



GEORGIAN MAIL

TIFLIS.

№. 39.

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ITALO-GEORGIAN RELATIONS.

Interview With Colonel Gabba.

(From "Borba").

Our representative had an interview with Colonel Gabba, the head of the Italian Imperial political agency, regarding the relation of Italy to Georgia.

Economical Connection between Italy and Georgia.

Colonel Gabba pointed out that the Italians from the very first aimed at the establishment of political and commercial relations with Georgia. First a military and then an economical mission were sent for this object.

As the result of the activity of the Italian Mission in Georgia and the Georgian one in Italy a regular economical connection was arranged between both countries. Italian merchants send their goods to Georgia, receiving Georgian raw materials instead. At present the Tiflis shops are full of Italian goods.

Senator Conti's Mission.

Up to now commercial relations between Italy and Georgia were of a private and very often a casual character. Bargains were concluded between private persons and sometimes between Italian commercial men and the Georgian government. But Italy aims at arranging a more constant and organised goods exchange with Georgia and other Trans-Caucasian states—a connection between the governments of both states through the mediation of large organisations. The Mission of Senator Conti was charged with studying on the spot the economical conditions in Georgia and to prepare ground for the establishment of economical connection between both governments. Senator Conti made the Italian government circles acquainted with the materials gathered by him and probably the mission of Minister Kandelaki will succeed in arriving at a final agreement with the Italian government regarding this question.

The Loan and the Organisation of Transport.

During its studying on the spot of the economical conditions of Georgia and Azerbaidjan, the Mission of Senator Conti became persuaded of the hard situation in the matter of railway transport. Senator Conti then proposed to conclude a loan of 30 millions for

the restoration of railways. Negotiations are being carried on now between the governments of Georgia and Azerbaidjan concerning this question. The naval transport is served more or less satisfactorily by private ship-companies who organised direct passage to Batoum via Constantinople and also roundabout passages through the Turkish and Russian ports.

Mutual Understanding.

Colonel Gabba pointed out that for the two years of constant relations of Italy with Georgia, the political as well as commercial circles of Italian society became well acquainted with Georgia and became interested in her. For during this time a number of Italian learned men and ordinary travellers visited Trans-Caucasia and Georgia in particular.

True, Colonel Gabba strived to waken in Italian society interest in Georgia which was not a little assisted by the work of the Georgian economical mission and by the brochure on Georgia which it published in Italian. The reports of Professor Novareze who visited Georgia had also great importance.

The Relation to Georgia.

Italian society's relations to Georgia are very friendly. The Italian representatives at the Peace Conference defended in every way the interests of Georgia. The work of the local Italian mission was and is being carried on in the same direction. The results of this work of the Italian diplomats benevolent for Georgia will probably soon display themselves.

Italy and the Batoum Question.

Passing to the question of Batoum, Colonel Gabba declared that he always thought that this question would be settled in the sense of giving Batoum to Georgia on condition of securing the interests of the neighbouring states—Armenia and Azerbaidjan.

The local Italian Mission had not received any official communications referring to the changes in the views of the Supreme Council regarding the Batoum question. However, Colonel Gabba counts that the communications published in "Corriere Della Sera" are undoubtedly reliable. The Batoum question will be finally settled at the Conference in San Remo which will be presided over by Nitti.

Colonel Gabba communicated that the opening of the Conference in San

Remo will be postponed from April 12 to April 19.

Colonel Gabba supposes that the changing of the Conference's point of view regarding the Batoum question is probably explained chiefly by the fact that the Conference was convinced that the League of Nations was not yet fit to govern. This could lead to the collision between the League and separate states. Undoubtedly, public opinion of Georgia, which was displayed in the demonstration of March 19, also influenced the changing of the Conference's views.

KAZAKH.

Armeno-Tartar Agreement.

Mr. E. P. Gegetchkori, who presided over the Conference of the Trans-Caucasian Republics, sent on April 15 the following telegram to the Presidents of the Azerbaidjan and Armenian Governments:

"I have the honour to communicate to you the resolution adopted by the commission of the Conference of the Azerbaidjan, Armenian and Georgian Republics, which visited the Kazakh region:

"With the object of abolishing any possibility of the beginning of sanguinary events in future in the Kazakh region, the commission finds it necessary to restore in the mentioned region the practical situation which existed there before the collision and to give to the population the possibility of returning to their places. Together with this the Conference expressed the wish that the further carrying out of the commission's resolution be imposed on the local forces. President—Gegetchkori".

The Conference of the Trans-Caucasian Republics in Tiflis received the following telegram on April 19 from Uzuntala:

"Herewith we inform the Tiflis Peace Conference that on April 18 at the station of Uzuntala the representatives of the Kazakh district of Azerbaidjan and of the Dilijan district of Armenia arrived at a final complete agreement regarding the abolition of collisions on the frontiers and the return of the refugees. Ovaness Djaguetian, Iskander Muradov".

DWINDLING POPULATIONS IN EUROPE.

Great Britain's Alone Increased.

The populations of most of the beligerent countries of Europe have diminished enormously since 1914. Great Britain's alone has increased. According to the latest estimates we are nearly seven hundred thousand to the good, despite the fact that during the war we lost by the fall in births more than half-a-million potential lives. The figures—they must be regarded as approximate for the present year—are—

	1914.	1920.
England and Wales	39,990,684	37,500,000
Scotland	4,747,167	4,900,000
Ireland	4,881,898	4,880,000
	46,609,249	43,784,000

Germany's population has decreased from sixty-eight to sixty-five millions, and to-day her females outnumber her males by nearly two millions. The number of children born during the war in Germany was from one-third to one-half below the normal.

Austria's population has shrunk in much the same proportion, and the women greatly outnumber the men. Vienna's inhabitants, once well over the two million mark, are to-day about two hundred thousand below it.

The greatest loser of all, of course, is Turkey. Shorn by the Peace Treaty of the greater part of her territories her population falls from thirty millions to six.

There is no doubt, too, that Russia has suffered very seriously in population, not only from the war but from the long period of famine and tribulation which has followed. Various figures have been given from time to time of the decrease in the populations of Petrograd and Moscow by persons who have compared the local conditions with those existing during the war.

KOBULETI BRIDGE DYNAMITED.

Disaster on Tiflis-Batoum Railway.

At the moment of going to press, we hear that at 2 o'clock on the morning of Friday, April 23, the railway bridge over the Kintrishi River near Kobuleti, between Notanabi and Batoum, was destroyed by dynamite. All train communications between Tiflis and Batoum have been cut off. We hope to give a full account of this disaster in our next number.

# EDITORIAL.

## Armeno-Tartar Agreement.

What Paris has been to the rest of Europe, Tiflis is to the Trans-Caucasus. It is the place of conferences and of various meetings of the Trans-Caucasian Republics. Various agreements have been signed in Tiflis—and, to be candid, broken elsewhere. Now there is a new agreement between the Armenians and the Azerbaïdjan Mussulmans whereby both sides have arranged to sheathe the sword and to bury the hatchet. Georgia has acted once more as mediator between the two warring sides and one can only hope now, as one has so often hoped in the past, that all disputes will cease and that the new republics will await patiently the decisions of the Great Powers as to their future status. There is really no reason why Mussulman and Armenian should not live in peace one with the other. We are sure that if all agitation and provocation should cease, there would be an end of the senseless bloodshed of recent weeks.

## Soviet Russia.

To our surprise—perhaps to our relief?—there has been no further Bolshevik note to Georgia. The matter stands at present thus: in his last note to Georgia, Tchitcherin, the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, threw quite a lot of mud at what he described as the "government of Jordania, Gegetchkori and Ramishvili". To this note and to the accusations contained in it, Gegetchkori made suitable response. It was then Tchitcherin's turn to write—but he has not written. In the meanwhile, however, negotiations seem to be proceeding between Azerbaïdjan and the Soviet government. It would appear that the latter is anxious to procure much-needed oil from Baku and that a commission from Azerbaïdjan is about to proceed to Moscow (or is it to go simply to Astrakhan?) to arrange for the sale or exchange of naphtha. If this mission is successful, we can but hope that the red and Damoclean sword of Bolshevism will be removed from its threatening position above our heads. We do not fear its falling. It would be blunted on the hard common sense of the people.

## Batoum.

The recently published quotation from an Italian newspaper to the effect that the Allies had altered their decision regarding

the future of Batoum has so far not been confirmed. Meanwhile, the usual rumours are going on their rounds. The British, it is said, are speedily evacuating the port, etc. etc. Meanwhile, sane Georgian opinion is that Batoum will inevitably be returned to Georgia and Georgians are awaiting the announcement of such a decision. One recognises that the present moment is a difficult one, and one recognises that a little patience is necessary.

## Tiflis Shops.

If ever there were any reason to think that there was a dearth of goods in Tiflis, a walk through the streets and a glance at the various shops would dispel the illusion. We have recently written of the abundance of eatables in the Tiflis market: we can write truly now of the abundance of other commodities in the shops. For in the latter one can find goods of many countries. There are English products of many kinds, ranging from soap to preserved meat, and from "washing blue" to cigarettes. There are American boots and cooking pans: there is French face powder and there is Parisian perfume: and there are Italian shirts and other garments just as intimate. And, alas! one can still see American chewing gum on sale by hawkers in the busy streets. It is a shock, of course: it is all very horrible—but what will you when the West comes East?...

## Refugees.

Tiflis, perhaps, is the most crowded town in Trans-Caucasia today. To Tiflis have come refugees from every part of the Caucasus in search of a peaceful haven. The hotels are all full, and it is practically impossible to find a room even in a private house. And that the refugees have found peace and calm after much tribulation is evident by the happy crowds of people one sees daily in the Rustaveli Prospect. Here are to be seen refugees from Russia and the North Caucasus, from Armenia and from Azerbaïdjan. Here are to be seen ex-Volunteers in British uniform... And if ever a tribute to Georgia were required, one can but refer to these refugees who have found order after the dreadful confusion and disorganisation of what we can refer to as Russia proper.

## The State Theatre.

We note with regret that the Opera season at the Tiflis State

Theatre ends on May 1. But it is with pleasure that we read that there will be a continuation of the plays recently presented in Tiflis by the artistes of the Moscow Artistic Theatre—themselves, by the way, refugees. We had the good fortune to witness the presentation of Tchekhoff's "Cherry Garden", and better acting we have never seen. In a company where each artiste was excellent it is useless to individualise, but we must draw special attention to the acting of M. Pavloff as the old lackey and to that of Madame Knipper and M. Massalinnoff in the third act. Madame Knipper's wonderful acting caused many in the audience to cry, and we confess without shame that the tears were not very far away from our own eyes at the sight of her grief, so excellently was it portrayed. One does not need to understand Russian to appreciate the acting of this company, so we would urge all our English and American readers to go without fail to the State Theatre when the Moscow artistes present their next play. One need only see in order to appreciate the splendid acting.

S. L.

## COLONEL WARD ON SIBERIA.

### The "Die Hards".

(From the "Times").

Colonel John Ward, C.B., C.M.G., M.P., in detailing his adventures with the "Die-Hards" in Siberia (Cassell, 10s. 6d. net), tells a story full of remarkable incidents with a blunt directness of narrative and expression of opinion which only the importance of his subject could justify. He was at many times and in many places in Siberia Senior British Officer. His remarks do not fall haphazard; they have every appearance of being accurate accounts of his own experiences, and the astonished reader will come to the conclusion that if they are what diplomats would consider indiscreet, they are certainly calculated indiscretions.

Colonel Ward had a variety of adventures, and frequently fought and discomfited the enemy. He was, however, at all seeming more often in peril of his life and liberty from dangers behind the lines, from Russian conspirators, "Black", "White", or "Red", or from aggressive and self-seeking Allies. In one place he restored the practices of religion to a people who had been terrified out of all such observances for nearly a year. In another place, finding the district sick for want of justice, Colonel Ward had a table set in the street, sat down behind it, and administered justice to all and sundry, to the vast content of the population. He afterwards hints at an explanation why such a duty was added to the ordinary labours of a

battalion commander in the field, in his description of the riot of anarchy which was called government in these unhappy territories, which had been occupied by Bolshevists.

The average member of the inexperienced politician class which afflicted the land appears to have been either an incompetent idealist or a peccolite babbler, not one of whom would the Colonel "trust to manage a wheel-stall". His opinion of the Bolshevists is that, in spite of the praise bestowed on them by their admirers in this country, they are "a disgusting gang of cut-throats", and he gives evidence in support of that view. In his spare time he gave lectures on sane trade union methods in England, to audiences of Russian workmen who had hitherto been alternately the prey of their employers and of the scoundrels whom they weakly permitted to pose as "labour leaders", and act "on their behalf".

Colonel Ward, by his connected story of military and political events in Siberia, helps to rehabilitate the reputation of the late Admiral Koltchak from the accusations brought against it, and shows conclusively that amid such a welter of treason, quarrelsome incapacity, knavery, and dishonesty on the part of the Russians, who were suffering from physical starvation on the top of great political doses of crude Bolshevism and devastating reactionary purges little could be done to reconstruct a State. And that little was not done, owing to the behaviour of various Allies, which, as detailed by Colonel Ward, appears to have been lamentable. Such, for example, were the cases in which one Ally so regulated railway traffic as to prevent the troops of another Ally from ever being able to reach the front, or arrested the Military Mission of a third Ally, or laboured to humiliate Allied officers in the eyes of the native population. Or those cases in which another Ally entered into amicable relations with the enemy to the detriment of the common cause. For the credit of that common cause it is to be hoped that authoritative denials, or explanations, will be forthcoming of some, at least, of the charges preferred by the author. Otherwise the more thoughtful readers of this amazing book will be inclined to revise their estimate of the usefulness of "Allied" enterprises.

## An Assyrian Plea.

A memorial has been placed before the Supreme Council asking that the Assyrian nation dwelling in Asia Minor may become independent under a Mandatory of the League of Nations. These people, who prefer to be called Assyrian-Chaldean, say that under the French and British they will be divided—part under French rule in Diarbekir and Mardin, and part under British rule in Mesopotamia—a division which would be injurious to their nationality.



**FREAKS OF THE MARK.**

**READJUSTING IDEAS IN BERLIN.**

(From the "Times" Correspondent).

BERLIN, March (by mail).

On the day on which this is written the German exchange stands at M. 350 to the pound sterling. It may be more to-morrow; if there is a big Allied loan it may even be less. But whatever the figure, it will remain sufficiently high to be a permanent source of amused wonder to certain young British officers now residing in the country.

Before the war most of them had lived in Germany. They appear to have had at their crammer's a very simple standard of exchange. The pound sterling was worth 20 marks and a cigar. If the exchange was favourable it might be a Havana; if it was bad it would be a Hamburg. Normal life was represented by a good medium Dutch smoke as representing the 20 to 30 pennings "agio". The mark then represented a shilling in which there were only 10 pence, but as more things were cheaper and few were dearer, it worked out at about the same—10 pence to a mark went about as for 12 pence to the shilling.

To-day, with the exchange at M.350 to the sovereign, one has to readjust one's ideas, and to anyone revisiting Germany after some years of absence the new system requires patience. It is full of surprises, mostly profitable. When the mark was at 240 or thereabouts the problem of calculation was simplified to the extent that one called the mark a penny and proceeded accordingly. But the penny mark did amazing things in the bulk, and functioned out of all proportion to the penny at home. Ten marks had then still something of the old purchasing glamour of half-a-sovereign. But that did not long remain. The decline proceeded to the present figure of 350, necessitating awkward calculations not readily done in the head. The mark is to-day worth 6857142d., and, conversely, the penny is worth M. 1. 4583.

Wages here toil painfully after rising prices, and prices seem to toil painfully upward as the mark rapidly falls. People with fixed salaries, annuities, pensions—a large class in Germany to-day—are left hopelessly behind by the rise in prices of the necessities of life as compared with stationary and depreciated incomes. From affluence some have fallen to a mere existence, others from comfort to beggary. As salaried folk secure a hardly-won rise, so money values fall and prices rise. One wonders how these people live. Urban State school teachers, for instance, were yesterday clamouring for a rise in salaries which, if obtained, will have been wiped out by rises in prices that have occurred since they made their application.

But to us who are paid in sterling, or who bring money from England

and are changing it from day to day as we require it at the current rate, the lighter side of life offers much for next to nothing. Strict laws have been enacted with regard to the distribution of food, but the moral decay of Germany is such that nobody bothers nowadays about the decrees of Governments. So there are all over Berlin restaurants where, for what looks like a lot of money, one may still buy the best food and the best wine, eat white bread, drink real coffee (being careful to ask for Mocha, as café now means the decoction of the little bean), and smoke real cigars. The bill for two persons may be as high as M.150—L7 10s. at pre-war rates. The same meal in London at the same class of restaurant would cost 24s. at least, and that at 350 is M.420, a difference of M.270 in our favour.

In considering the purchasing value of the mark from the German point of view, one is constantly tempted into questions which look like quite elementary economics yet which quickly carry one into abstruse fields. They can be safely left to economists, but they have their humorous side. "I went to see Reinhard's *Hamel*", wrote an English officer newly arrived in Berlin. "It was a fine performance, and quite worth the 160 marks I paid for my seat". But this officer had never been in Germany before. He knew nothing before this age of paper, and was not haunted by the ghost of that sum as eight golden sovereigns in a far-off and now almost unimaginable world.

**ADMIRAL SIMS'S NEGLECTED ADVICE.**

**"500,000 Lives Would Have Been Saved".**

NEW YORK, March 11.

Rear-Admiral Sims continued throughout yesterday to furnish extracts from his correspondence to the Senate Committee which is investigating his charges against the Navy Department. The correspondence showed:—

1) That, in spite of the recommendations, supported by the British and French Admiralties, that the maximum number of American destroyers should be dispatched immediately to the war zone, Mr. Daniels, Secretary of the Navy, failed to order more than six across until an appeal was carried over the Secretary's head to the President.

2) That it was not until June 20, two months and a half after the United States entered the war, that Mr. Daniels agreed to send as many as 32 destroyers or undertook to advise the Allies of any definite policy of aid.

3) That for months the Secretary refused to approve the plans proposed

by Admiral Sims for the establishment of the convoy system, though those plans had the approval of the British and French Admiralties.

4) That Mr. Daniels persisted in holding badly-needed anti-submarine craft in home waters for the protection of the American coast in face of the assurance that if submarines won on the other side of the Atlantic America could not transport her military force overseas.

5) That at the time when the Allied Navy Council was urging the concentration of all destroyers and patrol boats in the submarine zone, Mr. Daniels proposed to divert some American destroyers to the Arctic Ocean to protect Russian ports.

Admiral Sims estimated that if Mr. Daniels had acted on the recommendations made in the first months of the war the war could have been ended in July, 1918, with a saving to the Allied cause of 500,000 lives, 2,500,000 tons of shipping, and \$15,000,000 (£3,000,000, at pre-war rates). He drew from his files messages showing that the situation of the Allies was desperate, in particular one which the Ambassador in London, Mr. Page, sent on April 27, 1917, ending with the words:—

I cannot exaggerate the pressing and increasing danger of the situation. Thirty or more destroyers and other similar craft sent by us immediately would very likely be decisive. There is no time to be lost.

It was not until two months after this appeal that Mr. Daniels advised Admiral Sims that the destroyers were on their way. Meanwhile in message after message Admiral Sims was urging the development of the convoy system, and the response made by Mr. Daniels on June 30, was:—"In regard to convoys, I consider that American vessels having armed guards, are safer when sailing independently". Admiral Sims told the Committee that this message reduced him to despair.

I wanted to jump overboard (he said) since it was plain that the Department could not understand the situation. For months I had been explaining how the armed ship method was failing to meet the situation and it would have seemed obvious to a schoolboy that the task was not merely to protect the infinitesimally small number of American ships then supplying the Allied armies and civil populations, and that unless Allied shipping generally was protected it would be impossible to get the American Army to France in time to prevent Allied defeat.

**Shah Returning to Persia.**

The Shah of Persia has arrived in Paris *incognito* and is returning to Persia at the end of April.

**SHORT-LIVED SOVIET.**

**Town Seized in Northern Italy.**

The recent disturbances in the provinces of Treviso and Belluno may be partly traced to the acute state of the labour question in the Venetian provinces that suffered from the Austrian occupation after the disaster of Caporetto. The unemployment that exists in these northern provinces is directly due to the savage work of destruction undertaken by the Austrians prior to leaving the country. Considerable tracts of the "liberated territories" are still in a condition of desolation. Factories, workshops, and farmhouses cannot be rebuilt in a day, and though the Government has assigned large grants for the reconstruction of the devastated regions, much remains to be done yet.

In the province of Treviso, the disturbances culminated in a small Sovietist experiment, which has failed. But for some days "Commissaries of the People" directed the movement of the peasants, and for the time being—as was the case during the Mantuan riots of last year—commanded the situation. At San Martino, for instance, a vast crowd of out-of-work peasants and demonstrators invaded the municipal buildings, chased away the Royal Commissary, and substituted a "Commissary of the People". At Piave Soligo, in the Veneto, there have been nine deaths and several wounded in consequence of the popular violence. We must understand, though the reports do not say so, that the police fired on the mob for immediately after these deaths the general strike was proclaimed at Treviso. News of further acts of violence and destruction came from the districts of Vittorio Veneto, Montebelluna and Farra at the moment of writing.

The cause of these disturbances is chiefly unemployment, directly traceable to the condition in which the Austrians left these provinces, but it would be useless to deny that there are both Bolshevik and Republican forces at work. These Northern provinces, together with Romagna, are the headquarters of the Italian Republican movement. The institution of Soviets and "Commissaries of the People", even if such experiments fail, or at the best last but a few days, do nevertheless indicate the state of mind of the people.

As to remedying the disorder and discontent in the *terre liberate*, all depends on the promptness and liberality with which the Government treat the situation. By a decree which will be published in a few days, the Government will assign eighty millions to the Ministry for the liberated territories, to be divided equally between the provinces of Udine, Belluno, Treviso, Vicenza, and Venice.

One of the supplementary causes of the unemployment in these northern provinces is the arrested emigration, which on an average in pre-war years used to amount to 100,000 workmen or peasants a year.

# THE BULGAR OF TO-DAY.

## PROSPERITY OUT OF THE WAR.

### FLOURISHING PEASANTRY.

In comparison with the exciting rumours which her neighbours have been spreading so perseveringly ever since the conclusion of the Armistice, Bulgaria to-day is almost disappointingly tranquil and humdrum. Life in the country districts and villages, where the vast bulk of the population reside, is, now that the soldiers have been demobilized, practically the same as it was before the war. The only change is that the prosperity of the peasant, and his standard of living, are noticeably higher than they used to be.

The Bulgar peasant is by nature one of the most unassuming and hard-working of his kind, and was formerly content to live under conditions of simplicity hardly to be equalled in Europe. The last generation lived and died on the farms where they were born, a sturdy and laborious race, quite remarkably void of any tendency to airs and graces; like Shakespeare's elephant, they had "joints, but none for courtesy; their legs were legs for necessity, not for flexure".

The war has, however, brought about a change, for the peasant's mind has been enlarged by his travels and glimpses of a more luxurious life in Rumania and elsewhere; and he finds himself to-day in a commanding position to gratify his new tastes. Depreciation in the currency hardly touches him; rise in prices only benefits him, for he produces far more than he consumes, especially with the abundant harvest of last year. His food he grows himself, his wife spins him clothes which last a lifetime; and he thus finds himself in the novel and happy position of a capitalist. Many farmers who before the war were almost destitute, are now owners of fortunes of 500,000 or 600,000 levas (francs); fortunes which, unluckily for their country's commerce, they almost invariably keep safely under their pillows, having a wholesome dread of banks.

Politically they are supreme. The peasants' party commands an overwhelming majority in the Parliament, and the entire Cabinet, except for the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Finance, are simple sons of the soil, M. Stambulisky, the Minister-President, and the leading figure in Bulgarian politics to-day, being no exception. Thus in the all-important question of food prices the producers have had it all their own way; and the prices of the very plentiful commodities of bread, meat, eggs, &c., have been fixed with regard to the purchasing power of the levas outside the country; nor can the peasant be persuaded to sell at a lower price to his compatriots in Sofia when he can with ease and safety hold up

his goods until he obtains the better price abroad.

### Hard-hit Middle Class.

The happy condition of the farmers is some extent shared by the workmen, who are a very small class in Bulgaria. The cost of labour is very high, skilled work fetching about 40 levas (pre-war L1 12s. 6d.) a day. The class which really suffers from the changed conditions, the inflated prices, and the depreciated currency is a small one, and almost entirely confined to the towns. Most prominent in it are the Government officials, and the unhappy middle class, which over all Europe has been most hardly hit by the present economic convulsions.

Mainly from this class is recruited the Communist party, and among the Government employees took place the strike which inaccurate accounts magnified into a revolution. The strike, which began just after Christmas, and affected the railways, posts, and telegraphs, was directly organized by the Communists. The riots never became very serious and were easily put down, though about 40 people were killed in the skirmishing. Thus the Government, ceding nothing, gained a very striking victory, if hardly quite so complete as they make out, for the strikers have shown extraordinary perseverance, and the majority of them still remain out.

The day before I left Sofia, I questioned both M. Stambulisky and the Minister of Communications about the strike. They both answered in one word, "nema"—there is none—the same word which one hears when one asks for a room in an hotel or butter for breakfast, or indeed almost anything. "Nema"; but I was obliged to get a military ticket by devious means, as civilian tickets, owing to the over-demand, were not to be had for a week at least. I left by the one train which goes daily to Serbia, and as the single third-class coach which formed the entire passenger accommodation was crowded two hours before the train started, I crossed the mountain passes in an open goods truck, which is picturesque but cold in a Balkan winter.

### Communists and Nationalists.

The Communists, whom I had to thank for my open-air journey, are a rather diversified lot. They are the second strongest party in Parliament, and while in alliance with the Socialists, who correspond to our Labour Party, can give the Government a very hearty and energetic opposition. They are largely malcontents of various sorts.

They include the remnants of the old pro-German party which led the country into war—everyone, in fact, who suffers from disappointed ambitions or shortage of income; and the whole mass is welded together by a few genuine enthusiasts for theoretical Communism.

But the universal formula "a country where there is no agrarian question cannot go Communist" should not blind us to the possibility of Communism being adopted as a practical means to a quite un-Communistic end—to wit, the restoration of the various Bulgarian *irredente* in Dobrudja, Thrace, and Macedonia. It is the loss of these districts, and especially their occupation by neighbouring Balkan countries, which is the really bitter blow to all parties alike. For at heart a Bulgar is first a nationalist and everything else after, and he will never be contented so long as the Dobrudja, Eastern Macedonia, and Western Thrace remain in foreign hands.

The financial clauses of the Peace Treaty do not interest the Government half so much as the territorial, most of the Cabinet having, indeed, as much head for high finance as their own sheep. The Prime Minister himself told me that it was quite impossible to pay; and when I asked him why, in that case, he signed the Treaty, he answered airily, "to prevent the occupation of our country by Serbian or Greek troops".

The good will of the present Government, however, should not be doubted, nor their sincere desire to cultivate friendly relations with the Allies. The pro-German Party has sunk to very small proportions, and Stambulisky himself has always been strongly against the policy which led Bulgaria into the war on the side of the Central Powers. In fact, on the declaration of war he told King Ferdinand roundly that that action would cost him his throne, as a reward for which, speech he was imprisoned for over two years.

### EX-KAISER'S RICHES.

## Amazing Prussian Bill to Endow Him.

### A MULTI-MILLIONAIRE.

Difficulties are arising in connection with the proposed agreement between the ex-Kaiser and the Prussian Republic as to the disposal of what was regarded up to the end of the monarchy as the property of the Hohenzollerns. A Bill introduced in the Prussian National Assembly provides that the ex-Kaiser shall receive a lump sum of 100,000,000 marks, and shall not be required to make the extraordinary war sacrifice which is demanded of all Germans.

Besides this payment in money, the ex-Kaiser is to retain possession of eight palaces or castles, 83 villas and

plots of buildings, and a large number of houses in Berlin, Potsdam, Kiel, Ploen, and other places, estates at Oels, Cadinen, Rominten, Urweiler, and elsewhere, and large tracts of land and forest. It is stated in the Bill that in compliance with the wish of the royal house in the event of the return of the former Kaiser and his wife certain palaces for which they had a preference might be placed at their disposal for their lives, the Schloss and park at Hamburg, the palace of Cecilienhof with the new garden at Potsdam, and it necessary also the marble palace there will, as no interests of the State are opposed to the fulfilment of the wish, be handed over for their use free of cost.

In Clause 12 of the Bill an interesting fact is revealed, that the royal house agrees that revenues paid by the State to the Crown shall cease on April 1, 1920, that is to say, that the Prussian Republic will have paid the ex-Kaiser his revenue as monarch for seventeen months since the revolution. The Bill is very detailed, and deals with the future possession of all kinds of rights in works of art interests, &c., hitherto in the hands of the Hohenzollerns.

### Socialist Outcry.

This Bill bears the signature of a Socialist Minister, Herr Südekum, who is in charge of the Prussian finances, but it is maintained even by prominent Socialists that it was drawn up by officials of the old régime. Strong opposition is manifesting itself among the public, one of the arguments being that the former Kaiser acquired property not as a private person, but as king, and that therefore when he vacates the throne he forfeits all right to the property.

*Vorwärts*, the organ of the Majority Socialists, incensed perhaps by the attitude of the reactionary Press, which in an outburst of moral indignation holds up Erzberger as a model of Parliamentary corruption, and complains that Socialist Ministers use furniture intended for much more elevated persons, speaks out very strongly on the subject of the agreement. The Bill now before the Prussian National Assembly is, it asserts, the *Magna Charta* of huge profits made by the family of Hohenzollern during several centuries of rule. *Vorwärts* states that when the original Hohenzollern came to the Mark of Brandenburg they might have said with Jacob: "I had only this staff when I crossed the Jordan", and it maintains that the family has since become the possessors of vast wealth and property at the cost of the Prussian State and people. The paper demands that the German Government shall prevent the agreement being carried out, and argues that it has a moral right to do so.

This agitation is an indication of a struggle that is bound to come shortly between the Socialist proletariat and the upholders of the Monarchist régime. The Monarchists are showing that they feel stronger every day, and the proletariat realises its danger. The Socialist leaders maintain that government without the Socialists is now impossible, while the Monarchists will certainly not admit a Socialist into their ranks. Elections for the first Republican Reichstag, it is reported, are to be postponed until the autumn, but the fight will begin in good time and it will be bitter.