

HELPING YOU to KEEP POSTED

What are Bolsheviki?

Current History

Those Lancashire Lads

By Philip Gibbs

BLOOD FOR IRON!

WHEN Bismarck consented to club Alsace-Lorraine into the German Empire he didn't know that in 1917 Germans would be shedding blood to keep the Iron Ore of Lorraine which makes five-sevenths of all Germany's supply of iron and steel.—(Sydney Brooks in North American Review.)

Spies on the Great Lakes

New York Sunday Times

Scrap in Commission

Scientific American

WHEN Moltke in 1870 insisted upon, and Bismarck against his better judgment assented to, the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine, the main thought in their minds was that of securing a strategic frontier. They secured, though they did not know it at the time, something far more valuable than that, something that has proved the base on which Germany has built up her towering fabric of prosperity and power, something without which Germany could not have begun this war or could not have waged it for six months. They secured the largest deposit of iron ore in Europe and the second largest in the world, surpassed in value and extent only by the Lake Superior deposit in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. The soil of the lost provinces has made Germany's fortunes. She has derived from it her metallurgical ascendancy, the motive power for her industries, her wealth, and as a consequence her naval, military and political power.

The area covered by this deposit embraces the Longwy and Briey districts in France, now occupied by the German armies, and portions of German Lorraine, of Luxemburg, and of Belgium, also for the moment in German possession. If Germany could secure a peace based on her present military position the whole of this wealth of iron ore, estimated at some 5,000,000,000 tons, would pass under her control. As it is, rather more than half the deposit is supposed to lie on the French side of the border and rather less than half in German Lorraine and Luxemburg. That being so, it may be asked why Germany, when she had the chance in 1870, did not annex the entire ore-yielding area instead of allowing it to be divided between France and herself. Forty-seven years ago metallurgists generally regarded phosphoric ores, which formed the greater part of the Lorraine strata, as worthless and unworkable. The Germans seized everything that in the then state of science was known to be profitable and relinquished the rest to the French. But less than five years later the mining industry was revolutionized by the discovery of a process for dephosphorizing ores.

There are reckoned to be 2,800 million tons of iron ore in all Germany. Of these Lorraine alone is responsible for some 2,000 millions or five-sevenths of the Empire's total supply. When Germany hypothecated the Lorraine beds they were yielding about 500,000 tons of ore a year. In 1875 they still yielded less than three-quarters of a million. Then came Thomas's discovery of the dephosphorizing process and the figures shot up like a rocket until in the year before the war the Germans were extracting from Lorraine over 21,000,000 tons of ore, more than three-fifths of which was produced by the Thomas method. Up to 1903 Germany had no need to import from abroad a single ton of ore. Lorraine alone enabled her to maintain for thirty years an unprecedented industrial expansion.

Most of the ore found in the Lorraine basin on both sides of the frontier is inferior to the Lake Superior deposits and the grade varies considerably from one district to another. From 30 to 40 per cent. may be taken as an average

of the iron content. But there are compensating advantages in that, by properly blending the ore from different districts, it has been found possible to secure a mixture containing the essential slag-forming elements. In other words, this self-fluxing feature offsets to some extent the comparatively low value in iron. Moreover, as the ore is highly phosphoric, the resultant slag makes a much sought after and profitable fertilizer. America, for instance, in 1913 imported 15,000 tons of basic slag, valued at \$10 per ton, and in the following year 74,588 tons valued at \$20 per ton; while Russia just before the war was importing rather more than 180,000 tons a year. The bulk of this came from Germany, which in 1912 exported 290,000 tons and nearly as much in 1913. The Lorraine ores, in short, have yielded her as a mere by-product an abundant supply of fertilizer for her own domestic use and for export abroad.

France is badly off for, while Germany and Belgium are well provided with, coking coal. Now in iron smelting it is almost an axiom that the ore, being the more valuable product and better able to stand the cost of transport, must be brought to the coal, and not the coal to the ore. A very large proportion, therefore, of the French ore was smelted into pig iron in the blast furnaces of Germany and of Belgium, much to the advantage of the iron industries in both of these countries, but of doubtful benefit to France. Had the French Government been more alert to what was going on, had they realized the importance of the iron industry to France, or set to work to encourage the development of French iron smelting, they might in a large degree have counteracted the unhealthy conditions which enabled Germany and Belgium to flourish on the raw material exported to them from France.

The general outline of the issue that the war is shaping and will determine thus becomes clear. Suppose Germany were to win and were to annex the greater-half of the ferruginous basin that lies on French soil. Territorially it would be a very small acquisition. Economically its value would be inestimable. It would mean that after the war Germany would be able to raise some 46,000,000 tons of iron ore a year, while the French output would be reduced to a bare 4,000,000 tons. Suppose, on the other hand, that the Allied victory is as complete as we all intend it shall be and that Alsace-Lorraine is restored to France. The situation in that case would be almost precisely reversed. France would be in a position to extract about 43,000,000 tons of ore a year, and Germany would have to remain satisfied with a maximum yield of some 8,000,000 tons. No blow could more effectually cripple German industrialism, and with it Germany's capacity to organize another war, than the loss of the Lorraine ore beds; and nothing could so certainly and so speedily re-establish the economic equilibrium of France as to regain possession of them. In the fate of Alsace-Lorraine there is involved nothing less than the industrial primacy of Europe.

Bolsheviki et al—

A COMPLETE tale of the parties and factions which are fuddling affairs in Russia just now would be too cumbersome to put into type, but the Bolsheviki and Mensheviki have been in the front page headlines so often of late the following, from "Current History," as to their meaning and motives ought to be interesting—and illuminating.

The Bolsheviki, or Maximalists, form the Left or radical wing of the Social Democratic Party, which is largely the party of the proletariat. The party split in 1906, and the ultra radicals, led by Nikolai Lenine, were then in the majority, or "bolshinstvo," and hence got the name Bolsheviki, which meant the majority faction. To-day the Bolsheviki are also known as Maximalists, Leninites, Extremists, Zimmerwaldians, and Internationalists. They are opposed to offensive warfare, they want an immediate general peace, and seek to establish immediately the rule of the proletariat, the division of land, and the dispossession of the property classes. They are enemies of the present Provisional Government, even with a Constitution, and a large faction is extremely anarchistic in its views. They reject on principle any co-operation with legal organizations, and regard revolutionary action as alone effective. Nevertheless, two of their chiefs, Skobelev and Tseretelli, by force of circumstances, accepted

places in the Government, the former as Minister of Labor, the latter as Minister of the Interior. Their other leaders are Tscheidze, Lenine, Tschenkel. Their organs, created since the revolution, are the Social Democrat at Moscow and the Pravda (Truth) at Petrograd, and Gorki's review, Novaya Zhizn (New Life.)

The Mensheviki, or Minimalists, comprise the Right, or moderate elements of the proletarian Social Democratic Party. In the split of 1906 they were in the "menshinstvo," or minority, and became known as the Mensheviki or minority party. In contrast to the Bolsheviki, the Mensheviki believe in a compromise with the middle class, in the fullest prosecution of the war, and in gradual socialistic reforms. Though enemies of the present regime and not averse to revolutionary action, they admit the possibility of utilizing for their ends all the existing organizations—co-operative societies, trade unions, mutual aid funds, Parliamentary activity—and are declared advocates of the participation of workingmen in the War Industries Committees, among which have been created groups of workingmen with an autonomous organization. The chief leaders of the Minimalists or Mensheviki are Plekhanoff, Burtseff, Deutsch, Alexinsky. Their organs created since the revolution are—at Petrograd, the Rabochaia Gazeta (Workingmen's Journal), and the Edinstvo (Unity), edited by Plekhanoff; at Moscow, the Vpered (Forward!)

—Mud and Men

MANY a memorial to Valor is first modelled in clay, but the Lancashire lads, about whom Phillips Gibbs cabled a tremendous tale to the New York Times, mired through mud which fouled them to the neck to reach a pinnacle of splendid achievement in the taking of Holtoult Wood, in Flanders—and, in the doing of the thing they accomplished, he says, something "as wonderful as anything the British have done." Floundering in a fog befouled with poison gas, they marched through a morass-pock (marked with shell holes and swilling in slime), gained their objective after eleven hours of herculean labor and then, with machine guns and rifles plugged with clay, they routed the Bosche from his dry-drained trenches and grabbed victory with their bare hands—and bayonets sheathed in mud and blood.

In telling of the toil of that march through a night as black and dreadful as any which has marked off the weary months in Flanders, and through mud which was never more foul—even in Flanders, Gibbs says:

"To those who know the craterland of battlefields and with light kit or no kit have gone stumbling through it, picking their way between shell holes in the day-light, taking hours to travel a mile or two, it might have seemed impossible that great bodies of troops could go forward in an assault over