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In any line,
At any time,
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For a Soda Drink,
I do not think
You can surpass,
A delicious glass
Of our assortment.

Germany's New Bid for Commercial Supremacy.**FIFTY-FIFTY MIDDLEMEN.**

Germany is exploiting with equal skill one other old advantage, an advantage not sufficiently understood in America. This is that her language and her commercial customs and terminology have an unshakable grip on all Europe east of the French Vosges. All of the former components of Austria—anti-German though most of them were—the Balkan States and Scandinavia are entirely within the German-language sphere. Anti-German Poland and Russia have no trade language but German, which was first enforced and then maintained by millions of hyphenated citizens—German Balts, German industrial leaders in the former Russian Poland, Yiddish-speaking Jews; and Letts, Ests and Lithuanians nurtured on Germanic Kultur. The educated half-German classes in these nations always monopolize commerce all the way from the Warthe to the Neva; and indeed much farther. In Siberia Ekaterinburg in April, 1917, when Russia and Germany were still professedly at war, I found the German language and German trade standards being publicly taught by a municipal lecturer in the City Hall.

On this foundation has risen that specific European commercial type, the semi-German agent and middleman, often non-German by race and anti-German in politics, but always German in all that concerns his pocket. On these half Germans even American sellers come to depend. Through Stockholm on their way to Finland lately passed two such American business men, neither of whom was the least German in sentiment—on the contrary they naively proclaimed to all the world that they had come to Europe to cut out the Hun. But when these pioneers of unhyphenated American trade proceeded eastward one was in tow of a German-Danish interpreter the other of a German-Polish Jew, both men from the very class of international agents who were formerly the mainstays of Germany's position in the East-European commercial world.

Only Germans are trying to organise the trade of the less accessible parts of Europe. On my writing table lies a German book entitled "Guide to Commerce"—in German, "Wirtschaftsführer;" in Russian, "Torgovi Putevoditel"—which when opened reveals the languages of Poland, Bohemia, Serbia, Hungary, Bulgaria and Finland. It is the work of a retired German of Lodz; and it brims over with facts that would be useful to anyone, but in particular with facts aimed at inducing buyers to turn to Germany. Such publications are turned out in masses. At the height of Germany's military prosperity in Poland the big Leipzig publishing firms, also the Berlin Tageblatt and the other Prussian newspapers which their opened offices at Warsaw, published Polish, Bulgarian and Turkish trade guides, technical dictionaries and buyers' hand-books. Later in admirably written pamphlets the Ukrainians under Skoropadsky and the Great-Russians under Lenine were taught by Germans how to till their land and how to buy German implements. And when Russia's own printing industry fell to pieces Germany produced Russian books of all kinds; first Russian Bibles and prayer books, and later Russian fiction, poetry and science. And all this was done with such an unerring eye to the coming main chance that before I left Russia the joke was passing round that the Bibles dumped from Leipzig began with the Genesis of German mercantile domination in Russia and proceeded to chronicle the Exodus of all of Germany's competitors.

GERMAN DESIGNS ON RUSSIA.

The German campaign for the commercial conquest of Russia is now under full way. On this vital question, which has evoked many conflicting statements in Ally countries, the German Government and the German-Russian Economical Association of Berlin lately told the literal truth when they declared that "It is not yet practicable to resume commercial relations only because relations were never broken off. Just as in 1915 Germany notwithstanding a nominal state of fierce enmity was selling drugs to Russia via Swedish Haparanda, so to-day despite a formal cessation of diplomatic relations, very effective Russo-German commercial intercourse exists. In Russia Germany has agents everywhere; she has the tradition of old associations and mutual indispensability; she has societies for studying Russia, such as the Institute of Russian Research attached to Berlin University; and special banks for Russia, such as the German Eastern Trade and Industry Bank. Finally she has settled on her soil 150,000 Russians of educated class, mostly refugees, whose sole hope of permanently earning a living

lies in their collaboration with Germans for Russo-German trade.

And soviet Russia's only able organisers come from that very class of hyphenated Germans or hyphenated Russians who have always run Russia's trade. Lenine, who began his political career in a sealed German railroad car, is one; the German-named Brostein who calls himself Trotsky and the German-named Apfelbaum who calls himself Zinovieff are others; and the latest and greatest of all the soviet industrial geniuses, the Commissary of railroads Leonid Krasin, a man of real talents who in America would be a Carnegie, is German-trained, German-thinking and German by the fact that he long served the big Siemens Schuckert firm. So if he soviet government, as far as it has any active trade policy at all, is to-day moving in Germany's direction that is no passing accident but a very prescient design.

Within the past few months soviet Russia has given repeated proofs of solidarity with republican Germany. When in Moscow in May a special council was convened to decide Russia's attitude toward the peace terms handed to Von Rantzaun, Lenine openly declared for "military and commercial collaboration with Germany, bourgeois as she is." Trotsky agreed, but objected that Germany must take the first step. Thanks to the Germanophile vigor of the indefatigable Krasin, the first commercial steps had already been taken. When Krasin was temporarily diverted from the Commissariat of Communications to the even more important Munitions Bureau he advised the soviet government to entrust the Nationalized Chemicals Industry to German hands. Two Germans in Moscow are to-day candidates for presidency of the Chemicals Central. Krasin next declared that the estimated 600,000,000 rubles' expenditure necessary for putting telegraphs and telephones in order should be organised by a German named Stahl.

The next grandiose scheme which Germans should organise was also electrical. The soaring Bolsheviks, who shrink from no enterprise, who have even planned to divert the great river Oxus into the Caspian Sea, submitted to a special commission the question whether agriculture could not be electrified. Russia has few domestic animals left; and electricity would be the new plough horse. Russia would turn to Germany in such a matter was predetermined; for before the war she bought from Germany 85 per cent of her dynamos, 80 per cent of her transformers, 97½ per cent of her electric cables and 98 per cent of her electro-motor cars. Before the special commission dispersed, 22,000,000 rubles had been voted for preliminary inquiries; and the nine-tenths-German Krasin had forced through a vote that "the representatives of the German electrical industry be invited to help."

A month later Bolshevik newspapers reported a plan for electrification of the Donetz coal mines, whereby the annual output of 40,000,000 tons would be increased to 240,000,000 tons; and whereby Russia's fuel problem, now seriously aggravated by the loss of the Dombrovski mines in Poland, would be satisfactorily solved. And again the soviet newspapers talked of German help.

WAR MATERIAL SALVAGED.

What the Germans in Russia, who far outnumber even the Russians in Germany are doing for German commercial conquest plans I take from the report of M. Anatole Ruchloff, formerly of the Russian Bank for Foreign Trade. The 7000 Germans in the Red Army, says Ruchloff, are supplemented by 50,000 civilians, mostly ex-war prisoners who prefer the adventures and prospects of Russian life to stagnation at home. These Germans engage in capitalistic trade; and the anti-capitalistic soviet, which want commodities at all costs, favour them. The Germans formerly settled in Russian Poland are filtering through soviet Russian and starting businesses. The new German-Russian Trade Association at Moscow has 1700 German members. By buying up junk iron and derelict war material and turning it into useful goods Germans have appeased the iron hunger of whole provinces; and in Yaroslavl province Germans so successfully organised the distribution of merchandise that the peasants have resumed selling food to the soviet. Naturally the grateful soviet protect also the former German estate managers who are now on capitalistic lines tilling land expropriated from the nobles.

And "in the monasteries where the monks in hope of gaining a living have turned farmers, one usually," concludes Ruchloff, "finds a German in charge." Nothing, that means, is too small or too big for the Germans in Russia; it is Germans who teach monks how to plant cabbages; and it is Germans who are invoked to electrify areas of country very much bigger than Germany was at her best.

German commercial prospects in the former Baltic Provinces now the republics

of Livonia, Esthonia and Lithuania, are quite as bright. During her military occupation here Germany ran commerce for all it was worth. Still in circulation to-day and a powerful lever for future German trade are the "East-Marks" and "East-Rubles," which she enforced as currency. In seven Livonian and Esthonian towns she established well-equipped chambers of commerce; at Dorpat she opened a technical school of 500 pupils; and by rough but thorough enough measures she forced—naturally in her own interests only—agriculture and industry back into life. But Germany has her fastest grip in the fact that the local German nobles and burghers far exceed the Letts and Ests in Education and productive skill. In Finland company, with a dummy Finn from office the pro-German Svinhuivud Government, Germany seemed to lose her trade chance. But at the height of the catastrophe the Essen Krupp's formed a Finnish company, with a dummy Finn Professor Ramsay on top, to exploit Finland's minerals. Finland badly wants goods of all kinds—how badly is shown by the fact that in the first five months of 1919 she had only 69,000,000 marks of exports to set against 631,600,000 marks of imports. Germany is going to supply these goods. In Finland's smallest towns one meets her agents, spying out the land commercially, searching for developable water power, examining free-harbour plans so that she may open new offices; yes, even running on the eastern frontier of Finland an active smuggling trade with Russia which is locally regarded—probably with good reason—as the forerunner of very much bigger things to come.

DENMARK OVERRUN.

Germany in Scandinavia is relatively inert. She can afford to wait and watch, because that is a market which she never lost. With Sweden her commercial fate is cemented by her dependence upon the iron ore of Norrland, and the compulsion to pay Sweden in finished goods. Last winter Germany sent agents with offers to buy up for ten years ahead the whole ore output of the Kiruna mines. When the high prices of metal in Sweden led to a great increase of prospecting and to the registration of many claims—in the last year more than 1000—Germany's representatives were on the spot with offers similar to that successfully made in Finland.

Here, too, Germany has the advantage of dealing with countries that are very short of goods. Sweden imported in the last four months goods worth 407,000,000 crowns, against exports of 240,000,000 crowns; and Denmark in the last five months imported goods for 734,000,000 crowns, against exports of 204,000,000 crowns. Scandinavia's own extraordinary high production costs are a pledge that these imports will continue. In Sweden and Denmark the German, though mostly only on the watch, is everywhere. When I asked the Danish merchant who first called my attention to this why, if it were so, one heard nothing of these Germans, though the newspapers printed every day the arrivals of American business men, he answered: "There are so many German agents in Copenhagen that no editor in his senses would think it worth while to report fresh arrivals."

Republican Germany, I am convinced, is far from being in the desperate plight which some Americans imagine, which some Germans, for obvious, well-considered reasons, pretend. Of the universal despair and immediate state and private bankruptcy which were to follow the peace signature there is no sign. On the contrary Delenda Germania is already on the highroad to Germania Regenerata.

The stock exchange, which in all countries faithfully foreshadows coming industrial and commercial conditions, is instructive. Immediately after peace was certain German state securities rose with a jump. In sharp contrast with English loan stock the German 5 per cent War Loan rose nine points in nineteen days. And with it up went sharply Germany's chief bank, transport and industrial stocks—the stocks of the Deutsche Bank, of the Hamburg-American and Norddeutscher Lloyd, of Siemens and Halske, of the Baden Aniline Works, even of the German Armaments Corporation. And of course at the same time up went the stocks and shares of the big metallurgical and mining corporations of the West-German Grossindustrie.

This event is a final striking proof of the doctrine that though the German peril in the military domain may be excoriated for ever the peril in industrial domains—if one can rightly speak of an industrial peril—is potentially as great to-day as it was when Germany was Europe's greatest steel and iron producer, when Germany's general overseas trade was exceeded by that of only one country in the world.

The End.

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