

THE TRADERS' WAR

The Austro-Serbian conflict is a mere bagatelle—as if Hoboken should declare war on Coney Island—but all the civilization of Europe is drawn in.

The real war, of which this sudden outburst of death and destruction is only an incident, began long ago. It has been raging for tens of years, but its battles have been so little advertised that they have been hardly noted. It is a clash of traders.

It is well to remember that the German empire began as a business agreement. Bismarck's first victory was the *Zollverein*, a tariff agreement between a score of petty German principalities. This commercial league was solidified into a powerful state by military victories. It is small wonder that German business men believe that their trade development depends on force.

"*Ohne Armee, kein Deutschland*" ["Without an Army, no Germany"] is not only the motto of the Kaiser and the military caste. The success of the militarist propaganda of the Navy League and other such jingo organizations depends on the fact that nine Germans out of ten read history that way. . . .

After the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 came the "*gründerzeit*"—the "foundation period." Everything German leaped forward in a stupendous impulse of growth.

The withdrawal of the German mercantile marine from the sea has reminded us of the worldwide importance of their transportation services. All these great German fleets of ocean liners and merchantmen have sprung into being since 1870. In steel manufacture, in textile work, in mining and trading, in every branch of modern industrial and commercial life, and also in population, German development has been equally amazing.

But geographically all fields for development were closed.

In the days when there had been no army and no united Germany, the English and French had grabbed all the earth and the fullness thereof. . . .

England and France met German development with distrust and false sentiments of peace. "We do not intend to grab any more territory. The peace of Europe demands the maintenance of the status quo."

With these words scarcely cold on her lips, Great Britain took

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South Africa. And pretended to endless surprise and grief that the Germans did not applaud this closing of another market.

In 1909, King Edward—a great friend of peace—after long secret conferences, announced the *Entente Cordiale*, whereby France promised to back up England in absorbing Egypt, and England pledged to support France in her Morocco adventure.

The news of this underhand "gentleman's agreement" caused a storm. The Kaiser, in wild indignation, shouted that "Nothing can happen in Europe without my consent."

The peace-lovers of London and Paris agreed that this threat of war was very rude. But they were getting what they wanted without dirtying their hands in blood, so they consented to a Diplomatic Conference at Algeciras. France solemnly promised not to annex Morocco, and above all pledged herself to maintain "the Open Door." Everyone was to have an equal commercial chance. The storm blew over. . . .

One example out of a thousand of how the French observed their pledge to maintain an Open Door in Morocco is furnished by the method of buying cloth to uniform the Moorish Army.

In accordance with the "Act of Alegeciras," which required that all contracts should be put up at international auction, it was announced that the Sultan had decided on a large order of khaki to make uniforms for his soldiers. "Specifications" would be published on a certain day—in accordance with the law—and the cloth manufacturers of the world were invited to be present.

The "specifications" demanded that the cloth should be delivered in three months and that it should be of a certain width—three yards, as I remember. "But," protested the representatives of a German firm, "there are no looms in the world of that width. It would take months to build them." But it developed that a far-seeing—or forewarned—manufacturer of Lyons had installed the necessary machines a few months before. He got the contract.

The Ambassador at Tangier has had to hire extra clerks to forward to Berlin the complaints of German merchants protesting against the impossibleness of France's "Open Door." . . .

Perhaps the most exasperating thing of all has been the row over the Baghdad Railroad. A group of German capitalists secured a franchise for a railroad to open up Asia Minor by way of Baghdad and the Persian Gulf. It was an undeveloped country which offered just the kind of commercial outlet they needed. The scheme was blocked by England on the pretext that such a

railroad might be used by the Kaiser to send his army half-way round the world to steal India.

But the Germans understood very well that the English merchants and ship owners did not want to have their monopoly of Indian trade threatened.

Even when they scored this big commercial victory—the blocking of the Baghdad Railroad—the English diplomats protested their love of peace and their pure-hearted desire to preserve the status quo. It was at this juncture that a deputy in the Reichstag said, "The status quo is an aggression."

The situation in short is this. German capitalists want more profits. English and French Capitalists want it all. This war of commerce has gone on for years. . . .

No one can have a more utter abhorrence of militarism than I. No one can wish more heartily that the shame of it may be erased from our century. "It is neither by parliamentary oratory nor the votes of majorities that the great questions of the day can be solved but by blood and iron"—"*durch Eisen und Blut*"—these words of Bismarck are the motto of the Reaction. Nothing stands more squarely in the path of democratic progress.

And no recent words have seemed to me so ludicrously condescending as the Kaiser's speech to "his" people when he said that in this supreme crisis he freely forgave all those who had ever opposed him. I am ashamed that in this day in a civilized country anyone can speak such archaic nonsense.

But worse than the "personal government" of the Kaiser, worse even than the brutalizing ideals he boasts of standing for, is the raw hypocrisy of his armed foes, who shout for a peace which their greed has rendered impossible.

More nauseating than the crack-brained bombast of the Kaiser is the editorial chorus in America which pretends to believe—would have us believe—that the White and Spotless Knight of Modern Democracy is marching against the Un-speakably Vile Monster of Medieval Militarism.

What has democracy to do in an alliance with Nicholas, the tsar? Is it liberalism which is marching from the Petersburg of Father Gapon,* from the Odessa of pogroms? Are our editors naïve enough to believe this?

* A Russian priest who became a police agent. He led workers to present a petition to the tsar at the St. Petersburg Winter Palace, January 22, 1905, only to have them shot down by troops.—Ed.

No. There is a falling out among commercial rivals. One side has observed the polite forms of diplomacy and has talked of "peace"—relying the while on the eminently pacific navy of Great Britain and the army of France and on the millions of semi-serfs whom they have bribed the Tsar of All the Russias (and The Hague) to scourge forward against the Germans. On the other side there has been rudeness—and the hideous Gospel of Blood and Iron.

We, who are Socialists, must hope—we may even expect—that out of the horror of bloodshed and dire destruction will come far-reaching social changes—and a long step forward towards our goal of peace among men.

But we must not be duped by this editorial buncombe about Liberalism going forth to Holy War against Tyranny.

This is not Our War.

1914

WITH THE ALLIES

At the height of the great European war, the cataclysm of western civilization, Geneva glitters like Monte Carlo at the height of the season—Geneva, mother of the Red Cross; hostess of humanitarian congresses for the civilizing of warfare. It has come at last, what all the world dreaded, with the bombarding of open towns, the massacre of noncombatants, murder and mutilation of the wounded—the sack and burning of Louvain—and in Geneva are gathered the gaiety and frivolity of Europe. Germans, English, French dine together, dance together, and throng the gambling-table of the Kursaal at night, or crowd to see the latest naughty revue from Paris. At night the lights along the lake are a string of jewels. Red-coated orchestras play the lightest, merriest music, drowned in the laughing chatter of extravagant women and men in evening dress—English, French, German. The gay streets are patrolled by the fantastic girls of the Parisian boulevards. Nobody has any money; everyone is a trifle shabby. But all mention of the greatest war in the world's history is considered distinctly bad taste. Except for the Swiss mobilization orders posted on the walls, the companies of young soldiers drilling in the fields among the ungathered harvests, the silent throngs of

French and German reservists in front of their consulates, war is a remote, an incredible thing. The papers speak of it, and every train brings piles of blatant, shrieking French and German journals. Everybody reads the papers; for a few minutes they discuss the news—"Do you think the Germans will actually get to Paris?" "Will that end the war?" "They actually wanted me to serve my military service, the brutes!"—and then the talk veers round to women and the theater and the latest place to dine. You take your *apéritif* and look out across the sunlit lake toward the mighty barrier of snow-peaks, with the white little towns at their foot, and wonder if it isn't time to go to lunch. . . .

We took what was said to be the last train for Paris. The Germans, which was our name for a curious, alien race absolutely unconnected with those nice people in Berlin and Munich, were reported within thirty kilometers. It was even doubtful if our train would ever arrive. At Cernadon we pulled into the station beside ten third-class carriages which rocked with singing and cheering. Every door and window was decorated with masses of green vines and the branches of trees; and through the leaves stared hundreds of young faces and waving arms. They were the youth and the young blood of France, the Class of 1914, bound for the military centers to undergo a training that should stamp out all their impulses and ideas, and turn them into infinitesimal parts of an obedient machine to hurl against the youth of Germany, who had been treated the same way. "*Vive la France!*" they shouted. "We'll cut the Kaiser's mustaches! We want Alsace-Lorraine!" Ten different choruses in as many different stages of the *Marseillaise*, others singing the *Sambre et Meuse*, a hundred various renditions of the latest Paris music-hall songs roared in tremendous cacophony, a glorious hymn of youth out of school and out on a gigantic lark. On the sides of the cars they had chalked lascivious caricatures of Prussians in humiliating postures before a conquering French soldier. "*Mort aux Prussos!* This train express for Berlin! Guides may be obtained here for Germans desiring to tour France!"

Later I saw regiments of veterans who had seen service in Algeria and in Belgium. Their cars were not decorated. They neither cheered nor sang, although they were going to the front. They went with that curious, detached professional air of a man going to work in a silk mill in the morning. Beasts, they wisely spent their spare time eating, drinking, and sleeping, and for

the rest obeyed their officers. That was what the Class of 1914 would become. It was not a pleasant thought.

We hitched the ten cars on behind our train, and the cheering and singing floated to us as we went on. It was late. We began to notice that every station was thronged with silent, gray-clad people, mostly women. Every crossroads was packed with them. They leaned from the windows of the houses fronting the railway, anxious-faced, weeping, waving their handkerchiefs—sisters, mothers and lovers of the Class of 1914. It began to rain toward dark, but still they stood there in the open—had been standing for hours, probably—silent, gray in the rain and gathering darkness, to see for the last time their boys on their way to fight the Germans for reasons they did not know, at the order of that superior intelligence, the Government.

At Bourg, where the line from the eastern frontier joins the railway to Lyons, we left the train for dinner, and found ourselves in a crowd of soldiers hurrying here and there, and many women dressed in the white costume of Red Cross nurses. A train pulled in slowly from the direction of Belfort. As it slowed up there came from it the appalling stench of iodoform. Men with wounded arms and hands and heads leaned out of the windows and bellowed for cigarettes. "Where are you from?" I asked one of them. "Beyond in Alsace," he answered. And the soldiers on the platform shouted: "They are from Alsace! Have we got Strasbourg yet?" "I don't know," said one of the wounded. "In the trenches one knows nothing. But there are no more Germans in France." "*Eh bien, mon ami,*" cried another; "they are within thirty kilometers of Paris!" "Do you hear that, *mes enfants?*" "That's not true," said another man with his head all wrapped up in a bloody bandage; "we killed too many of them. How many, then, are there of these damned Prussos?"

"Ah, well, *je m'en fous!* I am going home to my country and eat eggs and drink wine and the damned war can go to the devil."

The train whistled, and the long line of carriages glided away south, a vista of waving, bandaged arms. At the end were two flat cars, their floors covered with straw; as they passed we could see by the feeble light the long rows of the desperately wounded lying on their backs, and there came to us a low buzzing hum of groaning. . . .

We drew close to Paris. Soliders thickened along the roads. At the edge of every little patch of woods cavalry horses stood

hitched, and the smoke of the men's breakfasts rose from the trees. Off yonder, on a low rise of ground, a company of soldiers with their coats off were digging a trench, their high-swung spades catching the sunlight. Here a swarm of men leveled a wood with swinging axes. There they piled cobble-stones in carts, furniture and tree-trunks across the road in a rude barricade at the entrance of some village. Train after train of soldiers, carrying long gray guns on flat cars, passed us. We were now within the fortifications of the entrenched camp of Paris.

I remember how we saw the first British Tommy. Our train made a long stop in the middle of a bridge over a great river. On the parapet of the bridge, not twenty feet from us, sat a British soldier, fishing. His line was fastened to the tip of his bayonet, his cap was a little on one side of his head, and he whistled "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" as he gazed contentedly off toward the west. Hearing our English greeting, he came politely over and began to retail his adventures.

"O yuss, I been retreatin' with the others all the wye from Belgium; we'd a bit of a mix-up around Monss wye, an' I seen the Irish Guards cut to bits in Viviers Woods. My chum got took by the Prussies at a plyce I think they call it Catteau. They took the britches off him, an'—"

Just in the middle of this thrilling story another soldier came up.

"I sye," he said respectfully, "we ain't got no news down here whatever. Could you tell me, sir—do you know whether the Russians has entered Berlin?"

"Garn!" responded the other in great disgust. "Why, they 'aven't even crossed the Pyrenees yet!"

"What's the name of this place?" I asked.

"I don't rightly know, sir," answered Tommy. "We ain't been here but a week. It tykes a time to learn 'ow to sye it. These Frenchie nymes is all alike. . . ."

Our engine whistled, and we went on.

We came into Paris when the German advance was only thirty kilometers away. It was a beautiful September morning, with just a hint of crispness in the air—the kind of day when Paris returns from the country, and the streets of the city sparkle most of all the year. We emerged from the station into a city of the dead. Long vistas of empty streets—no omnibuses, no trucks, no street cars—all the shops with their shutters down and liter-

ally covered with flags. Every window displayed five flags: French, Belgian, Russian, Serbian, and English. It was almost noon; yet along the Grands Boulevards, where it is said that one can sit on the *terrasse* of a café for an hour and see the whole world pass, scarcely a human being could be seen. Not a person was visible the whole length of the Rue de la Paix. The thunder of omnibuses, the roar of motor horns, shouting of street venders, and tramping of horses' hoofs that once made this the noisiest corner in the world were still. It was as if the city had decked itself out for some vast rejoicing, and then had sickened. For a deathlike silence was over everything, in which the hoofs of my cab-horse echoed loudly. The newsboys were forbidden to cry their papers. They held them up mutely. "We will be arrested if we tell you how close the German army is to Paris, but you may read the whole thing here for five centimes." So we would buy, and cast our eye over the latest official communiqué, which said: "The strategic retreat of the Allies continues with great success. . . ."

Paris for the first time in its history failed to express any emotion. We've all heard a good deal about the calm stoicism of the Parisians when the city was in danger—of the stern courage with which they faced the siege. But the truth is that with two millions of the youth of France fighting a losing battle against the German hordes pouring down from the north, Paris, the heart and soul of France, remained tranquil, ignorant, apathetic. As the enemy approached, far from facing them, Paris emptied itself toward the south and west. Almost two million people left the city. The splendid and luxurious hotels, the palaces of the rich were offered to the Red Cross under the excuse of patriotism, but really so that the Red Cross flag would save them from German destruction. On the shutters of the closed shops were posted notices saying: "The proprietor and all the clerks have joined the army. *Vive la France!*" And yet when, after the Battle of the Marne, the population poured back into the city, these same shops reopened, and the proprietor and his clerks shamelessly reappeared; even some of the great hotels and houses were withdrawn from the Red Cross when all danger seemed past.

Regularly, day after day, a German airplane appeared out of the north, flying low over the roofs of the city, dropping a bomb here and there on innocuous streets, and a sheaf of pro-

clamations summoning the Parisians to surrender, as the Germans were at the gates of the city. It always came at about four o'clock in the afternoon, and at that time all Paris was on the streets. One became cognizant of its presence by the sound of a terrific fusillade that followed along beneath the airplane and rolled away over the city. The population took to their roofs with a variety of firearms of the most fantastic description, and blazed away. The waiter serving you at the café dropped your drink with a crash, ran in and seized his gun, and emerged again on the street to bang away at the sky. A surging wave of small boys running and people on bicycles followed the course of the machine along the streets to see where the next bomb would fall. At the cafés the waiters adopted the custom of asking you to pay as soon as they brought your *apéritif*, because they said that all the customers ran away after the airplane without paying. The German airplanes were the diversion of Paris for a long time, and everyone was disappointed when they did not come.

Meanwhile the only stores that did a rushing business were those which advertised: "*Complete mourning in six hours.*" Each day the number of people in black on the streets increased. At the Mairies hundreds of anxious women stood in line all day long asking for news of their men. That was the only real emotion that one could see anywhere about the war. No lists of wounded or dead were published. You asked for a certain man. If he were well, there was no information. If dead, the fact was briefly stated, and within twenty-four hours you received the little tin identification tag with which every soldier was equipped on going into battle.

At night Paris was the most changed. The cafés closed at eight o'clock and the restaurants at nine. There were no theaters except an occasional moving-picture show. The brilliant flood of lights from the cafés, the great golden arcs in the boulevards, the graceful necklace of lamps that traced the curves of the river and the bridges, the white brilliance of the Champs Elysées—all were dark. At half-past nine the streets were absolutely deserted. But the great white beams of five searchlights played above the roofs of Paris, sweeping the sky for the long-expected airship attack. And through the dark streets the swinging tramp of regiments under my window, coming from unknown posts, and bound no one, not even themselves, knew whither.

This morning the drums were beating for the Guignol show; we paid our two sous and sat behind a deliriously delighted mob of very small children while Papa Guignol wrestled with the Devil, and his son outwitted the Gendarme. Some of the little children wore *crêpe* bands on their left arm—and they were perfectly delighted with the performance. The sunlight fell in checkers through the leaves. Looking up through a gap in the trees we saw an airplane, very high, glinting in the sun like a metallic bird. And as we strolled down toward the gate of the Gardens there came from outside a blare of trumpets and the rolling of drums. Everyone heard it. A regiment was passing, dusty, limping, the faces of the men unshaven and lined with dirt—a regiment from the front. It swung along stiffly, the tread of sore-footed men, its slanting bayonets swinging in unison. I stood thirty feet away, yet the smell was ghastly. It was the same smell that one gets in a Bowery lodging-house on a winter's night when the heat of the stove begins to thaw bodies foul with disease and grime, and clothes crawling with vermin. The trumpets blew proudly, and the Thirtieth Regiment of the Line of the French Army shuffled swinging past between crowded sidewalks. No one made a sound. We looked on curiously, dully, at these unfamiliar beings clothed in uniforms, smelling of the slums, fresh from the glories of the battlefields, yet who were so absolutely unconnected with the Guignol show of the Luxembourg Gardens. . . .

Wraiths of mist were wreathing the top of the white tower of the Calais lighthouse when we left the restaurant and sauntered out into the Rue Royale after dinner. The Rue Royale is the Broadway of Calais. Street cars clanged along, the shops and moving picture shows were open, and past the crowd waiting at the corner store for London papers by the last boat from Folkstone strolled a laughing, chattering stream of people—bourgeoisie of the good town of Calais: soldiers, sailors, fishermen, and their girls.

From the end of the pier we could follow with our eyes the blinding funnel of the enormous searchlight that lay straight and unmoving out across the Channel until it met at the center the white focus of the English light from Dover, just where a long gray British warship slipped north from the dark into the dark again.

In the Place d'Armes they were taking down the trestles and booths of the weekly market, with laughter and shouting, by the light of torches. We wandered along a silent cobbled street between ancient gray houses and found two drunken sailors, who conducted us to a Maison de Société, where there was an all-night café, music and girls. The place was full of sailors, with a sprinkling of soldiers. In twenty different keys and times they were roaring the *Marseillaise*, punctuated with shouts of *Vive la France!* We treated, and the crowd welcomed us like brothers. It appeared that the sailors belonged to the crews of three submarines which were to leave at five o'clock in the morning for the North Sea to do battle with the Germans; the soldiers, who had been wounded, were now convalescent, and were to rejoin their regiments the next day somewhere up on the vast battle-line of the Aisne.

Toward morning, long after the sailors had gone, we drank champagne to the glory of the French arms with the three soldiers and two of the girls; and my socialist friend wanted to discover what was the real feeling back of the *Marseillaise* and the shouts of *Vive la France!* which made men so joyously go to their death.

"Why do you fight?" he asked.

"Because France is attacked by the Germans."

"But the Germans think that they are attacked, too."

"Yes, I know that," said one; "there have been some German prisoners in Calais. They are very good fellows."

"But perhaps they were attacked? Perhaps they were right?"

"It is possible," said the Frenchman.

"But if they were attacked, then why are you fighting?"

"Because," answered the other, "we were attacked, too."

"Besides," added a second, "we were called to the colors to fight for the *patrie*."

My socialist friend embarked on a discussion of war. He said that the people did not profit by war; that the advance of the working-class absolutely ceased with war; that it destroyed the best blood of the race; that it checked civilization, and hurled the poor back into the misery from which they had so long struggled to emerge. The three soldiers listened to this with the most profound interest.

"It is true," they said; "war is a terrible thing."

A grizzled man of about forty leaned forward earnestly and remarked:

"Monsieur is absolutely right. I have seen my comrades fall about me now for seven years. My best friend was killed at Charleroi, and, by God, I will avenge him on these *sacrés Prussos!* Just wait until I get back on the firing line. I know war," he added, shaking his head proudly; "I have been six years in the Colonies. Look: here is a picture of me in the middle of my native troops in Indo-China, where we have built up a fine native army to put down uprisings."

Another, a slight fellow with a charming face, said eagerly:

"Yes, I am a socialist."

"Ah!" said my friend, "now at last we have something. Why are you fighting?"

"I am fighting," answered the other, with the air of one repeating a lesson, "to destroy Prussian despotism and set the working class free."

"But the Prussian working class is fighting to destroy Russian despotism."

"Yes, that is very true. They have told me that."

"But what will you get out of destroying Prussian militarism?"

"We will get freedom from Prussian militarism. . . ."

"After this war," said the third, "there will be no more war."

"No more war," repeated the other two.

"Let's order another bottle of champagne," said the man from Indo-China. "Tomorrow we are going back to our comrades. This time we give no quarter. The Germans have been killing our wounded, and two can play at that game. . . ."

I asked the women what they thought of the war.

"The French and English are noble," said one. "The Germans are all *cochons!* *Vive la France!*"

"But what do you get out of it, this war you are cheering?"

"If Nothing! Why should I get anything out of it? But it is good for me. There are many more soldiers and sailors in Calais than ever before."

I still retain the magnificent picture of my friend exchanging clothes with one of the French soldiers and strutting about the room with martial gestures, saying that he felt he would make a fine soldier! And after that we went home through the silent streets of Calais singing, until a patrol of suspicious military men informed us that Calais was under martial law, and that the war made it impossible to allow singing on the streets. . . .

Two weeks after the terrible battle of the Marne we went to Esternay to see the battlefield. Between Esternay and Sezanne the fiercest fighting took place. There the entire front of Von Bülow's army smashed into the French right wing and fought ceaselessly for three days; continuing a rear-guard battle as it retreated northward again.

In the café at Esternay where we had lunch there were several French officers, and the French commandant of the place looked over our passports and courteously directed us to the battlefield. In Esternay itself there was a hole in a wall where a shell had struck. It had been plastered up again and two weeks more of sun and rain would so obliterate the newness that one would never know that there had been any shell. The chief indication of war was that eggs and milk were still hard to get. And then there were flies—thousands and thousands of flies—which had come to light upon the dead and would be gone with the cold weather. . . .

We passed the railway track, and walked along the Sezanne road. Regularly every three feet on the south side of the road was a little single trench where the German riflemen had held off the French infantry under a hail of shrapnel from the French guns. The French infantry had come down and across and up the meadow under cover of their artillery, and had taken the trenches at the point of the bayonet. The slaughter here had been frightful. For three days the French guns had rained death on that sloping meadow and in the woods beyond. We could see their effect upon the barns and outbuildings of a chateau that stood at the crossing of the roads, which had been utterly destroyed by the cannon and still sent up thin smoke and the stench of burned animals.

But already along the length of the battlefield a man driving a plow shouted to his oxen; already many scars of the shells lay under the brown furrow, nor could one tell where they had been. Even in the valley where the French infantry had reformed again and again under the awful fire, and where wisps of straw and a few tin cans were all that remained to show where an army had camped, new pale violet crocuses stood up from the exuberant earth like lamps in the shade.

We continued along the side road up the hill, apple trees loaded with fruit on one side, and on the other lush narrow meadows at the edge of the forest, to Chatillon, a village which

had been exposed to the full flame of battle. There it was that the Germans had made their first desperate stand, and on retreating had burned and sacked the village. Shell fire had done the rest. Directly before us, fronting the cross-roads, stood the gaunt empty walls of the village's combined store, café, and hotel; and in both directions stretched a ghastly vista of roofless houses with the stain of fire on their gaping door-lintels. Only the village church and the schoolhouse remained intact—the latter, according to the schoolmaster, because three French soldiers in the attic had kept off the Germans through holes in the tiles. We imagined the horror of those terrible days—how the simple villagers, overcome by the blasting flame of war, had been slaughtered in the streets or had fled in terror from their homes, never to return. But the schoolmaster informed us that three days after the battle all the inhabitants had come back and were staying with their friends in the neighborhood until things could be rebuilt. Even the most complete and intentional destruction, and all the concentrated fire of all the French artillery, had not been able to obliterate this one small village. . . .

In the crisp, golden afternoon we went singing along the white road to Sezanne. A French officer warned us not to go into the woods, because soldiers were searching for a few miserable half-starved Germans who had hidden there after the battle; and from the heart of the forest we heard, indeed, two rifle shots. All the time, immeasurably distant in the north, sounded the troubling thunder of the cannon, where sleepless, wretched men mechanically killed each other near Rheims. We stood for a time listening to it and looking out over the yellow, rolling plains of Champigny, the same now as when Attila the Hun had been there more than a thousand years ago.

Here in the fields were long flat mounds of yellow earth—traces of quicklime about their edges—where the dead had been dragged by the leg and buried; Germans and French together. One long mound bore a wooden cross hung with flowers, on which was inscribed: "Here lie forty-three Frenchmen of the 73rd Regiment of the Line."

of a tiger about to leap upon its prey, as he silently rowed in that direction.

"And that ain't all," he said, briefly. "That diabolical Flinders he stopped them pumping, and druv north until they found an iceberg wot had drifted down from Greenland. He ranged the schooner alongside and grappled her to the iceberg until the water in the hold all friz up again to ice cakes. Then he bore away south by west and fetched up at Jamaica, where I heard tell that the profits was a million dollars. . . ."

Having crept up behind the unsuspecting swimmer, Bill suddenly gave vent to a series of frightful hoots and struck at him viciously with an oar. "Inside the lines with you," he roared in a voice that dominated the shouts of the bathers and the crash of the surf. "Take yourself and your shameful naked limbs out of this ocean oncet! And don't come around bothering me and my ocean no more, you miserable apology for a sandabl!"

1914

THE WAR IN EASTERN EUROPE*

THE EASTERN GATE OF WAR

By here passed the American Red Cross units, the foreign Medical Missions, on their way to typhus-stricken Serbia—veteran doctors and big, robust nurses laughing at the danger and boast-

* A month after Reed returned from the western front as a correspondent for the *Metropolitan Magazine*, he left to cover the war in Eastern Europe. He was accompanied by Boardman Robinson, a Canadian artist assigned by the *Metropolitan* to illustrate Reed's stories. They had planned to be away for three months but were gone seven—from April to October 1915—and did not witness any of the grand dramatic climaxes they had anticipated. From Italy they went to Salonika, from there to Serbia, and then to Bucharest where once again there was little action. They crossed into Russia and finally landed in Petrograd after some exasperating experiences with the tsarist authorities. Once more in Bucharest, Reed determined to see Constantinople. There he was unofficially asked to leave Turkey because he had been seen talking with too many Armenians. When Bulgaria proved uneventful, and their return to Serbia and Salonika even more so, they took ship for Italy and home. Ironically, just as they left hostilities flared up, with the German and Austrian armies entering Serbia, and Bulgaria coming under attack.—Ed.

ing what they would do; and by here the gaunt, shaking survivors drifted back to tell how their comrades died.

Still they came. While we were in Salonika three new British expeditions passed through, one hundred and nineteen strong. Fresh young girls, untrained and unequipped, without the slightest idea what they must face, explored the colorful streets and the bazaars.

"No, I never had any experience in nursing," said one; "but one just nurses, doesn't one?"

A British Royal Army Medical Corps lieutenant who heard her shook his head in despair.

"The damned fools in England to let them come!" he cried. "It is almost certain death. And they are worse than useless, you know. They are the first to fall sick, and then we have to look after them."

Of course, there was a new rumor every five minutes. Day and night ephemeral newspapers flooded the streets and cafés with huge scareheads reading:

CONSTANTINOPLE FALLS
FORTY THOUSAND ENGLISH SLAUGHTERED
ON THE PENINSULA!
TURKISH REVOLUTIONISTS MASSACRE THE
GERMANS!

One evening an excited mob of soldiers with flags swept cheering along the sea-wall shouting: "Greece declares war!"

Spies infested the city. Germans with shaved heads and sword-cuts all over their faces pretending to be Italians; Austrians in green Tyrolean hats passing as Turks; stupid-mannered Englishmen who sat drinking and talking in the cafés, eavesdropping the conversation in six languages that went on about them; exiled Mohammedans of the Old Turk party plotting in corners, and Greek secret service men who changed their clothes fourteen times a day and altered the shape of their mustaches.

Occasionally out of the East a French or British warship grew slowly from the flat world of the sea, moored at the docks, and made repairs. Then the city was full of drunken sailors day and night.

For Salonika was anything but neutral. Besides the army officers on the streets, every day saw the arrival of British ships full of ammunition for the Serbian front. Every day cars loaded with

English, French, and Russian cannon disappeared into the somber mountains northward. We saw the English gunboat on its special car begin the long journey to the Danube. And through this port went the French airplanes, with their hundred pilots and *mécaniciens*; and the British and Russian marines.

And all day long the refugees poured in; political exiles from Constantinople and Smyrna, Europeans from Turkey, Turks who feared the grand smashup when the empire should fall, Greeks of the Levant. From Lemnos and Tenedos the refugee-boats carried the plague brought there by the Indian troops—even now it was spreading in the crowded lower quarters of the town. Always you could see pitiful processions crawling through the streets—men, women, and children with bloody feet limping beside broken down wagons filled with the dilapidated furniture of some wretched peasant's hut. Hundreds of Greek popes from the monasteries of Asia Minor shuffled by, their threadbare black robes and high hats yellow with dust, their feet bound with rags, and all their possessions in a gunny sack over their shoulders. In trampled courtyards of old mosques, under pillared porticos painted red and blue, half-veiled women with black shawls on their heads crowded, staring vacantly into space or weeping quietly for their men, who had been taken for the army; the children played among the weed-grown tombs of the *hadjis*; their scanty bundles of belongings lay heaped in the corners.

Late one night we walked through the deserted quarter of docks and warehouses, so filled with shouting movement by day. From a faintly lighted window came the sound of pounding and singing, and we peered through the grimy pane. It was a waterfront saloon, a low-vaulted room with a floor of hard packed earth, rough table and stools, piles of black bottles, barrel-ends, and one smoking lamp hung crazily from the ceiling. At the table sat eight men, whining a wavering Oriental song, and beating time with their glasses. Suddenly one caught sight of our faces at the window; they halted, leaped to their feet. The door flew open—hands reached out and pulled us in.

"*Entrez! Pasen Ustedes! Herein! Herein!*" shouted the company, crowding eagerly about us as we entered the room. A short, bald-headed man with a wart on his nose pumped our hands up and down, babbling in a mixture of languages: "To drink! To drink! What will you have, friends?"

"But *we* invite you—" I began.

"This is my shop! Never shall a stranger pay in my shop! Wine? Beer? *Mastica?*"

"Who are you?" asked the others. "French? English? Ah—Americans! I have a cousin—his name Georgopoulos—he live in California. You know him?"

One spoke English, another harsh maritime French, a third Neapolitan, a fourth Levantine Spanish, and still another pidgin-German; all knew Greek, and the strange patois of the Mediterranean sailor. The fortunes of war had swept them from the four corners of the Middle World into this obscure backwater on the Salonika docks.

"It is strange," said the man who spoke English. "We met here by chance—not one of us has ever known the other before. And we are all seven carpenters. I am a Greek from Kili on the Black Sea, and he is a Greek, and he, and he—from Ephesus, and Erzurum, and Scutari. This man is an Italian—he lives in Aleppo, in Syria—and this one a Frenchman of Smyrna. Last night we were sitting here just like now, and he looked in at the window like you did."

The seventh carpenter, who had not spoken, said something that sounded like a German dialect. The proprietor translated:

"This man is Armenian. He says all his family is killed by the Turks. He tries to tell you in the German he learned working on the Baghdad Railway!"

"Back there," cried the Frenchman, "I leave my wife and two kids! I go away hiding on a fisherboat—"

"God knows where is my brother." The Italian shook his head. "The soldiers took him. We could not both escape."

Now the master of the house brought liquor, and we raised our glasses to his beaming countenance.

"He is like that," the Italian explained with gestures. "We have no money. He gives us food and drink, and we sleep here on the floor, poor refugees. God will certainly reward his charity!"

"Yes. Yes. God will reward him," assented the others, drinking. The proprietor crossed himself elaborately, after the complicated fashion of the Orthodox Church.

"God knows I am fond of company," he said. "And one cannot turn away destitute men in times like these, especially men of pleasing talents. Besides, a carpenter gains good wages when he works, and then I shall be repaid."

"Do you want Greece to go to war?" we asked.

"No!" cried some; others moodily shook their heads.

"It is like this," the English-speaking Greek said slowly: "This war has driven us from our homes and our work. Now there is no work for a carpenter. War is a tearing down and not a building up. A carpenter is for building up—" He translated to the silent audience, and they growled applause.

"But how about Constantinople?"

"Constantinople for Greece! Greek Constantinople!" shouted two of the carpenters. But the others broke into violent argument.

The Italian rose and lifted his glass. "*Eviva* Constantinople Internazionale!" he cried. With a cheer everybody rose. "Constantinople Internazionale!"

"Come," said the proprietor, "a song for the strangers!"

"What was that you were singing when we came?" demanded Robinson.

"That was an Arab song. Now let us sing a real Turkish song!" And throwing back their heads, the company opened their noses in a whining wail, tapping with stiff fingers on the table while the glasses leaped and jingled.

"More to drink!" cried the excited innkeeper. "What is song without drink?"

"God will reward him!" murmured the seven carpenters in voices husky with emotion.

The Italian had a powerful tenor voice; he sang "*La donna e mobile*," in which the others joined with Oriental improvisations. An American song was called for, and Robinson and I obliged with "John Brown's Body"—which was encored four times.

Later dancing displaced music. In the flickering light of the fast-expiring lamp the proprietor led a stamping trio in the *kolo*, dance of all the Balkan peoples. Great boots clumped stiffly down, arms waved, fingers snapped, ragged clothes fluttered in brown shadow and yellow radiance. . . . Followed an Arab measure, all swaying bodies and syncopated gliding steps, and slow twirlings with closed eyes. At an early hour of the morning we were giving the company lessons in the "Boston," and the turkey trot. . . . And so ended the adventure of the Seven Carpenters of Salonika. . . .

SERBIA

We rubbed ourselves from head to foot with camphorated oil, put kerosene on our hair, filled our pockets with mothballs, and sprinkled naphthaline through our baggage; and boarded a train so saturated with formalin that our eyes and lungs burned as with quicklime. The Americans from the Standard Oil office in Salonika strolled down to bid us a last farewell. . . .

These were the ordinary precautions of travelers bound for Serbia, the country of the typhus—abdominal typhus, recurrent fever, and the mysterious and violent spotted fever. . . .

Already the warm weather and the cessation of the spring rains had begun to check the epidemic—and the virus was weaker. Now there were only a hundred thousand sick in all Serbia, and only a thousand deaths a day—besides cases of the dreadful post-typhus gangrene. In February it must have been ghastly—hundreds of dying and delirious in the mud of the streets for want of hospitals.

The foreign medical missions had suffered heavily. Half a hundred priests succumbed after giving absolution to the dying. Out of the four hundred odd doctors with which the Serbian army began the war, less than two hundred were left. And the typhus was not all. Smallpox, scarlet fever, scarlatina, diphtheria raged along the great roads and in far villages, and already there were cases of cholera, which was sure to spread with the coming of the summer in that devastated land; where battle fields, villages, and roads stank with the lightly buried dead, and the streams were polluted with the bodies of men and horses. . . .

The gorge of the Vardar, as if it were a sterile frontier between Greek Macedonia and the high valleys of New Serbia, broadened out into a wide valley rimmed with stony hills, beyond which lay mountains still higher, with an occasional glimpse of an abrupt snow peak. From every canyon burst rapid mountain streams. In this valley the air was hot and moist; irrigation ditches, lined with great willows, struck off from the river, across fields of young tobacco-plants, acres upon acres of mulberry trees, and plowed land of heavy, rich clay that looked like cotton country. Here every field, every shelf of earth, was cultivated. Higher up, on bare slopes among the rocks, sheep and goats pastured, tended by bearded peasants with huge crooks, clad in sheep-skin coats, spinning wool and silk on wooden distaffs.

Irregular, white, red-roofed villages meandered along rutted spaces where squat little oxen and black water-buffaloes dragged creaking carts. Here and there was the galleried *konak* of some wealthy Turk of the old regime, set in yellow-green towering willows, or flowering almond trees heavy with scent; and over the tumbled little town a slender gray minaret, or the dome of a Greek church.

All sorts of people hung about the stations—men turbaned and fezzed and capped with conical hats of brown fur, men in Turkish trousers, or in long shirts and tights of creamy homespun linen, their leather vests richly worked in colored wheels and flowers, or in suits of heavy brown wool ornamented with patterns of black braid, high red sashes wound round and round their waists, leather sandals sewed to a circular spout on the toe and bound to the calf with leather ribbons wound to the knees; women with their Turkish *yashmak* and bloomers, or in leather and woolen jackets embroidered in bright colors, waists of the raw silk they weave in the villages, embroidered linen underskirts, black aprons worked in flowers, heavy overskirts woven in vivid bars of color and caught up behind, and yellow or white silk kerchiefs on their heads. Many wore a black kerchief—the only sign of mourning. And always and everywhere gypsies—the men in a kind of bright turban, the women with gold pieces for earrings and patches and scraps of gay rags for dresses, barefooted—shuffling along the roads beside their caravans, or lounging about the rakish black tents of their camps.

A tall, bearded man in black introduced himself in French as a Serbian secret-service officer whose job was to keep us under observation. Once a dapper young officer came aboard and questioned him, nodding to us. The other responded.

"Dobra! Good!" he said, clicking his heels and saluting.

"That station," remarked the secret-service man as the train moved on again, "is the frontier. We are now in Serbia."

We caught a glimpse of several big, gaunt men lounging on the platform, rifles with fixed bayonets slung at their shoulders, without any uniform except the soldier's kepi.

"What would you?" shrugged our friend, smiling. "We Serbians have no longer any uniforms. We have fought four wars in three years—the First and Second Balkan Wars, the Albanian revolt, and now this one. . . . For three years our soldiers have not changed their clothes."

Now we were passing along a narrow field planted with small wooden crosses, that might have been vine poles, spaced about three feet apart; they marched beside the train for five minutes.

"The typhus cemetery of Gievgieli," he said laconically. There must have been thousands of those little crosses, and each marked a grave!

There came in sight a great, tramped-down space on a hillside beyond, honeycombed with burrows leading into the brown earth, and humped into round hutches of heaped-up mud. Men crawled in and out of the holes, ragged, dirty fellows in every variety of half-uniform, with rifle-belts criss-crossed over their breasts like Mexican revolutionists. Between were stacked rifles, and there were cannon with ox-yoke limbers and half a hundred springless ox-carts ranged along the side, while farther on the hobbled oxen grazed. Below the mud huts, at the bottom of the hill, men were drinking from the yellow river that poured down from a score of infected villages up the valley. Around a fire squatted twenty or more, watching the carcass of a sheep turn in the flames.

"This regiment has come to guard the frontier," explained our friend. "It was here that the Bulgarian *comitadjis* tried to break through and cut the railroad last week. At any moment they might come again. . . . Is the Bulgarian government responsible, or did the Austrians pay them? One can never tell, in the Balkans."

And now, every quarter-mile we passed a rude hut made of mud and twigs, before which stood a ragged, hollow-cheeked soldier, filthy and starved-looking, but with his rifle at present arms. All over Serbia one saw these men—the last desperate gleanings of the country's manhood—who live in the mud, with scanty food and miserable clothing, guarding the long-deserted railroad tracks.

At first there seemed no difference between this country and Greek Macedonia. The same villages, a little more unkempt—tiles gone from the roofs, white paint chipped from the walls; the same people, but fewer of them, and those mostly women, old men, and children. But soon things began to strike one. The mulberry-trees were neglected, the tobacco-plants were last year's, rotting yellow; corn-stalks stood spikily in weedy fields unturned for twelve months or more. In Greek Macedonia, every foot of arable land was worked; here only one field out

of ten showed signs of cultivation. Occasionally we saw two oxen, led by a woman in bright yellow head-dress and brilliantly colored skirt, dragging a wooden plow carved from a twisted oak limb, which a soldier guided, his rifle slung from his shoulder.

The secret-service man pointed to them. "All the men of Serbia are in the army—or dead—and all the oxen were taken by the government to draw the cannon and the trains. But since December, when we drove the Austrians out, there has been no fighting. So the government sends the soldiers and the oxen over Serbia, wherever they are wanted, to help with the plowing."

Sometimes, in details like these, there flashed before our imaginations a picture of this country of the dead; with two bloody wars that swept away the flower of its youth, a two months' hard guerilla campaign, then this fearful struggle with the greatest military power on earth, and a devastating plague on top of that. . . .

Gievieli shared with Valieva the distinction of being the worst plague-spot in Serbia. Trees, station, and buildings were splashed and spattered with chloride of lime, and armed sentries stood guard at the fence, where a hundred ragged people pressed murmuring—for Gievieli was quarantined. We stared through the fence at a wide, rough street of cobbles and mud, flanked by one-story buildings white with disinfectant; at almost every door flapped a black flag, the sign of death in the house. . . .

On the station a bell was ringing. The station-master blew a horn, the engine whistled, the train began to move. . . .

Late in the afternoon we halted on a siding to let a military train pass—twelve open flat-cars packed with soldiers, in odds and ends of uniforms, wrapped in clashing and vividly colored blankets. It had begun to rain a little. A gypsy fiddler played wildly, holding his one-stringed violin before him by the throat, which was carved rudely to represent a horse's head; and about him lay the soldiers, singing the newest ballad of the Austrian defeat. . . .

Every regiment has two or three gypsies, who march with the troops, playing the Serbian fiddle or the bagpipes, and accompany the songs that are composed incessantly by the soldiers—love-songs, celebrations of victory, epic chants. And all through Serbia they are the musicians of the people, traveling from one country festa to another, playing for dancing and singing. Strange

substitution! The gypsies have practically replaced oldtime traveling bards, the *goosslari*, who transmitted from generation to generation through the far mountain valleys the ancient national epics and ballads. And yet they alone in Serbia have no vote. They have no homes, no villages, no land—only their tents and their dilapidated caravans.

We tossed some packages of cigarettes among the soldiers in the cars. For a moment they didn't seem to understand. They turned them over and over, opened them, stared at us with heavy, slow, flat faces. Then light broke—they smiled, nodding to us. "*Fala*," they said gently. "*Fala lepo!* Thanks beautifully!" . . .

THE VALLEY OF CORPSES

It was the summit of Goutchevo that the Austrians seized and entrenched at the time of the second invasion. In the face of their withering fire the Serbians climbed its eastern side, foot by foot, until their trenches were also upon the narrow crest, and along a front of ten miles on top of a savage mountain was fought that strange Battle Above the Clouds which lasted fifty-four days, and ended with the retirement of the Serbs, only because the third invasion had broken their lines down by Krupaigh. After the rout at Valievo the Austrians abandoned Goutchevo without a stand.

The genial young captain who escorted us had once been a *comitadji* officer, sent by the government to organize revolt—first in Macedonia, and then in Austrian Bosnia and Herzegovina.

"Before we volunteered for *comitadji* service," he said, "we were sent to the universities in Berlin and Vienna to study the organization of revolutions, particularly of the Italian *Risorgimento*. . . ."

Our road turned to rough country way, deep in mud, then to a mere track where only mules and pedestrians could pass—winding upward through immense oaks and ashes, lost in swift mountain brooks and choked with brush. An hour's hard climb brought us to the summit of the first mountain, from which we could see the precipitous peak of Eminove Vode—"Waters of Emin," as the old Turks named it—rising tremendous from

the little valley that lay between, and splendid with the vivid green of young leaves, and great shining knobs of black rock.

In the high valley of the hills the white houses of a village lay half hidden in a sea of riotous plum blossoms. Their windows gaped wide—their doors swung idly to and fro. Behind some wall which we could not see a feminine voice was wailing shrilly, flatly, with hysterical catches, the monotonous song of mourning for the dead. The captain pulled up his horse and hallooed loudly—finally a thin, gaunt woman came slowly through the orchard.

"Have you *rackia*, sister?"

"*Ima*. I have." She went back and returned with a stone jug and a long-necked vase for us to drink from.

"What is this place?"

"It is the Rich Village of the Rackia-Makers."

"Where are all the people?"

"They are dead, of the spotted heat (typhus)."

We spurred forward through the golden silence, heavy with the scent of the plum-trees and with humming bees. The wailing died behind. Here the traveled road ended, and beyond was a mountain path untraveled save by hunters and the goatheads of high Goutchevo, but now scarred and rutted by the feet of thousands, and the passage of heavy bodies dragged through the rocks and brush.

"By here the army climbed Goutchevo," said the captain, "and those marks are the marks of cannon that we took up there." He pointed to the towering height of Eminove Vode. "Horses were no good here—and the oxen fell dead of fatigue. So we pulled them up by men—a hundred and twenty to each gun."

The path wound upward along the flank of the mountain and through a leaping stream which we waded. Here it ceased; but on the other side the deeply scored hillside rose almost straight for five hundred feet. We dismounted and led the stumbling, winded mountain horses, zigzagging from shelf to shelf of earth and crumbling rock.

"It took them three days to haul the cannon up here," panted the captain.

Resting and walking, and for level spaces riding a short distance, we climbed up through the forest of the mounting crest perhaps a thousand feet higher, over ground strewn with brass cartridge-shells, trace-leathers, bits of Serbian uniforms, and the

wheels of shattered cannon limbers. Everywhere in the woods were deserted huts thatched with leaves and the branches of trees, and caves in the ground, where the Serbian army had lived for two months in the snow. Higher up we noticed that the lower parts of the trees were covered with leaves, but that their tops were as if dead; slowly as we climbed the dead part descended, until half the forest lifted gaunt, broken spikes where the vicious hail of bullets had torn off their tops—and then came trees naked of branches. We crossed two lines of deep trenches, and emerged on the bare summit of Goutchevo, which had also once been wooded, but where now nothing but jagged stumps studded with glistening lead remained.

On one side of this open space were the Serbian trenches, on the other side the Austrian. Barely twenty yards separated the two. Here and there both trenches merged into immense pits, forty feet around and fifty feet deep, where the enemy had undermined and dynamited them. The ground between was humped into irregular piles of earth. Looking closer, we saw a ghastly thing: From these little mounds protruded pieces of uniform, skulls with dragged hair, upon which shreds of flesh still hung; white bones with rotting hands at the end, bloody bones sticking from boots such as the soldiers wear. An awful smell hung over the place. Bands of half-wild dogs slunk at the edge of the forest, and far away we could see two tearing at something that lay half-covered on the ground. Without a word the captain pulled out his revolver and shot. One dog staggered and fell thrashing, then lay still—the other fled howling into the trees; and instantly from the depths of the wood all around came a wolfish, eerie howling in answer, dying away along the edge of the battlefield for miles.

We walked on the dead, so thick were they—sometimes our feet sank through into pits of rotting flesh, crunching bones. Little holes opened suddenly, leading deep down and swarming with gray magnots. Most of the bodies were covered only with a film of earth, partly washed away by the rain—many were not buried at all. Piles of Austrians lay as they had fallen in desperate charge, heaped along the ground in attitudes of terrible action. Serbians were among them. In one place the half-eaten skeletons of an Austrian and a Serbian were entangled, their arms and legs wrapped about each other in a deathgrip that could not even now be loosened. *Behind* the front line of Austrian trenches

was a barbed wire barricade, significant of the spirit of the men pinned in that death trap—for they were mostly Serbians from the Austrian Slav provinces, driven at the point of a revolver to fight their brothers.

For six miles along the top of Goutchevo the dead were heaped like that—ten thousand of them, said the captain. From here we could see for forty miles around—the green mountains of Bosnia across the silver Drina, little white villages and flat roads, planes of fields green and yellow with new crops and brown with plowing, and the towers and bright houses of Austrian Svornik, gleaming among lovely trees at the bend of the river; southward in long lines that seemed to move, so living were they, lifted and broke the farther peaks of Goutchevo, along which wriggled to the end of vision the double line of trenches and the sinister field between. . . .

We rode through fruit orchards heavy with blossoms, between great forests of oaks and beeches and blooming chestnuts; under high wooded hills, whose slopes broke into a hundred rippling mountain meadows that caught the sun like silk. Everywhere springs poured from the hollows, and clear streams leaped down canyons choked with verdure, from Goutchevo, which the Turks called "Mountain of Waters"—from Goutchevo, saturated with the rotting dead. All this part of Serbia was watered by the springs of Goutchevo; and on the other side they flowed into the Drina, thence into the Save and the Danube, through lands where millions of people drank and washed and fished in them. To the Black Sea flowed the poison of Goutchevo. . . .

RUSSIA

Cholm. Somewhere among those crowded roofs and spires was the headquarters of General Ivanov, commander-in-chief of all southwestern Russian armies, next in power to the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievich himself. At last here was a man with authority to let us visit the front. . . .

The sentry at staff headquarters said that every one had gone for the night.

"*Loutchaya gostinnitza!*" we told the driver. Mechanically we looked for the Hotel Bristol, which is to be found in every city, town, and village of the continent of Europe—but it had suffered the common decline of Hotel Bristols. The best *gostin-*

nitza turned out to be a three-story, lath-and-plaster structure half-way down a steep street in the crowded Jewish quarter, with a sign in Russian: "English Hotel." Of course, no one spoke English there—no English-speaking guest had ever visited the place. But a black-mustached little Pole, who bounced perspiring to answer the "*Nomerno!*" of impatient guests, knew two phrases of French: "*Très jolie*" and "*tout de suite*"; and the *Hashein* or housemaster spoke Yiddish.

As we were dressing next morning appeared an officer with a shaven head, and asked us politely to accompany him to the staff. No less than four persons, he said, had heard us speak German and reported the presence of spies at Cholm. We were ushered into a room where, at a small table, sat a pleasant-faced man who smilingly shook hands and spoke French. We gave him the passes and a card of introduction from Prince Troubetskoi.

"The governor-general of Galicia advised us to come here and ask General Ivanov for permission to go to the front."

He nodded genially. "Very good. But we must first telegraph the grand duke—a mere formality, you know. We'll have an answer in two or three hours at the most. In the meanwhile, please return to your hotel and wait there."

Our room was on the third floor, up under the roof, with a sloping ceiling and two dormer windows. Beyond were shabby, patched tin roofs of the huddled Jewish town, and rising over them the heavily wooded hill, crowned with the towers and golden domes of the monastery. A cobbled street on the right led up the hill to the gates of the monastery park, between wretched huts and tall tenements. To the left the view soared over housetops to wide-flung plains that stretched forever north—patches of deep woods, fields, villages, and nearby, the railroad yards alive with shuttling trains.

We waited all day, but no one came. Before we were up next morning the bald-headed officer entered, bowing.

"The grand duke has not yet answered," he said evasively; "but doubtless he will in the course of the day—or maybe tomorrow."

"Maybe tomorrow!" we cried together. "I thought it was a matter of two or three hours!"

He looked everywhere but at us. "His highness is very busy—" "Can't his highness spare a few minutes from planning retreats to attend to our case?"

"Have patience, gentlemen," said the officer hastily and uncomfortably. "It is only a matter of an hour or so now. I promise you that there will be no delay. . . . And now I am ordered to ask you to give me all your papers—of whatever nature."

Were we suspected of being spies? He laughed uneasily and answered no, as he made out a receipt.

"And now," said he, "I shall have to demand your word of honor not to leave the hotel until the answer comes."

"Are we under arrest?"

"Oh dear, no. You are perfectly free. But this is an important military post, you understand—" Muttering vaguely, he made off as fast as he could, to avoid answering any more questions.

Fifteen minutes later the *Hashein* walked unceremoniously into our room with three Cossacks, big fellows in tall fur hats, pointed boots, long caftans open at the chest; in each belt a silver-worked long dagger hung slantwise in front, and a long, silverhilted Cossack sword at the side. They stared at us with expressionless faces.

"What do they want?" I asked in German.

The *Hashein* smiled conciliatingly. "Only to look at the gentlemen. . . ."

A little later when I went downstairs one of the Cossacks was pacing up and down before our door. He drew aside to let me pass, but leaned over the stair rail, and shouted something in Russian; another, standing in the hall below, came forward; and from the street door I saw a third peering up.

We wrote an indignant note to General Ivanov. The colonel came at midnight and said that the Cossacks would immediately be withdrawn, with the general's apologies. (Next morning they had been withdrawn—to the bottom of the stairs, where they glowered at us suspiciously.) As for our detention, the colonel explained that that was all a very grave matter. We had entered the zone of military operations without the proper passes.

"How were we to know which passes were proper? They were signed by generals, and honored by Prince Bobrinski at Lemberg. What have we done that's wrong?"

"For one thing," said he, "you have come to Cholm, which is forbidden to correspondents. Secondly, you have discovered that Cholm is General Ivanov's headquarters, and that is a military secret."

Saturday morning our friend the shaven lieutenant appeared, looking gloomier than ever.

"I have, gentlemen, to announce to you some very disagreeable news," he began formally. "The grand duke has answered our telegram. He says: 'Keep the prisoners under strict guard.'"

"But what about our going to the front?"

"That is all he replied." He hurried on. "So unfortunately you will be compelled to keep to this room until further orders. The guards at the door will attend to your wants."

"Look here," said Robinson. "What's the matter with your silly grand duke—"

"Oh—" interjected the officer, with a shocked face.

"What are you shutting us up for? Does the grand duke think we're spies?"

"Well," he returned doubtfully, "you see, there are curious things, inexplicable things among your papers. In the first place, there is a list of names—"

We explained impatiently for the hundredth time that those were the names of American citizens reported to be caught by the war in the parts of Bucovina and Galicia held by the Russians, and that the American minister in Bucharest had given us the list to investigate.

The officer looked sympathetic but uncomprehending. "But many of them are Jewish names."

"But they are American citizens."

"Ah!" said he. "Do you mean to say that Jews are American citizens?" We affirmed this extraordinary fact, and he didn't contradict us—but you could see he didn't believe it.

Then he gave his orders. We were not to leave the room under any circumstances.

"Can we walk up and down the hall?"

"I am sorry"—he shrugged his shoulders.

"This is absurd," I said. "What is the charge against us? I demand that we be allowed to telegraph our ambassadors."

He scratched his head vaguely and went out, muttering that he would ask his chief. Two Cossacks immediately mounted the stairs and began to pace up and down in the little hall outside our door; another one stood on the landing below; a fourth at the front door; and the fifth man mounted a shed in the yard of the Jewish house, three stories sheer drop below, and fixed his stolid gaze upon our window.

After consultation, Robinson and I sat down and composed a diplomatic note to the Russian government—in English, so as to give them the trouble of translating it—formally notifying all concerned that from this date we refused to pay our hotel bill. Summoning a Cossack, we told him to take it to the staff.

It was now about noon. Over the wide Polish plain the June sun swam slowly up, beating down on the sloping tin roof immediately over our heads. We stripped, garment by garment, and hung out of the window gasping for air. Word had spread abroad of the illustrious captives in the top floor of the "English Hotel," and the Jewish family that inhabited the house below us swarmed out of the door, and stood gazing up at us. Beyond the yard fence was a silent crowd of townspeople, almost all Jews too, staring at our window in silence. They thought we were captured German spies. . . .

That night the shaven officer returned with permission for us to telegraph our ambassadors, and with General Ivanov's reply to our note: He did not know why the grand duke ordered us imprisoned. As for the hotel bill, that would be arranged.

Meanwhile the telegrams disappeared into the vast unknown, and for eight days no answer came. For eight days we inhabited that malodorous chamber under the hot tin roof. It measured four strides wide by five across. We had no books except a Russian-French dictionary and the "*Jardin de Supplice*," which exhausted their charm after the sixth perusal. Along about the fifth day the *Hashein* discovered somewhere in the town a pack of cards, and we played double-dummy bridge until even now I shriek at the sight of a card. Robinson designed me a town house and a country house to while away the time; he designed luxurious city residences for the Cossacks; he drew their portraits. I wrote verses; elaborated impossible plans of escape; planned a novel. We flirted from the window with the cook of the Jewish house below; we made speeches to the townspeople gathered in the street; we screamed curses to the surrounding air, and sang ribald songs; we walked up and down; we slept, or tried to sleep. And every day we spent a happy hour composing insulting communications to the tsar, the Duma, the Council of Empire, the grand duke, General Ivanov and his staff—which we forced a Cossack to take to headquarters.*

* After waiting sixteen days, Reed and Robinson were released and permitted to go to Petrograd.—Ed.

Early in the morning appeared the *Hashein*—a young Jew with a dark, handsome, expressionless face covered by a silky brown beard—followed by a suspicious Cossack.

"*Morgen!*" he would shout at us in broken German, as we stuck our noses out of the bedclothes. "*Was wollen sie essen heute?*"

"What can we have?" we would invariably reply.

"*Spiegeleier—biftek—kartoffeln—schnitzel—brot—butter—chai.*"

Day after day we took the Russian-French dictionary, and labored with him to change the diet; but he could not read Russian, and refused to understand it when we pronounced the words. So we alternated between eggs, tough steak, and veal, with always the eternal tea at least six times a day. A samovar operated on the balcony below our window, and from time to time one of us rushed to the door, pushed the Cossack out of the way, leaned over the stairs and bellowed "*Hashein!*" There was a running and calling of anxious Cossacks, doors opened and guests popped their heads out, and cries came echoing up from below.

"*Chto!*"

"*Chai!*" we bellowed. "*Dva chaya—skorrey!*"

We tried to have eggs for breakfast, but the *Hashein* refused. "Eggs for lunch, eggs for dinner, but no eggs for breakfast," he announced calmly: "Eggs for breakfast are very unhealthy. . . ."

Sometimes in the breathless evening, when the Cossack in the yard below had got tired of watching and slipped off for a drink, we would climb out of our window onto the steep peaked roof and look down on the tin roofs and teeming overcrowded streets of the town. Southward on the hill were the two ancient spires of the grand old Catholic church, remnant of the days of glory when John Poniatowski was king of Poland. Down on a dark side street was the squat, unmarked building that held the Jewish synagogue and the *heder*—the Jewish sacred school—and from this building ascended day and night the whining drone of boys chanting the sacred books, and the deeper voices of *raus* and *rebbe*s hotly discussing the intricate questions of the law. The tide of Russia was rising and overflowing this city of old Poland. We could see from our roofs colossal military barracks and institutions—immense buildings with façades a quarter of a mile long, as they are in Petrograd; and eight

churches building or completed lifted grotesque onion-shaped towers into the air, colored red and blue, or patterned in gay lozenges. Directly before our window was the Holy Hill. Above a rich mass of green trees six golden bulbs rose from the fantastic towers of the monastery, and at evening and on Sunday deep-toned and tinkly bells galloped and boomed. Morning and night we watched the priests going up and down the street—fanatic-faced men with beards and long curly hair falling upon their shoulders, dressed in gray or black silk coats falling to their feet. And the Jews on the sidewalk stepped out of their way. Now the monastery was a military hospital. Groups of girls in the lovely white headdress of the Russian Red Cross hurried in and out of the great gates where two soldiers always stood guard; and there was always a silent knot of people peering curiously through the iron fence. Occasionally a wide-open yelling siren could be heard rising and deepening out of the distance, and presently an automobile would rush furiously up the steep street, full of wounded officers. Once it was a big open machine, in which the body of a huge man writhed in the grip of four nurses who were trying to hold him down. Where his stomach had been was a raw mass of blood and rags, and he screamed awfully all the way up the hill, until the trees swallowed the automobile and his screams simultaneously.

During the day the uproar of the teeming town obscured all other sound. But at night we could hear, or rather feel, the shocking thunder of the enemy's guns less than twenty miles away.

Immediately under our eyes was enacted every day the drama of Jewish life in Russia. Our Cossack guard paraded superciliously about the yard of the house below, the children making wide detours as they passed him, the young girls bringing him glasses of tea and trying to smile at his coarse familiarities, the old people stopping politely to talk with him and casting looks of hate at him behind his back. He strutted about like a lord, he the humblest slave of the Russian military machine. We noticed that every two or three days all the Jews, young and old, wore upon their breasts a little paper medallion. One morning the *Hashein* came to our room with one: It was a cheap electrogravure of the tsar's daughter, the Grand Duchess Tatiana.

"What is that?" I asked him, pointing to it.

He shrugged his shoulders in a bitter kind of way. "It is the grand duchess's birthday," he said.

"But I have seen the people wearing it already twice this week."

"Every two or three days," he answered, "is the grand duchess's birthday. At least that is what the Cossacks say. The Cossacks make every Jew buy a picture of the grand duchess on her birthday and wear it. It costs five rubles. We are only poor Jews, too ignorant to know what day is the grand duchess's birthday. But the Cossacks are Russians, and they know."

"What if you refuse to buy it?" I asked.

He drew his finger significantly across his throat and made a gurgling noise.

It was a filthy place, that yard, full of the refuse of two Jewish houses and whatever the hotel guests threw out of their windows. A high board fence separated it from the street, with great wooden gates closed by a strong bar. The door and the lower windows of the house were also protected by heavy wooden shutters fastened from the inside. These were for defense against pogroms. Against the fence a slanting platform of planks had been erected, where all day long innumerable dirty little children climbed up and slid down, shrieking with laughter, or lay on their stomachs with their noses over the fence to watch the Cossacks ride by. Babies wailed and sprawled in the mud of the yard. From the open doors and windows ascended the odors of perpetual cooking.

But every Friday at noon the house was all of a bustle, as was every Jewish house in the town, preparing for the Sabbath. All the women put on their oldest working clothes; slops were emptied into the yard, and a tin tub of steaming water stood on the doorstep, out of which bucketfuls were carried inside, whence came sounds of scrubbing, sweeping, the slap of wet mops, and the rhythmic songs of Jewish women at work. The buckets, now full of dirty water, were poured back in the tin tub, and after its contents had become brown and thick like soup, all the family receptacles were brought—pans, crockery, knives and forks, cups and glasses—and washed there. The fountain was too far away to waste water. And after that the children each filled a bucket from the tub and went in to bathe, while the rest scoured the door-jambs and the window-sills and the two stone steps below the door, swaying in unison to a minor chant.

The linen hanging on the clothesline was taken in. A feeling

of joy and release was abroad; the terrorized gloom of weekdays seemed to lift. All the little Jewish shops closed early, and the men came home walking in little friendly knots like people whose work is done. Each put on his best long coat and peaked cap, his most shiny boots, and went out to join the ever-thickening steady stream of sober, black-robed people that flowed toward the synagogue.

In the house the dirty carpets were rolled up to reveal the white floor, which is always covered except on the Sabbath, and on the days of great religious feasts. And one by one the women, girls, and little children came laughing and chattering out of the purified house in their best clothes, and went out on the street, where all the other women and children were gathered, to gossip together and show off their finery.

From our window we could see a corner of the kitchen, with the wrinkled old dowager of the house superintending the sealing of the oven; could hear the jangling of the keys being put out of sight for the Holy Day, and look full upon the dining room table with its row of candles lit for Candle Prayer, and the Sabbath loaf covered with doily, the wine flask, and *kiddush* cup. . . .

After supper the children played quietly, stiffly in their Sabbath clothes, and the women gathered in front of the houses; as the darkness grew, from every window of a Jewish house a light beamed, to show the wayfarer that the spirit of God brooded over that roof. And we could look into the windows of a long, bare room on the second story, empty during the week, where the men-folks gathered with great books spread out before them on the table, and sang together deep-toned, Oriental-sounding psalms until late into the night.

On the Sabbath the men went in the morning to the synagogue. It was a day of much visiting between houses in Sabbath clothes; of an interminable dinner that lasted the greater part of the afternoon, with gay songs sung by the whole family to clapping of hands; of dressed-up families, down to the last baby, straggling along the road that led around the base of the Holy Hill toward the open country. . . . And then night and the unsealing of the oven, the putting down of the carpets, little Yakub repeating his lessons to his teacher in a singsong wail, the opening of the shops, old clothes again, dirt, and terror.

Every day or so a tragic little procession would pass up the street that led to the prison beyond the monastery: two or three Jews in their characteristic long coats and peaked caps, shuffling along with expressionless faces and dejected drooping shoulders, preceded and followed by a great shambling soldier with a bayoneted rifle in the hollow of his arm. Many times we asked *Hashein* about these people; but he always professed ignorance. Where were they going? "To Siberia," he would mumble, "or perhaps—" and he would gesture the pulling of a trigger. The *Hashein* was an extremely prudent person. But sometimes he stood for a long time in our room, looking from Robinson to me and back again, as if there was much to say if only he dared. Finally he shook his head, sighed, and went out past the watchful Cossack, devoutly touching the paper prayer nailed up at the door-jamb.

1916

SOLD OUT*

The Editor of the New York *Evening Mail* was advising the German-Americans to vote for [Theodore] Roosevelt. Someone asked him why. He replied, "I know he is anti-German, but the Germans should support Roosevelt because he is the only exponent of German Kultur in the United States."

When Theodore Roosevelt was president, a delegation from the state of Michigan went to Washington to plead with him the cause of the Boer Republic, then fighting for its life against the British government. One of the delegates told me that

* In 1916, as correspondent of the *Metropolitan Magazine* and the *Masses*, Reed attended the presidential nominating conventions of the Democratic, Republican, and Progressive parties. It was at the latter convention that Reed saw Theodore Roosevelt's betrayal of the Progressives. Under the impact of a widespread antimonopoly movement, they had fought for Roosevelt's nomination at the Republican convention in 1912. When the Republican hierarchy pushed through the renomination of William Howard Taft, the Republican dissidents, taken in by Roosevelt's sham liberalism, formed the Progressive Party and nominated Roosevelt for the presidency. Four years later he openly returned to his rampant imperialism and helped to crush the Progressives.—Ed.