INSIDE GERMANY
1914-1918

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EXCITEMENT reigned in the old city of Erfurt. An expectant crowd was gathering in the market square, around the old city well and upon the stairs of St. Lambert's church. The sun was slowly sinking behind the wooded Thuringian hills, when music of fifes and cymbals, accompanying the sound of human voices, could be heard approaching from Weimar Gate up Moritz Street; the sound of excited voices, of joyous songs and thumping rhythms. A stir went through the throng in the square. "They are coming. Here they are. Where is he? Look at him! Hail! Hail!" The enthusiastic greetings were addressed to a tall man who was clad in a green tunic, whose hair was falling freely in long, brown locks, and whose bare feet were shod with old-fashioned sandals. In his left hand he held a guitar, from whose neck silk ribbons of all colors were gaily fluttering in the light breeze of the summer evening. Waving his right hand, he greeted the crowd while he half danced, half marched in the midst of his followers and disciples. It was a colorful parade that turned into the square, marched around, and then grouped itself in a semicircle along the arcades of the steepled town hall. It was composed of young people—young men and women, girls, boys, children—with flowers and garlands in the hair of many. There were

girls in bright frocks of medieval design, young men with long hair, open wing collars, and bare knees, but there were others as well in the worn, drab, field-gray uniform of the ex-soldier. The center of the group was formed by the tall man whom the crowd had greeted so enthusiastically. He stood upon the balustrade of the town well, in the midst of a group of girls, who were looking at him adoringly and expectantly.

As expectant as they was the crowd, waiting for the tall man to address them, to give them the cheer and joy and hope and faith of which they all were in need. Haggard and careworn were the faces of that crowd, the faces of people who had gone through much suffering, much worry and hardship. They were waiting for the message of joy the tall man was said to bring to them. Now he began to speak, with a ringing, sonorous voice. He told them the message of salvation he was sent to announce to them, his new gospel of joy and love. It was simple, this gospel: sing, dance, make merry, live a simple life, leave the big cities, return to the fields and the woods, be like the lilies in the fields, trust in Providence, and place all your faith in the redeeming power of love. Love, ardent and pure, will cure the world of all evil. The way to love is to sing and to dance. "Let us dance! Play, play, musicians, drummers, fifers, guitarists; play, let us all join hands!" Dancing himself, he grasped the hand of the girl standing next to him and in an instant a chain was formed of people, dancing, singing, jumping in the night, dancing around the high-flaming pyre which the leader had lighted and from which sparks were carried by the wind over the heated faces of the people. Now the disciples turned to the spectators, grasped their hands

and whirled them around to the shrill tunes of bagpipes. In a short while the whole crowd, young and old, men and women, workers and burghers, soldiers and students, all were caught in the electrifying current of ecstasy, shouting, jumping, clasping their hands in a rhythm that grew faster and faster, wilder and wilder, until a crowd of thousands was caught in a St. Vitus dance, forgetting themselves, their miseries and cares.

This frenzied dance might have occurred in the Middle Ages, in the days when St. Bernard called up the faithful to the delivery of the Holy Sepulchre; when children, caught in mad entrancement, gathered for their fateful journey toward the Holy Land which they were never to behold, when flagellants roamed the streets revelling in the joys of their self-inflicted pains. But the wild night dance at Erfurt occurred in our own days, in 1919. Hans Muck-Lamberti, the leader, had come to town as he went to all the cities and villages of Thuringia from the medieval mountain castle of Leuchtenburg, where he resided with the flock of his disciples as master of a sect of utopians, who owned everything in common and practiced his gospel of love, as rumor had it, not entirely of the platonic kind. But Muck-Lamberti was only one of the numerous prophets and apostles of those days who marched and preached all over Germany, pronouncing new, strange gospels, gospels of dance and joy, or of free love, or of the threatening apocalypse, or, before all, of socialism as the general panacea. Some of these prophets were men of free, engaging manners like Muck-Lamberti; others were tense, lean agitators, talking of the profit system, of expropriation of the expropriators, or of proletarian culture, and addressing their hearers as com-

rades. There were religious zealots, who were sermonizing in biblical terms of sin and punishment, of penance and revival, and prophesying the day of justice and the wrath of the Lord. There were others whose words were tirades of hatred against the enemies of yesterday, who inveighed against the national humiliation of Versailles, who wailed about the lost territories and colonies, who extolled "our victorious armies" and "our glorious leaders in the field," who gloomed about traitors at home and the stab in the back, and darkly presaged revenge and Germany's future glory.

These were tumultuous years, the years after 1918—years of upheaval, confusion, hope, despair, and misery, of new wealth, of mournful memories of past glory, and of excited expectations of a new age of world-peace, freedom, equality, and justice. That summer night in Erfurt has become fixed upon my memory as a symbol of all Germany of these years. But there is another day of excitement which has impressed itself even more indelibly upon my memory, the first of August, 1914.

I was a boy at the time of the outbreak of the war, a student at the "gymnasium" in Munich. For four weeks we had all been living in a continuous state of fearful, joyful expectation. The war was becoming a reality—that war which we had been expecting all these years, that war for which our teachers and our Boy Scout leaders had told us to be ready. Years afterwards I learned that there had been many a man in Germany who had hoped or believed that mankind had reached a stage where war would be an anachronism. Our city of Munich in particular was a center of those cultured liberals, artists, and scholars who regarded themselves as citizens of the

world rather than of one country. But we boys of fourteen and fifteen felt differently. We had been taught that there always had been wars and that there always would be wars, that war was as natural a phenomenon as a thunderstorm, and that it was equally beneficial. War was the great regenerator of mankind, the fateful bath of steel, where everything decadent and effeminate had to give way to the strong, young, and healthy powers of life. To be strong, to be prepared, to be able to fight and to win, that was the spirit we were taught, in our lessons in history and geography as well as in science. Life was a continuous struggle for the survival of the fittest. Germany was young, strong, vigorous, energetic. She had been clumsy in her dealings with the world, trusting too much to French flattery and English cant. She was peaceful, she did not seek war, she was industrious, growing, conquering the markets of the world. The excellent quality of German goods, the inventive genius of German scientists, the industry, frugality, and discipline of German workers, and the wisdom and foresight of a benign but firm government had won for the newly united German nation a place in the world. But these achievements had stirred up the envy of the English, the jealousy of the French, and the fears of the Russians. England, like a spider in its web, was encircling Germany, preparing to strangle her growth and to assault her at an opportune moment. To be vigilant was the command of the hour; to be strong, stronger than Britain and her allies could ever hope to be; to maintain the great tradition of the German army; to be a united nation, loyal to king and emperor, disciplined in work and in the will to defend the fatherland against any coalition of attackers. England,

France, and the Russian Czar wanted war, not Germany.

That war was coming was as certain as that a new day would follow the night. Now it had come. The mobilization order brought about a release of the tensions that had accumulated over a long period of years and had become intolerable during the weeks that followed the shot of Sarajevo. By tens of thousands the citizens of Munich flocked to the wide square at the foot of Field Marshal's Hall, that lovely replica of Florence's Loggia dei Lanzi, with the monuments of the two great generals of the Bavarian armies, Tilly and Wrede, neither of whom had been a Bavarian. You may perhaps have seen the massive stone façade of the baroque church of the Theatine monks, the creation of the Italian genius of Barelli, and, on the other side of the square, the painted walls of the old Royal Palace, whose somber renaissance beauty had so enraptured the conqueror Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden that he wished he could move it on wheels to his own capital of Stockholm. Every Sunday noon, that square had been the scene of a gay concourse, where a military band was playing Wagnerian operas, Viennese waltzes, or stirring military marches before a crowd of elegant people, who were meeting their friends and strolling leisurely in the strong air of the Bavarian capital. Now, on that first day of August, 1914, the square was crammed with excited human beings. They were singing: "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles," the "Wacht am Rhein," and the Bavarian national anthem, which is sung to the tune of "My Country 'tis of Thee." They were shouting hail and hurrah, and were shaking each other's hands. Some people made speeches, cursing England or threatening France. "In two weeks

we shall be in Paris!" Wherever a soldier showed himself in the new gray uniform he was hailed and regaled with cigars and flowers. A regiment of infantry was turning into the square, the Royal Bavarian Body Guards, Colonel von Epp riding at their head on a beautiful white horse, the band playing the regiment's own "Musinan March," a tune dear to every Bavarian heart. Then came the soldiers, company after company, their glittering bayonets and their cloth-covered helmets garlanded with flowers. The crowd went wild: "Hail, hail, don't be late to Paris! Down with Poincaré! Down with the Czar!" We boys pushed through the crowd until we were right up with the band and could march with it to the station, to the sound of the trumpets and the rhythm of the drums.

Those were stirring days, those first days of August, 1914. Troops were leaving every day, cannons and pack trains were rumbling through the streets. Everybody was excited and happy. So at least it seemed to us boys. Of course, one saw sad faces, people with tears in their eyes. Friends of the family came to say goodbye to the soldiers before they joined their regiments. There were some of my mother's friends whose sons or husbands had left and who tried to hide their anxieties and fears before others and before themselves. There were even one or two among our acquaintances who seemed not to share the common surge of patriotic high feeling. One was a plumber, the husband of a former maid of ours. He talked in dark words of the breakdown of the capitalistic order and the opening phase of the world-revolution. He was a socialist, one of those misguided, deluded followers of professional agitators, who sought only to stir up class

hatred and discontent. Were they not quite well off, the workers? They had just won the ten-hour day—think of it, just ten hours of daily work! The unions were corrupting the workers and undermining all industry. Surely, Valentine himself was a decent fellow; we could never understand why he had joined the "Sozis," marched in the May Day parade, abused the King, and talked about socialism and the great day of general dividing of all wealth. But even Valentine was not against the war. His own party had voted for the war credits, "to end the tyranny of the czar and free the workers of the world." There was one single, lone dissenter in the whole Reichstag, Representative Liebknecht. Had he not always talked like a fool? Now he proved his stupidity. How could a man in his senses deny the credits for the defense of the fatherland? "In the midst of peace, we have been assassinated!" The Kaiser said it. Germany had to defend herself.

And defend herself she did! Victory followed upon victory; Liége, Namur, Brussels, Antwerp fell to the "Big Berthas." Germany's victorious armies were beating the hereditary enemy wherever they met him. The Frenchmen were on the run. The English—well, they didn't count. Who would take them seriously? They were a nation of shopkeepers and playboys and had no fighting spirit. Why, they did not even have a conscript army. How could a man be a man without having gone through the army, this most perfect school of manhood? The English had never fought anywhere. They had never done more than pay subsidies to other countries, which were supposed to do the fighting for them. For the English, war was a business. "Business as usual"—that was

the slogan of English life. So we read it in our schoolbooks. Or "Right or wrong, my country." That was the title of the book of readings which we used in our English lessons, a compilation of passages from Macaulay, Trevelyan, Lord Bryce, and other English historians, who told the truth about their own people, about "Perfidious Albion." "Gott strafe England!" The English were held responsible for the war, but as soldiers they were contemptible, no match at all for the glorious German army—the best-trained, the best-equipped, the best-prepared, and the best-officered army in the world.

The victories were celebrated. Flags were waving, our white and blue Bavarian flags, and flags in the black, white, and red colors of the Reich. The papers had screaming headlines; we had free days in school or assemblies with solemn addresses by our principal. Another month and final victory is ours! There were new victories, "Our troops 150 kilometers from Paris, 100 kilometers, 75 kilometers," "The Aisne River Crossed Victoriously, the French Routed." "Our Troops Have Reached the Marne River." Then "Heavy Fighting on the Marne," "Stubborn Resistance on the Marne," "The Battle between the Marne and the Aisne Continues," "Our Troops Have Victoriously Prevented the Enemy from Crossing the Aisne River." A new victory! New flags, new celebrations! Nobody realized that the German army had suffered the decisive defeat of the war. The Battle of the Marne was a German victory and so was the race toward the Channel and the battle in Flanders. True, the armies were no longer advancing, the front lines became fixed, but new victories were won on new fronts. At Tannenberg, an old, retired general named

Hindenburg had annihilated the Russian army. They had been driven into the lakes and swamps. Hundreds of thousands had surrendered, immense booty was captured. Japan declared war on Germany. Italy entered the war as an enemy. What of it! Let them come. "*Viel Feind, viel Ehr.*" ("Great fight, great honor.") Our king said it, and everybody repeated it. "Declarations of war accepted here," the soldiers wrote on their boxcars, in which they traveled from France to Russia or to other fronts. The Italians were stopped at the Isonzo, then driven back to the Piave. Rumania declared war and was overrun within a few weeks. The Serbs were beaten and driven out of their country. Blow upon blow was hammered upon the Russians, their front was broken, Warsaw was taken, and Lemberg, Byalistok, Brest Litovsk. The Baltic Provinces, old German soil, were freed from the Russian yoke, the kingdom of Poland was resurrected and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Turkey, our ally, withstood all attacks upon Gallipoli and drove the enemy back into the sea. Fighting side by side with the Sultan's armies, the Kaiser's troops won victories in the Caucasus, in Palestine, at Baghdad. In the west all attacks of the enemies were repulsed. At sea, the German navy won a great victory over the British at Jutland. German submarines were sinking British ships as fast as they could. Rising figures of destroyed tonnage were published in the official bulletins. German fliers were superior to the enemy on all fronts. Day by day the number of enemy planes downed was about twice as high as that of German planes, which were never lost otherwise than after heroic resistance. Victories, victories everywhere!

But, strangely, in spite of all these victories, the war was going on; just another campaign, and victory is ours! But spring went by and summer; winter came and Christmas; and the war went on. Another year, another winter, the war went on. A third summer, another Christmas, the war went on. Soldiers were sent home wounded and were sent back to the front, came back again with new injuries and were sent to the front again. Men of forty-five and boys of eighteen were called to the colors, were hastily trained and sent to the front. Strange, what happened to prices. They went up and housewives began to complain. Of course, prices were rigged by usurers and profiteers. Send a few of them to the penitentiary and everything will be all right. But prices continued to climb and food became difficult to obtain. Yesterday the butcher had no meat and today the grocer had no eggs and no butter. You had better lay in some stores. Or shouldn't you? It was unpatriotic, the papers said it, the teachers and the preachers, the King himself made a speech against hoarding. But he had good talking. He had his fine, big model farm at Leutstetten, he had not to worry about prices. Indeed, wasn't he selling his milk to Prussia? Think of it, the King, selling Bavarian milk to Prussia! Of course, they paid better prices, the Prussians. Look at all those profiteers, how fat they grow. They don't hunger, they don't live on their rations. Those ration cards! Isn't it awful? Every month you have to wait hours at the city hall until you get your ration cards. What red tape! Can anyone live on those rations? Of course not! Nobody does who knows a farmer or one of those food brokers who, for good money, can get you everything. Is it really true that old Professor So and So

is living on his rations? The poor man! He has always been a patriot. My, he even gets excited over a new victory. But he won't see the end of the war. Look how thin he has grown and how weak he looks. Maybe he is lucky, the old man, that he won't see the end. We *can't* win. Don't you see it? The British let us win all the battles and will simply starve us to death.

You could hear such talk in 1916 and more of it in 1917 and still more in 1918. But the army was still holding out against the world, standing on enemy soil everywhere. There was devastation in France, Belgium, Italy, Russia, but Germany was free, her life went on intact. The bulletins announced new victories and conquests; millions of prisoners were working all over Germany, tilling the soil and harvesting the crops. Then came, in 1917, the greatest victory of all, the breakdown of the Russian Empire. At one front the fight was over. That enemy that had been regarded as the most dangerous of all, the Russian monster, was destroyed. Peace treaties were signed with the Ukraine, with Russia, and with Rumania.

Peace! Now it would no longer take much time to bring the war to its victorious end. The one half of the army that had had to be kept in Russia became free and Germany's whole might could now be thrown against the French. How could they resist such an onslaught?

True, new enemies had appeared, a whole host of them. The United States had declared war, followed by Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, Chile, Honduras, Nicaragua, etc. Think of it, Nicaragua! Where was that country, after all? Oh yes, somewhere in Central America. Then came China! It was ridiculous. Of course, they all had but one motive. They wanted to steal the fine German

ships in their harbors. After the war we would get back all our ships and all of theirs, too. There was no ground for getting excited. The Americans had been supplying the enemies with munitions all the time anyway. All they were interested in were profits. They were dollar-chasers. Did they have an army? Oh yes, a handful of mercenaries, not worth while bothering about. They would never send troops. The only strange thing was that the Americans could so forget their German origin. At the time of their revolution Germans and English were about evenly balanced. A motion to adopt German as the official language was defeated in Congress by one vote, the vote of a German-American traitor to his race. We had heard that story in school. Later, the German stock became corrupted by adventurers and criminals from all over the world and by low-class Poles, Italians, Russians, and other inferior races, by Negroes, Chinese, and Filipinos. No wonder that these people were not interested in anything but making money. They were a corrupt medley of city dwellers, a formless mass of proletarians of the lowest type, governed by ruthless and rootless millionaires. In addition to them, there were just Indians, cowboys, mustangs, and buffaloes. That there was a big, wide, rural America, a farmer stock, a hard-working people with traditions and ideals was unknown to us. We had never heard of the Pilgrims or the Puritans, about pioneers or the "Forty-eighters." We knew nothing of the religious forces of America or of its abiding faith in freedom and democracy. We had never read the ringing words of the Declaration of Independence or the solemn cadences of the Gettysburg Address. We had never heard of Walt Whitman or of Emerson. We had

read the "Leather-Stocking Tales" and had played Mohicans and Sioux, we knew the names of Rockefeller and Vanderbilt, of Carnegie and Gould, and we knew of Hollywood and Charley Chaplin. We knew of remote relatives of ours or of friends who had crossed the big pond, black sheep or good-for-nothings. Most of them had disappeared, not greatly missed by anybody. A few had grown rich and had appeared in the old country on short visits, behaving themselves with a strange mixture of sloppiness and lofty irreverence, spending fabulous sums of money and pretending that they had forgotten their mother-tongue. They were strange people, those Americans. They had irritating, challenging characteristics—but, certainly, they were no fighters. There was no reason to be afraid of them. They had chosen to meddle with a war which was none of their business. It was just too bad for them—or, perhaps, it was their good fortune that they had challenged Germany and would now have to bow to her coming leadership of the world. The Germans would teach them discipline and order and would show them how to run their country. All that would come after victory, and victory was just around the corner.

But victory was elusive. After the initial success of the first onslaught, the big offensive in the west bogged down, and by September the territorial gains were lost in a strategic retreat. Another campaign loomed on the horizon, more bloodshed, more drumfire, more horror. The prospect of another war winter appeared before the emaciated people of the home front, with hunger and *ersatz*, with insufficient fuel and insufficient clothing, with rising prices and falling spirits of life. Could we

really win victory? Why not simply end this war with a treaty of general reconciliation? Wilson had announced to the world that he was striving for a peace without annexations and without indemnities. He had pronounced his Fourteen Points and had proclaimed each nation's right of self-determination. His program sounded quite reasonable; none of his points was unacceptable. The League of Nations and general disarmament began to appear as ideals of a new order, proclaimed by the new Messiah, the American President. The Pan-German League, of course, was still proclaiming Germany's mission to the world. Tirpitz and his Fatherland party were agitating for a peace of victory, branding as traitors the advocates of a peace of reconciliation. The Kaiser and Ludendorff issued proclamations exhorting the army to hold out for final victory. But they had good talk, these big wigs; they had enough to eat and they were safe in their headquarters far behind the front lines. Ludendorff was a fanatic, who had made himself the ruler and dominated over the civilian authorities and the Reichstag. But the chosen representatives of the people would no longer allow that they be kept in the dark and excluded from the course of events. The Reichstag reassembled, began to ask questions, and solemnly pronounced Germany's willingness to co-operate in the new order of the world. If the Kaiser was unwilling to obey the people, well, then he had to go. President Wilson had declared that he had no quarrel with the German people but only with its tyrannical leaders, the Prussian *junkers*, the militarists, and the Kaiser. There could be peace and liberty and brotherhood of all nations, if only

the Kaiser would abdicate. He should bring this sacrifice to his people!

Thus were the people talking in the late summer of 1918, and there were some audacious voices who went further. "Chase him away, the Kaiser, if he will not retire voluntarily, him and all the kings and princes! Other nations have had their revolutions, why should we Germans be lambs? This war is becoming unbearable and with it the whole regime that has brought it about. This war is nothing but the fruit of capitalism." Now Karl Marx's prophesies were becoming true. All kings would meet the fate of the Czar and the fate of the Russian bourgeois would befall all capitalists. The world-revolution was on the march. "Proletarians of all countries, unite!"

Mysterious pamphlets appeared upon the streets and in the barracks; there were rumors of strikes and mutinies and executions. And then the blow fell. I was at home in Munich on that fourth day of October, 1918, on a few days' leave from the army. I was in the theater that evening, seeing Strindberg's *Dream Play*. The curtain had fallen for the intermission when the manager appeared upon the stage wildly gesticulating with an extra in his hands. "Silence, please, silence! I have important news, ladies and gentleman. Great Headquarters officially announce that the Imperial Government has asked President Wilson to initiate peace negotiations!" There was silence in the house, the sudden realization of defeat. In spite of the setbacks in France, defeat was unexpected. All the time we had heard of victories and of nothing else. Now, Great Headquarters were giving up! Why? What had happened?

Nobody in that crowd, nobody among the German people, knew on that day of the catastrophe that had happened a week before in the Balkans, a catastrophe which had made it inevitable for the German High Command to ask for an armistice. We, in our ignorance, still had hopes. The peace to come would be an honorable one. There would be general reconciliation and a new era for the world. Nobody realized that five more weeks would pass before the conclusion of the armistice, and that we should have to witness the complete breakdown of the country.

On September 15 the Balkan army of the Allies had broken through the Bulgarian front north of Salonika; a few days later Bulgaria had asked for an armistice and denounced her alliance with Germany. Field Marshal von Mackensen's army of occupation was being cut off in Rumania. Unrest was stirring through the nations of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The Croats and Slovenes, whose national aspirations had started off the war, were greeting the approaching army of their Serbian brethren; local revolts were breaking out among the Rumanians of Transsylvania; the Czechs were in open rebellion and threatened to establish a new allied army right at the frontiers of Saxony and our own Bavaria. The Austrian front against Italy was cracking. The Hungarian government, frightened at the approach of the Allies' Balkan army, ordered the Hungarian troops away from the Italian front to the defense of the Serbian and Rumanian borders. When the Hungarians were withdrawn, gaps were opening in the front line of the Austrians and the small detachments of German mountain troops which held the front against Italy. There were rumors that the

Italians were already filtering through these gaps and were marching against the Tyrol and Southern Bavaria. A new front arose at Germany's southern and southeastern border. Munich became the headquarters of a new army which was quickly gathered from garrison troops—old men, young boys, men of reduced physical resistance, and from soldiers reconvalescing from their wounds. Suddenly the war became a reality for that part of Germany which had been remotest from all fronts. Wild rumors were spreading over the city that revolution had broken out in Austria, that the Italians had broken through and were marching upon the Brenner Pass.

Detailed to a brigade of mountain troops, I found myself on a troop train rolling into Austria. As soon as we crossed the Austrian border at Salzburg we entered a realm of utter confusion. Nobody knew whether the government in Vienna was still functioning; communications were interrupted; red flags were waving from the public buildings. No Austrian officers were visible and the station was crammed with Russian prisoners of war who had walked out of their camps and did not know what to do. Our train rolled southward passing long trains going north filled with Austrian soldiers who had left their regiments and decided to go home. At Werfen we had to stop to remove from the tracks the naked bodies of women whom Austrian marauders had thrown out of their cars after having raped and mutilated them. At St. Johann the tracks were strewn with tens of thousands of tin cans the starving Austrians had taken from the army stores which they had stormed and plundered. At Schwarzach we had to stop. The railroad bridge had just been blown up by the Austrian commander. At the

rumor of approaching Italians he had lost his head. Actually, there were no Italians anywhere. They were still afraid to pursue the crumbling Austrian army. They did not dare to advance until they were sure they would no longer meet resistance. Then only did they fall upon the remnants of the Austrian army, even after the Austrians had laid down their arms. On the second of November the Austrian High Command had officially announced that an armistice was concluded and that hostilities were to cease at 2:00 A.M. on November 3. To the Austrians' consternation, the Italians continued to fire and, since they no longer met resistance, advanced and broke into the Austrian positions. There must have been a misunderstanding, the Italian officers declared. According to their orders the armistice was to begin on November 4 at 2:00 P.M., thirty-six hours after the Austrians had laid down their arms. Hundreds of thousands of prisoners were made on this last day of the Austrian war, hosts of whom were to die of typhus in the wretched Italian camps in the languishing months before the Treaty of St. Germain took effect.

Now, with the bridge gone, the retreating Austrians were bottled up on the southern side of the river, desperately trying to cross it on pontoon and footbridges. Their army was dissolving. Regiments and battalions simply melted away. Cannons, rifles, horses were abandoned or lost. What had been an army the day before was now a formless mass of miserable humanity. All the nations of the Danube monarchy were cursing, beating, and fighting each other. Czech officers, fleeing before their Bosnian and Ukrainian subordinates, sought refuge with our German command. A battery of the famous motor-

ized heavy-size mortars rumbled into the town. Their Tyrolean gunners had miraculously brought them across the river and were now trying to bring them home to Salzburg. But the roads were jammed and the railroad was no longer running. That battery of mortars and a regiment of Tyrolean chasseurs were the only Austrian detachments which kept together as military cadres. They were proud and unbeaten, these Tyrolean peasant soldiers. At the plaza of St. Johann, to which we had meanwhile retreated, their colonel reviewed them in parade to the tune of the Radetzky March. It was the last cadre of the army which had for centuries defended Europe against the Turks, the army of Prince Eugene, the noble knight; the army that had beaten Napoleon at Wagram and the Italians at Custozza; that polyglot army that had fought four and a half years against Russians, Serbs, Rumanians, Italians, Montenegrins, and Albanians; that army which had comprised those Czech regiments which had marched over to the Russians with their bands playing, as well as those Croatian, Tyrolean, and Bosnian troops which had fought to the last ditch on the glaciers and in the gorges of the Alps, the deserts of the Karst, and the woodlands of the Carpathians.

Now that Austrian army had vanished and with it the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, that impossible creature of dynastic ambition, which had produced those wonderful flowers of Viennese music, of Bohemian gothic, Danubian baroque, and Hungarian chivalry. The Hapsburg Empire had brought Western civilization to the Near East and established through its army and its bureaucracy a regime of sloppy efficiency and benevolent tyranny over a dozen different peoples. It was the last home of feudalism

and the vanguard of an adventurous business bourgeoisie. A great country, a country with a proud history, had collapsed. Austria was now a republic, so the people told us. The emperor had left Vienna, the days of Hapsburg glory and of Hapsburg agony were over. The foreign nationalities would now have to build up their own countries, to forge their own destinies, and German-Austria would join the Reich and become a part of the great, reunited fatherland of all Germans.

What had become of the fatherland? For days we had no news. All communications were interrupted. Our German brigade was like a rock in the waving sea of the aimlessly floating remnants of the Austrian army. But we could get no provisions from Germany, no ammunition, no orders; we were cut off and left to our own resources. Finally, a German soldier reached our staff headquarters with a telegram. It had been wired to Salzburg and from there forwarded on foot or horseback. It contained a mysterious message: "Stay where you are. Await further orders. [Signed] ROSSHAUPTER, Minister of War."

Rosshaupter, minister of war? The minister of war was Lieutenant General Baron von Horn. Who was Rosshaupter? Somebody on the staff remembered: Rosshaupter, wasn't he a socialist, a deputy to the Bavarian Diet, a trade-union secretary? But how could he be minister of war? What had happened in Munich? Could there have been a revolution? Why, ridiculous; Bavarians don't make revolutions. But something must have happened. If we could only find out what! Soon we were to know. On November 7 revolution had broken out in Munich. The socialists had called a mass meeting on the state fair grounds. They formed a parade and marched upon the

city. At each of the army barracks they passed the crowd was joined by the soldiers, their officers not even trying to restrain them. Continuously swelling their ranks as they marched in good military order and without violence, the crowd reached the government buildings in the old center district of the city. While their leaders entered at the front doors, the ministers of the royal Bavarian government made a hurried but unmolested exit through the back doors. The King himself, so at least the story was told, was completely taken by surprise. A socialist worker was said to have met him on his daily morning walk in the public park. "Your Majesty had better go home," he is reported to have told the old king, "there is a revolution going on in the city."

So the old regime had collapsed without resistance. The socialists were in the saddle, Kurt Eisner was president and prime minister, Auer vice-president. Everybody knew Auer, he was the leader of the Socialist party in the diet; a quiet man, no radical, a man who was generally trusted and respected. But who was Eisner? Nobody knew. Gradually we learned more of this new ruler of our state. He was a writer, an intellectual, a Jew; some said he was from Berlin, others from Russia. He had long, dishevelled hair and a wiry beard. There were a few soldiers among us who had heard of him—that he had long been active underground as a leader of a pacifist socialist group—they said he was a marvellous speaker, an idealist, a poet, a saint. We read his first pronouncements and speeches; they were fervent appeals for peace, for socialism, international reconciliation and friendship; they expressed hopes of eternal bliss, announced the start of a new era of the world, the end of all wars, of all

cruelty, of all injustice and exploitation. They were ringing speeches, they had a mysterious appeal, but they sounded strange to Bavarian ears—too lofty and too vague. We hardly knew what to think and what to believe. Rumor had it that there was revolution all over Germany, that the Kaiser and Ludendorff had fled, that a new socialist government had been established in Berlin. Was the war over? We did not know, we had orders to stay where we were and to fight if necessary. Then came new orders from the new minister of war in Munich—that all officers were deposed from rank and that the soldiers were to elect a soviet. Our major called the brigade together and announced the news. Unanimously the soldiers shouted that they wanted the major as president of the soviet and all the other officers as its members. Acting in his new capacity as president of the soviet of the Mixed Bavarian Mountain Brigade No. 2, the major ordered the men to go back to their cantonments and to wait for new orders. They came after a week's waiting. The armistice was concluded. "Retreat to Berchtesgaden and guard frontier against marauding Austrians and Italians." With difficulties and delays we obtained a locomotive for our train. About a thousand men strong, we started on the homeward journey. At Berchtesgaden our brigade had dwindled to two hundred. The rest had left and gone home. The Bavarian army was in the way of following the example of the Austrian. It dissolved and disappeared. Two weeks later, the last fifty men of our brigade boarded the train for Munich.

On the train fellow-passengers told us of rumors about disturbances that had broken out in Munich—quarrels between Eisner's radical and Auer's moderate socialists.

Shortly before we reached the city we were told that radical sailors had occupied the railroad station and were disarming all newly arriving soldiers who would not join their ranks. This family quarrel of the socialists was none of our concern. Besides, why surrender our arms to the red sailors? All during the war, when the army was fighting, the sailors were sitting on their ships doing nothing. Now they were swarming all over the country, making radical speeches, electing themselves into the chairmanship of the local soviets, and dictating to the local authorities. When they had come to Berchtesgaden and tried to give orders to the burgomaster, the peasants, with our help, had driven the sailors out of town.

We knew those fellows and we hated them. They would never get our arms. A few miles before the city we jumped from the moving train. But what were we to do now? There we stood, fifty soldiers of a defeated army, in the drizzling rain of the chilly November evening. From the near-by tavern we heard the irritating sound of jazz music. Should we go in? No! How could people enjoy this exotic cacophony, how could they dance in these days of breakdown? We felt pained and disgusted. There were some among us who could not comprehend that the fight was over and who dreaded the dullness and daily worries of civilian life. Others were more hopeful, were looking forward to peace and to a new world of brotherhood and democracy. And so, in the rainy, muddy field, we parted, walking away in different directions toward a future of uncertainty.

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