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Title: Fighting Without a War: An Account of Military Intervention in North Russia

Creator: Ralph Albertson

Release date: July 4, 2014 [EBook #46191]

Language: English

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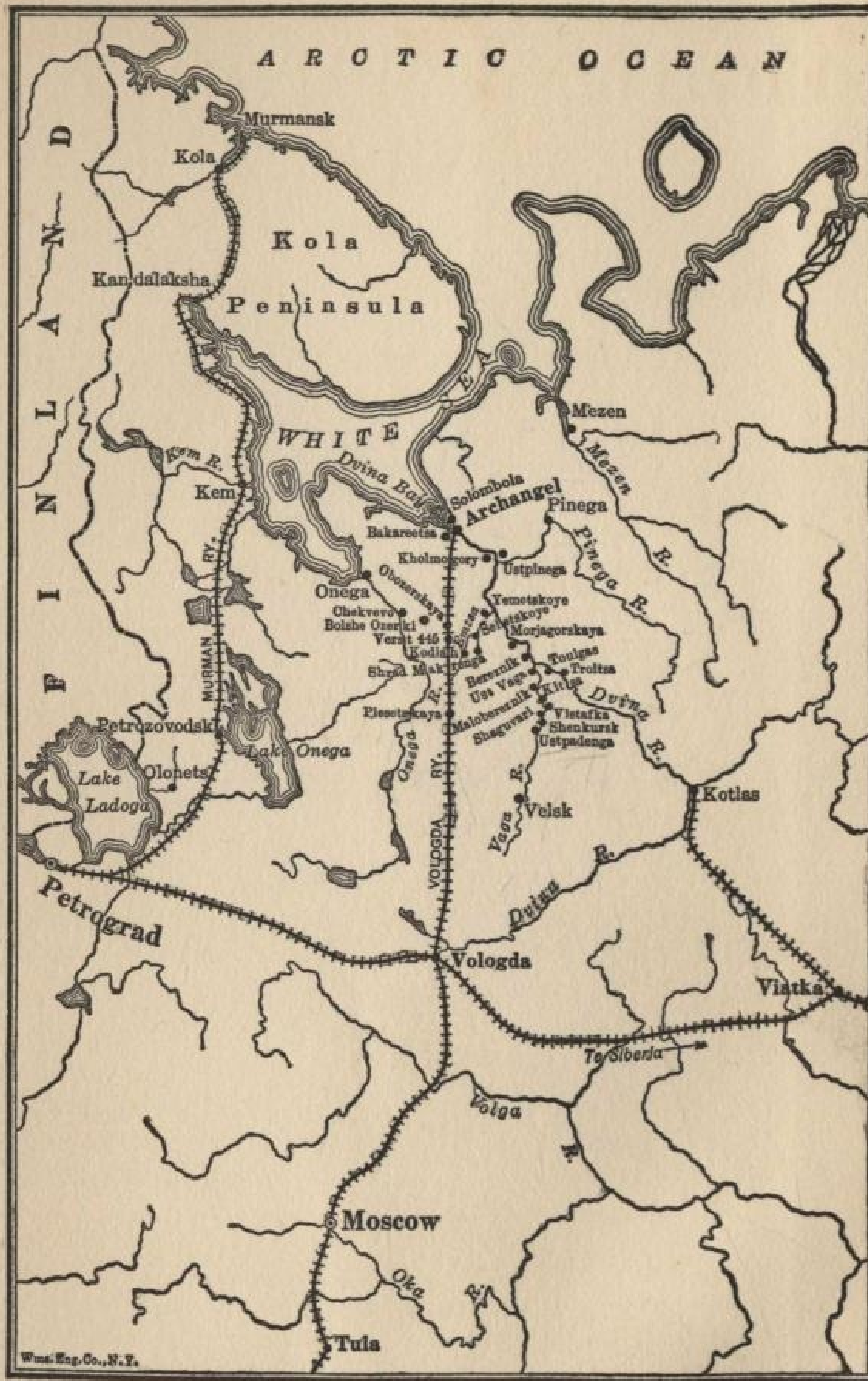

The Area of the Archangel Campaign.

FIGHTING WITHOUT A WAR

An Account of Military Intervention in North Russia

BY
RALPH ALBERTSON

ILLUSTRATED FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

NEW YORK
HARCOURT, BRACE AND HOWE
1920

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THE QUINN & BODEN COMPANY
RAHWAY, N. J.

TO THE AMERICAN, BRITISH AND CANADIAN MEN WHO LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES IN NORTH RUSSIA THIS BOOK IS REVERENTLY DEDICATED

PREFACE

The writer of this book went to North Russia as a Y.M.C.A. secretary assigned to work with the army, landing at Murmansk just before Thanksgiving, 1918. I reached Archangel December first and was sent at once to Shenkursk and Ustpadenga, the southernmost points of the expedition. I was in charge of the Y.M.C.A. work for the Vaga column until June first when I went to Yemetskoye and later to Archangel with the departing American troops. As the British Y.M.C.A. was not prepared to take over all the work at that time several Americans remained with the British and Russian armies. As one of these I returned south to Berezniki July first. On August first I was made responsible for the evacuation of the entire Allied Y.M.C.A. personnel, supplies, and equipment from the forward Dvina and Vaga areas. This enabled me to be the last American to leave. I returned to Archangel August thirtieth and sailed with the last of the embassies, consulates, military missions, etc., on September second.

This book does not assume to tell the whole story of that expedition. I did not see all of it. No man did. In addition to what I saw, however, I had the advantage of meeting constantly men who had seen and been in the various other fights and locations. Under the overstimulating circumstances of army life the very air seems full of wild rumors. This was particularly true in the isolations of the Russian fighting. I have felt the necessity therefore of exercising great care not to accept as true uncorroborated army rumors. The matters of chief interest in this book, moreover, are matters of my own personal observation and knowledge.

The various censorships imposed by the American and British governments have prevented the publication of so much important and significant news of this expedition that no number of books that may be published now could cover the whole story. Most of it, moreover, has ceased to be news. However, those censorships accompanied by the official propaganda have left the

country in a state of gross misinformation regarding the expedition. Mistakes were made, abuses suffered, heroisms performed, and tragedies enacted which it is the right of the American and British people to know about. In respect of the mistakes and abuses the publication of this account has devolved upon me as a not altogether pleasant duty.

While I have been compelled to criticize the attitude and actions of British officers as a class in order to tell the truth of what happened in North Russia I should regret to have my words taken as applying equally to all of them. I wish also to say that some who fall most squarely under the criticisms of this book were among my warmest friends and I cherish for them a genuine personal regard. To certain British and Canadian officers I undoubtedly owe my life and they gave me (especially the Canadians) the utmost coöperation and courtesy throughout the entire campaign.

As to the Yanks, God bless them, it wasn't their show.

E.A.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER

I. THE EXPEDITION
II. THE ARCHANGEL GOVERNMENT
III. MANAGEMENT
IV. THE FALL CAMPAIGN
V. THE WINTER CAMPAIGN
VI. KITSA
VII. FIGHTING WITHOUT A FLAG
VIII. "AMERICA DOBRA"
IX. AMERICA EXIT
X. THE NEW BRITISH ARMY
XI. THE NEW RUSSIAN ARMY
XII. MAKING BOLSHEVIKI
XIII. THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN
XIV. ATROCITIES
XV. THE MUTINIES
XVI. THE DÉBÂCLE
XVII. MILITARY INTERVENTION FINANCE
XVIII. PROPAGANDA
XIX. CONCERNING MILITARY INTERVENTION
XX. CONCERNING RUSSIAN PEASANTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

Map showing area of the Archangel Campaign . . . *Frontispiece*

Archangel has many excellent and substantial buildings

The Archangel water-front has miles of good docking facilities

The American engineers built scores of block houses like this

This was our only possible communication with Archangel, 300 miles to the north

The "Y" was always on the job

These Canadians fought in France before they went to Russia

The Canadian artillery got there every time

This Russian gun crew on the railroad front enjoys warmer weather

The church at Yemetskoye is visible for many miles up the Dvina

Shenkursk is a quiet and romantic spot on the Vaga River

The new British army entered Archangel in June with great pomp and ceremony

The Duma building at Archangel was decorated in honor of the new army that came to finish the Bolsheviki

Canadian soldiers with two captives, having changed caps

Bringing Bolsheviki prisoners into Malobereznik

The women work in the fields with the men

Russians love their homes and their villages devotedly

FIGHTING WITHOUT A WAR

I
THE EXPEDITION

The North Russian Expeditionary Force consisted of men from America, England, Canada, France, Italy, and Serbia. England sent the largest number of men, America the second largest, the other countries being represented by only a few companies each.

The expedition was under the command of the British War Office, which sent out a large number of unattached British officers to take charge of the Russian armies that were to be formed and to supervise all American and other officers that had been attached to the expedition.

The first landing of troops of the North Russian Expeditionary Force was in August, 1918. The German armistice was signed November 11. Fighting continued all winter. The American troops were withdrawn in June, 1919. A much larger British army landed in June. Our Russian conscripts mutinied against the English in July, making it impossible for the English to remain. The last man of the North Russian Expeditionary Force was withdrawn in September, 1919. The "washout" was complete. England had spent five hundred million dollars and lost thousands of men. The cost to America and the other countries had been less in men and money, but considerable in other ways. The cost to Russia in every way had been incalculable.

When this expedition was sent to Russia the Allies were at war with Germany. Russia was not. She had signed the Brest-Litovsk treaty. We did not declare war on Russia, nor on any section of Russians. We went, it was reasonable to suppose, to guard the military stores we had shipped to Archangel and save them from falling into German hands, and to prevent the Germans from establishing a submarine base at Murmansk. When we got there, however, the Bolshevik Russians, viewing the expedition as one of enmity to them, had removed practically all of the millions of dollars' worth of stores to points far south of Archangel and had themselves left for points of from one to two hundred miles south. We pursued them and war began,—war with the de facto government of Russia, whom indeed we had not recognized and against whom we had made no declaration.

There was no war technically speaking in North Russia. There surely was no legal basis of war. But there was plenty of fighting. News of this fighting does not seem to have reached America very freely. The double English and American censorship was very effective.

First we had declared we would not engage in a military intervention in Russia, then having gotten into it we declared we were not doing it, then we depended on the censorship.

No mention was made of this expedition in the armistice of November. Hence it had in some subtle way ceased to be a part of our war against Germany. It had become a new war, a war against Bolshevik Russia, an unlegalized war, and this it continued to be as long as the expedition

lasted. Yet no declaration was forthcoming, either of war or of peace. Particularly wanting was a declaration of purpose. Weary months of stubborn fighting for our men were unrelieved by any single word of definition of the fight from their government.

There consequently was antagonism to the campaign on the part of the soldiers. I do not say loss of morale, because the term would be misunderstood. Our men fought. Our infantry never lost a foot of ground. But they hated the fight, they resented fighting without a cause.

I made a trip in December, speaking to the men in their billets and the Y.M.C.A. huts over a stretch of five hundred versts. Everywhere, on every occasion, I was asked persistently and importunately, "What are we here for?"

"The armistice is signed. Why are we fighting?"

"Did they forget about us in Paris?"

"We don't want Russia. What have we against the Bolsheviki?"

Of course I tried to answer these questions, but I found it easier to convince myself than I did to convince these men. They were not convinced that I knew. The American and Canadian troops were particularly outspoken in their resentment at being at war in a futile fight against nobody and for nothing in particular when the rest of the world had stopped fighting.

A real cause of this grand débâcle therefore was the silence of our governments. I could not answer their questions. Nobody who came to them could answer their questions. Their governments would not.

II
THE ARCHANGEL GOVERNMENT

When our governments sent out this expedition the government of Archangel as of all Russia was Bolshevik. It was not a strong government, that is, it did not have a strong and dependable army and navy. It had not been regularly instituted by the people, nor had it been recognized by other governments than those with whom we were at war. We had no dealings with it, except the undeclared war of this expedition. We negotiated with certain individual Russians in London, took them to Archangel with us, and there set up a government to our own taste.

Archangel has many excellent and substantial buildings.

The Archangel water-front has miles of good docking facilities.

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This was a military job. Even the military, however, find it necessary to consider popular opinion to some extent. So this new government was composed of democratic men. Tschaikowsky was made President. The people knew him and trusted him. His government failed to realize at first that it was only the creature of foreign military authority and began to function sincerely. It was kidnaped for discipline and put on an island for a few days of meditation. The allied military did not come to Archangel to set up a pure democracy nor to encourage socialism nor to listen to theories. They came to fight the plans of Germany, to fight the Bolsheviki, to guard stores, to teach Russia to fight. Beyond this the military mind goeth not. So the venerable Tschaikowsky was gradually put aside and ignored and before long sent to London on an important mission, never to return, but still a valuable figurehead, while a Russian military government grew up under the aegis of the British army, composed of monarchists and military men of the old school. The head of this government was General Miller (Mueller) a militarist and monarchist who is without popular Russian support and whose position is entirely due to his standing with the British military establishment.

III
MANAGEMENT

It was a British show. The British were in absolute command. Whole shiploads of British officers were sent there to perform all possible functions of management and to cover all possible needs.

The Americans, Russians, French, Italians, and Serbians all obeyed the British officers, and found British officers duplicating their own at every juncture. Even at that there was a surplus, and I have had several of them, from a colonel down, tell me that they were hanging around Archangel waiting for something to do.

It was British responsibility to decide where we should stand, when we should move, and who should do what. They never neglected this responsibility in any detail. If they could avoid it, they never delegated any detail of authority to any officer of any other nationality. If they took counsel with their associates of other nationalities it was never heard of in the ranks. I have heard an American officer of high rank speak very bitterly of the fact that the British never consulted him except to give him orders, and made him feel quite useless.

IV
THE FALL CAMPAIGN

As our ships rode into the mouth of the Dvina River with the first troops of the expedition, and the last train pulled out of Archangel Preestyn bearing the last of the Bolsheviki away to the south, the people of Archangel came out to the river bank and the docks to see the incoming fleet and to welcome their deliverers from Bolshevist proletariat tyranny and prolonged political and industrial unrest. The Russians were tired of war, and as they lined up on the river banks in front of the hundreds of peasant villages bordering a thousand versts of rivers to express their welcome it was Peace and Prosperity that they thought they were welcoming.

In fact, however, it was war, war such as that part of Russia had never known before, and most expensive war.

The expedition had been sent "to guard stores at Archangel." Since these stores had been taken by those whom we assumed to be friends of Germany we must pursue them. We did. We took guns along. We found them, with guns also, at several points about a hundred miles from the city. Their forces were weak. So were ours. But we drove them, or they led us, down the Murmansk railroad past Kem, down the Vologda railroad beyond Obozerskaya, up the Onega River to Chekuevo, up the Pinega River, up the Emtza River, up the Dvina River past Toulgas, and up the Vaga River to Ustpadenga.

We did not capture our enemy nor the stores we had come to guard. The early Russian winter came and found us thrown out to seven points in a form that was like a seven-fingered hand with one finger three hundred miles long and with no lateral communication between the fingers. In driving these lines out there was some fighting, mostly of a guerrilla type. We lost a number of men, but our casualties were comparatively small. We had been on the offensive and had followed lines of not very great resistance. The positions in which winter found us may not have been planned by the Bolsheviki, but I doubt if any English record exists of such a plan or if any officer will confess to having made such a plan. We just happened to be there. We were scattered as far as possible. Each position was practically isolated from all the others. Our lines of communication were weak and inefficient. The only protection to our flanks and our rears was the hoped-for snow which came early and abundantly.

V
THE WINTER CAMPAIGN

The winter was spent on the defensive. The Bolsheviki at first attempted to cut us off at Yemetskoye by using his excellent communication on the Vologda railroad and attacked Kodish and Shredn Makrenga. He was held here by the Americans and Canadians, who did not know when they were defeated and who now fully realized the desperate character of the fight that they were launched upon. He also attacked on the Murmansk railroad, where he was met by seasoned Serbians against whom he shattered himself in vain. He attacked at Pinega and at Chekuevo also without success. We were fighting at Toulgas on Armistice Day, and with Kotlas as his base the Bolshevik managed to keep up his attack here practically all winter while Co. B, 339th Infantry, U.S.A., took the brunt of the work of holding him off.

The American Engineers built scores of block houses like this.

This was our only possible communication with Archangel, 300 miles to the north.

The American Engineers built scores of block houses like this.
This was our only possible communication with Archangel, 300 miles to the north.

The most serious fighting of the winter, however, was on the Vaga River. Our forward position at Ustpadenga was held by one company of American infantry, one platoon of American engineers, three eighteen-pounder guns manned by Canadians, and occasional units of Russian conscripts. The position had no peculiar advantages, and all the disadvantages of isolation and exposure that could make it a bad choice. It is doubtful whether it had been chosen. We got there and we stayed there. We were there because we were there. So we entrenched and built block houses and strung wire and chopped away a clearing a few hundred feet from our billets and laid in such stores and ammunition as a few ponies could pull down, and waited. This was twenty-seven versts south of Shenkursk, and Shenkursk was one hundred versts south of Bereznik, and Bereznik was three hundred versts south of Archangel.

Shenkursk was our advanced base. Here we had one company of American infantry, one platoon of American engineers, one section of Canadian artillery, American headquarters for 1st battalion, 339th, British headquarters for the Vaga column with all the attendant service units, an American hospital, and miscellaneous units of Russians numbering about a thousand, poorly organized, badly officered, and of doubtful morale. Shenkursk is the second largest city in the

Archangel government, having a normal population of about three thousand people, a cathedral, a monastery with two churches, and three other churches. It was something of an educational center and summer resort. We found a number of Petrograd and Moscow people here whose summer vacations had been prolonged by the exigencies of Russian politics. There were many excellent houses here, some mansions, some interesting people, a most comfortable place to spend the winter.

Here we fortified, quite thoroughly, better perhaps than anywhere else in North Russia. To be sure we were outflanked by Kodema, a Bolshevik village on our left and Tarniya, a Bolshevik village on our right, a little to the rear. But otherwise we were quite comfortable. We made several attacks on these villages, but always found it necessary to retire.

On January 19, 1919, the big fight began. The Bolsheviki five thousand strong attacked Ustpadenga. They had three or four times as many guns as we had, including some long-range artillery that was far beyond the reach of our guns. They had perfect observation on our positions and telephone wires clear around to our rear. They picked off every billet, up one side of the street and down the other. We had no secrets. And their infantry came up in excellent form and spirit, covered with perfect white camouflage and supported with machine-guns and pompoms. Our men drove them back and held them off for days until the British command ordered them to fall back to Shenkursk. One platoon of forty men had thirty-two casualties, and every man in that small force had to do the work of ten men throughout that terrible week. Fighting all the way back, Company A, 339th American Infantry, and the Center Section 38th Battery, Canadian Field Artillery, dragged themselves minus two guns into Shenkursk on the night of the 25th. During that day Shenkursk had been bombarded from four sides and we knew that we were completely surrounded, although no Bolshevik infantry had attacked here. There were no reinforcements to be had. Some of our Russian conscripts had gone over to the enemy. There was no hope of relief from the north in case we should be besieged. There was nothing to prevent his big guns reducing Shenkursk to ruins. We had Company C here as well as Company A and felt confident of our ability to hold off the Bolshevik infantry in any numbers, but his artillery had us beaten, because outranged, from the start.

So it was decided to evacuate that night by an unused road that we hoped the Bolsheviki had overlooked. By very clever and efficient work on the part of the British command the evacuation of Shenkursk was successfully carried out without the loss of a man, and we were followed by hundreds of civilians, who discovered our movement in the night. The next morning when we were well to the north we heard his guns open up on Shenkursk. He did not know we had escaped him. He had yet to learn that we had left behind for him one hundred days' rations for two thousand men, great stores of ammunition and ordinance, all our personal kits, and several spiked guns.

By night of the 26th we reached Shagavari, having made forty versts on a single track sled road, walking two abreast and stretched out for miles. Here nearly every one snatched a little sleep, as we found two platoons of Company D who held off the vanguard of the pursuit which had begun to catch up to us. The civilian column, swelled now to thousands, poured out into the road ahead of us, a long winding snake-like trail of black in a white world, making for somewhere north. We evacuated Shagavari on the afternoon of the 27th and stood for our new front at Vistafka, sixteen versts north, with Kitsa seven versts to the rear as headquarters.

During this retreat the temperature had been from thirty-six to ten below zero. We had brought out ninety-seven wounded and sick and these were sent on to Bereznik and Archangel—three hundred miles on pony sleds traveling day and night. The civilian refugees were partly Russians who had conspicuously identified themselves with us and so were afraid of the Bolsheviki, partly those who felt that they would be surer of food behind our lines, there were some personal friends of soldiers, and yet they were mostly peasants whom we had been compelled to put out of their houses for military reasons.

Our new front consisted in all of eight villages. At first a barricade of pine branches and snow, then some logs, then some block houses, then some wire, after a while a dug-out or two. The fighting here at Vistafka was the hardest and most continuous of the winter. Every day there was some shelling, and five major attacks were made before March first when we were forced to make Kitsa our forward position. The fighting at Vistafka was done by companies A, C, D, and F, by Royal Scots and Kings Liverpools, by Russians, and by the splendid Canadian artillery units who were fortunately reinforced by a 4.5 howitzer E.F.A. The old artillery supremacy of the Bolsheviki remained unchanged, however, and while seven thousand infantry, having surrounded Vistafka could not take it, the guns did finally reduce it to untenability.

From March 1 to April 20, Kitsa was the front line, with Maximofskaya for support on our right, and our guns at Ignatofskaya. These villages lay only one and two versts apart. We were preparing Malobereznik, seven versts in the rear, for defense, and fell back here on Easter Sunday. This stubborn resistance on our part was important because it was absolutely necessary to hold the enemy here or he would cut off the whole Dvina column and take Bereznik where we had accumulated great stores of supplies and munitions. Bereznik was his goal and the Vaga River was his road. He hammered away daily at Toulgas, our Dvina River front, but that was to keep Company B and our other forces there. He could not hope to take it.

The "Y" was always on the job.

These Canadians fought in France before they went to Russia.

The "Y" was always on the job.
These Canadians fought in France before they went to Russia.

On May first, the international labor holiday, he opened up on every front, making the supreme effort of the year. His heaviest blow fell on Malobereznik. The ice had begun to run out of the Vaga and the upper Dvina enabling him to mount guns on barges while our gunboats were still frozen in at Archangel. When he had put five thousand shells into Malobereznik and burned down every house, his infantry came on only to be fearfully cut up and sent back, again and again. He was deeply disappointed. The thing was inexplicable. So on May fifth he came again. This time with eight thousand shells as a prelude. And when the last futile wave of his infantry had gone to pieces under our fire and we had taken prisoner hundreds of his men who had been

sent to surround us, we knew that he had done his worst, and the winter campaign was practically at an end.

VI
KITSA

Kitsa is a church village of about fifty long, low Russian timber houses situated in a great bend of the Vaga River with only the outer curve of the river bank for a landscape and with a dense wall of pine woods in the rear. This level country is so painfully level that you always have a desire to look over the edge of the nearby horizon to see something—but you never can. When you first pass through Kitsa, which you never would have done in a million years had it not been for this war, you think it is the sorriest of all the sorry places on the river. It might at least have been located on the high bank and so gained the only thirty feet of vantage that nature had provided. Yet Kitsa has one striking distinction. The road makes a right angle in the midst of the houses, and the churches are in the angle and in the west. The West! Russia does not need landscapes because she has skies. Kitsa to me is that wonderful western sky cloven in the midst by the Byzantine spires in pea green and gold, and based flat on the black ridge of pine, and fixed forever in permanent and infinite pastels in my memory.

Kitsa was not a Bolshevist town nor Royalist. It was Constitutionalist Socialist Democratic. It was founded by refugees from Novgorod who had rebelled against certain imperial church decrees. There was still a little mound where these glorious ancestors had erected a hill of freedom. And the freedom itself had been retained intact, so the oldest inhabitant told me, it having been a matter of the text and type of the holy book read in the church.

I rode through Kitsa once when there was one platoon of American soldiers quartered there and the civilian population was about normally occupied with its own life. And then I came in with the refugees from Shenkursk on the night of January twenty-seventh. First it was Brackett Lewis and Ivan Taroslaftseff serving hot coffee and biscuits to the exhausted soldiers in the building that the people had built and used for a public school but the Allied military had commandeered, not to store whisky in, as at Bereznik, but to run a canteen in. Then it was caring for the ninety-seven wounded, then back to the men and civilian refugees, until the full daylight, and the column was all in. We took the three best houses in town for the hospital that night. Then the British officers took the next best. Then the American officers. And that following day we billeted troops in every house, and the Russian people made room for us, welcomed us, waited on us, made nothing of themselves, moved into their bath houses, then out again if we wanted them; gave us all the room there was, gladly, believed in us. I shall always remember a poor woman who came into an officer's room and opened a table drawer to look for two hundred silver roubles she had left there. The lock had been forced. The roubles were gone. Silver roubles were very precious. The woman's tearful face did not express so much grief as surprise. She had discovered something most unwelcome about our soldiers—perhaps officers. Other Russians were learning to hate the military for other reasons. In three days they were utterly bewildered. They do not take disillusionment in our offhand, familiar way. They are a serious people. Their illusions are genuine. No literature and no sophistication, but great sincerity. So completely did these Kitsaites give way to us that when the order for their evacuation went forth we gained no room for we already had it all.

One pretty girl came to us in despair one morning, because one of us could talk Russian, and told us that the Cossacks had broken into her stores in the night and stolen everything. We found they had left much. It is remarkable how effectively and cleverly these people can secrete their goods. But she knew that they would get the rest in time so she begged us to take it from her as a gift. We learned she was the daughter of the merchant who was presumably the richest man in the town. Her parents had gone to Archangel. She had refused to go. Her brothers were in Bolshevist territory. She had attended school in Moscow. She was now something of a socialist and utterly out of sympathy with her family. We bought all her goods. Some hand-woven skirt material. Some food stuff. Some oats and flour. She went to work at British headquarters as a scullery maid and was glad of the chance. And I do think she was irritated considerably by the attentions paid her because she was a pretty girl. They were of course most unartful and blatant as well as general.

A week after the peasants were evacuated the engineers who were cutting machine-gun

holes in the bath houses found the frozen body of an old woman who had hidden herself in a bath house and died there rather than go away from the village where she had spent all her life. The body lay untouched for a week. Bodies froze like ice or iron when the temperature was below zero.

The Canadian artillery got there every time.

This Russian gun crew on the railroad front enjoys warmer weather.

The Canadian artillery got there every time.
This Russian gun crew on the railroad front enjoys warmer weather.

One awful night when we had been horribly shelled and the evacuation of the town was hourly imminent there were nine frozen bodies laid side by side in the wood-shed behind the hospital. We should have to leave them there just as we had left others at Shenkursk and Shagavari. I had known all these boys—five Americans, two Englishmen and two Russians—and as I stood out there in the cold, dark, snowy night, I knew war. But there were other nights as bad. Nights when we sat by them as they were dying and waiting for the operating table. God! what nights! And we had to pack them off in the cold at once to a safer town to the north. Then there came a night that nearly made me forget all the others. Our forward position and only protection was demolished utterly. We were forced to abandon it, and our men and guns all crawled into Kitsa and across the river back of Kitsa to Ignatofskaya. We were done. We had put up such a fight however that the enemy was done too, but we did not know this. And the wounded came in that awful night, and the dead. We did not sleep a wink. When the sun rose on Kitsa, Kitsa too was dead. The order was for everybody to "stand to," and the streetful stood to all

day long, waiting, and nothing happened. After the continuous thunder of the days before not a gun was fired. But Kitsa was dead. And the engineers were going about setting every house and building with kerosene inside and out for burning. Every kit was packed. Not a thing but cinders was to be left. Kitsa was a thing of the past. And although nothing did happen—and weary men could not stand to forever—and everybody crawled inside and slept—Kitsa was dead.

For weeks afterward we lived and worked most of the time in Kitsa. The Bolsheviki had come back, at first feebly, then with real guns. He had put up a show at fighting. His shells had burned some of our buildings. He had killed and wounded some of our men. But we had new men now. And they had the new point of view. But the piles of straw in the corners of buildings were kept soaked with kerosene. We were now holding Kitsa to keep the enemy on the east side of the river until after the ice should break up. And as I stood on the bluff and looked down on the snow-covered roofs of the town I imagined what the fire would look like—and wanted to see it.

One day I went to the cemetery where our men had been buried in unmarked graves, and for the most part identified the places; and then visited the little chapel which had been looted, and the churches. The Bibles were printed from hand-cut plates. The silver ornaments on the Bibles and the elaborate candelabra, were all hand made in every detail of construction and decoration. The soldiers had left them because of their size. All little things had been taken. All Kitsa was just like the cemetery and the churches. But the tragedy had passed over for the moment. It was peaceful death. Not even the paltry dozen shells sent over by the Bolsheviki to remind us that the war was still on made any difference to this peace.

During the very last days of our tenure of Kitsa the friction between the British command and the Americans at the front became quite serious. The command wanted certain risks taken and sacrifices made that in the judgment of the Americans were without sufficient purpose and justification. The American officers were unwilling to make what they deemed useless sacrifice of their men. So bitter did this feeling become that at one time the British commanding officer gave certain orders to the Canadian Field Artillery which the Canadians undoubtedly would not have obeyed. The British command had its troubles with them also. In spite of all this, however, Kitsa was held against the enemy until the river ice actually broke under the men as they came out, leaving more desolation and ruin to the slowly conquering Bolsheviki.

VII
FIGHTING WITHOUT A FLAG

The American soldier who was sent to Northern Russia for his part in the great war had an experience which in several respects was novel in the vast field of experience which the war imposed on Americans. One of these was that he had to fight without his flag. Not only was the flag absent from the front lines in accord with the best practices of modern warfare, but the flag as a symbol and the consciousness of what it symbolizes were equally absent for the most part from his billet, his conversation, his mess kit, and the whole campaign.

He was fed with foreign food, clothed in part with foreign clothes, invading a foreign country, given orders by foreign officers, and fighting a war that was foreign to all he had ever thought of America. He had gone into the army to fight Germany, and here he found himself after the armistice fighting an unknown foe with whom the United States was not at war, and quite as much out of sympathy with the officers of another nationality whom he had to obey, as with the men whom he was trying to kill.

His government had not told him why he was here, what grievances it had against his enemies, what arrangements it had with its allies in this expedition, nor what it hoped to accomplish if successful in the enterprise for which he daily must offer his life. His officers could not tell him. They had never been told. They wanted to know. What they did know was that at every turn, in every position, on every piece of work, in every detail of responsibility, an English officer stood over them telling them what to do. Sometimes he was a very young English officer. Sometimes a strain was necessary to get adequate rank to him. Sometimes he was utterly inexperienced.

The method of the British control of the Allied expedition to North Russia is a subject for study and an example for warning that the League of Nations may well heed. If thousands of Americans have gone home thoroughly detesting the name and memory of everything English and if other thousands of Englishmen are telling each other and being told that Americans are

cowards and in the same breath that they are insolent and unmanageable, it is chiefly to be blamed on the British method of managing an allied campaign.

It might be supposed that the British, being appropriately and properly in supreme command, would have given their orders, as far as they applied solely to the operations of purely American units, to the responsible American officers, leaving these officers without petty interference to get the work accomplished. But it was not so. British colonels did not give their orders to American colonels to be passed down the line. In fact, they had very little use for American colonels. They went to the captains, the lieutenants, and even the sergeants and corporals and the men themselves. They ignored American officers most noticeably. They set their own petty officers upon the Americans in a manner that was most irritating to American national self-esteem and bitterly resented. And since all necessary things are reasonable to the military mind it was the greatest tact to explain that "the Americans know nothing about military matters, you know."

I do not feel that the Americans had a grievance necessarily because Old Glory did not wave above them in North Russia. I can imagine that they could have fought with excellent morale in France if they had not had their colors with them. The case consists of the aggravating circumstances. The men were made to feel most unnecessarily and quite contrary to the facts that they had been handed to England and forgotten, that their government was wholly unmindful of them, and that for the time at least they were deprived of the protection and divorced from the ideals of which the Stars and Stripes had always stood as a symbol in their minds.

I did see the flag once in American headquarters at Shenkursk, but it was inside and inconspicuous, and few soldiers go in at headquarters. I saw one flying on a Y.M.C.A. building, but it was of course ordered down for perfectly good and adequate reasons. I read in a soldier's letter to his sweetheart once: "For God's sake send me a little flag in your next letter. I haven't seen one since I came to this awful country." One soldier had a barishna make him a little flag from old bunting with embroidered stars. And I have seen more than one lonely American pull a little flag out of his pocket and kiss it.

At Shenkursk we were invited to hold our Christmas exercises in the monastery church. This was probably the greatest innovation ever ventured by the ecclesiastical establishment of that town. Seats were provided, the icons covered, the Abbess and nuns safely ensconced in the gallery to appease their curiosity, and the forces marched in—American soldiers and officers, a few Canadian artillerists, and British headquarters staff. Americans greatly predominated in numbers. A British chaplain read the service, concluding naturally with "God save the King." As we filed out an American private was heard to remark: "Who ever heard of the Star Spangled Banner anyhow?"

I shall not hope that academicians, business men, politicians, and sensible people generally will see anything in this but a thin sentimentalism. I should not have appreciated it had I not lived with men who were daily facing death for a cause unknown, without patriotic background or personal interest, and under the insistent domination of officers of another nation who looked down upon them, and talked about them discreditably.

"If we had British soldiers here we should drive the Bolos out in short order. But what can be done with these miserable Americans and Russians!"

The antipathy that British officers felt toward Yankees was acquired early in the campaign and increased in intensity toward the end. In some measure it was the Yankees' fault and to some extent the product of facts and forces that are beyond the control of individuals. There was disapproval and jealousy of the over-prominence America had too easily acquired in the great war. There was resentment of the favoritism of the Russians for the Americans. There was the inheritance of pride in the military achievements of the Empire. There was utter ignorance of the motives and purposes of the present English government. But there was also the independence and "insolence" of the Yankees, their free and easy attitude toward British official dignity, their insistence upon reasons why, and their assumption of knowledge and ability quite beyond anything their experience in military matters justified.

And these little irritations grew and were magnified in little minds until the manner of the Yankee salute itself became a mote in the British eye.

I have heard the most caustic and untrue criticism of American soldiers from the lips of English officers whose rank should in itself have been guaranty that they would not descend to this. I have heard it hinted at a score of times by petty officers who out of consideration for my presence did not pursue the subject to its commonplace ends. And repeatedly members of the

new British army that had never seen the Yanks at all said to me in all friendliness: "What a pity that your men out here were not real Americans, that they were foreigners, and that they gave America such a black eye by their conduct."

This was a direct echo of the campaign of vilification of the American soldier which was carried on within their own circles by certain British officers of the North Russian Expeditionary Force.

I overheard some English soldiers singing a parody of "Over There," of which I can only remember "The Yanks are running, the Yanks are running everywhere," and the last line "And they didn't do a damn thing about it over there." This was in Archangel. There were no Yankee soldiers about. They were at the front. The singing which had been in a subdued tone was stopped immediately when my presence was observed and when we had finished a little conversation the Tommies sang "Over There," and they sang it straight. There was no anti-Yank feeling in these men. They had genuine admiration for the Yankee soldiers. They had picked up the little seeds of antipathy from some of their officers.

As a matter of fact the American soldier in North Russia fought well. He drove the Bolsheviki 427 versts south of Archangel before winter set in, and then took up winter quarters and prepared for defense. Constant patrolling had to be done, and expeditions had to be made against the Bolshevik villages that flanked us on both sides and constantly threatened our rear. All this was for the most part true of seven fronts between which there was no connection or communication except by going back to the base.

Captain Odyard of Company A was decorated by the British government, and the company was praised for its gallant work at Ustpadenga and Vistafka, and yet the British Tommies of the new army asked me in July: "Why was it that the Yanks turned tail at Ustpadenga?"

The charges made by the British that the American soldiers were unreliable and mutinous were founded correctly on the mental attitude of the American soldier and upon the things he said. He hated the expedition and its management. But those charges were not fairly founded upon anything that the American soldier did. There was an instance of one company refusing at one time to go to the front. It was but a temporary refusal. They went. There were several parallel instances when British and Canadian and French soldiers resorted to similar semi-mutiny. It was always momentary. They always eventually went forward with the unequal fight despite the inhuman conditions. The dissatisfied and unhappy soldier was not yellow. He may have had some sympathy for the Bolsheviki whose country he was unwillingly invading. He certainly felt that the invasion was a crime. But he was not yellow.[#] He obeyed orders. He fought splendidly. He went to his death. He held his post. He cursed the British and did his duty. He killed Bolsheviki, plenty of them, not knowing why.

[#] The report of the Judge Advocate General gives a number of cases of American soldiers who were convicted by court-martial of having been guilty of self-inflicted wounds. The number accused of this was lamentably large. Even if larger in proportion, however, than in any other army in the world war, the reflective mind is forced to ask the question: Why?

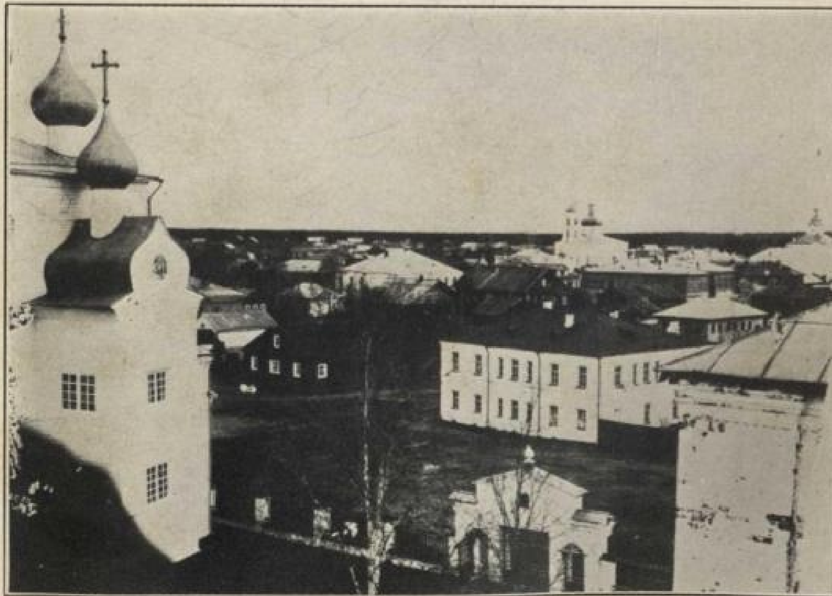
VIII
"AMERICA DOBRA"

There was one thing in North Russia that touched every American where every normal man is sentimental. There was a passion for America. In every log house there was love for America. In the hearts of the people in every village there was moving what Benjamin Kidd calls "the emotion of the ideal."

We could not understand it at first. Every peasant greeted us with "America dobra," which is not good Russian, but a sort of slang phrase meaning that America is all right. And now and then one would step up a little nearer and in a more subdued tone say that some other country was not all right.

We suspected at first that he was playing a double game. We remembered the man who walks like a bear. We smiled cynically and handed him a cigarette. But we did him an injustice.

The church at Yemetskoye is visible for many miles up the Dvina.



Shenkursk is a quiet and romantic spot on the Vaga River.

The church at Yemetskoye is visible for many miles up the Dvina.
Shenkursk is a quiet and romantic spot on the Vaga River.

One heavily whiskered old peasant of Kitsa made me see this injustice. We had crawled into Kitsa on the second night after the evacuation of Shenkursk, with the weather about twenty below zero and bringing with us ninety-seven wounded on sleds. The senior medical officer had selected the best houses in Kitsa for hospital purposes, and one could never forget how cheerfully on ten minutes' notice those peasant people got themselves and their things out of the way and helped to get the patients in and warm and fed. Two of these houses belonged to my bewhiskered friend. He was something of a magnate in Kitsa. And it turned out that we were to use his houses for hospital purposes for months after that night, sending him and his on their northward way, for safety in the company of refugees from seven other villages. His property interests in Kitsa, however, were too important in his old life to be ignored and in a few days he was back with a sled convoy as a common driver, a labor which he persisted in as long as the fortunes of war permitted for the sake of the opportunity it gave him to look things over. Knowing that the hospital was an American affair the old man was quite delighted that his houses had been chosen for this purpose.

"America dobra," he said to me exultantly.

One day I happened to discover that in both houses the private rooms in which the precious

family possessions had been stored and secured by heavy padlocks had been broken open and the contents looted and despoiled. Most of the fabrics and silverware and family gods pulled out of trunks and bureaus were of no use or interest to soldiers and had been thrown on the floor and trampled underfoot. It was wanton and heartless, and believing that our boys had at least had a hand in it I was ashamed and chagrined. It was painful to remember the gleam of faith in the old Mongolian eyes when he said "America dobra."

When he came again and I saw him the gloom on his face was terrible. He had seen the wreck. Apologetically I offered my condolences: "America ne dobra." "No," he said slowly in Russian, "no, war is at fault. War is not good. America dobra."

So I had to think again. I hadn't seen far enough into the soul behind this bushy face. And I didn't smile cynically as I handed him the cigarette.

After a while we learned to discriminate between "Amerikanski" and "Amerika." The peasants often handed us personal compliments, but we learned that when they praised America they were not talking about us but about an idea, an ideal, a dream—would I could say a fact!

These Russian peasants have not read American history. They do not know American politics. Most of them probably have not read five hundred words about America in all their lives. But they have heard and talked about America some, and thought about America more. Perhaps there are many well-read Americans who could profitably think about America more, even at a loss of time to read. And now the moujik of North Russia and his wife and children have all of them seen Americans—real live ones—and liked them.

How much the Russian peasant liked the American soldier it is a little difficult for me to convey without seeming to exaggerate. I was skeptical about it for months. It might be bear love. He was always begging for cigarettes, and one could easily see through his cupidity and simple craft. But I saw American soldiers billeted in Russian homes and mixing with the Russians so much that I am sure that I know the true sentiments in this case. I have been asked by English soldiers more than once: "Why is it that the Russians like the Yankees so much better than they do us?"

I asked this question, without the comparison, of an intelligent looking Russian soldier: "Why do you Russians like the Yanks so well?" "Because they shake hands like men," he answered thoughtfully. "Because they treat us as equals. Because they are good to the Russian people," and the next day when we were talking about the same subject he said: "It is because they represent America to us that we like the Yankee soldiers."

Yet there was another side to this picture. When first I came to Archangel there was in all people a wonderful faith in Mr. Wilson. I marveled how all these Russians could have learned so much about him. They knew what he had said. They knew what he stood for before the world. I wondered if the people at home knew as well. Pictures of the American President soon made their appearance and were given great prominence throughout the city and in every village. I was calling on the editor of a Russian newspaper hundreds of miles up the river one day. He could use a few English words and I a few Russian. Mr. Wilson's picture hung over his desk. "The friend of the Russian people," he said, pointing to the picture, and as he looked at it tears slowly gathered. Turning toward me he said brokenly: "He is the one man in all the world who can lead Russia out of her troubles." And I gathered that one reason for this faith was because the Bolsheviki respected and feared Mr. Wilson. This man was on the Bolshevik black list. His paper was radically socialistic, however, and the editor was quite distrustful of the results of the Allied expedition. But he believed in Mr. Wilson. "He will soon speak," he said, "and then all Russia will follow him."

That was in December. In June I met this editor in Archangel. His home and printing plant had long been in the hands of the Bolsheviki. There was pathetic sadness in his face as he told me of the universal hopelessness of the people. I boomed the League of Nations. It would cure the wrongs, it would become the guide and instrument of salvation. But there was no response of hope. "We have lost Mr. Wilson and there is no hope. But after we are all killed off in this mad and hopeless struggle, Russia will rise out of the ruins and show the way of real democracy."

IX
AMERICA EXIT

When it was openly announced that the American troops were to be withdrawn from North

Russia the Bolshevik propaganda took every possible advantage of it, claiming that President Wilson was now their friend and America would soon recognize their government. A certain type of Englishman also made use of the opportunity to call the attention of the Russians to the fact that their much praised American friends were now leaving them to the mercy of the Bolsheviki except for the greater friendship of England for Russia. England would not desert Russia. We felt great uncertainty at this time. Not a man of us had one authorized word of explanation to make. Our government was silent. Our enemies were noisy. But the Russian peasant never wavered a hair's-breadth in his faith in the friendship of America. If the Americans were going home then that was the best thing to do. If the English were staying then perhaps that was not the best thing to do.

And when the departure took place and the Yankees packed up their old kit-bags for home they were given the warmest good-bys and God-bless-yous in Russian, and there was no indication of resentment at being left in a bad predicament.

I stood on the bank of the Emtsa River when three platoons of Company K embarked on a barge and waved their farewells to the theater of war. I was the only American left behind. On the river bank nearly the entire population of Yemetskoye were assembled, dressed in their best clothes and giving every possible evidence of their regard and esteem for these boys. As the barge swung down the river with the soldiers singing "Keep the home fires burning," I saw many a handkerchief wiping tears away on the river bank, and the head man of the Zemstvo Upravda, who stood beside me all dressed up in a white shirt, had tears in his eyes too as he grasped my hand and said again as he had said repeatedly before: "Amerikanski dobrey."

I saw these American boys embark at Archangel and Economy—four great liners loaded with them—for Brest. Archangel was busy welcoming an incoming British army. There were no demonstrations here except those of American joy; exuberant, selfish joy. For the war at last was over in those last days of June for these five thousand men who for a year had done the work of twenty-five thousand on a job that called for fifty thousand or more. And the very last to leave were those who perhaps had done the hardest work—Companies A, B, and C of the 310th Engineers. These men embarked on a transport at Archangel on June twenty-sixth, and the American expedition was at an end.

When these men were gone Archangel was a lonesome place for an American. They were affectionately remembered by the Russians, and there certainly were some among them to remember the love and gratitude and admiration of old Russian eyes in wrinkled faces, and the simple, wonderful faith of these backward and romantic peasants in the land that symbolized to them freedom, education, and justice.

X
THE NEW BRITISH ARMY

In June a splendid new British army took over the fronts in North Russia from the Americans and the Canadians and the old British "category" men. They came to finish the job, to clean up North Russia, to take Kotlas by July fifteenth, Viatka and Vologda in another thirty days, and Petrograd before snowfall. This was quite on the cards. This new army had come to Russia with much boasting and had been received in Archangel with great ceremonial and flourish. They were "men from France" who "knew how to fight," and they would "show the Yankees how to lick the Bolos."

This boastfulness was unlike that of the first Yankees to go to France in that it was indulged in more by the officers than by the men. Many small British officers had acquired with reason a feeling of resentment toward the Yankee privates which during the spring found relief in big brag about what the new army was going to do in comparison with what the Yanks had done.

There were ex-colonels who came as corporals, and lords who came really to fight. It was an army to be proud of, an army of which much could be expected, an army which certainly would put across its program. It was very much bigger than the army that had borne the winter's campaign. The equipment was better in every way. They had new rifles that would not jam at every other shot as the old ones often did. They had more and better artillery. They had a large air force with an abundance of equipment. More than all they had the best time of the year in which to conduct a campaign. Moreover, they had small Bolshevik forces to contend with, as the Bolsheviki seemed to be busy just then elsewhere.

The new British army entered Archangel in June with great pomp and ceremony.

The Duma building at Archangel was decorated in honor of the new army that came to finish the Bolsheviki.

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In the address of welcome that was made to this new army on its arrival, the commanding general said that no better equipped army had ever been sent out by the British Empire. This was easy to believe. Not only was there the newest and latest equipment, there was quantity, such amplitude of everything as to inspire the greatest of confidence, and we who had lived through the poverty of the previous winter felt that there would be no such handicap upon those who should now turn the tide of battle and march victoriously to Petrograd.

About half of the men in this new army were volunteers. Many of them told me that they had enlisted because they could not find work, but that they had specifically volunteered to come and rescue besieged British soldiers from Archangel. When they found themselves three hundred miles up the Dvina River engaged in an expensive offensive they groused as hard as the Americans or Canadians ever had, but this did not interfere with their fighting. These men gave a good account of themselves, and they would have gone right through to Kotlas and Viatka and Vologda if something entirely beyond them had not changed the British plans.

XI
THE NEW RUSSIAN ARMY

There were broadly three classes in the Russian army: first, the volunteer Slavo-British Legion of men who enlisted in order to draw army rations and buy from the Y.M.C.A; second, the conscripted "mobilized" army of men forced to join against their own choice; and, third, a large body of ex-Bolshevist prisoners who chose the army in preference to prison and labor, and who because of this volition on their part were made a part of the Slavo-British Legion. In each of these classes were many men who had been on the "Eastern" front in February, 1917, and who then threw down their arms and went home, "having finished with war forever." Politicians and militarists who were unable to understand that act have been equally unable to understand any of the subsequent acts of these strange and natural men.

I am horrified at what these men have since done, and abhor it, but I think I understand it, at least somewhat.

These Russian soldiers were provided with food and rum and cigarettes. They liked this. But they disliked everything else. They were sometimes commanded by British officers, which they hated. They were permitted to wear the British name on their shoulders when they went into battle, which they could not do with patriotic enthusiasm, and when they visited their friends, which they did with explanations and chagrin. They were Russians, but they were not a Russian army. I have seen many a Russian officer shrug his shoulders in quizzical dismay as he spoke about the British uniform he was wearing.

But there was real fighting ability in this new Russian army. It was greatly increased in numbers and much better organized and officered than the army of the previous winter. It was supplied with the new equipment, and much was justly expected of it. It was thoroughly saturated with British stories of Bolshevik atrocities, as fear is a mighty motive with the Russian soldier and the British were determined he should be thoroughly afraid of the Bolsheviki.

But this army of Russian peasants did not altogether believe the atrocity stories, did not in the least believe that England was there for the good of Russia or for the general good of mankind, and did not want to fight.

XII
MAKING BOLSHEVIKI

In May General Miller, the Russian commander at Archangel, issued a proclamation calling upon all people of Bolshevist sympathies to leave Archangel within a prescribed time, offering them transport to the Bolshevik lines and two days' rations, and threatening severe penalties to all who failed to go. This was startling. All the Bolsheviki had left when we came in. None had been permitted to come in since the campaign began. Where, then, did these come from who were reported officially as being in Archangel in "large numbers"? The obvious answer is the correct one. They had developed Bolshevist sympathies in Archangel. Some of them took their two days' rations and crossed the line, the military command ordered quite a number of them shot, but others kept springing from the ground until the British command had ample ground for its theory that if you scratch a Russian you find a Bolshevik.

How are these numerous Bolsheviki to be accounted for? They were made in Archangel. They were made by the British militarists, the Russian monarchists and the Bolshevik propagandists. The making of Bolsheviki in Archangel had not proceeded according to the pet American theory of Bolshevist-making. They had not been made by hunger. Archangel had been fed. Not by charity, but by work. Plenty of work, fair pay, and ample supplies.

The first great step in the process of making Bolsheviki was the conscription of men for the army. This was not done until ample opportunity had been given everybody to enlist voluntarily, but not everybody volunteered. The Russian point of view and ours were quite different in this matter. We had undertaken to fight the Bolsheviki for him and he was glad to have us do it. Our men and officers, on the other hand, declared it was preposterous to suppose they were going to do this fighting while the "lazy Russians stayed at home." So conscription went into force. At first a small class of young men, then a larger class, and finally practically every able-bodied man from seventeen to fifty. Here was another story. Here was war, real war, again. The new thing

called Military Intervention or Allied Assistance or anything else had proved to be the old thing that Russia knew so well. And the peasant of North Russia did not want it. As early as January some of these conscripted companies at Shenkursk went over bodily to the Bolsheviki.

The suppression of all expressions of interest in Russia's "new-found freedom" was a stupid blunder. There were no public meetings, no open discussion of political questions, no real freedom of the press. The Russian soldiers were even afraid to sing the "Marseillaise," and confined themselves to the innocuous if beautiful folksongs, leaving all of the many excellent freedom songs of the revolution to the exclusive use of the Bolsheviki. The British never discovered that the Russian loves these freedom songs, because they took counsel solely of the reactionary monarchist element they had placed in power.

I have known a single strain of one of these freedom songs to throw a roomful of people into panic with fear that it meant a fresh revolt. And I have seen a crowd of Russian soldiers respond with keen pleasure when their officer, a friend of mine with whom I had talked the matter over, told them to go ahead and sing the so-called Bolshevist songs. This was toward the end of the chapter of Military Intervention.

The suspension of all kinds of democratic and political experiment and experience by the Military Intervention was a matter of grave consequence. After a year of Military Intervention a member of a Zemstvo Upravda said to me, "We have made no progress in government. We have lost ground. It could not have been worse under the Bolsheviki." The people under Military Intervention felt that they were robbed of the freedom they had waited for so long and enjoyed such a little time. The belief that the Bolsheviki would have robbed them equally or worse comforted them for a time, but this comfort wore away as time stretched on and Military Intervention made constantly increasing demands upon them.

Conscription for the army was accompanied by labor conscription. This was followed by more labor conscription. This labor was employed largely in building something to be blown up, loading cargoes to be reloaded, hauling supplies backward to be hauled forward again and other ostensibly wasteful operations which accompany all military operations, more or less, in this case more. This conscripted and wasted labor was taken away from farm work at times when it could not be spared without the loss of a season's crop. But it had to be done and military necessities do not take farm seasons into account. The Military Intervention had been here all winter and had consumed every bit of the country's surplus. This year there must be a big crop or starvation. It has been a good crop but a small one because of labor conscription. And those "ignorant" peasants can tell you what that means to them however many useless paper roubles the Military Intervention may leave behind it.

The execution of suspects made Bolsheviki right and left. The inquisitorial processes of the Russian puppets of the Military Intervention were necessarily so much like those of the old régimé that they went far to dispel all illusions about the Military Intervention that might have remained in the peasant mind.

When night after night the firing squad took out its batches of victims it mattered not that no civilians were permitted on the streets. There were thousands of listening ears to hear the rat-tat-tat of the machine guns, and no morning paper could have given all the gruesome details more complete circulation than they received in the regular process of universal news gossip by which Archangel keeps itself in up-to-the-minute touch with all local affairs.

The details were well known. Some one had seen it all. Some one also thought he knew who were to be included in the new batch tonight. These little gossip groups discussed freely the merits of the shooting and the charges. The Military Intervention tried to prevent this but it couldn't. Every victim had friends. These friends and their friends rapidly were made enemies of the Military Intervention. And this enmity naturally spelled Bolshevism, as far as the Military Intervention was concerned.

I witnessed the anguish of one woman whose husband and father were both in prison as suspects. They had both won honor in the war against Germany. The husband had been wounded. The charges of Bolshevist sympathy on which they were arrested were based on slight evidence. She could not visit them. Only through the underground methods of the native Russians could she learn anything about them. She, too, listened every night for the rat-tat-tat until she could bear it no longer. So she was arrested a few days before I left Archangel for having said something for which the Military Intervention could not stand. Another Bolshevik.

If the Russian soldiers whom we organized, equipped, and paid to fight the Bolsheviki went over as they did in whole companies to the Bolsheviki it was not because of any lure or reward that our enemies held out to them. It was because we in our stupidity thought of them as "swine"

and employed such methods of administration and control in our Military Intervention as they had been only too familiar with in the old days of Tsarism. We failed to win their hearts or their confidence. We destroyed all their illusions about us. And they turned "Bolshevik."

Of course English and American soldiers did not turn Bolshevik, but it was startling sometimes to hear their exclamations of sympathy with the Bolsheviki and their protests against the whole fact and practice of the Military Intervention. This was not unusual among the Americans and Canadians of the winter army and was so common among the new army that I felt at one time they were more likely to make trouble for the Military Intervention than the Russians were.

A gentleman who was very much in sympathy with the Military Intervention was lecturing to an audience of these men one night in Archangel on "Why are we here?" His lecture had been O.K.'d carefully by the Intelligence Department and was considered safe, in fact, most excellent. After the lecture the men were given an opportunity to ask questions, and some of the questions they asked were, "Is England going to take the port of Murmansk?" "Did a British syndicate get control of the lumber industry of Archangel?" "Who cashed in on the new rouble deal?" "Are we trying to set up a monarchy here in Russia?" This from British Tommies was too much. The Intelligence Department sent around word the next morning that this lecture had better not be given any more. What the troops needed was entertainment and amusement.

XIII
THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN

The relations between the English and the Russians were not on the whole pleasant or friendly. The English themselves do not know this. So long as they were not shooting each other there was nothing missing in the estimation of the average English soldier in his relations with the Russians. Feeling at heart the pressure of the white man's burden he had great scorn for the white Russians who now had added to its weight.

I have heard English officers curse Russian soldiers so violently that I knew they were giving themselves boldness under cover of their foreign tongue, and I knew too that the soldiers were refraining from protest under the pretense of not understanding. I once heard an English captain call three Russian captains "filthy swine" in their hearing and one of the Russians afterward told me in perfectly good English that he had frequently been so abused by Englishmen who thought he did not understand their words. This word "swine," in fact, was the favorite appellation of the English for the Russians.

Since it is necessary in this writing to generalize about the Englishmen and British officers somewhat I must say here that there were among them some splendid men. I had the privilege of knowing a few who are among the finest men to be met anywhere—tactful, human, sympathetic, and strong. But these were too small a minority.

The expedition called for military skill and it called for leadership, sympathy, social skill. There was a sad failure to realize that an expedition of this sort is bound to run into social and political problems that are quite as important, perhaps more so, than mere military practice. The management of this campaign has ignored all social and political considerations that might have contributed to its success or failure and has blundered stupidly whenever these matters have forced themselves to the front. And the military blunders have been so obvious that they have been openly acknowledged in part and are on record presumably in the war office today.

The failure of the North Russian Expedition was the failure of the British to make friends of the Russian people. There was no purpose of conquest here. The purpose of his government was to be helpful to the Russian people. But the British soldier does not think in these terms. He had been a pupil in the school of imperialism too long to become a conscious knight-errant of the League of Nations so suddenly. He took his imperialism to Russia with him, and Russia would not stand for it. He failed in Russia and the causes of his failure were:

1. The Russian distrust and dislike of the British.
2. The British inability to understand the Russian mind.

1. The British lack of respect for the Russian character.

4. The British tactlessness in dealing with the Russians.

1. The stupid propaganda conducted by the British.
2. The British war-weariness.

Probably the last of these reasons is the one that will seem most important to those who have been hearing the noise made by English politicians, but I believe it to be the least. It did not prevent the sending out of that fine new army with its marvelous supplies of stores and equipment. It did not spoil those precious plans for getting to Petrograd before winter. For it was neither British Labor nor the Bolsheviki that drove the British army from North Russia. It was the peasant population of North Russia that did this.

In April, May, and June I was told dozens of times by Russians that if the Americans left Russia, the English would be compelled to go. They did not believe the British would withdraw voluntarily. They expected to have to fight to drive them out. Some of them said they would ask the Bolsheviki to help them. Constantly new causes of irritation arose between the military and the peasants and violent expressions of military disgust with "swine" were increasingly heard. When things went wrong all blame was laid on the Russians. And it was laid on them in such a way as to increase the malady. Each day bitterness, distrust, and resentment increased on both sides. In August a British colonel said to me that he feared nothing from our enemies the Bolsheviki but everything from our friends the Russians, and he doubted if they would let us get out without another great tragedy of treachery. In August also a Russian officer told a friend of mine that the quicker the English got away the surer they were of getting away safely.

No Russian believed in the disinterestedness of England's motives. All kinds of stories were invented and believed as to the concessions and ports she was to receive, as to the debt Russia would owe her after the war, and as to King George's interest in the restoration of the Czar to his throne. Bolshevik propaganda was not idle and was all too easily believed.

The Russians knew, too, that the English liked the monarchists, took them into their confidence, had them to dinner, danced with them, and they came to believe that with England in North Russia the revolution was lost.

It was a common thing to hear an English officer say that every Russian was a Bolo. And this appellation was intended to be most opprobrious. A discussion of this charge involves an understanding of Bolos as well as of other Russians, and the statement emanates from an utter lack of such understanding. I must say that the great number of Russians that I have come to know somewhat are not at all open to the charge of being like the British idea of Bolos. They are, on the contrary, loyal, generous, honest, and reliable; neither crazy radicals nor indolent dreamers, but a plodding, persistent, patient people who also can dream dreams and turn over new pages.

On our way back to Archangel in the very last days of August we welcomed almost any suggestion that seemed to afford a pleasant justification for our retreat, and we talked much about the failure of Kolchak to meet us at Kotlas or Viatka and the unwisdom of risking another winter with Archangel for a base and such impossible lines of communication as we maintained last winter. In truth we were quite willing to realize that what we had undertaken to do there was from a military point of view stupid and utterly impractical. We did not believe anybody would ever again attempt to invade Russia from the north. But the political stupidity of our mission and our methods was never suspected, and English officers continued to talk about "swine."

XIV
ATROCITIES

The men of this expedition were told many stories of Bolshevik atrocities. No care or effort was spared in printing these stories in both English and Russian and getting them into the hands of the soldiers. It was important to inspire fear and hatred of the Bolsheviki in the hearts of our men, more important than the verification of the stories. After the evacuation of Shenkursk we were told, with complete details, of the murder of the nuns and the Abbess, and of the members of several families who were well known to us, also of the forced marriage to favored Bolsheviki of some of the young ladies who in the happy days had danced with our officers. We were told of rape and of tortures, all in convincing circumstantial setting. This "information" we were told had been obtained most cleverly by us through spies and prisoners—and it did its work. In July, however, we learned the truth—at least I did. Three Russians whom I had known all winter and in

whom I have the utmost confidence, went to Shenkursk, stayed there incognito a week, and came back. They told me that they had seen the nuns, and talked with the people who were supposed to have been murdered, that the Abbess was alive, that the girls were unmarried, and that there had been no forced marriages whatever. The one atrocity and the only one committed by the Bolsheviki in Shenkursk was the shooting of one priest. One priest was shot in the street by soldiers without official sanction. The only other Bolshevik atrocity about which I had any authentic information throughout the entire expedition was the mutilation of the bodies of some of our men who had been killed in the early days of Ustpadenga. I was unable to find any one who had any proof, however, that they had ever killed our men whom they had once taken prisoner. Perhaps they did it, but even so we were there not to imitate their worst practices but to wipe them off the face of the earth because of those practices.

A friend of mine was walking unarmed on a lonely road near the front one day when a Bolshevik soldier came out of the woods and made a friendly approach. He asked my friend if it was safe to go in and give himself up as a prisoner and was assured that it was. They went in together, the guard at the barricade took charge of the prisoner, taking him to headquarters. Ten days later my friend learned that this prisoner had been shot, and the only reason given was that he had refused to give certain desired information as to the enemy. I have heard an officer tell his men repeatedly to take no prisoners, to kill them even if they came in unarmed, and I have been told by the men themselves of many cases when this was done.

I saw a disarmed Bolshevik prisoner, who was making no attempt to escape and no trouble of any kind, and who was alone in charge of three armed soldiers, shot down in cold blood. The official whitewash on this case was that he was trying to escape. I have heard of many other cases of the shooting of Bolshevik prisoners. At one time this had become so common that the Officer Commanding troops issued and had posted up an order forbidding it and calling attention to the fact that there were many Bolshevik soldiers who wanted to come over and give themselves up but feared to do so because they had heard about our shooting prisoners, and warning our men that the Bolsheviki might retaliate by shooting our men whom they held as prisoners. I have seen at various times many prisoners brought in, but I have never yet seen one that was not robbed. The plunder belonged to the captor or the robber. We got as high as three thousand roubles off of some of them. Their boots and belt buckles were especially prized trophies. I have known cases where the captor was generous and left the prisoner some small thing, but it was only to have some other soldier take it away from him later.

We used gas shells on the Bolsheviki, but that I understand is no longer an atrocity. We fixed all the devil-traps we could think of for them when we evacuated villages. Once we shot more than thirty prisoners in our determination to punish three murderers. And when we caught the Commissar of Borok, a sergeant tells me we left his body in the street, stripped, with sixteen bayonet wounds. We surprised Borok, and the Commissar, a civilian, did not have time to arm himself. The sergeant was quite exultant over it. He killed Bolsheviki because they were barbarians and cruel. This was the only thing his government had ever told him as to why they should be killed. And the only safe way to fight barbarians is with their own methods.

The spoliation of scores of Russian villages and thousands of little farms, and the utter disorganization of the life and industry of a great section of the country with the attendant wanderings and sufferings of thousands of peasant-folk who had lost everything but life, are but the natural and necessary results of a military operation, and especially a weak and unsuccessful military operation such as this one was. One would hardly say, however, that it was necessary to close the school in order to use the schoolhouse for the storage of whisky, nor to put an entire Russian family into the street in order to make room for one officer, nor to loot personal property and ransack churches, nor to take so much whisky into the country that it could hardly be consumed when there was the greatest need for all kinds of merchandise, yet all these things were done, and acts of this kind are now outstanding features of the military "helpfulness" we went into so reluctantly.

We have been told about the employment by the Bolsheviki of Chinese mercenaries, and the dreadfulness of this was much stressed in April, but in July, August, and September we were importing large numbers of Chinese to Archangel, dressing them in British uniforms, and training them for fighting the Bolsheviki.

THE MUTINIES

Early in the year there had been a few small defections of conscripted Russians at Shenkursk, Murmansk, and later at Toulgas, but the thing that broke loose in July when the Yankees had gone home and the new British army had come and started its big campaign was quite another matter. At Troitsa, at Onega, at Pinega, at Obozerskaya, on the Vaga and on the Murmansk railroad our Russian soldiers mutinied, killed their officers, and went over to the Bolsheviki. On six of our seven fronts these mutinies occurred. They were evidently not concerted, not uniform in method, but spontaneous, having the same nature, and springing from the same causes.

There were some distinctive features about the Troitsa affair of July seventh. The Dyer's Battalion that mutinied here was composed of ex-Bolsheviki prisoners who had been given the option of joining our army or remaining prisoners of war, and who for obvious reasons had chosen to join the army. This battalion had been fêted and honored in many ways, and the privilege of wearing the British name on their shoulders was supposed to give assurance of their loyalty to our army. We did not conceal our stupidity about the Bolsheviki from these men. We did not keep them from hearing the stories on which we had fed our men. They saw the attitude of the English military toward the Russians and had learned the true state of Russian peasant feeling toward the military. They despised the name of the Slavo-British Legion that they wore. On Troitsa's fateful night they murdered five English officers and eight Russian officers and went over to the Bolsheviki. We recaptured a considerable number of them and executed them. Those that had not been in the mutiny we disarmed and put to labor. We had lost heavily and by treachery. It was enough to get the wind up of anybody. It got ours up. I heard many an Englishman say after that that he would never again trust any Russian anywhere. He would not discriminate. They were all treacherous, ungrateful swine. Every Russian was a Bolo. There was no longer possible any big coöperative campaign.

On the other fronts the mutinies were not of ex-Bolsheviki prisoners but of the "mobilized" conscripts who had never been tainted by Bolshevist theories or ideals and whose defection is therefore of greater significance. These men were the peasant inhabitants of North Russia who had welcomed our advent at Archangel. They had been in a sense our hosts all winter. They had worked for us, driven our transport, sold us hay and potatoes, smoked our cigarettes, and hated our enemies. But also they had told me in the spring that if the Americans went home the English, would have to go home too. Now they were murdering their officers, surrendering their positions to the enemy, refusing to advance, going over to the Bolsheviki in large numbers.

The British fought wonderfully well under these trying circumstances. At every point except Onega they re-took all positions that had been lost by treachery. They caught and shot traitors. And they also shot all other Russian soldiers who were suspected of treason. They did this with a brutality the details of which I will spare you, but not one item, of which escaped the Russian people.

The British wind was up. They were soldiers, and prepared for any fight that might be in store for them. But being shot in bed by your own men is not fighting. It is not war. There was no question of courage involved. The army had courage enough. But this was next to suicide, to go to the front leading traitors.

There was evidence one day on the railroad front that a new mutiny was brewing. All the men of the suspected company were put on a train and then disarmed. A guard went through the train and counted off the men, taking every tenth man outside to be shot without trial. The men had not mutinied, but they might, and something had to be done.

I was told about another company of eighty Russians who were under suspicion at the same time. The British officer in command gave them the option of declaring who the ringleaders were or being shot *en masse*. Under the fear of this threat fifteen out of the eighty men were named and shot without trial.

XVI
THE DÉBÂCLE

And so, there being nothing else possible, the débâcle began. But it is a big job to get an expedition out of a country, much bigger than to get it in. There were great quantities of

munitions and supplies to be transported or destroyed. There were fortifications to destroy, bridges to burn, railways to tear up, all fighting facilities to cripple. There were civilians to evacuate, and all the service branches of the army, with all their vast and varied stores, to be disposed of. And there was the enemy to be dealt with. The thing simply couldn't be done with any chance of success on all of those long fingers of this expedition until a smashing blow had been delivered to the Bolsheviki, both to reduce his morale and to increase your own, which had been so seriously impaired by the mutinies.

So a smashing blow was delivered successfully at one of the finger-points, costing us more men than any other fight in North Russia; and instanter the latest retreat from Moscow began. Now there was something quite peculiar about this retreat from the finger-points in North Russia. We were not pursued. The Bolsheviki knew we were going. In fact, they seemed to be remarkably well posted as to our plans. They were willing to have us go. But they did not chase us out. The Bolsheviki had little to do with causing this retreat. This retreat was forced by the conscripted soldiers and people of North Russia, who wanted the English to go, and who were so sincere in this that they were willing to face all the dangers of the "dictatorship of the proletariat" commissar, and the unrestrained spite of every personal enemy, without English protection. A school teacher who supposed himself to be on the Bolshevik black list, said to me in July, "Our duty is to Russia. The Bolsheviki may rule us or may kill us, but our duty is to Russia. The English must go." The Labor Congress, assembled at Solombola, passed resolutions urging the hasty withdrawal of the British and were at once disbanded by the army and charged with being Bolshevik propagandists.

But the retreat was on. Every embassy received orders from home to leave with all its citizens, bag and baggage, and in the early days of September they went as from a pestilence, shipload after shipload, the Americans, the French, Italian, Chinese, Serbian, Japanese embassies, consulates of all sorts, Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., military missions, bourgeois Russians, and any number of enterprising citizens of enterprising countries got out.

The military preceded, accompanied, followed. By September twentieth, the last British soldier was out and the washout was complete. We heard wild rumors that the Labor Congress continued to meet in spite of the army, that they turned upon the Russian military leaders, who are well-known to be monarchist in sympathy, and informed them that they must make peace with the Bolsheviki, and that there was some bad rioting in Solombola. Two British soldiers had been beaten to death in the streets by Russians. More Russians had been shot because they were suspected of Bolshevist sympathies. As our ships pulled out of the harbor great fires broke out in the vast lumber yards on both sides of the river, the laborers were charged with Bolshevik sabotage, and an enormous pall of black smoke hung for days over the scene of this most unfortunate expedition, a sinister emblem of the ruin and hatred that lay behind us, and a symbol of angry protest from the sky itself over our stupid failure to understand the Russian people.

XVII
MILITARY INTERVENTION FINANCE

The financial contrivances of this Military Intervention in North Russia, while conceived with the best of intentions, perhaps, and being presumably in the interests of Russian welfare, created much suspicion and bitterness among the peasants and the soldiers. The country having been flooded with Kerensky and Bolshevik paper money, it was impossible to maintain any general European value, so a new rouble was issued called the "English rouble," with a guaranteed minimum value based on deposits of securities with the Bank of England. But the peasants were not interested. They did not give up their old roubles for the new. So it became necessary to force matters. A schedule of depreciation of all old roubles was published. While the English roubles stood as guaranteed at forty to the pound all old or "Russian" money, as the peasants called it, stepped down a ladder of fortnightly rungs from forty-eight to fifty-six, to sixty-five, to seventy-two, to eighty, to ninety, after which it was to have no value whatever. It was hoped, of course, that all people would avail themselves of the opportunity thus offered to dispose of their worthless money and the region would have a sound currency of some intra-national value as a result.

Then, finding that it had a lot of old roubles on hand, the British paid their Russian soldiers and civilian labor in these old roubles that they had proposed to put out of circulation, at the

same time making it impossible for the holder to spend this money in availing himself of any of the resources of the Military Intervention.

Dozens of times I have seen Russian soldiers tear up this old money with which they had been paid and throw it on the floor in anger, because they could buy nothing with it.

Yet the old money stayed in circulation. When eighty was reached no attempt was made to press the process of depreciation any further. Old "Nicolai" paper had gone out of circulation, and in the early days of August the peasants generally were preferring old roubles at eighty to new ones at forty. And there was a very general feeling among the Russian people that the Military Intervention had taken all that value out of their old roubles and in some mysterious way put it into its own pocket.

XVIII
PROPAGANDA

The Bolsheviki are adepts at propaganda. They try to understand the point of view, the prejudices, the situations, of those to whom they appeal, and their propaganda is essentially sympathetic, tries to find a common ground, attempts to enter openings. They believe in propaganda. I have thought sometimes that they believe much more firmly in propaganda than in guns. They bombarded us constantly with leaflets in Russian and leaflets in English. We found them tacked up on trees in front of our lines every morning, and no one who went out to get them was ever shot at. We were forbidden to read this literature. All copies were to be taken unread to the "Information" office. As it came floating down the river on little rafts marked humorously "H.M.S. Thunderer," "H.M.S. Terrible," etc., we were warned that these were likely to be mine-traps. But they never were. We got them all. We read all the propaganda. It was interesting even when unconvincing. Having learned the names of some of our officers they sent personal messages across the lines. These made a great hit with our soldiers.

Throughout the campaign we often got better news information from the Bolshevik propaganda than from the British propaganda, which came daily by wireless but which published almost nothing of political value. The Bolsheviki watched the Peace Congress very closely, and while their reports lacked fairness as much as those of the British lacked frankness, we were very glad to get them for the facts they gave us.

Canadian soldiers with two captives, having changed caps.

Bringing Bolsheviki prisoners into Maloberezník.

Canadian soldiers with two captives, having changed caps.
Bringing Bolsheviki prisoners into Maloberezník.

Of course they attacked Mr. Wilson bitterly, violently, unfairly, but with enough basis of truth and fact to make their attacks effective. And their propaganda reached its goal. A limited amount was printed in English for the Allied troops. A greater amount was printed in Russian for Russian troops and Russian civilians, who as well as the troops devoured it with avidity. They were at first prejudiced against everything Bolshevist, but there was no reliable news. They knew the British were feeding them on watered milk, and this made them turn to the Bolshevik newspapers. I have been surprised to find that these newspapers were read and quoted everywhere. It was not so at first, but in July it was literally so.

In May I had only the preliminary publication of the Terms and the Covenant that had appeared in the London *Times* of February twenty-first. I essayed to address an audience of English-speaking soldiers on the work of the Peace Congress, full of optimistic enthusiasm. After the meeting a Russian friend told me quietly that he knew I was wrong, that I was doomed to disappointment, that he had later news than I had, and finally he very secretly produced the Bolshevik papers. Of course I did not have to believe all these papers said. It wasn't all true. But I found the Russians were believing much of it. President Wilson was not having his way in the Peace Congress. He had surrendered open diplomacy and would have to surrender more, perhaps much more. He lacked the support of the American Senate, and he was hopelessly out-

voted at Versailles. And there was Clemenceau. Russia knows Clemenceau. And the League of Nations would be born without teeth.

As a matter of fact these Russians through the Bolsheviki had the latest gossip on the peace parleys and their interest in the subject was very keen. They hate the Germans, but their eyes were fixed not on that hatred, but on an ideal, a hope. And now they were being disillusioned, let down. It had remained for Bolshevist propaganda to tell them that their dream was not coming true.

And British propaganda! The Bolsheviki might well have paid the bill, and it was a substantial one. The great themes about which this propaganda was built were:

The Size of the British Empire,

The Strength of the British Navy,

The Growth of the British Army since 1914,

The British Empire at War,

The Charitableness of British Royalty,

and latterly the severity of terms demanded of Germany. Great piles of sheets of old war pictures with Russian captions were scattered broadcast upon a war-bored population, and Russian editions of a transparently over-censored news communiqué which told who dined with the King, who got the Order of the Garter, who was responsible for the great war, how bad the Bolsheviki are, and how the great international game of cricket is getting on.

In this fashion did we undertake by our "Allied Bureau of Public Information" to bring Russia into the family of nations!

Not one word of the vital truth—the growing truth in these growing days—for which Russia is hungry. Not a spark of recognition for the intellectual heroism of these people whose fight for truth and freedom has only been begun. No belief in the manliness of these "children" who were to be taught. No faith in national ideals that were different from our own.

An educated Russian once said to me, holding a copy of "The British Empire at War" in his hand: "I believe that every Russian family knows more about war than whole cities of Englishmen." And I have seen a Russian peasant look at the same publication, shake his head and say: "English ne dobra."

A Russian Y.M.C.A. Secretary said to me once: "The English propaganda is making Bolos every day."

In August a squad of Americans came to Archangel from France with instructions to disinter the bodies of the 260 Americans buried in North Russia and take them to the military cemeteries in France or America for re-burial. Many of these bodies were in territory held by the Bolsheviki and the lieutenant in charge of this work asked permission of the British command at Archangel to enter into negotiations with the Bolshevik command for permission to get those bodies. Nobody doubted that this permission, would be granted by the Bolsheviki, but the negotiations were forbidden by the British, as it would be bad policy to let the Bolsheviki show us courtesies. They must remain outlaws. They must not be permitted to state their case to Americans who would tell the Russians. Americans must not see with their own eyes that the tales of Bolshevik atrocities in Shenkursk and Shagavari were untrue. The Bolsheviki must remain as black as they had been painted, so the American bodies must remain in their Russian graves.

In July two American Y.M.C.A. secretaries were captured by the Bolsheviki on the Onega front. Two others had been captured previously to this and had been released by way of Stockholm, and had reported good treatment. With these taken in July the Bolsheviki had taken also a number of British soldiers, some army supplies, and some Y.M.C.A. supplies. One of the secretaries had considerable money on his person belonging to the Y.M.C.A. He was given permission to go to Archangel on parole to take this money to "Y" headquarters, and he was given by the Bolshevik command two messages. One was to negotiate the purchase of the "Y" supplies captured, as the Bolsheviki did not consider these things war booty and wished to pay for them. The other was a message to the people of Archangel assuring them that when the Bolsheviki should take their city there would be no reprisals but full political amnesty. When this paroled American prisoner reached our lines he was taken to British headquarters and there told that he could not go to Archangel on any such mission. He appealed by telephone to the American Embassy and arrangements were made for him to go to Archangel, virtually under arrest. At British headquarters in Archangel he was ordered not to make known any of the Bolshevist messages and an attempt was made to induce him to break his parole. When he told of kindly treatment by the Bolsheviki he was angrily denounced as a Bolshevik propagandist. He returned to the front and re-crossed the line according to the terms of his parole. These prisoners were

sent to Moscow. They were not under arrest nor restraint, nor were the British Tommies whom the Bolsheviki held there as prisoners of war. These two men left Moscow September fifth for home by way of Vologda and Archangel. They saw nothing of the atrocities we read so much about, nor of the nationalization of women, nor the separation of children from parents by state decree, nor the other barbarities the British-American news factories give us so much to read about.

XIX
CONCERNING MILITARY INTERVENTION

During the first half of 1918 there was considerable discussion in America of the proposed military intervention in Russia. Mr. Roosevelt favored it—insisted upon it. Mr. Wilson was understood to be opposed to it, this understanding resting on the general interpretation of his utterances. The debate, widespread, was before the fact. Now that the fact is accomplished we may well look into the results.

The weak fashion in which we went into the enterprise has given rise to the theory in some quarters that it will be claimed that we did not go into it at all. If an armistice had been declared in Russia on November 11, or if America had then notified the Bolsheviki that we had no military motives there, the affair could well have been charged up to the war with Germany, and we might well claim that we had had no serious intention of interfering in the affairs of Russia. But the armistice did not even think of Russia. We were fighting a separate war there. We in Russia were not even notified officially that there was an armistice. We heard about it, and wondered where we came in. It was after November 11 that most of our fighting took place and most of our casualties were suffered. Not until March were we promised that we should be taken home in the spring, and then no intimation was given us that America was to withdraw. Rumors were industriously circulated giving the impression that other Americans were on their way to take our places, and not until our men were actually away did our "information" permit us to realize that America had withdrawn from the expedition.

We intervened. We undertook to crush Bolshevism in Russia. We sent a military and naval expedition there. We organized a civil war there. It was unsuccessful. America lost a few men, England more, Russia many more. How much more Russia suffered is not yet written. America withdrew her troops. France, Serbia, Italy withdrew theirs. England reluctantly withdraws hers.

Let us consider what this expedition meant to our own men. They were only a few thousand men, to be sure, and their little event was so much smaller than the big thing in France that it was naturally even necessarily overlooked. Because I was with them, however, I know that it was a big thing their government made them do. The men in France had faith in their cause. The men in Russia had none. Over and over again our men in Russia have argued with me that while we were fighting for freedom in France we were fighting to kill it in Russia. Some said we were fighting for the capitalists of England and France, others declared that the Bolsheviki were more right than wrong, and everybody felt that our government had made a great mistake and that a life lost there was a life worse than thrown away. In this frame of mind American boys went through all the dangers and privations and sufferings of a difficult all-winter campaign and some of them went to their last battles. Statistically it is a little thing, if you must measure everything by statistics, but I have been made to feel how terribly great a thing was the death of one man who as I held his hand cursed the fate that made him die in a fight for which he had no heart.

It was a high degree of sportsmanship that enabled these men to see it through. If Mr. Wilson told his colleagues at Paris that "if" American troops were sent to Russia they would mutiny he might have based his opinion on information as to what American troops in Russia had already said on that particular subject.

It is difficult to imagine a more unmoral situation than that of an army fighting without a sense of unction and against its sense of right, but this is what military intervention in Russia imposed on a small army of Americans.

I can testify of my personal knowledge that this was equally true of Canadian and British soldiers. I have heard that it was true of the French, the Italians, and the Serbians.

These men are all home now with their grievance. Few of them are proud of the expedition, or glad they had a part in it, or grateful to their country for its support, or willing to go again. Military intervention has been a tragedy in their lives and was an injustice to them such as no

government may with impunity impose on its citizens.

We may not easily estimate the harm that military intervention has done in the lowering of our standards of national rights and in devitalizing our ideals of international relations. The precedent that has been established, however, is most unfortunate and may in the future be used to strengthen the hands of some one who may be trying to lead us into a more serious error of the same sort. I must, moreover, say that this enterprise has done considerable harm to the most important friendship in the world—that of England and America—as far as so great a thing could be affected by the few thousands of men who were directly engaged in the expedition. Our governments do not know about this, of course, but the men know. No thoughtful person could hear these men of either nation talk about the other nation without seeing the awfulness of the thing that has been done. It is not at all similar to the attitude of the soldier who knew the British in France, nor to his disillusionment about the French. It is very much worse. It is enmity. And it is clear to me that it is directly due to the fact that our men had to fight in a bad cause, with unwilling minds, beclouded consciences, and rebellious hearts.

Again I do not know how much our participation in this affair has vitiated the faith of small nations in our disinterested friendship for the weak. We may hope that the nations of South America have not taken the Russian campaign to heart as seriously as have the small nations of Europe. Whatever result our military intervention in Russia has had upon this faith, however, those of us who have been in Russia know that it has had a profound effect upon the Russian people. We have not destroyed their faith in us. One mistake could not do that. But we have disillusioned many of them concerning the soundness of our judgment if not the purity of our motives, and they will hereafter, I think, look carefully into our alliances before trusting themselves utterly to our guidance.

Having got into a bad job the governments found it expedient to suppress news, to manipulate news, and even to manufacture a little.

Whether we have actually prolonged Lenin's tenure of office and Trotsky's reign in power we cannot of course know. But this is quite conceivable, and they are still in office and in power two years after the November revolution. We know that the armed barrier that we have built around them and forced them to build in front of us has prevented us from reaching them with any of the more convincing proofs of our "friendly purpose" than the shrapnel and h.e. we have managed to get over into their lines. The business men and educators and engineers and uplifters that we were going to send have had to wait while we undertook to settle Russian turmoil by making more turmoil.

We organized civil war in Russia. The Russians were not fighting the Bolsheviki—not our way. They did not want to fight them—in our way. We made them. We conscripted them to fight for their own freedom. It was difficult, but we had our army there and the army made the peasant patriotic—our way.

The Russian hates conscription; but what were we to do? If he wouldn't fight voluntarily he was a damned Bolshevik and must be made to. And so, as ever, one thing leads to another—especially when we are not quite clear that the one thing is a right thing. The conscripted Russians who rebelled against us and went over to the Bolsheviki were of course a small proportion of the whole. All sorts of mixed motives and confused judgments and conflicting loyalties entered into the situation, but one thing clearly emerged. This was civil war. Every man's hand is set against his neighbor. And now as we confess the futility of our intervention and evacuate, the evil harvest is to be reaped. No peasant can escape it. No woman or child can escape it. Suspicion, recrimination, tale-bearing, jealousy, hatred of Russian for Russian is the harvest our intervention has left behind it.

XX
CONCERNING RUSSIAN PEASANTS

The peasants of North Russia are generally supposed to be the poorest and least progressive class of Russians, living in the poorest and least desirable part of the country. I think that if this is true the interest which all Russia holds for Americans can hardly be exaggerated.

The people of North Russia are peasants. The professional and trading classes are negligible —perhaps smaller than anywhere else in the white world. The towns are small and few and even the towns are peopled largely by peasants.

North Russia, humanly speaking, consists of long tortuous arteries of life called rivers. The banks of these rivers are thickly, almost densely, populated. Villages of from twenty to a hundred houses are strung along so continuously and here and there clustered about a great church so thickly that you wonder where there is land for all these people to cultivate. Never, however, do you find an isolated settler. If it is a forest nobody lives there. You find a village or nobody.

There can be no more hospitable people anywhere in the world than these Russian people are. Their doors are never closed against strangers, and with unfailing courtesy they offer the best they have. I have traveled nearly a thousand versts by sled over this northern country and stopped every six hours at a private house for a samovar and perhaps a bed. To have the best the house afforded given me once or twice and pay refused would not have impressed me so much, but to have uniform hospitality extended me as though it were my right and to have this done without consciousness of virtue made me feel that the world's championship in hospitality abides with the people of this bleak and inhospitable country.

The women work in the fields with the men.

Russians love their homes and their villages devotedly.

The women work in the fields with the men.
Russians love their homes and their villages devotedly.

They get their living from the soil in a very short season, and this is possible only because the summer day is twenty-four hours long. This means that in the short growing season the crops grow very rapidly, and it also means that all the work has to be done in that limited time. If the crops grow twenty-four or twenty-two or twenty hours, then the peasant must work the harder. The wife and mother and children must also work. Most of the farm work is done by each family for itself, but some of it is done by the whole village co-operatively. I spent a half-day working in

a hayfield with peasants from Konetsgory who were eight versts from home. There were seventy-five of them, men, women, and children, and they stayed in that field five days and nights until the great stacks were finished. The hay was community property to which each family had a right in proportion to the number in the family. I noticed that they ate by families while at this work, the food being strictly private property. And I saw Mrs. "Smith" give Mrs. "Jones" some of her fresh cake, and other little private property courtesies. I asked if the families at Konetsgory not represented by workers in the field would have a right to any of the hay. Of course they would, because they were doing other work as directed by the staroster.

The staroster is a public official chosen by a meeting of the peasants whose duty it is to assess labor for any public or co-operative purpose. His assessments are compulsory upon men, women, children, and horses. With most of the men in the army, as is now and has been the case for so long, his chief labor resource of course is women. When there are exceptions to his authority such as doctors and school teachers, these persons do not count in the distributions of the co-operative products.

In all distributions of land and products now women are counted. This is a result of the revolution and has been brought about not because it was legislated but as a spontaneous product of the common sense of right. When Russia does have an election, as we must hope some day she will, these peasant people all assume as a matter of course that women will vote.

Americans do not need to be told how backward Russia is in the matter of machinery and especially agricultural machinery. But I gave myself a surprise one day by going to every house in a small village and finding in every house but one a one-horse cast-steel modern plow. I found also some very good harrows and a few hand-wheel sewing machines, but practically nothing else that could be called modern. I have since seen two mowing machines and one hay-rake. The absence of machinery here is practically as universal as it has been represented. There is no prejudice against it and the people are not ignorant of it. They want it, and they have plenty of money to buy it with, but it is not here to buy, and the money has uncertain value.

There is so much printed matter in America proving eighty-five per cent illiteracy among the Russian people that I approach this subject timidly. I cannot find the eighty-five per cent. I have yet to find one child ten years of age who cannot read and write, and the subject is of such interest to me that I always inquired about it. I found some old peasants who could not and some who could but sensitively would not write their names for me. I had Russian soldiers line up by hundreds to sign their names in a register and not a man would fail to write his own. I had peasants tell me that they knew how to read and write when they were children but had forgotten it since. I have no statistics on the subject, but it would be interesting to have the statisticians go up the Dvina River looking for the eighty-five per cent. In almost every village the best house is the schoolhouse. When it is not the best it is still a very good house. Among hundreds of villages there is not one of twenty houses or more that does not maintain a school eight months of the year.

Russia has but one church. I met a few dissentients—evangelicals and atheists—but the dissent is not organized and there is very little propaganda of reform. The Bolsheviki at first prohibited the church as an evil thing. Many of the un-Bolshevik Russians have dropped the church as a useless thing. But nobody seems to have undertaken to reform the church. And yet one of the greatest reforms in ecclesiastical history is taking place. In a moment and without warning the physical and militant props dropped out from under this institution and it had to stand alone or sink. Some of it did sink. Some of it was scuttled by the Bolsheviki. Then came the aftermath—the afterthought of the people. They missed something. They had not entirely outgrown the church. They had hated its arrogance and exactions, but they still believed what it had taught them and felt its spell. Now that they were free from it they voluntarily returned to it. But it is with a new attitude. These Russians go to church now looking for something that they hardly find. And the priest's only resources now are spiritual—superstition, art, inspiration, service, truth—perhaps he will make use of all in the struggle for existence.

I was interested in the attitude of the peasants toward their priest in a large village that we were about to evacuate. The Bolsheviki would be there shortly after we should leave, and as they were reputed frequently to shoot priests the military had arranged to take him with us. He had received for his worldly needs a house to live in, the use of some land which he and his wife had cultivated as peasants do, a certain amount of money, and certain ecclesiastical emoluments. When the committee of peasants came to settle with him they said: "You are favored above the rest of us. You are taken to a place of safety while we are left to the cruelty of the Bolsheviki. The first thing they will do will be to demand much food from us. After that they may kill us. So you

must help with the food. You may take with you only eight bags of flour. You may not sell your hay. You may sell your cow, but not the yearling." There was no appeal, as this had all been decided upon by vote, in a meeting. They took no money from him, nor gold, as they are told the Bolsheviki do not consider gold has any particular value. They were careful to see that he left everything pertaining to the church.

Talking with the priest afterward, having helped him build a fence around "his" haystack, I asked him what he should do in the future. He said he supposed he would be assigned to another church, but he wished he could get a permanent job with the Y.M.C.A.

The sense of private property is very strong among these people. They are jealous of what they own, and normally acquisitive. These easy expropriations and confiscations arise not from an absence of interest in private property but from the presence of a strong sense of common right and communal responsibility. Private property is not so "sacred" as with us but the acknowledgment of common responsibility is more general.

I had occasion at one time to sell quickly about three hundred thousand roubles' worth of supplies. I took a hurried trip through a string of villages sending messengers to others, calling upon the president of the co-operative society in each, and within a week I had sold out to the co-operatives of twenty-two villages. My chief concern had been that these goods should reach the peasants at cost, and they did. Each co-operative gave me a statement showing the number of houses and of people in the village, and showed me a statement giving the amount of money that had been collected from each family as purchasing capital. The staples, such as flour, sugar, and soap, were mostly distributed among the houses within twenty-four hours. Every family was given the privilege of buying its quota whether it had put up any purchasing capital or not. These were their regular practices.

The meeting of all the peasants by vote determines many matters of minor as well as major importance. The president of the co-operative at Shamova told me that he had asked the meeting to permit him to buy sardines, but they had voted against it. He wanted some sardines for himself, but could not buy them in the name of the co-operative. Would I sell them to him individually if he would sign a bond not to sell any at a profit? One committee had come under instructions to buy only flour and sugar, and as I had to ration these out with other goods in order to dispose of my cargo quickly they had to row their great carbosse back in the wind and rain twenty versts and call a meeting of the peasants for revised instructions. Married women and widows vote in these peasant meetings. One committee came with fifty thousand roubles in its bundle, but with instructions not to spend more than half of it unless they could buy cloth.

It seems to me almost unnecessary to say that I have found the Russian people and the Russian soldiers scrupulously honest in all my dealings with them.

The difference between their standards of morality and ours has been often dwelt upon by our writers. This difference as I found it consisted in the fact that they talk about sex more easily than we do and think about it less vulgarly. I believe the peasant woman is as virtuous as the average woman anywhere. And an intimate acquaintance with thousands of soldiers throughout the winter has given me this belief. Attractive women are not so rare as to fully explain the unusually excellent medical reports of the N.R.E.F. And nowhere in the West has the family tie been stronger nor the family organization so rigidly maintained.

The war-weariness of these Russian people is beyond words to describe. They are not in any sense militant in spirit. They do not believe in war. Passive resistance they will resort to in a thousand ways and with rare cunning and courageous persistence, but organized warfare is not to their taste. Who rules Russia against her will or ideals from now on will have a rocky road to travel, and who looks to her for militant alliance is doomed to certain disappointment. I have had a Russian officers' club in charge for two months and can say from personal knowledge of these men that from colonels down they are utterly sick of war and distrustful of its consequences. Before I went to Russia I felt that Tolstoy had perhaps weakened the Russian spirit with his doctrine of non-resistance. Now I think he only gave expression to what is most common in the ideals of the Russian mind.

In politics the Russian people are amateurs. They do not know the game. Not our game. They do not understand the compromises that are essential to the democratic state. They cannot agree to disagree in amity. They are inclined to be dogmatic. Like our own youth they are in search of the absolute in truth and righteousness and frequently think they have found it. But no higher ideals are to be found in any people than the political ideals of these Russians, and their interest in politics is a keen and vital one. I have attempted a number of speeches on political subjects to Russian soldiers by the aid of an interpreter and have been gratified both because I was

understood and because I was asked questions that indicated real intelligence in political matters.

I have witnessed a few peasants' meetings. At one the ownership of a horse was hotly contested. A woman found the horse astray in the woods. A boy claimed it, but it appeared that he had found it also only a few days before. It probably had been owned in one of the villages that had been burned in the fighting. The debate was loud and warm. The peasants ranged themselves on the two sides and under the force of argument some of them changed their opinion and so changed sides, arguing with each other. Everybody argued. There was never an equal division. But the Russian does not like majority votes. He insists on unanimity. There came a calm, and an old peasant stood aside and said that neither claimant had a good title to the horse, as its real owner might appear and claim it, but suggested that if the boy would pay the woman ten roubles for finding the horse he should hold it for six months and if by that time no owner should appear the horse should be given to the staroster as the property of the village. Everybody slowly went over to the old peasant and the question was settled. The boy refused to pay the ten roubles, so the woman paid ten roubles to him and took the horse.

I do not know that they always do justice in the management of their local affairs, but I am sure that if injustice is done everybody is clearly responsible for it, for everybody seems to take a hand in everything.

An American "Y" man said to me once that he thought the reason the Russians were so ostensibly fond of Americans was because they are so much like us. Perhaps there is some truth behind his remark, but in many ways they are decidedly unlike us, and not all these divergencies are by any means to their disadvantage.

I do not anticipate that their political development will parallel that of America. I do not see why it should, nor do I see how it can. Their national ideals cannot take form in the molds cast by Jefferson and Hamilton. And in their struggle for freedom and righteousness it is quite conceivable that they will evolve political forms and practices adapted to the modern days and conditions.

Military men who characterize the Russian peasant as lazy, indolent, and indifferent do not know what they are talking about. They do not see through the peasant's whiskers. They resent too strongly the peasant's aversion to the military profession. The peasant is no mollusc as they learn who have to do with him long. He will fight a long fight for his freedom, and fight it in his own way. And he will win it, may I predict, and win it so gloriously that light will shine once more again from the East even into the West.

Standing on the key at Archangel and waving farewells to the American soldiers who filled the decks and rigging of a transport slowly moving off with the current, an educated Russian friend said to me: "They are good boys, I am glad they came and glad they are going away. But now as never before Russia knows that she cannot be a second America. Now we do not want to be a second America. Russia must find her own way, for herself." He had to wipe tears from his face as he turned for a moment from the ship to say, "And you will go soon too?"

"Yes."

"But I shall stay here, and die fighting for Russia—fighting men who love Russia perhaps as much as I do."

THE END

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