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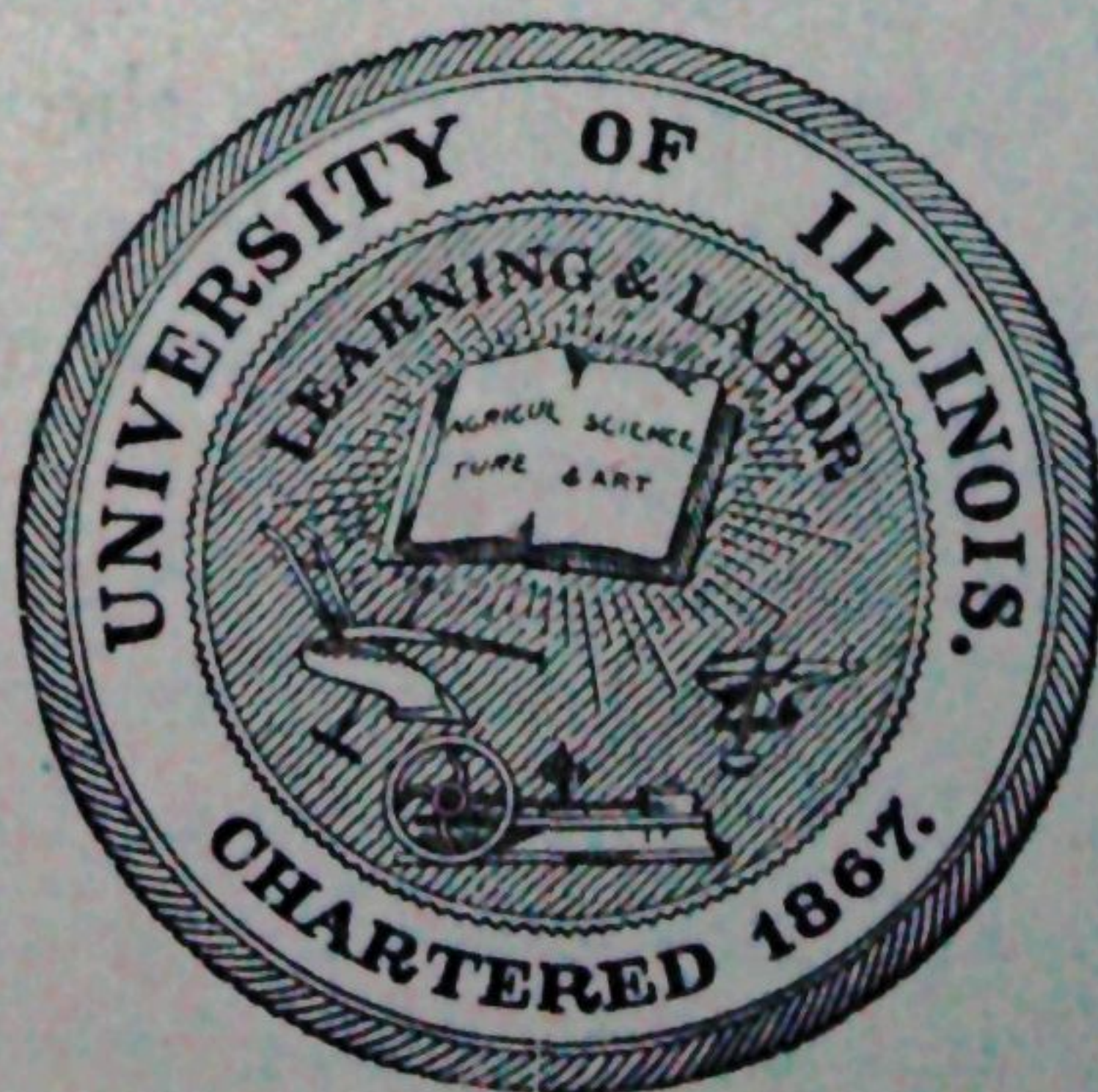
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Territorial Problems of the Baltic Basin

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TERRITORIAL PROBLEMS OF THE BALTIC BASIN.

In these days we often think of seas, rivers, and other waterways as natural boundaries separating nations and peoples, and affording a certain security against attack and invasion. But in earlier centuries, in the age before strategic railways, this was not the prevailing belief. Three generations ago the seas were not regarded as barriers: they were connecting influences that served to bind states and regions together. The sea has always been important as the great highway of commerce, and it has also facilitated the exchange of beliefs and ideas. In the past, nations have therefore been peculiarly interested in the seas that washed their shores, and also in the other shores that were touched by the same waters.

In spite of changed conditions of travel and transport, the interest in waterways has persisted. Italy seems anxious to control both shores of the Adriatic; and England feels that she must control the entire circuit of the Irish Sea. No nation at present can hope to make the Baltic Sea its own; but such ambitions have been cherished in the past and at times almost realized. Four hundred years ago Denmark was the greatest power on the "Eastern Sea." In the seventeenth century Sweden developed an even more complete hegemony in those waters, but was forced to surrender it to the Russians early in the eighteenth century. In recent years Germany has dominated the Baltic, and for a year after the Russian collapse the shores and the shipping of the entire sea was at her mercy.

It should be noted that Sweden has all her sea coast on these inland waters, that Denmark and Prussia have a number of important ports on the Baltic, and that in 1914 Russia, too, had a long "window" looking out upon this same sea. Economically speaking, the Baltic region is to a great extent a unit. In the years before the outbreak of the Great War the exports of Russia were directed chiefly toward Germany, from which country she also drew more than half of her imports. The commerce of Sweden has always traveled chiefly eastward and southward, to Russia and to Germany. It is therefore quite natural that the peoples occupying the shores of this great waterway should be interested in every important change that appears in any other part of the basin.

There was great anxiety in Sweden when the Tsar began to mobilize, and the Danes trembled when the Kaiser drew the sword. But now there is chaos in Russia and turmoil in Germany. And out of

the confusion that prevails along the eastern and southern shores of the Baltic basin have arisen a series of intricate territorial problems, some of which appear to be almost incapable of satisfactory solutions.

North Sleswick

English and American writers have recently referred to a problem of Sleswick-Holstein, to a Danish Alsace-Lorraine, the restoration of which is said to be stoutly demanded in Denmark. It happens, however, that there is no problem of Sleswick-Holstein, and the Danish Alsace-Lorraine is a much smaller area than is usually described by those who write on territorial peace problems. For a period of four hundred years the kings of Denmark were also counts or dukes of Holstein; but Holstein was never Danish either in race, language, or sentiment, and was never a part of the kingdom of Denmark.

Sleswick, on the other hand, at one time actually did belong to Denmark and it is a question whether it was not still a part of the kingdom, when the German powers seized the two duchies, Sleswick and Holstein, in 1864. There are Danes at present who wish to claim the greater part or even the whole of Sleswick on historic grounds, but this desire is not general. With the passing of time the southern part of the old duchy has become German in speech and sentiment, and the Danish people do not care to annex or even to reannex territory the population of which is of an alien nationality.

The case of North Sleswick is wholly different; this region has been Danish and Danish only for more than a thousand years. The same is true of parts of Mid Sleswick where both the German and the Danish nationality are strongly represented. The Danes were glad in 1864 to sever the old connection with Holstein; they yielded South Sleswick with great reluctance; but the separation from North Sleswick has ever since been a source of national grief.

The fact that Sleswick was not all German was recognized in the treaty of Prague (August 23, 1866), by which the emperor of Austria yielded his rights in the conquered duchies to the king of Prussia. This treaty stipulated that the inhabitants of "the northern districts of Sleswick" should be allowed to decide by referendum whether their country should continue a part of Prussia or be returned to Denmark. No such referendum has ever been allowed. In 1878 Austria released Prussia from this obligation; but the Danes of Sleswick insist that the pledge is still a binding one and that the right of decision belongs to them.

The problem of North Sleswick is, therefore, not whether a certain territory shall be restored to Denmark, but whether the inhabitants of that region shall be allowed to exercise the right of self-determination which was promised them more than fifty years ago.

Time and again the Danish members in the *Reichstag* have risen to demand a referendum with refusal as the invariable result. During the present war German opinion seems to have become more favorable to the cause of the inhabitants of North Sleswick, who for more than half a century have fought to maintain their nationality; but the policy of the government has been more repressive than ever before: it was a criminal act even to mention the Sleswick question in the public press. To discuss the matter at a public meeting was also forbidden.

But early in October, 1918, the citizens of North Sleswick were informed by their representative in Berlin that the Prussian regime was doomed and that the throne itself was tottering. A week later certain important steps were taken preparatory to another demand for a referendum. When the German government announced that it was willing to accept President Wilson's peace program, the Sleswick Danes felt that their day had arrived, and on October 23 the question of their future status was brought up in the *Reichstag*. The secretary for foreign affairs, Dr. Solf, denied vigorously that Denmark had any claim on any part of the old duchy, but privately he informed the Sleswick Danes that the government was disposed to grant their request.

A few days after the armistice had become a fact and Germany was still in the throes of the revolution, the Sleswick Danes took action to bring their case before the peace conference. The Electoral Union, the political organ of the Danish part of the population, at a meeting in Aabenraa (November 16) adopted a series of resolutions in which a referendum was demanded and certain conditions laid down of which the following are the most important:

(1) The southern boundary of North Sleswick is defined as a line beginning at a point a few miles north of Flensburg and drawn in a general westerly and slightly northwesterly direction across the peninsula. It is desired that the area north of this boundary shall vote as a unit.

(2) It is also demanded that such adjacent districts in Mid Sleswick as may wish to vote on the question of reannexation to Denmark shall be permitted to do so.

(3) All men and women of the age of twenty or above who are residents of the districts concerned (except Germans who have lived

less than ten years in the country) shall be allowed to participate in the referendum. Former residents who have been exiled by the Prussian authorities shall also be allowed to vote.

The Danish government has been requested to present the case of North Sleswick to the Allied powers and has consented to do so. It seems extremely probable that the peace conference will take favorable action. That North Sleswick will cast an overwhelming vote for reunion with Denmark is beyond question. The referendum, if held, will add at least 150,000 persons to the Danish population; if Mid Sleswick is also allowed to participate, the number may exceed 200,000. It was argued at the Aabenraa conference that the present anarchic conditions in Germany are likely to influence the voters of Mid Sleswick very strongly in the direction of a choice of allegiance to Denmark. But the conference was also agreed that "we must not demand more than what is really ours."

The Kiel Canal

It has been urged by certain influential English editors and statesmen that not only the Danish-speaking part of Sleswick but the entire province of Sleswick-Holstein should be transferred to Denmark. The origin of this suggestion lies in an effort to find a satisfactory solution for the problem of the Kiel Canal. For there seems to be a strong feeling in certain quarters that Germany must be deprived of the control of this waterway.

The Kaiser Wilhelm Canal (usually called the Kiel Canal) begins at Brunsbüttel at the mouth of the Elbe River and terminates at Haltenau on the Baltic Sea, two or three miles north of Kiel. Brunsbüttel is in Holstein, while Haltenau is just within the boundary of Sleswick. For a distance of twenty miles or more (between Rendsborg and Haltenau) the canal runs very close to or along the border separating the two old duchies; for a short distance it cuts through what has always been Sleswick territory.

The annexation of the entire province would consequently place the Danes in possession of the entire canal. The annexation of Sleswick alone might, perhaps, be sufficient, as it would make the canal an international waterway. Such an arrangement would leave the Germans in possession of the greater part of it, but the Danes would control the Baltic terminal, and they would also share to some extent in the control of the traffic on the canal because of its character as a waterway on the boundary. Shortly after the armistice had been proclaimed a writer

in the *London Times* suggested that the real problem in Sleswick is not North but South Sleswick. Though he realized that objections would be raised to the plan, he argued that the necessities of the situation demand that Denmark should assert her right to all of ancient Sleswick. South Sleswick might be given a large measure of political and cultural autonomy, but it should become an integral part of the Danish kingdom. The writer added that the annexation of the whole of Sleswick would give Denmark a strategic boundary, of which that country seems to be in real need.

There are, however, several excellent reasons why such a transfer of territory should not be made, any one of which should be sufficient to defeat the project.

(1) It violates the principle of nationalism: what is Danish should be Danish; what is German must be permitted to remain German. A lasting peace cannot be built on the disregard of this principle. If South Sleswick should declare her willingness to renew the old allegiance, that would be another matter; but such a decision is quite unlikely.

(2) The Danes do not desire to renew the old relationship with Holstein. From its very beginning this connection was a source of trouble and even of danger. The revolt of 1848 and the calamities of 1864 can be traced directly to the plottings of the intellectuals and the junkers of Holstein and German Sleswick. But complete annexation, such as is suggested at present, would be far more dangerous to Denmark than was the old personal union, for it would mean the addition of a German element numbering nearly 1,500,000 to a Danish population counting a little more than 2,700,000. It is quite clear that Denmark could not accept a gift of this sort without endangering the peace of the kingdom and the future of the Danish nationality.

(3) The Danes have scarcely sufficient military strength to be entrusted with the guardianship of so important a waterway as the Kiel Canal. It has been argued that in time of war it could easily be destroyed, if the Danes should find themselves unable to hold it. The Kiel Canal was, indeed, built for military purposes chiefly; but it is also of great commercial value, and it is to the interest of the world that it be kept intact. In the past it has been used mainly by German ships, but it has also been utilized to some extent by those of other nations.

(4) It is not possible to find a strategic boundary for Denmark that would be of any particular value. Perhaps the most satisfactory would be the old "Danework" line between the Sley inlet and the Trene River; but this would leave the Kiel Canal wholly within German

territory. It should be noted that Denmark is broken up into fragments, all of which can be readily isolated. Real strategic boundaries are therefore impossible in this case.

If the Kiel Canal is to be taken away from the Germans, some form of international control will have to be devised. This is by no means an ideal arrangement, but it seems likely that the peace conference will find many other problems, especially where waterways are in question, that will admit of no other solution.

Finland

By the treaty of Brest-Litovsk (signed March 3, 1918) the Bolshevik government formally surrendered a broad strip of territory lying along the western frontier of the Russian empire from the Arctic regions to the Sea of Azov. In parts of this great area nationalistic movements had been in active progress for some months or years; in others the demand for separation from Russia appears to have been artificially created to promote the plans of the Pan-Germanists.

When the armistice was agreed upon last November, one of the conditions laid down by the Allies was that the German government should repudiate the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Technically, therefore, Russia may be said to have recovered her territorial rights in the west and southwest, except in the case of Finland, the independence of which was recognized by the Bolsheviks at Brest-Litovsk early in March, 1918. But the facts and conditions are not what they were in the earlier months of 1918; governments have been set up in the various units surrendered at Brest-Litovsk, five or six in all; and some of these are likely to receive recognition at the peace conference.

Among those that will probably survive is the new state of Finland. From 1808 to 1917 the Finns were counted among the subjects of the Russian Tsar. Constitutionally Finland was an independent grand duchy united with Russia in the person of the emperor; practically this meant merely that the grand duchy occupied a privileged position among the many dominions of the Tsar. During the last twenty-five years of the union the Russians were actively seeking to obliterate all traces of Finnish independence and to "Russify" the country. This led to determined opposition on the part of the Finns, and when the Great War broke out the young men of Finland left their homes in large numbers, stole across the Baltic to Sweden, and ultimately found their way into the German army.

When tsardom collapsed, early in 1917, the Finns seized the opportunity to assert their independence. They contended that the union

with Russia was wholly personal and that when the imperial office was abolished, all connection with the Russian government automatically terminated. After a period of civil war between the Bolshevik elements and the more conservative classes, the middle class groups with the assistance of German forces were able to organize a government of the conservative type and with leanings toward Germany. A monarchical form of government was agreed upon and the crown was offered to a Hessian prince, a brother-in-law of the Kaiser. Then came the German collapse with serious results for the plans of the Finnish monarchists. A change in government became inevitable and the country is at present administered by a senate counting seven monarchists and six republicans. It is significant that the new regent, General Mannerheim, telegraphed his acceptance of the office from London.

Thus far the French government alone of the Allies has recognized the new state. A vigorous propaganda has been carried on to prevent further recognition and to induce France to rescind her action; but this is not likely to be successful. The probabilities favor the general recognition of an independent Finland at a reasonably early date.

The Finnish problem at the peace conference is chiefly one of boundaries. Finland as a political unit is a product of Swedish imperialism. The Swedes began their career of conquest east of the Baltic in the twelfth century, and they held the grand duchy continually to the earlier years of the nineteenth century. But they never came into control of all the regions inhabited by Finns: east of their borders lived a considerable number of that race (Karelians) who had accepted Russian rule and civilization and were adherents of the Greek Orthodox church.

During the past year the government at Helsingfors has asked that all eastern Karelia be transferred to Finland, and that the limits of that country be extended eastward to Lake Onega and northward to the Arctic Ocean. This suggestion naturally found no favor at Moscow. The Bolsheviki, in whom the passions of national feeling and patriotism are not strong, might conceivably be induced to surrender the territories between Finland and the great lakes; but the great peninsula north of the White Sea they will scarcely be willing to yield. The Murman (Norman) coast and Kola peninsula are almost without economic value and resources; they comprise a vast frozen area almost uninhabited except for a few nomadic Lapps and roving Karelians. But the Murman coast has an ice-free harbor, and Russia has lost more ports than she can afford to lose.

About sixty miles east of the Norwegian frontier on Kola Bay lies Alexandrowsk (Catherine Harbor) where ships may enter and leave at almost any time of the year. In 1915 the serious military situation (the Baltic and the Black Sea were both closed by the enemy) forced Russia to carry out an old plan which called for a railway from Petrograd to Catherine Harbor. If the claims of the Finnish state are allowed, Russia will lose Catherine Harbor and about one hundred and fifty miles of the Murman railway. She will have but one remaining port on the Arctic: Archangel, which is ice-bound nine months of the year.

The conflict between Helsingfors and Moscow thus involves two separate problems: eastern Karelia and the Murman coast. The Karelians outside Finland number about 350,000; most of them live between the Finnish boundary and the Murman railway. In this case the principle of nationalism may perhaps come into collision with the principle of self-determination. Being of the same racial stock as the western Karelians, they ought, it would seem, to take gladly to the suggestion that their country be joined to Finland. But if they are allowed to decide by referendum it is not at all sure that they will vote to separate from Russia. The civilization of Finland is Swedish and the religion is of the Lutheran type; while in eastern Karelia the faith and the civilization of Russia have ruled the minds for at least six centuries.

The problem of the Murman coast is essentially economic. It means that the Finns are determined to secure an outlet on the Arctic, which they have never had. As long as Finland promised to remain under German influence, the neighboring states of Norway and Sweden were reluctant to see Finland extend her territories to the frozen sea; but as the situation is at present they are not likely to interpose any objections, provided that their own territories be left intact.

The Aland Islands

Finland has long been a land of strife. Recently it was the bourgeoisie against the Bolsheviki; earlier it was the Finn contending against the Russian; still earlier it was Turanian Finn against Swedish Finlander. The Swedish element in Finland is not great numerically: about 400,000 in a population of about 3,250,000. But it controls to a large extent the wealth of the country; in earlier days the Swedes were the ruling class, and even at the present day their political influence is far out of proportion to their numbers.

The Swedes probably entered Finland by way of the Aland archipelago. The Alands are a group of rocks and small islands lying across the entrance to the Gulf of Bothnia; only one (Aland) is of any appreciable size. They approach to within twenty miles of the Swedish coast and form a natural series of stepping stones to the Finnish mainland. Geographically they may be regarded as fragments of the Finnish land mass; but they have been inhabited by Swedes as long as their history can be traced. There is at present a strong, almost unanimous sentiment on the islands in favor of a reunion with Sweden.

The material value of the Aland Islands is very slight. The inhabitants (about 15,000 in number) are chiefly farmers, sailors, and fisherfolk, subsisting on what they can wrest from a thin soil or gather from the waters about them. The importance of the islands in European diplomacy is due to their strategic position with reference to the capitals of Sweden, Finland, and Russia. The harbor facilities are good and the islands possess real possibilities as a military stronghold. The Russians soon came to see the advantage of a naval station at Aland and erected fortifications at Bomarsund, which were destroyed by the English and the French in the Crimean War. On the request of Sweden, Russia agreed not to rebuild the fortifications, and Aland remained unfortified until some time after the outbreak of the Great War.

As Stockholm is only seventy-five miles distant, any plan to build a naval establishment on the Alands is sure to produce uneasiness in Sweden. For similar reasons Finland and Russia are anxious that the archipelago shall not fall into the hands of the Swedes. Soon after the outbreak of the Finnish revolution a Swedish force landed on the islands ostensibly to maintain order; but they were soon displaced by German garrisons. At Brest-Litovsk it was agreed that the islands should belong to Finland, but also that they should never be fortified and that the shipping conditions in the waters about them should be regulated by a special agreement among the nations most interested: Germany, Sweden, Finland, and Russia.

The efforts of Sweden to gain control of the archipelago and the evident desire of the inhabitants to be reunited with the mother country has caused much uneasiness and resentment among the Finns. The feeling that the Alands must remain a part of Finland is shared by the Swedish Finlanders as well as by the Turanian Finns. The former have organized a separate political party the object of which is to secure Swedish nationalism in Finland and they call loudly to their brethren

on the islands not to desert them but to remain with them and help them in the struggle that is sure to come.

The program recently published by the Swedish party in Finland does not promise a wholly peaceful development in the new state. It calls for equal rights for the two languages, Swedish and Finnish, and for equal opportunities for each in the schools of the land. It also calls for the creation of new administrative areas in order that the regions occupied by Swedish Finlanders may be formed into compact territorial units. For these units an extensive autonomy is demanded and it is also suggested that the Swedish churches should be grouped into a separate diocese. The Swedes also demand what virtually amounts to a distinct organization for their part of the army and the navy. But these demands (some of them, at least) are sure to meet strenuous opposition from the Turanian Finns.

The problem of the Aland Islands, though in large part a military consideration, is involved in the nationalistic conflict between Swedes and Finns. The Swedish Finlanders cannot afford to weaken their strength by surrendering the islands to Sweden. The Finns on their side are anxious to prevent the Swedish boundary from approaching the Finnish mainland.

The Esthonians and the Letts

South of the Gulf of Finland lie the Baltic Provinces, a broad strip of coast land extending to the frontiers of Prussia. There are three provinces in this group: Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland. Their combined area is about 36,000 square miles, and they have a total population of approximately 3,000,000. There is scarcely any other region in Europe that offers more serious problems than this strip of coast on the east side of the Baltic.

All the great states in the Baltic basin have at some time or other held possessions on the eastern shore. In the thirteenth century the greater part of the Provinces was held by the Danes. Later in the same century came the Teutonic Knights, a crusading order that was looking for a new field for their military and religious activities. During the sixteenth and the seventeenth century the Swedes came into possession of Esthonia and Livonia, while Courland (1561) was united to Poland. Ultimately the whole region was annexed to Russia. Excepting the Danes, whose occupation was for a brief period only, these conquering peoples have left deep traces on the history, the intellectual life, and the civilization of these three little states.

The earliest known inhabitants of this region were the Letts, an ancient people closely related to the Lithuanian stock. The Letts and the Lithuanians must have come into this part of Europe long before the arrival of either the German or the Slav; their language is very ancient: it is said that "almost any Lithuanian peasant can understand simple phrases in Sanskrit" (the language of ancient India).

Soon after the beginning of the Christian era the Finns entered the country from central Russia. The Letts and the Finns are still the dominant races in the Baltic Provinces. The Letts occupy the country from the Gulf of Riga eastward: Courland and the southern half of Livonia. The Finns (Esthonians) inhabit the remainder of the Provinces: Esthonia and the northern half of Livonia. There is no longer a Livonian people.

Scattered throughout the three Provinces are small groups of other peoples, Germans, Slavs, Swedes, Jews and mixed races. Of these the German element is the most important and also the most ancient, dating, as it does, from the time when the Teutonic Knights controlled the land. Until quite recently the German nobility was the land-owning class in the rural districts; the German merchants controlled the trade in the cities; German scholars manned the institutions of higher learning; and German clergymen of the Lutheran faith directed the affairs of the church and the primary schools. The Germans comprised only from five to ten per cent of the total population; but their importance in the public life of the Letts and the Esthonians was very great.

In the treaty of Brest-Litovsk Lenine and his associates were compelled to surrender the Baltic shore-land. It is not known just what the Prussians intended to do with the Provinces, but it is clear that they planned to organize them in such a way as to bring them into some sort of a vassal relationship to the German empire. The Prussian expansionists realized that it would be unwise to add extensive alien elements to the German citizenship; but they believed it possible to annex the Baltic lands (with other neighboring regions) to the economic system of the Fatherland without seeming to impair their national rights. The extension of the German strategic railway system from the east Prussian border to the Gulf of Finland, perhaps even to some port on the Arctic, and the admission of the Baltic states to the projected Mid-European tariff union would give the commercial interests of Germany an unassailable position on the east coast of the Baltic Sea. Economic dependence naturally carries with it a certain measure of

political vassalage. Military alliances and the election of German princes to Baltic thrones were also important items in the Pan-German program. During the summer of 1918 several princelings from the lesser German states held themselves in readiness to accept crowns or coronets in the conquered lands. It was reported at one time that the Kaiser thought seriously of assuming the title duke of Courland.

At the conclusion of the recent armistice it was stipulated that the Germans should withdraw the forces that were still being kept in regions formerly belonging to Russia. When this became known the inhabitants of the Provinces began to look forward to national independence. There was already a working governmental organization among the Esthonians, and late in November the Letts proclaimed a republic in Riga to be known as Lettland. It was announced that it was to be a state primarily for native Letts and that no German Balts were to be admitted to office in the ministry. At the same time one Karl Kullmann (or Ullmann) was appointed prime minister; if his name is an indication, the new regent of Lettland is surely not innocent of Teutonic ancestry.

When the German forces began to retire, the Letts and the Esthonians suddenly found themselves facing a new danger from the east. On the heels of the retreating Teutons came the hosts of the Bolsheviki, who had seized the opportunity to begin a vigorous campaign of reconquest. In the neighborhood of Narva the Red army met a decisive defeat, however, and the invasion seems, at this writing, to have been checked, though perhaps only temporarily. The Finns apparently came to the assistance of their Esthonian kinsmen and the Swedes appear to have shown some interest in the cause of the Letts. But the situation remains very precarious: the Russian forces are evidently undisciplined and inefficient; but they are strong in numbers and it is doubtful whether the Baltic levies can defeat another offensive.

The future of this region is therefore extremely uncertain. There are no indications as to how the controlling minds at the peace conference regard the problems of the old Russian frontier; consequently, all that can be done at present is to indicate a few of the more probable solutions.

(1) The Provinces may be restored to Russia. There seems to be a Bolshevik element in the Baltic lands which naturally favors some sort of a reunion with the great neighbor to the east. In the earlier days of the Lenine regime, the "people's commissioners" depended largely on the military services of the "Lettish guard," a force of Lettish soldiers

with strong revolutionary tendencies. But this element is probably not a numerous one, as the population of the Provinces is chiefly agricultural, and the problem of the land has been to some extent solved by the extension of a system of peasant proprietorship.

There is, indeed, something to be said for reunion with Russia. The war has left Russia in great need of commercial outlets. The best ports on the Black Sea have been seized by the Ukrainians; and in the Baltic region a single port remains: Petrograd, which is ice-bound for several months of the year. Practically the only ice-free port remaining within the borders of Russia is Catherine Harbor on the Arctic coast. The Bolshevik mind may be deficient in patriotism but it no doubt understands the importance of commercial outlets and the economic value of ice-free ports. In the Baltic Provinces there are at least six fair harbors, all of which have a longer period of navigation than Petrograd. Of these the best known is Riga, though it is less important than Libau, which is open for navigation every month in the year.

It is quite evident that Russia needs the Baltic ports, but it is also clear that these ports are in real need of Russia. Their prosperity has in large measure been built up on the commerce of the vast plain to the east and if means should be found to divert this trade to another series of ports, there would be economic distress along the whole shore from Libau to Narva.

(2) They may be allowed to organize themselves into two independent states (as appears to be their desire), in which case the common boundary would probably be the Salis River, a small stream that approximately separates the Esthonian settlements from those of the Letts. It is a grave question whether these two peoples have sufficient strength and resources to maintain a self-respecting existence. At the highest the population of the proposed Lettland will not exceed 2,000,000, while that of Esthonia will be less than 1,000,000. It would seem that such an arrangement must mean serious difficulties in the future.

(3) Esthonia may decide to join Finland. Recent years have seen the development of a strong national feeling among the Esthonians, but being, after all, a branch of the Finnish race, they ought to be able to live in reasonable happiness with their brothers in a greater Finland. If the Finns are permitted to annex Karelia to the east and Esthonia to the south, their country will have a population of approximately 5,000,000.

(4) The Letts may be asked to join forces with their Lithuanian kinsmen in a revived Lithuanian state. Six hundred years ago Lithuania had a period of greatness, her area covering an extensive region east of Poland between the Baltic and the Black Sea. Since then a considerable part of the Lithuanian race has been absorbed into the Slavic mass; there have also been strong currents of emigration from the Lithuanian territories to Siberia and to other parts of Russia and even to lands across the Atlantic. At present the Lithuanian population in its native territories numbers less than 3,500,000.

The Lithuanian area is not extensive, perhaps not more than 30,000 square miles. The future of this region has not been much discussed; the organization of a Lithuanian state has been urged and is within the realm of the possible; but it is not a promising solution, especially if the Letts should insist on establishing a separate state.

For several centuries the Lithuanians and in part also the Letts were subjects of the king of Poland. It is possible that they might be induced to renew this historic relationship, though it is doubtful, since racially Poles and Lithuanians have nothing in common. They will, however, have common rivals and perhaps enemies to the east and the west, and such a union may in time be forced by circumstances, as it was forced in the middle ages. An arrangement of this sort would add considerably to the strength of Poland, and, what is more important, it would give the Poles a satisfactory commercial outlet on the Baltic.

Danzig

As a result of the Great War and the consequent readjustment of frontiers, several important European states are likely to find themselves deprived of direct access to the sea. These are German Austria, Hungary, Bohemia (the republic of the Czechs and Slovaks), and Poland. In the case of German Austria this condition may be remedied by the admission of the Austrian territories to the new German republic; but for Bohemia and Hungary the only solution of this difficulty appears to be an economic arrangement with some neighboring state.

It is possible, as suggested above, that Poland may be able to reach the sea through the lands of the Letts and the Lithuanians. The Poles hope, however, to secure a shorter and more direct route by way of the Vistula. Libau and Riga are, indeed, desirable ports; but from the Polish viewpoint Danzig at the mouth of the Vistula is the natural outlet.

The Poles insist that the Vistula is a Polish river and should therefore

be under their control throughout its entire course. It is true that both banks of this river have a Polish population to a point some distance below Thorn or about one hundred miles from its mouth. Along the lower course between Thorn and the Baltic, the Polish population occupies a narrow tongue of land from twenty to fifty miles wide lying along the west bank of the river, while the opposite bank is occupied almost exclusively by Germans. The Poles insist that this strip of territory is not only essentially Polish, but is also necessary to their economic life and to the successful defense of their country; they demand, therefore, that it be included in the revived Polish state.

This area was for several centuries a part of the Polish kingdom but was taken by the Prussians in the partitions of Poland in the eighteenth century. To return what territory is still Polish in speech and sentiment, seems, therefore, a matter of justice merely. There are, however, certain facts and conditions that must be taken seriously into account before the left bank of the Vistula is definitely handed over to the Polish state.

(1) The tongue of land in question lies wholly within the territory of Prussia; if it is annexed to Poland that part of Germany east of the Vistula will be separated completely from the rest of the Fatherland. It is inconceivable that the Germans will remain satisfied with this condition. The Poles are consequently likely to find that the possession of this strip is a danger as well as an advantage. In case of war with Germany it could not be successfully defended.

(2) The territory, while largely Polish in population, is not exclusively so; it has a strong German minority which in certain sections is almost as strong as the Slavic majority. This is particularly true of the cities where the Germans are, in places, even the more numerous element.

(3) The region would lose much of its economic value to Poland unless Danzig were included. But Danzig is essentially a German city, nine-tenths of the population being German in race and speech. Through most of its history Danzig has been German rather than Polish; though for a long time it was counted as a part of the Polish kingdom, its relationship to that state was almost wholly nominal, as it enjoyed privileges which made it practically a self-governing republic.

At the same time it must be remembered that the prosperity of Danzig is based largely on the great trade that flows toward it from the valley of the Vistula. And it must not be forgotten that the disposal of the tongue of land between Thorn and Danzig involves the political fate of more than 500,000 Poles.