling rapidity. He motioned to us to draw on the felt slippers which visitors are requested to wear, and, thus equipped, we shambled along the polished floor and visited the living-rooms of vanished royalty. The Palace is an imitation Versailles, the rooms and gardens being planned after that model. We visited the suite of rooms occupied by the late Czar, and admired the plenishings, the artistic

decoration, and the paintings. Many of these latter had been removed by the Russians and their empty frames stared down on us pathetically, like a giant eye that had been torn out. Our ancient guide shuffled along behind us, watching us nervously and mumbling the history of each separate room, in rapid and, to me, wholly unintelligible Polish. When we had completed our tour he led us back to the door, where we disencumbered ourselves of our slippers, and, having excused himself for his apparent lack of cordiality on some plea or other, he accepted a *pourboire*, opened the door again stealthily, and dismissed us with all expedition and outward sign of relief.

While we were in Warsaw the army of General Haller arrived, and was passed in review. The troops, clad in the blue uniforms of the French infantry, with steel helmets, rifle, bayonet, and equipment of the French army, presented a magnificent appearance, and roused immense enthusiasm among the cheering crowds who lined the streets. Officers and men alike impressed by their smartness, their physique, and their businesslike appearance. The French uniform is everywhere in evidence in Warsaw. When General Haller addressed the troops after the parade, he was surrounded by a brilliantly uniformed staff in French

uniforms ; he wore French uniform himself, and the *Croix de guerre*, his sole distinction from an officer of that army being a heavily braided lancer-like Polish cap. The officers of the other Allied nations were little in evidence. Indeed, the uniforms of the Entente are little known among the people. Günther asked a couple of staring lads if they knew of what nationality we were. "French," was the prompt reply. "Try again," said Günther. "Russians." "And now, try once more." "Germans !"

The Polish officer is the politest creature in the world. He salutes the company when he enters a café or a room with a graceful and comprehensive bow ; he kisses the hand of his hostess, of every lady with whom he is acquainted, or to whom he is introduced ; he presents himself to you, announces his name, salutes, bows, and gives you his hand. He does the same when he leaves the company. His manners are courteous, elegant, refined even to exaggeration, but there is one important respect in which he differs from ourselves, and that is on the question of shaving. If there is one thing about which the English soldier is fastidious, it is shaving. To appear unshaved on parade, or in public, is one of the unpardonable sins. But with the Polish officer, as with

the Czech, the matter is otherwise ; to appear unshaven implies no reproach. When the Polish Minister of War, General Leśniewski, inspected the troops and barracks in Teschen, and afterwards delivered a speech at the banquet in his honour, he had not shaved. It might have been urged by way of excuse that he had been travelling for a couple of days and had little time for shaving. But there was no occasion to make any defence on his behalf ; the matter passed without the slightest comment. One can, however, hardly imagine a British Secretary of State for War reviewing his troops, or delivering a speech at a public banquet, with a two days' growth of beard on his face.

In Warsaw they are keen politicians, but, as society there is more cosmopolitan than in Cracow, social and political questions are discussed in a more liberal and broad-minded spirit. On the evening of our arrival we were invited to a *soirée* by Countess Potocka, when a large and distinguished company was present. Among others we made the acquaintance of Countess Elizabeth Potocka, Prince and Princess Jannusz-Radziwill, Princess Olga Radziwill, Princess Czetwertynska, and Count Gotuchowski, formerly Austrian Foreign Minister, a picturesque old man of the old

school of diplomacy. We played Bridge and talked; at 10.30 coffee and biscuits were served, and a few minutes before 11 we took our departure. The following day we lunched with Countess Raczynska, a cultured and charming old lady, the owner of one of the most wonderful palaces in Warsaw. We met there Princess Sapieha, Count Charles Raczynski and his wife, Countess Helen Potocka, our hostess of the previous evening, Madame Hausner, Mademoiselle Tyrzkiewicz, and a number of other distinguished people. As in Cracow, the table talk was of high excellence, the subjects ranging from Spiritualism to the choice of wine, from Shaw to Mickiewicz. At lunch we drank some rare old Tokay and some excellent cognac. We enjoyed, too, real coffee. In the evening we dined at the Jäger Club, on the invitation of Count Przizdrecchi, Chief of Protocol in the Foreign Office, Monsieur Goldstand and another friend, both of the Foreign Office. Our hosts had been educated at Eton and Oxford. After dinner we made the acquaintance of a number of the more notable Polish sportsmen. On the following day we lunched at the Club again, when Count Gotuchowski declared, "There can be no Teschen question for us, we shall never give it up." In our

modesty we had imagined that no one had heard of the Teschen question in Warsaw, but we found to our astonishment that the problems of Teschen and of Danzig were the two political questions which, at the moment, were chiefly agitating the Polish Foreign Office.

We lunched and dined with various other hosts, and were everywhere impressed, not merely by the warmth of our reception, but by the elegance of our entertainment. The Poles are the most delightful and courteous hosts in the world. But there were occasions when we heard the Government sharply criticized, and the doubt expressed as to whether the Polish people were capable of the successful application of the principle of self-government. I met one of these critics at a gathering of artistic people at tea. The critic in question was a little dark-eyed, black-haired woman, the type one would have at once characterized before the war as an intellectual revolutionary. She was a singer by profession and spoke English perfectly.

“I need hardly ask you,” she said, “how you like Warsaw, for, of course, in common politeness you could only give me one answer. It is unfortunate that your stay in town is so short, for you will take away a number of false

impressions of Polish society, as, of course, the people you have met here are only representative of their own class and that only partially so."

"I am afraid, madame," I replied, "that the people in England labour under many misconceptions about the Poles just as the Poles do about the English. I remember when I was a student in Giessen University a young Polish woman student from Warsaw asked me whether I was English. When I said no, she ventured, 'Irish.' Again I said no. Then she ventured timidly, 'Perhaps you are Scotch.' I admitted this failing, whereupon she said, 'Ah, poor monsieur, and are you in Scotland very much oppressed by the English?'"

She laughed.

"Ah, that was, however, you must remember, before I had been either in England or America. Yes, I remember the conversation quite well, although I saw that you had quite forgotten me. We were a hotbed of revolutionaries those days, Grün and others. We used to meet in a room in the Stephanstrasse, No. 32, beneath you, on the same floor where the chemist lived with his fat mistress. How they used to quarrel, these two! I remember one night he beat her, and her screams brought down the engine-driver who

lived above us. Anyhow, your anecdote simply supports my contention with this difference, that I had never been in England, but had read a lot about the country and formed my own opinion about the people, while you have been in Poland and have seen the people and have read nothing about the country. May I ask where you normally live ? ”

“ Madame, the other day I found that my batman had given his address as ‘ Teschen, Poland,’ and I had to caution him not to interfere in matters of high politics. ‘ W’y, ain’t we ’ere in Poland, sir ? ’ he asked in surprise. ‘ Ain’t them all Poles ’ere ? ’ ‘ They are, P.,’ I said. ‘ Then, ’ow is it we aren’t in Poland, sir ? ’ ‘ P.,’ I said, ‘ you see that fat fellow there in the street who, I have no doubt, will be hung some day ? He’s a German. Why is it, then, we aren’t in Germany ? No one knows where Teschen is. You don’t know, I don’t know, nobody knows.’ ”

“ I am quite clear on the matter now,” she answered with a laugh. “ You are discretion itself, but, tell me, are you interested in revolutions ? ”

“ Last time I was home, a Scotch friend of mine said to me, ‘ I doot you have been affecked wi’ they Boslevik views ’ ; but that, of course, is neither here nor there. May I

ask, however, before answering your question, what particular bearing the query has on the subject under discussion—if any——”

“Because,” she said simply, “we need a revolution in Poland.”

“I was under the impression,” I said mildly, “but, of course, I may be mistaken, that your country has recently been passing through something of that nature. I have myself never been able to see exactly what particular good is done by revolutions. They seem to me to be simply a change from one system of misgovernment to another. They are, besides, in my opinion, very often unjustifiable. The Irish rebellion, for example.”

“Ah. But you must remember that in the matter of revolutions, Ireland is a back number. That was a mere political revolution mixed up with the religious question. The kind of revolution I mean is a social revolution. Now take, for example, our Semitic problem. Here in Warsaw, in a city of 800,000 people, live 300,000 Jews who contribute more than half the communal revenue and receive in return nothing for their own communal institutions. Proportional representation is a mere theory. Out of 400 Members of Parliament at the present moment, only nine are Jews. The Jews can neither be repressed nor

assimilated. They can neither be exterminated nor forcibly emigrated to Palestine. Poland can neither exist without them nor flourish until there is a radical readjustment in the social and political relationships between themselves and the land of their adoption."

"But I understand," I replied, "that a comprehensive scheme has been formulated, whereby it is hoped to secure the recognition of the Jews in Poland, as a state minority and ensure civil equality. No scheme can be workable or acceptable which implies the principle of dual nationality in Poland. The Jewish population forms an integral portion of the State to which it belongs. It is a matter of equitable taxation and simple justice, and their first duty is to help in the task of the social reconstruction of the State of their adoption."

"I very largely blame Paderewski for the present state of affairs. He has misled the people on the Teschen question and on the question of Danzig. He has promised them too much. He should have stuck to piano-playing in America and building bad hotels in Poland. Besides, I question very much whether the Pole is capable of self-government. His past history tends to disprove this, but, of course, you are shocked to hear a good Pole talk like this."

“ Surely, madame, freedom of speech and thought are allowed in Poland. Even in England, I have occasionally heard people express mild disapproval of Mr. Lloyd George.”

“ Ah. Your Mr. Lloyd George. I only wish I could talk to him. But your Mr. Balfour—— ”

“ Mr. Balfour,” I said, “ is a Statesman, constitutionally unadapted for the *saletés* of modern politics. I once heard some one say of Mr. Balfour that he thought that man’s chief end is to invent a fresh dilemma.”

“ Splendid ! But now, after our discussion, I think you would like another cup of tea.”

“ Madame,” I said, passing my cup, “ I was thinking the same myself.”

On our return to Cracow we were entertained to lunch at the Club ; the company on this occasion including Count Tarnowski, Monsieur Zelenski, Count Myczilski, Professor of the History of Art in the University, and Monsieur Brunicki. After lunch we repaired to the *garçonnière* of Zelenski, where we were entertained by him for a couple of hours. Zelenski possesses a wonderful collection of china and art curios, and is, in addition, a musician of a very high order. We listened to Chopin and Bach, and carried away a

number of modern English authors with us. Zelenski is an interesting personality who bears a marked resemblance to Joseph Conrad, of whose works he is an admirer. He had been selected to act as guide to the ex-Kaiser Wilhelm on the two occasions on which he visited Cracow during the war, and described him as "a dignified, intelligent, impulsive individual, with a wonderful memory and a capacity for assimilating facts, but absolutely unapproachable owing to the close surveillance of his staff and his personal and confidential advisers, and consequently sadly out of touch with reality."

We took tea with Busiadechi, Prefect of Cracow, and Kurnikowski, and in the evening returned to Teschen. We felt depressed on the journey and read and slept alternately. The weather had changed during the last two days; the air was mild and spring-like; but the thought of life in Teschen lay like a weight on our spirits, and baffled any attempt at cheerfulness on our part. Not even the prospect of taking wine with Görski or drinking Schnapps with Czaczka, or talking Celtic literature with Bochinski, or politics with Piontowski was sufficient to arouse us. We were frankly bored.

May 1st.

The Commission remained indoors. As trouble was anticipated in Karwin and Freistadt between the Polish miners and the Czech soldiery, cars were held in readiness to proceed immediately to the scene of any disturbance. By 8 a.m. processions of workmen began to assemble, headed by brass bands, cyclists with enormous red ribands round their shoulders, and the spokes of their bicycles, and a host of banners bearing the usual inscriptions in Polish and German, "Down with the Capitalists," "Down with Militarism," etc. The shops in town were closed, as the wildest rumours had been circulated, which found ready credence, in the nervous and disturbed state of public feeling.

Inflammatory and revolutionary speeches were delivered by the leaders to the patient, wearied, and dust-begrimed crowds in the Square, but, owing to the precautions taken by the Polish authorities, to cope with any disturbance, and to the promise given by the leaders of the demonstration themselves, the proceedings were orderly to a degree. The only "incident" occurred when a Polish deputy attempted to address the German portion of the crowd in German, and was promptly pushed off his perch for his pains, the audience

shouting, " We have been listening to speeches from your kind for five hours, and are tired. Let us go home. Away with him. Your speeches do not put bread in our empty bellies, neither do they interest us in the slightest." With this practical illustration of the working of brotherly love, a dull and uninteresting morning abruptly terminated. It cannot be ignored, however, that there exists a spirit of lawlessness among a large proportion of the workers, the irregular delivery of coal having resulted in frequent stoppages of work, loss of pay and hardship among the women and children.

That evening, alas, witnessed the downfall of S. S. had dined at midday not wisely, and in the course of the afternoon had retired to his room, with the intention of sleeping a little. Finding the blind drawn, he had lit the gas, and proceeded to undress under the impression that it was evening. He had taken off his coat and collar, and one of his boots ; but at this stage a doubt had crept into his mind as to whether he was actually engaged in the operation of getting up or of going to bed. He had sat down to consider this momentous question, but, drowsiness having overtaken him, he had stretched himself on the bed and, being tired, had slept a dreamless sleep until evening.

We had arranged to call for him at 7.30. At 7.15 he had awoke, risen, looked at his watch, verified the time, and proceeded to dress, when again a further doubt assailed him. His watch clearly indicated 7.15, but was this 7.15 in the morning or the evening—was he going to bed or was he getting up? It was obviously an awkward dilemma, and he was deeply pondering the problem when I entered his room. His hair was tousled, his waistcoat undone; he was holding a boot in one hand and his collar in the other, and gazing fixedly at the two objects.

“Ready?” I asked.

“*Mon capitaine*, in five minutes.”

“Aren’t you dressing?”

“Mais oui, mon capitaine, I’ve only this moment got up.”

“The colonel is waiting for you.”

“The colonel, waiting for me, at this hour; but it is too early.”

“Early?” I cried. “On the contrary, we are late already, dinner is at eight, and the journey will take us half an hour.”

“The journey!” with a look of puzzled surprise, putting down the boot carefully.

“Yes. You accepted an invitation to dinner this evening, you know. Don’t you remember?”

“Oui, mon capitaine,” with a smile of comprehension, “mais c’est pour ce soir.”

“Precisely,” I said, “for this evening. Well, this *is* the evening, isn’t it?”

“Mais non, mon capitaine, vous vous-trompez c’est le matin, ce n’est pas le soir. Look,” he said, pulling out his watch, “7.25. I’m only getting up yet.”

“Astounding,” I said in my turn. “The colonel must have made a most extraordinary mistake.”

“*Mon capitaine*,” he said patiently, “I assure you, the colonel has made an astounding mistake.”

“I must tell him at once,” I said, backing towards the door. “It is most incomprehensible.”

“*Mon capitaine*,” he repeated, picking up the boot and following me on to the landing, “make my excuses to the colonel, and tell him it is in the evening we dine.”

“I’ll tell the colonel,” I cried from the foot of the stairs. “Yes, yes, of course, it’s for this evening, how stupid of him.”

He was still talking across the banisters when I joined the colonel.

“Colonel,” I said, “we are late.”

“And S.?” he asked.

“Can’t decide whether he is getting up

or going to bed. Swears it's morning, because he has the gas burning and the blind down. Showed me a boot he had in his hand, as a proof of it. He seems to think everybody is drunk, except himself. He's coming round in the course of the day to ask for you, and has promised to dine with you in the evening."

"Hopeless, I suppose."

"Quite," I said.

"Then let's drive on."

"Drive on," I said to the chauffeur.

P. has gone home to be demobilized, travelling to Paris in charge of Puslowski. The Army has been his world; he has been clothed and fed by the Army, paid by the Army, married by the Army, sent to the ends of the earth by the Army, done his campaigns, his fatigues, his tiresome marches in the Army; he has taken his pleasure in the Army, and grown middle-aged in the Army, and now, with a trifling pension, a wife and a family, with a confused picture in his brain of barracks and canteens and regimental sergeant-majors, he is, at his own request, being bundled into civilian clothes and trundled from his home of a quarter of a century, and the gates locked and bolted behind him, with no knowledge of any trade, and without the slightest idea as to how to set about earning a livelihood.

“ I’ve served me time, sir,” he told me, “ and I’m entitled to my discharge.”

“ Have you any idea what you mean to do when you are discharged ? ” I asked him.

“ No, sir ; but I reckon it’s like this ’ere, sir, if I don’t get out of the Army now, there’ll be no jobs left for the likes o’ me when I do get me discharge. I want to go ’ome to my missus, and the kiddies, sir. The Army ain’t no more good to me now, sir. It’s not like as if I was a young man, sir, I’m not. The Army ain’t w’ot it used to be like when I first joined up, sir. I don’t ’old wi’ them new-fangled ways o’ doing things. W’y, sir, them young boys as one sees, them orderlies, they speaks to an officer like, w’y, sir, I wouldn’t have the face to do it, not for one minute, sir, not me, sir.”

So we wired to Paris. P. brushed my boots in the early morning for the last time, gathered his kit together, bundled off in a car to catch the Paris Express—and at the present moment, I wager, he is doing a six months’ refresher course somewhere, and is down for the next draft of recruits for India.

May 8th.

It is President Masaryk who is credited with the saying that “ Vienna is a town that

has always been accustomed to live on *pour-boires*." So long as the Court and the aristocracy continued to reside in Vienna, so long as Vienna continued to be the queen of musical cities, so long as crowds of students, serious and otherwise, and pleasure-seekers and gamblers and adventurers and anarchists and diplomats and the gilded youth of the Dual Monarchy continued to flock thither, the Austrian Capital enjoyed an artificial and fictitious prosperity. Now that the Emperor and his Court have gone, and the aristocracy, deprived of title and prestige, live in unobtrusive seclusion, now that the Czech has betaken himself to Prague, the Pole to Warsaw, and the Cosmopolitans have vanished to the ends of the earth, Vienna is empty, joyless, friendless, starving, and penniless. The Kaiser's palace stands empty and shuttered, with sun-stained blinds behind its dusty windows ; the Government offices are deserted or to let ; the museums are closed ; the grass grows wild in the untended gardens and squares ; the languid crowds drag moodily through the neglected parks ; and there is an absence of noise and bustle in the streets, which is almost terrifying. The Republican flag flaps above the Parliament buildings, while its National Assembly wrangles and squabbles

within its walls ; the students hang drearily about the desolate university ; maimed and disabled soldiers huddle on the pavements begging and exposing their mutilated limbs to the passers-by. Food is scarce and dear, and the only people who appear to possess abundance of money are the Hungarian refugees, whose presence adds to the phantasmagoric nightmare of life in the dead capital.

Poor Vienna, with your streets filled with strange uniforms ; with haughty Italians lord-ing it over you, and Poles and Frenchmen and Americans and British thronging your pavements ; with your shoddy National Guard and your down-at-heel ex-officers ; your aimless pleasure seekers, your silent family groups sipping weak tea and drinking weak beer in your silent cafés, alas ! how the spring has gone out of your step, and the laughter from your eyes. Gone the gay night life, for which you were at one time famed, the wide world over—its devotees driven to make mock revelry in secret haunts hidden from the Police ; silenced your bewitching music, faded the dance from your heels. When you laugh it is the laughter of tragedy ; when you dance it is as men dancing at a funeral ; when you make music it is a mockery of music, in the Courts of death. Your newsvendors

shriek their news shrilly, your passers-by purchase their papers and read their vapourings indifferently, whirling, helpless human wreckage, in the eddy of disaster. A poor, sad city, sitting in sackcloth and ashes, ground between the upper and the nether millstones, a hollow, tired city, trampled on by the foe you despised, drearily remembering past glories, with your children crying aloud for bread, a city daring not to look beyond the present, for in the present there is no future.

And still, Vienna has not entirely lost her faculty for gaiety.

In the lounge of the *Bristol* I met a man who asked me whence I came, and when I answered, "Teschen," he replied, "Never heard of the place. Is it in Poland?" And when I said I didn't know, he drew his chair a few inches nearer mine, and said pleasantly :

"Ah. But perhaps you know Commander Rawlings?"

"D—— that fellow," I cried explosively. "One cannot move a single step in Europe without running across him."

"I see you know Rawlings," he said agreeably.

"He's a wonderful chap. Have a drink."

Then he told me a long story about Bela Kuhn, and some plot he had unmasked, about

coal and railway engines, and so on, and told me that he was going down to Pest himself to interview Bela, although he knew the atmosphere wasn't a particularly healthy one. Then, when I said I must be going, he added :

" I am glad you know Rawlings. You'll find him with Picton round in Sacker's. Come to Pest soon, and look me up."

I told him I hoped I might.

In Sacker's I met Rawlings, Picton, Colonel A. of the Irish Guards, and the Midshipmite.

" Hello, laddie," was R.'s greeting. " Sit down, will you. Have some food. Waiter, set one more place and bring one extra glass. Well, laddie, and what's the best of your news ? "

" To begin with, coal is always black in Silesia," I replied.

" Oh, d—— coal. Tell me, has the Commission drunk all the Slimowitz yet ? "

" Rawlings," I said sadly, " you know perfectly well that the last time you were in Teschen—— "

" Imphm. We'll say no more about *that*, if you please. P., fill the gentleman's glass."

" And now, gentlemen, may I ask, if it is not an imprudent question, to what it is we owe the pleasure of this unexpected meeting, in this noble and beautiful city ? "

“Hush,” said P., laying his finger on his lips.

“Tut,” said R.

“Hist,” said the colonel.

“Aha!” I said darkly. “So that’s the little game is it.”

The Midshipmite, who had meanwhile finally succeeded in catching the eye of Madame Marcovici, who was lunching at the next table, said nothing.

“The usual, laddie, the usual. Just got back from Pest—tried to run out a train of forty truckloads of stuff. Got on the foot-plate of the engine ourselves. Tried to work the bally thing. Would have succeeded only some of these Bolshevik laddies came along and told us to desist, whereupon we skipped out and came along here, hoping of course to find you.”

I bowed my acknowledgments.

“We telegraphed to Colonel A. in Warsaw: ‘Forwarding one large gun for you and two small ones with ammunition complete,’ and the poor boy sat in the hotel for a couple of days, expecting to see a 12-inch and a couple of 6-inchers blow in, and wondering how the devil he was to account for them to the Minister. When we got back we found he had vamoosed, taking the big one with him, and left a note

that we were to drink the small ones ourselves, which—— ”

“ Of course—— ”

“ We didn't. And now, young fellow ”— to the Midshipmite—“ if there is much *more* of that—— We have troubles enough as it is.”

“ By the by, R.,” I asked innocently, “ do you still keep up your interest in the Russian Ballet ? ”

“ Ah. Snookie Pootsa, present address Upper Silesia, at home Thursday afternoons, wants to get back to Pest. Impossible, not even as soft goods.”

“ Tell me about, what do you call her, Snookie Pootsa,” said the colonel, pricking up his ears.

“ Colonel,” said P., “ I wouldn't like to shock your sense of propriety by detailing that sordid story, and, as for the blameless youth by your side, it shall never be said of me that I did or said aught to blight the early promise of his dawning years. Hey, you young villain, eyes front.”

“ Gentlemen,” I said, “ this fortunate meeting seems to promise an eventful evening. I am sorry I can't stay now.”

“ *Lusthaus* in the Prater 7 p.m. We'll expect you.”

“Till then, au revoir,” taking my hat and stick.

“Proszę Pana,” said R. in shocking bad Polish.

“God bless you,” said P.

That evening we dined at the *Lusthaus*. From time to time we would find an Austrian policeman hanging about the door, fetch him in, bid him be seated and give him a glass of champagne or cognac. He would drink our health, talk a little, rise after a quarter of an hour, click his heels, clank his sword, salute, and with many apologies and regrets, take his departure. His place would presently be taken by a comrade, until we must have dispersed cigars and champagne almost to the entire police force in the capital. Sometimes they came back again, and sometimes they sang, but usually when they had treated us to a bar or two of “Deutschland über alles,” or “Die Wacht am Rhein,” their melody was summarily interrupted by the not unusual method, on similar occasions, of polite but forceful expulsion. The following evening we were present at a night club in the Biebergasse, where the company engaged in dancing, drank champagne, and partook of suppers until an early hour. On leaving the club the members were subjected to a scrutiny at the door, but

apparently, having satisfied the authorities that they had definite business there, on behalf of one or other of the Entente countries, they were allowed to proceed on their way. Admission to these night clubs is only accorded to the privileged few, and the majority of those present were Hungarian refugees of the better class. During Saturday and Sunday, the races in the Prater were attended by enormous crowds of people who, one would have imagined, were without a care in the world. The cafés and the tea-gardens and the stands on the racecourse were thronged with crowds of elegant women and well-dressed men, and an enormous number of droshkies and cars were stacked outside the enclosure. The droshky drivers, who plied their fare between the town and the races, demanded as much as 200 kronen for the single journey, and, unless they were retained, it was impossible to procure a conveyance of any description. In peace-time, the Prater is a handsome, well-kept park, but during the war it has been sadly neglected, and now presents a wild and uncouth appearance. The paths and carriage drives are weed-grown and unswept; the borders overhung with rank and untidy grass; the shrubs are ragged and overgrown, and the long grass in the open stretches uncut.

Football was in full swing, and the matches well patronized, but the tennis courts, owing to the difficulty and latterly the impossibility of procuring anything but *Ersatz* balls, wore a dilapidated air and were almost entirely deserted.

The British Embassy in the Metternichgasse stands opposite the German Embassy, and is very quiet. An open carriage, with a couple of horses and a coachman in plain livery, was standing opposite the latter building, but there was otherwise no sign of activity about its doors. The British Minister was absent in London, and his representative, Captain B., told me that all attempts on the part of Bolshevik agitators to whip up popular passions had proved ineffectual, and that a recent meeting, to protest against the German peace terms, which was to have been held in front of the British Embassy, had fallen through owing to the indifference of the people. The Viennese is long-suffering and *gemütlich*; a fatalist incapable either of leading the times or of marching with them. The young men ape English fashions and manners, and are as empty-headed and noisy as ever; but, despite the forced hilarity and gaiety which one meets in odd corners, deep dejection has settled on the solider portion of the population.

On Saturday I lunched with Countess Hoyos-Whitehead and Princess Lichtenstein. The conversation was of an intimate and personal character, dealing with such trivialities as house-letting, domestic problems, and gossip about friends and acquaintance. In the evening I dined with Prince and Princess Festetics, in their house in the Metternichgasse, and a few personal friends. The Prince is a tall, aristocratic, dignified old man, with close-cropped side-whiskers, brushed back carefully, and an old-world courtliness of manner and address. The Princess, a fat, motherly person, was originally Lady Mary Hamilton, a sister of the late Duke of that name. The Prince was concerned over the report that the Hungarian Bolsheviks had ploughed up the racecourse at Budapest and employed blood-horses for that task. The talk at table was mainly on the English universities and sport, and, after dinner over our coffee, we discussed spiritualism, present social and political conditions at home and abroad, and the economic outlook. The aristocratic and wealthy classes in Vienna have suffered little personal inconvenience from the revolution; they have become republicans in name, while remaining monarchists at heart; and, while forbidden to use their titles, under

threat of a term of imprisonment and a heavy money fine, they continue to be addressed in their former style by public officials, and maintain their former state, within their own homes, unaffected by the thunders of the revolutionary tribunals. They have been restricted in the matter of travel, even the shortest journey being now attended with much inconvenience and vexatious delay, but they have, unlike the vast majority of the population, experienced no inconvenience, owing to the prevalent food shortage. While realizing the hopeless future of Austria, they refuse to believe in the permanency of present conditions as affecting themselves—but there must be moments, for all that, when they find it difficult to be gay.

One event, which has greatly appealed to the imagination of the Austrian aristocracy, was the escape of the Ex-Emperor Karl through British agency. "We can never forget," Count Lahrisch said to me one night when dining at his house, "how the English helped our Emperor to escape. It will always be an agreeable memory for those who were in the habit of going much about the Court, who loved their Emperor, and who cannot change their loyalty. No other nation would have thought of such a thing except the English." I believe the Count spoke sincerely, but I

could not help contrasting the company which assembled in that same drawing-room in March, 1917, with that which was present, when he spoke those words. I wonder what was said on that occasion, when Wilhelm of Germany, who signed his name so flauntingly in the autograph album on the table, came to visit the Austrian Headquarters in the town of Teschen. On that last visit, the Count told me, the Emperor posed as the peacemaker, lamenting the ruin and bloodshed which the War had wrought, and bemoaning the criminal and suicidal strife between cousins, of which he declared himself to be innocent. The war-lord must have looked across the Silesian plains at the busy pits, at the clustered villages, at the forest of chimneys, at the rich farms of the Duchy ; he must have heard and responded to the cheers of the miners who crowded to greet him as he rode by ; he must have envied the heritage of Cousin Karl of Austria, housed in the Archduke's palace yonder, a few leagues distant, the host to him of Bulgaria. And now, vanished all these phantoms of royalty, with their struttings and posings and blasphemings ; one to chop trees in a Dutch park and to drone psalmody in a Dutch chapel ; one to twiddle idle thumbs and yawn over the newspapers in his Swiss château, and one

to experiment fatuously with chemicals and crucibles in his dingy laboratory in *Weissnichtwo*. And now, the friend of the fallen war-lord was telling an obscure Captain in the Gunners, he could never forget how the English saved his Emperor.

There was something in what the Count said. The Italian is in Central Europe for gain; the Frenchman for political motives; the American on business; but the Englishman—it was, I imagine, the spirit of knight-errantry and of gallant romance, which lives deep down in the heart of every Englishman, which brought him hither, and prompted him to lend a helping hand to fallen monarchy; it was this spirit which impelled the weary, mud-stained Tommies in Flanders, in bodily distress and physical danger themselves, to wheel an old woman's poor belongings across the rough roads, and to carry footsore children to safety; which sent our men to Archangel to succour hard-pressed comrades, and to risk peril and death in the North Sea to save those that go down to the sea in ships. It was this same spirit of chivalry and heroic self-sacrifice which prompted Sir Stanley Maude to drink the cup of water that was offered him, knowing it might well be tainted, rather than hurt the susceptibilities of the inhabitants of a

plague-stricken area, and it was by this act of nobility that he died. It was one of these actions, for which many might be found to blame him, but which serves to remind us that the age of chivalry is not yet dead. It is this spirit which, in times of peril and danger, carries the Englishman debonairly to the ends of the earth.

I had hoped to have made the acquaintance of Ex-Grand Duke Max, brother of Karl, at Countess Whitehead's, but a few days previously he had succeeded in crossing into Switzerland by ordinary train, as a third-class passenger. Imagine, then, the brother of Imperial Majesty—the "*Echter Wiener, lustig aber ein bischen leichtsinnig*," as the Viennese say of him—herding in a third-class smoker with Jewish bagmen, slinking from his country with an empty purse, under an assumed name, kicking his impatient heels, and scrambling at the customs counter at the Frontier, in order to declare his couple of odd shirts and his tooth-brush. They tell me Karl was badly advised; and that had he come to his Capital during the crisis, and shown himself in the streets with his children, the tender-hearted Viennese would have rallied to his cause, there would have been no revolution, and the monarchy would have been saved. But I

doubt whether this sentimental appeal would have sufficed for his people in their hour of disillusionment and despair. Anyhow, the last chapter of the history of the Hapsburgs is ended.

May 16th.

It is three years ago to-day since I made my first acquaintance with Montreuil. A queer, quaint, mediæval town this, with rich sunlit plains stretching far down the horizon, and winding roads leading away from it, dust-heaped and traffic-worn, hedged in with bordures of grass and beeches grey-tinted; a town with moss-grown ramparts, crusted with history and legend, with antique cobbled streets—a plague upon them—with a thousand odours and rubbish heaps; a town with weather-worn churches towering overhead crumblingly, a town ablaze with vivid colouring and antique roofing; a proud retired town; but a sad town too for all its long pedigree, with a sombre air overhanging its crumbling bastions and wasted ramparts and its tiny little garden plots in the moats.

Montreuil has a history that stretches back as far as Roman days, and was once the site of a great mart. One reads its varied story wonderingly—of good St. Saulve founding

his Monastery there ; of stout Count Helgand, who died facing the Northmen, building his fort by the Abbey on the ancient mart site ; of sad-hearted Bertha, dragging wearily thither, cast off by the first Philip ; of the lawless hordes of the Comte de Bures, clamouring about its walls and sacking it and pillaging it without mercy, after the cruel wont of these times ; of the progress through the town of the fourth Henry—and, it is said, I know not on what authority, that Dan Chaucer once trod these streets. Imagine him then, taking stock of the place, and storing up his youthful impressions, with an eye to a pretty face, no doubt, while tales of faery jostled and crowded through his romantic head, and the lilt of some old French chanson danced tunefully in his ears.

Arthur Young spares but a few words for the place ; but Sterne has given us some of his most delightful pages on its theme.

“ *C'est un garçon de bonne fortune,*” said the landlord, pointing through the window to half a dozen wenches who had got round about La Fleur, and were most kindly taking leave of him as the postillion was leading out the horses. La Fleur kissed all their hands round and round again, and thrice he wiped his eyes,

and thrice he promised he would bring them all pardons from Rome.

“The young fellow,” said the landlord, “is beloved by all the town ; and there is scarce a corner in Montreuil where the want of him will not be felt. He has but one misfortune in the world,” continued he : “ he is always in love.”

There was an air of romantic unreality about the town which gave one the impression of gazing on a tapestry in some dim ghost-haunted room, and, when dusk fell, I could hardly tear myself away from its contemplation. The motionless larches, delicately limned, gossamer-like, fantastically outlined against the red background of summer sky ; the shadowy grey blotches of white cottage, with subdued lights, banked by the tiers of red roofs, opaque and unreal. I never tired of them and of the great peace that overhung the valley. On market days the big, dusty Square was filled with booths and grey motor-lorries and hucksters and gendarmes and Staff Officers riding up and down, and country carts with their rounded canvas coverings and their brown-faced occupants, who descended from them stiffly, and haggled over their butter and eggs and rusty iron and cheap print aprons in noisy patois, and with smudge-faced little roundheads, who chuckled and tumbled at their play about

the house steps or paddled in the runnels that careered merrily down the streets. There was little hint of War about the place, but when the night was calm and the wind was from the East, one heard insistent little puffs of sound, which one might hardly have noticed, if one had not attended them. It was the distant sound of the sleepless guns.

Well! Well! It seems all so very far away now, and, were it not for the fact that there are times I almost mistake the realities out here for dreams, I should incline to relegate that experience too to the scrapheap of half-forgotten phantasmagoria.

May 18th.

Travelled from Vienna to Prague with Princess Colloredo-Mannsfeld. The carriage was uncomfortably crowded with Jewish commercial travellers who were making their way to the Czech capital. They were an uncouth company, who spent their time eating sausage which they cut with pen-knives, and hunks of black bread which they deposited among the dust and dirt of the seats, and who wiped their margarine-grimed fingers on the backs of their greasy trousers. They talked occasionally, and when they were neither talking nor eating they smoked and dozed and snored,

until one of them, a black-moustached, unshaved fellow, with a dirty collar and unkempt hair, recognizing that we were talking English, addressed himself to me in German :

“ The *Herr* is an Englishman ? ” he asked, wiping the blade of his pen-knife on one of his thick grey socks.

“ *Jawohl*, ” I answered.

“ Pity, ” said my new acquaintance, putting a bottle of red wine to his mouth and gulping down some of the contents. “ My brother knows English perfectly. He is a wonderful fellow, my brother, and speaks, *weiss Gott*, how many languages. *Schade*, if only he had been here, he could have talked to you, and you could have got on splendidly together. ” I looked my polite regret. “ Yes, he is altogether a wonderful fellow, my brother. And French—he speaks French to perfection. But, naturally, it is necessary for him to know languages in his profession. ”

“ And, pray, sir, what is your brother’s profession ? ” I inquired politely.

“ My brother, sir, is a diplomatist. ”

“ A diplomatist, ” I repeated, “ naturally, and in what country, may I inquire, is your brother who speaks so many languages at present stationed ? ”

“ Russia. ”

At the Austrian Frontier, all the passengers with the exception of the members of the various Entente Commissions, who were travelling in the train, were compelled to alight in order to have their baggage searched, and to show that they were carrying no more than the authorized sum (500 kr.) out of the country. We remained in our seats, and in a few moments an Austrian official entered our carriage, saluted, and addressing himself to the Princess, demanded abruptly :

“ The lady has a passport ? ”

“ *Jawohl.* Here is my passport and my maid’s.”

The Austrian examined the documents carefully, handed them back and continued :

“ And money. Has the gracious lady perhaps any money ? ”

“ *Jawohl.* ”

“ How much money has the gracious lady with her, may I ask ? ”

“ One hundred crowns.”

“ No more ? ” suspiciously.

“ No, no more.”

“ *Lausbub,*” I thought.

“ But the *Herr Engländer* has at least a couple of millions ? ” he said, turning to me.

“ Only a few millions,” I answered casually.
“ And now, what about it ? ”

“ *Und nun,*” he repeated, as if in perplexity.

“ If it is all the same to you, *mein Lieber*—the door, I see, stands open behind you.”

“ *Mein Kompliment,*” he said, clicking his heels, and vanishing.

“ And now,” I said, “ madame, let’s go out on the platform and give the little dog a walk. In five minutes our friends will have returned to resume their unfinished meal. Besides, I want to hear more about the brother of my new acquaintance, the diplomat in Russia. Judging from the one member of that distinguished family we have so recently been privileged to know, the diplomat himself must be a fascinating personality.”

We paced the platform, however, for half an hour before our fellow travellers returned and resumed their places. They were in high spirits and at once fell on the bread and sausage.

At Lundenburg, on the Czech side of the Frontier, the delay was exasperating, and we were compelled to wait two and a half hours while the most thorough examination was conducted of all the baggage in the train, and the closest search was made of the travellers’ persons, both men and women. Many of the passengers, herded together in the evil-smelling, badly lit *douane*, were almost dropping

from exhaustion, but none escaped the merciless scrutiny. I suggested to the brother of the diplomat, before he left the carriage, that he should leave a rug of which he was particularly proud in my keeping.

“It is an excellent piece of material,” he assured me. “Pre-war stuff, and unprocurable now. I am taking it to Prague to have it made into a dress for my wife. I will declare it.”

“If you care to leave it in my charge it will be safe enough, and you will get it on your return.”

“No, I will take it. The Czechs will not rob a poor man. Now, had it been in the old days, but that is finished. We are free now, and in these new republics——”

“Precisely,” I murmured, “as you will,” and allowed him to go to meet his fate.

At the end of a couple of hours, two of the party returned, and a quarter of an hour later my friend of the rug. He was exhausted and furious, and minus his rug. He entered the carriage limply, flung himself into his seat, and burst out :

“To keep me standing in a pig-sty for two hours to search the very lining of my shirt, and then to confiscate my rug! My poor wife. Thieves and robbers, plunderers.

Before the war one might travel the length and breadth of Austria-Hungary unmolested, but now, there is neither liberty of movement nor security of property. And this," he added, looking across at me fiercely, "is the Republic of Czecho-Slovakia, which you English have created."

"I assure you, sir," I said with a voice of sympathy, "that had I only known how these Czechs were to turn out, I should never have lifted a finger to help them. Ah, these new republics——"

The brother of the diplomat glared at me. It was obvious he was unused to the interchange of pleasantries, and I wondered whether the diplomat in Russia possessed an equal sense of humour. When, however, he had exhausted his anger he ate some more sausage and bread, and washed it down with some red wine, and presently fell asleep between his two friends and snored loudly until we arrived in Prague at 2.30 a.m.

At the Wilson Station the Prince was waiting. He is a pleasant, cheery, blue-eyed man of middle age, good-natured and shrewd, but, at the present moment, in sore trouble.

We drove in his car to the flat in the Harra-chova Nam I., Smichov, and had dinner, the meal finishing at 4 a.m., in broad daylight.

In the morning, I paid my respects to the Minister, Mr. Gosling, who had removed the Legation to the Palast Thun, where he keeps house with his sister, Countess Löwenfeld. In the afternoon, I took tea with Prince and Princess Lobkowitz, in the gardens of the Palais Lobkowitz, Count Czernin, Cartwright of the Legation, and a number of other guests being also invited.

The Palais Lobkowitz is already partly occupied by a host of Government officials with their attendant satellites, and the gardens have been taken possession of by the public who wander in them at will. Lobkowitz is a somewhat rakish, Jewish-looking young man; his wife is a jolly little woman, who speaks admirable English and seems somewhat bewildered with the turn events have taken. One is struck, however, by the constant and unaffected gaiety of these people, who have not only been deprived of their social status and forbidden to use their titles, but who may, within a brief period, lose their lands and property as well.

At times they are almost pathetic in their bewilderment, but they have adapted themselves, outwardly at least, with amazing facility to their changed circumstances. It is natural to learn that, while it is forbidden to address the

aristocracy by their titles, the better known and more liberal among them are the constant recipients of begging letters, couched in a style which could not have been more humble or more cringing in tone in the most autocratic days of imperialism.

And yet, who so rash as to believe that these aristocrats, who have seen their estates declared national property by the workmen's leaders, their names held up to opprobrium, and their pretensions scorned, have bowed thus tamely and meekly before their fate. What plottings and counter-plottings must at this very moment be in the process of being hatched in Vienna and Budapest and Prague among the Austrian and Hungarian monarchists. It would be a poor tribute, indeed, to Hapsburgs and Hohenzollerns alike, if there are not to be found many who are ready to risk all for their restoration. If there is no counter-revolution against the Governments of these new republics by the disgruntled aristos of the Dual Monarchy, it will be an astounding admission of the unworthiness of their pretensions; it will be an amazing revelation, if it is proved that the subject millions, who have suddenly taken the reins of power into their own hands, have been governed and taxed and had their lives ordered and their wars made

and their secret treaties concluded during all these years by an effete and incompetent coterie, whose cause is so feeble and whose hopes are so faint, that no one is found who dares strike a blow to help to regain the power they have lost.

Prague is gay, for those who are in the social whirl; food is plentiful, for those who have the means to procure it; there is in political and diplomatic circles a constant succession of dinners, balls, and receptions. In the matter of invitations to these functions, democratic principles have been carried to ridiculous lengths, and it is an admirable commentary, on the topsy-turvydom of the times, that the very people who formerly had the *entrée* to the most exclusive society now find themselves deliberately excluded from it, by individuals with whom, before the war, they would never have condescended to mix. It is related of a prominent politician that, on being invited to shoot over a certain nobleman's estate, he curtly refused with the remark, "I refuse to know any one with a title." In matters of religion the Czech is tolerant and liberal, and the Roman Catholic Church is agitated with various forward movements, which are by no means palatable to the Vatican. Enlightened opinion would term the demands

of the clergy moderate enough, but there are certain Roman Catholics who confound Protestantism with atheism, just as there are Anglicans in England who identify Presbyterianism with Rationalism, and these look askance on any suggested proposals of reform. The demands in question, which have created such heart-burning at the Vatican, are that the Metropolitans be of the same nationality as the Czech clergy, and speak their language, and be no longer German or Austrian nominees; that celibacy of the clergy be optional; that the liturgy be chanted in Czech, and Latin abolished as the ecclesiastical language. Such is the strength of the newly-awakened national feeling, and the animus against things Teutonic, that the Vatican dare no longer pretend to ignore the request. The new order of things in Prague has resulted in the creation of a host of petty officials, for whom occupation and a means of livelihood has to be found, and the unfortunate civilian finds himself in the grip of a new and unprecedented bureaucratic tyranny. He has discovered, when he is kept dancing attendance on some minor tyrant, that he has merely exchanged one form of bondage for another, and there are many who roundly declare that, of the two systems, they prefer that under the mild rule of the Empire.

There is widespread dissatisfaction among the people owing to the inability of the Government to solve the housing problem, and growing discontent owing to the scarcity and the high cost of the necessaries of life.

The Czech Government is confronted with innumerable difficulties, external and internal. It is handicapped by lack of expert advice in matters of finance, and inadequately served in its diplomatic service, which is filled by men who are without diplomatic experience, social distinction, or political influence. The Government contemplates a wide-reaching scheme of communistic expropriation, and although President Masaryk has promised that, so long as he holds the reins of office, there will be no confiscation of property without adequate financial compensation, it is certain that if his moderating influence is once removed the lot of the landed proprietor will be a hard one. The argument of the Czech is, that, by confiscating the lands of the Austrian landowners, he is merely taking back his own. It is argued that 80 per cent. of the population of the country is socialist, and that the common ownership of land was agreed to by the International at Lausanne fifty years ago. The entire atmosphere is against the aristocracy; they may save a portion from the wreckage of

their fortunes, but their days are numbered. With the Austrian aristocracy one can have little sympathy. It has shown no reason why it should continue to exist as a separate favoured class; it has had its day. For centuries it enjoyed all the advantages which wealth and political power and social refinement procure; it had a great opportunity which it lost. It was out of touch with modern thought, and out of sympathy with modern social movements; at the first breath of revolt its adherents and dependents fell away from it, and it went out, along with other lost causes, unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.

In England, with our cautious and opportunist legislation, we fail to realize the rapidity with which fresh ideas are matured and applied in the new republics of Central Europe. We fail, too, to realize that these new democracies and republics are in many respects more narrow-minded and tyrannical than the empires which they have replaced. The aristocracy of intellect has replaced that of birth and privilege, but there is much that the new peoples may learn from the society which is passing away. A nation, especially a new nation which is setting its house in order, which will obliterate the associations and destroy the memory of its aristocracy, is not only doing infinite harm to

the present generation, but committing a sin against posterity. It is destroying something infinitely higher than actuality ; it is destroying the ideal—for aristocracy is always higher than itself.

On the Russian front the Bolsheviks stabled their horses in the marble hall of Count Tarlowski's home ; the Ruthenian irregulars disfigured with bayonet and bullet the portraits of the Hereditary Wardens of the Marches which now hang in the Cracow Gallery ; at Dobříš the workmen's leaders came to the Prince and said, " You must give everything to us ; all belongs to the State. You have nothing which does not belong to the State. We will give you two rooms, one for yourself and one for your wife, one hundred and fifty hectares of land, and we will take all your wood without paying for it." " We," the Haves replied, " have been accustomed all our lives to a certain standard of comfort, and cannot dwell in poverty." " Thou shalt not steal," the Havenots cried menacingly, and Prague, entangled in the problems of social reconstruction, irritated by lack of employment, and with the gaunt spectacle of poverty ever lurking in the background, lends ready ear to the preachers of communism and to the sowers of the seeds of unrest.

Dobříš Castle, the seat of Prince Colloredo-Mannsfeld, is situated close to the village of the same name, at a distance of about forty kilometres south of Prague. The way thither from the Capital runs through wooded undulating country, dotted with the homes of the nobility, and picturesque villages with white houses and red roofs, and square church towers. Dobříš Castle is a comparatively modern two-storied building, forming three sides of a square, with the main entrance from the north. I was told that since the revolution the attitude of the villagers and of the peasantry had changed ; that they had grown aggressive and discourteous ; but, in the course of my walks abroad with my host, I saw none of the rudeness I had been led to expect, but, on the contrary, we met everywhere with respectful greetings. Dependents, on being spoken to, stood hat in hand throughout the interview, and, on being dismissed, they would bow profoundly and attempt to kiss the gloved right hand of my hostess, or the sleeve of her gown. Imagine such a thing happening in England ! Here, as in Vienna and Warsaw, wherever one finds these old families and their dependents, the deeply ingrained sentiment of loyalty persists, and whatever the demagogues may say, or the local Soviets decree,

Durchlaucht is still *Durchlaucht* for Humnet and Paprika who, if needs be, will go to the death for him gladly. Englishmen were particularly welcome at Dobříš, as the Prince, despite his foreign birth and title, is more at home in England than in any other country, except his own. The Americans, who come to visit the castle, with their fresh civilization, are incapable of understanding the point of view of these old families; the French, for political and diplomatic reasons, have few dealings with them. The English alone, while sympathizing with the legitimate political aspirations of the people, possess an instinctive sympathy for those about to die.

One cannot but feel, in those great houses, with their gorgeously furnished empty rooms, which no one ever fills, with their deft servants, who have taken off their gorgeous wigs and plumes, and tucked them away for ever, in the lumber room, with the long rows of ancestors, in stars and ribbons and laces and ruffles and mediæval armour and armorial bearings, that one is assisting at the last scene of a veritable tragedy. The gardens, with their wonderful lawns and statuary, their wealth of rose trees and the rich flower beds, are neglected, because there is no one to tend them. The stables stand empty, because the war and the Govern-

ment have claimed their horses ; the cars lie idle in the garage, because it is impossible to obtain petrol or tyres ; the old-fashioned state carriages rot, dust-covered and neglected in the coach-house, because there is no one to ride in them, or to clean them, or to drive them. To the east of the grounds lies a lake, with rich wooded banks overlooked by the ancient keep of the Mannsfelds, and, beyond, stretches a vista of gorgeous Bohemian campaign. One can see in imagination the roystering knights, with their attendant squires, pricking across the plains on their business of war or plunder ; or hear the clash of armour and the jingle of harness, and see the glint of sun on lance and helm as the gallant cavalcade comes riding through the woods to the castle on the rock. Now, it is Englishmen and Americans who drive to the great new house, to fish and shoot and play billiards and talk politics and sport and drink sherry and discuss the tittle-tattle of the day ; or the workmen's leaders who come to take stock of the furniture in the rooms, or the peasants who come to demand the farms and the wood for nothing. There is an atmosphere of unreality about Dobříš ; one closes the door of the vast, empty drawing-room as if there were ghosts one did not wish to disturb. One is almost afraid

to break the silence ; one expects to see the discreet Humnet, when he brings the sherry into the library, dissolve and vanish suddenly, side-whiskers and all. Sometimes the Prince orders the old-fashioned open carriage, with the aged coachman and the bay mare, to await him at the main entrance, and the two silent footmen stand by the door until he comes down with his gun, and goes off to shoot a roe deer. He drives slowly through the woods, past the lochs where the trout leap, and the marshes where the wild-fowl call, and the little farms, which have been in the possession of his family for hundreds of years. And, already, he feels that his worldly possessions have passed out of his hands for ever ; he is a stranger among his own.

May 26th.

Rain, incessant, cold, pitiless rain, dullness, and boredom. An Austrian Town Council has been summarily sent about its business by its Polish over-lords ; the President of the *Rada Narodowa* has been arrested by the Czechs, and, by way of reprisal, the Czech officers, attached to the Commission, have been put under open arrest by the Poles. A deputation of local business men seek audience, in order to point out that business is in danger of

complete collapse and the entire community threatened with ruination. The Poles complain that one of their Nationals has been compelled to serve with the Czech Forces ; the Czechs bring forward a counter complaint, that one of their people has received notice to present himself for medical inspection, with a view to being forced to serve in the Polish army. The Commission has, in fact, become the supreme arbiter and final Court of Appeal ; it is attacked at one time in the Czech Press, at another time in the Polish, or again in the German. Yet all parties confess that it would be little short of a misfortune if it were to be withdrawn. From Paris we hear privately that the problem is no nearer solution. It is interminable. In another month, we shall all have died of melancholia.

It is becoming daily a matter of increasing difficulty for the ordinary citizen to obtain such luxuries as sugar, cigars, wine, beer, and cognac. The food has deteriorated ; the trout which are daily supplied, cooked in butter or served cold in jelly, are, owing to the softness and tastelessness of the flesh, disagreeable to eat oftener than twice or thrice. In consequence of the difficulty experienced in obtaining sugar and cigars, an extensive system of smuggling has been introduced, and various

ingenious methods have been adopted to deceive the watchfulness of the Czech customs officials at the line of demarcation. The mining disaster in Orlau Lazy, by which two hundred miners met their deaths, has thrown an atmosphere of gloom and depression over the community. The cause has not yet been investigated, but it is feared that the unsettled political and economic conditions which prevail in the mining districts, and the weakened discipline which is the result of the dissemination of extremist views among the miners, are not unconnected with the tragedy.

Despite the evil weather, however, tennis is in full swing at the German Club, and the standard of play is high. During the past few years play has been considerably restricted, but it is now possible to obtain a limited supply of balls from Paris. The score is counted in English; a proposal to substitute German terms for English being recently heavily vetoed. The courts are in excellent condition, and there is a well-appointed club-house. Polish girls, armed with a sort of butterfly net, are employed during the game to collect the scattered balls for the players, and this device saves a considerable amount of trouble. Surprise was expressed when I pointed out that this labour-saving device was unknown in England, or

that, if it was in use, it was by no means universal. "*Aber was*," a member of the club said to me, "and one always heard that the English were so practical. We want to play tennis and to concentrate on the game, and that is impossible if you have to spend your time hunting around for balls." Tennis is also played by the Polish officers in the garrison, but the game there, owing to the inferior nature of the courts, has so far enjoyed no great popularity. Golf has not yet been introduced into Teschen, but football is widely patronized by Poles and Germans alike. The game played is Association, but with the Czechs Rugby is also popular.

By way of amusement, Backovský and I betake ourselves to Schultz's in the evenings, where we wile away the time until midnight, over a pipe and a glass or two of wine. Backovský, who speaks German and Italian well, and French and English passably, suffers from the linguistic disability of the great majority of his countrymen. The Czech, whether from inherent inaptitude, or from the absence of the tradition of spoken English in Bohemia, compares unfavourably with the Pole and the Hungarian as a linguist. He finds peculiar difficulty in pronouncing the sounds of English. A Pole of intelligence, who has

spoken and heard English spoken for some time, will, within a very short time, speak the language more correctly, with greater fluency, and with a better pronunciation than the Czech, whose inaptitude for acquiring languages other than his own is well known among his neighbours. There are, of course, exceptions, but in the main the criticism holds. Apart from the question of intelligence, there seems to be some quality in the musical Polish language which makes the ear more ready to assimilate foreign sounds.

Schultz's *Weinstube* stands in the main street opposite the church, and is frequented by Germans of the better class, by occasional parties of Polish officers, by odds and ends of travellers, by Backovský and myself. Schultz himself is a stout, close-cropped, middle-aged German, with a comfortable looking, pleasant-faced wife; he sits smoking and drinking sour wine at his *Stammtisch*, with his particular cronies, till closing time. Angelica, the waitress, a black-haired, black-eyed, handsome Silesian girl, with strong pro-Czech sympathies, has offended several of her Polish patrons by her outspoken views.

Angelica reminds me of Germaine.

Who Germaine was? I will tell you who Germaine was.

Germaine and her mother, it must be known, lived in the *Grande Place* in the town of A.

It is not a gay town, A., and when I met a company of mourners in the rain one day, trudging behind the hearse, they seemed in entire keeping with the surroundings. It is a black-a-vised little place with ancient sunken red roofs, stuffy alleys with absurd pumps set at absurd corners, and quaint carvings peering out fantastically from ancient gables, and mysterious passages with a hint of mediæval adventure about them. Its buildings wear a faded gentle air that takes one back to the days of Marlbrook and the Spaniards, so that one would not be surprised if the people one meets in the streets were to appear some day in Spanish ruffles or to hear the clink of Toledos on the greasy cobbles ; or, if Marlbrook himself were to come riding by, booted and bewigged with scarlet-clad staff in attendance. But one can only understand the spirit of the place when one has seen the *Grande Place* at midnight under the shadow of the *Baillage* with its quaint sixteenth-century carving, and the flitting shadows, chasing in fantastic dance in the clear vista of flat willowed pasture-land beyond.

Germaine was young and pretty, and had very taking ways, and the most agreeable of

smiles. She was pale and dark-eyed, and had a neat ankle ; altogether a dainty person with a hint of coquettishness about her. I suspect she was really a little cold at bottom, but it was not long, however, until we were fast friends. She told me her story ; how she had wanted to marry her fiancé the first time he was home *en permission*, but that he was then unwilling ; and how, alas, next leave, he was willing, but she had then changed her mind. I saw the said fiancé. He was a good-looking fellow, wearing the *médaille militaire*, who followed her every movement with a dour affection lurking in his eyes, so that my heart went out to him at once. A couple of days after he had gone to rejoin his battery, I found Germaine very miserable. And so, too, no doubt, was her artilleryman.

When she asked me whether I did not think she had done wisely in refusing to marry him I had, alas, to say no. Germaine bridled up at that.

“ But, monsieur,” she argued, “ I have *maman* here and the business, and I am happy. If I were married now and he were killed, I should be a young widow, and I do not wish that. ‘ N’est pas j’ai bien fait ? ’ ”

“ Germaine,” I said very solemnly, “ there is one test by which you may judge whether

you have done rightly. Are you happy in your decision ? ”

“ Non, monsieur, ” very poutingly.

“ And your artilleryman, is he happy ? ”

“ Non, monsieur, ” still more poutingly.

“ Well, Germaine, ” I said brutally, “ is it not the case that you had the chance to make two people happy, and that you have chosen instead to render two people miserable ? ”

Germaine made no reply. She toyed with the flowered pattern she was stitching, and pushed her little foot out from beneath her skirt, and hung her head and looked very enticing, so that I wanted to put my arms about her and kiss her for her own sake. But there are moments in life when one must be firm with oneself. So I finished my cocktail very solemnly, and, bidding her adieu, stalked out of the room.

A year later I rode into the town again on a cloudy night, when the lights were beginning to twinkle in the marshlands. I dismounted at the cathedral, handed my horse to my groom, found my billet, and, as I had been wondering about Germaine on my way down, I presently found myself in the *Commerce* once more. There was no one there at the moment with the exception of Germaine herself. She was still embroidering the piece of work she had

been busy at the year before, with the wicker-work basket on its stand beside her, with its many-coloured reels. I thought she looked unhappy, but the day was dull, and it was very sombre in the darkling square. So I put it down to that.

I can no more understand Germaine than I can understand any other woman. She is moody and diffident, and has developed a humour in keeping with her mental outlook, which, I fear, has compelled her to the profound conclusion that all men who are not bad are foolish, and that even the best of them are both, to the exclusion of all other qualities.

“Bon jour, Germaine,” I cried gaily. “Comment ça va? Vous ne m’avez pas oublié?”

“Tiens, c’est Monsieur R.,” she cried, rising and putting her work aside. “Mais comment—vous oublier? Jamais de la vie!”

Then *maman* came in, looking as comfortable as ever, and smoothing out her black satin apron.

“Tiens,” she cried in her turn in a voice that was very like Germaine’s, “c’est Monsieur R.”

There was the same smell of stale tobacco and wine in the café; the same chairs and tables; the same array of champagne bottles

and glasses behind the counter; the same *Bottins*—everything as I had left it the year before; but I was glad to think that I had not been forgotten by Germaine and her mother. I told the latter she was looking younger than ever.

“*Monsieur est toujours blagueur,*” she replied, laughing, and wiping down the counter with a cloth she kept hidden behind it for that purpose.

We talked about indifferent matters for a little. Then I looked towards Germaine, who at once rose from her seat, went to the counter, and composed my usual cocktail, with a slice of lemon in it.

Maman left us presently. Germaine came and sat down beside me, and I felt exactly as I used to feel the year before, when she used to do that, but I looked at her left hand instead.

“*Eh bien ! Germaine,*” I said quite firmly, “you are not yet married?”

“*Non, monsieur,*” she answered simply, “*pas même fiancée.*”

“How not even *fiancée*?” I asked in astonishment.

“*Parce que c’est fini,*” she said tragically, picking up her work again. “We write to each other at times, but I shall never see him

again." "Il ne m'est plus sympathique," she continued after a little, "et enfin, je suis désillusionnée."

"But, Germaine," I persisted, "tell me."

"War is cruel, monsieur," she continued, somewhat inconsequentially, I thought, "and I was afraid that we might change, when it was too late."

"Love, Germaine, some wise person has said, is eternal, if only for a month; and life is, at best, a risk. If it were so ordered that nothing could go wrong, there would be nothing to look forward to and nothing to look back on. There would be no memory of pleasure or pain. When you are my age"—I am two years older than Germaine—"you will have reached a stage when further disillusionment will seem impossible, and then you will begin to look backwards——"

"And then?" she asked, laying her work on her knee and looking into my face anxiously.

"And then, you will suddenly find in one way or another that there is so much good hidden away in people, good that has been crusted over with their own disappointments and sorrows, that you will grow very charitable in your judgment of others and you will begin to believe in love again, for, 'love casteth out fear.'"

“ That is always what *maman* is saying.”

I did not doubt it, but, nevertheless, I asked :

“ *Maman* is always saying what ? ”

“ That I am *trop difficile*.”

I suppose that did mean the same, although it took me a moment or two to see it. Then, after a pause, she added :

“ If I should write him this evening—I shall tell him—— ”

There was a light in her eyes, and the dark afternoon seemed to have grown brighter. At least, so it seemed to me. Germaine gathered up her work and set it in a bundle on one of the little tables.

“ But now we must light the gas,” she said, rising, with a little sigh, which had a note of happiness in it.

I struck a match for her and lit the incandescent, and when the shutters were drawn I sat down again.

“ Germaine,” I cried joyously, “ I think I shall have one more cocktail—— ”

The *Weinstube* itself is an old-fashioned, dark-panelled room, with English hunting prints on the walls and a piano in the corner, around which theatre parties make merry when the spirit moves them. But most nights the company is dull, and even the old cronies

at the *Stammtisch* fail to provoke argument with one another and drink their half-litres stolidly and silently. The wet season, the poor quality of the wine, and the stagnation of business have affected their spirits. The old Protestant *Pfarrer*—a picturesque old man, with flowing white hair and palsied hands—grows more deaf and more taciturn daily, Madame more captious, Angelica shriller voiced; and mine host and his cronies at the *Stammtisch* call less frequently for their glasses to be renewed. It is a melancholy thought, that even Schultz's is losing its attraction.

Conversation between B. and myself, which is never at any time characterized by any particular brilliancy, runs commonly somewhat after this nature :

“ I am vairy sleepy t'is efening,” with a yawn.

“ Can't say I feel particularly skittish myself,” I answer, yawning in my turn.

“ Skeetish—waat ees eet? Ah, yes, now I know. Scottish, you would say. Yes, of course. Yes, you are Scottish, are you not? ”

I look B. steadily in the eye for a moment to see whether he is attempting a joke, but he is perfectly serious. Then after a moment he asks :

“ Do you wair a keelt in Scotland? ”

“ Oh, off and on.”

“ Zat ees not possable.”

“ What is not possible ? ” irritably.

“ Zat you wair a keelt off and on. Either you most wair a keelt, or you most not wair a keelt.”

We sip our glasses silently, and I watch B. aggressively. I try again, however.

“ I saw Howe looking for you this evening in your room. He wanted you to go to his room. Did you see him ? ”

“ How, saw you ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ Bot *How* say you.”

“ Yes,” snappily.

“ How sais you looking for me in hees room t’is efening, say you ? ”

“ No, my dear Ass, what I said was, ‘ I saw Howe looking for you in your room. He wanted you to go to his room.’ ”

“ Bot I was not in hees room.”

“ No, no, he was in *your* room.”

“ In my room—Howe ? Deed he seek me ? ”

“ He wanted to speak to you,” I say, raising my voice in such a manner that all the cronies look across at us.

“ Bot I was not een my room, I was een ze café-’ouse.”

“ Then you couldn’t have seen him.”

“ Een my room ? ”

“ How in my room ? What *are* you talking about now ? ”

“ Howe was een *your* room too ? Did he seek me, zere too ? ”

“ No, no, no, in your room. Howe was in *your* room, not mine.”

“ T’is efening ? ”

“ Yes,” with resignation. “ Did you see him ? ”

“ Een my room ? No.”

By this time, however, the subject is worn threadbare. B. still looks slightly puzzled, but I make no attempt to enlighten him. Angelica approaches to see if we are still provided with wine. B. says something to her in Czech. She laughs and answers back, and the dialogue continues until one of the cronies raps his empty glass on the table, when she goes away to refill it.

“ I ’ave told to t’is girl that I am a pooer man and cannot pay her for her drink,” he explains.

But I make no sign that I have heard.

We sit a little longer in silence, frankly bored. Then we yawn once more, pull out our watches sleepily, call for our score, and, having bade the dull company good-night, drag slowly along the empty street to bed.

June 9th.

Returned to Teschen, after a further visit to Prague and Dobříš. During my stay at the latter place, a number of visitors arrived, were entertained and departed. Colonel Coulson, and Cartwright of the Legation, came down for a day's fishing on one of the lochs on the estate. A good basket of trout was procured with the dry fly. We lunched in a gamekeeper's cottage close to the loch, a picturesque, old-fashioned little house which was beautifully clean. The flesh of the trout had a peculiar peaty taste, which was not disagreeable, and we had, in addition, some excellent country butter and white bread, being waited on by the chauffeur and the gamekeeper and the gamekeeper's comely wife. After lunch we motored to one of the Prince's shooting-boxes, about fifteen miles away, the *Lovecký Zámeček u Třech Trab*. Despite the fact that neither of our hosts had visited the place since 1914, the servants looked as if they had expected company; there was not a speck of dust on the furniture, and the grounds were in perfect order. It was a remarkable tribute to the efficiency of the domestic arrangements of a great Bohemian family.

When we returned to Dobříš in the evening C. found a telegram recalling him to Prague,

on account of the situation in Slovakia. Not only are the Magyars well equipped, well organized, and provided with a plentiful supply of munitions, which they have obtained from Mackensen's Army, but there is the additional complication of Slovakia to harass the government. The Slovaks are unwilling partners in the Czecho-Slovak union, and Hlinka, turning against his would-be masters, has repudiated the Paris-made compact and made common cause with the Magyars. The large German population, automatically incorporated, complains of oppression and injustice, and the opposition of these determined and united compatriots is a serious menace not only to the present, but to the future stability of the Czecho-Slovak State. The repressive methods of the Czechs, the wholesale dismissals of German railway employees, the insistence that those who remain should acquire the Czech language within an unreasonably brief period, the substitution of the Czech language for the German in German schools, the obliteration of German street signs and directions, have given rise to much bitterness and heart burning. The campaign in Slovakia is being conducted without enthusiasm on the part of the Czech troops, who are deficient in heavy artillery and machine-guns. On the way to Prague we

passed numerous train-loads of soldiers *en route* for Slovakia. The men were decorated with bunches of flowers and the trucks were adorned with caricatures of the enemy and patriotic phrases; but, despite the popular enthusiasm which accompanied their departure, many have declared their unwillingness to take up arms against a sister Republic, the more extreme among them finding a certain affinity between the ideas of Bela Kuhn and their own. "You may send us to the Front," they are reported to have said among themselves, "but you cannot make us fight."

The following day the American Minister with his attaché, accompanied by a Czech painter and his wife, arrived at the castle. The Minister is a big, stolid man who played a heavy game of snooker after dinner with our hosts and the colonel. The painter and myself discussed modern art, and the inevitable Teschen question. What Count Gotuchowski said to us in Warsaw, the Czech painter said to me in Dobříš. "There can be no Teschen question for us, we shall never give it up." I found him informative in a dull sort of way, like so many of his countrymen. He had spent many years of his life in the States, and his views were, in consequence, comparatively free from the taint of provincialism.

His wife, too, was a woman of superior talent and information, who discussed literature and contemporary problems in a broad and liberal spirit. Her husband, I understand, enjoys a considerable reputation in his country.

Next day Mr. Gosling arrived, accompanied by his sister, Countess Löwenfeld, and Raikes of the Foreign Office. The Union Jack, above the main entrance to the castle, which had been lowered in favour of the Stars and Stripes when the Americans arrived, was immediately re-hoisted on the arrival of the British party. At first the peasants on the estate were ignorant as to the significance of the Union Jack, some imagining that it was the flag of the French Republic, others that the castle had been taken possession of by the Communists, who had hoisted the flag, on the order of the leaders of the Local Workmen's Councils. This unfamiliarity with the flags of the Allies is, however, not surprising. Czech Legionaries who have fought in France or Italy, or who have been trained in England, have a nodding acquaintance with the uniforms and the flags of these countries, but it is not surprising to find that a peasant who has never seen a flag in his life before, or that a poor Polish soldier who has done his fighting on the Russian Front, should show an inability to distinguish

these unfamiliar emblems. At dinner, Gosling was quiet ; the Countess dull ; our hosts were comparatively unacquainted with their guests, and it was Raikes who was the life and soul of the party. He was full of witty anecdote and reminiscence and brimful of humour. He seemed to have been everywhere and to know every one ; to be familiar with the secret history of all the Court intrigues in Central Europe during the last quarter of a century ; to have slapped deposed and departed royalties on their royal backs ; to have wined with banished Kaisers, dined with Princes of the Blood, and said his orisons at dawn and dusk in the queerest and most interesting companies in the world. He told his tales admirably, and illustrated his points with witty quip and crank ; a shrewd, jovial fellow, and *bon camarade*, one would sorely regret to have missed. After dinner we sat late ; the talk drifted into ghostly channels, when some remarkable experiences were related by several members of the party.

The conversation was resumed next day with sherry before lunch, but, alas, in the afternoon the genial gathering broke up and I returned to Teschen—to stale trout, *Sauerkraut*, horse-sausage, sour wine, bad coffee, wranglings of Czech and Pole, eternal halting

French, broken German, and murdered English; to greasy Galician Jews and squabbling chauffeurs and slouching orderlies and sleepy sentries, and the smell of Russian leather; to the garish hotel with its glaring pillars, its noisy restaurant, its slatternly maids, its fat porter, its slipshod waiters, its pock-marked proprietor. True, there can be no comparison between places which are so essentially different, and in Teschen we have the Tower of the Piasts and the *Rada Naradowa* and the four o'clock fashion parade and the humours of the Commission. But alas!

June 20th.

On the 12th of the month General Haller visited Teschen. The town was gaily decorated and the occasion was observed as a national holiday. Crowds of peasants and miners, with their children and womenfolk, gaily beribboned and gaily bodiced, trudged for miles from their crofts and the mines to do honour to the national hero. They were tired and weary and dusty and thirsty and footsore. The day was hot and the General's train was late, but, like crowds in every land who have come to shout and to cheer, they hung on with determined pertinacity, and Poland, although it may have a short memory

for some things, has not forgotten the fashion of hero worship. During the entire proceedings the German population held severely aloof, and it is reported of certain good burghers, that they drew their window blinds rather than that the sight of Polish rejoicing should offend their eyes. Persistence in this contemptuous attitude of unveiled hostility must inevitably aggravate the prevailing bitterness, and lead sooner or later to reprisals on the part of the Poles.

General Haller I had seen before in Warsaw, on the occasion of the official entry of his army into the Capital, when the scene had lacked nothing of pomp and circumstance. In Teschen the setting was less grandiose, but the public welcome could not have been more spontaneous and sincere. When we reached the station the train had already arrived, and the General was replying to an address of welcome from his compatriots. He was dressed in his familiar light blue French uniform, with his single decoration the *Croix de guerre* and the heavily embroidered Lancer-like headgear of the Polish army. Haller is a pale-faced, black-eyed Slav, with a short, dark, brown beard. He has a frank and engaging smile, which illumines his face when he is giving expression to some particularly happy

phrase or sentiment. His manner is energetic and decisive ; he rarely hesitates for a word, and, while he is speaking, he rests his left hand on his sword and gesticulates in an emphatic and forceful manner with his right. He is a man of middle height and comparatively young in years—the embodiment of Slav ambition and pertinacity, with a touch of Gallic enthusiasm. He possesses the histrionic instinct, and loves to play the rôle of the great man. When he saw us making our way through the crowd, he broke off in the middle of his speech and greeted us warmly. When he had concluded the crowd sang their national hymn, and, as he left the station, his path was strewn with roses by a bevy of young Polish maidens in white. He then drove off to the Barracks to review the troops.

An hour later, accompanied by General Latinek and his Staff, he returned to pay his respects to the Commission. Speaking in French, he replied to the President's words of welcome, thanking the Allies for all they had done, and assuring us of the appreciation and confidence of his countrymen. After this ceremony we adjourned to the Barracks and attended a luncheon in his honour, given by the officers of the Garrison. The banquet was a simple affair, with the usual loyal and

patriotic toasts in Polish and French, and when the Polish national hymn had been played the General shook hands with the company and departed. Haller impressed one as a man of great enthusiasms, of tremendous energy and vitality. He is tactful and diplomatic, but, while labouring under no illusions as to the difficulties which confront his country, his views have been broadened by his military experience in Russia and in France. He commands the devoted enthusiasm of those who know him best, and who have served under him ; he is, as the Americans say, " a live wire," and one cannot be five minutes in his company without becoming conscious of the fact.

Corpus Christi Day was observed on the 19th, a beautiful day of sunshine. Two altars were erected in the Square, where Mass was celebrated and a procession of clergy paraded the streets, followed by the devout peasantry and preceded by young girls in white, who strewed their path with flowers. The clamour and jangle of the bells drowned the noise of the shuffling feet, the jingle of horses' harness, and the quaver of the chanting voices. The clouds of incense, the scent of crushed flowers, rendered the air heavy and aromatic, while the gorgeous robes of the clergy, the gay ribbons of the women, the drab dress of

the peasants, and the silent crowds of onlookers gave an atmosphere of picturesque solemnity to the scene. When the religious ceremony was concluded the usual review of the troops was held, before they marched off in the direction of the Barracks.

The visit of the Polish General has, however, had an unfortunate sequel. The following extract from the local paper speaks for itself :—

“ In Issue 5 of the *Teschner Volksblatt* appeared an article entitled ‘ General Haller in Teschen.’ The Poles, feeling themselves insulted by this article, the local authorities took action. The matter was threshed out between Commissary Podgorski and a member of the Committee responsible for the publication of the paper. On Wednesday, the 18th, an orderly came to Professor Müller, and handed him a letter written in French, in which he was politely requested to come to the Demelplatz at one o’clock in the afternoon.

“ Professor Müller thought the invitation a peculiar one, and, suspecting some design against his person, he went at 12 noon to the *Brauner Hirsch*, where the Entente Commission holds its sittings, and made inquiries as to the meaning of the note.

“ Professor Müller was directed to Rittmeister Czaczka, who demanded in a most uncompromising manner, whether he had written the article on General Haller. Professor Müller denied this, whereupon Rittmeister Czaczka declared that he had been with General Haller and shared his dangers, that he had been his A.D.C., that he was personally insulted by the article in question, and that he would slap the author’s ears. The statements made in the article were untrue, and he knew exactly what happened. Professor Müller declared his readiness, in case of the article having contained actual falsehoods, to publish a correction from Rittmeister Czaczka. Rittmeister Czaczka, however, declined to allow his name to appear. The article must be recalled, he said, otherwise the author or the editor would have his ears slapped. Professor Müller protested against this threat, and said that he wished to lay the matter before the Committee of his paper. The same evening the Committee met, when it was decided to entrust the local secretary of the German National Socialist Party with the settlement of the business. On Thursday, at 12 noon, Rittmeister Czaczka was informed of the decision.

“ The matter is, as we go to press, still under discussion.

“ An account of this incident, which is entirely contrary to the facts, having already appeared in the *Dziennik Cieszynski*, we feel ourselves compelled to make public the real facts of the case.”

The article in question was undoubtedly calculated to give offence ; it had not only cast doubts upon the military qualifications of General Haller, but aspersions on his personal honour. I met Dr. Müller in the corridor, showed him to Czaczka's room where Harris happened to be at the moment, and the incident transpired as above related. As an immediate and complete apology was not forthcoming, the unfortunate Müller was arrested by the Polish authorities and clapped into prison, the justification for this step being that the article was not a mere spiteful attack on a prominent Polish officer, but that the paper in question was known to be the mouth-piece of an Anti-Polish League, which existed for the sole purpose of fomenting dissatisfaction with and disloyalty to the Polish State. In the afternoon of the day on which Müller was arrested, I received two of the most prominent members of the German party, who put the case before me, and asked me to bring the matter up before the Commission at my

earliest convenience, but, as I had left before the inquiry was held, I did not hear the issue. But the incident is an admirable illustration of prevailing conditions in Silesia, and of what is likely to happen in the future. There is something droll in the idea of a Polish Staff officer slapping the ears of a fat German professor in the public Square, in the presence of the Fräuleins taking their Anti-Prandial constitutional, but, as events turned out, we had not the satisfaction of witnessing the comedy. There would be, it seems to me, much slapping of ears in England if, unfortunately, the prosaic law of libel and Dame Dora did not step in, and put a stop to this direct and picturesque method of salving wounded vanity and personal pique.

June 21st.

Received a wire from the War Office ordering me to return to London for a new appointment.

My mind is, however, already made up, and when I return to England I shall claim my discharge. There are moments when the five years I have spent in the army seem to me to be mere wasted years ; but, the fact is, I have grown much older than five years since 1914, and it is extraordinary how complacently

one settles down, once one has begun to realize one's limitations. I do not regret having had my illusions, and there is a sadness in looking back on them, but I have reached the stage when I know they were illusions merely. They made life passionate and full while they lasted, and, when they vanished, I found I had learned to look on life with broader sympathies, and with a better understanding of its meaning.

There were moments when I was discontented and dissatisfied, and girded against circumstances, but one usually finds, when one girds against circumstances, that it is not circumstances that are at fault, but oneself. The majority of men pass their lives in the pursuit of what is, at best, only an illusory happiness; they suffer from the lack of high impulse, and are unhappy, not because there is nothing to do, but because there is so much to do, and through diffidence or indolence they refrain from doing it.

Sometimes I hesitate to return, for the old world I knew has changed so much, and we have grown away from each other. It has heard the tumult of distant warfare, and read its papers and discussed the campaign as one might discuss the campaigns of Napoleon, and so quiet did it seem in that sheltered corner

that it seemed to have escaped the common sorrow of the times. But that is a mistake. When I call up before me the faces of my friends, I know how great the mistake is. Many have gone, and those who remain have, like myself, grown older; sickness, wounds, bereavement, have sobered them, and those on whom I must in the future count for companionship are, in the main, new friends. It is this that makes me anxious to return, and at the same time to dread the going back.

I shall miss the country here which, at the moment, is at its fairest—the green shaded *Anlagen*; the Beskiden with their warring cascades and murmuring pine woods; the Jablunkau Pass with its cosy farms, its rich fields, its peaceful hamlets, with their antique streets and peeping spires, with its vista, in the dim distance, of the tumbled mass of the snow-clad Carpathians. The Silesian landscape possesses a mellow quiet beauty of its own—whether it is the vivid greenness of the grass, the rich foliage of the trees, the undulating pasture land, the stillness of the countryside, with its background of mountain and crag and its wooded peaks, is hard to analyse. On Easter Monday we climbed the Jaworowy. The snow still lingered in the sheltered folds of the mountain, and the wind blew snell and

keen down the pass. The grass had acquired its first soft verdure ; the trees wore their fresh coating of green, and even the mining villages possessed, in the distance, an ideal beauty of their own. There was little movement on the roads ; a two-horse waggon drew up in front of an inn ; a train steamed slowly through the Pass ; a couple of peasants crossed a ploughed field slowly ; on the opposite side of the valley the smoke from the factory chimneys rose lazily above the towns. At the keeper's house on the summit of the mountain, we split a couple of bottles of wine and studied the portraits of successive presidents of the *Beskiden Verein* with which the walls of the room were ornamented.

"Comme c'est joli," said Marschal, looking out of the windows towards the Carpathians.

"C'est magnifique," I agreed.

"Mais je n'ai jamais vu de si laides figures," he continued, looking at the portraits on the wall. "Mon Dieu, comme ils sont laids ces types de Boches. Regardez donc cette tête—là !"

It was indeed an ugly collection, so we finished our wine and called for the bill and took our departure. The *têtes de Boches* had quite taken the sunshine out of the afternoon.

Somehow I thought of France at the

moment and seemed to see a sad old couple in their dingy little cottage in Haute Avesnes, whence, on clear days, they looked across the battle line and saw a corner of their own country-side at Willerval. There were moments when Monsieur would let his pipe go out and his weather-beaten hands would fall listlessly on his chair as we talked, and Madame would lay her knitting in her lap and a silence would fall on the three of us. I knew what was happening. They had quite forgotten me and gone wandering together down the quiet road they had trodden so far together. They were remembering the long summer nights of their romance and the happiness of that time; their early married days, the coming of the son and the daughter, their slow ripening and the good promise they had brought into their lives. They were recalling all the little sorrows and triumphs which made up the bundle of their lives and which made them beautiful. Presently, they would retrace their steps very slowly, and come back to the present, and life would suddenly grow very grey and dreary for them again. On these occasions I always wanted to steal away quietly, and leave them alone with their sorrow, for the bare little room had become holy ground. But, after a little, the

dark cloud would lift, Monsieur would relight his pipe, and Madame, gathering her work together, would fall to some household task busily, and I would pretend I did not know that they had been away on a journey.

Then Madame would say, remembering her duties as hostess :

“ Monsieur prendra un petit verre de vin ? Ce n'est pas du bon vin tel que nous avons l'habitude de boire chez nous avant la guerre, mais Monsieur comprendra.”

Presently the three glasses were brought, and she would wipe the bottle of cheap wine carefully with her apron, and fill the glasses ceremoniously.

“ À votre santé, madame. À votre santé, monsieur,” I would pledge them slowly.

“ À votre santé, monsieur,” they would answer quietly.

And we would sip the wine in silence ; and I used to think it was the best wine in the whole world.

But there were moments when I would have given the world for a whiff of peat reek, and the smell of the heather, or to have seen the mist wreathing and whirling on the hill-tops, or to have heard the roar of the burn in spate. Sometimes I would close my eyes and imagine that I heard the cry of the whaup on

the moors, or the bleat of the sheep on the hills, and I was like one starving within sight of plenty.

I shall miss, too, the Villa Linhart, where in winter we played our indoor games and made merry with song and dance; where I talked Scott with my hostess, and Scotland and the clans and Dickens and Thackeray and Wilde and Lafcadio Hearn and Jerome and Jacobs and Tagore and Shaw and Stevenson; and when the days lengthened we would sit in the garden, and when it grew dusk retire to the summer-house and light the Chinese lanterns, and Greta would fetch her mandoline, and we would gather round the table and fill our glasses and sing, I am afraid, the old-fashioned, romantic German songs, to the murmur of the music of the river. Sometimes a voice would take up the chorus in the dark, and we would fall silent until the melody died away quaveringly in the woods. Then the frogs in the marsh would take up the refrain and crack the night with their discordant croaking, and when they had ceased the stillness seemed filled with a myriad of strange noises, as the setting sun, lingering on the distant hills, paled and merged with the vague blackness of the darkening heavens.

Somehow, these old-fashioned songs make

one sad—these old songs of adventure and war, which we sang lustily during our *Wanderjahre*, when life lay clear and brave before us, and disillusionment and bitterness were mere words to us. I thought them good brave days when we lingered late at the *Kneipe* and went home with the fresh winds of the morning blowing in our faces, and attended the *Mensur* and strutted the streets with the swashbuckling Teutonen swaggering in all the pride of “Korpship.” I wonder whether this life, with its deification of Kaiser and Vaterland, its glorification of blood, its exaltation of the barbaric virtues, has disappeared in the new Germany. The beer-soaked tables, the atmosphere reeking of blood and perspiration and iodoform and cigars and sawdust, the punctilious salutings of the rival corporations, the duellists munching their sausages and swilling their lager, the dancing couples swirling to the tune of the *Matiche* strummed at the piano, while the wounded were being stitched, the brutal laugh, the coarse jest, the cultivated callousness to pain, the gaping rustics in the gallery, eagerly watching the butchery in the cock-pit beneath. Can one wonder if this system resulted in brutalization, with its later manifestations. During one of these duels I turned to an acquaintance and said, “Surely

you have had enough now. This bloodshed is pure madness." "*Mein Lieber,*" came the reply, "we Germans are like the ancient Romans, we must have blood, and more blood. We must harden these young fellows to the sight of it. Come," he said, as a rapier blade broke and glanced off his collar, and the duel was temporarily interrupted, "look at Hentzel, there, getting sewn up, he looks green. *Herr Je*, how it must hurt." He laughed as the doctor stitched his victim viciously. "Good. We Germans must have war." The war was inevitable. The shadow, no bigger than a man's hand, would fall across our most intimate gatherings, when old *Pfarrer* Battenberg, with his venerable beard and kindly eye, would look across the dinner-table to his son and myself, and say quietly: "I wonder when you two young men will meet each other in battle. I served in the army in '70 as a *Freiwillige*, and was present at the Siege of Paris. We did not think we should have to fight the French; but we did—and one day England and Germany will go to war too. I am an old man, and may not live to see it, but it is coming. You English have not willed it nor have we Germans, but it stands written and must be, and God knows where it will end." In August, 1914, after war broke out,

I called on the old *Pfarrer*, in Frankfurt, but he had died in July.

Germany, the land of Schiller and Goethe, of Luther, of the *Minnesänger*, of poetry and romance, of mediæval legend of chivalry and fairy tale, the land of *Wanderjahre*, alas, how soon were our dreams shattered when we went thither. We dozed weary hours in her musty classrooms; we found her philosophical system without inspiration and illumination; her theology a mere resumé of agnostic ratiocination; her academic teachers the paid hirelings of a warped and aggressive imperialism. Propaganda formed the basis of their curricula. Gunkel, the blond Prussian, invariably concluded his lectures with the following exordium. "So, gentlemen, the history of every nation shows us a slow emergence from a jumble of rude internecine tribes; the gradual evolution towards tribal, and finally towards national consciousness; a steady rise to power; a period of glory and then—inevitable decay. The process follows a natural and inexorable law. You see it, gentlemen, in operation now, in the case of England. England, that decadent England, that crumbling Colossus"—the subtlety of the formula consisting in the implication that one power stood between Germany and the

realization of her dream of universal domination. "Deutschland, Deutschland über alles" was sung at a thousand Bismarck *Kommers*, at ten thousand *Kneipen* with fierce enthusiasm; it was the working creed of every German missionary who set out to preach the gospel of *Kultur* throughout the world. The catchword "Deutschland's Zukunft liegt auf dem Wasser" (Germany's future lies on the sea) plunged the world into the mad competition of armaments. The dull smouldering hatred of socialist against capitalist, the carefully inculcated hate against England taught in the schools, contributed to plunge the country into a profound and morbid psychological neurasthenia. It was an abnormal Germany that went to war, a Germany incapable of thinking sanely or of acting reasonably—when the exile of Amerongen was as God, of whom to speak disrespectfully was to risk punishment and imprisonment.

These days are gone, and the world which saw them has passed like the unreal experience of a dream. The little French reading circle, which used to meet in Thomas' red room in the Stephanstrasse, has been broken up years ago; Paul Fort and the absurdities of his "*Vers et Prose*," the evanescent questions of literary interest which we used to discuss over our

cocoa and cigarettes, have long been forgotten. Rausch, polishing his flimsy verses, has vanished so completely that not even his features remain in my memory. The younger Spira died before the war, but of the other members of the little coterie of so-called intellectuals I know nothing; they may be dead, for aught I know, and it is curious to think that I may have had a hand in their killing. Romance I buried years ago, but in the garden of the Villa Linhart, it seemed to me that there were moments when I caught once again a glimpse of the dim, half-forgotten world of illusion in which I at one time lived.

I shall miss the Commission: Tissi, with his bad French and worse German, his brusqueness, his dictatorial manners, his comic perplexities, his struttings and operatic posings; Marschal, with his gay abandon, his simple enjoyment, his sane and humorous criticisms, his corkscrew trousers and the indefinable suggestion of the *Grande Armee*; Howe, with his quiet repartee, his faculty for witty verse, his whimsical observance of the men and manners about him; Walsh, with his amiable placidity, his quaint puzzled airs, his correct attitude towards life; Harris, with his shrewd and caustic comments. Rawlings, with his breezy air, and complete *joie de vivre*, I shall

probably meet at the ends of the earth in a quarter of a century, an admiral and portly ; and Picton, the man of many tongues, looking plump, will possibly be ordering a meal of birds'-nests wherever that particular dish is popular. I shall hear the laughter of the supper-parties in the *Brauner Hirsch* when I sit in my study on winter nights, while the spume breaks over the pier-head and the North Sea lashes itself in pale fury, and, with a touch of heartache, I shall see the faces of the vanished company rise once more above the wine-glasses.

June 27th.

Travelled from Vienna to Paris with Freeman of the Navy, who had left Budapest for urgent and particular reasons of his own. He told me some interesting facts about conditions in the Hungarian capital. The peasantry are conservative and reactionary, and when ordered to supply the town with provisions the stout peasant women, after retaining sufficient for their own needs, pour the remainder of the milk into the pig troughs and smash the eggs which they cannot use themselves. Paper money is debased ; false notes are in circulation in enormous quantities ; commerce and industry are at a standstill ;

and it is universally felt that the successes against the Czechs in Slovakia are temporary and illusory, and that the most brilliant military triumphs can achieve no permanent results. When Bela Kuhn issued his famous order to close the churches and convert them into public refuges, a wit in the town passed a blasphemous joke, and amid the universal shout of laughter that went up Kuhn lost prestige for ever. As to the method of administering justice, F. related the following: On one occasion he attended a Sitting of the Law Courts, during the Communist regime. Three "judges" were on the Bench—two butchers and a seamstress who acted as President, illiterate women of the lowest class. The accused was a respectable woman of the bourgeoisie, whose alleged crime was the theft of a blouse. The Court was crowded with a mob of the unwashed, whose sympathies were openly against the prisoner. The trial was conducted after the following manner:—

President. "Why did you steal this blouse?"

Accused. "I didn't steal the blouse."

President. } "You did steal the
1st and 2nd Butchers. } blouse."

Accused. "Who told you I stole the blouse?"

President. } “ One of the prolet-
1st and 2nd Butchers. } tariat.”

Accused. “ That is no evidence.”

President. “ You are one of the bourgeoisie—that is sufficient. Besides, we have the word of one of the proletariat, and a proletarian can never lie.”

Accused. “ That itself is a lie. A proletarian can lie like any one else.” (*Uproar.*)

When comparative quiet had been restored, the accused continued with increased vehemence :

Accused. “ The proletariat, I repeat, can lie. The entire proletariat are liars, and you yourself are the biggest liar amongst them.”

President. “ That’s done it. Twelve years’ hard. Remove the prisoner.”

In Paris I met Rawlings at the *Majestic* returning from leave. When I saw him he was in his room staunching a cut in his cheek after shaving.

“ Ha, ha ! ” he laughed. “ I don’t think it at all funny, I really don’t. But, tell me, what ill wind blows you here ? Sacked, I suppose ? ”

“ I really came to tell you,” I said firmly, “ that I want your bath. By the by, I met a Naval bird who says he knows you—rigged up in the most extraordinary uniform, khaki,

Naval Brigade crest, red band in his hat, red tabs, crown on shoulder, lieutenant-commander stripes on his arm."

"Not F.?" he cried joyously. "Damme, I haven't seen the laddie for years. When's he coming round?"

"*Ah, voilà!*" I said as the door opened and F. walked in.

The two gallant sailors rushed into each other's arms, after the manner of the Navy, and kissed repeatedly, and I turned away my head, so that I might not witness this touching and affecting scene.

After lunch R. set off for Warsaw. "Look me up," he cried as the car moved off, "any time you are in London. Junior Naval and Military, or the Goat Club. What's yours again? Ah, yes, of course, I'd forgotten for the moment. Vine Street, isn't it? Yes, of course, stupid of me, very."

I shall regret leaving the army to resume an academic career, for I am conscious that, despite my gain in experience, I have suffered to a certain extent from intellectual stagnation during the five years I have spent in it. When I used to complain of this, people would say to me, "You will be able to pick up the threads again immediately the war is over, never fear," and I would reply, "By that time I shall

have lost all literary incentive, for I have grown away from the academic atmosphere and lost touch with academic friends. The very students will be more expert than myself. Chemists, physicists, and medical men have gained by the war, I have only lost."

"You have only lost time," people would reply, "time which you can make up if you will. A man has, after all, the making of himself, and will ultimately become what he chooses to make himself, and the measure of his success is just the extent by which he has fallen short of his ideals. When we make worldly success the final standard, we lose the proper perspective of life. You are still young. It is Bergson who says, 'A man is just the age that he wills to be.'

"We have not changed as a nation. Wars do not change a people, only religion can. It is no excuse to plead that circumstances have been against you, for the man of character and grit will find a way to overcome them, and past endeavour is an earnest of future performance."

I would accept the implied reproach. There are so many who have lost life itself.

.

What a welter this Central Europe is! And yet, there are some who dream of the

lion lying down with the lamb, of the sword being beaten into ploughshares, of a world where the din of strife and the clash of arms is stilled, of Czech and Pole and Magyar and Rumanian, and Croat, and Slovene and Italian and Serb, dwelling together in unity as brethren, and settling down to amiable and peaceful commercial rivalry, and sharing their common burdens and difficulties, and starting on their careers, joyously, as strong men rejoicing to run a race. We picture to ourselves a bruised and bleeding Poland binding up her grievous wounds, and turning a meek face of longing and appeal towards the noble-hearted sister nations in the west who have hastened to succour her in her hour of need—a Poland filled with charity and the spirit of forgiveness for those who have wronged her, overflowing with the milk of human kindness and burning with the desire to live at peace with all men, and to love her neighbour as herself. We imagine a Czecho-Slovakia, united in happy union, bound by a common bond of kindness and forbearance, and pressing on towards the mark of a noble and lofty idealism. So be it. But what do we really find? Pole and Ruthenian at daggers drawn over East Galicia; Ukrainians joyfully indulging in a fierce unrestrained orgy of

pogroms ; Czech and Pole at loggerheads over the Silesian question ; Czech and Slovak snarling at one another, with Hlinka hounding on his Slovaks against the hateful domination of his overlords ; Magyar routing the Czech from the Slovak territory ; Rumania hurling defiance at the Allies, persecuting the Protestant clergy, and plundering and imprisoning those who differ from her politically, denying civil and religious rights to oppressed minorities and removing agricultural implements and machinery and rolling stock in Transylvania ; Serb and Italian quarrelling over the Dalmatian seaboard ; Montenegrins driving the Serb from his Black mountains ; Catholic Croat and Orthodox Serb cutting one another's throats to the greater Glory of God Greek and Bulgarian glowering at each other hatefully, hand on knife ; Magyar and Bulgarian united in common detestation for the Rumanian ; Czech shouting " Traitor " to the Jugo-Slav for having sold his birthright to the Italians ; Bolshevismus contra Mundum ; everywhere hate and malice and wrath and uncharitableness and evil speaking towards one's fellow-men. Long-bearded, long-gowned, long-nailed, unkempt *papas* skulk in the Warsaw streets ; priests murmur their holy Latin, immemorial acolytes swing their

censers, the three-hatted successor of Peter sulks in his Vatican, and men turn and laugh derisively when he plucks up courage to bid them be charitable and mend their ways. Poor Pope!

Yea, verily, it is a sight to make the angels weep. Peace. There shall be no peace. The breaking up of the "Ramshackle Empire" has spread the local cancer, until it has tainted the whole of Central Europe, and we in England, hearing the din from the cock-pit, turn our eyes toward it with languid indifference. We have our own problems; we have enough on our own hands without troubling our heads about other people. Poles and Czechs and Slovaks and Ruthenians and Ukrainians and Magyars and Serbs and Croats and Slovenes and Albanians—what are these quaint, queer histrionic brigands to us! Let them cut each other's throats to their heart's content if it amuses them. Ah, yes, poor fellows—they are very musical, the Poles, Padewereski is a Pole, and one of our Jameses gave a Queen to Bohemia, did he not? How very romantic! Do the Czechs and Rumanians abolish monuments? Well, the local authorities had to think about widening the streets, and, no doubt, they were in bad taste. Some of our own might well be abolished, and no

one be a whit the worse. Do the Ukrainians murder Jews? How curious—but we have heard that story before, and the picture can't be so bad as it is painted. Do the Rumanians stop the payment of the salaries of their ministers and professors because they won't subscribe to a particular religious formula? Well, their congregations will make up their minister's salary, and, as for the professors, they are highly overpaid as it is. Evict the people from their farms and lands? The country was over-populated and, if it seems a hard thing to do, it is for their own good in the end.

Then we talk about the high cost of living, and shut our eyes to the real issues at stake. But how very interesting it all is! Anyhow, the war is over, and we have beaten the Germans, so what more do you want. Ah! Germany. Yes, we had forgotten Germany for the moment.

Beaten the Germans. We have reduced their army, we have taken away their colonies and their fleet; we have forced them to pay an indemnity, we have crippled them for a generation. But there is one thing we have not done. We have not changed the nation. We have created an immense number of paper states, which we seek to bolster up by promises

and by loans ; we have delimited their frontiers and set their house in order. What, pray, is there to prevent ambitious Germany from quietly gathering new strength, and re-arming in secret ? Very frail the reed we lean upon. Who can foretell the future course of Central European diplomacy ? What *rapprochements* and secret alliances and treaties may not be entered into ! It is not this frail barrier of discontented and embittered and disillusioned and disunited paper peoples that will hinder the German march to the Mediterranean to strike a blow at our Eastern Empire. But what, then, is the solution of this problem, for you have profoundly depressed us by the picture you have drawn ? I am neither a prophet nor a prophet's son. I cannot tell you.

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