CHAPTER I

Sheltered by two prominent hills Ben Ghriam Mor, a great rounded mass with two humps, and Ben Ghriam Bheg a graceful peak, there stands - to this day - a thatched cottage with byre and stable, twenty careful steps above the tumbling burn where the slopes of the narrow glen widen out into Kildonan Strath and Loch-an-Ruthair. The Gaelic name Ghriamachary means a piece of land facing the sunshine. A good tidy place where oats and potatoes grow on small cultivated patches. A cow is in the byre and a garron browses nearby.
By the dyke around the small garden stand a few rowan trees, a regular highland feature, the rowan - mystic guardian of peace and well-being, also protection against evil in croft and cottage. This is the home of the Grants.

One morning when the Grant family had just "taken the books" (family worship) - always the first morning act together and always before the porridge and milk breakfast, not after - a message arrived from the tacksman Adam Gordon. A call issued by the government in London and conveyed throughout the county with the approval of Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland, Dunrobin Castle. The year was 1802, when the Napoleonic war was holding Europe in thrall and Britain needed more men for the army in order to continue resistance to his domination. The message was brief, the point of it being that from each family where there were sons one son would be `called` for the army. I record the incident of nearly two centuries ago as it was told to me by my father, and earlier, by Grandma. The message having been received in Ghriamachary, the family gathered together and, by agreement, cast lots to discover which of the two sons should go. The lot fell to John the eldest but George his younger brother, stood up at once, saying: "John, I will go to the army instead of you, I have more education."

So it came about that George Grant, crofter, Ghriamachary, born in 1782, a peasant, inured to natural hardships, accustomed to the toil and rigour of `living off the land` with all the survival qualities that such a spartan upbringing on moor and mountain develops, took his way in that year "through the hill", leaving croft, family and home. That George Grant was my grandfather. Crossing the humped shoulder of Big Ben Ghriam and holding majestic Ben Loyal as landmark, the twenty-year-old native son made his way to Strathnaver where he linked up with several hundred other young Sutherland men answering the call of the nation.
And this less than sixty years after Culloden and the subsequent dismemberment of the people of the highlands and their ancient ways and fiefdoms. From Strathnaver, in disciplined form, with their officers they marched to Fort George in Inverness and then on to Stirling - 200 miles and more from home. Leaving their crofts, their straths, their homes in Sutherland, they marched away to war. Very few of these young men lived to return to their native county again.

My grandfather was one of the very few survivors of the fourteen years of war. In 1816, the authentic returning native, he came hom e again. I must tell something of his story and of his gradual readjustment in, in terms of the Kipling lines:

"They shall return as strangers;
They shall remain as sons."

There were two special battles in Grandpa`s war experience, special battles even in British history: the retreat to Corunna, 1809 and, four months before Waterloo, the Battle of New Orleans in 1815. Grandpa fought and suffered in each of these historic battles and it is of his experiences in these that we have the fullest record. The retreat to Corunna was one of the outstanding events of British military history. A shattering event, like an early Dunkirk except that here, unlike the retreat in 1940, the ships - delayed by storm - were not there to take the men off. Desperate, yet relying upon his disciplined, veteran soldiers, Sir John Moore decided to halt his weary troops and turn round to fight. To fight without cavalry, without artillery

"Moore skilfully drew off his troops. The British pulled bavk throughout the wild night of February 3rd along narrow tracks cutting deep into the mountains. Rivers roared at thebottom of the black ravines by the side of the road; men and carts slipped into the chasms; the wind howled and the sleet hissed down. The French were only a few hundred yards behind. The sullen hills crackled with pistol shots as wounded horses were despatched. The road was strewn with dead horses, blood-stained snow, broken carts, scrapped ammunition cases, spiked guns,starved and frozen soldiers". (1)

During the engagement Sir John was suddenly flung from his horse. He lay on his side for a moment, then struggled to rise. His aides saw blood spurting through the uniform on his left breast and shoulder. The medical officer took one look and muttered "hopeless"!. Soon a party of aides and officers, marching very slowly, followed the six soldiers bearing the mortally wounded commander on a blood-stained blanket slung between two poles.....
with death Sir John whispered: "I have always wished to die this way...."

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning,
By the struggling moonbeam`s misty light
And the lanthorn dimly burning.

We thought, as we hollowed his narrow bed
And smoothed out his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o`er his head,
And we far away on the billow.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory,
We carved not a line and we raised not a stone,
But we left him alone with his glory.

(1) I have chiefly quoted from "The Peninsular War" by Roger Parkinson, London 1973.

"Both armies were worn-out and silent; but the departure of the British troops could now proceed unmolested. Throughout the night the exhausted soldiers moved through Corunna, still in good order, but with uniforms in tatters, covered in blood and filth and with gaunt hollow-eyed faces.

As the exhausted soldiers passed through the flickering patches of lamplight, Corunna citizens in the streets, with quick sympathy, made the sign of the cross, they looked so terrible." (2)

George Grant, Ghriamachary, the veteran of ten years` campaigning in the Peninsula against Napoleon`s thrusting armies, was a highland crofter in his very nature. Accustomed to spartan living, a peasant, carefully tilling the scanty soil of the high mountain table-land, inured to all conditions of weatherand mountains and always steadied and strengthened by an unswerving Christian faith in God and His Providence. Grandpa was the authentic native son of the most northerly Scottish highland county, Sutherland.

In the little country school - Skibo school, Clashmore (which during 1894-1900 from my fifth to my eleventh year so adequately prepared me for secondary education) - one of the earliest poems I learned was "The Burial of Sir John Moore". Also I learned from Grandma that George Grant, my father`s father, was one of the party who, if they survived the further years of war and death, could say:

"We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning."

Although Grandpa died in in 1857 I have more to tell of him, indeed more of war and wounds. Not until 1816, one year after Waterloo, did Grandpa see again his highland hills and the Ghriamachary home from which war had reft him in 1802.

Yet another battle, even more bloody and fateful, was the climax of Granpa`s twelve long years of "war and howling, death and woe." That was at New Orleans in the New World in 1815 - four short months before Waterloo. Short of manpower in this continuing struggle against Napoleon, Britain claimed and exercised the right to search American ships for deserters. The UK-US war of 1812-15 followed. (3)

In 1812 New Orleans was the second most important seaport in the young United States. Britain decided to capture it. Grandpa`s regiment of veteran highlanders (the 93rd Highland Regt.) had been shipped across the Atlantic Ocean to wage this new war. Finally and fatefully, in 1815, the British assault on this great seaport was undertaken. The concept was flawed and the resources were inadequate. The red-coated highlanders, Grandpa among

(2.) An army commissary, an eye-witness, describes how Sir John Moore was mortally wounded and buried on the battlefield. I have quoted from these sources in order to convey some impression of the horrors that made Corunna.

(3)In 1802, the year which saw the Sutherland men gathering in Strathnaver, New Orleans was still a part of the French possessions. The new U.S. republic had not yet stretched right across the American continent. President Thomas Jefferson, quickly negotiating the "Louisiana Purchase" with Napoleon, bought the whole of Louisiana including New Orleans. A wonderful `pig in a poke`, for he got half the (available) continent in 1803 for a `paltry` seven million dollars -- thereby making Napoleon that much richer towards the cost of his wars in Europe.

them, launched their attack upon a strongly fortified position in the town.The skilled American riflemen, safe behind their stone ramparts, shot down the conspicuous highlanders by the score. Many Sutherland men fell on that distant battlefield. Most of these died. Grandpa was among the casualties with a desperate wound. His left arm shattered beyond any hope, he was carried to the rear where the surgeons were desperately trying to work among the carnage to rescue some who would otherwise be left to die. No anaesthetic -
only whisky! A strong draught from the bottle - two perhaps - then the surgeon took the knife and the saw; and cut. (4) From that day, George Grant Ghriamachary was the one-armed veteran. This is Grant family history - folk-lore indeed - but none the less authentic. In our native county only `gloomy memories` are

quickened by the mention of New Orleans.

The Royal Chelsea Hospital, London, nursed him back to convalescence and recovery. He had now acquired the useful pension of one shilling and threepence per day. He was a strong man and his way of life and his faith saw him through these dark times to recovery. Now he longed to get home again; longed to see his parents and his brothers once again. Ghriamachary called him.

Discharged from the army in 1816 with honour (and his pension) and a civilian once again, the veteran soldier made his way northwards. In the highlands the roads were very few; crofter and shepherd that he was he walked `through the hill`. After hardship and difficulty, but with the fury and death of war far behind him now, Grandpa finally reached Kinbrace, the little hamlet at the height of the Strath of Kildonan. Only five more miles lay ahead.

In my mind`s eye I picture the one-armed ex-soldier as he makes his way slowly on foot by paths and tracks he had known in his boyhood that seemed so long ago.

"Under their feet in the grasses, my clinging magic runs;
They shall return as strangers, they shall remain as sons."

Deeply moved by the sight and the feel of the heather slopes and the path homewards, knapsack on his back and greatcoat over his good shoulder, he reaches the `beall-ach` (byall-ach), the pass between the hills. There he rests awhile, tears in his eyes as he looks away down over the heather slopes and the grassy `lones`, the darker peat-banks too, until his view includes the thatched cottage, the byre and the stable which he had left so willingly so long ago.

I do not seek to describe but I do suggest the complete mental release he felt in the acceptance of home and the quiet but loving welcome with which the family received him after his fourteen years of war and death on two continents. Unable to avoid the sense of being the `stranger` in surroundings so familiar, his heart -beats quickened not only with relief and with love but surely too with the spiritual hope that, spared from the suffering

(4) It is part of the family mythology that, after the amputation, the surgeon`s assistant said to his senior - "there`s an arm that will never strike a man again....." - whereupon Grandpa, stirring himself for a superhuman effort, lifted the severed limb with his other hand and struck him a blow!

years, something further might now be granted to him by Providence; some further knowledge and active meaning, if not for `a thousand years` then for the seven generations of Ghriamachary Grants. No doubt, with this awakening sense of heritage, physical and spiritual, he knew that only by degrees he, the returning native, could become and remain the native son. (5)

In an early symbolic affirmative gesture towards his physical disability Grandpa visited Helmsdale and charged the local craftsman there to build him a simple, straight-backed, even stiff-looking armchair - with only one arm. (This talisman remained in the family for many long years after both my grandparents passed on and, indeed , became an important symbol for me through my childhood!)He knew, deep within himself, that he was now home for good in the peace and beauty of his native hills and moors; knew the brimming gladness and a relief which, lacking his recent experiences, no relative or neighbour could share. There was a kind of

strangeness, he felt, in all the welcoming factors that greeted him and his acceptance of it all. He had to wait a while in order fully to become again *a son*, at home with the Ben Ghriam hills all around. Even in the simple comfort and healing peace of home Grandpa was never to forget his experience of "war and howling, death and woe".

Soon after his own return word reached him that another veteran, Donald the Sailor, had also come home. Donald`s story was already known through the north coast lands around the parish of Farr. His name was the result of an unforgettable experience, unforgettable not only for Donald but for all who knew the man. As a boy of fifteen Donald Mackay was `herding in the hill` when he was accosted by two strangers who enquired if he could direct them to a certain hamlet on the coast. Partly through persuasion and partly by the promise of a shilling, and then another shilling, Donald accompanied the two strangers as far as Loch Erribol-- many miles away. The outcome was that, later that day, young Donald found himself on board a vessel and already out at sea. He had been press-ganged, not by the Royal Navy, but by a smuggler`s ship trading between Stornoway in the outer isles and northwest Europe. Donald could not write. His parents soon gave him up as lost. But after two years, Donald found a friend who *could* write and he sent a letter to tell his parents that he was alive and well. Two more years passed and a day came when Donald and another crewman were sent ashore to get water for the ship. Recognising the coast Donald knew where he was; so, having helped load the skiff with the water as required, Donald, still ashore, gave the skiff a good push to set it on its course, and moved off rapidly in the opposite direction. He was soon able to reach his own home to the untold joy of his parents and, of course, all his old friends and neighbours. He had become `Donald the Sailor` and remained the same all his days. Regardless, however, of his soubriquet Donald later joined the Army and also served as a soldier against Napoleon. One year after Waterloo `Donald the Sailor` also came home to live his own kind of life among the hills and the wild moors of Sutherland with the roar of the North Atlantic in his ears. Like Grandpa, he was a deeply religious man and, knowing about him, George Grant longed to meet him for they had so much in common and no-one else in that sparsely populated and lonely land could share these troublesome

(5) My father often spoke of himself and his brothers (all themselves born at Ghriamachary) as the eighth generation, living in "the eight generations house."

memories. Grandpa decided to pay Donald a visit. At that time there was already along the North Sea coast on the east side of the county a primitive coach road; elsewhere in that wide land the traveller followed - or made for himself - a way `through the hill`.

For the Ghriamachary man the twenty mile walk to the north coast posed no problems. So, after `taking the Books` (6) one morning, George, his plaid over his shoulder and oatcakes with butter and crowdie wrapped in a white napkin in his pocket, turned his face to the North. He followed the course of the burn, skirted the lower slopes of Ben Ghriam Mhor and then, reading the contours of the hill with the dominant Ben Loyal in the distant north-west, stepped ahead. The `hill country` lay open before him.

Donald had a warm welcome for the younger man. Veterans both George, the junior, was not yet forty. Grandpa stayed and rested after his long hill walk. As he had expected and hoped he found that special ties linked him with Donald; for the rest of the evening they explored their long years of war, their strong faith in God and in an over-ruling Providence and

their active devotion to Jesus Christ.

Together they talked quietly, sitting by the peat fire, as it smouldered in the hearth. Later, they `broke bread`, Donald courteously inviting his guest with a word - "George, please ask a blessing". Grandpa said grace, a Gaelic grace, of course, the mother tongue for both men. It was a memorable experience; they conversed more personally about `the things that concerned their eternal peace` - in other words their faith in God and in Christ as saviour. Finally Donald said "now, we`ll be taking the Books". He took down the Bible, briefly invoked a blessing on "the Word" and on their worship, then read - no doubt a selected passage true to their mood of praise and thankfulness. As they both got down on their knees Donald said, "George, you will pray." I can almost hear the words of Grandpa`s prayer, living Biblical phrases from the Gaelic scriptures, for I began to hear the same living words nearly a century later - from my own father`s lips but, more usually, in English for he was free in both languages - "Prepare us for life, death and a never-ending eternity; forgive us our sins and accept of us in Christ." Enriched, refreshed, George then retired to his couch, first kneeling down beside it to commit, at the day`s end, himself and all his doings to his Maker. Donald smoored the now diminished peat fire so that it would easily kindle again at morning light.

Their humble homes twenty miles apart , George Grant and Donald the Sailor continued thereafter to visit each other quite regularly. Donald was by now well known in the community as a man of wisdom, experience and wit. He would often be quite jocular and renowned for his wry highland humour. George, although the more serious and deeply religious of the two, was neither grim nor censorious. Quite the contrary, he too could joke and tell a very good story. He was often heard to say "there`s many a bonnie lassie lies between my two arms!" Both continued to serve their local communities with their unusual background, experience and wisdom and, indeed, were accorded much credit and standing for those functions in their respective communities of Farr on the north coast and Kinbrace - Forsinard in the centre of the county.

(6) This was (and is) the phrase used for family worship - Bible reading, O.T. in the morning and N.T. in the evening; the psalms and (usually extempore) prayers.

During his regular pastoral visits Grandpa became well acquainted with a family of Frasers in a quiet strath above Rogart, five miles north of the river Fleet. There were sons and three daughters - Helen, Catherine and Margaret - in the Fraser home; also plenty of talk and, often, music. Grandpa courted fair-haired, blue-eyed Helen and they were married in St. Callan`s church on the hillside above Rogart in Strathfleet, in 1840. He was 58 and she was 23, thirty-five years younger than her one-armed man. It was a brief but solemn religious ceremony, a personal and social contract, a commitment to each other and to the promises and blessings of a wise Providence. The twenty-five mile ride through the hill followed, the quiet cavalcade halting for a breather at the "Beallach". Looking down from there across two miles of heather moorland Helen could see the thatched cottage, byre and stable - the Ghriamachary homestead above the burn. It was a warm, welcoming sight and Helen, now Helen Fraser Grant, had plenty of courage, faith in a beneficent Providence and also much faith in life itself. There , in Ghriamachary in the enfolding arms of the ancient hills, her family was born during the years 1842-52; Annie, Donald, Alick, William and Catherine (who, sadly, died in infancy). Her man of the seventh generation of Ghriamachary Grants was known by now far beyond the Strath of Kildonan as far as Dornoch and Creich; indeed he was well-known

throughout the county.

Helen, now the young mother, devoted to her children, was the source of warmth and spiritual comfort in the home; a warmth within which her man found increasing personal fulfilment in an atmosphere of discipline and love. The life, of course, was spartan but the environment was one of endless space and surpassing physical beauty, with the clean forces of nature always in operation. The need for a deep and personal sense of self-reliance was ever-present. George Grant now lived most of his life in and around this family croft and, indeed, would be found out about the hill working nearly all the available daylight hours. All the available hours , that is, apart from the Sabbath Day. Always ready to help or to visit where there was a need, he was a sympathetic man, outward-going and a good talker with an enormous fund of good stories at his command in the best highland verbal tradition. Some of the `good` men about were very critical, indeed censorious of this lighthearted attitude but George was not cast down by the opposition of these narrow minds. He had `seen the world` had even been in London for a while; but now, home again, life was in so many ways easier for him despite the gruelling work out on the hill. His regular pension (1shilling & 3 pence per day) meant a degree of security; moreover Helen, his young wife, was a real partner to
her husband, with inner strengths and resources upon which the whole family depended. In the language of the Highlands she was "a mother in Israel" - not only a good wife and a good manager but she became the historian of the Frasers and the Grants and, gradually, of other families as well. She had a well-furnished mind and she could take the lead when that was called for. Grandpa died in 1857 and was buried in the old walled churchyard at Kinbrace. On his flat tombstone, raised two feet above the ground, the inscription reads simply: "George Grant, 1782-1857, a Good soldier of Jesus Christ." Two direct heirlooms remain - the one-armed armchair already mentioned and the two-pronged, staghorn-hafted eating fork which accompanied him throughout the long

Peninsular campaign and, later, to New Orleans. The fork folds up into itself, to half its length when closed and is still in tight and good condition!

Widowed at forty with four surviving young children Helen faced a stern prospect and depended, perforce, a lot on her own family. Her chief concern was the further education of the three boys. By 1860 the boys were at school in the fishing village of Helmsdale, 25 miles away down the Kildonan strath. Each Friday afternoon would find them setting out upon the twenty-five mile walk along the Helmsdale river to Kinbrace and home. There Helen always had a welcome and food awaiting them, with `Grace before meat` and `Grace after meat` as set out in the Catechism. The family would `take the books` somewhat earlier on Friday nights so that all might be ready for a full day on Saturday. Then the Saturday activities could themselves be brought to an early evening finish so that the whole family could have a quiet evening in preparation for the rest and solemnity of the Sabbath.

By the time he was sixteen Alick, my father, was precentor at the little church of Achineccan, Kinbrace. One of the favourite psalms was "I to the hills will lift mine eyes". The church was overlooked from the south by the little hill Cnoc-crun-igurach, the bigger Ben Ghriams were only five miles to the north and more distant, but familiar, the swell of quiet Ben

Armin and the peak of Ben Klibreck. And, overall, to the north that `queen of Scottish mountains` - the majestic Ben Loyal. To the crofters, to the shepherds, indeed to everyone these were `our own hills`.

At `the books` in the morning a chapter would be read from the Old Testament followed by a prayer and then the psalm. When that had been read it was usual to sing three of the stanzas the father taking the lead in each act of worship and he would close with an extempore prayer enriched with biblical phrases and fluent language be it Gaelic or English
To my father the Almighty was just *there* - and very personal. I am sure that the hallowed language of intercession, which to this day I can hear in the clear resonant tones of my father at prayer (..."prepare us for life, death and a never-ending eternity....") was taken from the fervent prayers of his father and deeply conditioned by the Bible.

Evangelical hymns were not sung at these gatherings. Indeed, they were not even known, for they were considered to be `the work of man` and frivolous. The psalms and paraphrases were our daily songs of praise. They were in the Bible and they `came from God`. These limits, long fixed by highland custom, were inculcated by the Shorter
Catechism - itself a brief formulation of the Christian doctrines - the ten commandments, what they require and what they forbade. The bare simplicity of highland Presbyterianism and the deep-rooted awareness of these doctrines (including the terrify doctrine of 'the elect') were achieved by the means of the Catechism. This inherited framework of faith and belief was severe but its sombre outlook warmed, softened and rendered tolerable by and over-0riding trust in an all-seeing Providence and in `the promises of God`. These daily disciplines built strong, self-reliant men and women learning very early on "to grow straight in the strength of their being and live out their life as the light" - the light of the Old and the New Testaments.

During their years of extra schooling, with all the efforts both physical and mental to achieve it, the Ghriamachary family came to realise that there was no long-term future for them in the shelter of their beloved hills. They would have to go out from home, away from the hills, away from Ghriamachary. In1864 Donald went to an office in Thurso; William, somewhat later, to a bank in the south; while Annie, the eldest, accepted - not without much trepidation - the proposal of a Rutherford (a local family) now living in Australia, that she should leave her home and leave her devoted mother and family, and commit herself to a voyage of two months or more on the oceans, migrate to Australia and marry him. So she did. She never saw the hills of home again.

The graves of the Ghriamachary family are far apart. Annie and Donald are both buried in Australia; Alick and William in Dornoch; George and Helen, whose later years were spent in Evelix farm by Dornoch, are both laid to rest in the little walled churchyard at Kinbrace cradled by the hills that gave them all nurture and heritage - that austere heritage of spartan life, unswerving faith, character and achievement characteristic of the 18th and 19th centuries in the far north of Scotland.

Born in 1850, Alick the second son displayed many of the strong characteristics of two gifted parents. Outgoing by nature, a good speaker, a natural raconteur with no fear of man or beast, he nevertheless maintained a powerful respect for the devil and all his works and worked endlessly all his life to keep him at a safe distance. Physically he was built like his father -

medium height, broad, deep-chested and very strong. Work, endless activity of mind and body had fashioned the boy into an effective man; inevitably too a religious man of clear integrity - a leader. The story is told of a visiting minister taking the service one Sabbath in Achineccan church, for whom, as usual, Alick acted as precentor. After the first part of the service the minister went on to announce his text and deliver his sermon - always the high point of the service. Leaving his seat below the pulpit and facing the congregation, Alick as always moved to a seat facing the minister. Later that minister confessed that he had felt to be under a real challenge as a preacher of the gospel, feeling himself rivetted by the searching blue eyes of the young precentor who held his attention throughout!

The variety of incidents and activities recorded in the life of young Alick reveal that here was a doer and a thinker and, above all, a worker and a practical man who would make a powerful partnership with the land and all its fruits - for farming was to be his metier. Imbibing principles all his young life that shaped him in loyalty and truth into the kind of personality that he himself, in later years of fuller maturity, recognised and was glad to meet in other men, a direct, true man - "in whom there is no guile".

As the family sought distant fields for their endeavour, Alick became not only the stay-at-home but *the stay* of the home. There he showed the same enterprise as had the others in spreading their wings. Already, as a boy and in his teens, he had become `the farmer` - cattleman, shepherd, stockman and thinker. The summer holidays were long and he used them to the full. He carried on the work of the hill croft itself; oats, potatoes and some barley were usually planted, peat cutting, buying and selling stock - on a small scale, of course, for as yet, he had no farm. Ghriamachary was a hill croft, sheltered from the wild north wind but open to the south..

Often I heard him tell of these exhilarating youthful days when, as a boy, herding over 100 cattle and young horses, he did a man`s work and carried a man`s responsibilities. Stripping off shirt and trousers he would cover stretches of the hill country half-naked and, of course, barefoot. Here he was at home in this wild, natural environment and he learned to love it, care for it and work with it. On one occasion he had to catch five different horses, one after the other, and ride each to a standstill, chasing the recalcitrant `maverick` one which defied him and his efforts. Finally he manoeuvred the wild one into a bog and got a halter on him. In these active, long summer days and weeks Alick developed skill, confidence, self-discipline and total self-dependence.

After 1870, when Alick was in his twenties, it happened (to quote Elizabeth, the Countess of Sutherland) that "the 3rd Duke, in a bowler hat, liked to drive a great `steam-plough` in the moors of eastern Sutherland County". This work, which went on for several years, came to be called `The Improvements` ; the land thus reclaimed is farmland today. A contractor from the south took on this large development scheme. The Countess relates that the Duke, reporting after the event upon the total scheme, added the wry comment: "At the start of the project the contractor had the experience and I had the money; at its completion these positions were reversed!"

Alick began to save money. Then in the period 1872-5 The Highland Railway was extended to Wick and Thurso. The line (much influenced, it was said, by the forceful

presentations of the same Duke) traversed the centre of the county through the enormous Sutherland estates and passed within 2 miles of the Ghriamachary home. Through this period Alick worked his two-horse team in the construction of the new highway - hauling rocks,gravel and ballast of every sort. It brought him laborious days and ,often, nights as well, but it was his own choice. He was preparing himself for `fresh woods and pastures new` and a new life. But as yet he did not know where.

The railway really linked these highland hills and their scattered communities with the very different and `more developed` South. Soon Alick, by now 25 years of age, found an additional and more personal link with the railway and its iron horses. Kinbrace became a railway station on the Highland Line and Tom Taylor came `from the South` to be the stationmaster. He came from Elgin in Moray and with him came, as housekeeper, his 20-year-old sister Margaret. After that Alick went more often across the hill and through the `beallach` to Kinbrace. His visits, of course, were made in the evening, for no man had as much as he to attend to during the day. And he might well visit his cousins too, for Katie and Helen Macpherson lived on the five-acre Kirkcroft and their mother Catherine Fraser, the wife of William Macpherson, was sister to Grandma at Ghriamachary.

Throughout his life, especially later when he had become `Grant Evelix`, Alick was ever helpful to his cousins at Kirkcroft; he bought their lambs, found a suitable garron for them when their faithful Dandy had become `dead old` but not yet dead (7) In the late seventies Alick visited his Kinbrace cousins more often than usual and always contrived to call at the railway station house, both going and coming. Then, like any other horseman, he would leave it to the garron to find its way back home `through the hill`.

(7) `Garron` is a generic name for a draft horse of medium size, a small cob. It is the best type of horse for croft, hill and moor.

So, when he was 28 years of age, Alick Grant of Ghriamachary and Margaret Taylor, the Elgin lass, were married and made their home at once in the "eight generations` house" in the arms of the hills. In 1864 an enlarged and improved dwelling had been built, upon the same site above the burn; the outhouses were also improved to accomodate the increased stock. Helen Fraser Grant (not yet `Grandma`) continued as head of the house, home and family - the role she had filled since being left a young widow in 1857. With two brothers and a sister far away in Australia Alick, now the man of the house and the stay of his mother and the home, brought his young bride back to Ghriamachary where, at table, she sat at his mother`s left hand. The mother, of course, took the seat at the head of the table. Fully trained in womanly graces and services young Margaret, a dark-haired attractrive Morayshire lass, easily fitted in with this matriarchal dispensation - itself an expression of the fifth commandment: "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

The coming of the railway, to which he had contributed so much of his own toil and sweat, brought a new challenge to Alick. Always ready to go beyond the mountain to view the wider scene, he began to feel an interest in the real South; especially in Edinburgh the national capital. Finding a kindred spirit in one of the Rutherfords, whose people, southern sheepmen, had come north from the borders half a century earlier, he decided that they might make the trip together. As it happened, the two youths from the Strath of Kildonan were making their journey south on the very day of the great storm which caused the collapse of the Tay Bridge - the "Tay

Bridge Disaster" of November 1879. (Even twenty years later I would sometimes hear my mother recall the painful suspense that gripped the families at the time on getting the news of the disaster. Relief soon came however, with the news that the adventuring young men were on a different train which went via Stirling and not Dundee.)

That visit to Edinburgh in 1879 by the two young highlanders, full as they were of curiosity and wonder, was spoken of around the Strath of Kildonan for many years thereafter. They visited every part of the city and admired the shops - indeed Alick bought a gold watch for £20. He wore that watch for the rest of his life. Finally, true to the youth of all ages, they had to borrow five shillings in Inverness to pay for the final stretch of their journey home.

(8) often composed verses. He recorded that visit to the big city in lines still remembered by a few ageing denizens of the Strath:

`Alick, like another cousin known to all that generation as "Malcolm at the Mound" often composed verses. He recorded that visit to the big city in lines still remembered by a few ageing denizens of the Strath :

In memory sweet I do recall the pleasures of our dander,
and that we did get home at all it was the greatest wonder.

The Castle stands upon a rock, in feet aloft three hundred:
and there a gun at one o`clock to our alarm was thundered.

There carts and cabs and carriages go by in one direction,
While births and deaths and marriages fill up another section."
(The last, of course, is a reference to the Register House,
Princes St., the Scottish equivalent of Somerset House.)

Alick felt keenly the absence of his two brothers and his sister Annie whom he had especially loved. I think this sense of emptiness contributed to his strong drive to pastures new for he certainly felt the creative instinct powerfully within. At this time he was keenly aware of the severe limitations upon the future that the small moorland croft imposed. So he was ripe for the

challenge and he began to seek a larger task. Naturally, he prayed about this. Soon he found that his mind was clear. So he acted.

Fifty miles to the south from Ghriamachary in the much favoured arable belt of land between the Rivers Fleet and Evelix a brief two miles to the west of Dornoch (the county town of Sutherland) Evelix farm had become vacant. It was not in good condition, but Alick decided. With his mother, his young wife Margaret and his one year old daughter Kate, using the Highland Railway that he had helped to build, Alick came to the Parish of Dornoch. This scion of eight Grant generations left the hills and the history. It was in 1881, during a winter of unusual severity that Alick took Evelix Farm - 200 acres of arable land where the river widens out into meadows, strath and fields, with further acres of `outrun` along the river banks and with the Evelix House on higher ground thirty yards from the flowing water. To the south and east, beyond the fields near the house, lay another hundred acres of heather and grassland bounded and sheltered by the pine wood. There on Evelix Farm Alick put his hand to the plough in more ways than one. He never looked back.

(8) `The Mound` is a strong local geographical feature which gave its name to the railway station as it was being built nearby. "Malcolm at the Mound" was a man of many talents and multiple functions in the local community. Among others he was the local Postmaster (with bicycle!), the keeper of the weir and served as the community`s `communication satellite`. He also kept bees, a beautiful garden and possessed a view from his little house across Loch Fleet which was - and is - priceless.

CHAPTER II

Sunshine in the quiet 'pink room'; Mother at the sewing machine, the blossoming little gean tree by the 'little parkie' where white hankies are bleaching on the green grass; peace, the sense of HOME. Grandma - always a presence - the link to history with her stories, stories so brief but always so vivid. Five years old and eagerly growing I explored and learned something of the varied features of land, river and farm all around me. Early memories abound - Meg, the large chestnut Clydesdale mare lying at rest on the grass near the house backdoor with me, happy and safe, astraddle her enormous back. The river twenty steps down the grassy slope to the firm bank of the `house-pool`, just beyond the tall whin bushes. The urge to explore further down the river, perhaps even to cross to the meadows on the other side, where the lone aspen tree, its leaves ever atremble, stood tall above the clustering alders. This was the river bank. The Evelix river bank.. This was Home.

"I remember, I remember the the house where I was born"; the three storey house a quarter mile downstream from the farm steading which one always called `the Square`. The Square was a complete square block, functionally designed comprising barns, byres, cattle-folds on the ground level and, of course, the `upper-class` seven-stalled stable for the three pairs of Clydesdales who were the real power house of the enterprise. The seventh stall was reserved for the incomparable roadster mare, Tibbie; while the loose-box, a kind of annexe with its own door might house a mare with a foal, or a special colt. On the upper floor the hay-loft was over the stable, while the water-powered threshing mill was amidships on that level with a great gable door opening out to the stackyard. The rest of the spacious granary floor held the tons and tons of grain - oats and barley - lying about six inches deep and drying. An occasional boyhood task for me was to turn over a few tons of grain before supper, using a special, curved wooden shovel.

At the Square lived the grieve - a kind of farm manager, three ploughmen and the cattleman. The farm gave a living to a number of men and their families, indeed it was a very living community. These people were my friends and I knew them and their functions in a very personal way despite my tender years. And what a lot I learned from them all. Wat the shepherd was my most special friend although he lived in a nearby hamlet through the wood. Special because I sometimes went with him in his briefer visits around the fields for sheep needing special care. Prince - the handsome Evelix dog - I also numbered among my best friends. Even as a six-year-old I could get Prince to round up the sheep in the house-park and turn them out to the muir for the night in the shelter of the pines. From `the march` where the nut trees grow, on the border between Evelix and the next farm, I have chased a score of cattle upstream to the house, then across the river and through more fields eastwards, past the

`fanks` where the sheep are dipped twice a year, to the high road at Camore, Prince racing with me all the time. This was all fun for a boy about my very own native heath - one mile was the length of the farm and its width about half that. I knew it all - and I was learning.

The winter of 1895 was severe and long. The river was frozen hard. At the house-pool a hole, just over a bucket-wide, had been cut for house water (the drinking well was five minutes distant). Trying the unusual ice I slipped in to that hole. My hands clutched the edge - I clung. Mother of course, heard my yells and was there instantly to help me out. I was whisked away to the large farmhouse kitchen where Allie, the maid, set about me in my wetness while Mother gently scolded.

Some weeks after that Eskimo plunge thaw and rain broke up the thick ice and the river rose in spate. Ice blocks piled up creating a partially effective dam quite near the houseand I watched old Uncle Malcolm with a long pole taken from the five-bar gate tirling - as Robbie Burns would say - the key ice-blocks to release the river flow. Turnip clamps in the field nearby were burst open and swept away by the swirling flood waters. My childhood impression of the swift power of the river in spate was measured by the thought: who could possibly cross the river in such a spate? Surely no man could - only one of the great Clydesdales could cross such a raging flood.

Traversing the fields and the meadows of the farm in a meandering bend, the river made the whole varied area more attractive - particularly to the very young. A quarter-mile upstream

from the House a fine humped General Wade bridge spanned the river only fifty yards from the gate into the steading. Fifty steps from the stable down to the horse-pond below the bridge the Clydesdales, after their day`s work, would eagerly drink the soft river water, tossing their heads now and then while gouts of water fell from their thirsty mouths. They drank one pair at a time for each ploughman would handle only a pair. How I loved
those horses - for me they were the very emblem of power in those times.

By the time I was ten I was helping in the June/July haymaking after school and at 12 I had become the forker in the harvest fields to the men, more skilled than I, who made up the loads. The forker develops his own set of skills - when he picks up the sheaf with the two tined fork he quickly learns to place it in exactly the right place and the right way up for the man who, on his knees, is building the load. When the load is complete and will not safely hold more, the ploughman slides down from the top, unfurls from the rear of the high loaded cart a long hempen rope, flings it along the length of the load - one rope on each side - and then man and boy together heave on the rope until it is tight enough, and then the slack is coiled and carefully secured with several turns round each shaft of the cart beside the massive flanks of the Clydesdale between the shafts. This routine, heavy farm work was, to me in my teens, always a pleasure inducing much tiredness and always withal, a sense of achievement. When the last load of the day rumbled over the bridge and into the stackyard, however, I was never too tired to run the quarter mile down river and home. Indeed, more often than not, I would run a little distance up the river to my favourite little river pool for a quick dip in the lovely, pure and cool, peaty brown water. This was Pool Chraggan - quite big enough for a really
good swim. Then it would be the high-tea farm supper.

That was farm life three generations ago or more; humans and animals always at work together; seasonal routine on the farm, security, warmth and love at home. So as a boy was I shaped by these multiple creative influences during eighteen years in this idyllic environment, shaped in eager youth and into manhood by parental love and unity along with the varying pressures of a large family. Until her death at the end of the century Grandma was a central and very significant contributor to the family structure and we were all very much aware of her presence. As I remember her, Grandma had a deeply lined face and always wore a white frilly cap atop her white hair; through her steady blue eyes shone the courageous living soul within her. She always had thought and time for me for I was the youngest during her later years. So there would be talk, talk and listening, particularly at the end of the day. I would say to he "Grandma, please tell me about Mungo Park" - and she would recount for me the story of this Scottish doctor and his faith in God while suffering in the boundless African desert during his searches for the course of the River Niger. That story told, I would often follow with "now tell me about Rowallan. (1) The earliest incident in which I played a part in the family folk-lore concerns a family high-tea with Grandma at the head of the table, as always. All the teacups at hand and the milk and sugar vessels within reach. Still only three years old I seemed to be preparing for school, for I had a slate and a slate pencil in my hand. On the slate I had drawn my idea of a donkey (but remembering the New Testament always, we would have called it an ass). Thrusting the slate in front of Grandma I said "Be you looking at the ass, Grandma" and at the same moment proceeded to stretch out for a sugar lump. Her influence on the grandchildren was

profound and if, latterly, we sometimes felt irked by her interference the burden was a very light one and easily born with affection.

It was chiefly to see Grandma once more that Donald, Alick`s elder brother made the long voyage from Australia in 1891. His prosperous state in that rapidly developing `colony` was emphasised bythe fact that he brought his wife - Aunt Bessie - and two children with him on that double trip half way round the world. That visit also left its imprint on the Evelix family with so many exciting personal insights into that distant world of the Antipodes. And in the years that followed photographs of the Illillawa Station (the homestead) there were eagerly examined and the first oranges we ever saw on the farm came in handy packing cases from that southern continent of sheep and kangaroos. I do not carry any clear personal memory of that visit by my uncle but after his departure two special additions to our family life were fetched from the railway station by Danny Bain and his clydesdales; two items that influenced our individual and family lives for evermore. From Inverness, Uncle Donald had sent back to Evelix a great laundry mangle and a fine upright piano. Both subsequently
wrought great changes in the nature of our family life. We took the piano for granted, we children, for it was always in use (and my eldest sister Kate soon became the family musician) but it was another piece of furniture standing there alongside the familiar piano that I always regarded with a particular admiration, almost with awe. That was the long Sheraton sideboard, which Father had inherited along with a few other fine pieces and some fine china from a cousin in Stromness, Orkney.

1) Rowallan Gordon Cumming the famous hunter who when he surprised a pride of lions at their watering hole one night, succeeded in discomfiting them by waving his blanket at them.

I do not recall any direct word from Grandma about her own man, George Grant
but indirect historical references abounded and their was the ever-present reminder for us all in the living-room - the armchair with the single arm. But I do well remember, when
God called her, her funeral and the assembly of solemn men in their Sunday clothes, and the minister at the house. The quiet file of people passing through the wide-swung gate and the slow closing of that gate after the slow-moving procession had passed the great elm tree there. On, up the road by the river, bearing in highland funereal fashion `the remains` of seventy-seven years old Grandma - Helen Fraser Grant - upon her last earthly journey to the churchyard at Kinbrace in her own much-loved Strath of Kildonan, there to be laid at the side of her man who had left her so many long years since.

The river made Evelix. Flowing from the gentle inland hills through the ages it had worked upon the land to make Evelix farm into a property of surpassing natural beauty and great potential productivity. The river traverses the farm towards the south and west to `the March` - the boundary with the next farm, Cyderhall (historically `Sidera` - a viking name) - and finally, a few miles later it reaches the Dornoch Firth. Eastwards the firth runs out to meet the real architect-builder of this unique stretch of the Scottish links land - the North Sea. For five miles eastward from the mouth of the Evelix river at the Meikle Ferry the Firth coast runs out to Dornoch point, passing Ardnakalk and Lonemore; then sharply north past the fishing village of Embo to the Little Ferry and the mouth of the Fleet. Miles and miles of clean golden sands lie along this coast-line in sweeps of great beauty. For three centuries and more the ridges and headlands which parallel these sands, and the savannahs lying between have attracted people to

the golf. The game itself is, of course, older than that. Today The Royal Dornoch Golf Club - one of the great golf courses of the world - is there at home.

While he was still `Sandy Ghriamachary`, 1881-1891, Father began to buy fertilizer for the Evelix land, something of an innovation at that time. I remember the sacks of the stuff: superphosphate, kainit, ammonia etc. The shining clydesdales Prince and Lil, the big chestnut horse and the tall black mare, would haul the enormous consignment from the railway siding at The Mound by Loch Fleet, the seven miles to Evelix, deposit scores of sacks in the shelter of the cartshed where the various manures would be mixed and blended according to purpose and formula. The smell is also memorable..... not nasty, but very smelly. To a farmer, of course, there are no nasty smells on his farm.

During these first few years in Evelix wrestling with a new challenge and stretched to his uttermost both physically and financially, my father worked himself very, very hard. Unable to afford a full staff for a farm of this size he would often be out in the turnip field at 2 0'clock

in the morning "putting up a break" (2) or some other immediate task. More than fully occupied during the day, every day, other urgencies had to be met. Soon, however, he was able to engage and pay for a full complement of men and the work became more containable and the stock increased. As his success and integrity were more and more acknowledged in the community Sandy Ghriamachary gradually became Grant Evelix and the farmhouse down by the river near the General Wade bridge became Evelix House. From the earliest days there Sandy Ghriamachary was always in close touch with the Dornoch banker, and like a good imaginative farmer of the time, saw to it that he was always `in the red` and pushing the improvements to the financial limit. Overdrawn that is, except for those periods in the farming calendar when the profits would come in the wool cheque in August or the cheques in September from Alick Wilson, Dumfries or Tom Hesketh, Cumberland for the lambs of his four sheep hirsels (3) in the Halladale and Kildonan straths.He continued to grow. As a practised farmer and stockman he learned by doing, frequently by trial and error. But he possessed and had studied, as I well remember, several quite magnificent and beautifully illustrated books for the study of the horse, the cow, the bull and the bullock. Gradually he was consulted by other local farmers as an informed student of animal husbandry. So knowledgeable himself, there was only one contemporary to whom he would go for advice about a horse, that was Jim Rideout - Andrew Carnegie`s professional coachman , a good Man-of-Kent who loved and knew horses. (4)

From the start Father had two main purposes in Evelix: to gather and run a full herd of stock and, at the same time, to restore and maintain a high degree of fertility to the land, ithaving become somewhat depleted during previous decades.The three pairs of clydesdales and the roadster in the stable were already a symbol of his programme; they, and the good men who

handled them, proclaimed the standard of work on the farm. The other standard-bearer occupied the first stall in the feeders` byre - the pedigree bull. Another vital piece of equipment for the young farmer of the day was the two-seater gig with the roadster between the shafts, for his daily travel about the parish and, quite often, farther afield. He was meticulous about all these material matters and always insisted upon the best available. He always had a first-class harness and, while he would carefully wash the gig himself, the harness was cared for by the horseman Danny Bain. When addressing his men on the farm,

(2) "Putting up a break" - that is, by driving a number of staves into the deep ground and organising wire netting around a suitable patch would be enclosed for the sheep to feed on fresh turnip. In this way, patch by patch, there was no waste, no trampling and other spoiling of the field in other parts.

(3) A `Hirsel` was a sheep-farming unit. Each hirsel carried about 700 ewes and was managed by a responsible shepherd (always a married man with wife, family, a garden 3 dogs and perhaps a garron as well). The shepherds were always good and wise men, living in adjustment to and dependence upon the forces of nature.

(4) Andrew Carnegie made an enormous fortune out of steel in the young USA and then retired to his native and beloved Scotland. He built Skibo Castle as a family residence, at the village of Clashmore near Dornoch and was, therefore, a near neighbour to the Evelix family.

perhaps to explain some new piece of work he would address them together as `Boys`, easily, as the master who shared and appreciated the effort involved. Individually he used their Christian names - George the grieve (to us young ones rather an austere man) the boss of the stackyard and steading was simply George; the foreman Danny; Wat was the shepherd; Sinclair or `Skipper` the cattleman and the third ploughman was Davie. After ten years of his meticulous care Evelix Farm was in good heart, its fertility restored the crops generally very good and one hundred and ten head of cattle in the steading. Grant Evelix was established.

Father was completely bilingual; Gaelic, I often heard him say is a wonderful language for religion and for love. It was his first language and he learnt it at his mother`s knee and never forgot its fitness for those purposes. In school and in church the Ghriamachary children had learned English and the use of the Gaelic had already much declined by the turn of the century. He had a flair for communication with the spoken word, often using a Gaelic word to add colour or nuance to the English - but I never heard him use an oath or any swear word or, indeed, any coarse words or phrases in either. A direct and simple man he regarded the world as his friend and did not believe in enemies. An incident in 1884 illustrates his personality: he was walking along the road from Dornoch to Evelix when he noticed in the distance another coming towards him.. As the other man drew near, a word of scripture flashed into his mind: "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile". When the two men came abreast father at once greeted the stranger and spoke of the flash from scripture that had enlightened him. Warmly the other man responded to this approach, for he too, as it turned out, was a religious man and a seeker after `the way`. From that day the two men were always close indeed Angus Munro, who farmed a local croft, became an intimate friend and two of his sons served on Evelix farm thereafter.

The idea that some highland people have especial gifts in the nature of the `Second Sight` was totally accepted in the community at the time for the unseen, and the beyond, seem to be

ever beckoning to the hill folk. My father had many stories to tell of such phenomena, the simplest of them about the old woman at Achintoul who lived alongside the railway as it was being built and who said, in 1875, when she heard the first steam engine go rumbling by: "Why, that`s the sound that I`ve been hearing all these years!" He would also occasionally recount the story of his brother William, the youngest in the family, who, at the age of four came running to tell his mother that he had just seen through the window, a large black object coming towards him over the heather and at great speed. He was frightened. The black object then swung round past the house and moved on rapidly to the south along the track leading to the high road two miles away. He was worried that `it` would overtake and crush the two people who had left the house a few minutes earlier to walk that road. It was a very vivid experience. Sixty years later my Uncle William, then home from Australia, sitting in the porch one day suddenly saw the big, black automobile from the Hirsch Shooting Lodge nearby driving towards him through the birch trees. At once he recognised the vision he had seen as a child

he had seen as a child in Ghriamachary so long before (5).

Confident in his own judgement of stock of every kind, father would sometimes bring home to Evelix as many as one hundred young sheep or twenty `stirks` all of a sudden. Knowing that Evelix was already fully stocked my (older) brother George or "farmer" as we sometimes called him would be sternly critical, having not yet acquired the imagination to step over the boundaries of custom. "Where are you going to get pasture for that mob?" he would exclaim. Calmly, father would reply "Oh! don`t you worry , we`ll find the pasture for them all right"; and, a few days later right enough, after he had wired to one or other of the nearby Ross-shire farms, Wat the shepherd with his two dogs as well as `Prince` the senior Evelix sheep-dog would drive the extra flock to the Meikle Ferry where Roddy the ferryman would ship them across the Dornoch Firth to the richer Ross-shire pastures. By an occasional deal of this kind father helped gradually to reduce his severe bank overdraft. By 1889, the year I was born, Evelix was not only a going concern, but in good health financially and otherwise, the land restored and `in good health` - the rhythm of arable and sheep farming now fully established. Now, under his painstaking, imaginative and efficient care, the seasons would come and go, harvest would follow seedtime and "the Lord giveth the increase."

Father never stayed up at `the square` on Saturday afternoon. Saturday morning was always busy enough; throughout the period October to April, half a stack of oats was usually threshed by the watermill up at the Square. From 7 to 11 o`clock each Saturday I would stand beside the grieve, rapidly cutting the bands of the sheaves and spreading the loose sheaf on the table beside his left arm for him to feed the flow of oats - neither too much nor too little - to the maw of the mill. It was a dusty, sweaty job aand very hard work for the mill, of course, never paused for a second and it was always demanding more to feed upon. At 11 o`clock or soon after, the last straw having been garnered to the loft, I would blow the dust out of my throat and nostrils with draughts of water from the mill-lade and then, clarified, I would run the quarter-mile to the House, ready for dinner.

The ploughmen, of course, had to attend to their horses before seeking their midday meal. The break was from 11 to 1 o`clock. Down the river, we would have our dinner about 11.30, two courses sometimes three, with usually a milk pudding for dessert. Father would then take to his armchair at the fireside; very often, with food taken, he would gently call "Kate, come and give us some highland music" and Kate (my sister and the eldest) would shortly appear from the kitchen. Father would then call

(5) Other histories abound, concerning not only visions of the future (the true `second sight` phenomenon) but also intuitive visions of contemporary events elsewhere. A crofter friend of my grandfather in Kildonan was well known for this gift. The war with Russia in the Crimea began in 1854 and news of significant events began to filter through to the Highland communities where people felt much involved for the Highlanders were there too. The Argyll and Sutherlands, the 93rd, were `The Thin Red Line`, the unflinching, under Sir Colin Campbell who, knowing his highlanders, knew the thin line would not break. This was the time of the famous charge of the Light Brigade and, as these events were unfolding before the news reached them this friend described the scene to his listeners in an excited mixture of Gaelic and English with such vivid phrases as "the Atmossoffer is all afire, the Atmossoffer (atmosphere) is all on fire."

shortly appear from the kitchen. Father would then call for any or all of "The Wind that Shakes the Barley", "The Barren Rocks of Aden", "The 74th`s Farewell to Gibraltar", "The Braes o` Tullymet", "Moy Hall", "The De`il Among the Tailors", "Dornoch Links" or "Hielan` Laddie" among many other and even more famous tunes. How important that piano from Uncle Donald had become - it somehow wove a spell around us all.

Before the turn of the century Father began to receive invitations to act as a judge of stock - sheep, cows, bullocks and horses - at agricultural shows and special other occasions. He was now fully established and universally known as Grant Evelix. This kind of representative recognition brought him a quiet prestige which he himself hardly noticed; yet the fact is that a degree of authority attached itself to his personality like an aura. His prominence in the parish and, more widely, as a Christian citizen of single-minded integrity completed the public image of wisdom and probity accorded him up to the time of his death (6).

At the age of five I chanced to hear Mother mention school. Vaguely I knew that school was something that awaited children and I knew that this something was bbeyond home and farm and river. I wanted <u>not</u> to go to school. But I remembered the that the teacherhad visited Evelix earlier and that I had been presented to her. She was all right but still, I wanted to be at home, to stay at home, to be by my mother. The morning soon came when I was due for that two mile walk westwards to "SCHOOL". Quietly I carried my little `stoolie` towards the kitchen, placing it behind a heavy, rather unused lobby door lying close and parallel to the wall. Standing there on `my stoolie` I thought no-one would find me and I would be spared. It was not to be. Tears notwithstanding, I went to school.

In terms of life that was my first significant `new horizon` - little did I know how many more laid in wait for me in the future. Skibo School was a country school with one teacher, Miss Hyslop, in a kind of `Sweet Auburn` hamlet, Clashmore, where in fact "health and plenty" (by 1890 standards) "did greet the labouring swain". It was the five-year-old son of a

`labouring swain` who at once became my first real friend outside the family. Angus, like myself, was experiencing his first day at school and we sat together on the old desk/seat as members of the youngest class. Many a boy`s name was carved into the side of the desk and the wood was ancient and adorned with insect holes. Angus and I had a lot of fun catching the little insects that sometimes emerged to explore! I was rather timid, I am told, as a small boy but we had an ever ready protector in Neil, Angus` older brother. I well remember the very tall plane tree high above the school where,

(6) When, on his death-bed in 1923, Mother and all the family (except myself 1000 miles away) all around him, Father had a quiet word of encouragement for each one. Later, when gentle Uncle Willie was dying one of the Evelix Grants was visiting him. "Little Margaret", as he called her, was the one he knew best. "Little Maggie" he said, "what does it say in the Catechism about `the souls of believers` .....?" Brought up - as I was too - with the Bible and the Shorter Catechism our daily companions, she gave the answer promptly and unerringly (and I could have supplied it just as readily): "the souls of believers are, at their death, made perfect in holiness and do immediately pass into Glory; their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in the grave till the resurrection."

in the bright days of spring-summer I used to hear "the murmurings of innumerable bees" busy in the honey-rich blossoms during May and June. It was usually one day in May that I, on my way home, would decide that the promise of real summer was there; then I would sit down on the bank, pull off shoes and stockings, tie them together and sling them over my shoulder. The new pleasure of walking home barefoot filled me with content. A still more vivid pleasure awaited me, but I could enjoy that only after a thunderstorm had left pools of rainwater here and there on the no longer dusty road. Pools that were rimmed yellow with spruce and larch pollen and warm, pools specially dropped from the skies for little boys barefoot to splash in and enjoy. Sometimes, after the storm, Mother would meet me half a mile from home and still in the wood with the tall, tall trees all around. Joy and pleasure was there in abundance. Finally arriving home, Mother always had some tasty little snack already set out upon the table. The evening meal would not follow until seven o`clock.

So my early schooling in that happy and orderly little country school was completed in my eleventh year. Miss Hyslop had led me out of childhood and into forward-looking boyhood. Under her observant yet sympathetic eye I worked and played my way through six stages - reading, writing (hours of practice in copperplate copying the well-formed letters), arithmetic (multiplication tables all and even mental arithmetic), some geography and singing. Two special memories linger - A very large map of Africa hanging on the west wall with the challenging word emblazoned across the centre of that great continent in large letters: **" UNEXPLORED"**. (That map must have been made before Stanley found Livingstone!) And if that old map calls up a visual memory for me another follows hard upon its heels - the squeals and protesting grunts of Willie Cummings pig as its throat is quickly cut just over the school wall twenty yards away at the village `smiddy` (blacksmith`s forge). That was an annual autumnal event. Other things we learned too - extra-curricular things. An older boy, Bob Bremner, taught me how, from a smooth piece of alder tree an inch thick, to make a whistle. And, on my own and by the

to the catechism and, should any question arise, superior in standing was The Bible. These were our daily and weekly instruments of faith, the embodiment of this religious heritage, inculcating the divine and providential plan with its clear authority and hierarchies, against a background of fairly harsh geography made for strong, spartan individuals and a supporting society, functioning around and through basic institutions: home, school, church, market and the civil authorities in parish and county. Even as children we all learned that one never

(7) Grant is a common name in the county of Sutherland. There were many different Grant families in the wider Dornoch community not, by any means, all related to each other. So various families would be identified as much by their location as by their name. We were the Evelix Grants. Another family lived in a small cottage on the other side of the big Evelix bridge. They were universally known as the `Grants over-the-bridge`.

(8) `The Shorter Catechism` was itself an expression of the ten commandments; commandments which had been filtered by divines three centuries earlier from the more exacting theological system contained in the "Confession of Faith".

placed another book, or anything else, on top of the Bible. Observed as inevitably as waking and taking breakfast each morning was the practice of `taking the Books`. The afternoon of the Sabbath was the period of "The Questions" when the whole family assembled in the dining room and went through half of the catechism in alternating question and answer - Father posing the questions and correcting the answers as and when necessary.

When we had completed the questions half hour it was usual for the children to `take a walk` - the kind of "permitted" activity we never needed on any other day. Our walk usually took us down the river past the sweet-smelling turfy bank of wild thyme near the `March` where the drystone dyke was our Sabbath boundary. The nut-wood was beyond the dyke, but `our own hill` was in the Evelix land, so we visited it and then moved eastward till we met the path, the right of way north-south to Lonemore; there we turned for home. After the relief of the walk we might read in the permitted Sabbath day books; The Pilgrims Progress, a favourite; Fox`s Book of Martyrs - a large inherited volume, very anti-Catholic and, in parts, very gruesome. We (the children) preferred John Bunyan`s wonderful allegory. it was also a large, thick volume and well illustrated. I imagine that many of these special, religious volumes were to be found in most homes in Sutherland throughout the nineteenth century. Other books were not permitted and magazines, except the Free Church Monthly, were all put away out of sight.

As I recall the Shorter Catechism its final pages contained "Grace before Meat" and "Grace after Meat" and, finally, "The (Apostles) Creed". Probably it was Fox`s "Book of Martyrs", along with the prevailing attitude of rejection and condemnation towards Roman Catholicism that caused me once (I must have been six or seven at the time) to exclaim noticeably at the end of Questions when, as usual, the family repeated the Creed " *I don`t* believe in the Holy Catholic Church....." instead of " I believe....." for I was not too happy with the explanation that `Holy Catholic` was quite different to `Roman Catholic` !

Grandma, of course, was and had always been a very keen and strict Sabbatarian, meticulously observing the ordinance in the fourth commandment `...in it (the Sabbath) thou shalt not do any work, thou nor thy son nor thy daughter nor thy man servant nor thy maid

light of nature, I fashioned a bow and arrow, the arrow sharpened at its business end by a filed nail, bound with snare wire at the tip and neatly feathered at the butt so that it rotated nicely in flight. In similar ways I constructed a two foot long spear also feathered at the butt-end for fine flight. My only real interest in that spear was the flight when launched. The flight was great! The filed nail reminds me of an occasional hunting activity when, bearing a short stake tipped by such a filed nail I would venture out into the mudflats of the shallow pool `Pool Churich` at the mouth of the Evelix River, and moved about there barefoot, of course, seeking to get a flounder under my feet, when I promptly speared him, pressing the stave down, carefully, between my feet. That was fun - and occasionally rewarding.

Already, from childhood acquainted with the River, I fitted into the routine work of the farm at eight or nine years , observing rather than sharing in the work there. On Saturday mornings, age nine, I went to the steading - usually called the `square` - for now I was at home on the farm; at home with cows, stirks in the folds, and of course, the horses - the Clydesdales - and the fine roadster, usually a mare, which completed the handsome `gig` my father used. And with Wat the shepherd I would go after the sheep in the evenings - assisted, of course, by Prince.

On the farm there was the regular routine of work and behaviour. On Saturday morning I would spend most of my time in the steading; during my `tender years` up to the age of nine, I often went to The Smiddy to see Jack MacLeod shoeing the horses, yes and fashioning the horse-shoes with furnace aglow, tub of cooling water within reach, anvil, hammers of all sizes and clang a lang. Even more exciting I was witness once in a while to Jack and his old but skilled father, Old John Macleod, ringing a cart wheel. The Smiddy was probably the most interesting, most active place in the whole parish and only five minutes from the Evelix steading. The carpenter was also near - just over the bridge (7), the miller half a mile away and the butcher was also very nearby. Evelix was a real community in those times, eight families within a radius of about a quarter of a mile!

These local craftsmen are no longer there, indeed their very functions have been transferred elsewhere. Today we have to go to the greater population centres if we have any need for these crafts that were always, once upon a time, local. With the departure of the craftsmen from the parish, and from the country generally, the `local` flavour of life too has diminished, sometimes even disappeared. In my early life I forked the oats in the harvest field. Early in harvest time Father would send a cart with half a ton of newly threshed oats to Oman`s mill nearby. With that new oatmeal, fresh from Mother Earth, from rain and sun, therecame to our breakfast table the porridge with such a bloom on each spoonful, such a flavour that we always took notice and talked about it. You cannot find that experience in this land today.

Permeating and informing the human family and society around me in childhood and youth the religion of my parents and forefathers offered a shape and a form for all things both temporal and spiritual derived from the Protestant `Confession of Faith`. The code for us all was clearly formulated in the Shorter Catechism (8) which prescribed the beliefs and their application to daily life which were accepted and proclaimed throughout the Highlands of Scotland. Linked

servant....." - it was indeed a day of prayer and meditation. No visits were paid beyond the home; one tried not to meet with neighbours. The young especially were to be restrained, lest they, in company with others, be tempted to play or to talk loudly or to seek some special enjoyment. Such behaviour was `worldly`. The clear implication was that to be jolly, to laugh, to be amused and be happy in the company of others on the Lord`s day was `sinful`. That day was a day for concern about the things that have to do with eternity and concern for one`s own eternal welfare. I recall many good men who would studiously wear a very solemn face on the Sabbath and would do everything possible to prevent others from being bright or obviously happy on the Sabbath. This attitude came from deep conviction and not mere slaveish adherence to protocol. The `ruling elder` in the old Free Church, one David Ross, a very `spiritually-minded man, was rather older than my father. With a deep religious sensitivity he was much less active in the parish and, where father was always quite forthright, David was quiet and reserved. He enjoyed to the full the quiet observance of the Sabbath Day, scripture

reading, meditation and prayer and regular attendance at church (9). We, as children, of course took a very different view. We accepted the Sabbath as a day that was quite different from the other six; we tolerated the religious exercises, including the Questions but we were always much relieved when the evening hours came on and the light waned. We gladly went early to bed and thought of the approach of Monday. Quite different was it with old David Ross. He welcomed the Sabbath morning light, attended church, rested, read some special scriptures, or sermons by well-known divines such as Matthew Hendry, or the more evangelical writings of Murray McCheyne. David`s Sabbath was the high point of the week.His own word for it went thus: "On the Sabbath Day I never went to bed until midnight; I wanted the Almighty to know my thankfulness for His gift of the Lord`s Day."

So I lived and had my being in the terms and by the standards of Highland Presbyterianism, a system of beliefs and practices rendered severe by the original Calvinism and the steady accretions due to traditions often based upon the word or the example of self-appointed interpreters of "the Word of God". Usually these were older men (they were ,of course, always men), well versed, literally, in Bible and Catechism, who exercised a degree of leadership as influential as that of the minister. Indeed my grandfather had been one of them. The awareness of the Sabbath day was ever a feature of our early days in Evelix.There was a different kind of breakfast on this special day ffor no cooking was allowed, and it was later than usual. No daily duties called one that morning; a Garden of Eden peace reigned; one moved more slowly; Father took the books an hour later; the newspapers and magazines that caught our eye during the week were no longer to be seen. After breakfast the whole family carefully donned their best clothes. On weekdays I wore my Grant hunting-tartan kilt usually with otter skin or leather sporran; on the Sabbath day my attire was complete with dress kilt (red tartan), dark doublet and horse-hair sporran.

The peace and sense of reverence of those Sunday mornings abide - and my mother`s prayer which lingers in the memory:

"It is in the morning of life, O Lord, that I see thy glory; in the midday I see

thy helpfulness.
Thou art then, to me, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land,
A refuge from the burden and the heat.
In the evening I see thy faithfulness;
I behold in retrospect all that thou hast done; and Lo! it is all very good.
But the morning is the season of my implicit trust; perfectly implicit

(8) Angus one of the `eminent men` in the community a century ago was walking down the little hill known as `the Receiving House Brae` on his way in to Dornoch going to church, on the Sabbath. The sun was shining, and Angus was very conscious of the solemnity of the occasion. An acquaintance, a younger man, saw him coming and spoke: "Good morning Angus. It`s a fine day." "It`s no` a day to be speaking aboot days" came the discouraging reply. "Well, what would you call a bad day, Angus?" the young man essayed. Never at a loss, the old experienced catechist countered at once: "The day of judgement to the wicked."

Because not yet founded upon experience.
I trust thee at midday because I feel Thy help;
I trust Thee at even because I trace Thy plan,
But I trust Thee at morning without any reason save the morning`s glow and I trust Thee as the lark trusts the morning air into which it soars and through which it sings
I trust Thee by an instinct of my being. I trust Thee without experience,
Before trial induces argument - and in defiance of difficulty;
There is no vision but the brightness of Thy face.
My God - give me back my youth, I can regain it in Thee.
Let the shadows of my life be rekindled into morning`s glow;
Let my heart be lit with thine eternal youth.
Thou hast promised us eternal life, and what is that? Not merely life, but life forever young.
Thine eternal life can make me a child again, a child without childishness.
O! Thou on whose bloom time breathes not, who art the same yesterday, today and forever,
Bathe me in the fountains of the morning whence thou hast the dew of thy youth.
Bathe me in the ocean of that love in which there is no variableness nor the least shadow of turning
That the pulses of this heart may be renewed.
Then shall I have the bright and morning star
And the dayspring from on high shall rise with me.
Then shall creation break forth into gladness, as in the day
When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy
I shall see the glory of life when Thy morning is in my soul." (10)

Sunday mornings *were* different. The calves in the `little parkie` seemed to frolic less; the birds

spiritual world and Friday because..... because it was laundry day.

In the Evelix laundry two large tubs (sometimes even three) stood on firm wooden trestles and very early on a Friday Mrs. Maclean from `down the road` would come in to help with the washing (11). In a farmhouse with a family of nine including parents there were enormous piles of washing every week - woolies, stockings,shirts, trousers,towels, underclothes apart from household linen and all the etceteras - and we do not have to call upon the imagination to allow that some of these would be more than

(11) Jean Maclean came from a little cottage a mile away across the muir and past the `dipper` where the sheep were dipped twice a year (and that meant a specially busy day, too, at Evelix with four extra men to feed).

merely 'grubby'! The huge,deep wooden tubs held gallons of water and the cast-iron boiler with its small fireplace underneath in its annexe alongside provided the hot water all day long. The boiler alone needed careful attention and seemed to possess a personality of its own, for it could easily pay you back in various ways if you treated it other than kindly. Nearby, close to the house wall, stood the large mangle and the smaller wringer. The whole operation, of course, was heavily `weather-dependent` but usually the washing, having gone through the various stages and through the mangle and the wringer, was then piled into one or two capacious baskets and carried out through the near back door and then down and along about twenty-five paces to the great whin bushes (gorse) by the riverside. There everything was spread out upon the weather-clean bushes with (in the springtime) rich yellow blossom peeping out alongside each garment. Linen things such as napkins, hankies and pillow-slips were carefulkly spread on the grass of the `little parkie` - our bleaching green. When the children were all young mother and Mrs. Maclean did all the washing although there were two maids in the house at that early period. The maids were always more than fully occupied with their other multiple tasks - including the careful tending, polishing and trimming of the many, many paraffin lamps which were required to keep such a household alight in the evenings.` The Electric` was on its way although we were unaware of its approach at that time. If the weather was bad, of course, laundry day could easily degenerate from being merely a problem to being a major headache. I well remember coming home from school about 5pm on some Fridays to find my mother prostrate with such a headache (and only on a Friday!). Never did she mention it but I always knew. So, while Mrs. Maclean finished putting out the washing wherever a space could be found, I would quickly make a cup of tea and carry it to my wearying mother. I would then lead her ben - we always used the word `ben` - to the east wing of the house, the centuries old part, with its 3ft thick walls and there I would set her down in her armchair and begin to brush and comb her lovely long hair. She loved that, it helped to restore her. When my older brother (George) came home from his office training job, he would then take up the brush and continue the filial action with soothing pleasure.

Washing the blankets was always a special event in Spring - April or May. The iron boiler would be taken down the slope from the back door to the green about ten feet from the river. My great friend Wat the Shepherd usually managed this, fixing the boiler on well-placed stones so that the fire could burn well underneath. There was always plenty of lovely brown soft hill water from the river, the two big wash-tubs also steady on the sward and buckets of Sunlight soap in liquid form nearby for readier use in the tubs. In fine, sunny weather blanket-washing

sang with fuller thrill; the river thrummed a deeper gurgle - or so it all seemed. As a family we often noticed and talked about the rooks and their `Sabbath behaviour`. Weekdays, they always flew over the house to the North. "They`re off to Rogart and the hills" is what we said of them. We knew, however, that they would stay around the house on the Sabbath; they assembled, tier above tier of them, black-coated like the

(10) This prayer is taken from my mother`s personal notebook and is attributed to `G.M.` I would say the `G.M.` stands for George Morrison (Rev.) the distinguished Glasgow preacher of the first quarter of the present century.

minister, on the spreading branches of the ancient elms towering above the house to the north and north-west. Not only did the rooks stay at home on this first day of the week, they so arranged themselves among the branches that to us children they were a congregation with the minister and the precentor clearly on the topmost pinnacles. So fully and easily was this Sabbath routine part of our developing consciousness that we, the children, also staged a church service on the second flight of stairs up to the attic in the west wing of the house. We read the Bible, we sang and followed the sequence of the Church service.

Church in Dornoch was the high point of our Sabbath routine. Although Father was fully bi-lingual and could well have gone to the Gaelic service he took his growing family always to the English service in the old Free Church - the Church of the Disruption. From the steading the third ploughman would drive the waggonette down the river to the house where the family would climb in and then we rode the two miles into Dornoch. No organ in the Free Church. The precentor was, it seemed to us children, only a little lower than the minister himself (as a man, of course, we knew him well for he was Angus Ross who ran the wee croft down the river from Evelix, through the wood at Lonemore). After the service we would proceed slowly homewards, restored and with a lingering sense of the fulness of life and the completion of another week`s cycle. Our lives were governed by many cycles - all of them seemingly totally natural and in the gift of the Lord.. And so the Sabbath would move gradually to its close ushering in the next sunrise. Monday! Now that was a different day indeed.

Dawn on a Monday revealed a very different world. The secular world. The world of doing. Working, travelling, cooking, cleaning washing and - first and last - the world of farming with all its imperatives. Not to say that God was, indeed, denied but rather that it was owed to him to put shoulder to the wheel in partnership towards the grand design. So Monday was always an excellently busy day, no matter what the weather, making immediate inroads upon those tasks which had, of necessity, been left behind with the dusk of the previous Saturday. So Monday had its own attractions and each day in the weekacquired its own status and had its own rewards to offer in the wake of the relentless movement of the days and the seasons. Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays each imposed there own disciplines but Mondays and Fridays were the most memorable. Monday because it *was* Monday and demanded our return from the

meant a rather memorable, jolly day. My two sisters or one sister and one of the maids having rolled up their sleeves and their skirts well above the knee, engaged in vigorous tramping of the blankets with their bare feet and dripping legs. Fun, with much singing, chatter and joking, all in the open air by the river, with bird-song all around. Thge end of this strenuous day saw yards and yards of fresh-smelling clumps of whinbush laden with white woolly blankets. Before spreading all over the bushes the forty to fifty blankets, these were wrung out with the use of a wooden spar from the "five-bar gate".

This was then used as an instrument to twist the blankets, tourniquet-fashion, for quicker exit of the wash-water. The girls became quite expert in this technique. After this treatment the blankets were piled on to great wicker baskets and carried by two
"lavandieres" to the inviting whin stretches, where the startlingly yellow blossoms already stetched there own blankets of colour all around. And all this only one small part of the `Spring Cleaning` exercise. It was always a special day.

CHAPTER III

So I grew in freedom. There were standards all around me and disciplines aplenty, religious and social. I grew within these - without being irked. I think the words "children should be seen and not heard" never reached our ears. Yet good behaviour was the rule and table manners seemed just to belong to the tablecloth, the table always fully and correctly set, with napkins on Sundays. The two-mile walk to Skibo School was a good thing; the main road, the woods, the horse-and-cart men; sometimes a gypsy caravan with basket chairs and tin-ware hanging all over its outer frame; the Clashmore market with its buying and selling, and `drink taken` fights liable to erupt from, seemingly, nowhere. It was life. Twelve years old - perhaps even younger - would see me off into the hills or walking some miles upstream in exploring the river. And there, on my own doorstep, one hundred yards above the Evelix Bridge where the river, coming from the hills, is halted by a big rock there was my own pool - Pool Chraggan. Smooth flagstones pave the varying depth of the pool - smooth, like the kitchen floor, and dark too. If the river was full a boy could dive into the brown pool from the rock itself; several ledges jut out from the lower rock underwater, making it easy to plunge when the water is quiet. Pool Chraggan became the very image and function of the river for me. Early I had graduated from the ledge to the rock itself for the dive and, as the years passed my young brother Dick came to join me. The joy of it during the long summer days! There was time for living and always time for pool Chraggan. After all it was only a quarter-mile from the house; up to the bridge beyond the horse-pond, then over the road and through the alder and gean trees to the rock. I think my record of bathes in one day was eight.

There were other boys around, of course, and sometimes they would come to the Pool too but I was the regular. I learned things there too; one day I missed my footing and made a real belly-dive - on the way home I had to lie down on the grass beside the `Black Pool` to ease the pain, I remember. What a smack that was! At harvest time - and that, in the North, means

September to October - I have seen seven or eight men and boys together in that pool. Today and, indeed, for decades past Pool Chraggan is deserted and its joys are unknown, except, of course, to my own family for whom it remains part of the family heritage along with Evelix itself, the fields, the river, the historic `Standing Stones` in the West Park (1).

And the woods and the forests with the brooding hills always looming, the Mother may have been concerned for me but she never showed it or ever said so - and I felt free to

(1) Legend said that they mark the site of Vikings slain in battle, but in truth they may be much older - a relic of the ancient Celtic-Pictish Druids.

make my own way. By the time I was twelve and thirteen I was `my own man` and fully occupied in `doing my own thing`. Age twelve, too, having been at the grand Dornoch Academy already for a year, I, like many of the other boys, went to the links. This magnificent sea-side golf course we all knew to be very, very good but it was to be well over half a century later before it became widely recognised as one of the world`s great courses and, indeed, a place of pilgrimage for the cognoscenti. Here I began to learn about the `noble and ancient game of gowf ` and soon joined some of my friends as a caddie on the links, under the tutelage of the caddie-master, during the six weeks of the summer holidays. At that age, of course, those who so wish learn fast and some of us rapidly became quite proficient at this most demanding of leisure occupations. So here was something new, different from and away from the farm life and its preoccupations which had hitherto been my all-engaging milieu. I was on a line of my own. I even earned some money. All this was very satisfying and, of course, very normal. People seemed pleased at my prowess and I was much encouraged.

At home there was security. Father and Mother were there; love was there; dear brothers and sisters and a room of my own; books that were mine - some were occasional prizes, others came from the library and some were presents. I seemed to read more than most of my contemporaries. In terms of my life the farm Evelix was everything, had everything. The wider Evelix community had three Grant families: Evelix Grants, the Grants `over-the-bridge` and the Grants at `corner cottage`, the fourth local family were the Macleods at the Smiddy - we were a real community there at the cross-roads by the old bridge. We were all good friends and neighbours and livestock was all around us. So nature and creativity were part of the milieu and the processes of nature held no secrets. At a tender age we all knew what the bull was for and sometimes we would watch him `serve` a cow. And we understood that something in his cow`s behaviour had caused the cattleman to put a halter over the head of his cow, or young heifer, and forthwith lead her quietly as if she ,too, understood to the Evelix steading. "Skipper", the cattleman, would then go to the feeder`s byre, halter the big, sleek bull and lead him out to the space by the stable where the cow, in her need awaited him. It did not take long, not very long; the boys often saw it, even watched for it and the girls, for aught I know watched it too. Nothing strange in that. The cow was served, the date was marked, the fee went down in the cattleman`s book. All this was ordinary farm routine. The calves came early in the year, say February or March. Although there were a dozen milch cows on the farm we would all feel the scarcity of

milk after the calves came; for the cows and their milk were, primarily, for their offspring. It was at this season that we had to make do with treacle for our morning porridge!

Much grander, however, was the equine mating, and this *was* something of a special event! The stallions were owned and organised by bigger farmers on the much larger farms further south; usually they boasted both name and fame. Occasionally a roadster stallion would tour our north country serving only mares of the roadster class. It was quite an event for us, the school-children, to meet such a stallion - proud and prancing - led along the

highway by his groom. More often, and even more magnificent, the Clydesdale stallion was a truly commanding sight. Now *he* was top of the first league. His schooled and well-dressed valet, the groom, walked with him and took care of him throughout the county; he was for the larger farms where the clydesdale mares were stabled. I well remember when Champion III came to Evelix. That was a sight for a ten-year-old boy - and a farm boy at that - to see him, watch him appearing over the crest of the Evelix Bridge; colourfully caparisoned he was, as to high head, arched neck and rounded barrel. Magnificent! Power! You could see that the groom was pleased with him, was *proud* of him. One felt that it was a special honour for the finest mare in Evelix - jet black she was - indeed the finest mare in the whole parish (even counting the Skibo home farm) to be selected to meet and to mate with this magnificent, spirited chestnut stallion named, so appropriately, Champion III. Not "Skipper" the cattleman for this occasion. "Skipper" was alright for the cows and the Black Angus bull; but Lil, the mare, the Clydesdale black beauty - as tall as Champion if not quite so heavy and thick - was led out by the foreman, that veteran horseman Danny Bain, who loved the horses better than any one, cared for them, kept his clydesdale pair `Prince` and `Lil` sleek and shining in the stalls numbers one and two along with all their many coloured badges from the Farmer`s Show over the years: "First Prize", " First Prize", "First Prize" tacked to the timbered beams above them. Two years later Father Grant or Danny Bain, probably both of them, would take a hand at breaking in Lil`s foal, now a colt. In the hands of these two great horsemen the `breaking-in` never became a "breaking".

Lil the black beauty could, like her partner in the first pair, Prince, pull a load of two tons if necessary but one ton was regarded as the regular load. The biggest and most awkward load for both horse and man to pilot home to the stackyard was a full load of oats or barley sheaves from the harvest field. One always preferred to handle the oats for there was no `hook` to the oats but the yaan of the barleys was a kind of weapon. Often I was the forker after the corn had been cut and, in stooks, had hardened so that it was ready for "the leading" to the yard. Pulling a full load one day across and then up an incline , Lil fell, the load overturned; when the harness was undone and Lil released. She never rose, she was dead. She was buried in the graveyard of the clydesdales and the other farm stock. I have always been much aware of that graveyard in Evelix. It is a sandy acre beyond the `Whinny Knowe` two hundred yards from the house with the pine wood to the south and quiet moorland to the east. In those days of long ago, as I remember them now, with some emotion even, when horse, cow or calf died the body was drawn across the fields on a sledge to this animal graveyard and there buried in the sandy soil. Always the small, violet-like heartsease grows there, by the hundred, more than anywhere else on the farm.

"I sometimes think that never blows so red
The rose as where some Caesar bled;
That every hyacinth the garden yields
Dropped in its lap from some once lovely head".

Lil`s mate is there too. If he was not a Caesar, he certainly was a clydesdale Prince to me.

During this period I was able to spend some holiday weeks with my Uncle Malcolm (`Malcolm at the Mound`) who was known to everybody as "Ma-com". Among his multiple and varied functions he was the keeper of the sluices controlling the tides from Loch Fleet into the River Fleet (2). Here I learned how to row and manage a boat; I would sometimes stand in for Ma-com as postman and would often help him in tending his small croft. Here I also learned about the Highland Railway (The Mound station was at our back door) and I soon knew by name and much admired the great railway engines which daily passed the cottage. Their names remain with me: `Lochalsh` with the tall smokestack was the oldest of them; `Ben More` and `Ben Clibrick` the younger, larger engines. At times my holidays were spent farther afield to the North, in the centre of the county. There, under the care of two maiden aunts, I became acquainted with the peat-cutting and the peat stack among the wilder heather-hills and the nearby churchyard where my Ghriamachary forbears lie buried. There, too, I could see the crowns of the Ben-y-Ghriams where my father, as a schoolboy, had herded his flocks, chased and controlled the horses and the cattle on the open range - like Norval`s father on the Grampian Hills. Such early experiences and occasional trips with Father to one or other of his sheep hirsels in Strathalladale or the Strath of Kildonan gave me a real feeling for the county as a whole and I found it very easy to identify with those generations of ancestors who had lived out their Spartan lives in this beautiful and poetic but never forgiving countryside. This is where I came from and this is where I belonged. Despite what the future held for me (I was to become one of the great `wanderers` of my generation and travelled the world) that sense never again left me and the pull of the Northland is everpresent.

At fourteen I had begun to order things from Gamages, the great department store in London that we all knew about (now sadly defunct!) : a .22 rifle, bow ties, boxing gloves - two pairs of course - athletic equipment, printed paperbacks on football or golf, boxing and swimming. There was no physical training teacher in school in my day and these functions were not considered to be a serious part of the curriculum. For any `real` book I might need, be it French, History, English Literature or whatever which I clearly needed for my studies in my teens, my father would give me six shillings or the like and expect to see the result. Surely I was growing. Moreover the fact that I was making real progress in games as well as at school all helped forward my teenage development as a definite person. Among other physical accomplishments I had, by now, become a strong and competent swimmer. The sea was an ever-present attraction and I had already learned something of its many moods and always gave it my full respect. The beaches, the gray North Sea and the far hills: south-east across the Moray Firth to Ben Rhinnes and (on a good day) Ben Macduih in the Cairngorms, west to Carn Chuinneag and Carn Bhren and Struie just across the firth. And the links. Dornoch links, endlessly varied in its undulating stretches of seaside terrain with savannahs,

(2) Road building and, more particularly, the coming of the railway to the Highlands had offered the famous engineer Thomas Telford many opportunities. The causeway across the mouth of the River Fleet was one of his famous local works and Malcolm`s little house looked out upon it.

hillocks, hummocks, promontories and gentle slopes of all description, had attracted golfers with their ancient golf clubs even as early as 1500 and before.(3),(4) And now I felt its pull and golf gradually became a part of my life. Here was a completely natural golfing terrain: ample room for fairways within 100 and sometimes even 50 yards of the North Sea. At this time, cattle and sheep and the occasional pony found open pasture here for the links belonged to the people of the town. This was common land. In 1877 the Dornoch Golf Club was formed and some of the great names of 19th century golf were soon associated with it including such legendary figures as Old Tom Morris, Donald Ross and his brother Alec, Horace Hutchinson and others (5).

Early in my golfing career, although I did not appreciate it at the time, I was privileged to witness one of the great matches of the amateur game and indeed the experience influenced me strongly to pursue this most singular of sports. It was 1901 and John Sutherland, secretary of the Dornoch Golf Club and the leading local player was to play a match against John L. Low who, at that time , was the greatest of the St. Andrews golfers and clearly one of the best-known amateurs in the world. Untutored in the ways of golf, let alone the deeper psychological aspects of the game, I nevertheless saw and understood that this was a match, a contest of man against man, stroke following challenging stroke and, withal, a measure of quality between the different localities - Dornoch versus St. Andrews. The Dornoch man won that match, as he had won earlier encounters with the distinguished Johnny Low. John Sutherland remained secretary of the club for 53 years in all and was almost single-handedly responsible for putting Dornoch on the national map. A pioneer of golf, nationwide, he planned a number of northern courses. In this, his own realm, Sutherland was administrator, legislator, performer, mentor and especially a student and pioneer in the making and upkeep of first-class putting greens. He was a practised and authoritative interpreter of the rules of golf and meticulous in observing and commending the unwritten code of golfing etiquette which he regarded, quite properly, as an important part of the make-up of any player aspiring to become a real golfer. His unrivalled knowledge of the royal and ancient game and his capacity for lucid expression had brought him, in 1890, an invitation to contribute a weekly golf article to the *London Daily News*. Every Monday this column appeared in that London newspaper over the signature J.S. and it also helped to put the `sleepy capital` of this most northerly county properly on the map. Soon Dornoch was to occupy even more space on the golfing map as I shall shortly relate.

Not only did Sutherland learn more and more about good turf and how to make good

(3) Historian Robt. Gordon wrote (early 17th Century): "About the toun ther are the fairest and largest links of any pairt of Scotland."

(4) ...from the accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland: "1505-6, Feb 22. Item: to Golf Clubbis and Ballis to the King that he playis with....." James IV was then King and he may have visited Dornoch.

(5) Donald Ross, the most famous of all golf course architects, was himself a Dornoch man and emigrated to the United States. His less well-known brother Alec won the U.S. Open Championship in 1907.

putting greens but he found another expert, an enthusiast even, in the same work and study. Hugh Hamilton was the head gardener at Skibo Castle and the lawns there were,and still are, extensive and very fine. In the period 1890-1903 there developed a close and creative co-operation between these two men. They had a special `top dressing` and Sutherland used it regularly to astonishing effect on the plateau greens of Dornoch. Then, in 1903 Hamilton, the Dornoch man, was invited to go to St. Andrews to become the head greenkeeper to the Royal and Ancient Golf Club and the Old Golf Course there. Laurie Auchterlonie, the professional there, told me that "within one year Hugh Hamilton improved the greens of St.Andrews beyond recognition.

Aged 12, 13 and 14 I was often to be found on the golf course either caddying for a visitor or, in the evenings, with a cleek in one hand and a book of Latin grammar in the other, working at the serious business of perfecting a golf swing. In the end I was pretty good at both the golf *and* the Latin and, by the time I was 15 I was a scratch golfer, one of a small band of the younger generation of golfers who were to make a significant impact on the game in the far North. This coterie of the young caddies proved to be a very different society from that with which I was previously familiar. Good golfers all, but from very differing homes, what we shared was, among other things, a highly developed sense of humour and it`s relationship with the absurd. Visitors came and went to the links but very few regulars would escape a label of some kind from the brotherhood. Occasionally a personal idiosyncrasy or an unusual physical feature would give rise to the suitable label but, more often, it was more a matter of behaviour that induced the nickname. An oldish devotee of golf - well known for his amazingly slow progress about the course - soon became known as "The Curse of Scotland"; a senior visitor, a regular summer denizen of the former Bishop`s Palace (now the Castle Hotel), had a red face and a red, bulbous nose - he instantly became "Bubbly"; while another - a silent Oxonian, a very different type - had a definite, aquiline profile and was therefore referred to as "the Vulture" (pronounced, as we caddies with our highland speech at once noticed: "Vultuah"). Others became "Golliwog" or "Sheepdog" and an irascible old gent whoose everyday experience was that golf was, indeed, "an `umblin game" (!) was known as "Old Damn and Blast".

For many years, even while playing first class golf, I carried only seven clubs. My driver and brassie, beautiful woods made by Butchart, were a gift to me at the age of sixteen from that famous international player Charles E.Dick. I played matches several times each summer with C.E. and I knew very well how hard a man he was to beat. Walter Matheson and T.E.(Tommy) Grant - my golfing peers of the time - all knew too, that he never made any remark about his opponents shots, be they good or bad, and even a shot getting an unlucky kick into disaster would draw no comment. But were C.E. himself to suffer any such misfortune, however minor, or fetch up in a bunker that he thought to have carried he would inevitably exclaim, usually with some violence, "crushing luck!" Needless to say he was known to all and

sundry only as "Crushing Luck". He was always immaculately dressed, usually in a Savile Row knickerbocker suit and highly polished golfing shoes. "Crushing

Luck" was only one of an ever increasing number of golfing visitors from the South.

At the turn of the century in the full flush of Victorian prosperity the prosperous English took to travel and sport. There was an annual exodus from London and the South to the highlands of Scotland for `The Twelfth` on the highland moors (6). Another, and possibly more civilised section, of southern society now began to come to the far north for the beauty, the excitement and the discipline offered by the game of golf on the Dornoch links. The London artist Arthur J. Ryle was one of them. Scion of a distinguished family of bishops and deans, he came north in order to paint. Having admired and painted a goodly number of land and seascapes around The Mound and having, by the bye, made firm friends with Ma`com there, he came, in time to Dornoch. There he stayed and built a house with a large studio-annexe wherein he could pursue his metier. True to his family heritage he named the house Bishopcote.

That house became the centre of a very warm welcome for a wide variety of distinguished and talented people from far away. Some of these were golfers for Arthur Ryle, although himself an indifferent golfer, enjoyed playing the game enormously. After the railway link to Dornoch from The Mound was completed in 1903 a regular stream of visitors came during the summer months and these included many famous golfing personalities. E.G.Robinson (known as "Lucky Jim") was a good 3 handicap player but he was sort of `kenspeckle` on the teeing ground for he would waggle his club either eighteen or twenty-one times before he could bring himself to swing and hit the ball. In addition, when he did swing the club he bent his two knees to the right so far that the old `Chief ` (The Chief Constable - a very good player) was heard to observe "No wonder he can hit the ball when he gets down on his knees to it!" A particular friend was John Henry Taylor (always known as `J.H.`) the five times Open Champion who went on to become world famous to golfers as a member of "the Great Triumvirate" who swept all before them for so many years - Harry Vardon, James Braid and J.H. himself. As a youth, on leaving school J.H. was for years "houseboy" in the home of that leading golfer and writer Horace Hutchinson of Westward Ho! - the far away golf club in Devon which, in so many ways resembled the Dornoch Club. In Dornoch the traditional distinction between the "gentlemen and the players" which perfused all sport in England at this time was completely unknown and the fact that J.H. was actually a professional may have influenced some of the visiting gentry but the locals were all only too pleased to have his acquaintance, let alone the chance of actually playing with the great man. He would play in foursomes, singles or mixed foursomes with Ryle or with Hector Mackay the redoubtable Town Clerk and on many occasions I would be called upon to partner any one of them in these games. Thus began a close personal friendship for me with J.H. I don`t recall that I was ever able to beat him at the golf, however. Arthur Ryle painted his portrait and it still hangs in the clubhouse for all to see.

(6) `The Twelfth` is August 12th, the date when the grouse shooting season begins on the heather hills and the moors of the Highlands. Native highlanders served as gamekeepers and ghillies, the visiting gentry and their guests were known as "the sportsmen" and would stay for the season in the hunting lodges built, mostly, by wealthy landlords at the end of the century.

In 1905 the strength in depth of Dornoch golf was clearly demonstrated by the fact that, while over a score of teams had entered for the prestigious Northern Counties Cup tournament of that year, the final was contested by two Dornoch teams, the others having all been eliminated on the way. In fact that tournament, instituted in 1902, was won by Dornoch`s team of four each year for eleven consecutive years 1902-13. I was a member of that team on seven occasions, when available. In that 1905 final T.E.Grant and I, both scratch golfers, were only the first couple in Dornoch`s second team. We were 4 down with seven to play in the final against that peerless pair Sutherland and Montmorency and we staged a great comeback and finally halved the match on the home hole.

One day in 1906, while I was still in school, a note was delivered to Mr. Moore the headmaster, with my name on it. It read: "Dear Donald, Please come to the Masonic Hall today at 4.30 and bring your driver and mid-iron" it was signed J.S. To me , as to many others, J.S. meant authority - John Sutherland, Secretary of the Golf Club. I was seventeen and I appeared at the hall promptly.My good friends Walter Matheson and Tommy (T.E.) Grant were also there - we were all scratch players. For an hour that afternoon we swungdriver and iron alternately, consulting together the while under the stimulus and guidance of our mentor J.S. Our purpose was to study and observe the action and the complementary role in each case, of hands, wrists, arms and the general body movements in the execution of the golf stroke. This was undoubtedly the first real `Golf Clinic` in the North and - in all probability, the first of its kind anywhere. This innovation soon became a regular feature for us and we all profited greatly from the experiment for we were all serious students of the game. In 1907 King Edward granted a 'Royal Dispensation' to the club which became "The Royal Dornoch Golf Club".

Time itself had, heretofore, always presented a measured and regular visage to me but now, in the autumn of 1907, the pace began to quicken and change became the order of the day. Early in July I had completed my extra year at school. There followed a long summer with much farm work and plenty of golf. On the occasional Sunday I would make for the hills during the morning, climb Ben Tarvie and drink in the landscape, the heather, the contours and the distances of this, my very native land for the idea of leaving was looming larger and ever larger in my mind. I had never thought of any other than a university career as my next stage. Eighteen years of age , I had completed my schooling, had read a good deal, played much golf and football and had become acquainted with a number of visiting Englishmen and the very different world which they represented, both on the golf course and sometimes at afternoon tea in Captain Ryle`s salon-studio. I was a normal, unsophisticated highland youth with a definite and strong religious outlook and a somewhat spartan way of life. I knew the farm, the hills, fields, shepherds, ploughmen and the people of Dornoch and about. I had some feeling for my ancestors and for the great, lonely stretches of Sutherland County where my father had fulfilled his active youth. I felt, albeit rather vaguely, that I was one of the eight generations of the Ghriamachary Grants. I was very conscious of home in Evelix, in Dornoch, in the County. But I also knew that there was a very big world outside

and I was strongly impelled to be more active in it. It was time to leave home. Time to extend my horizons - at Edinburgh University.

Now it was the last Sunday for I was away next morning. We were all rather quiet that evening. Father had come down from the square after six o`clock, later than usual because (now early October) it was still harvest time ; he put off his boots, pulled on his clean, white wool socks and his slippers - I had, as so often before, put these into position for him by his armchair at the fireside in the dining-room. The table would be set for high tea, the regular evening meal on the farm. Presently we sat down, a company - or rather, a family - of nine around the board. Father and Mother sat at either end of the big table in that historic room with the three foot thick walls; myself (Don, as my father always called me) in the middle with two sisters and brother on each side of me.

Mother poured the tea for all of us, with cosy, hot-water jug and other accessories all around. Father had a large cup of coffee - his routine liquid coffee essence out of a bottle plus hot water. The table, as always, was fully furnished with plates, implements, butter dish, marmalade and many other accoutrements about - all set out on the gleaming white linen table-cloth. And there, on the inside wall of this great dining-sitting-room, the long Sheraton sideboard exuding a special dignity. I think that noble piece influenced my childhood daily, as did the sunrise and sunset. The piano (*the* piano) was in the farther corner beyond the sideboard. It had also been a constant influence during all the formative years. So we were all together as a family; all somewhat conscious of an event (not so common in that small, distant highland community) - Don was going away. To the University. There was not much talk. It was nearly 10 o`clock when father said: "Margat, come, we must take the books". So we came together for the regular evening worship - a brief invocation, Psalm reading, then a chapter from the New Testament. In the mornings we would always read an Old Testament chapter, the full sequence, week by week from Genesis to Malachi; and finally prayer. We were quieter this evening Father was always eloquent and earnest in prayer, with his faultless language, reverent yet with a touch of intimacy. Warm. I knew he would speak to the Lord on behalf of the member of the family about to go out beyond the circle of affection and support - out from the family. Quite naturally, he commended me in all my ways to the Almighty. His own life was like a prayer, just naturally good. We rose from our knees with a powerful sense of communion one with another and knit in quiet love with our parents. I knew that father would again, like Jacob at Peniel, almost wrestle in prayer to the Lord, kneeling by his bedside upstairs that night. I could never get away from that, never wanted to get away from the quiet commitment made by my father. Next morning after breakfast Father `took the books` once more, the family reading verse by verse in sequence. The prayer was now briefer, for the routine of the new day was calling and, in any case, the dedication had been fully made the night before. Now it was goodbye; goodbye to brothers and sisters and particularly to that younger brother Dick, who was already a very good soccer player and the best diver and swimmer in his class. Goodbye.

George, my older brother, was to drive me to Dornoch to catch the 11.05 train for The Mound and Inverness. I left the house alone, to walk by the river from the house to the square. I was to remember all my life what my eye now observed - in a different light than ever before - as I slowly walked by the friendly river, `my river`, which I

knew and loved; the great trees around the house, those trees whose branches whirled and sang when `Boreas` raged down from the northwest; the pool near the house with the tall ash tree looking down upon it, the line of alder trees, the well, the `black pool` and then, just below the old General Wade bridge, the horses` pond with the square, as we called the farm steading, fifty yards up the slope.

Skipper, the cattleman, had yoked Tibbie in the gig and George too was waiting for me. Halfway to Dornoch we were drivung down Carmore Brae, a noticeable slope and memory flashed me a picture from an earlier experience: it was winter, the road was iced and the `sharps` on Tibbie`s iron shoes were blunt - even on the level road she was slipping at times - and I was touched by fear for all was ice. Father, of course, was driving and as we reached the crest of the hill before the down slope I suddenly felt a surge of admiration and relief as he, great horseman that he was, called to the gallant mare and made her gallop, full tilt, the whole lengthof the icy slope - for this, as I later realised, was the only safe way to take the horse and all across the risks to safety.

George had seen the world and was much more worldly-wise than I. He had soldiered through the Boer War 1900-1902 and was then, for two years, a tea-planter in India. Six years my senior, he had trained me in a few things among others, how to handle a gun, how to clean a bicycle (his bicycle!) and later even how to shave when I attended my first formal dance. He had not taught me the `noble art of self-defence (for I was interested in that and other athletic activities) but he was, nevertheless, my sparring partner on many a winter evening in the spacious kitchen of Evelix house; for I was ever the student, specially keen on self development. (Davy Cormack, the third ploughmen, whose bedroom was the east end attic, also took the gloves at times - but there was no science from him, just slog!).

So, George had been my mentor in many ways and now it was goodbye to him at the station. Once more he offered me good advice - "Watch out for women. Keep them at a distance." But, in my own mind, I gave the response "I`m listenin` to what you`re sayin`" (meaning that, although I can hear you, I don`t have to agree with you!) I had on a wonderful new overcoat specially tailored for me by Moore, the Tailor. It was rather long; even double-breasted, with great leather buttons. I was very proud of that coat. I remember that, chiefly because of that coat, I found myself giving a porter at Inverness a florin as a tip. What extravagance - I was slightly shocked myself at this. But I felt that I was learning to make my way in the new world I was now approaching.

It was evening in Edinburgh. I took a taxi to my 'digs' in Bruntsfield Place. The auguries at once were good. A little later, one hundred yards down that street I discovered "Wimmera", a distinguished dwelling. It was in that very house, that my father with his Rutherford pal from Helmsdale had stayed when they, greatly daring, had visited Edinburgh in 1879, ten years before I was born! And now I found that Jessie Rutherford, Helmsdale -

also a `fresher` - was due to cross the Meadows on the way to the University on the opening day. So, throwing caution to the winds and with a silent aside to brother George, I invited myself to accompany her, and we walked together that morning on our journey to Academia.

CHAPTER IV

From Dornoch, ancient Northern centre of religion, history, law and education I moved to Edinburgh University. With great anticipation I attended the inaugural lecture of the distinguished professor of Latin; but shock, even distrust stirred within me when the class of three hundred students mocked, whistled and sang each time the learned professor attempted his opening sentence. After a few minutes of generalised mayhem and cacophony the unfortunate professor gave up the unequal struggle and retired. Here was a form of group behaviour - in my own age group - that was entirely unfamiliar to me and it caused me immediate concern. I quickly discovered, however, that such mindless academic hooliganism was a rare event within the hallowed portals of the institution to which I now offered my allegiance and that there was always some reason behind the phenomenon, for the student body, in the main, was very fair and serious-minded. The reason for this particular occasion was, however, never made clear to me and it remained a puzzle in my early student days.

In my northern school my headmaster, himself a classical scholar, had introduced me to his special field, French language and literature. Many an afternoon, being ahead of other pupils, he would send me to his own home there to browse among and to read the French books in his own study. At school I had become accustomed to being a "big fish in a small pond" but here, in the University, I quickly learned that the position had been reversed. I never heard my name called out among the top ten students in the Latin class although I had expected to be able to make my mark in that field. And when I attended the large mathematics class it was soon apparent that my chief distinction was that of sitting next to Hyman Levy who, it was clear, was already marked out as of star quality. What I did discover however, was that Mathematics was not merely to do with relationships between numbers and spaces and forces, but that it was in fact a whole new language (new, that is, to me) and I began to feel the pull and the power of this field of philosophy. So I felt further chastened and redoubled my efforts in my own chosen field of endeavour which was Modern Languages. Now here I really could hold my own and I quickly began to feel at home.

In French Dr. Charles Sarolea linked up especially with Balzac and Maeterlink which held great appeal for me but the most picturesque figure in the `Old Quad` was Prof. Otto Schlapp of the German Department. More than any other teacher he opened ways and windows for me into "universitas" - the wider world not simply of knowledge, but of understanding, appreciation, tradition, music, folk-song and the nature of the human condition. The three years of my honours course in Mods. linked with Dr. Schlapp and his very talented lecturer Hans Eggling much enriched my life.

The first of the many university societies that attracted my attention was The German Society. I joined. On one Saturday each winter month the Society assembled for a concert in

one of the university basement halls. On each occasion the programme was taken up with the study of a particular composer - Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Brahms, Schubert and others. The German lecturer Hans Eggling, himself a first class pianist, would give a running commentary on the composer`s life and works, delivered in a series of periods with solos, duets, trios and choruses to illustrate what he had to say and he regularly held us all in thrall. The intervals with coffee and sandwiches were always very busy and conversation flowed. All the students who attended these evenings found them not merely enjoyable but illuminating, exciting and, for many of us, indicative of new worlds. Thanks to the voluntary extra hour each Monday after the regular class, we became acquainted with a considerable number of folk-songs, both German and Austrian, out of that rich heritage from the time of the troubadours to Luther`s chorales and then on to the soldier`s and marching songs of a later era - a splendid variety. Each concert closed with us all together singing an old parting song about leaving home, parents and sweetheart: "Nun leb` wohl du kleine Gasse, Nun ade du stilles Dach....." Then, in twos or threes we would walk home quietly to our student `digs`. Part of the community-style framework of the German Society were the regular excursions into the countryside that were made during occasional holiday weekends (1). We might take a train journey for an hour or so, many of us carrying rucksacks and Dr. Schlapp picturesque in his green `loden-mantel` (2) (a much less familiar garment then than it is today) and feathered Alpine hat. Numbering twenty or thirty we would then walk for several hours in the Trossachs or other desirable countryside, pausing to eat lunch and taking the train back to Edinburgh in the evening. Little did I realise how all this would come back to me in the work that lay ahead and a life in Austrian society.

The towering figure of German literature is, of course, Goethe - one of the greats on the world literary stage. From youth to old age his inner life and outward achievements illustrate the personal adage: "nihil humani a me alienum puto" (3). In one of his earlier works: "The Sorrows of Werther", Goethe tells the story of the young man who is experiencing the years of inner conflict while seeking the meaning of life and, indeed, seeking a way of life. This is the period of `Sturm und Drang`. In the second decade of the twentieth century this youthful concern and search for light and meaning in life had come to known as `the malady of 21`, and I soon reached the conclusion that I, too, was gripped in the toils of this phenomenon although I never felt really morbid with it as did some others that I now knew. In those searching years I read a great deal and I found many serious writers such

(1) Meal Monday was a certain weekend in mid-February. It was so-called because, over a century previously,students walked home on the Saturday and would return on the following Monday with a sack of meal, by the carrier`s cart - their main provender for the term.

(2) Lodenmantel: a large, flowing cloak made of a rain-resisting woollen fabric, common in southern Germany and the Austrian Tyrol.

(3) " I believe there is nothing about the human race that is no concern of mine."

to the full Christian service of the ministry in the church. I heard no voice telling me, received no sign to convince me of the way forward but I was increasingly aware of the insistent idea. The more I contemplated it the more the conviction grew upon me and the idea seemed also to address, if not instantly to cure that lurking malady. This was the path into which I could channel my energies and deal with the inner turbulence and indecision. So now my German was already much improved, if not yet totally fluent, and my future direction began to look more clear. The summer vacation was at hand and I cabled my entry for the Open Amateur Golf Tournament to be played at Lossiemouth, near Elgin my mother`s birthplace. I won that competition a few weeks later and made my way home to Dornoch with the cup, to the welcoming arms of my mother and a gentle reproach from my father for travelling home and crossing the ferry on the Sabbath Day.

Golf continued to serve me both as a means of expression and as an avenue for personal growth. There can be no better arena in which to learn that most difficult of all youth`s difficult lessons - the art of self-discipline. As a member of `academia` I was a good student but I realized early on that I was not necessarily destined for the highest academic honours - a good second class honours degree was most probably my level. But on the golf course I was the equal of any and the game served, in part, to shape my identity rather than simply feeding me ego. As a matter of course I had joined the University Golf Club and, playing in all the regular fixtures of that autumn and winter, quickly became prominent. The following spring I won the University club championship. For myself these successes brought no great surprise for I already had so much experience of playing against the very best in the game that a quiet confidence was already resident in me - no matter which course and in what company. I was usually scheduled to play the `top` match - i.e. against the opposition`s best player - so there was often some publicity, if only in the university magazine "The Student". I recall one comment from the press of those days which always had a very satisfying ring to it: "Grant`s golf, as usual, was like the laws of the Medes and the Persians". Students of today, unacquainted with the Bible, might well fail to appreciate the compliment but it was well understood in 1908. Then, in my second student year I was elected Captain of the University Golf Club and, in a match against St. Andrews University I had another memorable experience for I met and talked with the venerable and great champion of the game `Old Tom Morris` of the St. Andrews Club. `Old Tom`, father of the peerless `Young Tommy`, had done us the honour of coming to the first tee to start the students off in their annual match and, as visiting Captain, I had the honour and privilege of meeting and talking with "the grand old man" of golf. At the mention of Dornoch his interest quickened for, as early as 1886, it was he who, responding to an invitation from J.S., had come to the northern borough, surveyed the terrain and planned the nine-hole course that soon became eighteen and was now becoming well-known. When the official programme ended that day and I had made the short speech required of the captain, I made my way to the Cathedral churchyard. There, with my own feeling of `pietas`, I stood by the grave of `Young Tommy`, son of the that grand Old Man of golf; Young Tommy who had won the

Open Championship forty years earlier with scores that no other golfer of the time could

as George Bernard Shaw, Edward Carpenter, Ibsen, Walt Whitman and Thoreau were sympathetic to the direction and outlook that were shaping in my own mind. I was especially interested in ideas to do with personality and the relationship of personal freedom to authority - particularly the prevailing authority of the Bible and \ or the authority which grows - or may grow - within oneself.

Influential among the students was the fine speaking and able preaching J.R.P.Sclater of the New North Church, quite near to the University. I sampled and savoured other prominent preachers, notably Dr. John Kelman and the venerable Dr. Alexander Whyte but I soon returned with a keener relish to the stimulus and challenge of Sclater. Soon I was a regular member of the New North Church evening service and attended also the stimulating study class after the service. Among the subjects of Sclater`s illuminating studies with this class were these: "St. Paul" that vivid descriptive poem by F.W.H.Myers, in which the Apostle tells his own story in words which are so memorable; poems of Tennyson, Browning, Clough and even Dante`s `Divine Comedy`. On these winter Sunday evenings J.R.P.Sclater was a human, spiritual dynamo displaying amazing intellectual stamina. Very often I would be one of the two or three he brought home for supper and more talk after class. Keyed up and somewhat spent by his exacting Sunday programme, he needed good food and talk while the inner fires eased into relaxation. As Henry Drummond served and inspired an earlier student generation, so Sclater was a special formative, stimulating and supportive influence during those years while I felt myself at risk to that `malady of 21`.

Thanks to my name and some degree of scholarship, I enjoyed a Grant bursary of £45 a year for three years. The balance of my modest budget came in the form of a cheque from home, as needed. I lived frugally but without being seriously stinted in any way. At home in Evelix, in one deep drawer of that Sheraton sideboard, there were always three bottles - one of whisky, one of port wine and one of ginger wine - regular farmhouse hospitality for the visitor, or for the tired shepherd or, very occasionally, for my father himself after a particularly tiresome day. But we, the family, knew that that drawer was not for us, except a glass of ginger wine at New Year. So I was not a drinker at all and did not care for smoking, and I could be `passing rich` on £100 a year.

In the summer of 1908 I spent a month in Germany living with a German family - this was my `student attachment` period. Spotless coal boat, sunshine trip Leith to Hamburg; visit the Bismarck monument; travel to Coethen in Anhalt, there to stay pleasantly in a professors` family. Rising early, even for the vigorous and hard-working German community, I would go out into the Harz Mountains for the day or spend a day wandering about the Hexentanzplatz (the witches` dance place), see Brocken where witches were wont to assemble in days of yore after broomstick flights from all over Europe on Mayday eve. In Coethen I received my first lesson on how to drink and savour wine from my professor host and here I also learned to accept the "continental Sunday" and the full meaning of those words of wisdom: "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." It was at this point in my time that I began to be aware of the lingering notion that I might commit myself

approach; won the title indeed four times in succession and then died, at the age of 25. Later that same year, in the winter of 1908, Old Tom Morris, full of years and honour, also died - aged 87.

Although from my twelfth year golf had been both a special interest and a personal avenue of achievement I was, nevertheless, surprised and gratified when, soon after my arrival in Edinburgh, I received from the historic Royal Musselburgh Golf Club an invitation to become a member of the club without paying any entrance fee. Of course I accepted. Soon after that I played a round one October day in the autumn tournament for the `Old Club Cup`, instituted in 1774. I was just 18; I scored two 37s (it was a famous nine hole course) and my 74 won the cup and brought me a gold medal. At the Club Dinner that night, unaccustomed to such doings, I had to make a brief speech. It seemed that my 74 was the lowest score to win that trophy in all the earlier years of competition (4).

Then, hard on the heels of my success at Lossiemouth, in the August of that year, I played in the Carnegie Shield Competition - the premier `Open` competition of my own club Royal Dornoch (5) - and I remember some of the players that I met en route. These included Alec Morrison and T.E.Grant both now, like myself, plus one handicap players. T.E. was my opponent in that final and I defeated him by three and two. It was here, as I recall, that I first realised how firm a grip I had developed, not so much of the golf club, but of my internal and often turbulent feelings, for I remember how difficult it was for me to unbend into a smile when, at the 16th hole (locally known as `The Nile` because the long second shot had to carry the burn to reach the green) my beautifully struck brassie second pitched on the green and ran towards the hole. That was, in effect, the end of the match. Unforgettably, one of Mendelssohn`s "Songs Without Words" held me with its quiet rhythm throughout the thirty-four holes of the that day`s play. (6)

Now into my second year I felt more and more preoccupied with the need to address what I felt to be `the magnetism of the ministry`. I joined the Student Christian Movement (SCM) and soon found myself much involved in those meetings. It was here that I first began to recognise that perhaps I had some aptitude for organisation and for speaking in public and more than one kind friend said some such words as "you are such a good speaker you should take it up as a career....." . Much, much later in my life I was to remember those words and acknowledge their prophetic ring. I read poetry even

(4) Nearly seventy years later I received a letter signed `Robert Ironside, former Secretary to the Royal Musselburgh Golf Club` which read : "Dear Mr. Grant, In 1908 you won the Old Club Cup, instituted in 1774. Your score of 74 is the lowest recorded score while the club was at its original base". Since the course was substantially changed thereafter, this record presumably holds in perpetuity!

(5)The previous year King Edward VII had visited Millicent, Duchess of Sutherland, in her home at Dunrobin Castle north of Dornoch. Soon after that the golf club in Dornoch became The Royal Dornoch Golf Club.

(6) It was to be a quarter of a century before I won that competition for the second time.

composed verses; read much of Edward Carpenter and found much stimulus in his outlook and view of the nature of personality. His book "Towards Democracy" was aleays near me and I

responded to it. I read the "Vie de Jesu" by that celtic scholar Renan also "The Jesus of History" by Glover and was also able to go to some of Glover`s own lectures on the subject. J.R.P.Sclater`s inspirational preaching and teaching continued to exercise their sway and his interpretations of the poets and the prophets were always rivetting. I found his review of "The Hound of Heaven" especially vivid and inspiring. More and more I was coming to recognise how powerfully so much of these works appealed to the feelings rather than simply to the intellect. Here, I felt sure, at the crossroads of the mind and the spirit, was the arena to study in the search for the nature of man.

Now religion had become a concern for me. I was interested not so much in `being saved` out of this life here below as in being delivered into a full life in this world, as true as possible to the nature of man and the purpose of God; for I believed that there was, and is, a purpose in God rather than simply a plan. In my teens the reading of St. Augustine`s "Imitatio Christi" and "The Practice of the Presence of God" by Brother Lawrence had both made a profound impact on me. Although Christ was the name usually used for our Lord, for myself I preferred to use the name Jesus. This was because the `idea` of Jesus seemed to me more direct and more human, personal; a man, *the man,* among men, saving us by showing us the way, the truth, and leading to the life. About this time too, I was becoming increasingly aware of another area of growing intellectual discomfort spawned by so many intimate disscussions with my many student friends. In the wider world that most powerful agent of discovery and creativity - the mind of man - was more and more engaged in efforts to understand the apparent conflict between scientific issues and those of Religion. Two alternate views of the truth? So the idea of a sort of `co-existence` of differing truths began to surface in my mind. Perhaps these different but not necessarily mutually exclusive views could, in some way, be reconciled. And that threw into high relief another concern for me: the interpretation of (and therefore my attitude to) the greatest book of them all - The Bible - in the light of historical research and criticism.

I decided that I had to go home to talk to my father or, rather, to talk with my father. Not at all with the idea of modifying his own very clear and decided views and beliefs but in order to make known to him that my `inherited` views were changing, that they had indeed changed. I wanted him to know that this change was happening in me. It was a good talk we had together. I suppose I did most of the talking because it was I who had to reveal myself as the devoted son who had grown , and continued to grow, away from that inherited formulation of ideas and beliefs, while holding to and living by the same ethical standards of behaviour and Christian outlook. I had always had a very close and warm relationship with my father which I expressed in a number of personal, if incidental, ways and our attitude to these biblical truths had always previously been congruent. So it was not easy for me and, I daresay, it was equally difficult for him. It was characteristic of his wisdom, understanding and tolerance, so unlike the prevailing Calvinistic attitudes in the church to which we both

subscribed, that he said at the close of our conversation: "Well, that`s alright, Don. I know you have faith. I have my faith and you have yours. That is what matters."

So I returned to Edinburgh for the start of my second year with a strong sense of affirmation and support from my family at home and with the growing conviction that I would seek to train for the ministry. Meanwhile, in order the better to engage that challenge,I would do

my best towards the immediate goals - a good degree, the development of my functions in the SCM, a wider experience of this metropolitan society that was now my backdrop and, D.V., to play some more good golf.

The latter opportunity arrived earlier than expected. 1909 was the year that came to be known, in Scotland`s golfing circles at least, as the year of "the Dornoch Invasion" . John Sutherland, having put the, now Royal!, Dornoch Golf Club firmly on the map was looking for new fields for action - beyond the northern counties. One result was that the club was heavily represented in the 1909 Amateur Championship which was to be played at Muirfield Golf Club near Edinburgh. There really was a sense of `golfing giants` in those days and their names, of course, were all very well known to us in Dornoch. We have already met John L.Low, R.H.de Montmorency and C.E.Dick. Others with fearsome reputations were men such as John Ball, the quiet Englishman who had already won the Open Championship once as well as the Amateur on five occasions! He really was *primus inter pares.* Harold Hilton had won the Open twice and the Amateur Championship twice. J.E.Laidlay, Jack Graham, Bob Maxwell and Horace Hutchinson were also of this company. Among others, all of these `greats` were to take part in that 1909 Amateur Championship at Muirfield. And so were we, the men from Dornoch. This was to be my first essay into the world of major golf competition and with it came a stirring of the soul. I was to play Douglas Currie in the first round, a large blond Viking type, mentioned in the "Golfer`s Yearbook" 1908 and a member at Muirfield. Not previously acquainted with a serious sense of nervousness, on this occasion I was aware of feeling somewhat jittery and was dismayed to find myself four down after seven holes. But I took command of myself and addressed the task in hand to such effect that on the eighteenth tee we were once again all square. My over-ambitious second to that green went over, I took a five and lost the match. Immediately, suppressing my disappointment, I hurried out onto the course to find the state of play with my Dornoch confreres. Rumour was already abroad that the great John Ball was in trouble and all agreed that this was likely to be the match of the day. And so it proved for this was the encounter between the (current) great man of golf and my close friend the Dornoch baker - T.E.Grant. A few years earlier, while still a baker- apprentice in Glasgow, T.E. had had his left thumb wrenched off by a machine. As a golfer this meant that, in order to have a firm and manageable grip he had to turn his left hand *over* the shaft more than was usual. In driving, and he was always very long off the tee, T.E. would play for the right side of the fairway - even beyond it a bit - allowing for his natural `draw` to bring the ball back. I think that these idiosyncrasies puzzled the champion John Ball somewhat and T.E., playing his very best golf, defeated the great man in that first round of the championship. That Dornoch victory made headlines on both

sides of the Atlantic. Unfortunately for us, T.E. was narrowly defeated in the next round by the C.K.Hutchinson who subsequently reached the final of the championship. Walter Matheson won his first round match also, as did Alick Morrison another Dornoch competitor and questions were already being asked about this contingent from a (relatively) unknown club away in the far north. After another two rounds, however, there remained in contention only one of our number and that, appropriately enough, was the veteran John Sutherland himself, for he had defeated that very good golfer Harry Colt (himself the architect of the famous Sunningdale number 2 course)

and subsequently eliminated an exceedingly able and talented player in J.L.C.Jenkins from Troon. The culminating moment of these events, which came to be styled "the Dornoch Invasion" in the papers of the day, was Sutherland`s next match against Harold Hilton - yet another internationally renowned player - now still at the height of his powers. I watched every shot of that great contest and, in the event, John George (otherwise John Sutherland) emerged the victor. Having thus reached the last eight of the championship, Sutherland was finally defeated by George Wilkie from Leven who himself reached the semifina of the tournament. Dornoch was now well known in golfing circles and the game had established itself very deeply in my subconscious. I was to come back to it from time to time during my life, when circumstances allowed, in many different locations all over the globe.

1909 gave us all the feeling of being a very `eventful` year. Rutherford had just been awarded the Nobel Prize for Chemistry (7). Bleriot became the first man to fly an aircraft across the English Channel and Peary finally reached the North Pole. The workhouse laws came under attack from a Royal Commission among whose members Beatrice Webb of the Fabian Society and George Lansbury were prominent activists. The suffragettes had acquired a high profile and some of them, in prison, were force fed under instruction from the Home Office "to save them from themselves" we were told. More ominously, we learned that the government was becoming increasingly anxious at Germany`s continued grrowth in armaments, most particularly in their building of the new super-battleships - the `Dreadnoughts`. Britain`s endless superiority in naval power was, it seemed, under threat. Of course it was unthinkable that King Edward VII `s nation could ever contemplate hostilities against the German people whose King (Kaiser Wilhelm II) was actually Edward`s nephew..... or was it?

A general election was called for February 1910 and in the event the (ruling) Liberal Party and the Tory Party both won 273 seats. Herbert Asquith, the Prime Minister of the day, retained power with support from the Labour Party which itself had been gaining ground for some time under the leadership of Keir Hardie, M.P. Sir Edward Carson became the new leader of the Ulster Unionists with a mandate to fight home rule for Ireland to the uttermost.And then in one of the great political `jokes` of history, in the predicted re-run of

(7) Prof. Ernest Rutherford of Manchester University in the course of his work on radioactivity and the nature of the atom had demonstrated three kinds of radiation: from `alpha` particles (+ve), `beta` particles (-ve); and the `gamma` rays related to x-rays and light.

the earlier general election, that same December the Liberals retained 272 seats at Westminster and the Tories brought in the same result - 272! Asquith survived that fiasco into yet another term of office with the backing (however reluctant) of the Labour Party and of 84 Irish Nationalists.

During this period, as I made my way through early adulthood moving in circles much closer to the centres of political power, I could not but become increasingly aware of the problems of government and the unanswerable questions that seemed to be rooted in the very nature of the society. Discussions of these phenomena were common place of course, the student body and there was always a strong sense abroad of the incompetence of present day politicians

In New College I began a four year course in theology and in biblical studies which would fit me to become a licensed minister in presbyterian Scotland. In that year we were arranged in four separate groups or classes and my first few months there quickly convinced me that at least one third of my fellow students were, at least on the basis of past academic achievement, an elite. Several had First Class honours in Philosophy already behind them and the college itself had such a reputation as a teaching centre with a wide and liberal approach to theology that I found myself mingling with serious and able students from around the world - coming from USA, Canada, Hungary, Germany, Japan, China and even Spain. We were an influential group; the more so because several of us lived together in the New College Settlement, in the slum part of the city. That experience too had its influence on a number of us in a socialist or, so to speak, in a `change society` direction. I was not the only one to find, for the first time in my life, that I was experiencing life in the raw - this was the world in which politics really counted and it burst upon me one day that, although it had taken a long time, I had at last emerged from the nursery of life into a wider world where there seemed to be multiple truths. Many of them were already proving very uncomfortable.

Our year seemed to be particularly energetic and not only in the intellectual field - even our mentors seemed to notice a more lively tempo than heretofore. Collegiate activities clearly received a very welcome fillip from our entry, notably the soccer and hockey teams. There grew an easy communication between the students and teachers. I was known as a golf blue; two of our professors were keen golfers. One of them Prof. Hugh MacIntosh (known affectionately as Hughie) often invited me to give him a game, as his guest, at Duddingston Golf Club. This, of course, I was delighted to do. Then one day in class, I was sitting on the front bench while Hughie was discoursing on `the atonement`and so far forgot myself that, with my hands together above the desk, as if gripping a club, I was enacting the wrist and forearm motion of a golf chipshot. In amused silence the class looked on; `Hughie` paused in his fluent exposition of Schleiermacher and quietly looked down at me. The silence seemed very loud and long. Everyone understood, smiled, and not a word was said. We were all mature students, to some studies we gave more than our full attention and to others very little. A few worked very hard at Hebrew, as did Bill Christie, but most of us were rather less motivated, knowing that what was needed of scholarship in the language of the Old Testament could be culled from pre-existing commentaries. One of our number, a Mr. Anderson usually known as "Soc" (Socrates) because he came with a distinction in Philosophy, was particularly neglectful of his Hebrew studies. After the special exam that year, however, Soc - who had sat beside Christie during the writing of the exam - produced

a paper of such quality that Prof. Paterson (1) felt constrained to talk to him about it and called him to his retiring room. Surmising that Soc had somehow enlisted much help from his neighbour, the professor addressed him thus: "Mr. Anderson, how do you explain this phenomenon..... " . Soc, in his broad Angus speech with a reverberating rr, replied with a smile: "Prrofessorr Paaterrson ... the less I say about that the bettherr..." .

The `science versus religion` issue, although unwelcome, had invaded the rather complacent realm of Theology late in the nineteenth century. The evangelical Prof. Henry Drummond ("The Greatest Thing in the World") had recently been installed in the Theological

along with the conviction, which has doubtless belonged to every generation of the young, that we could ourselves manage it all better. I began to be assailed by very personal doubts, however, that the society of which I was inevitably a part was a lot less benign, let alone Christian, than I had previously thought. There seemed to be the most frightening gaps in our social structures and institutions and the disease of poverty seemed to me to be unnecessarily widespread. I began to become more aware of the darker side of the political picture and it seemed to me that Capitalism had a lot to answer for. There was already a sense abroad that all was not well on the international scene, particularly in Europe. There was widespread political unrest throughout the Balkan region, involving Greece, Turkey, Montenegro, Serbia, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. The previous year war between Austria and Serbia was only narrowly averted when, at the last minute, Serbia had agreed to forgo `compensation` for the loss of Bosnia Herzegovina half a millenium before. The attendant `peace` in the area was very, very unstable and crude nationalism was to be felt at every turn..

Perhaps it was about this time that people began to think the unthinkable. Certain it is that in that time there was a growing sense of urgency in the background and a feeling hidden somewhere in the conversations and discussions among my friends that our generation was, in some way, at risk to the future. And so it proved.. This indefinable shadow lent purpose to my chosen work, on the one hand, to learn more and more about the German people and the nature of their society and, on the other, to go in to the ministry to help in teaching and disseminating the fellowship, meaning and peace of Jesus and all that I believed in. A year later I took my final exams and secured a good second class honours degree. I then made preparations to enter New College, Edinburgh - that distinguished theological college of The Church of Scotland - the following year. This I did in October 1911.

CHAPTER V

College in Glasgow in order, it was said, to educate `theologs` in scientific lore and thought to the point where they should be at least able to think and expound adequately in this all too disturbing new field. In New College, at this time, that role was filled by Prof. J.Y.Simpson who, along with his charming American wife, had rapidly become an integral and special feature of college life. He was to be the centre, for me, of many animated, instructive and sometimes even painful tussles with both my own group and my inner self. In that group I had, early on, become close friends with two of the American students: Harold Warren (2) and Evan Thomas, and they were to remain among my closest friends for the rest of my life. Both were Princeton University men where they had studied under Woodrow Wilson, who had himself just been elected President of the USA. In two different succeeding years first Harold and then Evan came north with me to spend two weeks or more of the long vacation en famille in my Evelix home. In the summer of 1912 - shortly after the Titanic disaster - Winston Churchill was promoted to become the 1st Lord of the Admiralty and he promptly put in train movements of British naval forces from the Mediterranean to the North Sea and the competition between the great powers for arms and ever more arms was already gathering pace. These and other indicators made me and many of my closest friends feel more and more anxious and the prospect of war, however remote, entered in to common conversation.

Evan Thomas was the brother of the Norman Thomas who subsequently left his church in the United States to edit an anti-war magazine "The World Tomorrow" and who, thereafter, regularly ran as socialist candidate for the presidency of the USA. Evan himself, with a first class mind of his own, was very widely read in philosophy and religious thought and we both took very seriously indeed the way of life of Jesus. Under the relentless pressure of events all about us, our discussions and thinking at that time reached a sort of crisis and we both came gradually but ineluctably to the conclusion that, in the event of war, we would have to refuse to take part and become war-resisters. So, as time moved inexorably on and December gave way to 1913 we would talk again and again about these issues and explored in more detail what it really would mean to resist the imperative. Evan and I seemed to be

(1) Prof. Paterson, Dept . of Old Testament Studies, was affectionately known as `Pathuk` after an item in the writing of Hebrew.

(2) A natural academic and teacher he ultimately became President of Tougaloo College in Mississipi, USA.

the only members in our wider group (of maybe 7 or 8) who were totally committed although most of our friends were understanding and supportive. Our thoughts on this issue were decisive. We knew the course we had to follow. Even so our paths were different, for Evan was a foreign national and the storm that we were all contemplating was, it seemed to him (and, indeed, to us all) a purely European one. American foreign policy was strongly isolationist and conscription was not even contemplated across the Atlantic. It was already clear to me that this was a path which I would have to walk alone. Before that challenge arrived; before our society was plunged into the maelstrom and I had to enter my own long dark tunnel, two other experiences opened up for me leading on to ever widening horizons.

In the autumn of 1913, at the start of my third year at New College, having already in my

mind obeyed the `call to the ministry` I joined the Christian Union and actively worked up a large delegation of Edinburgh students to the Summer Conference of the Student Christian Movement in which organisation I was still very active and, by now, well known. The SCM was a very well-led, progressive movement active and effective throughout the whole land, Ireland included. The summer conferences were held at Swanwick in Derbyshire. Thanks largely to the vision and leadership of the general secretary, the Rev. Tissington Tatlow, a well planned hostel and conference site had been developed there. That large hostel could accomodate 350 women, and twice that number of men dwelt in the camp in marquees and tents. Usually three conferences, each of a week`s duration, were held there in July each year. Interdenominational and very much international, these gatherings, each numbering up to one thousand participants, helped greatly to confirm many existing personal beliefs, to modify others and - always - to widen the patterns of thinking. With a keen interest I had worked for that conference and that summer I was elected a member of the SCM General Committee. That experience in organising a large gathering, taking care of the multiple needs of so many people let alone, at the same time, having to address the issues of the conference and, indeed, having to *actually* address the assembly more than once, proved to be immensely rewarding, revealed skills in me that I had no idea of before and, as time would show, laid down a marker for much of the work that lay ahead of me.

But now it was August 1914. The vast Habsburg empire had been losing its vision, versatility and vigour for half a century under the petrified and stumbling leadership of Kaiser Franz Josef. The endless internecine turmoil within its borders in the Balkans was like a touch paper to the powder-keg of the greater European confrontation between the other great powers: Germany, Britain, France and Russia. On 28th June, the week before the Swanwick conference began, the heir to the Austrian throne Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his morganatic wife the Duchess of Hohenburg were both assassinated as they drove through the streets of Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital. The spark ran quickly through the politics of the ensuing few weeks and on August 3rd Germany declared war on France. Sir Edward Grey, Britain`s long-serving Foreign Secretary contemplating this catastrophic outcome said:

"The lamps are going out all over Europe: we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime." The following day Asquith declared war against Germany and we were all plunged into that

abyss from which a whole generation never recovered.

During this period in New College, as a serious student of historical religion and its sources, I realised by degrees that these very sources, including the ten commandments, were themselves in the nature of human achievements. Being truly human in origin they have had and continue to have enormous power and influence with successive generations thanks to the thought, the suffering and the spiritual experience of the great luminaries of history such as Moses, the Psalmist, the Prophets and Jesus himself. These pioneers, these leaders, developed to a high degree their insight into "the highest they could know", namely the nature of man; in other words into their own nature, aided and inspired in this by what they could use of their existing heritage and history. As I worked away in my own mind during these maturing years - 1911-15 - the workplace for developing these paths of thought was, simply, other people and other patterns of thought against which I could test out what seemed to be forming in my own head.

hammered out. Ever since it has been abundantly clear to me that nationalism, sectarianism and fundamentalism are among the ultimate enemies of mankind. These are the divisive influences that separate people, and peoples,one from another. In my personal theology these attitudes represented the work of the devil. The path of true fellowship and love leads elsewhere.

This work attracted me; I was ready for it. It proved to be a very effective training in leadership. During these three years (1915-18) I felt very lucky to be able to to work among this large number of students, constantly making contact with the young enquiring mind and learning, always learning, about other people and other countries. The community functions at these conferences were quite as useful and informative as any of the more serious, scheduled `work` of the day. This was where the real sense of belonging together came to the fore in all forms of simple, daily contact. Thinking myself to be quite as spartan as the barefooted Africans I, like them, played soccer barefooted too. Friendships were made then which have endured over the years, as the curtains were raised by the continuing expansion of my thought and the reduction of essentials for my spiritual, progressive Christian way of life and discovery. I was keenly aware that all this had awakened in me a strong desire to travel and experience the impact of other cultures. I did not then know - how could I - that I was destined to become one of the most travelled people of my generation!

When in Edinburgh there were always meetings of various kinds that cried out for my attention. Official and unofficial meetings - all too often I found that I had to go to the `official` event whereas the other groups were the more attractive. It was at such informal meetings, which I often went to only on the spur of the moment, that I usually managed to keep in touch with contemporary events, for my rather frenetic and peripatetic life made it otherwise difficult to keep up with the pace of the world. As an illustration I quote here from a letter I wrote to my mother on the 21st February, 1918:

"..... There was a small gathering in a studio of about 20 people, students and artists who had finished their course, also about half a dozen university people, some of

whose names you would know. This was to meet Jonty Hanaghan, and to have talk with him. I told you of this before, did I not? Well, we all had a great time . Jonty began about 3pm and talked about art and life (and "art does not really mean something special and far away which only experts deal in, else how should I deal in it?, but a happening where people express themselves truly, where there is true life, in other words"). I can`t tell you all that he said or what we all said but it was stimulating and unusual and radical. He read some Irish poems and we had more things to say. About 5o`clock tea began to appear, but some of the younger people had to go away. There remained about ten of us all together talking and exploring until twenty to eight when Jonty had a meeting in the Oddfellows Hall at which he was speaking on `Labour Unrest`. To show you how people took him for granted, notwithstanding some of the very revolutionary things which he was saying - all of us who had remained in the studio went along to that meeting. And as we went along the street we all found ourselves talking busily, like old friends although none of us previously knew each other. There is something in this lad Jonty which wins people.He really is the most vital fellow I have ever come across. Same sort of age

These intellectually seeking, probing and testing conversations with my nearest companions, both men and women, were immensely rewarding and, inevitably, brought me very close to several of my compatriots. I was learning the significance of another dimension of human attachment - that of true fellowship. Following Jesus` words "Seek and ye shall find", I had sought and I had, gradually, found two basic articles of faith. Basic, that is, for my personal thought and practice:

> The highest form of life known to us is man; the most complete expression of the life of man is seen in Jesus of Nazareth, he who lived and died true to fundamental principle of life and all relationships.
>
> The very nature of life, be it plant or animal, amoeba or man, is to seek more to seek that which is the most necessary or the highest that one knows. This involves a process of discrimination and rejection. The amoeba seeks food. Man seeks God.

So, for me, the terms `Love` `Personality` and `Fellowship` came to hold ever greater and greater significance and pointed the way for me in my search. The abiding standard for my personal living and thinking lies and always will lie within what I know of the person of Jesus, his teaching and his way of life. That *is* the standard. There one can be "safe when all safety`s lost"; sure, even should it be proved that Jesus as a real person never existed; for his person as human, his behaviour and teaching as representative man is on record in the New Testament. Anyone can respond to his person or indeed, if needs must, simply to the *idea* of his person. Anyone can try out for themselves the way of life of Jesus, quite apart from the mischievous question of whether or not the historic Jesus ever did live there at that time in Galilee. My own view is that the historical reality of Jesus is quite certain.

When I graduated from New College in 1915 and was licensed as a minister in the Presbyterian Church I had reached a clear conviction in thought and practice. I had been

active in the Student Christian Movement for a number of years and was now invited to serve the movement as travelling secretary for Scotland and Ireland. There followed for me an extremely active and challenging three years. In this period I travelled almost non-stop; I met Christian Union committees, intercollegiate committees and leaders, organised studies (often led them), organised study schools, co-operated in shaping and running big summer conferences and was forever delivering talks to students, sometimes even series of talks. Here I quickly learned the basic skills of the professional lecturer, talents which were to stand me in very good stead much later in life. The role of an SCM travelling secretary combined the challenges of leader, teacher, organiser, money raiser, personal consultant and adviser. Such a person was expected to be a `prophet` (in its original sense in the Old Testament a prophet was one who interpreted the `signs of the times`). I quickly learned, also, to feel quite at home within any religious denomination, with citizens of other nations and members of other races. It was on the anvil of these experiences that my life-long commitment to the cause of internationalism was first truly

and build as me, he is not particularly good looking yet people are all pulled towards him. For power and life he takes everything! He belongs to the Fellowship of Reconciliation (1), and yet he is, at times, full of tremendous denunciations as, for instance, when he was in full cry speaking on Sunday night at a big I.L.P. (2) meeting about the oppression of the peasants in the west of Ireland. This was a great, keen, enthusiastic meeting of about 800 people, many standing and Jonty was the speaker, the subject: Sinn Fein. Many questions afterwards and the whole meeting went on for two hours. Something happens at these I.L.P. meetings. The people crowd in, their faces look awake, and questioning; they care about things and are looking for something; whereas so many people who wander in to the churches are not looking for anything, and go just because they have always gone before..... "

By now I was entirely at home with the episcopalian prayer book and the conduct of church service and looked forward to those occasions when I was called upon to take a service having, as yet, no dedicated parish of my own. I also had the privilege of working together with some of the most able and dynamic leaders of the movement: Tissington Tatlow, Zoe Fairfield, Robert Wilder and Ruth Rouse. I lived all this time (as far as I `lived` in any place at all) in Edinburgh and my office was there. My closest and most personal relations were with the SCM leaders - both men and women - in Scotland and particularly, of course, in Edinburgh. For me it was natural, then, to

I had joined the FOR in 1915, which was (and still is) a Christian Pacifist organisation. It was growing rapidly at this time and, in 1919, it became international - The International Fellowship of Reconciliation - and the organisation remains very active today. I was destined to work in that organisation for some years from 1929.

(2) Independent Labour Party.

become very friendly with students a few years younger than myself, usually leading students - committee members in all the college and university centres of Scotland. Perhaps, therefore, it was not entirely unexpected that I should become more personally involved with one of the young women students whom I saw so often.

I had, of course, become quite close to several of the very exciting and attractive young women whose paths had crossed mine in the previous years. The memory of them still brightens my mind and warms my heart. I think, in one sense, I really loved more than one of them; perhaps a little piece of me loves them still. Life, natural and normal, is male and female but it conceals its own matrix and biological imperatives. This was yet another voyage of discovery for me. For in my own gentle childhood the inescapable unity of mother and father was the basic fact, an anchor as reliable as the day and the night. That there could possibly be any other arrangement had always, to the child, seemed incomprehensible. The idea was not that `this is how it *ought* to be` but that `this how it *is*`. That there could be a difficult journey on the way to this perceived happiness did not occur to us all in our youth. In the family of seven there were a brother and two sisters on each side of me; I was in the middle. At school girls were all

around, just like boys, all together in the same classes too; easily they bumped and pushed against each other in the rush of getting out of school, noon or afternoon. At fifteen I had found myself warmly attached (in my spirit) to a special girl and, as it was acceptable to her, I would often make the quarter-mile detour in order to accompany her on the way homeward from school. Gradually that `attachment` ran out into the sands of time and later my interest centred on another - we sometimes walked on the links and looked out at the sea. I recall the sense of romance and suppressed expectation as we, both of us, looked at each other and contemplated the future. I do not recall how it came also to drift away but drift it did and I think that neither of us felt any serious regret. But the feelings were strong enough at the time.

But from 1915 on Irene Passmore seemed to cross my path more and more often and gradually I became aware that something new was awakening inside me - and I had to consider the idea that perhaps one or other of the two of us was seeking these meetings which, at first, had seemed to be random. Or perhaps we both were? Gradually, however, as the time slipped past through those determining years, so fateful for the future, I knew in the "oubliette" of my inner being that I could never get away, would never wish to get away, from Irene. One evening sitting on the floor in her `digs` and leaning against her knees I said: "I would like to live with you". It was enough. I knew her answer from the look in her eyes. It was 1917.

CHAPTER VI

So in the period 1915-18 I served as SCM Travelling Secretary. Throughout World War One I was always aware of the fact that I, a strong young man and eminently eligible for war service, could still move freely about as a civilian in our war-torn society. I was acutely aware of the many people who regarded at me with some suspicion and sometimes in conversation there was only a very thinly veiled hostility in evidence. However, I was never actually called upon to deal with a `white feather`. Twice a call-up notice came for me in the testing months of 1917. Mentioning my training and the Christian Aid work I was engaged in, I wrote back on each occasion to say that I was a conscientious objector and was therefore rejecting the call.

Finally, in 1918, came a letter commanding me to join the forces and instructing me to appear at the orderly office in Berwick-upon-Tweed of the King`s Own Scottish Borderers (the KOSB). All the long time of thinking and contemplation and of talking was past. An established war resister, now I had to do something. I immediately entered an appeal to the Tribunal which had been set up in Edinburgh for this purpose. Shortly thereafter I was summoned to appear before that stiff, unsympathetic (not to say hostile) board of men to claim my exemption from military service as a conscientious objector on personal religious grounds. [The protocols had been established by my predecessors and I knew the formula.] My case was summarily dismissed and arrangements were already in hand, as I discovered, to hand me over to the Army. "Please do not post me to a Highland regiment" was my only request of the board. Now I really was alone. As a boy I wore the kilt proudly; was often called `kiltie`. Knowing that I had now to resist, to refuse to obey orders, I wanted nevertheless to `dree my ain weird` (1) as a war resister but not in a kilted highland regiment. This much, at least was allowed, and in the event I was instructed, once again to report to the KOSBs at Berwick-upon-Tweed. "I will not need an escort ", I said. They took me at my word.

Arriving in the ancient town which is neither Scotland nor England, I found my way to the orderly room, spoke my piece: " I`m a conscientious objector. I will not obey orders." I was taken to the orderly officer of the day and repeated my statement. "Very well, then", came the reply, "we know how to deal with the likes of you. We shall see you again in the morning". Next morning, on hearing reveille, I did not turn out for breakfast. Presently I was required to accompany the corporal to the quartermaster`s store. I knew what to do and when the quartermaster set out the uniform for me to try I said: "I refuse to take the uniform".
Taken at once to the cells I was immediately confined to barracks. Treated with a mixture of

(1) `dree my ain weird` : the Gaelic phrase for `plough my own furrow".

respect, curiosity and distant hostility I spent the next ten days looking at the sky and the clouds through the little window of my cell and contemplating my uncertain future.

Then came the court martial. It was brief, formal, decisive. 112 days in prison with hard labour. Thus the sentence. Then the climax. I was marched out into the parade square.
There, in the barrack square, on a beautiful, bright and sunny day, I was a little taken aback to be confronted with a parade of a full company of The King`s Own Scottish Borderers drawn up with the full trappings. Commanding Officer, officers, non-coms and the rank and file in silence and at watchful attention. I, the prisoner, condemned, stood straight there between two rankers, my eyes on the border hills. An order rings out, the drums roll. Sharply the sentence is once more proclaimed and: "Thus are you dismissed the service, with ignominy" said the Colonel, drawing his sword to smite off my cap. I was instantly handed over to a military guard for transfer to prison.

It was an overnight train journey to London; my escort a sergeant and a private. We could talk. I recall asking the sergeant about the medal ribbon on his chest - it was the Delhi Durbar ribbon. I remembered the date of that splendid show of Empire: 1911. I had with me a small leather suitcase, my mother`s birthday present a year earlier. The escort allowed me to

take a taxi to my uncle's address in Goodge Street, leave my case there and to rejoin them later that morning. The sergeant took my word and I felt much reassured by that: this was a form of informal 'parole' for which, I have no doubt, he had no authority. I wondered what would happen to that man if I failed the rendezvous? And my heart warmed to him. Thanks, I said. Thanks. Later we met up again as arranged and my friendly escort took me the last leg of that unique journey to my destination. Wormwood Scrubbs. As I contemplated the ponderous prison gate from without I was keenly aware of the furious turmoil of different emotions within. Here was the time I had thought about so often in the past when I considered what I should do. As the prison door swung open to allow me in, as I left my freedom behind, I turned to that good human, the sergeant, and thanked him for his kindness and humanity and I was aware of a strange feeling - a kind of bond - between us, though little enough was said. I have wondered ever since what happened for him thereafter. Then I moved on into what awaited within and, as I did so, the strains of a song popular at the time welled quietly up in my mind:

'When you come to the end of a perfect day
And sit alone with your heart..... '

and the irony of the different context was not lost on me.

Awaiting me, inside, was the small cell where I would sit alone for a time and, as the great gate swung to behind me I was changed from my former civilian status into a prisoner. My civilian clothes were taken from me and various sizes of prison garb were offered. I chose. A convict cap was put on my head. Now, in truth, I was an inmate - not Donald Grant any more - just No. 333, Hall A. So to the cell; black-leaded floor, clean walls, stool, small triangle of wood fixed as a 'table' in the corner, bedboard with blanket and pillow arranged in a specific order on top, small window through which I could look up at the

sky, but only by mounting the stool. Here I was to sit. I took in the features of the grim cell; then the warder left me, went out, closed the door. The door was closed. Closed. There was no handle on the inside. Then I heard a click; turning back the metal hood of the spy-hole the warder looked in. I could see an eye; the eye.

Alone. I felt I had the inner resources for it; but how could I *know*? Anyway I was set to try and would find out soon enough. The bell made my day; organised it. When needs must, we learn quickly. I learned what the bells meant. Rise at 5.30; clean, tidy the cell; fold blanket (the proper way); prop bedboard right there against the wall with folded blanket atop and convict cap on top of that. Just so; no other way. Morning had come, I found myself in the prison yard for exercise; 45 minutes of slow promenade in the oval compound with tall uniformed warders punctuating it. Here was some fellowship although talking was an offence. There was the communication of the living eye - not the 'prison eye'; recognition too, even a smile. I recognised one or two Quakers: John Fletcher, Barratt Brown; also, and unmistakeable, Fenner Brockway (2). The living eye said "Hello, are you there too?" We were to become firm friends. So one was not alone.

There was a workshop in Scrubbs and a good many prisoners were occupied there. But mostly our hard labour consisted of sewing mail-bags. One discovered by degrees that the labour should not really be hard. I could easily complete ten mail-bags in an eight-hour working

day. But eight or even seven was all right with the warder who collected them, so that instantly became the norm. To do much more was to let down the others, many of whom were not so quick. Food was brought round three times a day; it was clean but inadequate. I lost weight. Early on the query was put: "What religion?". Rather than tangle with the complexities of the question I offered, simply, Quaker. So a copy of the Quaker "Book of Discipline" was brought to my cell and lay there beside the Bible. One other book was allowed each month. I asked for Carlyle`s " Life and Works " thinking that would keep me going for a little. I rationed the book to myself, reading it only after retiring for the night at 8 o`clock. When the time went too slowly I would repeat familiar lines of poetry to myself - `The Nightingale`, `Ode to the West Wind`, `The Hound of Heaven` or verses from Myer`s `St. Paul`. At times I sang quietly to myself: hymns, psalms, German folk-songs, Hebridean folk tunes. Chapel on Sunday morning was popular because it meant a break in the endless monotony of the routine; it also meant that one had a chance to hear some special piece of news , news from the outside world; for we were definitely "inside". The singing of the doxology provided a good framework for `singing` a piece of news to one`s neighbour. Well do I remember one message that came my way during this exercise: instead of "all the earth shall praise thy name, the Father everlasting", I heard the cadences mediating the words "the engineers are coming out on strike; they`re coming out on Thursday".

Nevertheless, some hours, some days were slow and tedious. An occasional piece of news, dropped casually and quietly, out of pity, by a cleaner taking away the morning slop pail, would flutter through the shuttered steel corridors. News of the enclosed inmate, for instance, who, unable to contain this shuttered, twilight existence,

Towards the end of the century Fenner was to become Lord Brockway, the Labour peer.

burst out into destructive action and smashed the few things within the cell that could be smashed. Or the C.O.who, on receiving his bowl of morning thin gruel, complained to the warder that there was a small beetle in the `skilly`. Don`t tell, said the warder or they`ll all want similar extras! Unoriginal, of course, but none the less true for that.

The prison walls are 17 ft high; we could measure them during `exercise` each morning. One result was that one never heard "the winds that will be howling at all hours", not even the noisy `boreas` that I had loved to hear and feel in my remote farm boyhood in the far north. So, an occasional thunderstorm brought a welcome "power music of the spheres" into our truncated lives. And, as I recall, there came, one London evening, I know not how, the rumour..... "German Zeppelin coming". And so it shortly proved and the image is firmly printed in my mind of that giant cylinder in the sky with the attendant hum still in my ears; I, of course, standing on my little wooden stool (a prison `crime`) in order to look out to the sky.

About this time Irene wrote to the prison Governor enclosing a letter for me, also a book. It was given to me at once. I was still, of course, an `un-person` to society at large - no. 333 merely - but Irene was always able to break through to reach me in a variety of different ways. "Imagination" she said "will always reveal cracks in unimaginative structures". Irene has always been the enemy of unnatural convention and unnecessary boundaries. Her endless support and spiritual presence with me through this most demanding and potentially destructive

period of my life was, of course, my life-line and the bond was indestructible. It attached me to the outer world and provided constant endorsement of the profound faith that we both shared in the power of the human spirit.

There were occasional excitements. Once a month one was allowed a `visitor` - one officially appointed to this humane work. Registered as a quaker, I asked for this visit. What an oasis of rich and deep humanity opened for me in the steely desert of the hard labour prison, when I met Percy Bigland for a full half-hour. We talked; I could share. I got real news measured by a critical, mature, self-determining christian. Inevitably I, the conscientious objector, was critical of the organised churches, of power policies and armament firms. I recalled reading Bernard Shaw`s "Major Barbara" which had been published years before 1914 and how prophetic it had proved. Perhaps about this time I first began to speculate about God and the Devil and how closely related they sometimes seemed to be. I think Percy Bigland and I both found some solace in putting in to words some of our very strong feelings, our anger, at the cataclysmic events of the last few years - man`s inhumanity to man seemed to us both to be the ultimate contradiction of all we believed in, of our faith.

Soon after that visit news reached me that I was, after all, to be allowed to put my case as a genuine war resister to the main Central London Tribunal to allow them to judge whether or not I should be allowed to undertake the `alternative service` as it was called. If this were to prove the case I would be transferred to the prison on Dartmoor where most such prisoners were housed - presumably for the duration of the war. Happily for me Irene was determined to be present. With her came the Reverend

Leslie Hunter (3), a fellow SCM secretary at the time, in my support. The hearing took more than an hour and a half and went some way to restore my faith in human nature in that these several rather severe, learned-looking, not to say distinguished, men behind the table who were the tribunal went to some pains to find out what I really thought and believed, and why. I was not unprepared. After all, I had had a little time to consider what I believed, and why. I had thought long and hard about how to present my case and, in the end, had decided to take with me an aide-memoire, for I was very well aware that I could expect little assistance from the members of the tribunal themselves. I had been led to understand that they would ask questions and, depending on the quality of my answers, might listen. I had also received some help concerning the nature of the questions to expect. Accordingly I had a prepared strategy and Irene, following many discussions with me, had typed out a document for me to take with me. Here it is:

Case:- No. 9572. Donald Grant.

1. The precise and fundamental ground upon which I base my conscientious objection to military service in all its forms, is the following. For eight years now the centre of my life and thought has been Jesus Christ and his way of life. In my mind I am convinced that the truth of life is in his purpose and in his method, and my spirit responds

to all that he stands for. Combatant military service is, to me, an absolute transgression of the spirit and of the way of life of Jesus Christ and of my own deepest principles and practice as moulded by him.

2. I object to non-combatant military service because, as a complement to combatant service, it cannot in purpose and in effect be distinguished from it.

3. I object to participation in the use of arms in any dispute whatsoever, because the use of arms is contrary to the principle of love, as revealed in Jesus Christ and because, in itself such use cannot establish what is right and true.

4. I am conscientiously opposed to joining any branch of military service, even a branch such as the RAMC because all these branches serve the purpose of material warfare and, to my mind, are therefore an integral part of the fighting forces.

5. I have held these views on conscientious objection since early in the war. Since July1915 my mind has been quite clear about this attitude. In autumn 1915 I joined the Fellowship of Reconciliation because the whole trend of my thought and practice is in sympathy with the principles of that organisation, particularly its pacifist stance of objection to all forms of military service.

6. The conscientious objections which I am now putting forward, do not form merely an isolated opinion regarding war, they are the outcome of my understanding of Jesus Christ and of my attitude to Him. Because of that attitude I

(3) Leslie Hunter later became Bishop of Sheffield.

changed from my university course from the purpose of pursuing a successful career to the purpose of working wholly for his kingdom and his way of life.

7. (a) I am conscientiously opposed to engaging in work of national service which helps materially in the prosecution of war. It would not be against my conscience to engage in agricultural work, provided that such engagement did not release another man for military service.
(b) At the same time, up to the point of my incarceration, I was doing work that some would consider to be of national importance and my great desire is to go on working for the new world for which all humanity is looking.
(c) To help my country now and always and to be true to my own conscience, I am ready and desirous to live according to the principle of love instead of the principle of self-interest. I am sure that the principles of Jesus Christ can be applied to life and I desire nothing more than to work for the true Scotland, the true Britain and the true international life, which the practice of the ways of Christ will make realities.

The tribunal members offered me their attention and, it seemed to me, some respect as I endeavoured to piece my argument together in response to their many, and sometimes very searching, questions. The chairman was fair, very firm and entirely even-handed in his efforts to give due weight to both sides of the argument. Occasionally I was aware of more than one of the members actually nodding, apparently in agreement, as I developed my case. In the end, as the stress levels mounted and I was becoming ever more conscious of my `sponsors` willing me on and silently praying for success, the chairman called a halt to the proceedings. There was a brief colloquy among the committee and, suddenly, we were told that the appeal had been allowed. So it was that my status was changed . I was no longer a convict but a genuine C.O. And I was to be translated to Dartmoor Prison.

It was one bright day in March 1918 when the massive gate of Wormwood Scrubbs opened for me and then closed behind. I had sat for three months on that little wooden stool, polished that black-leaded floor, swallowed the contents of the morning skilly and sung the doxology with my ears open for news in Sunday chapel. The following June the great gate swung open again and I was on my way at once to H.M.Prison on Dartmoor. The longest day of the year - and my birthday to boot. The skies were blue, a zephyr sussurus purred in the air and I felt that the auguries were good. In a brief visit to 66 Goodge Street I had picked up my leather suitcase; my cousins there, the suitcase itself, all reminded me of Scotland, Dornoch, golf, the links, the hills - freedom. Elated withal, I found myself looking forward to another new experience as, expectant, I stood in the corridor of the fine Great Western train thrusting its flashing rhythm across England`s green and pleasant land in midsummer: destination - Devon and Dartmoor. In ironic counterpoint to the truth of my situation my mind insisted on considering the lines:

"Oh, the great gates of the mountain have opened once again
And the sound of song and dancing falls upon the ears of men,

And the Land of Youth lies gleaming, flushed with rainbow light and mirth,
And the old enchantment lingers in the honey-heart of earth."

In Dartmoor prison there was a governor and a doctor. The warders and the prisoners ran the prison: foremen and workers. Regular Dartmoor garb, worn by us all there, was baggy corduroy trousers, khaki shirt and a dark grey jacket. Later, when I made a closer acquaintance with the moors I would be allowed to wear my shorts and a sports shirt. With my background I opted to join the agricultural party. For two weeks I took a hand at thinning turnips. To do this task well requires experience and no little skill, because of the pace. I was no greenhorn with the hoe, so I could keep my place in the squad. But I wanted to stop long before the tenth hour had come! Transported to the field, we began operations at 7 a.m.; a midday respite of one hour was keenly welcomed. We`d lie down, slowly eat our cob of bread and the slice of cheese that came with it; then sleep. It was the height of summer and it brought real summer weather. There was an all-pervading sense of total unreality about it all, for the knowledge of the endless catastrophe and the mindless perpetual slaughter in "some foreign field" was with every one of us every day. Indeed the sense of guilt that came with that knowledge proved too much for several of our

number and psychological breakdown in one form or another was a regular event. The feeling of living in an illusion was persistent and I was soon to discover that this was the common experience among my peers. In a curious and insistent way the cancerous sense of guilt became the most serious and unexpected attack upon the deeply held convictions of many of us there. Here I was not alone.

In the late evening before sleep again and again I found myself rearranging and re-examining the issues, and the arguments for and against my personal stance. Like Lancelot Gobbo in his dilemma I was constantly torn: " `Budge` said the fiend. `Budge not` said my conscience " - it was like a whirlpool of differing forces. But in the end I would always have recourse to my anchor, where I could feel "safe when all safety`s lost" , and I would pause to think again what was the teaching of Jesus? Then my spirit would reassert its power and the whirlpool would be stilled. It was always a great support to be able to talk through the issues and the feelings with some of my fellow prisoners. I soon discovered that they numbered among them a variety of exceptional minds with whom it was always a rewarding experience to tease out the logic or the spiritual strength of an argument and also to be able to evaluate the emotional pull of the contrary view. We had some struggles in these testing times!

However, I was lucky. A job in the hospital became vacant and it was offered to me, on whose recommendation I know not. This was known by all to be a rare privilege and no one of my number would have turned it down. No more did I. So I left the farm squad and joined the hospital staff as one of the five orderlies. There followed one of the most interesting five months of my life, further embellished by several unsought privileges. Now I had a roomy cell all to myself; I could have a bath at any time when off duty. `Duty` meant to take responsibilty for the place, for the patients (usually few), fetching and carrying food - and other paraphernalia - and going round with the doctor on his daily round to take `doctor`s orders` aand carry them through. Day and night duty

meant the 24 hours were divided into four shifts and, when I had served mine, 18 or more hours of freedom followed. And it was indeed freedom. There were no convicts in Dartmoor, only conscientious objectors. 900 of them. No doors were locked, in fact there were no locks left on the doors. Inmates of the hospital were served with good food and enough of it. There was a prison library; I read more during my five Dartmoor months than in any similar period of time in my life and I had my own books as well.

There was freedom of association, although `lights out` rang out at 10p.m. All work (except in the hospital, of course) finished at 6 o`clock and the summer evenings in 1918 were bright and warm. Some individuals, some groups, with very strong convictions about original sin and the need for special and individual salvation displayed placards in salient places and, on Sunday mornings, held services with short preachings in the central open square of the prison compound. There was no rejection of this, no interference. There came an occasion, however when Banks (universally known as "Banks the Anarchist" and a character much valued by us all) went one better than the morning preacher who had felt moved to dwell at unusual length and with exceptional intensity upon the theme `the Blood of the Lamb`. Banks instantly

composed a large and lurid placard with the single word `Blood` emblazoned upon it and, shortly after the preceding sermon, paraded himself about the square with the device fixed to his back like a sandwich man. Much amusement followed and the stunt was taken in good part.

"Man is called upon to conduct life, why should he not discuss it?" There was much discussion of life ahead for me now. The Dartmoor community comprised these 900 men in the prime of their lives each one moved by sufficient inner power to criticise and reject the generally accepted tenets and arrangements of the society in which they lived. Resistance to war and criticism of the highly developed `power-society` which was seen as the root cause of the war ethic were common to us all in our joint and several ways. Inevitably, I found myself a member of a `cell` which met weekly - after 10 0`clock at night. In a cell, of course. Usually the cell of `Banks the Anarchist`, for he always seemed to be better provided than the rest with the prerequisites for real hospitality. A candle burned in an empty bottle and coffee was made in a marmalade jar which, curiously, never cracked. Where the coffee came from or, indeed, what it was really composed of, none of us ever discovered. So we would sit around, some on the floor and some on the bed; a fine prison this, we often said to each other. Members specially prominent were two well-schooled Marxists; one the thin-lipped Morgan from South Wales, the other a broad-spoken Lowland Scot from Clydeside. Few of us had so complete and unshakeable a philosophy as these two. In each there resided a kind of hunger for a fuller life, sharpened by a thrusting mind already widely read in works such as Maine`s "Ancient Law", Winwood Read`s "Martyrdom of Man". I had the advantage - was it an advantage? - of both a university education and a high degree of theological training; I was practised in discussion, in the formulation of ideas, as also in the guiding not to say leading of groups, small and large. And my point of view, inevitably organic with my background training in Christianity and in the Student Christian Movement kind of progressive diagnosis of social, national and international institutions, was liberal,

responsible and inclusive. I would concede the point that it might well be viewed as an idealists stance, but then I have never really understood what is wrong with the idea of idealism? In this cell I had my first experience, oft times repeated thereafter, of the distrust of the committed Marxist. Again and again I was to meet this capacity for outright rejection, rejection `sight unseen`, so to speak, of a new idea without halting first to examine its true content. In this group the main thrust of the discussion was always in the direction of enabling social function through the better understanding of the nature of man and of a society co-operatively leading to ever greater degrees of true democracy and internationalism; all rooted in the first prerequisite: that of better and ever better universal education. Of these ideas I found myself often the chief protagonist. But our Marxist bretheren would endlessly, and predictably, reject and then argue against these theses and I, in turn, found I had to marshall all my resources in defence against the thrust of the promoted facts of Marxism (as perceived by Morgan and Miller in our group) whose argument could be presented thus: "Give us the land, the rivers, the mines, ownership and/or control of all the major national institutions and we can do everything; we can make the new society nationally and then, in time, internationally also." I always felt myself at a

disadvantage in these confrontations (for that is what they felt like) in that the `opposition` had studied Karl Marx - or had they? and I had not. Many years were to pass before I found for myself that the clue to Marxist theory and philosophy lay, not so much in forceful political control if necessary by force, as in the fight against the increasing sense of alienation ofhuman beings from the society of which they are an integral part. The idea that a human being is *also an economic unit* and must be treated with respect on that count as well as all the other aspects did not come to me until much later. The more the pity.

Since growth was indeed one of my basic aims, this weekly group provided a regular source of fertilizer. I learned a lot about different types of men, learned to understand them, respect them and respect their differences. Indeed, one of the five orderlies in the hospital with me, part of my close Dartmoor coterie, was Tyson the Bolton weaver, also a schooled Marxist, but a little less doctrinaire and aggressive than his fellow travellers. He was true Lancashire - consciously working class in origin but shrewd, intelligent, sharp and generous. The three others: Mark Hayler, Victor Callow and Reg Fuller were strong personalities all, each one holding firm convictions and well able to stand their own ground wherever there merged a conflict of interest. We had much in common and worked a very successful and co-operative rota, each one taking care of the others` interests. We each felt that here, in microcosm, was a working model to illustrate our own concepts of fellowship and co-operation. I think that, in some ways, I spread myself and my activities more widely than most of my peers; the free arrangements of Dartmoor Prison at the time allowed us a great degree of latitude and the illusion of freedom. I had no idea of any attempt at escaping this interesting prison life on the Devon moors - for me incarceration was the price that my society had demanded

of me for the attendant privileges of `contracting out`. (4) Some of the others did, however. The great gate was open until 9.30 at night. A civilised way to treat political prisoners. There was absolutely no difficulty about escape but - then what? Quite a few of the inmates did abscond. Inside Dartmoor they were known as the "Royal Flying Corps". As a rule they were pretty soon apprehended and then they were sent, not back to the relative privilege of Dartmoor but to another prison such as Wakefield, or Barlinnie in Glasgow with attendant hard labour. This always seemed to me to be a poor exchange.

Sometimes friends, and very occasionally Irene, would come to meet me outside the main gate. Such snatched moments of intimacy were particularly precious and a significant part of my `support system`. I was surprised and very moved by the number of people who were prepared to make such a special journey for that express purpose. Certainly it gave origin to a number of quite exceptional human exchanges. Several such conversations have remained with me down the years. Bright in my memory is the afternoon when a friend of Ghandi`s, a fine Indian named Jesudason whom I knew through the Student Christian Movement came to meet me. We walked to Two Bridges, had tea there, then slowly back again through the gathering twilight on Dartmoor to reach the gate in time. The talk was wide-ranging concerning not only our mutual Christianity and the challenge thereto of our times but also much about the politics of the day and particularly the relationship of India and Britain and some of the appalling history that lay

behind. A kind, gentle and thoughtful man.

Throughout those summer months I wandered for hours upon the moors. I would climb tor after tor; would lie in the heather and stay there to read for a while, for I always had a book in my pocket. Now it was no longer the Latin Primer, as of yore, it was more likely to be some work of Edward Carpenter, for he was my kind of man. I had already read "Towards Democracy" more than once and also had a close acquaintance with: "Civilization, its Cause and Cure", "The Healing of Nations" or "Love`s Coming of Age". Carlyle was another favourite read and, during this time I discovered William Morris, starting with "News from Nowhere" and responded strongly to his philosophy of society. The end of the carnage and slaughter was, by now, already in sight and we were all thinking and talking of nothing else. For the first time in five years there was a whiff of optimism in the air. Now it was November.

Armistice Day - 11th November 1918. At once I applied for permission to leave Dartmoor in order to join the Quaker Mission (both British and American) which I knew was being formed to go to France to start the work of rebuilding the "regions devastees" of northern France. I was the first to get away from Dartmoor. By January I was already in France. In the grey uniform of The Friends and the Friend's star on my cap I joined the working team (the equipe) at Sermaize in the Argonne.

(4) I had no doubt that contracting out was an apt description of my attitude but when challenged with this view I had always been able to respond with the riposte that what I was actually doing was to contract in to another form of social arrangement in response to a higher imperative.

CHAPTER VII

World War I - "The Kaiser's War" 1914-18 - destroyed four empires. The Russian, Ottoman, German and the Austro-Hungarian hegemony was attacked, ruined and ultimately destroyed during those years. In August 1914 the die was cast. The world was never to be the same again. That breakdown of empire set off the chain of events leading to revolution in Romanoff Russia, dismemberment of the Turkish Empire, and the Kaiser's German Empire was reduced to a singular Republic virtually contained within European boundaries. Kaiser Wilhelm and Kaiser Karl abdicated; the Romanoff royal family were murdered in 1917 at Ekaterinburg and historic Poland was restored to the political map of Europe. The Habsburg Empire flew apart with a centrifugal force engendered by centuries of internecine strife - and not without much lingering and dangerous hostility. Suddenly there appears on the political map of Europe: Czechoslovakia, 'Greater' Rumania, Jugoslavia, a dismembered Hungary back from history

with remaining monarch (wearing the crown of St.Stephen!) but in baulk to a regent. And Austria. 'Little Austria' - a small democratic republic with Vienna. Vienna, that great historic city at the crossroads of Europe, now reduced to the status "the eagle head without a body" (1). This global European breakdown meant lost territories, changed frontiers and, inevitably, tens and hundreds of thousands of refugees struggling to make their way back to their ethnic homelands in a miasma of bitterness, breavement, hatreds, starvation and famine. This was the dangerous, explosive state of Europe after the cessation of hostilities, even before Versailles. My star pointed me firmly in that direction.

Within a few weeks of my release from Dartmoor I was on my way to meet the next great challenge. A challenge which, in its wider context, was to occupy me more than fully for the next six years and beyond. Relief work not only in the 'regions devastees' of France but, subsequently, throughout the new lands of Europe. Before the end of 1918 I was already in France with the star of the Quaker "War Victim's Relief" on the arm of my gray uniform and the front of my gray cap. The Hotel Brittanique near the Pont Neuf in Paris housed me for a week. My first visit to France. What a thrill! - I visited the special places: Notre Dame, The Louvre, The Madeleine, Place de la Concorde, Tour Eiffel, Les Invalides with Napoleon's Tomb. A Europhile all my life and confirmed internationalist, this was the seemingly unreal induction to the reality which lay beyond. I would not see Paris with those innocent eyes again. Then, from the Gare de L'Est a swinging French train bore me rapidly to the wooded, rolling country that is north-eastern France there to join the 'Mission des Amis' at Sermaize.

Paris, Chalons, Rheims were now clearly on the map in my mind's eye. I was

(1) The double-headed eagle had been the emblem of Austro-Hungary since time (nearly) immemorial, and on the dissolution of the Habsburg empire the phrase 'The head without a body' was coined to describe the state of the new Austria.

very familiar with that tongue ere long. When I first saw this land all the villages and the farmsteads were in total ruin; all the women wore black and the very land itself seemed to be in mourning as well as the people. Sermaize had been a prosperous small town with 4,000+ inhabitants in a good farming area. It had been reduced to rubble and all its people were either dead or refugees. By the time I arrived in early 1919 the British / American Mission had already erected over 100 pre-fabricated houses which were themselves manufactured by another section of the Mission at Dole, south of Besancon, ssince the armistice. The Quaker movement with its everpresent human concerns, as so often before, was the first on the scene and I was happy to be among the early arrivals. Here indeed was the reverse of the coin of my profound Christian anti-war conviction and all its recent consequences. I began to experience a sense of personal destiny. This was to be my work. I did not yet realise - how could I? - that within two years my parish would stretch from the Seine to the Volga.

A few months after the armistice Prof. R.W.Seton-Watson wrote:

> "From the first it seemed to me obvious that the Pan-German plan, summed up in the two catch words `Mittel-Europa` and `Berlin-Baghdad`, could never be defeated simply by a policy of negation, but was a challenge to the Western democracies..... to produce a rival programme.
>
> To my mind the territorial issues seemed to centre in the creation of a new

Europe upon a mainly racial basis with the reduction of Germany to her national boundaries; the restoration of Polish and Bohemian (Czechoslovak) independence; the completion of Italian, Rumanian and Greek national unity and the ejection of the Turks from Europe.

Only very slowly did it dawn upon the public mind that such a programme was the only road to victory, to the overthrow of the old order and to the establishment of the League of Nations."

The programme here described by the outstanding British interpreter of European affairs became the standard for the next 20 years of my personal commitment to the New Europe. And here I was. What could I do? The answer was not long in coming. The day after my arrival at Sermaize the following exchange (or something very similar) took place at dawn:

"What can you do?"

"Well - I can speak French, I can organise, I can write. I can do farm work...."

"Right, you're the man we want. You can drive a horse and manage a cart. Our jack- of-all trades 'Drunkey' is past his best today. You'll take his horse and cart to the wood - there's a lot of cut firewood there waiting for you to haul it to the equipe".

I had trained myself in self-sufficiency and various spartan ways since before the inception of the Boy Scouts and "Be Prepared" was a motto that I always felt Baden-Powell had appropriated from me. So the present requirement did not disturb me. I knew how to speak to a horse in Scotland - but how to speak to this French quadruped whose name, I learned, was Romeo? Even scottish equine language is not easily spelled and the

French version was even more obscure. However, some sounds came to me and I directed them at Romeo, a dapple grey of medium size (no Percheron he!) and to my surprise Romeo started and stopped at my behest.(1) Thus was my personal effort at European reconstruction launched. I made 4 `rakes` that day to the wood and back with heavy loads and when `Drunkey` appeared in the afternoon, looking somewhat bemused, he stayed long enough to give us both his blessing and retired once more.

Following this experience and in keeping with the universal flawed logic of all human institutional organisations I was shortly thereafter transferred to the Mission's Transport Dept. However I was not destined to become a motor mechanic and by the time I had learned a little about grinding valves I realised that life offered alternative prospects. At my own request I was then moved to the Building Department where my French language proved to be of more use. We lived in the above-mentioned pre-fabricated `barraques` whch proved to be rather chilly (even our American friends had to do without central heating here) and January / February 1919 proved to be extremely cold in northern France and there was much snow and ice. My bunk in the barraque was 4 feet above the floor and there was just room for a candle beside my head. Dartmoor had been more civilized. Night after night I read the seven volumes of "Jean Christophe", that fine novel by Romain Rolland, in the French paperback edition. Along with Edward Carpenter, Rolland was one of my literary heroes of the time.

Gradually we set about marshalling the few remaining local resources to build temporary

buildings, to find food for the refugees and to pursue the endless effort of trying to restore the devastated farmlands of the region to productivity. Without pay, pioneering, living rough and working very hard, this small international band of volunteers, including many from America, toiled to restore some degree of order to the `Regions Devastees` of N E France. Emissaries were despatched to all points of the compass in France and beyond looking for any or all the basic necessities for life and the wider farming communities - in tatters all about us. The Agricultural Dept. (`The Aggies`) carried out an imaginative and creative programme of restoration for the surviving peasants and farmers. There was no middle class. I remember that Geoffrey Franklin, one of our most entertaining members, was seldom to be seen for he was endlessly away scouring Europe (France, Italy, Holland, Spain)to bring back new bloodstock - cows, sheep, goats and, occasionally, even horses.

I had finished reading Jean Christophe before being transferred.Leaving my bunk and candle in Sermaize I now moved nearer to the heart of the Argonne, to Clermont. A few months earlier the wooded hill at Clermont had been the headquarters of the American C.-in-C. General J.J.Pershing. Now the open forest glade (if you could still call it that) at the top of the hill became the Friends' Meeting Place each first day of the week. Achieving a still keener contrast to war's futile destructiveness, the Mission, having bought up a number of army supply dumps from the U.S.Army, sold a car-load of bayonets to a farm-tool manufacturer to be melted and recast into ploughshares! What a metaphor for the poets:

(1) The Percheron is the powerful, thickset draught horse of France and Belgium. A sort of Continental Clydesdale.

"Jerusalem fell in Lambeth Vale,
Down through Poplar and old Bow,
In Malden and across the sea,
In war and howling, Death and woe." (Wm. Blake).

Building and restoring in Clermont en Argonne I recall many a walk in the woods, the air fragrant with lily-of-the-valley, acres white with bloom. The poignancy was almost overwhelming.

There is a long seemingly white road from Metz to Chalons and thence to Paris. I do not know how old this road may be, but the Romans moved along it 2000 years ago. On a spring day in 1919 I was on that road with my wheels travelling from Clermont-en-Argonne to Chalons-sur-Marne - a distance of some 70 kilometres. This was a day of days. All the fine things were playing about that day: wind, sunshine, green grass, fruit blossom, the larks above, blue sky overall and a few drifting white clouds. That day the illusion was of happiness but there was a real promise of life about in the air. I rode through the ancient Forest of Argonne via Les Islettes to St. Menehouls. A forest of great beeches, ash and slender birch trees; some pines lent a touch of sombre dignity and mystery to the landscape and wonder and creation were all around. I felt myself to be in the presence of my Maker and could only wonder and wonder at it all. The intolerable sense of collective pain from the recent carnage seemed allayed a little - for the nonce.

That night however, and for seemingly endless nights thereafter, I was awakened again

and again by lumbering American trucks carrying the thousands of makeshift coffins across the land - to the sea and the USA. The remains of the American boys were being repatriated in death. Those which could be found and identified. During a few days at Easter that year a few of us cycled the 100 kilometres to Verdun, gaunt symbol of that historic, heroic battle, a mere skeleton city. [It was at a critical moment in the Battle of Verdun that, in the midst of the desperate hand-to-hand fighting, a French officer, seeing all his men dead around him, summoned them all in ringing tones: "Debouts les morts, debouts les morts" to rise up and fight again]. I set out to visit the village of Vauquois and could not find it. So rent and mangled had it been by mines, shells and mortars that even the returning local people were unable to decide where their homes had previously stood. Even the location of the major buildings which had been their railway station had been obliterated in that suffering landscape.

These powerful and contrasting images of God and the Devil were all around us and we were all much affected. How could any man have survived the reality of the preceding years with his soul intact?

Somehow, in pursuing the relentless demands of of reconstruction, we found an escape route from the universal sense of depression and disaster and we all laboured on supported by the sense of mutuality and shared goals. Individual strengths, as also the weaknesses, were quickly laid bare in these conditions; friendships were quickly made and cemented and the group rapidly gained an identity and its own ethos. The power of such a group of self-selected individuals - both men and women - from such diverse backgrounds was very impressive and we all reaped rich rewards from each other and the context of the work. I was now 30 years of age and my established conviction of man's over-riding need for fellowship with others, with the land and with God was here

endorsed, day after day, in the most demanding circumstances I had yet encountered. I could never shake off the sense of wonderment at the riches and the beauty of the earth in such stark contrast to man's inhumanity to man and the brooding evil genius for destruction that lurks in God's shadow. The egotist in us all is the enemy. A few years earlier I had given a lecture on this theme at an SCM conference and in it I said: "Of course the struggle for life is always there, but that is only the pass exam. The honours are only taken in life when one gets beyond that - beyond egotism. A person can only in truth 'be himself' (or herself) when he has learnt to set aside his own egotism."

These weeks and months of hard labour ploughed ineluctably on and we were all amazed, in the end, at how much we were able to achieve in so short a time with such limited resources. We were all exhausted - but exhilarated at the same time - by the rebuilding of this shattered land. We all needed a rest and - one by one - we took one. In June it was my turn and I took a week's holiday to attend the WSCF International Conference (2) in Switzerland. Here I made a great walking tour. Alone. Thun, Brienz, the gorge of the Aar, Grimsel, the Rhone glacier, Andermatt, Altdorf (and William Tell's monument), the Fluelen and then a boat on Lake Lucerne (Lake of the 4 Cantons). I viewed the hilltop where the early three tribes formed the alliance so many centuries earlier which, by degrees, became the Confederation Suisse with its 22 Cantons which we know today. Finally I climbed the Faulhorn with a score of students. Up to 9000 ft, in the evening, to sleep in the cowsheds - above the cows - and to rise at 2a.m. to watch the

sunrise. The rest of that day I roamed the hills and then returned to the Brienzersee for an evening swim. That brief 'rest' is imprinted upon my memory for many reasons not least the really serious sunburn I acquired which took me into a Swiss hospital for the next five days! And so, eventually, back to Clermont.

In July the Mission began to close its operation and to hand over the work to the returning French population. So - what next? My thoughts instantly turned to Irene. Irene and then home. Home to Dornoch, to Evelix and to my mother and father. The idea was simple enough. But how? Travel at this time was supremely difficult and long journeys, let alone international ones, full of complications and uncertainties. However necessity, we are told, is an imaginative parent and I soon discovered that there were used cars to be found for sale. I had never driven a motor vehicle and had but a nodding acquaintance with the internal combustion engine. Well, I had surmounted greater problems in my life, so it all came to pass. I had now been working for more than half a year for 30 Fr. francs (£1 equivalent) per week all found. Such cash as I had I would need for the journey. So I wired 'Grant, Evelix' to send a cheque for £70 to the mission and, shortly thereafter, possessed myself of my first ever motor vehicle. It was a 1915 model-T Ford.. I was all set for Sutherland.

Fortune favours the brave (foolhardy?) and Leonard Barnes, a young engineer from the group, had agreed to accompany me as far as London and, with some timely assistance from him (for he had sat in such a machine before) I had some practice in driving - forward ever forward, for reverse was a closed book to us both - en route to Southampton. By the time we reached England my money supplies were in terminal decline but with my ever-inventive mind and excellent recall I remembered that Olive

(2) World Student Christian Federation.

Moberley (an SCM colleague of times gone by) lived in Southampton. It was the work of a few moments to discover her father's name in the telephone book and shortly I had another £5 in my pocket. That would surely take me the last 500 miles, back to Evelix?

In London I parted from Leonard and visited again my Uncle Joseph who worked as an administrator at The Middlesex Hospital in Mortimer Street. I then collected Irene who was waiting for me at SCM headquarters. We were not yet married of course: with the pressure of events how could we have been? But that primary objective was in sight. We both knew that it was going to happen and, in any event, we also knew that in the eyes of the Lord we were already as one. What a meeting was there. I would write about it if I could.

From London we set off for Swanwick in Derbyshire for the SCM summer conference In Bedford, however, my new-found friend the model-T took a wrong turning - the wrong way up a one-way street. Disaster. Must reverse. Reverse? How do you do that? With Irene as my scout the operation was achieved by my willing mechanical horse before the arrival of hostile forces and on we went. At Swanwick Irene and I were among old friends and what an array of conversations we had there! All, all had their own stories of struggle, pain and reconstruction to report. We were all good listeners and there was an over-arching sense of of reconstruction in the air - rebuilding not just of personal lives but also of institutions and, indeed, of nations and federations. The feeling of hope was so strong as to be almost tangible. Otherwise..... what

was all that slaughter for? I was together with Irene and and we talked and talked far in to the night. So many plans we had, and so little time, for she had to return to her work in Manchester and I was off to Scotland. After breakfast the next day I set off for the North.

Two days later I reached Bonar Bridge, the village where the beautiful old Telford Bridge (3) carried the road north from Rosshire into the county of Sutherland. 10 miles to go. The Ford had managed an average speed of between thirty and forty miles an hour - most of the time. I had informed brother George John, Pulrossie (4) that I was on my way - on my way, indeed, with the first motor-car that any of us had owned in the county. I had told him that I intended to drive my new mechanical friend up to the Pulrossie front door, for inspection. Little did I know! Bonar Bridge to Pulrossie - that beautiful home stretch among the oaks past the Doune of Creich on the northern shore of the Dornoch Firth in shade and sunshine. Beauty and expectation all around. So, finally, with 1000 miles already behind me I sped the last mile along the farm road known as Pulrossie avenue noticing, as I passed, the deep ditch, grassy and wide, on each side of the well-cambered stony and muddy road. Sure enough the Ford chose this spot for its first playful attempt at a skid. Into the ditch. 200 yards from my (older) brother's front door. "Sic transit gloria mundi" - I felt it. Smiling nonetheless, I climbed the brae expecting the inevitable caustic comment but no. His face sent the message while he

(3) That magnificent old piece of early industrial architecture is, sadly, no longer with us. It was replaced and demolished in the mid-20th century by another structure from a different architectural idiom that, for some of us, does not do justice to the location.

(4) George John, farmer of Pulrossie, was by now already a significant figure in the community. He was to become the convenor (leader) of the County Council, in the fulness of time.

said, with ill-concealed pleasure: "you have the motor but I have what will bring him home". So we walked to the steading to find John Lockie, the foreman. In a few minutes John appeared leading the biggest and, by this time, the oldest Clydesdale in the county. His name, suitably enough, was Thor. With a big,strong rope Thor was attached to the Ford. Quietly the giant horse leaned forward, took the strain,then walked. Slowly, gently Thor walked step by step toward Pulrossie farmhouse. Equally slowly, gently and relentlessly, the Ford followed. So I brought that Henry Ford home from France to Evelix. My Evelix. Thankyou Thor. George always had a word for it, whatever the occasion: now he christened the new mechanical horse 'Boanerges' (5). The happy vehicle answered ever after to the name of Bo.

'Home' is a rich word:

"I remember, I remember the house where I was born
The little window where the sun came peeping in at morn..... "

I remember my little window alright but it faced the west and my memories were of the welcome autumnal winds calling me out very early to fork the oats or barley in 'the leading'. Now, after five daunting, testing and in some ways even, wonderful years, I had come home To rejoin my family and replenish the inner resources latterly so depleted by the demanding and enveloping chaos of post-war Europe. Home again to be with my father; he who, unforgettably, had prayed with me and for me, a boy of eighteen leaving home for the university and the wide

world, and who had - I knew - "held me before the Throne of Grace" morning and night ever since. He who accepted me completely as I was although he knew that I had outgrown and relinquished certain cherished beliefs that were, for him, the very basis of "life, death and a never-ending eternity". My father who intimately felt our communion to be unbroken saying, finally, " Well, Don, I know that you have faith." (He was to say that again, three years later on his death-bed: "Don is far away, but he has faith.")

During the next seven months I was to remain there, with Irene visiting as often as she was able, until the next 'call' came. New avenues for life and creativity were revealing themselves. But how to choose? Irene beckoned. The Church and the SCM beckoned. Europe beckoned. Contemplating these different pathways (not all mutually exclusive, of course) I became aware of a growing sense of 'vocation' leading me to make whatever contribution I could towards dealing with the cataclysm that was unfolding in post-war Central Europe.

In my personal philosophy I was aware that this was the real challenge which the Jesus of history was asking me to meet. At the same time I was deeply conscious of a growing change inside myself. My very concept of the nature of Man and his (and her!) relationship with God was on the move. My 'sense of calling' was in the process of profound change in the light of my recent experiences and my earlier youthful certainties were beginning to look less absolute. More and more my mind would return to the many discussions I had held during my university years with my close friend the philosopher

(5) James and John the sons of Zebedee were named by Jesus Boanerges, meaning 'sons of thunder'. Mark III, 17.

John Macmurray (5) and of course, with Irene, about the nature of Man and the very meaning of life - and of love. Whatever path I was now to choose must but must, ineluctably, include Irene and her needs also, for she was already a part of my soul. Here was a watershed indeed.

I needed this time at home to contemplate this collision of experience - my early years with all their peace, security and love in the North and my recent times in Dartmoor, in France and the dangerous maelstrom of the ravaged lands. And beyond, the growing realization that my twin anchors of intellectual and spiritual certainty - Jesus and Love - were both actively under review in my personal being, did nothing to relieve this dilemma. I was deeply aware how rapidly my horizons were expanding and how my earlier (?indeed my adolescent) philosophy could not encompass the changes demanded by experience. There must be many more mansions in my father's house than I had previously dreamt of. The limited and rigid Calvinistic purity and simplicity of my forbears was not adequate to this task and I knew that I had to widen my horizons in faith as well. Intimate cerebral exchanges with my own idea of Jesus at this time were concerned less and less with notions of rectitude and religious propriety (rooted in the absurd teachings of "confessional doctrine" and ideas of "the elect") but more and more with Jesus' teaching, as I understood the scriptures, of humility, tolerance and acceptance. Man's inhumanity to man was a new dimension for me but, if Jesus could not cast light on this seemingly bottomless pit, where was I to find it? My faith was at a crossroads and I knew it.

So this brief interlude in the home of my fathers gave me respite, reward and renewal. To the full I savoured the peace, the natural life of the farm, the spacious Northland. Attracted by the

elements I would don my football strip, pull on tennis shoes to run a mile in the heavy rain, or hike for an hour or two in the hills three miles away. In no time I found myself integrated into the routine of the farm and the old familiar ways. The comforts and the powerful warmth of family life. Peace. Tranquil. The seasons. Shape, form, cause and effect. Endless creativity, order and reward for effort. It was all around me and it was good. Very good. Security. The present and the past pointing - and pulling the - to a similar future. But did I really want to live that life? Did I relish the same future? Here was the rub for me. I knew there was another world abroad. Indeed, in this 'closed' world at home I was the only one who did know. I was the only one who had seen this "dark side of the moon". The old life, the old certainties beckoned me - how powerfully did they pull. With the idea of Irene, marriage and a family as the greatest purpose. If my father or my mother had put pressure on me, let alone Irene, I would have been sore pressed indeed. No one of them did. They all knew that I was my own man and must find my own way so they left me to struggle with my own vision of my own vision of the future.There have been occasional events in my life which invited a

(5) After a distinguished academic career in the Universities of Edinburgh, Oxford and London John Macmurray eventually became the Professor Emeritus of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh.

belief in destiny, not to say predestination. One such occurred at this point. I received a letter in December 1919 from the Society of Friends (International) to ask if, under their auspices, I felt able to help by going back to Europe to make an assessment of the situation they were facing there and report on immediate needs relevant to their operation. With my recent experiences and possessing a facility in three languages I was thought to be an unusual resource. I would be in charge of their office in Vienna. I asked for 48 hours to consider this request. I think I knew, even before that request arrived, that I would go back to Europe in some capacity and there seemed to me to be something beyond chance in this letter. When I then spoke to Irene about it she said it was inevitable, she was entirely supportive and said she had known all along that "we would be going back to Europe" - clearly she had no intention of letting me go alone! So it came to pass. The sense of action and renewed purpose went some way to assuage our sadness at another parting but we both knew it was not to be for very long and that we would find a way to build our life together - in Vienna or wherever. So I set out for the Austrian capital, that timeless city on the Danube, at the crossroads of Europe. I could not yet know what a large part that ancient, cultured and beautiful city was to play in my life.

The imperial history was at an end but the Schlemperei remained for it was part of the Austrian character. The other side of that coin was the Austrian's love of beaureaucratic control (1). The old imperial emblem was the double-headed eagle with two crowns - one the crown of the Emperor and the other the more ancient crown of St. Stephen and the nearly 1000-year-old Hungarian monarchy. Where in 1914 Vienna was one of the great capital cities of Europe and head of an empire of 53 million people, after the war it survived only as the head of a small alpine republic of 6 million. The aura of creativity and romance, however, lingered on for a long time there after.

Vienna is more than 2500 years old. Place names and coins reveal that the Celts were already there 1500 years before Christ. For the Romans it was an important encampment called Vindobona and it corresponds with the walled town of the middle ages. As old as Rome and with Koln (Cologne) the oldest Germanic city. The most ancient building still extant is the RuprechtsKirche (St. Rupert's Church) founded by the Bishop of Salzburg in the 8th century. Tradition has it that St. Ruprecht was much involved in the very profitable salt trade - begun by the Celts and the Romans - which remained a great source of wealth for the city for at least 1000 years. In the tenth century pious sailors erected another church by the shores of the Danube known as St. Maria am Gestade, built of wood. The famous Gothic stone church which stands there now was not finished until 1534.

In the Middle Ages the Danube followed a different path and washed the walls of the old city. The old walled city is today's 'Innere Stadt' (inner city) - now at some distance from the great river. Vienna was always one of Europe's most important trading centres standing, as it does, on the major European trade route half way between London and Constantinople (Istanbul). It therefore had immense strategic importance. From the North in mediaeval times would come great wooden rafts carrying marble, lime, salt, leather, hides and weapons while upstream from Hungary, the Near East and the further Orient would come wheat, wine, spices, silk and fruit. Vienna was the mercantile centre and only Viennese merchants were permitted to engage in the commerce. They and their city became rich. But through many centuries Vienna and the West were constantly at risk to the invasions of the ever-threatening Ottoman Empire and many place-names bear witness to the associated battles. This threat only finally receded in the 17th century. Up to this time the Lutheran influence of the German Reformed Church held sway but the Protestant society of 15th century Germany was under counter-attack by the Roman church and the Austrian state finally reverted to the Church of Rome in the early 16th century and has remained profoundly Catholic ever since.

In 1678 the great architect Fischer von Erlach came to Vienna and ushered in the full flower of the age of Baroque architecture for which the city is so famous. In the course of the next 45 years this great man with his Italianate genius left so great an impact that it is now not possible to view any of Vienna's most famous quarters without being affected by either a Fischer von Erlach building or, at the least, his surviving influence. The Karlskirche may be his most

CHAPTER VIII

Wien. The Vienna of Franz Joseph (who was crowned in 1848, the year of revolution in Europe) was one of culture, militarism, organisation, music and romance. A citizen of Imperial Austria could travel without a passport from Switzerland to Bessarabia and from Prague to Montenegro. The emperor allowed audience on request to all his subjects. The rich and their riches were everywhere in evidence and most of them were only seen in dazzling gowns or uniforms. The huge palaces and enormous town houses were full of beautifully dressed men and women dancing, courting, eating, flirting and drinking the ubiquitous Austrian wine. After sixty years of this apparently secure and stable existence it is small wonder they gave so little thought to the future galloping towards them and Archduke Ferdinand in 1914.

In 1920 the international legend that was Vienna remained but the population, the politics and the sociology were changed beyond recall. A witty Viennese of the period aptly described the historic but now defunct Austro-Hungarian Empire as:

"Imperialismus gemildert durch Schlemperei"

("Imperialism softened by an easy-going muddle.")

notable (and, incidentally, his last) great monument. Lukas von Hildebrandt, his architect contemporary, was almost as famous. Between them they left an unique and indelible stamp on the physical aspects of this beautiful imperial city, including the great palaces of Schonbrunn and The Belvedere.

The great Austrian figures of the 18th century are famous around the world - Maria Theresia, the founding empress of modern Austria, Innsbruck and Vienna; Prinz Eugen who campaigned with Marlborough and helped him to victory at the battle of Blenheim. They were followed by Metternich (2) who stamped form, rigour and efficiency upon the administration of this huge empire. The powerful political events of this time were played out against the background of Europe's greatest humanist centre where the explosion of musical genius in the works of Josef Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert (among so many others) drew a searchlight of fame upon the international city where an unparalleled tradition of Western culture was being established. At the same time Vienna was earning itself an international reputation as one of the great European centres of learning with the famous and ancient university as its fulcrum.

Prince Clemens Lothar Wenzel Metternich, a German nobleman, the son of an old-established family in the Rhineland, became the Emperor's Foreign Minister and all-powerful adviser. Both were rooted in the aristocratic traditions of a semi-feudal regime and deeply influenced by the horrors of the French Revolution and recoiled from the earlier 'humanist' experiments.

The great "Biedermeier" era (3) in the early 19th century (roughly 1815-1848) was dominated by Emperor Franz I and Metternich; it was lived out in the political undertow of the French Revolution and the ensuing Napoleonic wars, which had sent tremors all over Europe and beyond The flowering of European culture during this time with Vienna as its hub could be viewed as the response of the social creative genius to a period of political stability and relaxation. Then the revolutionary years, culminating in the fateful year of 1848, called a halt to this period of narcissistic self-satisfaction. The young Franz Josef became Emperor and a new era of growth and civic reorganisation was embarked upon. He was to remain head of state through an historic reign of 68 years during which he strove to hold together his huge empire of 17 different nationalities. Perhaps his greatest legacy was to be the urban reorganisation of his capital city. Of this the Ringstrasse was the showpiece (4). He was to die in 1916 - the paralysed and petrified patriarch, the last member of the Habsburg dynasty that had dominated central Europe for centuries. Queen Victoria - monarch of the other great empire of the western world - was his contemporary and she was, in so many ways, his mirror image in rectitude, and adherence to protocol and propriety. This was the world of law and order and a social structure rooted in property, status and privilege.

The industrial revolution was gathering pace and generating a new mercantile wealth and, at the same time, a new underclass who worked the factories. This was the time of Charles Dickens and Karl Marx and the rise of the new politics in Europe. Democracy was flexing its muscle and the socialist movement began to take root. Among the early socialist agitators Adelheid Popp came to fame among the working class of Vienna. Dr. Victor Adler and Otto

Bauer were to become the political leaders of this tide in Austria in the early 20th century. The Pantheon of Vienna's greatest creative figures was to include, from the world of music, such names as Schumann, Brahms, Mahler, the Johann Strausses - father and son,
Richard Strauss and his librettist the poet Hugo von Hoffmansthal and Hugo Wolff, Schonberg and his pupils Berg and Webern. Among the famous artists were to come

(2) One view of this period, diagnosing the Biedermeier era as an escapist stagnation-in-cosiness time, was put a century later by the Viennese poet Josef Weinheber in the deliberately simplified form of a poem called 'Biedermeie'. (Weinheber was deeply in love with what he saw as 'his' Old Vienna, with the old half-rural suburbs, the Wienerwald, the parks, the inflections of the dialect when it was genuine, but he hated make-believe and was a satirist and grumbler in the best Viennese fashion.) The poem describes in flat verses a family of nice middle-class people : the father grafting yellow and red roses - the mother lovingly dusting her knick-knacks - auntie dozing in a garden corner - the girl dreaming of her young man, he of her, and the couple whispering across the garden fence at night - the clock striking under a glass dome, time itself vanquished by a figurine. Then a thunderstorm sweeps through the "junk shop", and the dream bubble bursts on the barricades - the barricades of 1848.

(3) The Ringstrasse (now simply The Ring) was the high point, the central concept, of the design of the 'New Vienna'. It is a wide boulevard which encircles the old (mediaeval) city following the line of the original ramparts in the shape of a horseshoe, the ends of which are closed by the Danube Canal. Great new public buildings arose along its path starting with the Opera next to the old Hofburg, and including the new University building, the great twinned Museums of Natural History and Art, and the Rathaus (City Hall and Council Chamber).

Klimt, Schiele and Kokoschka to name but three. Then consider the Viennese theatre and the Opera, both world-famous, let alone the emergence of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. Small wonder that the city became the European centre of culture. Further, Vienna was becoming renowned for the quality of its university and scholarship and was, indeed, pre-eminent as a medical centre and medical school. Small wonder again then, that it was here in Vienna, albeit after years of internal academic strife, that the jewish Prof. Sigmund Freud emerged to challenge the accepted medical view of the nature of man and womankind. What an irony that this explicit challenge from the school of psychoanalysis rooted in new theories of the nature of human sexuality (as taught by Freud) should find its first audience among the prurient middle and upper classes of the Habsburg capital. Freud's theory of the inherently sexual nature of neurosis was to appeal to and, indeed, to capture the spirit of Viennese society during the ensuing decades. Here was the birth of a new philosophy - emerging from a society already mortally stricken and rushing toward its funeral rites in the Great War of 1914-18. However, the abiding beauty, the history and the endless charm of the great city survives, as I quickly discovered following my arrival there in January 1920.

Within hours I was receiving advice and information from all quarters - from friends, from strangers, in person, in letters and all other lines of communication; also in various languages many of which I did not understand. The sense of chaos and paralysis was all-pervading and infectious. It was instantly clear that I must bring some discipline, both personal

and organisational, into the equation in order not to succumb to the chaos and despair. I quickly determined that my philosophy must be one of strictly limited objectives and that these must be objectives which our paltry resources could, conceivably, meet. To this end I set myself a programme of seeking informed opinion and listening. Listening, with the mind as well as the ears, is one of the great skills and I was beginning to get a little better at it. I held endless conversations with people from all walks of life. Many such were with Viennese politicians, intellectuals, academics and beaureaucrats and the most significant was a long talk that I had with the eminent Dr. Redlich (4) - now a professor at the University of Vienna. I was required to write a report on that meeting. Here it is:

> Vienna, February10th 1920. Dr. Redlich of Vienna University is one of the best known men in the political and intellectual world. He was a minister in the government which advised Kaiser Karl to abdicate. Yesterday he told me himself of that meeting when he and some other ministers advised the Kaiser thus. Now he is not in the government but he remains in government but he remains in close touch with all that goes on..
>
> Immediately we were talking of the present situation in Europe - the Treaty, the ruin, the revolution. I spoke of the

(4) Josef Redlich, eminent historian, expert on the history of local government in England and in Austria. He was a member of the Lower House of the Austrian parliament and a most important member of many of the senior committees of that house. He became the trusted advisor of Kaiser Franz Josef and friend of many international statesmen of the time.

actual "5 years' Revolution" and he agreed. The only way to combat Bolshevism, he said, was with food. Hungry, starving people fall into despair and have nothing more to lose; minds become fearful and panic-stricken so anything may happen. Even in these terrible times there are people who make profit out of the suffering of others and the high prices. In Vienna food is held up at the point of distribution while the prices rise. Even the peasants will withold their produce until they get a higher price. So the need becomes ever more acute. If it became known that half a million tons of flour from America had reached Vienna, prices would immediately fall with a bang. So, said Dr. Redlich, if Britain and America can send in food, the psychological difference that would make would be enormous and it would do something to dispel the fears and the greed.

"Central Europe is in a pathological state" I said, "there is an attitude of mind common to all the nations whose manifestations are the unrest, the wild projects, the vain efforts, misdirection of resources, keen nationalism and a rising tide of Bolshevism."

"Agreed, just so" replied Dr. Redlich "and the men who have been thinking themselves the guides and the leaders of Europe have not understood and do not yet understand. Clemenceau saw through Wilson at once. Clemenceau is the cleverest rascal in Europe. He said to himself 'we shall have to concede Wilson his idea of the League of Nations but then we can get him to compromise on that which we want from him.' So Wilson, later, gave way often without a struggle, when he need not have done so, simply because his Big Idea - The League of Nations - had been taken over. Clemenceau got what he wanted out of the negotiations and had no more fear of the League. Having made the concession to the positive idea of the League of Nations it was not, however, instantly carried into effect. In consequence the swing of

expectant Europe is now towards the only other 'great idea' that is in the air - the Soviet Revolution - or, as it is known in some quarters here: 'Das Licht von Osten' (' the Light from the East '). "

Here Dr. Redlich added "Churchill sees this danger, but he combats it with an inadequate response. Bayonets and bombs are futile against it. Only food and more food can save Central Europe from the westward march of Bolshevism. When that movement of Revolution reaches Central Europe and looks further West - what will Britain think then?" He then went on: "Germany alone can save Europe from the Bolshevist threat. The German, like the Englishman only more so, cannot stand disorder; he cannot work in a disorderly office or in a disorderly country, he must reduce things to order. But, owing chiefly to France, the efforts of the Entente (5) have tended towards the ruin of Germany. They wish her to be brushed from their path as a rival. This because they fail to understand the crucial role which Germany alone can play in dealing with the onset of European anarchy.

For the sake of Europe, Germany should now be helped to restoration (6); her coal should be left with her for industry and production. Only that which she is able to pay should be expected from her. She should thus be encouraged to build up order within her boundaries to take her place as a central bulwark against the menace from the East. She

(5)The "Little Entente" comprising Czechoslovakia, Roumania and Jugoslavia.

(6). The Versailles Treaty signed seven months earlier which entailed crippling reparations to be paid by the German nation.

alone can do it."
Unfortunately for us all, this prophetic view was not endorsed in the Western corridors of power in 1920. Germany was, in large measure, abandoned to her fate and the inevitable of aggressive nationalism in the ensuing period of economic chaos. The
governments of Central Europe were left to deal with the aftermath of the cataclysm with very little aid and no international co-ordination and the peoples were abandoned to their suffering.

In the light of this kind of intelligence and the minimal resources available to us it was very soon agreed within the Friends Mission that the only practical way forward was for us to target a limited slice of the population with food. The most significant slice of that population, with an eye to the 'short long term', was thought to be the students and their teachers. We embarked upon an instant review of the size of the problem and the feasibility of the project. On the 16th February I wrote (among other things) to Irene:

> "I have been totally occupied for some days past in setting up an administrative framework to engage in this problem of finding and delivering food to the population we have agreed to reach - students of all descriptions and the much deprived teaching staff of the University. In two days I set out on my first exploration of the Balkan states in pursuit of agricultural resources and food for Vienna and the nearby farmlands, so much of the population is at or near starvation point.
> We desperately need (at least) two workers to form a secretariat and room(s) for them to work in. My committee of SCM people and the Friends' special commissioners for

Europe have agreed to further this strategy in my absence. Now I w o r k o n m y itinerary to Hungary, Yugoslavia and Rumania and back - I very much hope - before the end of April....."

And again, two days later:

"last night I saw the sun, blood red, go down on the Danube. Low hills rose in the distance; Pressburg (now Bratislava) with its memories of the Turks and other invaders, was just behind me. The whole scene was dominated by this immense river and the setting sun. I had left Vienna by motor-car early in the afternoon, had made Pressburg by dusk and now , in the red twilight, my face was towards a strange land, Hungary and a strange city, Budapest. Red is the fitting colour for Hungary. The communist revolution held this nation in thrall for the first half of 1919 and were then defeated by the "White" reactionary forces and the latter have been in power since last August. Mounted Police and soldiers are everywhere. Repeatedly I had to produce my passport and to explain myself. Posters, crude and brutal, proclaim in raw colours the crimes of the defeated communists, of whom large numbers languish in prisons and in internment camps while others have been put to death. Bela Kun (7) is in hospital in Austria - exiled.

(7) Bela Kun was the leader of the abortive Communist revolution in Hungary in 1919.

The traveller in Hungary now is immediately immersed in the global sense of insecurity and the fear of the repressed forces thrust down again into brooding darkness..... "

My little Austrian driver had for three months driven the members of an international commission of investigation through all these newly separated nations of central Europe and he knew his work and the roads. These - the roads - are appalling, just mud more mud and ruts. One night I passed a convoy of thirty wagons, each drawn by four oxen. When transport is so slow and inadequate and trains so very infrequent, it is no wonder that the cities are all in such sore need of food and fuel. I have done a whole day's journey alongside the main railway line fro Austria into Hungary without seeing a single train. The very fact that I have to travel by motor between these two great cities is sufficient indication of the state of the railways.

Although these 'new' nations of central Europe fragmented one from the other and felt the excitement of nationalism previously suppressed, in economic terms they remain closely bound to one another and clearly can have little hope for the future as enemies. In another letter (Feb. 17th.) I wrote:

".... the political fact now is that they are separate nations and they seem to have more pride, more nationalism and more militarism than ever. Now there are strong barriers being erected between them interfering profoundly with travel and, indeed, with the

necessary diplomatic intercourse. One nation withholds its coal another raw materials and their previous productive capacity is further diminished. Soldiering seems the chief occupation. Hardly any trains run, factories are quiet, chimneys are smokeless. If this policy continues, these nations must go down further yet. They are committing suicide; only they do it with pride, wearing neat moustaches and military uniforms. The international exchange is another crushing burden. In Paris I got 45 francs for an English pound note, instead of the old time 25 francs. You now get about 1000 kronen (Austrian) for £1 - the previous rate was 25! The cost of a good meal here is about 50-60 kronen and workmen earn from 400-1500 k. per week, most of them much nearer the 400 mark. I have seen only paper money here , and you deal with it in handfuls.(8) I am asked if England will help Hungary to make war against her hostile neighbours and I reply 'certainly not, it is now 1920 and England is not making any more wars, the people will not allow it'. The astounding reply to that is ' then she will help us with money and munitions.' I am endlessly amazed at the capacity of people to believe that their own cause is the only just one and that, inevitably, God is on their side. I have no evidence that the God in whom I trust is on the side of any of us when we go to war.

The other day in Vienna I met a former professor from Budapest. He had

(8) The days of total hyperinflation and economic collapse were still ahead of us at that time but, in retrospect this was clearly the harbinger.

been a minister in the Karolyi government and in England would be called 'a radical'. He told me he was keen to go to America to study the federal system in operation there because, he said, ' I can see no solution for the nations of central Europe except in a confederation.' Hungary is a land of immense plains and very
fertile. Like Abraham of old the peasants and farmers seem 'to have much cattle'.
Also there are hundreds of beautiful horses - the Hungarians are great horsemen.
Only the very poorest go on foot. A horse's back is the natural seat for any man in this land..... "

On the way to Budapest I spent one night at Raab. Here I was turned away from 5 hotels. All occupied. With the help of a policeman I reached the house of a comfortable citizen who agreed to take the car into his yard for a fee - 80 kronen. Finally I persuaded him to take the driver Dutle and myself into his best room. But I had to pay 300 kronen for it. Dutle thought this was 'Schweinerei' and so did I, but there seemed to be nothing else for it, extortion or not. Then I was aware that the policeman was still hovering about - of course, he was expecting some kronen too, wasn't he - so I gave him 10. Not enough! I had to increase that to 20 before he withdrew his attentions and only then did I discover that the policeman was attended by a satellite who had come along on the step of the car and who clearly expected to be included in the handouts. At this I drew the line and said so, emphatically, only to find myself confronted by the policeman, the satellite and mine host as well!. It cost me twenty hungry minutes and much straight talking to get rid of these two protectors of the public. Next morning I duly paid up the 300k and was further taken aback to be asked for a lift in the car, for my host had important business to transact in Budapest, did he not? I took him.

Wednesday 18th February, 1920.

In Budapest I soon discovered that Hungary was advertising for a king. Preference would be given to an English prince. This topic was one of general concern for it came at me from various quarters and was, clearly, a subject close to the hearts of the people particularly, of the middle classes who, in their reaction against the harsh rigours of the recent communistregime, embraced this idea with ease as one likely to make for much greater security at home and to enhance Hungarian prestige abroad.

The profiteer was everywhere. Profiteering seemed to have become a way of life and, particularly in the mercantile middle classes, seemed to be quite easily accepted as a way of conducting business in such uncertain times. The function is familiar, of course, throughout history but there are always variations on a theme and the Hungarian variety always seemed to me to be superior to the other examples of the genre. Here I found they have a special name for men who display these talents, a name which at once suggests his method of elbowing back more sensitive or less well equipped people. He is known as a 'Schieber' - a pusher or a shover. This is part of the picture, in Austria as in Hungary, and the complementary image is of the pitiful suffering not only among the

(9)Count Michael Karolyi, a wealthy liberal aristocrat, was the head of the Hungarian Independent Party and opened a campaign for peace in 1917. In 1918, after the armistice, he became the political leader of Hungary and, as an act of faith, gave away his estates to the landless peasants. His regime was swept away in the communist revolution under Bela Kun a few months later and Karolyi himself was arrested.

poor but equally among the now impoverished middle classes. Students are in desperate straits and reduced to unimaginable extremities. At first sight this suffering is not so apparent for it happens below the surface, in the homes and the rooms where they live, where both food and fuel fail. In the streets of Vienna and of Budapest the movement of life and of business seems to go on, save the people walk more slowly and smiles are very rare. In the streets the traffic is much diminished for business is sick and dying everywhere. I see very few children moving about.

On arrival in Budapest we found Count Andrassy's palace where, we had been told we would get a room, in a state of turmoil and turning about because the Count himself was returning. It had been in the hands of the International Red Cross which 'bonne chance' had saved it from the otherwise certain depredations of the Communists, the Whites and / or the rampaging Roumanians. The Ritz was also full to overflowing as also the Grand Hotel Hungarica. At the latter, however, I had a letter of introduction (from my friend Dr. Munro in Vienna) to Captain Domaille R.N. and he was pleased to lend us his own office for our bedroom. This must rank as the grandest hotel I have ever been in, let alone stayed in, and the comparison with everything all around us is nothing short of obscene.

From the balcony of our room we look down upon the Danube; and at night, as I open the French windows before going to bed the river is there down below me showing the reflections of the lights from the ancient city of Buda, up on the hill opposite, on the far side of the river. All is beautiful, quiet and tranquil in the silence and the starlight. What a lie.

February 19th.

I have today been at a conference of the International Red Cross, have visited some refugees and have had lunch with Dr. Ronald Macfie. Now, between 3 and 4 pm I await tea-time when we meet with Dr. and Mrs. Havas in the coffee room. At lunch Dr. Macfie and I had a bottle of Tokay between us - the most famous of the Hungarian wines. Costly too. He paid! It is now very warm and the sun strikes down as if it were July. Last night I was at dinner at Dr. Koranyi's, the best known physician in Budapest. His brother, Finance Minister in the present government, was there along with
Count Schonski, the Foreign Minister, among numerous others. State matters, politics, finance and international affairs were the only subjects under discussion. The prevailing
mood was one of bewilderment, of paralysis, of pain and injustice, and also of anger. Frustration and retribution were lurking in the wings. I began to feel quite frightened of the potential for further violence. And then in among this, so to speak, 'disaster scenario' suddenly we were served with coffee, sugar, cigarettes or cigars if one so desired and to finish, with tea. I was overawed at the contrast with the external realities of life. But then this was still one of the great feudal households in modern Hungary.

10.30 pm. I have just come in from the Ritz Hotel where I went at 9 o'clock to have a talk with the Dutch Minister of State and his wife, very pleasant and frank people, whose information and impressions closely resembled my own. The conversation, once again,

was to the accompaniment of music - a Hungarian band playing traditional (Hungarian 'Zigeuner') and some negro music - coffee, liqueurs and men and women vying with each other in their residual finery. I experienced once again the strong illusion of being in Rome listening to Nero.

Feb. 20th

Today I took a trip out into the countryside to seek impressions of the nonurban communities. The villages were picturesque, looking cleaner than one would have expected and the houses were mostly built end on to the road and, usually, whitewashed. As I moved about in this lovely land, apparently unravaged by the toils of war, I was reminded once more of the all-embracing unity of nature as I moved along through a whirl of yells and gesticulations from groups of mischievous children supported by attacks from excited dogs against a background of ferocious hissing from the ludicrous geese. Moreover, improbably, here there was also some kind of gypsy music to be heard, which only added to the sense of unreality knowing, as I did, the grim reality beyond.

There is much interesting talk here - always in some way related to the pressing political problems of the day and the seemingly powerless administration. I would not myself relish any position of executive power in any of the governments that are facing such insuperable problems - all inherited from earlier generations of guilty men. In England at the present time there is a sublime and total ignorance of the scale of the disaster on the doorstep in Central Europe - let alone in Russia from where the news is, if possible, even more catastrophic. Uncertainty and injustice are universal companions. I can see no hope of any improvement in Hungary coming

from within; there is only antagonism, terror, despair and the hope of revenge - upon whom, I wonder? Help, change, hope, movement, purpose must come from outside Hungary. Tomorrow I lunch with my Dutch friends again and I hope to call on Mrs. Havas once more before I have to leave Budapest. She and her husband made a strong impression on me - cultured, intelligent and fair-minded people with real integrity and a strong sense of justice. We had much discussion about books, authors and literature of several languages. They are both very keen to read my copy of Maynard Keynes' "The Economic Consequences of the Peace" (10).

Hungary has been very severely treated by the Treaty of Trianon (11) and had to

(10)This volume, published at the end of 1919, was deeply critical of the provisions of the Versailles Treaty. Keynes had resigned his post as Treasury adviser in Paris in order to write the book. His thesis was that the treaty only set out to settle political grudges and was going to create nothing but chaos and antagonism in Germany. History was to prove this argument in a manner far beyond his imagination at the time.

(11) The Treaty of Trianon, signed in Paris on 4th June 1920 dismembered Hungary and reduced it to one quarter of its previous size. In an effort to follow President Wilson's principle of self-determination the treaty makers removed from the old empires territories with national minorities but, in so doing, they succeeded in creating 'reverse' minorities instead. For example Czechs and Slovaks, previously minorities under the Hapsburgs now formed the new nation of Czechoslovakia with its own very difficult minority problem - the Germans living in the old Sudetenland.

cede territory to her neighbours: Jugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and even to Austria. Six months ago a Roumanian army invaded Hungary to defeat the Bela Kun revolution. A new government was then established under Regent Horthy and the Roumanians withdrew taking with them everything that they could move - immense quantities of 'booty' of every kind. Britain is held to be largely responsible (rightly or wrongly) for this general state of affairs and also for the continuing support of the present appalling repressive regime under which the great majority of the people suffer unimaginable indignities and restrictions. More and more people are being drawn to the left politically and the younger generation in particular works and thinks and sometimes lives in terms of the "new world" it sees emerging on its eastern doorstep. Such social control as remains is mostly conducted by violence and patronage and terror is everywhere about us in the streets. Many well-known academic and intellectual personalities have been cashiered from their work (mostly within the university) and go in fear of their continuing liberty if not of their lives. Pacifist women, who believe in freedom and internationalism are reduced to talking in public in metaphor, or in whispers, because they know they are suspect. Their leader Rosika Schwimmer, known and honoured all over the western world, is now a refugee abroad as are so many other liberals and academics. Since I arrived in Budapest I have heard and read public threats against various significant protesters almost every day, most notably against Mr. Somogyi, editor of the socialist newspaper "The People's Voice". On Thursday last his body, stabbed and mutilated, was recovered from the Danube. Later they also found the body of his deputy editor. The following Sunday I saw 300,000 people, orderly and dignified, follow that martyred body to the grave. The next day the headline in the government newspaper read: "If there are so many Socialists in Budapest, yet stronger measures are needed to root them out." Three weeks ago, at Retschkmet, not far from here, 200 political prisoners were dragged out of

the train they were being transported in by the 'White Guards' of the regime and brutally despatched in the woods. This is public knowledge - no denial or excuse is thought necessary. Such illustrations could be multiplied but they are typical. Nobody is arrested; no enquiry is held; no-one is accountable and nobody is punished. Budapest is at present the city of 'the clutching hand and the dagger'. Everywhere there is fear, suspicion, class and racial hatred and even warfare; and, overall, there is pestilence famine and disease. For the workers there is no work and therefore they are also bereft of power. There is a General Strike in operation in the city. The plight of the workers and also the middle classes (particularly the artists and the academics) is beyond description and, in far away Britain, however many cheques are written and collections made to save the children, no true understanding of this situation is possible. One recalls the stories of the hunted aristocrats during the terror of the Vendee. Here and now the terror is the same but the hunted are the intellectuals who stand for equality and freedom. The communists have already been interned, imprisoned or put to death.

Budapest is, in fact, a whirlpool of fears and hatreds - class, economic and national. Czechs are hated and feared (many Hungarians contemplate war against them), so are the Roumanians, communists, socialists and all people with progressive ideas. I am appalled to find here a country already in the depths of economic and political ruin

where the predominant concern seems to be with the brutal repression of its own workers and its own intellectual leaders the very people with whom the only solution of the problem lies. The earlier communist regime was suppressed by the political intervention from abroad supporting the military invasion by the 'Little Entente' with the result that this small country was further ravaged by the aggressors who then laid bare the countryside and robbed the nation of everything that moved - food, railway rolling stock, engines, all forms of transport, machinery (agricultural and manufacturing plant) livestock and all forms of personal belongings. Hungary was raped and pillaged and the results have all been laid at the door of the communist uprising. This view, it seems, is largely accepted by politicians abroad. The present government is the major result of that conflict and the "White Terror" that stalks the streets today is, it seems, a matter of policy on the part of that administration We know that there are atleast 20,330 men and women in the prisons and 26,400 men and women interned. The government actually acknowledges that 5000 executions have taken place (and that does not include the many politically inspired murders). In contrast, against the previous communist regime only 220 known executions can be charged.

There is a strong and widespread anti-Jewish movement, fomented by the newspapers (all now in government control), posters and the common gossip in the market place. Professors and teachers with Jewish connections are either suspended or sacked and ordinary Jewish citizens are in danger on the streets at night - they are frequently accosted, insulted and, all too often, beaten. I went to visit a Jew yesterday who had had a business in Belgium but, when he tried to travel there recently, he was apprehended on the train by the soldiers acting for the government. They retained his papers and sent him home after beating him nearly senseless. He is now unfit for work and afraid to go out at all. He now lives with his family of five in one room and they are all starving.

The responsibility for this state of affairs unquestionably rests, in large measure, with the

British government. The Horthy regime is the result of British influence here and it is supported daily by British prestige and patronage. I can see no way out of this impasse at the moment for all the real leaders and the able men in opposition are now either dead, in prison or out of the country. All with progressive minds and all known intellectuals are suspect and their jobs (and sometimes their lives) are at risk if they are still lucky enough to be employed - I have met a number of professors recently dismissed from their posts. Women are not now allowed to return to the university at all. There is a strong anti-semitic movement - Jewish students are not allowed to attend classes at the university where a guard stands at the gate to examine everyone's documents.

Most of the ordinary people I talk to seem to look to Britain as the source of moderation and constitutionalism and find it difficult to understand why no help seems to be on offer from that direction and more and more they seem to be looking, in their despair, to the east and the hope that is engendered by "Das Licht von Osten". This is a very dangerous state of affairs for Britain and the other western nations which we will all ignore at our peril. In Russia now the Bolshevik revolution is taking hold after two years of bloodshed, violence, fear and death and a new structure for the society is in

construction. For those people on the borders (of the revolution) who have nothing and are in despair such a new hope is very compelling. Now, more than ever before, I can see that the rabid nationalism which is all about us here is the greatest enemy, for it is a negative power rooted within nation states. Hungary is only one of many countries where this conflict is in the process of being acted out and we need men at home who are great enough to comprehend these events and act with wisdom in response. .

A week later I sent a long report back to the Mission in Vienna with my assessment of the situation in Hungary, some conclusions concerning our projected operation and my reasons for them:

Budapest, 27th Feb. 1920

The tide in the Russian civil war having turned a few months ago, in favour of Trotsky's Red Army, the units supporting Gen. Denikin's White Army were all in disarray and confusion. Units from the British Navy, Army and Air Force; from Czechoslovakia, Roumania, Poland, France, Germany and even from America and Japan had all been involved. All retired, licking their wounds and abandoned the struggle.

Lenin's revolution now seems to be holding its ground and is constantly gaining support among the ordinary people in Russia. The feudal system of the Tsars has clearly been swept away for ever. Exactly what will replace it must, at present, remain an open question but the socialist philosophy and system seems to promise much to the huge majority of the people. To many other people here, in Central Europe, it is also viewed in that way and is often referred to as "Das Licht von Osten." Here is a collision of cultures indeed - the old against the new - the confrontation of the old hierarchical society of 'landed' power and privilege by the new ideas of 'the worker's international' rooted in the strength of the mass of the people when offered land, democracy and power. No wonder so many are dazzled. I am here surrounded by the very

circumstances in which such revolutionary ideas thrive. Au fond it is a battle for the power that derives from the ownership of the very land itself - either it will remain in the hands of the privileged few or it will be shared among all. Predictably the threat of advancing 'Bolshevism' calls into being an equal and opposite reaction. The present regime in Hungary, under Admiral Horthy, is the best example at present but Hitler's National Socialists in Germany and Mussolini's Fascisti in Italy may soon become political forces to be reckoned with. So many people here wish nothing so much as to be led, protected and organised. This is a very dangerous time to be alive in Europe.

This horrific situation has direct consequences for the aid movement - particularly relief that is targetted at Budapest. I am satisfied that there is clearcut partiality and fraud operating in the distribution of all available aid of both food and materials. There is, of course, a flourishing black market operating for all those with money to pay and gross injustice and exploitation are everywhere in evidence. Everyone I talk with, even those who are themselves involved in the administration, make no bones about what is going on and acknowledge the abysmal situation. There is one effective Friend (i.e. Quaker) that I know in Budapest - Max Fodor, special correspondent of the Manchester Guardian. He is equally appalled and ashamed for his country.

In conclusion I have to report that, to my mind, the present brutal regime here is so repressive, dictatorial and dangerous that I hesitate to advise relief because that can only, both directly and indirectly, serve to bolster this intolerable administration. The present state of affairs must go down, and the sooner the better. D.G.. (12)

The next day I was due back in Vienna to explain my report and prepare for my next reconnaisance. Into the Balkans. via the new Jugoslavia to Roumania.

(12) The Horthy government survived this undiplomatic report to my committee, and for many years thereafter.

CHAPTER IX

A few days later I set off once again, by train this time, to Zagreb en route for Roumania. In Maribor, just across the Jugoslav border with Austria, the train waited for an hour so that hungry passengers from Austria could have a meal. As waiters with trays of food appeared eager hands quickly carried off everything edible in sight. It was as hot as if it was July. Here I met another currency and another language. The Austrian crown was already unacceptable. This was a Slav country busy separating itself from its Austro-Hungarian past and I had to provide myself with Jugoslav crowns instead. I was instantly aware of the efforts all around to obliterate the external German influences as Slav signs replaced the German ones and the old gothic script gave way to the cyrillic alphabet, for I was now in Croatia. Unifying factors were denied, an aggressive nationalism was on the move. Even the postage stamp, a large one, bore the image of a young man measuring his strength against some powerful opposing force.

Later the train stopped at the small town of Celje where we were delayed for some two hours. When the train finally did depart Celje it had, apparently, converted itself into a 'bummelzug', that is a slow train, stopping everywhere on its hesitating journey to Zagreb. We finally approached that capital city (of Croatia) at 11pm and immediately every Croat, Slovene, Serb, German and Italian in the coach began to shunt his baggage into the corridor to ensure that he should be the first out. I stayed put, kept cool and got into the town ahead of most of them. So, at nearly midnight, I found myself, a Briton, alone in this big city - new country, new speech, new money, new ways and nowhere to go. "Englische Mission", as so often before, helped me in my search for a room. Before I went to sleep I sat down to write my letter to Irene.

March 6th 1920. Zagreb - en route Roumania.

".....this is Croatia, formerly in the Empire, now independent Jugoslavia. My chief function today has been money-changing. Austrian crowns, Jugoslav crowns, French francs, even a little English money and, of course, some Roumanian lei. I have at least seven

different currencies in my pocket and am endeavouring to hold conversations in at least five different languages. I am confused and, occasionally, a little bewildered so you will not be surprised to hear that I have stopped at a number of cafes today, for coffee and chat with the locals. This country seems to be flowing with milk and honey in such stark contrast to the Austria I have just left behind. It is nothing to see a man buy half a calf in the market, put it over his shoulder and set off home with it! The people are warm and easy and they look, most of them, very picturesque, especially the peasant women. The chief colours worn by Croatian women seem to be white and red - white dresses embroidered in red, white stockings and heel-less shoes (which they call 'ypamka') rather like Indian moccasins. They carry themselves very elegantly and walk beautifully, not a city walk, but a walk with a swing. The whole body swings and, more often than not, there is a basket laden with food surely balanced on the head.

Tomorrow I catch the Simplon Express (1) to Bucharest ....."

(1) This famous international train, so called because it travelled through the Simplon Tunnel, ran twice a week from Paris to Istanbul. It was later re-named the Orient Express.

March 8th

".....on the way to Bucharest we climbed a long, long hill near Turnu Severin. This is very near to the famous 'Iron Gate' on the Danube, which great feat of engineering I have always wanted to see. The Gate is deep and narrow because the great river is compressed here into a narrow channel as it cuts through the rocky range and this scheme represents a very impressive form of flood control and navigational aid. The things man can do when he tries!

I have sent the first pages of this letter back to London already with a Red Cross man whom I met at Filasi. In a way I envied him his journey while before me there lies a city of wildness and wickedness. By Saturday he will be in London and I shall be in Bucharest seeking export licences to send wagon loads of fodder to Vienna. During my travels I have heard that the Red Army has launched a major offensive against Poland in an effort to 'export' the revolution westwards in a drive to link up with the German communists. Presumably the hope is further to secure the communist state by extending its boundaries into the west. Everywhere in eastern Europe just now is in flux, danger lurks round every corner. Bucharest will be no exception and I wonder what I will find there....."

At the Roumanian border I was involved in a minor 'stramash' (2) with the border police but it was all quickly resolved in my favour when I produced the diplomatic visa with which I armed myself before leaving Vienna. Nevertheless I was left with a disturbing sense of unease at my 'foreigness' - clearly such people were not very welcome in this Balkan land. On arrival at Bucharest I took a taxi to the Hotel Continental. Fully occupied. So also with The Imperial, The Metropole, The High Life, The Athenee Palace. The problems coursing through my mind in the last few days had not included this one. So at midnight at The Athenee Palace, feeling I had had enough for one day I simply stayed in the hall there and would not move. I slept that night on a couch in the reception area and washed my face from a tin mug at 5am

before leaving for an inspection of the city. At 9 0'clock I went to the office of the American Red Cross (ARC) at 30 Boulevard Lascar there to deliver a letter I had been handed by an ARC acquaintance in Zagreb. Happily Major Lamb of the ARC was able to send me with a letter of recommendation back to the manager of the Hotel Metropole authorising me to occupy Room 4 there which was held at the disposal of that organisation. What a stroke of luck!

At the British Embassy I presented my official letter of introduction to the Charge d'Affaires. Mr. Rattigan, the ambassador, and his staff there proved to be enormously helpful and, by degrees, doors were opened to me, contacts made and many useful addresses provided to further my purpose of purchasing and then shipping back to Vienna enormous quantities of cow fodder.

March 9th.

".....5pm. Interview with business man about maize and bran; amount, price, transport.

Stramash is a Gaelic word for a fuss or a conflict.

Should I use rail or a barge on the Danube.....? 5.30pm. Another interview, also in French, with some men who have oil cake. The same points arose. I feel inclined to back oil cake rather than the bran and to use the Danube rather than the railways which, I don't doubt, are less predictable. An hour later I am sending a t e l e g r a m concerning the possibility of transporting 1,000 tons of oil cake Bucharest-Vienna on the Danube and I move on to my next appointment and exploratory talks about livestock."

This proved to be a little less simple. On Friday 12th March I wrote a long letter to Irene with much detail concerning the political scenario, my hopes for the coming 6 months and an account of the events of that day:

"..... I had an appointment to see the Foreign Minister at 9.30 a.m. in the Ministry for Transylvania. I was there at 9.00 and waited. About 9.40 the Minister arrived and I continued to wait - in a small office which seemed also to serve as an ante-room. I had already explained my purpose to one of the important-looking men in that office but time was passing and I had other tasks before me so I gave him another word and reinforced the message by offering my card. Still nothing happened a n d I could see others in the throng that now surrounded me bracing themselves to push in before me, as the manner is among the general run of mankind - especially it seems, in this part of the world. I sat down on a sofa and reminded the official of my presence from time to time. When the door to the Minister's room finally opened I found myself instantly propelled to the head of the queue by unseen strong arms and as the door closed behind me I was acutely aware of the developing fracas behind me. Whose arms were responsible for that outcome I yet don't know.

The Minister seemed genuinely pleased to see me and I took an immediate liking to him. 'What was my business?' - I explained (French seemed to be our only common language) my urgent need to arrange export documents and transport for the food which I was garnering for my Austrian students..... with the most gentle smile about his lips my companion interrupted and said ' I am so sad, but I must tell you

that, while I personally have nothing in principle against your request, the authority which you seek can only come from the Minister of Industry and Commerce and you will need to make your application there. It is not far from here.' Choking back my frustration and one or two verbal ripostes that recommended themselves to me I asked, with as benign an expression as I could muster, if there was any way in which the Minister (the one in front of me!) could perhaps smooth my path? 'But of course,you must have a letter of introduction. At once. I will see to it.....'

At 10.50 I was due to meet a Mr. Makratz in pursuit of another load of bran and oilcake. To my surprise he was still waiting for me and we went off for further discussions with a friendly Greek merchant. 11.30 saw me at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. As usual, the hirelings at the front door tried to prevent my entrance but I had long since learned not to waste time and effort in explanations. Show them anything they can't read and go straight in and up any

staircase you can see had become my strategy and on this occasion, once again, it worked. I found what what was clearly used as a waiting room and sat down. After a few minutes a man came in, stood to attention before me and raised his eyebrows at me - in silence. I stood up, raised my eyebrows in return and handed him my letter. My interlocutor (if that is the correct term for such an exchange) spun round on his heel and departed in classic military style. I waited. I was in a beautiful small room in a magnificent Baroque building decorated and furnished to the acme of elegance with seemingly priceless pictures on the walls and a luxurious carpet on the floor. The obscene contrast to all else around me in Central / Eastern Europe filled me with a sense of foreboding and my gloom deepened. Two men came in from the door which (I assumed) led to the inner sanctum and stared at me. They then left and closed the door once again. Again I waited. I have become a very skilled waiter! The secret is to bring something important with you in your head which can occupy you without building on the frustrations. Either some remembered poetry or a difficult idea, such as the nature of man. Occasionally a little sleep will serve. On this occasion I spent the time with my old friend Macaulay and 'The Lays of Ancient Rome' and Horatio was not yet in the Tiber when the two men returned. "What could they do?" I referred to my letter of introduction which they had (presumably) already seen ..... "Yes, of course...." well, I explained my urgent need for export licences and how I wished a certain condition suspended in my case, if the Minister would allow. The condition in question increased the price of my goods by approx. 40%. I found myself embroiled in a tricky argument with these two for the next twenty minutes during which not less than five European languages were deployed. There was a very strong 'Alice in Wonderland' feeling growing around me during all this for it was very clear that no one member of the trio could possibly understand more than half the discussion. My two opponents were implacable in their opposition and their hardness of heart was like Pharaoh's. They showed the hard spirit of the gladiator whose foot is on the neck of his opponent - not me but Central Europe - and I felt grieved. Finally, deeming discretion rather than valour to be the order of the day I disengaged and left, my resolve to see the

minister himself much strengthened. " Receuiller pour mieux sauter " I told myself.

2.15 Visited British Embassy again. Gave in letter for diplomatic courier to take to London. Saw Mr Rattigan and received a card from him asking for personal interview with Minister Popovic.

3.30 Back again at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. Again the hirelings rose up. They understand neither French or German (let alone English) but this time there was a young woman in attendance who interpreted, in French. The Minister was not there..... "Try the Boulevard Carol - a large building" I was told. "What number?" I asked. They did not know. "What is the name of the building?" Didn't know that either. Up to this point the absurdity of the situation had sustained me and I knew that my rational mind would, in the end, carry the day. Now even that conviction came under attack and I began to

despair. I was on the point of surrender when their minds seemed to change and Minister Popovic was assuredlyto be found at that moment at the Finance Ministry. In the Calla Victoria. Of course, that was the way of it! So sorry..... but I was already on my way.

3.45 Finance Ministry. After discomfiting the hirelings I came upstairs. I knock at any sacred door now and walk in. I saw 'Secretarul Cabinetului' on one so I knocked and entered. Black-bearded gentleman at desk looked up "what the..... ?" M. Popovic I said, showing my card from Mr. Rattigan. "He is not here at present but will be back. Can you return at 4.30?"

4.30 I am back at the minute. Waiting for blackbeard. But he has disappeared. 15 minutes later I knocked at another door and entered to find about six officials working at various desks. One of them evidently knew some German and seemed disposed to help. He took me to another room labelled 'Sejul Cabinetul' and invited me to make myself comfortable. It was just as well he did so because

5.30 p.m. found me in the same situation in solitary splendour.returned to the first room to seek further assistance. The room was empty as, indeed, the whole building appeared to be. I did not need further encouragement to concede defeat. I left the Finance Ministry prey to a strange coalition of powerful feelings including the angry recognition that the opposition was equipped with a superior weapon. My over-riding emotion was a longing for home and, of course, for

Irene."

Outside it was very cold and very wet and I recall setting out for the YWCA in the Marcovici Strada to seek a cup of tea by way of relief and the hope of seeing a friendly face. I could not find that either!

The Saturday morning in Bucharest was dreary. Snow had fallen overnight despite the early signs of spring. The streets were clogged with snow as I walked about with my eyes always open for things of interest. I noticed a large sign over the door of an impressive building. "Socialislmul" it said. I thought I might go in to see if anyone there could speak German or

French to ease my passage. I did not spend long there and what we discussed I do not now recall but what I remember very vividly is my exit from that building which was the headquarters of the Bucharest Socialist Party. As I came down the front steps a harsh voice behind my left ear said "Ihr legitimation" (German for "your papers"). This was not a request, it was a demand, and I knew I was in trouble.

I knew how frightened the authorities were at that time of anything to do with what they thought was simple socialism let alone communism. The Russians were at their doorstep. Instantly I became aware of how obvious it was to any observer that I was a foreigner: relatively blond and wearing a light coloured coat among the peoples of Eastern Europe who dress differently. Surely I was taken for a spy. I had given myself away by entering that Socialist building. Foolish fellow. Now the secret police had me. where would it all end? Suddenly I felt very vulnerable. " I am going to the British
Embassy" I said. "You are coming with me to police headquarters" was the sharp reply.

"Very well, I shall have to go to the Embassy later. Please will you call a taxi, I am very short of time" I retorted, doing my best to inject an Olympian quality into my voice. My effort at sang froid was wafted away on the icy breeze and we trudged away for a mile and a half in silence through the snow to the Police HQ on Boulevard Carol. This was not a nice place. Nobody took any notice of my questions. I waited a full half hour. The mechanical indifference of those about me and the studied silence were intimidating and I began to feel anxious - precisely the state of mind that I wished at all costs to avoid. I aimed at being calm, frank, truthful, knowing it was best to stick to the bare facts even if thery showed me to have acted foolishly.

For cross-examination after this calculated waiting time, I was led along several corridors and finally ushered into a small room where a dark-visaged scrutineer in uniform confronted me across a table. In hectoring tones, speaking German, he assailed me with questions, evidently intended to shatter my morale. Why had I entered that house? With whom had I spoken? What did I come about? Whence had I come? Which was my 'Organisation'? Where did I get my Rumanian visa? My additional 'diplomatic document' was a forgery, was it not? To whom was I due to report? and so on, and on and on. These and countless other questions - more statements of fact than questions - were rapped out in stylised, aggressive, secret police fashion. Had it not been so serious I might have smiled at the theatrical nature of the whole scenario. Weak though they sometimes appeared my answers were, nevertheless, always true to the facts, so I think he had some difficulty in trapping me into some guilty voluntary admission. My black-browed inquisitor finally snapped his note-book shut, stood up and marched away without a word. I was led away for another half-hour wait. This was now suspense tinged with apprehension. At last I was taken to another room; an attractive, large, warm and well-furnished room where I was invited, quite courteously, to sit beside a large desk where I was confronted quietly by a kind of mystery man who shook hands with me and introduced himself, very much in the grand manner, as The Captain with the Black Beard. The title could be viewed (if not as absurd) as reassuring or intimidating and I think I felt all three. Authority was stamped all over this small, exciting and gracious man with his fine facial features, curling jet-black hair and pointed beard. Affably greeting me, this fascinating officer

did not at once reveal himself. He, too, put several questions to me, almost - it seemed to me - as a matter of form. My responses were quite clear and unambiguous. Then he put this last query: "Did you yourself get your Roumanian visa at our Embassy in Vienna?" There might, I thought, easily be a hook to this question. Travellers were expected to present themselves when applying for a visa. "in truth" I replied " I did not get it for myself. A member of the Mission fetched it for me." The directness of my answer seemed to satisfy my interrogator who turned to me with a smile and said "Mr. Grant, I know your story is true. I know that you are here on a mission of mercy. I was actually present at our Embassy in Vienna when your passport was handed in for our visa. I remember that you did not fetch it personally. You are now quite free and under no suspicion. But I would gently advise you to be more discreet after this when, as a stranger, you travel in the countries of Eastern Europe. We are living in very disturbed times and life is cheap. We are, in fact, looking for a spy - a
blond man with blue eyes whose description is really quite like you. I am sure you will

understand and forgive us any unintended discourtesy. When you return to Vienna next month I invite you to call at the Roumanian Embassy once again and ask again for The Captain with the Black Beard. I might well be there and would be very pleased to renew our acquaintance. Good bye." His English was faultless. I left that Police HQ much chastened and with food for thought.

The next few days were spent in efforts to solve the transport problem for the foodstuffs which I was now contracted to buy. It had become clear to me that this was going to cause endless trouble for, although various solutions were instantly available, this was only so if your pockets were lined with gold and willing to pay the extortionate black market price. I had no such mandate. And M. Popovic seemed more difficult to find than the Will-'o-the-Wisp. Finally it was suggested to me at the British Embassy that a Commander Fletcher, of the Danube Commission, might be willing to help me in my extremity and I sent him a wire requesting a meeting at Orsova on the Roumanian border, where I was to arrive the next day on my serpiginous route back to Vienna. More in hope than might otherwise have been the case I then took my leave of Bucharest. Not without considerable relief. I took with me two books to read that I had found in the city: "Die Mutter" by Gorki and "Konigliche Hochzeit" by Thomas Mann. I felt sure that I would find some time for them before reaching Vienna.

Letter to Irene, March 17th 1920.

" I am glad to be in the luxurious Simplon Express again, although my face is not yet towards Vienna. In contrast to this unstable and unknown Eastern Europe, and in the knowledge that Irene and family are quite out of reach at the present, Vienna already represents a sort of home to me. I look forward eagerly to getting back there.

Another stop. I leave my coupe and stand in the corridor so that the comfort of my travel may not be seen by the people who occupy the train alongside. It is a 'Personenzug' - the slowest and cheapest form of railway travel. All the compartments are crowded; men and women hang on to the handrails and crouch upon the steps of the carriages, even the roof is fully occupied for the whole length of the train. I have seen

this again and again in Hungary and Roumania. The crowded trains, and they are very few, are an incidental illustration of the chaotic condition of Central Europe at this time. I feel a sense of shame that so much comfort surrounds me in this 'train de luxe' yet it is clear that the folk on the steps and the roof of the little train opposite me do not question or wonder at the contrast.

Tomorrow I expect to be in Belgrade prospecting for milk..... "

At Orsova the express has a scheduled stop of 50 minutes (this is related to border controls and international tensions) and I was delighted to meet with Commander Fletcher as arranged, on the platform. I was agreeably surprised to find that he was only too pleased to be able to help me with the transport of the oil-cake and that at a very reasonable cost. The principle was agreed and the details were left to our

correspondence. The turmoil all about us at this Balkan frontier was impressive and, seemingly, permanent. What a cross-roads was there! Serbs, Rumans, Magyars, Germans, Croats, Slovenes, Bosnians, Montenegrins and others - such as myself. Here on the international railway junction I had the impression of some kind of political market place, as if there were endless negotiations in train (sic!) as, indeed, there were. But back in the many different homelands of all these people there seems everywhere to be an aggressive consciousness of national identity and of race. In Jugoslavia the Croats and the Serbs are both Slavs with the same language, but the Croats use the Roman alphabet like the rest of Europe while the Serbs retain the old Cyrillic alphabet. Moreover, the Croats are a Roman Catholic people, having been part of the old Habsburg empire while the Serbs belong to the Greek Orthodox Church. Old allegiances are crumbling. There is universal antagonism, one to another. It feels very dangerous.

Letter to Irene, March 18th.

Vinkovici is a long, clean Croatian village with broad streets and a large market-place and at least two churches. It is now early evening and I am in a large eating-house waiting for "white coffee, three eggs soft cooked in a glass, and bread and butter." Eggs are usually served up in this way - in a large wine-glass minus the shells. Tea is usually touched with a few spoonfuls of 'slivovitz' (the local rum) or with lemon and sugar. The butter is very white and the coffee is excellent. You receive a glass of water on your tray, just as in Vienna, and each table is provided with delicately cut wooden toothpicks.

Later I strolled along the street looking for a bank to change some money into dinars. In conversation there I found that local farmers are only too keen to export much of their produce (high quality bacon, flour, eggs) all the best kinds of food that Vienna so badly needs. I took details of prices, addresses, transport facilities and hope to be able to come to some arrangement. Then to the fine old church in the village square - Roman Catholic I should say to judge by the interior. The sense of the past hung about its walls - the pictures, ancient flags, inscriptions and the weapons. These people are obviously in continuity with their own past, their heroes, their racial gods. Here there

Dr. Knapp and his ally Gen. Baron von Luttwitz. In theory the insurrection was 'to oppose Bolshevism' but to me it seems much more probable that this was an effort to re-instate Prussianism. Pres. Ebert seems rather more to the political left than was Scheidemann. Yesterday I read (in an old English newspaper I found in the hotel) dated Feb. 25th: 'An extremist political group, which appeared on the scene in the wake of the brief Bavarian Soviet Republic, has published a programme for creating a Third German Reich. According to its spokesman Adolf Hitler, a former army corporal, the group is to call itself the National Socialist German Workers' Party
and will campaign against the 'Versailles Diktat' as well as Jewish and capitalist influence in German society.

Hitler, who was known by his mother's name of Schickelgruber until he joined the army in 1914, once earned a living painting picture postcards in his

native Austria; he is now devising banners, posters and a swastika flag for his party. He is also said to be practising public speaking.' This is not the first time I have seen this name in the news and, I fear, it will probably not be the last. Germany and its people is in a very dangerous state politically and almost anything can happen there. I look forward to some real news and your letter(s) when I get back to Vienna.

Yesterday, Sunday afternoon, I called on Mrs. Radowitz (an Aberdeen girl married to a Serbian Army Captain) and it was very pleasant to hear the slight Buchan accent, so far away from the granite city! We talked of Serbia and Ragusa - the Venice of this land - of agriculture and of many things. She has a new baby and I promised to see if I could find a good perambulator for her in Vienna (why are prams so difficult to find in Serbia?). I find that I am entrusted with lots of small such commissions as I move about in these lands. I have letters to post in Vienna from a staff captain in Bucharest, others from a woman author I met the same day, a commission from an old Viennese lady now living in Bucharest to visit her friends in Vienna and carry greetings for her; a letter also from a doctor here in Belgrade to his friends in Vienna. You might well wonder why I have to be a postman as well as everything else but the postal services are so uncertain in these countries that I am more sympathetic than I might otherwise be. But, best of all!, an Anglican clergyman in Bucharest asked me to seek out a truck-load of Roumanian language bibles with which he hopes to make contact except that, surprise surprise, they seem to have been delayed in Budapest for some months past. What a pity they did not reach Budapest before October last, for they would undoubtedly have been carried away, along with everything else, back to their homeland by the retreating Roumanian soldiers and - who knows - they might have made an impact..... "

That exploratory trip through the Balkans (3) in search of food for the starving population of Vienna was, for me, amazingly colourful, exceedingly venturesome and very anxiety provoking for the future of Europe. It was, however, successful beyond all of my hopes and, gradually, a more adequate supply of foodstuffs (both for humans and for livestock) and a more plentiful supply of milk for the hungry bellies of the ricketty (4) children of the former Imperial City began to flow. But my real concern was for the students and so, on my return, I

is a sense of stability and I get a feel of the power of The Church. My train to Belgrade leaves at 7pm.

Now it is Friday, 19th March and I am in Belgrade having spent the night on the train. In the Grand Hotel, at breakfast, I met a Mr. Ward, a former member of the Friends' Mission and now in business here. He linked me up with Innes, a member of The Friends and Chief of their programme of child welfare in Serbia. He gave me no end of help. I have been to the Embassy too, rather a slow place I fear, and my task is not going to be made any easier by prevarication and compromise from above! Once more I have to get permission to export, and then arrange transport for, those goods which I can purchase from this land of plenty, whose currency is rather weak. That may, indeed, be the political problem. Nothing is ever straightforward....."

In Belgrade I got some chocolates and a hot bath. The shops were

crowded with cheap British and American luxuries clearly intended for the foreign visitors with money. The exchange rate was severely against Serbia at the time and all such luxury items could be purchased at half what it would have cost in England. There was vary little evidence of the fine handiwork of the local craftsmen and women - apart from the carpets which were quite amazing. The town itself was like a great straggling village on a hill, beside the Danube. No great buildings, shops or theatres. Belgrade did not instantly strike me as one of the cities likely to lead in the development of Europe. I was by now very tired and tired, indeed, of travelling around the great cities without time to enjoy them. I longed to get back to Vienna which became daily more and more like home to me. Despite the hunger and the pitiful state of so many of the people Vienna seemed to be more alive and more civilised than any of the other cities I had seen. Music, opera, theatre, the coffee houses with all the newspapers to read and instant political debate, kind people and human intercourse. I had suffered a terrible dearth of real news, except from hearsay, and I was feeling disconnected. In Bucharest the only newspapers I ever saw were in the Roumanian language and, although some words like Bolshevism or Socialismul were self-explanatory I was quite unable to make any sense of the rest. The same was true in Serbia, only more so, for here the cyrillic alphabet was almost indecipherable. In Bucharest the old government was turned out by a general while I was there and everything was in turmoil. The new administration was then run by this new little Napoleon - General Avarescu. So it did not come as a great surprise to me in Belgrade, while seeking out ministers with whom to get my business through, to be informed that my operations would be considerably impeded by the fact that here there was also a change of government in process, with all the accompanying unsettlement. So I had, perforce, to make a number of unscheduled stops at the Hotel Moscow (sic!) for coffee and cakes on my way to and fro the Chamber of Commerce while pursuing further authorization for my foodstuffs for Vienna. Here, in conversation with locals and visitors I gleaned the real news each day.....

Letter to Irene, Monday 22nd

" I hear that there is fighting and political upheaval in Berlin and elsewhere in Germany. President Ebert standing firm against the would-be chancellor

found much work waiting for me among the student population. And the situation among the teaching staff was often even more grim.

I found, on my return, that we had been allocated two rooms to use as offices in the main building of Vienna University on the Ringstrasse, and they were already always thronged with students enquiring or actively seeking help. My organisation was already providing cocoa and bread for 700 students each day and our aim was to increase that

(3) 'Die Ball-kaan' as the Austrians would call it.

(4)All the children in Austria, and in Vienna in particular, were severely malnourished after 4 years of total war and the most obvious evidence was the enormous incidence of rickets in the young populace.

number by 200 each week for the foreseeable future. We had engaged people to make suits, underclothing, supply suit length materials and other clothing at nominal cost and the office was already impossibly busy extending our offers of help in to the engineering, agriculture, commerce, art, music and veterinary colleges in other parts of Austria. To secure a continuous supply of all the necessary foodstuffs, especially the enormous quantities of cocoa, flour and condensed milk required for our operation, (and all the other necessary materials) we kept a communication network open with many other countries through the World Student Christian Federation.

Letter home to Evelix, March. 25th:

".....went to a concert in Vienna with my friend Dr. Scheu. During the long pause in the programme we went round to the boxes on the other side of the concert hall to meet the Minister of Education (Dr. Gloeckel) who is a friend of the Scheus. We are hoping to enlist his help in getting a building for a Students' Hostel..... The minister seemed to be very interested in all that we were doing for student relief and I think the auguries are favourable for he made an appointment to see us again tomorrow.

Frau Dr. Scheu is herself quite a well-known author and is at present working upon a scheme for an international series of schoolbooks to allow the young to read from the great masterpieces of literature from all lands..... "

By now my group had acquired a name. We were known as the "Wiener Komitee der Internationalen Studenthilfe" (Vienna Committee for International Student Aid) and, clearly, we were now fully established. Besides running a breakfast in the two University buffets from 7.30 to 9.30 each day we had a breakfast organised in the Student Home in the Lazarett Gasse where the students (about 60) were all medical, and we were in the process of trying to integrate another group from a similar 'hostel' in the Theresien Gasse. The word was getting about. While the supply of food was always our first priority, other demands were making themselves felt for which we had, as yet, made no provision. When you are faced with a population of starving people you do not instantly ask questions about clothes and footwear let alone soap, toothbrushes, blankets or books. These were, however, all necessary for the welfare of our clientele and approaches were quickly made around the globe to the student organisations (including our own SCM and WSCF groups), churches and the Friends with which we were

already in touch. The British Universities Committee (5) was also approached. I was now directly in touch with the student movements in Britain, America, France, Switzerland, Italy, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Holland, India and Japan, opening up wide possibilities for co-operation and solidarity but it all demanded more and more 'staff work' which, with our severely limited and overstretched resources, threatened to swamp the early days of the operation. The appeals met with a rapid and heart-warming response, far beyond my expectations, and supplies very soon began to arrive in Vienna requiring another tranche of administrative arrangements. Now my office was in danger of sinking under the work

(5) Recently established in the UK to assist the rehabilitation of the universities of Central Europe.

load so, without any possible hope of an increase in our tiny budget to increase the payroll, we set out to find some trustworthy students with command of more than one language as voluntary part-time assistants. This they were very keen to do and the operation soon recovered and moved on.

Among other goals, I had always been aware of the need to spread information as widely and quickly as possible concerning our work in Vienna, particularly to the student populace. To this end, before I left for my Balkan journeys, I had set in train the ground work for a student conference, that I hoped would have an international flavour, hosted by ourselves, to consider the burning issues of the day. So the week after my return, the Student Christian Movement in Vienna did hold a weekend conference, in the lovely village of Kierling on the fringe of the city. Various representatives came from abroad bringing friendship and greetings from the student movements in other lands - Fritz de Rougemont from Switzerland, my old friend Van Maanen and two others from Holland and a Dr. Weisl from Germany. The whole conference was fed on bread, corned beef and cocoa in various combinations. The late spring weather was at its sparkling best and we were able to hold many of our talks and discussions in the open air out on the hillside. Apart from indirectly publicising the work of my committee, the aim of this meeting was to spread information about the SCM and the World Student Christian Federation. Six formal speakers had been scheduled, myself included. The conference was to address great themes under the umbrella title of "The New Vision of God" and much of the work was scheduled for small working groups tackling subjects such as War, Nationalism, Forms of Society, Church, Militarism, Art, Love, Marriage and Fellowship. The all-including 'Plenary Sessions' predictably became a nightmare for the chairman (I was one), because the students would try - as students around the world always will - in their earnestness and their eagerness to change things, to get all their problems and ideals together into one overcrowded period of thought and speech. Of course it was all too much, in truth, and yet there was a very real value in all this flow of ideas, discussion, exchange and togetherness - a new and rewarding experience for so many of them. I could not but marvel at the energy of these marvellous young people from all over Europe trying their hardest not merely to 'address the issues of our time' but actively to contribute to the building of The New World that we had all been dreaming of through the dark years. I was so moved by the latent power of these young people that I went back to my desk to seek out, from my personal papers, a piece that I wrote to Irene at the time of my Edinburgh Tribunal - it felt so apposite:

"This is to me really a land of promise (Britain) ; and I suppose I do see it with the eyes of love. But it is the eyes of love that see deep down to the truth and the possibilities; and that is why there is youth and enthusiasm, ideals and a forward look for the land, for the people, for the nations.

I wakened in the quiet hours three nights ago with the thought and the desire of the New World, the New Society strong upon me. This desire, this purpose, this reality is always with me; the dominant desire. And if there is movement and questioning and many desires, apparently conflicting, unfathomed and undirected in the minds and hearts of students, it is to this end - the New World.

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We have to build it, that is to incarnate it, by the nature of our living. In the past people have looked for messiahs and prophets and leaders to do it for them. But it comes not so; it comes only from ourselves, when we live it. We cannot leave it to others to make this Kingdom real; not legislation, not new laws. Only the true spirit in the minds and lives of many music-makers and dreamers of dreams will find its outlet and true expression in ways which are the ways of the New World.

So the ferment has begun. " 22: 4: 18.

Just at this time, as we were getting our breakfast scheme for students off the ground, there were widespread disturbances - political and racial in nature - in the city and particularly within the University itself, as a result of which the University was closed for a week and everyone was denied access. However, we were able to negotiate for a door at the back to be left open for us (at our own risk, of course) through which we were able to continue the running of the scheme. All students who carried one of our entrance cards were admitted. Clearly we were viewed by the authorities as impartial and friendly, even if we were foreigners.

From my monthly report for my UK Committee, end of March 1920:

Damenzimmer. (Women's Room.) A room in the University is now available and in the process of being furnished and decorated. It will be ready for the 1920/21 session and will provide space for rest, quiet, reading and social exchange. Opening ceremony in October.

English Classes. There is an ever-increasing demand for this. I am trying to set up a course for the students with lectures, talks and discussion groups on English language, literature, art, student life and so forth. We continue our general policy of teatime meetings, social evenings with English conversation and games.

Students Hostel. An additional such hostel is now urgently required and the Vienna Student Christian Movement (CSV) is working on this to find a suitable house. Student accomodation is impossibly difficult at present.

D.G.

On March 28th we heard that Admiral Miklos Horthy, abandoning all pretence at reinstating the ancient monarchy, had pronounced himself Dictator and absolute ruler (no longer

'Regent') in Hungary and our worst fears for that lovely land were realised. I saw at once that I would very shortly need to make another trip to Hungary to secure my supply lines from that quarter. A week later international tension was further increased when French troops were marched in to the Ruhr (the German industrial heartland) in response to the news that the German Army retained more soldiers there than the Versailles treaty allowed for. The French occupied Frankfurt and we felt that here was a major international incident in the making. There was some hope that the League of Nations would be able to broker a solution. On the contrary, later that month (April) The League fixed Germany's war reparations at a figure of 3,000,000,000 Marks a year. For 30 Years!

By the end of April I was off once again to Hungary. My hotel proved to be in a stunning location, that is to say, on the 'Insel' (a small island in the Danube). I arrived in the late evening of Sunday 25th. During the next few days I wrote some notes (not to say Diary) on my experiences:

Sunday night: It is really the most romantic imaginable Spring night at the end of April and I can hear the nightingales. This is a long island in the middle of the Danube between Buda and Pest (the old and the new cities). It is clad with fine trees now rich and fragrant in their summer green. Here and there are houses and villas and, right away at the far end, this hotel hidden away among the arbours.

In these surroundings - in the moonlight, trees in full foliage gently stirring to the night wind, with the scents of grass and blossom all about; the feeling of night in a far country and the long deep note of the nightingale what dreams could I command?

Monday morning: Out of my open window I can see great chestnut trees, the lawns and the Danube. Yesterday is like a dream - we motored all day to reach here from Vienna - and a wonderful day it was with sunshine and growing nature all around. But it seems so far away now, with its swift motion and changing, flickering scenes. Here there is quietness, peace, beauty, birdsong and a wealth of colour. Last night I walked along these avenues of trees amid their green fragrance, in the mysterious twilight, reminiscent of many times long ago; the quiet sounds of the immense river nearby and the whisper of a fountain on a lawn among the trees. Another dream, for any fine thing might happen in surroundings such as these and on such a night: a fairy happening, a poem, an inspiration of love and beauty. But..my mind returns, returns to the harsh reality that is Central Europe today and the tasks that stretch ahead. The contrasts are almost unbearable..... Irene, are you there?

Monday night. 11.30 pm, in the Scottish mission again. I took Dr. Armstrong Smith (6) to dinner at Dr. Koranyi's, where I had been several times two months ago. This evening we went across the Danube and away out of town, beyond Buda, to see the sanatorium founded there by Dr. Koranyi's father.

Earlier in the afternoon Dr. Clark and I had a talk with Mr. Hohler (British Minister in Budapest), chiefly about relief programmes but also about prisons and the state of the prisoners. I have now been directly in touch with the British Minister responsible in each of the central European countries save Czechoslovakia (and before

long I must also go there). We visited two prisons - and what a contrast to prisons that I have known! Many of the prisoners, most of them political, have not appeared for trial and many have not been formally

(6) Dr. Armstrong Smith had been doing relief work there for two months. A medical doctor whose chief interest was in education, he began the Arundel School in Letchworth in 1915. He had run that school since, with great success, on very progressive co-educational lines; boys and girls up to age 18 living in the same house doing everything together. In 1920 this was very avant garde.

charged. Some have been shut up here for more than 5 months. None of them has any idea of when - or if - they might expect release. They are virtually hostages. There are women in these prisons as well as men. One of them, whose husband had escaped to Vienna, had given lectures at the University during the days of the Commune and had been summarily arrested and thrown into prison, apparently sine die, and without charge.

Tuesday 27th. My face is almost 'turkey-red', for I travelled all day Sunday in the wind and sunshine with my hat off. It was a mistake! I had about a dozen cigarettes with me yesterday, bonne chance, for I was able to leave them with some of the political prisoners. One of them was an artist who has modelled several little figures, very cleverly, from the soft insides of various bits of bread he was able to s c r o u n g e. Each one was clamouring for information and for a release date. I was unable to help.

Today we visited a creche where mothers can leave their babies while they go out to work. It was highly organised and very clean and the children all looked well and happy. There is no fresh milk, however, for people in this income group cannot a f f o r d it. At 11am we went for a second visit to Mr. Hohler and subsequently I had an h o u r's conversation with my friend Fodor (M.G. correspondent). He is, by training, a consulting engineer and combines some of this work with his journalist functions. Very successfully, by all accounts. He cannot live in a city, he tells me and must always return to the land. I recognise the impulse. In him I have found a fellow spirit who is anxious to help build a new and better society through the Christian life and method.

At 1.30 I was due to collect Hilda Clark for lunch at the Havases before moving on for our appointment with Governor Horthy himself. The chief memory I retain of that interview with Admiral Horthy (is there not something absurd in the idea of a land-locked state like Hungary having an admiral at all, let alone in political command?) is of the magnificence of the Hussars who stand so rigidly to attention at his doors and along all the corridors of the government buildings there in Buda, the ancient citadel of the Hungarians. I suppose the Hungarians are ethnologically the old Huns, and that Attila himself was one of them. Certainly I came away with the feeling that the new dictator of Hungary was not unaware of his antecedents. As a person, however, Governor Horthy seemed to be one of the true-blue old aristocrats of this land - strikingly good-looking, pleasant manner, direct, definite and always aware of what he wants. I could find no signs in his dealings with us or with those about him of any desire to negotiate or discuss. A man steeped in ideas of duty, rectitude, propriety and protocol. Diplomacy and statesmanship were conspicuously absent from his character. He was clearly

unaccustomed to being crossed or gainsaid. We talked about the present state of Hungary, about arrests, prisons, the 1st May, the White Terror, and the poverty and the pain of the people. We repeatedly assured him of the political impartiality of the Friends. Horthy listened, I felt, with care and courtesy but, in the end, I knew we had made no impact. An Iron Man. I cannot

see this man or the politics he stands for saving Hungary from her economic and social troubles. However he was quite happy for our operation to proceed, he said, and would put no obstacles in our way.

Wednesday morning. Up and ready at 6am. I am already looking forward to the journey back toVienna but first there are one or two more visits and I have to pick up Armstrong Smith and Hilda Clark at the Hungaria at 7. From there we drove to Tata Banya and found the roads much improved since January! There we visited a hospital and a 'Consum Verein' (public kitchen) where children were being fed each day and we found the quality and the service to be very good. We were treated by the "Direction" there to an extremely good meal before setting off for home. Driving through smiling country, full of waving green corn of all kinds, flocks of goslings, herds of cattle and through the finest poplar avenues I have ever seen, for the first time in many weeks I felt almost at peace. My sense of alienation from the real Mother Earth receded for the time being and I was in touch once again with the nature of my goals. We reached Vienna at 8 o'clock and - with my first encounter with a mirror for 24 hours - I realised that most of the skin had now peeled off my brick-red face..... Love, Donald. "

When I arrived in the office at the University the next morning it was clear that much had happened in my absence and things were now moving quite quickly. I had been laying foundations for co-operating committees to be formed in other Austrian centres - Graz, Leoben and Innsbruck - and I now heard that these initiatives were bearing fruit and these committees were all functioning. Furthermore, we had also been graced with a new - an official - title. We were now to be known as European Student Relief (ESR) (7) and this exciting (if slightly grandiose) name in some way injected new vigour and enthusiasm into us all. Spurred on by these events I negotiated with the Post Office a cable address, for telegrams seemed to be the most frequent form of overseas communication, and we became "Breakfast Vienna". All this was good publicity and we began to feel not just that we had really arrived but that we might, indeed, be staying. Up to this point the undertaking had always seemed to be operating upon so tenuous a shoestring that I was always worried about the possibility of instant financial collapse.

Now help in re-organising several 'Studentheime' (hostels) claimed my special attention. One of them was in the Strozzigasse and I had often visited it before. On this occasion when I called I met a young student there who was studying at the School of Art. His name was Willi Kaufmann and he told me that he came from Salzburg (8). Willi was a well-built, square shouldered young man with wavy hair, steady and honest eyes, wearing lederhosen and a gray/ green jacket with staghorn buttons (9) and strong, heavy

(7) This ultimately grew into the World University Service (WUS) and is still very much alive today.

(8) Willi Kaufmann later became one of his generation's most celebrated Austrian painters and was associated for many years with Dr. Albert Schweitzer at Lambarene in Africa. He was later commissioned to paint the portrait of Pope Paul VI and deliver it to the Vatican.

(9) Traditional Austrian (male) dress.

hand-made shoes. He had an arresting smile, a musical voice and spoke quite good English. He was to become one of my closest friends. Life-long. Willi, speaking in general terms for all his contemporaries, proceeded to give me a detailed and graphic account of student life in Vienna at this time and how close many had come to despair in the previous twelve months afflicted as they all were by dire poverty, malnutrition and, in many cases, quite severe illness. Many would have gone back to their homes but lacked the will and/or the resources to do so. Some indeed had died. He told me that our feeding programme had seemed to be a direct answer to their many prayers and that there was great goodwill around for our operation. The students would, without any doubt, be keen and able to help wherever they could. This was very good news and we were all much cheered by the intelligence (10). "Breakfast Vienna" was going to survive after all.

The relief was immense. With the lightening of the burden I realised that I had for some time past been feeling more and more removed from my own, my personal, life; from home, from Evelix, from the land and - above all - from Irene. Irene and I were absolutely committed, one to the other, and I knew how eager we both were to embark on the great adventure together but somehow events had overtaken us and the relationship had been shunted into a siding while, under a different imperative, I had had to pursue a path where, so far at least, Irene was not able to follow. This was in no way through lack of any resources in Irene, least of all a shortage of courage, for that I already knew she possessed in full measure No, it was simply due to lack of funds. But now I saw a glimmer of hope. With the horizons expanding daily before my eyes I could see work to be done where Irene's skills and training could very well be employed. Perhaps she might now be able to join me? Suddenly the way forward was revealed and I began to lay my plans for my return home. To this day I can recall the relief at the discovery that the decision was made - the feeling that the mists had cleared - and my path was clear. I would return. Irene and I would marry. We would then come back together to Europe - to Vienna - the better to address the task and God would reveal whither our life would take us. Where this decision came about I know not but it was not in the mind.

So I wrote to Irene telling her of these thoughts and feelings. (I seemed to spend hours of every day writing here, there, everywhere - the telephone was not then the first likely means of communication and telegrams were inadequate and expensive. Somehow, notwithstanding the universal chaos, the postal services did their work and I quickly learned the discipline of writing. That discipline has remained with me down the years and I am glad of it.) But I always made time to write to Irene. Now I wanted to tell her of my plans and to hear her responses and to know that we were in tune. At the end of that letter I wrote about my growing sense of 'internationalism' as the only political hope for the future and how this seemed to me to be the logical necessary reflection in human society of the philosophy of fellowship among and between individuals and, ergo, the reflection in communal terms of our overall relationship with

(10) At that time we learned that in Graz 500 very needy students were busy organising a summer camp and were seeking help rather than accepting free breakfasts in the university. So we instantly sent a case of beans, 4 cases cocoa, 3 cases cheese, 2 sacks flour, 10 cases maizemeal, 15 cases corned beef and a barrel of condensed milk. I visited them on 10th June and set up a representative committee.

God. The idea and the m,eaning of Fellowship between persons was very much in my mind at this time. It was to remain there, lifelong.

> From that letter to Irene dated 21. 5. 20:
>
> ".....Boiling hot. I have been putting together some notes for a talk which I give this evening in the University here. " Internationalism in the Right Spirit" is more or less my subject. Then, at 7.30 I have dinner with at the Hotel Bristol with Baron Pollanat, the Dutch diplomat, along with Dr. and Mrs. Rickman who have been so long in Russia....."

Russia. Holy Russia. Revolutionary Russia. Europe was in turmoil indeed, but Russia by all accounts was experiencing catastrophe beyond imagining. The 1917 revolution had sewn the wind in that vast country and the people were now reaping the whirlwind. That meeting with the Rickmans stretched the horizons of my mind and in some way sensitized me to the political upheavals and the ongoing war that was still ravaging that far country. The conversation that evening sowed a seed that was to have far-reaching effects upon me.

The Red Army had for months been fighting large Allied forces on two fronts in both the West and the East (11). The World War, the Bolshevik Revolution, famine, disease, an economy in total paralysis and now civil war. Mother Russia, that vast land of history with millions upon millions of disparate peoples, rebuilt under the Romanov dynasty by, inter alia, Peter the Great and the Empress Catherine and finally united in a feudal culture cemented by the Byzantine Christian Church, had now reached Armageddon. The Four Horsemen were all unleashed in their full fury - devastation and ruin was everywhere and no-one could know where it would end. As news arrived in Vienna of Polish troops entering Kiev (now the capital city of the Ukraine) I was preparing for my departure to the U.K. and setting up the ESR staff and structure for my intended absence during the next three months. At the same time Tomas Masaryk was inaugurated as the first President of the new Czechoslovak Republic with Eduard Benes as his vice-president. There was a powerful sense of global disorder with new political movements constantly emerging. The very air was full of strife, restlessness and anxiety, anger with the past, suffering for the present and hope for the future. Moving boundaries, moving people, moving power and moving trust all acted out against a back-drop of war, mayhem and revolution. Whatever the future might hold security, stability, community and and comfort seemed to have disappeared for ever. I had for some time now been aware of a brooding sense deep within myself that perhaps the divine trumpet had blown and that all our walls, like Jericho, were crashing about our ears. The mood was strong

(10) Nearly 100,000 men, including French, Greek, Polish and Rumanian troops had been despatched in Dec. 1919 to southern Russia to support the flagging fortunes of Gen. Denikin's Cossack armies. Denikin, with the wavering support of the surviving aristocracy (much of it already in exile), had been declared the "ruler of the Caucasus" but

his 'White' Army was by now showing signs of collapse under the relentless pressure of the Red Army in the West where Gen. Budenny's Red cavalry seemed to be irresistible. At the same time the Red Army in the East was advancing steadily along the Trans-Siberian Railway to push the American and Japanese opposition back to Vladivostok and defeat.

upon me to seek some reassurance that my own world was still intact, that it was not by stealth also being sucked into this European maelstrom.

As the Treaty of Trianon was being signed in Paris on 4th June I was on my way back to relocate myself and rediscover my own security, to review the great certitudes of old and to reinforce my relationships with my twin anchors of home and Irene. My sister Kate was by now married and living in Acton, London. Irene was waiting there for me and Europe faded from my mind as if the curtain were falling on a tragic opera. How could I know, at that time, that it was only Act I ?

CHAPTER X

I was soon immersed in the work of the SCM in London and much energy was additionally employed in seeking further resources for 'Breakfast Vienna' - new contacts, new avenues, speaking privately to small groups, among friends and, when the occasion arose, speaking at public meetings. Endless effort, or so it seemed at the time, to awaken a sleepy domestic populace to the growing disaster that was Central Europe at this time. It was already clear to me that we were all (that is all the peoples of Europe) at risk to, if not already involved in, a major socio-political disaster which was spreading rapidly across the map of post-war Europe. Like any other infectious disease, I felt, if we did not combine together to take active steps to limit the spread of the contagion all Europe and beyond would become imbroigled. That disease, in my lexicon, was a very dangerous mixture of nationalism, racism and revenge. To me this was the devil's work and these were but three of his different labels. My understanding of Jesus' teaching was that the nature of God was to be found only within Nature and human society and that we can only experience God in our actual living and in our relationships. If this be true, then good and facilitative relations between nations and between peoples must also be among the pre-requisites for the full experienceof God. The most powerful and universal form of the devil in my philosophy was fear. FEAR. Fear is the ultimate anti-Christ. And Europe at this time was absolutely full of fear. Among all the people I had met and worked with in the last 18 months Fear, it seemed to me, was the only universal experience. No-one was without it and I was beginning to recognise that I was also infected. The only way to address this distress was to examine the personal situation and decide in which direction my understanding of Jesus would have me move in order to counter the attack. I knew, in the instant, that my contribution was to give my all to the initiative that fate had put into my hands in the work in Vienna and that I must return to it. Irene talked with me, not just once but many times, about these ideas and about our future together, and she never wavered one iota from a full understanding and a total endorsement of what I felt I must do. We already felt at one with each other and we knew that in the eyes of God we were, indeed, already married but we had to acknowledge that the time for the wedding was not yet. That would have to be next year.

From London I went with Irene to Swanwick (in Derbyshire) for the annual SCM conference where I was able to meet with so many old friends and pick up the threads of the familiar discussions about the nature of man and how to deal with the devil. So I was able to tell

something about the devil's work that I had been witnessing at such close quarters and my plans for the next stage of the battle. It was a very large conference and there were present many well-known and influential public figures whose support I was at pains to enlist for my enterprise, in the knowledge that more and more resources were going to be needed.

Letter home to the family at Evelix, Friday 23rd July 1920:

"This is a wet day, like many others; but the second conference begins only tonight. Herbert Gray is here, also Gilbert Murray accompanied by his daughter Agnes, and Cairns (1) (2) (3) and so many others. I hope to leave here in a couple of days and may be able to get home on Monday night or Tuesday morning. At that rate it is questionable if I will be in sufficiently good form to play on Thursday for the N.C.C. (4) but I am very fit, at least..... "

Irene penned a postscript to this.....

"Nannie dear,

just a word in with Donald's to send you my love. We have had a good time here, you may be sure. And now, on Sunday, Donald comes on to you. Dad will be here and Gladys is here - half the family. Love to Dick and all the rest, and always to yourself - Irene."

The rest of that summer was spent in Dornoch, drinking in the richness, the quietness, the eternal beauty of the land and, above all, the warmth of the community which had nurtured me and the love of the family to which I belonged. To watch the thoughtful farmer (my father) caring for the land, the soil, the animals and always giving time to those who worked with him and their families.... here was another form of love, beautiful to watch for those who cared to see. This was God's work also, or so it seemed to me. I had to pause. To think. Perhaps I should stay here and join this work instead? In some ways, it seemed, this was the primary task. Slowly, however, the logic receded although the appeal remained. In some dark recess of the mind in conversation, it seemed, with my alter ego the decision was arrived at that others were better suited to that work whereas I had command of some less usual attributes that would be better employed where they were already engaged. Somehow I was becoming familiar with this method of what, nowadays, might be called 'conflict resolution' in myself. The method was simple: think, evaluate, contemplate, wait and reflect and, ultimately a decision will arrive. And when it does arrive, in some strange way the decision always seems secure. There is no going back and, in my mind, I am now sure of my direction. So it was on this occasion and by September, when Irene came back to join us in Evelix, I knew that I would return to Vienna in October.

I had just missed the opportunity to play in the Northern Counties Cup golf

tournament but I was glad to be able to take part once again in the Carnegie Shield

Later Sir Herbert Gray, founder of the National Marriage Guidance Council later renamed Relate.

(2) Later Professor Gilbert Murray in the University of Oxford. (3) Later Sir Walter Cairns, diplomat.

The aforementioned Northern Counties Cup.

competition in mid-August and to rediscover my touch and feel on the golf course. But, as so often in life, just as I began to experience the exciting return of confidence and the ability to send the ball to a spot of my own choosing, the time came for me to leave. And as news arrived that the Poles had defeated the Red Army at the gates of Warsaw and, it would seem, saved Europe from the spread eastwards of communism, I was taking my farewells once more and setting out for Vienna. Irene was to return to Manchester where she was living and working at that time and we had planned our wedding the following July. By the beginning of October I was at my desk in the University in Vienna once more and the tide of problems was flooding all about us.

Letter to my mother, written in Hietzing, Vienna, 27th Feb. 1921:

"..... I heard the bells of a church ringing. The bells, too, were attractive, speaking of quietness, time to think, an ordered country and the n a t u r a l aspirations of man. I listened to them until they ceased and somehow thought of a pretty church in Kilchreggan, beyond Helensburgh, where, on a June Sunday I once preached to a number of village and country people. How far away in time that seems.

Now I am always in the midst of the strongest currents of conomic pressure, in the acutest struggle for existence, although that current does not affect me directly. There are 'problems' everywhere; economic, political, trade, tariff, racial, class; and it is all one seething turmoil full of the movements of fear. No wonder one longs for a natural life, with natural work, and the recurring periods of rest and of coming to oneself.....

Once a week I get two small rashers of bacon (not very good but it has the primary qualities of bacon!) and these I keep for Sunday morning. But I haven't had an egg since coming back here, nor any butter. These can be had, of course, but at huge prices and the Viennese cannot afford them. No more can I. Did I tell you that I have a piano here? There is music here for a lot of German and Austrian folk songs and I am learning to sing many of them.

Reg Mountford - one of the very brightest and best - has been out here for a few weeks again, this time waiting for couple of motor trucks to be got ready. He hopes to convoy them, with the supplies they carry, into Russia. Now he is gone - over Stettin and Reval he will go and says he does not know how far into Russia he will get. What an adventure! We all await his news, not without some apprehension. I talked a lot with him - about Life! I also met Charles Roden Burton - most interesting of all - who is in Vienna at the International Labour Conference acting as interpreter. This conference is trying to compose a new 'International' , more representative and wise than the 3rd

(Moscow) and more alive and kicking than the 2nd (Geneva). So I do meet the most interesting people.....

Yesterday I was at Gumpersdorferstrasse for tea with Margaret Brooke who now lives there. You will remember me speaking to you of her and her friend Martha Speakman. They were both at the Jordans conference last year and got to know Irene there. Both have just returned to Vienna after three weeks'

vacation in Italy. The Spring has really come there, they say. I don't think you realize how easy it is to go in any direction from Vienna for a holiday! - Italy, Tyrol, Germany, Dalmatia, Dolomites and even further. Madleen Gribbon and Irene Somerville (two of my best friends) are thinking of making a bid for Constantinople after a month..... after all, they say, we are two thirds of the way there already! I am beginning to think that I might take a break myself and I would like to go to the Dolomites....."

By this time I was becoming quite well known in certain circles in Vienna and beyond and, inevitably, had been recruited to a variety of different causes and committees all related to the sort of work that I was involved in. It was instantly apparent that it was quite unrealistic that I could hope to pursue more than one or two of these 'secondary' pursuits when I was already overcommitted to the main task. Furthermore, it had become clear to me that I actively disapproved of the hidden policies of some of these groups and that, in any event, I was unable to do justice to many of the others. Accordingly I set about a strategic withdrawal from most of these functions - not always an easy task when it is important not to leave bad feeling, let alone hostility, behind you. On the other hand one or two were committees where I had uncovered vested interests quite unacceptable to my own view of the scheme of things and from such groups, I felt, I must really distance myself and be seen to do so. Thus, in Feb. 1921, I wrote to the 'Akademisches Wohlfahrts Werk' (Academic Welfare) committee :

".....When you persuaded me in May 1920 to join your list of directors, I was assured that it was purely a nominal affair. At the same time the Akademisches Wohlfahrts Werk has since then undertaken enterprises and responsibilities which I should have opposed had I known about them at the time. Also I do not have the time to take any active part in the work of the A.W.W. so I send you herewith my resignation..... " (5)

I was ever aware how much the real work was dependent upon the goodwill of those about me who worked so unstintingly for so little personal reward. The stipend was minimal and the standard of living, like all others around us particularly the students, was abysmal. But somehow the sense of the work being its own reward and the feeling that this really was a work for 'the greater good' kept us all going. Without any doubt we were making a lot of friends in this great European city - in at least thirteen different languages!
Vienna really did seem still to be the hub of Europe, notwithstanding the devastation of empire, and students from all over the continent were still desperately anxious to find places to study there, indeed hundreds came from much further afield. The many attractions of this great city

other than the purely academic also played a significant part. The sense of history, the culture, the art, the music, the politics and, especially for the young, the feeling that this is 'where things happen'. The idea of living

(5) This committee, with very limited resources at its disposal, seemed to be trying to operate selective procedures, related to privilege, that I considered questionable.

in a new time and the seductive sense of being actively involved in a new beginning was all about us. No wonder the young students, and also many of their elders and teachers, were so full of enthusiasm and willing to put up with the most astonishing deprivation if only they could get on with their studies and the great task of building the new world. But
Vienna, the ancient city and the baroque jewel of the Hapsburgs, had attractions other than purely metropolitan. The city, since early times regarded as 'the gateway to the East' lies just south of one of the great bends of the Danube and the location of the great city is one of outstanding natural beauty. Lying in the eastern lee of the Leopoldsberg and the
Kahlenberg hills and further screened by the Wienerwald (6) the city looks out Eastwards to the vast central European plain and the twin capital city of Budapest and the great Lake Balaton only half a day's journey away. The Danube valley itself hereabouts ("The Wachau") is of exceptional beauty with its famous castles and monasteries (7)(8) and is one of the most famous vineyards in Austria. The scenery is breath-taking. Further afield to the North, West and South, but all within a radius of 200 miles; the Tatra mountains and Prague in Czechoslovakia; Bavaria with Munich, Bayreuth, Garmisch and Oberammagau; Upper Austria including the magnificent Salzkammergut lakeland, Passau and Salzburg itself; the Austrian alpine land with Innsbruck and the Inn valley; and also southern Austria and the Dolomites - possibly the most exciting of all the alpine ranges - and all the land that once was the 'Ost Tirol' (East Tirol) now ceded to Italy, including Bolzano and Merano (Bozen und Meran). What a wealth of nature all around. Now, for the first time, I saw the possibilities - both for myself and the organisation. Here we were in the midst of natural pastures beyond compare and trying our uttermost to care for a generation of the young with our resources stretched to the limit. The health-giving and re-vitalising powers of God's countryside itself could surely be pulled in to account? Three very significant events occurred at this time which had great influence upon me and my strategies. I paid my first visit to Czechoslovakia, I took a holiday and I met Oscar Bock.

In the Spring of 1921, following up an invitation from the ministry of the interior in Prague, I took the train to the ancient kingdom of Bohemia to assess for myself the state of the new nation of Czechoslovakia. On my return 10 days later I wrote a piece about that very beautiful country for publication in the English press under the pen-name Viator. Here it is:

(6) The legendary Vienna Woods - for the Viennese the Wienerwald is their own countryside.

(7) It was the castle of Durnstein in the Wachau where King Richard I of England was incarcerated for so long in the 12th century, after his capture by the Duke of Austria, and ultimately discovered by his own singing minstrel and ransomed. To the relief, we are told, of our own Robin Hood.

(8) The great mediaeval monasteries of Melk (on the Danube upstream from Vienna) and Klosterneuburg (on Vienna's Kahlenberg) were both deeply involved with Viennese history.

"NEW EUROPE"

Czechoslovakia - a People's Dream Realised.

"Roll up that map" said William Pitt the Younger, over a hundred years ago when Napoleon's victories were carving European territories into new formations. A century later, at the close of the Great War, the map of Europe was literally rolled up in many a school and put away as obsolete. New countries, new frontiers appeared everywhere; old and distinguished geographical names were displaced by new ones sounding very strange to the older generations.

A Nation of Mixed Race .

Bohemia and Serbia have disappeared from the map. Bohemia, the ancient land of the Czech people is today part of the new Czecho-Slovak Republic. Serbia has given way to another composite state with another complex, hephenated name - · Jugo-Slavia, lying to the south of Austria and Hungary, themselves only just separated. Czechoslovakia now lies between Austria and Germany. The Czechs are the people of old Bohemia, the country of John Huss, and the major population in the new nation state The leading role of the Serbs in the new Jugoslavia is challenged by the Croats (9) whose home-land, Croatia, has been subsumed into the new republic. The Croats are a strong, independent, progressive peasant people, and they claim more political power than they have enjoyed up to the present, as one of the major component peoples of the new state. Hungarians, Bosnians, Slovenes, Montenegrins - all different component minorities in this emerging European country increase the complexity of the racial and the political problems facing the leaders of today's Jugoslavia. (10) To that we must add the inevitable tensions across the religious divide between Christian and Muslim which stretch back to the Middle Ages. What a maelstrom! This situation is mirrored, to some extent in Czechoslovakia.

Here, beside the Czechs, there are three million Germans occupying that part of the new country they know as 'The Sudetenland' as well as the smaller major population of Slovaks and significant numbers of Ruthenes and other stocks. Since the Peace Treaties establishing the new state there has been great friction among these various peoples with their different histories all living together for the first time under one government. This friction frequently broke out into fighting and killing. Many German youths who were killed in these outbreaks of violence are tody regarded as martyrs for the liberty of their people (the Sudeten Germans). An uneasy truce has now emerged and today the Germans, the Slovaks the Ruthenes and others are represented in the national cabinet of this young constitutional democracy along with the Czechs themselves. Many of the rights and privileges demanded by the Germans and other minorities have been conceded. In the capital city, Prague, there is a German university and relations between the

different groups are, for the present at least, much improved.

(9) The ethnic confusion is compounded by the official language of the new nation - Serbo-Croat!

Cherished Nationalism.

Czechoslovakia stands at the heart of Europe. The main territory of the new state is the old Kingdom of Bohemia and the Czechs are the Bohemians. For centuries they played a very inferior second fiddle in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Czechs were regarded as the people who supplied the manual workers and the lackeys for the well-to-do families living in the imperial city of Vienna and in other metropolitan centres of empire. Nevertheless the Czechs have always cherished the memories of and the belief in their unique history and destiny as a sovereign people. In spite of severe difficulties

through the centuries they have maintained their own language, customs and literature and their own sense of society. Their outstanding leader during the Great War was Professor Thomas Masaryk who had had to escape to London earlier because of his well-known political opinions, where he became a lecturer at King's College. The end of the
war brought him his great opportunioty and and he became the first President of the new Republic of Czechoslovakia. This man is proving to have great statesmanlike qualities and one of his strongest characteristics has always been to stand four-square behind a policy of conciliation and co-operation with regard to the differing and mutually antagonistic racial groups in the country. His influence, more than that of any other man has drawn these disparate groups together into a political working agreement, and that is only one of his many achievements. Czechoslovakia is today already one of the most successful and progressive countries in Europe.

Masaryk's Lieutenant.

Dr. Eduard Benes has been Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia almost continuously since the end of the war. Ministries have come and gone but the President and the Foreign Minister have remained. Dr. Benes has been one of the most prominent figures in support of The League of Nations. Fully informed upon all the intricate questions of European politics, national and international, and in full possession of the patient and tactful attitudes of the highly trained diplomat Dr. Benes has been the means of settling many dangerous disputes. He is an old student and now an old friend of the President - Thomas Masaryk. They make a formidable team.

Beautiful Prague.

Prague, the beautiful, ancient capital of the new Czechoslovakia still retains something of the form and the spirit of the Middle Ages. The old eccentric houses; the bidges over the River Moldau (Vltava in the Czech language); the steep, tortuous streets - like old Edinburgh wynds - are reminders of the very distant past (10). Here, in Prague (as, also in Edinburgh) the great fortress Hradcany Castle stands out on a hill in and above the city

itself. Here is the seat of government of the country and of the city, yet aloof from it, like the Burg in the old town of Buda on the higher bank of the Danube

(10) Just as the old walls and houses of Geneva remind one of the historic deeds of earlier centuries when the Savoyards attempted to capture and subjugate that other fine European city.

looking down over the river through the haze of the centuries to the 'new' town of Pesth. Hradcany Castle is old. Like the Kremlin in Moscow - also set upon a hill - it is a collection of buildings representative of various periods, the oldest dating back to the 11th Century. "Old King Wenceslas" looked out from these castle terraces, we are told and it is easy to believe it. Today the President, the Foreign Minister and other leaders of
the nation have their private apartments and state offices here in among the courtyards, porches, wells, fountains and other architectural features that, along with the many heavy gateways lend such variety and colour to the aggregate of buildings from the centuries within the castle walls. And overall in Hradcany now broods the spirit of Peace.

The situation of Prague on the Moldau is particularly beautiful and the varying art and architecture of the bridges over the river are also strikingly beautiful. I know of only
one other city that takes its river so completely into the life and scheme of the whole and that is Budapest where the Danube is enclosed in an equally intimate way. In London and in Paris the Thames and the Seine are important in a variety of secondary ways but Prague and Budapest are essentially river cities where the river is integral and intimate and the bridges bear witness to the fact. The Charles Bridge in Prague dates from 1357 - a magnificent structure culminating in strange-looking towers at either end and punctuated all along its fine parapets by fifteen bold statues. "Nothing more surely makes for grandeur in a city than a broad shining river flowing nobly through....". The mention of the Charles Bridge (the Karls-bruecke) reminds me of the fact that the German people have also played their part in the history of this great city. The oldest German university still in existence is the Charles University of Prague which was founded at the same time as the famous bridge was built.

The Czechs of today are nothing if not 'modern'. Believing intensely in the genius of their own people they express that genius in their painting, their writing, in opera, in drama and other cultural forms and they are heirs, of course to a powerful musical tradition that is not simply derivative. The same dedicated enthusiasm is seen nationwide in the preoccupation of the young with the fields of sport and athletics (11). Football, tennis, track events and gymnastics are the universal activities of Czechoslovak youth today. Indeed it is a Czech tennis player who is at present coaching Britain's players for the forthcoming Davis Cup tie and I have seen one of London's finest soccer teams West Ham getting a very severe testing game at the hands of the famous Sparta Club in Prague. The name of that club is, perhaps, not without significance. The Czechs are a very tough people, indeed. Strong, solid, virile and deeply wedded to their homeland they resemble in many ways the Scots. Their land is a rich agricultural one and the new country has inherited most of the mines and of manufacturing industry from the old Hapsburg empire. Her economic postion is sound and her people have a strong sense of both purpose and destiny. If the political structures can hold her future should be assured.

'Viator'

(10) Just as the old walls and houses of Geneva remind one of the historic deeds of earlier centuries when the Savoyards attempted to capture and subjugate that other fine European city.

That first visit to Prague is deeply etched in my mind and had a profound effect on my view and understanding of subsequent political events in Europe which were so soon to reverberate around the world.

In May I gave myself a few days off and took a holiday. Forty years later, reading a Zane Grey story about the American 'Wild West' (13 I felt that I was reading another man's description of the same "Happy Valley". In that hidden valley, or the 'Sealed Valley' as I think it is called in the book man can find all that is needed in the way of land, wood, water, sunshine, beauty and peace, for a good life. In that brief interlude in 1921 I found myself in that wonderful Happy Valley. I had travelled in a very overcrowded train from Vienna to Salzburg, a long wearisome journey by night and

(11) The reader who is past the 'first flush of youth' will recall the names of Zatopek - the great long distance runner who left the world behind him in the 1950s - and Jaroslav Drobny who mesmerised the crowds on Wimbledon's Centre Court in the same period.

(13) For Zane Grey devotees - I think it comes from 'Riders of the Purple Sage'.

half the next day standing all the way, so that my ankles were weary. At noon my train came through the gorge at the entrance to the Valley. The mountains rose so high on either side that, from the carriage window, one could not see the summit. The sides of those mountains, dotted with spruce, larch and beech trees, made a most inspiring sight to city-tired eyes. And through the gorge, tumbling out from the valley to meet my train, came the river.

Then the valley, undulating at the feet of the encircling mountains, widened out. There were green fields, a white road, a bridge, some farm buildings and, away above, in every direction ranges of soaring mountains rising up to six and seven thousand feet. Pines, beeches, torrent-falls, patches of snow, rocky surfaces and heights, clean, majestic lonely. In the western distance the mountain walls of the valley approached each other again giving an added feeling of seclusion and peace. I left the train at a small station where there was no-one to ask for my ticket. I walked. From two youths on the road I asked the way to Steinwend. "Steinwend? Graf Hochberg - ja. We go in that direction; a quarter of an hour."

I had seen a photograph of the house and I knew that I would recognise it as soon as I

saw it. An old-fashioned Austrian farmhouse in the 'Swiss chalet' style. Much woodwork everywhere, plentiful shrubbery and, close behind, beechwoods giving way to pinewoods further up the mountainside behind the house. After ten minutes walk the mountains seemed to recede and the fields, trees and various buildings came to view. Then, suddenly, there was the house itself. I took my leave of the two guides and crossed the bridge towards Steinwend. Here was peace and beauty and the life of early summer all about. Green trees, green grass, streams, waterfalls, high pasture and the mountains. Hardly any vehicles along this mountain road and the train makes only one or two trips along the valley each day. I knocked at the door and was soon greeted by Count Fritz von Hochberg who was to be my host for the next few days. The name alone seemed particularly apt - Fritz of the High Mountain - but he was quick to explain that he could not help it for he had not chosen to be born into an old landed family with a title. To the locals he was known as Count Fritz and it is clear that they all care for him.

Count Fritz and I seemed to establish an instant rapport. Tall and alert, he was well-dressed in the country fashion - light coloured riding breeches and jacket, pale blue shirt and bow tie, puttees and brown boots. His aspect was in some ways really quite English and his conversation seemed to endorse that view and he later told me that he really regarded England as his spiritual home having spent much time there in his youth. During the 1914 War, from conviction, he refused to fight but he fitted up and ran a hospital instead. Patriotism is usually stupidity, he told me.

Fritz Hochberg was a deeply religious man but by no means orthodox. Religion was very real to him and God, Faith, Spirituality and the meaning of Eternal life were part of his every day. It was largely for this reason, he told me, that he felt quite lonely when he came back to Germany at the outbreak of war. Here there were no kindred spirits. The friends with whom he could share such things were all in England. So our minds met and, as is so often the case when first meeting such a person, we soon felt that we had known each other for a long time.

After tea that evening the Count took me for a walk, across the river, past the old

farmhouse which he was rebuilding to be a centre for the care of malnourished children, over the fields and into the woods at the foot of the mountains on the south side of the valley. Paths made by men and, others made by sheep and deer, we followed, shaded by the pines and beeches. The woods were full of the glad sound of cascades and rapids in the streams that tumbled down the mountain slopes. Emerging into a clearing we could see, rugged and impressive, the white head and shoulders of a great mountain towering above us, illuminated by the early evening sunshine.

"This is the Angel's Walk," said the Count. "I call it that because I often see angels and other visions over here." Then he went on to describe to me his many such experiences and examples of what he could only term his 'second sight' phenomena and how it came to him somewhat late in life because previously, in his earlier years he had only hunted, travelled and generally knocked about the world in the fashion of most young rich men. It was only during a long and serious illness that he had found the time and the power to seek within himself the more contemplative pursuits and so found himself, found God and life and the real power. As we walked the Angel Walk, so we exchanged ideas and examined our understanding of life and our different forms of Faith gradually finding that these differences were more a matter of detail than of principle. We grew rapidly closer in our understanding and could soon share the idea of the

universal creative principle embodied in Carlyle's dictum of the ' Everlasting Yea ' and - in the necessary co-existence of the opposing thesis - the destructive power of the negative. For me that negative was to be found in the Satanic powers of fear and all that lay therein. Even here my friend and I were in accord.

At 7 o'clock the next morning in my shorts I set out for a run to the stream and the waterfall on the mountainside opposite. There I took the plunge. Delicious it was - snow water and cold. Refreshed I returned for breakfast and then climbed hiugh up among the beeches in the forest until I came to the pine belt. Now, having no nails in my shoes I had to take care as the rock took charge and any small slip could mean disaster. Up and up I went, looking for a suitable place to bathe in the sun - some small, flat rocky ledge where I could lie in comfort - but no such place could I find, so steep and mountainous was the terrain. However, I did finally find a little spot that would accomodate my moderate length and there I spent a couple of hours naked in the sun with a light and friendly breeze for company, drinking in the immensity and the immanent beauty of it all.

Then it was time to go and it came as no surprise to find that getting down that rock face was more tricky than had been the climbing up. But slowly, with infinite care and assisted by many crevices and not a few stunted trees I achieved the descent in the blazing sunshine at the cost of only a few scratches and weary legs. I made my way straight to the pool I had discovered that morning and dived in to the icy water. I felt much invigorated by all this intimate involvement with earth, sun, sky and the mountain and its waters. And ready for my supper.

On my return I found Count Fritz waiting for me to tell me that we had guests for the evening and I was introduced to the Henschels, visitors from Dresden where he was an artist and she a designer. It did not surprise me in the context to find them both very 'sympathique', with open seeking minds and a very internationalist outlook - indeed he

reminded me somewhat of my new friend in Vienna Willi Kaufman. I was a little surprised however, when Fritz said to me, seemingly a propos nothing at all, that Frau Henschel shared with him some kind of 'sixth sense' capacity - "We have often remarked upon it" he said "and have shared some quite strange experiences."

That evening, as we addressed a table laden with Bauernschmaus (14) local wine, after a lull in the conversation, Fritz suddenly turned to me and said:

"Have you any relation, or otherwise closely connected with anyone, an old lady with three curls at her temples and wearing some little white linen cap upon her head? I can see her sitting beside you at this moment."

A little taken aback, I sat in silence for a moment and then replied:

"Only my grandmother and she died more than twenty years ago."

Fritz then proceeded to describe the old lady more carefully and that description did, indeed, seem uncannily like the old lady in my memory but then he said:

"I'm sorry but the image is fading - I must stop. You have come at a bad time, I am not very receptive tonight." Then he turned to Frau Henschel and said:

"I wonder why he, a Scot from so far away, was sent here tonight? Anyway, he must have been sent for some purpose, and Hilda von Griesheim (15) After a brief pause Frau Henschel made the perceptive comment:

(16) Brunnen = a stream or a well; Alm = mountain pasture so, Brunnalm = the high watered pasture, here the cows are led to water.

slip! What exhilaration, what excitement - the whistling wind with nature's language all about me I knew, in some moments, what it was like to be Mercury himself.

The ground was quickly covered, mercifully without mishap, for few knew better than I how little regard mountains have for careless feet. It was warm work, but dazzlingly beautiful and rewarding, feet so sure, muscles and limbs in perfect order and working so easily, lungs in good form and, above all, eyes working to perfection in all their amazing multiple capacities. What a piece of work is man! All around the wondrous air, the sunshine and the rushing water. At the foot of the mountain I plunged again into the torrent of snow water for one last dip then out onto the road by the tiny village of Sulzau and along it at the double to Steinwend. I could see someone in front of the building, on the verandah. It was Frau Henschel - "Goodness" I thought "she is coming out after lunch to sit and rest."

So I came in and said:

" I am so sorry, I must be very late..."

"Why, not at all", she said. So we consult the time. It is 10 minutes to one o'clock.

Later, as I left Steinwend and the Happy Valley, and following a path out into a clearing, there in a small open space was a wooden hut looking to me like a replica of Solveig's hut. My mind could see Peer Gynt moving towards it and wood for the fire was already all piled up outside. Grieg's music in the wood and on the mountain was not far away.

I was aware during all this time of a stirring of some kind deep in my consciousness (or perhaps even a little further away) which I would have to consider before too long. The contrast between the world that I just entered and was now leaving behind and that other world that I had only just stepped out of to get here - the world of chaos, hunger, despair and daily pain that seemed to be the lot of mankind in Europe - was too powerful to be set aside or simply accepted. It felt as if I had in some strange way, been allowed a brief journey out of time and into one of the great timeless myths that belong to us all in the deepest wells of our consciousness. I was not, at that time familiar with the work of C.J.Jung, but I now know that this experience belonged in some way to that stream of thought.

Where was the meaning? There must be a lesson for the receptive mind. I think it was at this time that, in the pursuit of my relationship with God, I first began to feel the need of a review of some kind of my relationship with the Church. As I made my way back to Vienna not without some reluctance, back to my chosen path, I was aware of a spiritual cloud in the background. I began to be aware that, where previously I had felt a kind of 'linear' relationship with God and the Church, which I had always regarded as indissoluble, I now began to feel that it was not so linear and perhaps I was only one of three points in a triangle. I knew at once that there was a built in discomfort here that was not going to go away. The insidious idea of a crack growing between myself and my church was finding a foothold. Having acknowledged the problem I was able to put it away into a recess in the mind and return to the task in hand while continuing to savour the recent amazing precipitating experience.

"Of course the purpose may be more on Herr Grant's acount than ours."
I felt that observation to be very close to the mark and the quiet that followed seemed to close the conversation.

Early the next morning I set out alone to climb up to the alms (16). I climbed for an hour or so up a steep gorge marvelling at the beauty and the variety of the alpine wild flowers, and on emerging from the gorge I struck west into great thickets of pine trees. The wind and the smell of the pines spoke to me and I was not surprised to come upon scenes of violence here, not human of course, but natural violence - trees torn up by the roots and lying twisted across eavh other in their hour of need, branches hurled to the ground, where they now lifeless lie; snow in patches everywhere and the little path destroyed in different strands by rockfalls and even avalanches. Nature can be very violent but, I felt, the laws of chance were in operation here in contrast to man's dangerous pre-meditation. I was even dimly aware of the idea of a logic overall in stark contradiction of the chaos I had (for the moment) left behind. Suddenly I espied a small alpine hut and in a moment came upon the Brunnalm (16).

(13) Bauernschmaus is the traditional Austrian / Bavarian farmer's mixed platter of (very good) food.

The panoramic scene and the alpine peaks in the sunshine were there, all about me, and the sense of wonder and, further, the idea of the immortality of consciousness were with me at that moment. I had to sit down and reflect. What was the real meaning of this? Indeed why was I come to Steinwend - as Fritz had asked last night? There was a very real sense of God nearby. Something was speaking to me and I had to internalise the nature of that communication in order the better to reflect upon it later.

I had been climbing now for some hours and had begun to lose track of time. A look into the sky and the track of the sun left me wondering if I would be late for lunch so I turned again towards the valley. It had taken me more than four hours to reach this high point and, intending no discourtesy to my host, I hurried down. I ran, I slipped, tumbled and cantered down the steep mountain path, still wearing only my shorts and shoes, gripping an occasional tree or branch thereof to steady myself in my flight. And never a

auernschmaus Bis the traditional Austrian / Bavarian farmer's mixed platter of (very good) food.

(14) It was through Hilda von Griesheim in Vienna that I had been put in touch with Fritz von Hochberg.

(15) The alms are the summer pastures used by the mountain farmers for their livestock, high up on the mountainsides the alms will often rise to 6000 or 7000 feet above the valley.

CHAPTER XI

Tuesday 25th May found me at my desk, midnight already behind me, writing a dozen or more letters by hand in pursuit of the most urgent ESR objectives. This was a bare seven weeks before the wedding, fixed for 14th July, but that still felt distant and unreal and the last letter was a long one to Irene, much of it describing what I was doing each day, and why:

> ".....and on Tuesday 27th April we opened the doors of the two buffets in the University at 7.30 am to about 500 students whom we had carefully selected with the aid of several different questionnaires and interviews..... Very, very few are refused cards for breakfast - only 10 out of the last list of 150 men were turned down and last week we added 140 men and about 60 women to the list. This disparity is i t s e l f interesting for, right at the beginning of our operation, the Women Student's Committee had declared that the men students were, in the main, more needy than the women and that the proportion of men to women should be in the region of 4 to 1. Our work since that time has confirmed that view. Many of these students are desperately and pitifully poor. The rule is that they help to support themselves by giving lessons or 'Stunden' (hours) as often as they can manage it. By this means most of them manage to increase their pittance of 200, 300 or - the lucky ones - of 500 Kronen a month. The average monthly resources of the students with whom we deal is about 500K per month. The present rate of exchange (which is itself constantly changing - for the worse) stands at £1 sterling = 840 Kronen! My English friends here tell me that they cannot get a real meal for less than 70K. So it will not surprise you when I tell you that the biggest problem which faces the students apart from hunger is their clothes. Most of them haven't got any proper clothes only a collection of rags and remains and, as for shoes, a good pair of shoes is one of the great luxuries. We have had to address this problem and are desperately searching for more money to underwrite the whole ESR function but most particularly, at this time, to try to get our 'tailoring initiative' moving.
>
> For the men we are arranging that they may go to a certain tailoring firm in the city and have a simple suit of inexpensive material made to measure. That material was promised to us gratis by The Friend's Mission and they have also offered £120 towards the tailor's costs. The tailor in his turn has offered to work for a reduced return. The first 30 suits will be ready tomorrow and we are already looking for the next batch (of about 80) students. The cost of each suit is as low as 780 Kronen and t h e students are expected to make a contribution towards that of not less than 80K. One of my staff is working on a programme for the women. I have sent an appeal (among many others!) to Gilbert Murray in Oxford for help in this work, perhaps you could get in touch with him there

yourself to see if there is any hope?

We have become so used to seeing men going about in their uniforms 3 or 4 years old that it is all too easy not to recognise the plight that they are in. All too often that is the only clothing that they possess. And I mean only for, they have nothing to wear underneath that uniform! Yesterday I was helping a new friend of mine (his n a m e is Oskar Bock and I must tell you more about him another time) to get himself f i t t e d out with some underclothing because he travels to Holland on Thursday for a visit at the invitation of the Dutch SCM. He got his suit through us the other day but has been unable to wear it yet, possessing neither shirt nor collar to wear with it. So I t o o k him to the Friend's clothing store and together we purchased, at nominal prices, two shirts, two pairs of socks and linen stuff for underclothes. It was only then that I learned that he had not worn any socks for months! The uniform that had served to conceal his penury for so many months consists of a tunic, buttoned right up to the neck (no shirt) and gaiters meeting the breeches at the knee thus concealing the absence of socks. This is typical of so many young men here.....

It is good to know that the movement now afoot in the British Universities is to help (I daresay Gilbert Murray was a prime mover in this)..... beyond Vienna there is Graz with a university of 4000 students, mostly medical and also a Technical College, where the need is as great, let alone Innsbruck (university) and Leoben, Salzburg, and Klagenfurt (colleges, various) and then Budapest and beyond. It is not difficult to feel defeat looking at you, for the problems are immense, but I always remind myself - as you in the past have sometimes reminded me - that a journey of a thousand miles starts with one step, so I gather my courage and move on.

Your face is before me as I write, I feel that courage flowing from you at this moment and I receive it with grace and love. If I had more time I would like to write you a poem but, in truth, I must now sleep. We will be together soon - so soon, meanwhile I send you my love,

Donald "

Oskar Bock, a young man recently a student now an officer of the Austrian NUS (National Union of Students), had crossed my path recently and we had instantly warmed to each other. His main task at this time, apart from simple survival, was that of building up the organisation of the 'Amt fur den Studenten Wanderungen' (1). He was, I think, the founder of the organisation and was already gathering much support from the student body. It always held strong Schubertian undertones for Oskar and for me. I came to view these organised 'Wanderungen' as an especially strong complementary function to the more material exercise that my own initiatives were involved in. I think I recognised, even at that early time in these friendships, that one of the personal characteristics that I shared with Oskar and, even more with Willi Kaufmann

(1) Literally - Centre for Student Excursions. A 'Wanderung' is an excursion on foot into the country, more often than not in the mountains. Such excursions can last for many days or a week.

was a romantic streak that allowed the imagination to roam in and out of worlds other than the immediate one. This trait, I had already learned, can be very creative, but only if kept under tight control to avoid the trap that awaits the dreamer. It was at Oskar's suggestion that I had approached Hilda von Griesheim for advice on where to go for my own recent 'wanderung' and he was much pleased to hear that I had had such a rewarding time in the mountains. By now there were groups of students scattered all over Austria and others even further afield which, having learned of the existence of the ESR, were desperately seeking help. Oskar told me of one such, a group of students in Leoben at the Mining College there, with whom he was already in touch who would be only too pleased to meet us with a view to receiving some help in return for themselves helping the ESR operation in that part of Austria. The group was already working with Oskar to establish a base in Leoben for his Amt organisation. So I wrote to them saying I would like to come to discuss plans with them soon, but that it was not possible until after I returned from my wedding in July. By return the reply came:

"But you *must* come. You must 'unbedingt' (absolutely) come....."

The sense of urgency and of hope that jumped from that page urged me to go to see what was on offer and to see if we could kick start an ESR group in Leoben. So I went. With Oskar. That night. We were on the 9.20 train and at 2 am we reached Leoben, to be met by Fritz Vogl and Conrad Nieber who explained to us, as they shepherded us to our rooms for what remained of the night, that we were all to go for a walk in the mountains starting early the next morning for that would lend the best background to our discussions. At 7am we were ready to leave - a group of eight (2) and we set off, rucksacks on our backs, for three days in the mountains (3). I had had a great welcome and already felt quite integrated - indeed I seemed myself to be one of the Wandervoegel (4) - and was fully aware of the powerful sense of mutual trust and friendship all about me. The food would be only what we had in our rucksacks and clearly it was to be at least three nights before we slept in a bed again. For this brief interlude, at least, we were free. Free to do as we liked surrounded by the colours and silence of nature, to walk, to climb a mountain, to sing or to talk, pull some flowers or to lie in the sun, wash in the springs, bathe in the lakes, sleep in hay or straw at night and to set out again in the morning with the sunrise.

(2) Donald, Oskar, Fritz and Conrad also Dr. Sitte (a chemist), Fritz Vogl's sister, Sepp Riess and Karl Bieovski (from Bielitz in Poland). Fritz, his sister Heidi, Conrad, Sepp and Karl were all typical penurious Austrian students of the time, experienced mountaineers, trained in climbing and according the mountains all due love and respect. From them I learned a great deal of mountain wisdom and - a little later - how to ski.

(3) This was to be a trip into the Eisenerz Alps, including the astonishing Iron Mountain (the Erzberg) which has supplied Austria with much of its iron since the Middle Ages.

(4) The Wandervoegel (literally 'wandering birds') was a special Youth Movement which operated in Austria and Germany during the years1905-1933 until the advent of Adolf Hitler. His development of the 'Hitler Jugend' (Hitler Youth) put an end to the free organisation which was instantly swallowed up.

By five o'clock that afternoon, as the the storm-clouds were gathering, we had reached a

peasant house at the far end of the long valley. "Could we stay the night here? Perhaps there was some hay in the barn for us to sleep in?" The hausfrau would consult her man but she was not very hopeful, because there were already 20 woodcutters all about the property for the next few days. However, she produced two large basins of sour milk and we had a great time that thirsty afternoon putting away that very healthy country product. Soon those basins were empty but "Schade, es gibt kein platz fur die nacht...." (Sorry, but there is no place for you here tonight....). So we set off again further up the mountain as the rain and the thunder made its approach.

So, 9 pm Saturday 26th May, I recall the scene that evening 2000 feet above our starting point, among the summer pastures (the 'alm') on the slopes of Mount Reichenstein as the storm was breaking. And what a storm that proved to be. The noise, the lights, the crashing turmoil in the sky, the lashing wind and rain and the ever-present looming figure of the mountain, glimpsed occasionally in the lightning light, standing there brooding over all. The anxious exhilaration of the Olympian mountains at their most dramatic. Threatening nature instantly reminding us of the true perspective of the human condition - "and at my back I always hear Time's winged chariot hurrying near....." these are the times when the poet comes in to his own. I felt Time's winged chariot very nearby.

While this amazing piece of celestial theatre was preparing itself, we came upon a small mountain hut which we were naturally invited to share with the occupants - a small group of Sennen (5). They had had their food but we were invited to use their outside fire to cook our own so we prepared a mixture of corned beef and rice and washed that down with some hot cocoa. We were all intrigued, while hurriedly cooking and eating our food before the storm, to hear all of a sudden a gentle hum reminiscent of a small children's school coming from inside the hut. What could it be, we wondered. It was the few Sennen, inside, saying their extended prayers quietly together, before leaving the table. This proceeding was repeated again the next morning after breakfast.

Two hours later, when the storm had passed, we were all settling down to sleep in the hay among the cows. When each of us had found a place Fritz Vogl walked the length of the hay-loft with a pitch-fork, shovelling over us the fragrant hay against the sharp chill that comes with the morning before the sun. Breakfast next morning at 6 under clear blue skies. Their German dialect is not easy and, before we left, we sang and danced some Styrian (6) folk songs and folk dances for our hosts. That was our thanks for their hospitality and then we were all on our way once more to a mixture of more songs, various greetings, "Gruess Gotts" and "Auf Wiedersehens". All that Friday morning we climbed passing through more Alms and various, as yet unoccupied, mountain huts. Past pine groves and by rumbling brooks and then out above the tree line, higher and higher, until at last we reached the remaining summer snows. At noon we were able to refresh ourselves in the snow water on the summit of the Reichenstein and

(5) The peasant cowmen who go up to the Alm with the cows are known, in Switzerland, as the 'Sennen' and this name is also in use in other German speaking Alpine regions.

(6) Styria is one of the southern provinces of Austria.

reward ourselves with the view across the alps somewhere between 6000 and 7000 feet up - ridge upon ridge fading gradually into the shimmering distance. While we looked and watched, enthralled to be in this 'world within a world', we could see another thunder storm beginning to gather itself for the onslaught in the south-west, so we began to make our way down and look for possible shelter. We soon came upon another little mountain hut but could not get in, so we sheltered in the lee of the porch - happily with an opposite wind - and watched and listened while the Gods played their games all about us. The lightning was spectacular, so high up in the mountains and we could all feel the electric current running through our hair.

That night after much tramping, we came upon an uninhabited 'Sennen-huette' of some sophistication with several buildings, and here we stopped for the night, lit a fire, cooked ourselves some Knockerl (7) and ate our evening meal in one of the outhouses by the light of a candle while the storm hammered away at the windows and gradually blew itself out. The next day the rain had gone and we were bathed in sunshine once more. We made a leisurely start , making for another ridge of peaks - the Griesmaur. Here we had to lay down our rucksacks, for to make the ascent of this peak we had to be free to do some serious rock climbing and any impedimenta were contra-indicated. It was not unreasonably dangerous but required a lot of unswerving concentration. When we finally reached the summit we found - enclosed in a weather-proof aluminium cage - what I can only call the 'Visitors Book' of the Griesmaur. If you, dear reader, should ever be so fortunate as to climb this magnificent grey Austrian mountain, you may see there, written in that book among all the other names, 'Donald Grant, Dornoch, Scotland. May 28th 1921.'

But the Griesmaur was not yet done with us. Suddenly we were overtaken with another, instant, downpour. The rain was so heavy for a while that the visibility was reduced to only 30-40 yards and then the mist which followed as the rain slackened, reduced it once more - almost to zero at times. We tried for a time to shelter beside the bigger rocks but the swirling wind always sought us out so, finally, rain and mist notwithstanding, we sallied forth into the elements to continue our descent. This was quite different for me from my own native Sutherland mountains where it is all too easy to get lost in such conditions. Here, at this altitude and on this mountain the descent was so steep that there was no question about
which direction. Down. So down we went, with some anxiety and much gathering excitement, all of us soaked through and through but exhilarated and happy with the days' work. And, as we went our way sliding, slipping and sometimes tumbling down the two steep snow fields, Fritz Vogl would always go first, he being the most accomplished mountain guide, to test the route and search for crevasses and lurking big drops or precipices that might catch the unwary. With his skilled help we avoided all but the minor mishaps. After the two snow fields and as the descent gradually levelled out we emerged from the mist, the rain having already stopped, to find we were looking at a further descent of about 1000 feet which was clearly going to be by way of the 'scree' (an endless slide of loose stones). We set off, one after the other, and had an exciting competition to see if anyone could catch up with the one in front, for running down such a hillside

(7) Knockerl are a form of Austrian dumplings.

covered in scree the going gets fast and, occasionally, a little rough. This part of the descent was much enjoyed by us all and, by the time we met up again at the bottom we were all not only warm but nearly dry and bathed in sunshine.

Our next conquest that Saturday afternoon was to be the Frauenmauer, where we entered the mountain wall on one side, explored the caves and grottoes with the aid of one or two candles and, holding each other's hands like "the Christian soldiers in the Darkness", until much later we emerged on the other side of the mountain. There, far away below us, we espied the hut which we hoped might prove to be our shelter for that night. So, fortified by some bread and marmalade, we set upon our way through the pine trees again and the alpine pastures, a winding stream and an occasional path, on down into the valley. The first hut proved too dilapidated to provide much shelter so we pressed on in the gathering dusk and came upon a large and opulent looking mountain lodge which was evidently occupied. We stopped to enquire and discovered that this was the property of Count so-and-so (the Austrian Republic still retained full complement of Counts in this post-Imperial age!) but his retainers were happy to give us leave to use an empty hut which they pointed out to us on the other side of the valley. We reached it as the last light of day was dying - a large, clean, dry wooden building with a divided-off open plan room. Open fire-place in the centre with a hole in the roof for the smoke. On our way through the neighbourhood we had acquired eggs and three litres of fresh milk. What a meal we made there round a big fire with hot cocoa to follow - the stuff that dreams are made of ! Here was the greatest comfort yet and we all slept well and long that night.

The next day, Sunday, the valley was lonely. Most of us rose early to enjoy the sharp fresh air, a run through the dew on the grass to a bathe in the nearby mountain spring where there was a convenient pool. As I emerged from the water I looked up to the steep mountain cliffs and peaks all about me and could see the early morning sun lighting up the crests adding another dimension to the sense of colour, of light and shade and contrast. I was rivetted here for some minutes with the bewildering beauty of it all and the sense of wonder that such experiences always put upon me. Momentarily I felt a veil lifted in my mind and there was I face to face with my maker. For me this was what it meant to have God all about us for, if not to be found anywhere else, *my* God was indeed in the very nature of things. Here. Here in the ineffable beauty of the natural world and, indeed, of the greater Cosmos. This was a truly Sabbatical experience for me and I felt my understanding of man's place in the world and his relationship to God had made a significant move forward.

Not an hour's walk away from our camp was the Green Lake and we set off with the prospect of our next bathe there. We reached it about 10am to find another stunningly beautiful alpine scene. So seductive was the milieu here that we none of us wanted to leave and we just languished there for some hours. We bathed, we ate, we walked, we talked and sometimes we slept as we lay on the bank. I was loth to leave that lake for the time was approaching when we would have to disband and go each one our own way. I was not ready for that and I felt not just the pull of the mountains but also a very personal affinity for this piece of nature where something significant was happening for me and I was also acutely aware of the powerful sense of fellowship that had grown

so quickly in this group of remarkable young people. These, and there ilk, were to become the

architects of the new Republic. A sense of 'belonging' was very strong within me. I can still conjure up the scene, although I have never since returned, a large and irregular alpine lake with many arms snaking in and out between the steep hillsides; those hillsides clothed with pine, larch and occasional beech and converting into a grassy sward as the land approaches the water. All is green here - the hillsides, the trees, the sward and even the water was green. It is well called the Green Lake. When the time did come to leave we all were aware of a very strong sense of power, of health and of energy. We had a good four hours walk ahead of us and I think we all felt rich.

As we walked we talked and we sang and the woods echoed to the sound of our folk song choruses. Marching songs, Love songs, Bavarian songs, Tyrolean songs, Viennese songs, Styrian songs; among us we seemed to have an endless supply and, although I already knew a number of them, that day I learnt many more. While we sang them, swinging along the woodland paths, I had the feeling that Frederick the Great's soldiers might well have marched to some of these same melodies, for one of the songs tells at some length the story of the soldiers who served him (Frederick) truly and well for three years and they left some of their number behind in his cause and how, after three years, he sent them home again without any pay! That one is a rousing song indeed!

As we walked on and on down the long valley, the scene behind us gradually unfolded until we regained the greater view of where we had lately been. There, away to the West, lay the Reichenstein, our first conquest and then, running up from him, the saddle and the chain of peaks which we followed that same day. About eleven peaks in all and then the Griesmaur - which had occupied us on the Saturday and drenched us with rain and then offered us by way of compensation the amazing snow fields and the scree slides. And behind and beyond we could just spot the Frauenmaur with her caves and grottoes. That view seemed to evoke some special response inside each one of the company for we all instinctively stopped as we looked back and waited, each in his or her own personal silence. There are some silences that are louder than words and this was one such. We talked of it afterwards and clearly all had the same feeling of 'integrity' within the group. The sense of being completely integrated with each other in our mutual understanding, love and respect. In no other way, either before or since, have I ever experienced so quick a development in a small group of people. The other seven members of that group were to remain close friends for me for ever, although I was destined never again to see five of them, they remain with me in spirit.

That evening we came back to the places of people. We could not easily stop gently singing our songs to ourselves as we swung along the village road and that made the people curious. At the village station they crowded all around us, wondering. Then we were on the train and the culture shock of the return to the 'real' world. I had some difficulty in deciding which of these alternative worlds was the more real and I have no doubt that I was not the only one on that train with such thoughts. The difficulty, of course, is how to arrange for the one world better to inform the other. Greater philosophers than the writer have stumbled at this point in human thought.

Our evening meal was cooked by Conrad Sieber and Fritz Vogl in the 'Nest' of the Wandervoegel in Leoben. It was a simple dish - a form of Austrian pancakes along with

a few remaining vegetables. It tasted of the heavens to us all and we all had at least four. Thus fortified the two of us, Oskar and I, left our companions I must say with much regret on all sides - but we had to catch the last Vienna train at fifteen minutes past midnight. The parting song floated all around us as the train pulled slowly out of the station:

"Gruess di' Gott, Gruess di' Gott " and so on (the familiar Austrian valediction - "God greet thee, God greet thee...").

We were both very quiet on the way back caught up, no doubt, in our own most personal reflections. My mind was full of thoughts and feelings and excitement and hope. I had just been accorded a new insight into the nature of man's place in God's world. I had just experienced, not for the first time, the power of true human (?Christian) fellowship. I had just established a number of new personal friendships and one, in the person of Oskar Bock, was at that moment sitting opposite me and reflecting, no doubt, on his own view of recent events. The work that was awaiting me on the morrow lurked in the back of my mind but somewhere I could feel there could be a connection. Gradually the awareness grew in me that Oskar's organisation (The 'Amt') offered a resource complementary to the purely physical needs addressed by the ESR for the rehabilitation of the hundreds, indeed thousands, of deprived and needy students in Austria for whom I now felt a degree of personal responsibility. As my recognition of the potential grew I spoke to Oskar about it and he enthusiastically agreed that we should work together in this direction. Starting tomorrow. Thus began another life-long friendship.

The next morning found me back at my desk at 5.30am making a start on the backlog of work awaiting my return and to try to pull together the many threads of the growing organisation in preparation for my return to England. Return to Irene and the ultimate sacrament now only weeks away. I was not sure at this time whether I would be able to return to the task, for my own contract was far from clear, my income was irregular, insecure and minimal and, while these arrangements were entirely satisfactory for me up to this point, I could not hope to run a household for a married couple on such a basis. I wrote to our patron Gilbert Murray in Oxford to thank him for his ongoing efforts on our behalf and a brief note to his daughter at the same time, for she had also been instrumental in securing some of that sponsorship:

"Miss Agnes Murray
Yatscombe, Oxford.

My dear friend,

I have been hoping for some time to send you a note. This hope has been strengthened from time to time by conversations with Miss Niven.....

I hear that you have taken on a job in London now for the League of Nations Union. I hope that is correct and that you will enjoy the work.....

Thanks for the card which I received from you at Christmas time. Just over a year ago we were putting our heads together over this Student Relief work. Now that little project has widened out somewhat and already embraces over 6000 students. No doubt you get some news of the work - it goes on very

well. Students here - and professors! - do not forget to ask for Miss Murray. You will

be glad to hear that. I hope you may find time to send a note about your enterprises.

Sincerely yours,
Donald Grant. "

Then I typed out a brief Memo. to my organising committee (of the Society of Friends International), which committee was already well aware of my intentions and all the attendant uncertainties for the work and for the ESR itself :

"Vienna, June 1921

This Student Relief Work which we have organised here must go on all through the coming winter, and on a greater scale than ever. I must set to and make plans and estimates for that. And then somebody must be here to do what I am now doing. There you are. I should not be able to stay another winter here, working really pretty hard, for nothing for, as you know, I am to be married next month in England. One should need some salary. Dr. Mott comes here soon (8)."

As I made my preparations to leave Vienna I received a letter from my father:

Evelix Farm, Dornoch
Sutherland 9. 6. 21.

I had your letter a few days ago and your mother has been calling to me these last days to write to you and now I'm just started after returning from the Square seeing the folk off to Ardallie. We finished the turnips in Evelix and have the land in Ardallie about ready.

I see by your letters that you expect Nellie and Dick (my brother and sister) up to your wedding but I'm rather afraid they won't be able. Possibly they might have time but it is now so very expensive to travel so far that meantime at least they are wavering. Though you may be quite sure we would like to be there the whole lot of us and if not there in body will D.V. be with you in spirit. Commending you and yours to the Great God who alone can bless and prosper us in every circumstance and relation of life and desiring you may be enabled to commit the keeping of your soul unto him as unto a Faithful Creator.

I was reading your letter last about your travelling in the mountains and it brought to my mind what the late Dr. Kennedy (lately a local minister) said about the organ (a relative newcomer), I think it was on an occasion when in Mr.Spurgeon's Tabernacle: 'the Sermon all that could be desired - but O! the Hirdy Girdy and the Hymns!'

(8) Dr. John R. Mott - one of the outstanding Christian statesmen of the period 1880-1921. He was President of the WSCF, President of the International YMCA and YWCA and had been asked in 1919 by President Woodrow Wilson to visit Europe and, more particularly, Revolutionary Russia to see in what ways the West could help. I think he actually visited St. Petersburg in 1920 but was unable to achieve very much there.

The bathing in the loch on the Sabbath does not appeal kindly to me. I never bathed in life outside on the Sabbath day. Now I think I have not much more to say just now. I hope this will find you quite well observing at all times that blessed injunction in all thy ways to acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths. With our united best wishes and earnest prayers

Your affct Father
Alick Grant.

Apart from the problems of trying to make arrangements for my marriage at such a distance and with so little time I was also much stretched to complete the longer report on the work so far of the the ESR, which I had promised to my 'Head Office' in Geneva before leaving (see Appendix A). Three weeks later I was on my way to the Westbahnhof with my face towards England.

CHAPTER XII

As I was making my way to London towards marriage and a precarious and uncertain economic future, a meeting was taking place (I later discovered) 10,000 miles away in Shanghai, in the wake of a huge and powerful wave of student unrest, inaugurating the Chinese Communist Party. Among those attending that meeting was a young primary school teacher by the name of Mao Tse-Tung. I remember hearing this news at the time (although the name of Mao was not itself part of the message) and feeling in some way disturbed by the intelligence. Although long since a confirmed and dedicated internationalist myself, I knew somewhere inside my own being that the export of revolution was not likely to be the way of achieving long-term accord between different peoples. If revolution there had to be, and I had no doubt that some points in history demanded that solution, then such upheavals - for success - must be 'home-grown' . My view of the nature of mankind did not support the Bolshevik ideology, so much in the news at that time, of global revolution and all power to the masses and the driving need to liberate the oppressed peoples of the world by the export of the revolution. At the same time I was only too conscious of the iniquitous, insupportable and self-perpetuating inequalities built into the regimes of those nations with which I was familiar and, without any doubt, there were many others about the globe far worse. I had not yet even looked at the works of Karl Marx but I knew that his writings and philosophy must at some time be examined by all serious students of post-Industrial-Revolution man. The idea that economics was not merely an abstract academic study in the relations of Capital, workers, import and export trade and tariffs, manufacturing output and sales charts was becoming borne in upon me more and more clearly every day, as I lived and worked among the chaos engendered by man in the very name of economic 'freedom'. Two significant notions deriving from such thoughts were, at this time, constantly challenging for attention in the recesses of my mind:

economics is an integral function of the human condition and

what is the nature of 'freedom' and what are its limitations?

This proposition and this question were to engage my attentions for the rest of my life. As the Vienna-Paris express chattered out its rhythms through the cities and countryside of post-war Europe moving me ever closer to London and Irene, although my mind was seemingly fully occupied with thoughts about tomorrow, I was aware that simultaneously and at some other level of consciousness it was also engaged in the struggle with these ideas and their implications.

These two parallel preoccupations were also, curiously, closely related for I knew that no-one would be better able to help in

these thoughts and formulations than Irene whose personality, so complementary to mine, was equally engaged with such questions. Irene.

CHAPTER XIII

As Charlie Chaplin (my exact contemporary) returned to his native London in September 1921 to be mobbed by his admirers, Irene and I set out for Vienna embarking on our new life together full of hope and excitement and eagerly anticipating whatever lay ahead. I was not, at that time, aware of the powerful metaphor of the times that Chaplin was presenting with his mixed messages of eternal hope in the face of adversity, and the struggle of the little man against the odds combined with a nostalgia for the world we had all known and a hopeful incomprehension of what lay ahead. But I later recognised, as that train in August 1921 clattered its way through France and Germany carrying us to our destination, that Irene and I were both carrying just such a mixed bag of hopes and fears with us.

On arrival the next evening in Vienna we set out for the primitive lodgings I had engaged in the central address of Salesianer Strasse, Wien III; and Irene was soon to put her working knowledge of the German language to the test. Little did I then realise what a talent she had for language and that she would soon become not merely trilingual in German, French and English but that she would soon be speaking with a strong Viennese accent (1). In no time we were both immersed in the flood of work that awaited us even as old friends came in one after another to welcome us and help to settle the 'new couple' in the new home. For Irene this was "in at the deep end" with a vengeance but, as I was to discover times without number, hers was not a personality likely to quail at the prospect. Phyllis Wood, a lifelong friend from London, came to help and said while helping with the washing up: " Irene, you possess the only qualities really necessary for this life - courage and a dish-rack!" In fact, a dish-rack was one of the few items of traditional furniture that we possessed at this point for, apart from a borrowed double bed and such cupboard space as the apartment provided, our main items of furniture were three chairs, various (second-hand of course), a table and a number of orange boxes (purloined from the local greengrocer) which, when decorated with such remnants of materials as we then boasted, added to the storage space and looked fairly presentable. Among many other talents, my wife was to become very accomplished at making a home out of minimal material and financial resources. Salesianer Strasse was only the first of more than twenty homes that Irene was to be called upon to construct on a shoestring budget in the course of the next 50 years. My family were to become very fond of orange boxes.

The office that had been put at my disposal in the university was alive and humming

when I returned to the fray and within hours I felt as if I had never been away and the weeks

(1) The Viennese dialect ('echt Wienerisch') is as different from Prussian German ('Hoch Deutsch') as is the Yorkshire dialect from the Queen's English.

since leaving Vienna - even the wedding itself - quickly began to assume that dream-like quality that is so familiar to us all on the return to the 'daily round and common task'. The task that was increasingly occupying me, however, was anything but common and I began to wonder at times if I had the nerve and the strength to prosecute it at all. Notwithstanding that, I am credited with a sanguine nature and at such times of uncertainty I have often taken heart from the Marquis of Montrose's immortal lines:

"He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
That dares not put it to the touch,
To win, or lose it all" (2).

So we set to with a good will, Irene and I, to put it to the touch - for better, for worse. Having read her book "Married Love" (3) while in London we had considered the possibility of going to Dr. Marie Stopes' new birth control clinic in London but decided that we would not wait to embark upon a family. With the world about us in such a turmoil who could tell when it might be 'a better time'? By now, September, as we were soon to discover, Irene was already pregnant. While giving us both great joy and spurring the imagination, the arrival of that intelligence also offered much food for thought and rendered many of the decisions lurking in the wings much more troublesome. But, meanwhile, what excitement!

From my letter home at the time:

University, 22. 10. 21.

.....Yesterday, Tuesday, I had an interview with Mr. Vanderlip, the great American financier who is at present studying the financial and economic condition of Europe. He had heard in Germany that student relief work was going on on a large scale in central Europe and perhaps I could help him? Dr.Bell, President of a college near New York, took me to Mr. V.'s hotel and at 9 o'clock we started right away on the story. I have to say that I felt that I have never dealt

(2) Seumas (James) Graham, was always one of my great heroes. Marquis of Montrose, soldier and great champion of Charles I, he was one of the greatest military commanders of that and other ages. He met his premature end hung, drawn and quartered, at the age of 38 on the Tolbooth in Edinburgh in the year 1650. On the window of his gaol, , the night before his execution, he also wrote the following lines:

Let them bestow on every airth a limb;
Then open all my veins that I may swim
To thee, my Maker, in that crimson lake;
Then place my parboiled head upon a stake -
Scatter my ashes - strew them in the air; -
Lord! Since thou know'st where all these atoms are,
I'm hopeful thou'lt recover once my dust,

And confident thou'lt raise me with the just.

(3) This book created a great sensation at the time of first publication in 1918. The book examines the idea that sex has an importance in human relationships far beyond that of the procreation of children and it set up an immediate outcry against the growing call for contraceptive advice to be freely available.

better with the position and problems of Austria and neighbouring countries and never have I had a more alert or sympathetic listener. From the beginnings early in 1920 I sketched the development of the work while explaining the reasons behind the decisions as they were reached. Numbers, method, rationale, statistics, percentages were all asked for and I was well able to answer all these questions. And still the questions kept coming: What work do the students do? What kind of character does the student body present? Are they liberal or conservative, in the main? What nationalities are represented? What about the Jewish students? (Always, always 'the Jewish question'). How do we find the most needy students? etc., etc. Then he asked me what was my thinking about strategies to address all these apparently insurmountable problems? So I talked with him along the lines of the need for co-operation among the nations of the Danube basin and the pressing need for some political initiatives and give and take between these different countries most of which are, in varying degrees, intrinsically hostile to one another. This relief work could only be regarded as temporary and palliative, I said, while fundamental solutions need to be pursued through channels of international finance, politics and diplomacy. "Of course you are quite right" he said. Dr Bell was also a significant presence and copious notes were taken by both men. Mr. Vanderlip then said he was very anxious to visit our head office in Geneva to explore these matters further. I felt that he left much impressed with our exchanges and certainly I gained many valuable insights from him into the current thinking in the USA concerning the political, diplomatic and economic maelstrom in which we are all adrift in Central Europe.

You can see at once from the bizarre behaviour of the exchange rates in the financial markets that Germany, Austria, Russia, Poland and other lands are going rapidly further and further down into poverty and are, therefore, less and less able to buy things from the manufacturing countries abroad. The prospects for British and American trade are consequently bleak in middle Europe. Mr Vanderlip, who is one of America's foremost authorities upon international trade and finance said to me that Germany cannot possibly pay the reparations that are required of her. The overall effect of these phenomena, he feels, is likely to be so depressing on the wider economy that Britain and America in particular will have great difficulty in maintaining their trading positions with Europe when these European countries have re-established their industries with much unemployment and 'low-wage economies'. He clearly feels anxious about the long-term prospects for American manufacturing industry. He is worried that the USA , unable to achieve reasonable trade agreements with Europe, and being largely self-supporting at home, may become an exclusive land of smug pharisees who will have as little to do with the rest of the world as they can. This view also gives much food for thought and I have been pondering it ever since. The implications are formidable.

I am not clear what I shall be doing next year - I suppose it depends, in part, upon the meeting of the World Student Christian Federation in China next May. At the same time the Christian International has asked me to consider the

possibility of taking up for them the work of general secretary. That work would really mean a programme of pioneering and development. I have written to say that I should like to consider the matter for a little. So, we are still 'wanderers'. Sometimes we have a great longing for a home of our own and some settled place to live and work in. We have so little time for reading or recreation of any kind. We have been learning Russian for a couple of months for their are waves in the aether about the catastrophy that is growingthere and who knows what might come next? But we do not feel called at present to go to

"Russia".

As I was writing this letter, my father was writing again to me and a few days later I received it. The contrast between the two documents occupying, as they do, two segments of the same sphere but worlds apart is - to me at least - astounding:

Evelix Farm,
22. 10. 21. Dornoch,
Sutherland.

I have now to acknowledge your second letter to myself and your mother insists that I must now endeavour to reply. Well, to begin, I am afraid that I can't remember now all your enquiries but will make mention of some of them. The sheep being the biggest item. Well, sheep did come down more than we expected but I got fairly well out of them. Mr. Heskett got the Kilearnan ewes and I got £3.5/- each for them and as we had a big cast of them well on for 400 in all that includes broken mouths and shotts they will make the most of £1200 so you see numbers count. Then the Evelix ewes about 140 went to Inverness and made 56/- the broken mouthers to Alick Gordon at 55/- and I have some yet for him but they won't make so much.Mr. Wilson got my tups and 26 ewes I have not got his money yet. I have about the usual number of lambs wintering in the old places. Watt is going to winter in Pulrossie and John takes the East End. At Proncy Nain and Achinchanter the Streeters and the Fishers are finishing the dipping today.(4) We were up at Kilearnan on Thursday and I think they might finish yesterday. We sent an offer for the renewal of Kilearnan lease but have had no reply yet. The crop was all got in in good order and plenty of good straw this year. We are busy meantime building a garage Willie Calder and Sannie at the job and getting on well. George will likely be here in the afternoon they and they have their potatoes about up. We hope to start next week.. Now I think I have given a general outline of matters as we have been going on. Friends and neighbours are fairly well except my good friend Hugh McKay who is not keeping well and I am very sorry to tell you one of Dannie Fraser's boys John is

(5) Watt the Shepherd. My childhood friend and mentor. John Mackay was a younger man learning the skills from Watt. Pulrossie was the next door farm which My older brother George was to take on in the fullness of time. Proncy Nain and Achinchanter were other farming properties to the North-East of Evelix with whose owners my father had a close, friendly working relationship.

ill and people are afraid he has the same trouble as his sister had (5). I hope D.V. to go to see them today. You were asking about the car (Boanerges!) it's a good car and fast. I often think of when I used to travel these strath roads with carts at 4 miles an hour. Now it is 20 - 25 per hour!. Now for the present will finish hoping this will find you both quite well with love and best wishes for the time present and to come

Your affct Father
Alick Grant.

Just at this time a nearby political event raised the international temperature and quickened the pulses of many of us in Vienna when the ex-Emperor Karl launched a fresh and more serious attempt to regain the throne of Hungary. He had raised an army of some 12,000 men and, emerging from exile in Switzerland, proceeded to march on Budapest. He was, however, defeated and captured by troops loyal to the Regent, Admiral Horthy, in a bloody battle on the outskirts of the city. Much to the relief, I imagine, of the Allies who would be quite unable, politically, to tolerate his return to the throne.

The vagaries of 'chance' have played so significant a part in my life that it is very difficult to believe that chance actually has anything to do with it! A few days after I had sent off the above letter I received the following missive in the post:

"Dear Mr. Grant,

I have seen your name recently in the Vienna newspapers, have read about your work for the students in this city and that your home town is Dornoch, Scotland. You must be the son of Dr. Donald Grant, minister of the Cathedral, Dornoch. My maiden name is Isobel MacGregor, now Mrs. Hans Artner. I am the daughter of Dr.Charles MacGregor who was minister in Dornoch Cathedral before Dr. Grant. It will give me great pleasure if you will come and drink tea with me one of these days. Please ring my telephone number and we can fix a date,

Yours sincerely,
Isobel MacGregor Artner.

. A few days later I did drink tea with Mrs. Artner and we talked at length together about my work in Europe and, of course, much also about Dornoch and all our common ground. Isobel and Hans Artner became our very dear friends; they remained our very dear friends as long as they both lived - and since. Hans was Jewish and had a good job on the Vienna staff of the great German chemical firm I.G.Farben. He was a delightful man, a fine musician and a first-class pianist. It was in their home that I first learnt the pleasures of singing seriously, both lieder and part-songs in among the endless Viennese tradition of vocal music from folk-songs, Bach chorales, Mozart opera, Schubert lieder, Strauss (Richard, of course) to all the (then) modern music of the students and the wider European catalogue. I was persuaded by them, in

whatever free time I had, to take some serious singing lessons, for they clearly thought that I had a bass-baritone voice of some promise. It was from this point that the group singing propensities of my family (the

(6) This may have been Diphtheria.

three of them as yet unborn) began - for Irene and I were already wedded to the art. [Of course, although I had the same name (not so very uncommon in Sutherland!) I was in no way related to the Dr. Donald Grant to whom Isobel made reference. But I remember him well - he was at one time Captain of the Royal Dornoch Golf Club after the great Arthur Ryle and also chairman of the old School Board.]

An ominous cloud was already brewing at this time in the rise of the 'Fascisti' in Italy. Benito Mussolini, a blacksmith's son from a poverty-stricken background and a former socialist, having been adopted by the National Fascist Party, declared himself to be ' Il Duce'. An extreme nationalist and a supporter of the recent occupation of Fiume, Mussolini seemed even then to be in favour of violence as a political tool and was already gaining a reputation as an effective rabble-rouser. His support could be seen to be growing daily at that time and the newspapers regularly carried reports of his blackshirted 'Squadristi' beating up Bolsheviks, breaking strikes and terrorising all Socialist organisations. Here was a backlash to the communist threat with a vengeance and Italy's political future looked bleak to all of us nearby observers. I was interested (and not a little worried) to remark how little serious diplomatic protest was engendered in European political circles by this widely acknowledged barbarian behaviour. The unimagineable excesses of Adolf Hitler's regime were, at this time, still far in the future but for historians the signs of Europe's descent into the abyss were there then. The international business community had no wish to strike conclusions with emerging despots any more than their political leaders of the day. As for the UK, the government of the day under the Prime Minister Lloyd George, was stretched to the uttermost with multiple other phenomena not the least of which was the ever-present 'Irish problem'. On December 7th. an agreement was signed between the negotiators establishing 'The Six Counties' of historic Ulster as part of the UK and the remaining 26 to become the "Irish Free State" (7).

On 20th December we held a celebratory 'Christmas evening' for all those involved with the work of the ESR in one of the University halls hired for the occasion. We invited many Professors and other academics involved with the work as well as friends from the many Missions in the city with concerns in the same field - The Society of Friends, The American Relief Administration (Hoover) and the British Embassy were among the groups represented. All the members of our seven student college committees were there and three or four representatives from each of the 14 student hostels.

We started with some music and then, to open the occasion, I made a brief speech of welcome expressing our hope for, and the actuality of, co-operation between the students of different nations. Then some more music followed by the main speeches of

the evening delivered by first, Prof. Karl Brunner from the Commercial College (by now already a close personal friend) followed by Walter Kolbe the President of the "German Students Union" in Austria. Prof. Brunner talked about all the efforts that were being made in this field to promote the basic Christian beliefs in a practical sense and Herr

(7) At which event Michael Collins made his prophetic announcement: "With this I am signing my own death warrant"!

Kolbe then developed the notion of good-will and co-operation between peoples and nations and went on to say that, quite apart from the material relief provided by the ESR, the way in which good will seemed to leak out 'osmotically' from that and other Christian organisations was a lesson in itself and that perhaps the most exciting development of all was to observe the degree to which other countries are again open and friendly towards Austria and her students so that intercourse and exchange are once more established.

His talk was received with great enthusiasm and a warm and friendly atmosphere was well established as we lit up the Christmas tree. No little symbolic sapling this, but a real 'Tannenbaum' that reached the ceiling, really quite a dramatic symbol by the time nearly 100 candles were all alight! Then the lights were turned out and the real music of the evening began as we all sang the first two verses of "Stille Nacht" and moved on to "O Du Heilige..." and then gradually worked our way through the repertoire. The quality of the singing was very high and there were indeed, many very, very good voices in that company and the extemporary harmonization rings in my ears still! Next, Christmas gifts began to appear - one for each committee member and also for each leader from the student hostels while, not to be outdone in the giving, the students themselves had found from somewhere the resources to underwrite a very handsome gift for each member of the ESR organisation. We were all very touched by this and so the Stimmung grew and grew in content and humanity and during the interval countless conversations could be heard as people talked together and discussed the work and the speeches they had just heard. And the music never stopped - for this was Vienna, of course - and after the interval we had a feast of chamber music played for us by a quartet of distinguished musicians from the music school. The small band of English-speaking folk were not let off before making their contribution of traditional English carols and, I must say, I felt we acquitted ourselves quite well. By the end of that evening I was convinced that the European Student Relief organisation had been well and truly adopted by the Austrian \ Viennese community.

CHAPTER XIV

As the New Year approached the news from all about us became dramatically worse. Inflation had long since become an established fact of life throughout Europe but it was particularly severe in all the devastated countries of the old Hapsburg empire and worst of all in Germany where the prospect of the demonic reparations to be paid to the victorious Allies comprehensively depressed all creative financial activity and inevitably led to catastrophic economic consequences. Exchange rates were the focus for everyone in any sort of business and the financial markets were agog with all manner of Domesday speculation. £1 sterling would now buy 32,000 German marks! This seemed to us all at the time to be a major disaster. Little did we know what was yet to come. Conversation in all the famous Vienna coffee houses (still frequented by so many better-off Viennese, literati, glitterati and an always fascinating mixture of visitors) was almost universally rivetted on the domestic political and economic scene. There was a brooding sense about that, notwithstanding the horrific events of recent years, the fates had not yet done with us. The tone of conversation had changed and I became aware of a growing sense of, not quite despair, but of resignation all about me, especially in the older populace. The future no longer looked attractive - it was becoming hostile. All the more did I feel it necessary to address the young and the students among whom I worked to support them and to and fuel their natural hope and enthusiasm for life, for it was increasingly clear that they were the future.

And this growing domestic pessimism was not in any way relieved by the international news particularly that coming from many of our nearest neighbour countries.The problems were multiplying daily and there seemed to be no serious effort by the international community to prosecute a global strategy. Nothing but piecemeal tactics on the part of individual nations or of organisations. 'Finger in the dam' thinking. There were times when I felt myself to be merely one of those fingers. The news in January that there were now 33 million people in Russia at serious risk of starvation reinforced that feeling.

So it was not entirely a surprise when the invitation came. At the end of February 1922 the Geneva Committee of the ESR, now seeking more and more international involvement, wrote to me and Irene asking us whether we would consider that I, Donald, should go into Russia to extend the ESR operation into that great land where winter and famine had the enormous population in its deathly grasp. This was not just a question, nor merely a challenge. To me it was, almost, the ultimate challenge. It stunned us both. The committee was just looking for someone who had the necessary skills and the experience to address this new task. The

committee, of course, had no knowledge of Irene's pregnancy, now into its sixth month. But we knew. We looked at each other in silence neither wanting to be the first to speak. Finally I said " I cannot say yes. But I

cannot say no. We must think about it." And I wrote back to ask for a little more time to consider the request. What did the answer <u>really</u> signify? We could not tell.

Russia. Holy Russia. And now - Revolutionary Russia, trapped in the cataclysm of the fall-out from the Great War, the 1917 Bolshevik revolution, and the collision of cultures that ensued. The political drive to change the course of history had laid waste all the old social structures that underpinned the ancient feudal state that was Mother Russia. As with the earlier revolution in France, it had destroyed the ancient dynasty that had held power for so long in that huge empire and it was now seeking to lay the foundations for the entry of that great country into the 19th Century in order to compete in the 20th. But while the leaders of that revolution were still planning what to do next, chaos had taken control in the cities, the steppes and the vast countryside. Influenza (1), typhus, cholera and tuberculosis were all rampant in the population and epidemic disease was engulfing the nation and quite out of control. The severe winter combined with economic collapse and universal failure of distribution systems had, predictably, provoked famine on an unprecedented scale. The rest of the world stood by and watched in paralytic fascination. The traveller to Russia at this time was viewed by many in the West as either a hero or a fool - most probably the latter. He (or she) was not expected to return.

I was deeply disturbed at the Geneva request and needed time to reflect on my quandary. Never had Hamlet's paradox seemed so personal or so clear. After much reflection and searching of my conscience I knew that I was quite unable to answer this question alone and unaided. Where, previously, a consultation with my internal spirit would have delivered I now recognised with my mind, what my soul had already clearly apprehended, that Irene and I were not merely a couple but, within a philosophy previously closed to me, we were not merely 'as one'. We actually <u>were</u> one. I knew instantly that I could not answer the question without her. So we talked together, Irene and I. On the one hand this, on the other hand that. " If I go what will happen to you?" Or, "if you go what will happen to you?" "What will I do without you?" "How long?" "Where should I have this baby?" "How can I leave you like this?" What do I <u>really</u> believe, and what does that mean in truth? "If I love you how can I go?" "But I know you *must* go and, if so and I really love you, how can I stop you?" And still we talked, and talked, and talked. And with the talking some form of knowing emerged for us both and we slowly came to the knowledge that, for the sake of the unity that we both recognised in our duality, it was necessary that I should go. For us both the concept of 'destiny' was hovering in the wings. Montrose once again. Finally, in our mutual suffering, I said:

"Irene, say NO and I'll not go." Irene never said "NO".

From a letter to my brother George: 18. 3 22.

"Dear George, ... I do not want to go to Russia one bit but there seems to be nobody else..... I don't need to say that I would rather choose to stay by Irene..... However, it looks now as if I should be leaving Vienna very soon for

(1) The 'Spanish' influenza ravaged the whole of Europe at this time and was said to be responsible for more deaths

than the Great War itself.

Berlin and Riga, en route for Moscow, - that city so much dreaded by so many people.....

At the same time, Irene will leave for Scotland.....

I got up at 7 o'clock this morning. I was in the hands of the dentist yesterday for an hour and a half and felt justified, therefore, in sleeping an hour longer than usual. At 9.30 today I had a singing lesson from my friend Prof. Anderson. Very enjoyable. Singing seems to be a universal attribute in Vienna. In the office I dealt with a small mail and then my first visitor - a commission agent who had done some business for us and to whom I paid out 430,000 Kronen for his services (2). Then, while I was talking with Merkl ('our man' in Graz) Kaiser came in to say: "The Georgians..... " and I interrupted him to tell them to come back another time. "But they have no money, and won't get any more credit at the coffee-house..... " "very well, give them half a kilo of coffee and three tins of milk." (This exchange concerns three students from Georgia in the far away Caucasus and they have been regular clients of the ESR for many months. They have no work, cannot yet study because of the language barrier and have no visible means of support. We have already paid all their accumulated debts and clothed them. They are delightful. They are ' The Georgians ' !)

"Dr. Rosciewicz wants to see you" is the next announcement, and a small slightly deformed figure of a young woman enters. She has recently graduated as doctor from the (very prestigious) School of Medicine in Vienna and now has a place, unpaid, in a hospital where she can start her career and begin to gather some experience of real doctoring. But she has to earn her living in some other way. As she has been able to finish her studies only with the help of the ESR, so the ESR must now go on helping her to live until the time comes when she can actually earn her own keep in this grossly distorted society. Otherwise, of course, our whole investment in her to date has been a waste - QED. We discuss her difficulties for a little, she and I, while I try to discover whether 500,000 Kronen or 300,000 will serve to keep her going for a month.

"Oh! I am now so accustomed to doing without" she said "that I can make do with one sum or the other. I shall just take up my 'fancy work' again to make ends meet." (We knew her to be amazingly skilled at a sort of 'petit point' crochet and produced a lot of very beautiful traditional work with a ready market even in these times!) I finally gave her 250,000 Kronen and she left me with radiant smiles. I am left wondering how you set about being a doctor in full time employment and making ends meet on less than £1 sterling for a month ! And so it goes on.....

Not long after I was writing to my mother (I seem to have spent half a working life-time writing) at home in Evelix:

(8) By July that year the exchange rate had sunk to £1= 350,000 Kr. !

Rectoratskanslei,
Universitaet,
Thursday 6th April, 1922 Vienna 1.

"Dear Mother,

Two days ago I saw Irene off by train for London and later got on the Vienna-Berlin express myself. I am now in Berlin. I haven't told you half of the goings-on with which I was greeted before I left Vienna. I told you about the ceremonial presentation of The Gold Medal of Vienna University to me some weeks ago. That really was a great affair and a special honour, in recognition of my "work and outstanding achievements on behalf of the University and the student body.... ". So, if I don't get the chance much to win any more medals at golf, you see, there are other ways of picking them up! Following that presentation about a dozen student societies, colleges and unions sent a delegation to greet me before my departure for Russia, to thank me for all that had been and was being done for the students and so on. We leave behind us in Austria a lot of very good friends among the students, the professors and others who really trust us and believe in our good will, including my (large) general committee representing all the colleges and universities in this land. This committee has sent to our head office in Geneva a fully signed request that I be allowed to stay here in Austria for the next year also. I believe that the Geneva committee has, in fact, already made this proposal to the WSCF which will be meeting in China in a month's time. We shall not know the outcome for many weeks. Irene and I would be very glad to return to Austria for another year.

Now I must go and seek some breakfast (6.45 am) then I go to the American YMCA to exchange some money - for one single pound note I expect to get nine million roubles! If I exchange a fiver I shall not be able to carry all the roubles! The YM is also packing up a box of food for me to take with me for the next journey for, they tell me, food is scarce where I am going! Bovril, hard tack, Quaker (sic!) Oats, cocoa etc. Later I must go to visit my colleague Henry Israel (American under ARA auspices(3) who is in charge of all the student relief in Germany. I hope he will have some letters for me - I have had so few recently. This journey to Moscow gets more difficult every time I turn about and I am surrounded by confusion. The next step is to get a passport and I am instructed that, towards noon I must go to the 'Nansen Office'(4). The next day, looking at the first newspaper I had seen for three days, I

(3) In 1915 the American engineer Herbert Hoover, later President, launched an organisation in Europe for the relief of the suffering Belgians overrun by the German invasion in that year. This became the American Relief Administration or ARA. It later spread throughout Europe and by 1922 was already very active in Russia. This partly explains the great numbers of American men and women in European relief work.

(4) here to get my Latvian and Lithuanian visas for the next stage of my trip - to Riga. And, if I am lucky, a sleeping-car ticket as well. I leave again tomorrow from your loving son, Don."

saw theheadline telling the world that Lenin had appointed Josef Stalin general secretary of the Communist Party. I recall that intelligence being received with some disquiet in the circles I was in touch with at the time, for Stalin was viewed as something of a 'dark horse' and a very hard man of uncertain temperament. Not a man, it seemed, that professional diplomats looked forward to meeting. In Berlin I stayed at the American YMCA in the Kochstrasse(5) making all the necessary arrangements, thinking of possible difficulties ahead and trying, to the best of my ability, to avoid them or devise strategies to meet them. In fact, at the Nansen Office, I had myself to point out most of the things that had to be done to secure my passage. I was, by now, a seasoned traveller and knew more about the latent difficulties than most! I was greatly helped in all these preparations by Henry Israel and his staff at the YMCA - suitable clothing, including knee-breeches and knee-boots like a cavalryman (these were seen as protection against the acquisition of the typhus louse), prophylactic innoculations, food and so forth.

And then suddenly, I was entrained once more on the euphemistically labelled express chugging its way through the countryside to the north and east of Berlin. The sunset was red, reflected off the window-panes of the houses, but other reflections were at work in my mind as I moved through yet another foreign land. Foreign, yes, but known and familiar in contrast to that land of famine, disease, mystery and terror for which I was bound. In the corridors of the German train could be heard many different languages of which English, French and German were only the most common. Most of the conversation was about experiences with passports and visas and other problems not least the various customs requirements. This last was no small matter for we were to cross six or seven separate frontiers (from Germany across the Polish Corridor and back into East Prussia, then through Lithuania and Latvia) before the final arrival of this 'express' three days later at its destination - Riga. Riga, the door to Muscovy.

The next day the train made a long stop at Kovno, the capital of Lithuania (since Vilna had been ceded to Poland in 1919) and then set off once more running through low tidelands which reminded me of the sandy stretches of Schleswig. Then long tracts of woodlands with enormous numbers of beautiful, slim and elegant birch trees predominating. At the same time I recall noticing how clean and fragrant was the smoke coming from the engine's smokestack up ahead..... birch-wood is the main fuel for the engine, I was told. The reddish-purple colours of the new life in these woods

(9) In 1922 the Bolshevik government under Lenin had not yet been recognised by most countries Including the USA, GB, Norway and many others. The famous Norwegian explorer Nansen had already launched and sponsored a relief campaign for the starving Russians. This work the Russians were only too pleased to endorse and, accordingly, 'Nansen passports' were recognised and facilitated by the Russian authorities.

(5) Immediately after the Great War the American YMCA and YWCA had spread an extensive network of fully 100 offices all over Europe staffed by very skilled and devoted workers helping to heal the woundsand the losses. I came to know many of these exceptional men and women - Darius Davis the European Director in Paris, Henry Israel in Berlin, Donald Lowrie in Moscow, Paul Super in Warsaw, Huntley Dupre in Prague, Jan Fredericksen in Belgrade, Bill Morgan in Bucharest and others scattered about the continent.

is reminiscent of the spring in my own Highland country, particularly so in the evening sunshine. Before long we were crossing the great Njmen (Nyemen) River winding about in huge, powerful curves. On its banks occasional stunted villages of small wooden houses..... night descending on the forest land with long open spaces and a snowy landscape, stillness, clear sky; the engine halts, panting, the birchwood smoke goes up in great puffs; I opened the carriage window, put out the light and gazed out on this wonderful scene. The most amazing blending of colours in the sky to the west and north - blue, turquoise shot with green shading down into yellow and strengthened by the bright whiteness of the horizon. A northern night at its best, combining the translucent beauties of moonlight and the evening afterglow. Visual poetry.

Then the train clanked and we were moving again - stopping and starting - but always panting onwards, towards Riga (6) where we finally arrived on on the morning of Sunday 9th April. I was fated to wait there for eleven days more before getting away on my journey to Moscow.

The expenses for this total journey (Berlin to Riga) including rail tickets Berlin-Wirballen and then Wirballen-Riga, sleeping-car ticket, registered kit-bag to Riga, tips to three porters and the wagon-lit attendant, taxi in Berlin and a droshky on arrival in Riga came to 6085 German marks. At 1350 marks to the £1 that was approx. £4.10 (i.e. four pounds ten shillings) or $20 in American money. Another indication of the havoc that inflation can play with international 'values'.

From a Letter to Irene:

"Easter Saturday 15. 4. 22.

I am now in the Hotel Petrograd in Riga. I have had coffee, bread and butter, with ham and eggs for breakfast and I have managed to say, in Russian, ' I understand Russian very little'. Joe Somerville from the American YMCA called for me at noon and took me home to lunch with himself and his wife. It is snowing this afternoon and two days ago I watched three ice-breakers trying to open up the River Dwina (Duna) which has been frozen over for five months. Spring has not yet quite arrived in this land, although I can tell from the signs on my journey that it is on its way. There is a strange dream-like quality hanging over me as all these amazing mages float by - here am I with my own personal history observing all these foreign people in foreign places living their real lives and I cannot but feel that I am, at best, a dreamer or, at worst, an impostor, to imagine that I am bringing something with me to their benefit..... at every place I feel I would like to stay and become part of the community, to share their lives and understand their truths but I seem to be on a set of railway tracks, both literally and metaphorically, and I must but **must** move on. W h y must I? I ask myself and, always, the only absolute answer is that to go <u>on</u> is the only way to get back. To get back to my own <u>real</u> life. To Irene.

In the Baedeker guide book I have with me Riga is given as one of the

6) Riga was founded by merchants (of the Hanseatic League) as a centre for their trade in 1158. Even in 1914 40% of the population was German, including 'the Baltic Barons.' The Riga Cathedral organ, built in 1885 was, at that time, one of the largest in the world.

cities of Russia. And so it was of course and, in many ways, still is. The little droshkies driven by big bearded men in flowing blue coats with their knee-boots and heavy fur caps are typically Russian.....

later - Tuesday 11th..... There is a magnificent river front here in Riga for it is clearly a major Baltic sea port and can accomodate the biggest cargo boats. But not through the winter because of the ice. Today I watched the big "Eisfos" from Kristiania coming in to the quayside - the first boat to enter the port this season, for the ice had it closed for the last five months. Today the ice floats away down the great Dwina all the time in huge pieces and it makes a wonderful scene in the moonlight. The river is about 600 yards wide here and, standing on the railway bridge a little further up, I watched these huge islands of ice sweeping past me in the current and in the near distance the tall spires of the fine Russian churches complete the sense of magic in the surrounding silence.

I attended a special midnight service in the great cathedral on Good Friday the liturgy and the enactment all laid on in the traditional manner of the Russian Orthodox Church : huge congregation packed into every corner, all standing, the deep resonant voice of the priest and the powerful, emotional responses reverberating around us. The intonation of the prayers, the incense and the seemingly endless processions within the dome itself. Finally, on the stroke of midnight, the chanting priests led the entire people out of the cathedral and three times around the great building with swinging censers and the echoing refrain 'Christ is Risen, Christ is Risen'. Wonderful presentation of a deep devotion with such a faith in the power of music and movement. It was impossible not to be deeply moved and, indeed, deeply attracted! Holy Russia is still living here, Bolsheviks notwithstanding.

I must wait here at least until Monday to meet with E.T.Colton and Ed MacNaughton who are on their way back from Moscow at this moment where they have been working in the student relief programme of the ARA. Meanwhile there seems nothing for me to do except to enjoy the hospitality of the Somervilles who look after my every need and feed me prodigiously well! My only task seems to be to take care of the money that has been sent after me which amounts to about £1000 per month at present and leaves me feeling rather vulnerable an discomfited. We are told that the situation in Russia is beyond description and quite unlike anything that any of us has ever seen let alone tackled directly. At the same time I get reassuring messages from Geneva such as: '....and we have every confidence in your attitude and your capacity to meet the problems as they arise.....' !!! Think of that! Think of me. I think of you, of course I think of you but, much more than that, you are with me all my waking hours in my mind and my soul and somewhere even in my sleep. My body is here and most of my mind, most of the time. But my essence seems to be elsewhere and you and I know where. I love you. Both of you. Please take great care of both. I look forward to your letters, as and when they catch up with me.....

Donald. "

The following Tuesday the Americans arrived from Moscow and I learnt from them what was being done in Moscow under Miss Dunham and also in Petrograd whither Sam Keeney had gone and also about the arrangements agreed with the government in Moscow. I learned from them that my sphere of work was to be in the special famine area of the Volga basin.

From a letter to Irene written on the train from Riga to Moscow:

"Friday 21st April

Two nights ago we all - the Somervilles and I - went out to the YW girls place for supper. It was Joe Somerville's birthday and we celebrated that. There were four girls living together in the YWCA there and one of them seemed to know all about me because (she told me) she had been working in the New York office of the ESR and had to make constant use of my reports, duplicating them and sending them all over the place! We had a grand time together for I was due to leave the next day.

The next evening Kirkhoff, a tall young man from the Nansen Office called for me, we hailed a droshky, loaded ourselves and my baggage upon it along with a couple of large parcels I was taking with me to an unknown American in Moscow and set off for the station to catch the Moscow train, due to leave about an hour later. The drab streets, an occasional street lamp, flitting pedestrian forms left their impression as we clattered along the cobbled streets and soon the gloomy buildings gave way in the darkness to the looming shape of the railway station - and the Moscow train. The Soviet courier had not yet appeared, and we were assured there would be one and all the arrangements were 'in hand'. Before the barrier the platform was overflowing with pushing human forms, all trying to ensure a place on the train - a Latvian train with only one carriage for Moscow. In the ensuing melee at the doors to this carriage I kept my peace and waited in personal silence while considering what to do when the (seemingly) inevitable confrontational problem arose. After some minutes of rising tension and anxiety I thought I heard a name not unlike 'Grant' called in a Russian voice and found the attendant gesticulating to the throng all about him. I remember thinking it seemed a little like Daniel in the lions' den.but he had discovered my name on one of the berths in his Moscow carriage and was determined to lead me to it. Hope sprang to life again and I went to my compartment with some relief which soon disipated, however, when I gazed into a space designed for four sleeping people which was already occupied by five! The ensuing negotiations (more like a war of words, in truth) must have been very entertaining to any listener with command of all the languages involved. However in the end, much to my surprise, what I call reason prevailed and I found myself the undisputed occupant of a berth in the special courier carriage bound for Moscow. This same scene was re-enacted several times with each of the other three berths and soon after the train started off and I quickly fell asleep with my head on my air cushion.

By the time we reached Zilupe on the border between Latvia and Russia I

had made the acquaintance of my three companions each one from a different corner of the USA - Hewson (with the Quaker administration), Stevens (an

ARA man) and the American courier Fink known as 'Fatty Fink' because he is a very, very large man. Once a newspaper man with a travelling baseball team he has now become a much valued courier through his inveterate habit of 'kidding' everyone all the time. In consequence, it seems, he can talk his way out of any difficulty (for his papers were less than adequate) and his performance is a joy to behold. He clearly regards this as a great game the objective of which is, simply, to 'get through'. I'm sure he will! Fink had been through all this many times before and suddenly he said: "See that little hill with the pole atop of it? That's the Russian side of the border and all between is filled with barbed wire and things." A few minutes later we passed the barbed wire and things, the train stopped and various officials entered our carriage accompanied by a soldier. My first red soldier! He wore the typical peaked cap with its prominent red star, heavy greatcoat, rifle and bayonet too; a Red Army man. They paid me scant attention but concentrated their energies on my friend Fink who seemed in no way discomfited and, finally, they all went away and the train began to move once more.

Now it is Saturday, we have spent a whole day and two nights travelling and we are less than half way to Moscow. The attendant has a Samovar constantly boiling away and you can have Russian tea whenever you choose. I had Bovril this morning but the men standing in the corridors seem to drink tea all day long! The provodnik (attendant) has been very helpful and he was very anxious to learn how to say in German "Lettish (Latvian) train goes slow, Russian train goes fast." So I rehearsed him and he will, doubtless, use this to someone's disadvantage next time he is in Riga. But he is right - the Russian train <u>does</u> travel faster and the featureless countryside here slides by quite quickly. He tells me that we should arrive on time all being well.

Sunday morning, and sunshine. We have left the snow behind and the country looks better now. A fine breeze of warmer air greeted us this morning and even the windows were opened for us by the provodnik. What a difference that made. 'At 10.30 we shall be in Moscow' he tells us and there is a bustle of activity as all the people in the carriage begin to prepare themselves for the great event.....

Donald"

That evening I stood under the shadow of the Kremlin. I looked down upon the river at my feet, then up towards the great walls towering above and surveyed the turrets and the towers of the cathedrals, churches and palaces of that ancient, historical - even mythical - site and I wondered. I wondered about the wonder itself. The endless wondrous wonder that the world in its galaxy of galaxies offer us throughout time. The world itself, nature and man in interaction and the endless striving of man through all recorded history, and no doubt before that, to uncover the meaning of everything and to achieve some grasp of the nature of God, and - generation after generation - we leave our mark. There was also, alack, the equal and opposite feeling in the hinterland of

my mind that the most recent efforts of mankind were more in the nature of a scar. At least I was working on the repair.

Macaulay, the historian, expressed his keen disappointment with a friend who had made a serious visit to India but returned to England completely unchanged by his sojourn there.

In Macaulay's words that friend lacked "the experiencing mind". In this searching comment I find the touchstone for my own brief but practical visit to the revolutionary Russia of 1922. Even as a teenager I was a seeker and a questioner rapidly outgrowing the clear and strong framework of the Calvinistic religious belief that was my Highland background. Years of work and residence in the slums had convinced me that a radical change in the very basis of our society was necessary. While conceding that Western imperialism had opened up the world and stimulated growth with development on a global scale, there was much room for doubt about the very nature of the rampant capitalism that could be seen everywhere reaping only the financial rewards of that growth, and doubt about the price that was required for the opening of these new markets. I kept asking myself "Who benefits from these 'markets' in the 'developing' countries? The imperialist or the peasant?" The Russian experiment was, clearly, an astounding new venture with some hope for the poverty-stricken feudal people of that land. We knew that Lenin and his cabal were working on the first Five Year Plan already and were laying the foundations for a new 'co-operative' state the like of which had not been seen. For many, like me, already convinced that we must discover the more liberal politics of progressive internationalism, humane and inter-racial, there was a promise hanging in the air with these events. I remember thinking to myself at that moment that I hoped and believed that I did, in fact, have Macaulay's 'experiencing mind'. Certainly that time, with my first view of the Kremlin, left an indelible imprint on me and in some strange way the awfulness of what I knew to be ahead of me became a ringing endorsement of the work that I was now more and more committed to.

The palaces and towers of Moscow were always impressive, but the streets and byways were filthy dirty and unkempt, with litter and garbage strewn about, dead dogs lying about for days and the all-pervading general sense of apathy. And there was fear. The drab facts of Moscow clouded my vision and my hopes. I could only notice and contemplate the immediate imperative. The universal suffering. Even here in the capital city, in the jewel of the great Imperial past, the heart of Holy Russia, there was - not just privation - but horror all around. "Outside" - in wider Europe and the world, Russia stood for terror and mystery. When I got inside I felt no mystery, encountered no terror. Everything was simple and direct - the primal urgency of famine, starvation and death. I have never tried to describe my experiences of the Russian famine in any detail. Such events are beyond description. The most painful sight, at first, was that of the young men lying on the pavements, in terminal exhaustion, awaiting the inevitable. They were everywhere - patient; they died patiently, only occasionally emitting a weak cry of despair. I saw it. I was not prepared. It injured me. Ever after I recommended that no-one should have to endure that work for more than three months.

It was confirmed that I should go to the Volga region. There the famine was at its

worst. Saratov, Samara (7) and Kazan were indicated as the student centres where I should start relief work. In the meantime I looked around in Moscow. When, that evening, I finally set out for my nights' rest I was treated to my first experience of a Russian guest-house. Here I stayed for the first few days of my sojourn in the city and when I found it I was much impressed by the grandeur of the building. The inside was not quite of the same quality. The next day I discovered

that I was housed in the former German Embassy, in Denijney Pereoluk. The German Ambassador in 1919, Mirbach, was murdered there, I was reliably informed, and the room where that famous event occurred was duly demonstrated for me.

The head of such an 'official' guest-house (there were, at this time, no real hotels in Russia) would always be a government employee. This one was very grand, offering great comfort and excellent food. I found I was among distinguished company, all of them foreign visitors on official or professional business. Some of them I already knew or knew of, such as the American journalist Walter Duranty, who had already been in Russia now for two years and knew the language well and also knew many of the chief actors on the political stage. I delivered to him the two large and very heavy parcels of typing paper that I had been commissioned to carry to him from Riga, becoming his instant friend thereby! In return I received much good advice and information. (Soon after that, he was required to leave Russia at 24 hours notice and I never did discover what his [political] crime had been). Then there was Phillips Price, a British M.P.(Labour), a man of most constitutional views and record who had recently recovered from a bout of smallpox - not so very unusual, I gathered, in this land. The chief Red Cross representative from France was also there, always attired in the most amazing beautiful, full-length leather overcoat and many other Red Cross men from many other countries besides. This was good company indeed and, as I got to know them, I began to look forward to my stay in this amazing city in among such an exceptional international coterie. A few days later, however, I was offered (no question of refusal!) alternative quarters in what had been styled the "Palace of the Sugar King." There was no outward sign here of the former tycoon but his 'palace' had been turned into the hotel for visitors from abroad on official business. From the windows of this old palace of the aristocracy on Sofiaskaya, the great erstwhile bourgeois street right opposite the Kremlin itself, I could gaze down upon that unique and amazing collection of buildings. And, as I scanned that strange and varied scene I felt the wonder and the colour of that amazing and diverse history that held the key to understanding this awesome world of the ancient Kings and Emperors and the Romanoff dynasty. I thought I could actually feel the presence of the Russians and the Cossacks and the Tartars in among all the churches and the mosques and the domes around me. And I could indulge my phantasies of the great figures of that history - Jenghiz Khan; Ivan the Terrible; Tamburlane and the 'silk road' to China; Peter the Great, sometimes known as 'the first Bolshevik'; and then his grandson's Prussian wife Catherine the Great, Maria Theresia's contemporary; and Marshal Kutuzov, the great military leader who finally bled Napoleon dry on the road to Moscow. There was a curious feeling abroad in the aether between the pillars of the this pile of palaces, towers,

Samara later became Kuibyshev.

cathedrals, and churches that Sunday morning. It was almost as if the very buildings were talking to me ..... 'you are looking at us now, but you will pass, we remain. We are history and you would never believe the half of what we have seen.....' But, in among the crazy turmoil of those days, another memory came to me conjuring up other visions.... "My name is Ozymandias...." Nothing is for ever except eternity itself..

Moscow - the very symbol of Russia - that strange East / West city on the great

Eurasian plain was laid out all around me and suffering. The very Kremlin itself, with its undertones of the far eastern 'Forbidden City', seemed besieged by events. But there were whisperings in my mind that said Russia and Moscow had seen such threats before and survived. Jenghiz Khan and the Tartars in the 13th century, the numberless wars through the centuries, large and small (most of them involving either Poland or Prussia) and the repeated calls to repel the endless onslaught of the Ottoman Empire. And then, only a little more than a century ago, the fearful depredations caused by Napoleon's ill-fated adventure into the Russian winter in the year 1812 when he was only finally halted, after his occupation of Moscow, by the horrendous weather conditions and his lack of supplies. At the battle of Borodino there were not less than 100,000 casualties and, doubtless, as many again thereafter. Now this - the riddle and the tragedy of the past 20 years. The Russian people were no strangers to catastrophe and personal anguish. This amazing people, this federation of history, would survive it all. I did not know it - but I felt it and, however insignificant, I was here to play my part.

That evening, Wednesday 23rd April, I linked up with Mulder, a Dutchman, and three others and we went out for a walk through the old city. As far as direction, planning and spacing is concerned Moscow is built 'anyhow' and it was quite the hardest city to find one's way around. Thousands of houses were simply lying in ruins everywhere - actually destroyed in the fighting in the 1917 revolution. The people were, in the main, very eastern looking all heavily garbed in enveloping overcoats and wearing long boots nearly always and the characteristic Russian headgear was universal. In the shops, many still open quite late into the night, one could buy most things, but at what a price, and we saw no buyers. We passed the opera house and many other imposing buildings and went into a cafe for some tea and some wine. Cafes had recently begun to open again. The wine was good - from the Caucasus - an finally took a droshky home, for none of us knew how to find the way back. That cost us one million roubles! But then I reminded myself that, the day before, I had received 18 million in exchange for £1 sterling!

In what was obviously an early exercise in security clearance I was required the next day to attend an interview with a Mr. Eiduck who (I later learned) was the Head of the Secret Police or OGPU, as it was to become. Whatever his hidden agenda with me may have been, after a little while he seemed satisfied with all my answers and we moved on to less personal topics. From him I learned that the Russian Government welcomed my proposed programme (as well they might!) and would provide railroad transport and storage room for my undertakings at the universities I was proposing to visit.

From a letter to my mother in Evelix, 28th April 1922:

" I have all my luggage ready for the trip to Saratov and it may be that

before I get back I shall also have the chance to visit Samara. The Friends are at work near Samara and I have been invited there to visit them. The weather here is noand there has been no snow in Moscow for a week or two. It steadily gets warmer and it seems that the threat of typhus is receding. I cannot do justice at all to this city. It is thrust down to the ground at

present but it is a very great city all the same. The Kremlin is not the only great place in Moscow; there are really hundreds of churches in this city, many of them quite historic and very fine.

I wonder if I shall be able to take some things home with me from Russia. The shops are interesting with many beautiful hand-made things, trinkets and lovely household things and many toys. Last night I bought a pair of the most marvellous Turkish slippers you ever saw. They are hand-made of course and come from Tartary. I paid several millions for them !! - not very much, really. (8) I dined last night with members of the ARA in their centre here in Moscow - excellent meal, marvellous coffee (a rare privilege) and great company.

Four years ago, April 1918, I was in Berwick on Tweed.
Three years ago I was working with the Mission des Amis in France.
Two years ago I was in Vienna, one year ago in London and then Scotland -
Now I am here. I wonder where I may be a year from now.....

(8) These colourful slippers from Kazan in the Tartar Republic on the Volga are still with me 50 years later A family heirloom, exotic, amazing!

When you pack up and travel in Russia at these times you pack everything - you pack your bed, your sleeping linen and your food as well as anything else you may really need. This I am now doing.....

Donald. "

After these 'limbo' days in Moscow, seeing people, talking to officials, making arrangements and trying, all too often without success, to make contact with other workers at the front line in this war against catastrophe in the Volga basin, I was on my way to Saratov, a provincial city of 200,000 people. Two days south-east from Moscow on a moderately 'good' train brought me to "Matushka Volga" (Little Mother Volga) the region of the most acute famine. I was booked in once more to a local family in a guest house. But the guest houses here were of a different stamp to the magnificent places that were offered to the visitor in Moscow! Two days further east and I would be in Turkestan (the land of Bokhara and the 'Golden City of Samarkand') and in this republic, I was told, there are not even any guest houses - no hostelries of any kind for the traveller. In such circumstances one can only seek out a family who are prepared to share whatever space they have to offer. Everything here tells you that you are moving in a different culture to the one you came from where the values of almost everything are quite different to your own. It is as if you are part of a different world and a different history which, in some ways, is not so far from the truth.

It had always been clear to me that the greatest difficulty in the pursuit of the politics of internationalism was the precondition of teaching different peoples in different countries that we all inhabit the same world and now, the more I travelled abroad the more could I see the chasms which separate us from each other as much as the shared characteristics which bind us. At this moment, however, in the face of overwhelming disaster it was clear that the differences were completely submerged and every day I saw endless examples of selfless co-operation, humanity and sacrifice. "Why", I asked myself, not for the first time, "is it that we only really co-operate

with one another in the face of the great disasters?" I was to contemplate this question with monotonous regularity for many decades to come.

CHAPTER XV

The 1917 revolution in Russia turned a people, a culture, a society and its infrastructure upside down. Following that revolution came repeated invasions of Russia by hostile armies (1), added to the internecine wars against the 'white' Russian divisions, all of which had to

be opposed by the state with armies and militias of its own. The resulting civil wars moved up and down the land like a devouring monster until the civil strife came to an end with the defeat(s) of the old guard. Then followed the Government attempt to requisition land and produce from the peasants who, as a result, began to plough less and less and to sow less. Bringing all these disintegrating and destructive factors to a climax, came the terrible drought and resultant famine of the spring and summer of 1921. The post-war influenza epidemic having already made its contribution in weakening and diminishing the populace, all these factors during these four or five years had reduced Russia to a wilderness. All this finally made international headlines, albeit rather late in the day, thanks largely to the single-handed efforts of Dr. Nansen, the now famous Norwegian explorer, who had been organising aid programmes and lobbying for international help for twelve months previously. The diabolical paradox of this huge famine was that it proved to be most disastrous in the outlying country districts because so many of the nearly starving became refugees from the countryside to the bigger towns where transport systems still survived. Those who stayed behind died. In the cities the refugees were seen everywhere, on every street corner leaning against the walls in their emaciated state or, all too often simply lying in the street. Those not yet at the end of the road would walk slowly along past each door or window, crossing themselves and asking for bread in the name of Christ. Children were often abandoned by their parents and even the Red Cross Missions were unable to take in these waifs and orphans, knowing only too well that, if they did, they would be inundated beyond control and that their whole operation would close down. The worst sights that I observed with my own eyes were so horrific and obscene that I have never been able to talk about them even, let alone to describe them. I did have some photographs from that time which I needed for communication purposes in my work, but I found them so appalling that when the need for them was done I had to destroy them. These experiences also left their scars and I have never forgotten them. There were widely differing estimates abroad at that time of the scale of the disaster but one of the more conservative and (in my view) most careful and accurate said that up to June 1922 about half a million people had died as a direct result of the famine.

May Day 1922 found me watching the May Day Parade in Saratov, a provincial city of 200,000 people, organised for celebration of the revolution. This despite the

(1) These invasions into post-revolutionary Russia, both in the West by the UK via Murmansk and Archangel, and in the East by the USA and Japan into Manchukuo and Siberia, have been long since forgotten by the old and were never taught to subsequent generations.

death, famine and disaster all about us. The irony - all too apparent to those of us there who were there from foreign lands - seemed to be totally lost on the enormous crowds of, seemingly, able-bodied Russian people all about us. The throng seemed to be even, in some strange way, happy. The great square before the University was crowded with people: troops, men, women with children, women without children, processions on foot and even a motorised 'cavalcade'. Flags everywhere and rain. A lot of rain. But no-one other than myself seemed to notice that. Music was floating about also or, I might say 'musics', for there seemed to be two or three or more different forms of music coming from different corners of the square. The overall effect was rather surreal and even eerie. I felt a dream-like quality to the scene and the unreality of it all was heightened by the lingering sense of impending disaster hard on our heels.

I was soon to become enmeshed in that disaster but, for the moment, this curtain of make believe jollity cocooned us.

I walked off into the town but I soon found that on this day, May 1st, I was always moving against the tide for all roads seemed to lead straight back to the city square I had just left behind. The sense of urgency was palpable. Then a column of marching soldiers came by and I was so interested that I followed them. Dirty grey uniforms and their peaked caps each one adorned with a shining red star. "Ughin, dwa, dre..." shouted their commander and they tramp, tramp, tramped along marching to a slow undulating chorus which they sang in unison with a strong, deep bass feel to it. At the next cross-roads I started to move away again but I met a courier with whom I had travelled two days earlier and he said he was 'going to the fair' and wanted me to join him so we turned back towards the University square. Another procession began to pass us, many of them wearing shining brass helmets. "What could these be?" I asked myself and my companion. We both expected them to be the cavalry or the artillery..... but no. They turned out to be the Fire Brigade and were clearly very impressed with themselves as, indeed, were the local populace who gave them a much greater cheer than most. We were now part of the crowd and that crowd was moving. We had, perforce, to move with them. Different companies of soldiery passed before our eyes, some of them resplendent in glittering 19th century uniforms, such as the cavalry astride their magnificent horses all in bright red breeches with the exaggerated bulge just above the knee and their brilliant white tunics. Unbelievably smart in their natty forage caps. Then a company or two of the very young - slim, fresh-faced - cadets, I supposed, also beautifully turned out in simple, light khaki outfits. Everything that could shine did shine. The officer groups were also instantly identifiable with glistening swords on show. All very grand. But then - with an undeniable sense of bathos - came row upon row of the 'other ranks' looking, by contrast, ragged and ill-kempt, dull and solid. Expressionless. Revolvers, rifles, swords and even bayonets much in evidence. It seemed as if these endless ranks of grey men felt themselves to be defined by the weapons they carried: "we <u>are</u> the revolution", they seemed to say, "nothing can stop us now". I was not so sure - Mother Nature is a formidable foe.

The great parade was not, however, made up only of soldiers. School-children followed in great columns despite the rain and their pitiful garments; yes, and they raised the most natural and resounding cheers, as children would. Other groups of little ones went past in large motor-cars with their teachers, evidently enjoying the outing and in

high spirits. The heavy rain fell incessantly and was like to dampen the festivities but still the crowd moved on and on to congregate in the great square. Much bunting and streamers and a rough grandstand marked the centre of the place where the great "Orat" (oration) was to take place. I noticed many small indications of the underlying social distress. For instance, as the dense procession and the crowds were pushing in towards the great square a small cortege came along one of the cross streets and made as if to cut through the procession itself. This was a little cart, drawn by one horse and bearing a coffin, the lid of which was still open. An oldish man sat also in the cart and a woman with two small children followed close behind. It did intercept the

procession. It did, however briefly, stop the surging flow of humanity and then went on its way in another direction. I was acutely aware that the crowd never *saw* this little 'entre-act' although they had to stand back and watch it. The symbolism was totally lost, or so it seemed, on all but myself. I shed a tear for them and another for suffering humanity.

A brass band came along followed by a crowd of workers. I watched the faces as they passed. In some strange way they succeeded in looking all the same to me. Impassive, unyielding, not hard but strong and determined. Here, I felt, I was in the presence of purpose. These men did not only call each other 'comrade' - one had the powerful feeling that they really were comrades, if not comrades in arms then comrades in purpose. I was impressed in spite of myself. And the parade went on and on. More and more people passed by me some organised in groups and others totally disorganised (so this is Lenin's 'proletariat' I remember thinking), to be followed by more military power in the form of armoured cars, mobile machine-guns, camouflaged vehicles, trucks full of more troops. All this, I kept reminding myself, unfolding here before my eyes was in only one relatively small provincial city in this huge land. What must May Day be like in all Russia? The abiding impression from it all was of enormous power, and of illusion. By now there were 20,000 people in the square all waiting patiently in the drenching rain for the man (who would it be?) who was to come and deliver the 'Oration'. They waited. The rain fell. They waited longer and still the man had not arrived. As far as I know, he never did arrive.

The mud got deeper, the flags drooped further and so did the spirits of the crowd. I had begun to talk, in French, with a small man standing next to me (some kind of academic I think) about the events of the day and the wider context in Saratov and the terrible situation. Finally he said:

" I blame no-one. I blame no-one. It is all a great catastrophe, but perhaps it will be good for the human race. I blame no-one." I could read the despair in his eyes.

I left the crowded square, taking with me the confusing images of power and pestilence and entered a large new building that had drawn my attention bearing the legend "Institute of Medicine". This, I was informed, was a part of the university and a number of young men were lounging about in the foyer, sheltering from the rain. I addressed them::

"Can I find the Rector of the university somewhere here?"

"Holiday today", was the reply, "perhaps if you come back tomorrow". I asked

if anyone spoke English or French or German and a young student was pushed towards me by his friends. To him I explained in German what my business was about and that the thrust of my work was about student relief. Even while we were talking there was a frisson of interest in the assembled company. Clearly many of them had got the drift of the conversation (2). Suddenly they were all eager to help and I received a lot of advice, much of it conflicting. But, in any event, tomorrow would be more rewarding for me.

The next day I returned, explaining that I had come to offer help for the student body, and asked to see the Rector. I was led upstairs to a large, cold laboratory where I was presented to two thin, tired looking slightly dishevelled men. My guide informed me that these were two

of the most senior professors. The laboratory was empty apart from a blackboard, a few small tables, some charts on the walls and a skeleton. I was instantly struck by the symbolism - the two sad men were doing nothing but gazing disconsolately out of the window and the whole scene could have been a still from an Eisenstein film. The two professors were there simply because it was their life-long habit to be there. I broke the silence asking in Russian whether I could speak in French and they agreed. I spoke a few words of explanation concerning my mission. The students, the day before, had been very enthusiastic and eager to help but my two professors seemed to be unmoved by my information. They appeared to be lost - away behind in a dreary world of their own privations, misery and hopelessness.

" Now it is too late", they said and clearly felt that anything good was, in truth, quite unbelievable.

" I should like to get some facts about the situation in which the students and staff find themselves" I said. "Are the professors also in such desperate need?"

"Need?" came the reply "Need? Mon Dieu! - we shall go to the Rector", he said and immediately led me away down the corridor to another room. This, he told me, was the home of another professor, who spoke no French.

"He has no home" I was told. "He and his wife live in this room and they have nothing." The little, old quiet professor in question had on a kind of dressing gown and a uniform jacket under it. Old, threadbare fabric slippers on his feet; he had nothing to say to me. He was the Professor of Physiology in the University of Saratov and he had nothing. And clearly he had no hope. I walked along with my French-speaking companion and we talked. The rain fell all the time:

(2) This was in itself interesting for the official 'second language' in Russia was French and I did not expect many to have German. Indeed, until the revolution, French had for long been the official court language.

" Is there a students' kitchen or dining room anywhere in the University" I asked. "No, there is nothing at all organised like that. The students are very badly off ....."

" And what about the staff and the professors?" I interrupted.

"Oh, we are supposed to get twelve million roubles a month, but we usually have

to wait some months for that. Anyway, what can you do with that", he said, "A pound of meal costs three million. And sugar. God! We have forgotten what sugar tastes like. No sugar, no salt, nothing. Oi! Oi!". The tears came to his eyes as he spoke:

" London" he said, " Oi! Oi! I know London. The British Museum: what a place! If only I could go there again. And Belgium: Brussels, Louvain..... I know them even better. I was there for six years with my family. That is why I speak French so well. And then I came back to be professor in Kharkov and for the past twelve years I have been here and this is going to be the end.... Oi! Oi!!!"

The Rector remained inaccessible that day but I did eventually meet with him and he was only too pleased to give me his full support. What this really meant at the time was somewhat

obscure, for there seemed to be no working administrative machinery in the institution - not even a residual structure. There was, in fact, no organisation, no chain of command, no bureaucracy, no communication system - nothing. We seemed to be approaching the law of the jungle in Saratov, and the weakest were already paying the price. The ultimate price. In their hundreds. But equally, at least, I felt reassured that the institution and the bureaucracy was not able, even had it been so minded, to be obstructive to my plans for I was, by now, no stranger to local politics and I knew how tricky that could become, not least in the hallowed halls of academia!

Before long I had organised a representative committee in this Volga city to facilitate, inform and keep in touch with, the relief programme which I was building, to reach out to over one thousand students in the first instance (see Appendix II). I worked through this committee on which the Save the Children Fund had a permanent member to voice, if necessary, the established ESR principles: in selecting students for assistance no question is even asked about race, religion, politics or colour. Although I had a smattering of the Russian language I found it advisable to work a;lways through my regular interpreter. He proved to be a highly intelligent Russian student of medicine named Wilhelm. With such a name, of course, it was no surprise to discover that he was a 'Volga German' (3). Wilhelm was an enormous help in very many ways and a mine of local intelligence. From him I learned, among so many other things, that this university city of Saratov had originally been built by the 'Volga Germans' when they were first settled in the region two hundred years earlier. This he told me when I expressed my surprise to him at finding this faraway Russian city built according to a regular square plan, like a new American city. This was the reason, he said - quite unlike any other Russian city.

Before the revolution, I learnt, Wilhelm had been an officer in the Russian army, somewhere in Asia Minor. After the revolution, in spite of the dangers which he as an officer was bound to face, he did not flee (as so many of his contemporaries did) but

(3) The Volga Germans were a recognised ethnic group whose forbears had settled here on the invitation of Catherine the Great who was herself, originally, a German (Prussian) princess. These were the people, The Volga Germans, with more than two centuries of Russian citizenship behind them, who were summarily exiled to Siberia by order of Stalin when Hitler's tanks and Hitler's Nazis were overrunning western Russia in 1941 in the horrors preceding the Battle of Stalingrad - the turning of the tide.

but returned to Saratov, to find his family. His parents had had an estate somewhere in the province and had been quite well off. Now that estate had been nationalised and he lived with his mother (his father having perished in the revolution) in a tiny lodging while he worked in the hospitals and the prisons of the town. He said that perhaps the hardest experience of all - and he had come through many - was to find himself totally unable to help any of the beggars and even the students who came, starving, to his door every day. He had managed systematically each week to give 100,000 roubles and half his Sunday meal to whoever he could find each Sabbath day but more than that he simply could not do. The students at the university, he told me, have to work all day simply to survive and therefore could only study at night. Because of this the lectures and other classes in the Volga universities were held from five in the evening untill 11 pm. Many of the students in Saratov were employed at this time by the Save the Children Fund and other relief agencies. This information was very helpful to me and the

students I had dealings with at that time all proved to be first class workers and, in the main, delightful and intelligent people. We became good friends, Wilhelm and I and, indeed, when I left Saratov soon after, he gave me a very beautiful, small, embossed silver chalice which has remained with me ever since. I was very sorry to lose him.

All around us, on either side of the enormous river, lay the undulating stretches of the "Nemetsky Gubernia" - the German Province. One day I was being driven out into the Russian steppes by a fair-haired young boy with his horse and cart, his friend sitting beside him. I think they were not much educated and therefore not getting much from my efforts at communication - a mixture of a number of basic Russian words and sign language. However, we seemed to feel quite at home with each other. We came to a huge cornfield with the young crop already waving about 8 inches high. He turned round to me, clearly in a state of great excitement, pointing generally to this huge field of young corn and said, with great feeling in his voice and a look of triumph on his face:

"Chleb! Chleb!" , meaning "Bread! Bread! (4).

Miles passed, and we were driving along a field on a high muddy road. A couple of yards into this field - there were no fences in Russia - a horse was contentedly browsing in the corn. My two boys became very indignant at this and began gesticulating wildly to me about this crime - clearly someone should be made to suffer, they seemed to say. One hundred

yards further on we came upon a moujik lying fast asleep, like a true Rus, in the road. Clearly he was responsible for the horse. The two boys yelled at him and chastised him, hurling all sorts of powerful Russian invective at him (I understood nothing of it, of course, but it would have shrivelled me!) and, pointing back at the horse in the corn, began to make for the moujik himself. He gathered himself up and hurled himself down the road towards the horse as fast as he

(4) Bread was the Alpha and the Omega of existence for all at this time. During my time in Russia I saw, handled and (occasionally) even tasted, a score or more samples of different forms of 'bread'. Among these there were 'breads' made from bonemeal, tree bark, ground up roots and / or grasses and some even made from different kinds of clay. Starving people will eat anything, whether it have any nutritious potential or not, if only to allay the dreaded emptiness that assails them in waves.

could and we resumed our journey. Nothing, at that time, was more precious than bread.
'Loshit' said my young Jehu, pointing to the small horse between the shafts. Then he murmured a number which I took to be seventy, and said "Soldat" pointing back to the village we had just passed. I think this meant that the soldiers came recently and took away 70 horses from that village. Hunger was not the only problem.

Remembering the forgotten men, the old-time Russian professors, I was a little puzzled, a few days later, to receive a request from a small group of them that I should meet with them. I wondered what they could have in mind. They were too poor for me to think that it could mean food or even tea. In the event we met, in the two-roomed home of the senior mathematics professor and I was relieved to find that all those present in this group spoke, or at least understood, English. Now I discovered what these learned men had had in mind when they invited me to this simple, indeed primitive, rendezvous as he spoke to me:

"Mr. Grant, you come to us from the outside world. For nearly ten years of war and revolution we have been cut off from that world. We do not even receive any real news from 'the Outside'. We receive no scientific or literary, far less political publications, newspapers or magazines. Some of us have written books, on a variety of subjects, which will never be published. We suffer from this isolation. Isolation of the spirit. Please, Mr. Grant, tell us what has been happening 'Outside' - unknown to us - in the realms of science and learning. We are all starving, we know, but this starvation of the mind is the worst".

As I listened to this moving appeal I recalled the words of the Psalmist: "Out of the depths I cried to thee...." and thought how best to help these quiet, gentle intelligent men and women who, in the grip of ultimate, irremediable disaster, with the light of hope spiralling out of sight, could still seek information and outside intelligence. I did my best. I spoke with them for two hours or more covering all kinds of concerns and political developments. Of science I had but little to tell them for I was only too well aware of my own deficiencies in this field. The only scientific news I can remember reporting to them was of Einstein's Nobel Prize for his theory of relativity, the invention of a working helicopter by the Frenchman Etienne Oehmichen and the recent discovery of Insulin by the great Canadian researchers Banting and Best. Nor do I recall much of what I had to tell them otherwise but it included news of Mahatma Ghandi being put in jail for sedition and, by strong contrast, the growth of the surrealist movement in the world of art and the emergence of Dadaism and its relationship with the anarchists in France and Germany.

The experiencing mind kept prodding me - linking geography with history. I discovered that the right bank (looking South) of the Volga is 'the high bank'. The inevitable corollary of that is that the left bank is low. Throughout the month of May when the snows were melting fast, Mother Volga in flood was contained by the high bank while the low left bank was under ten feet of water. Water that stretched eastwards for miles. Yermak the Cossack stood on the right bank in 1535, looked eastwards and later explored in that direction. So had begun the Muscovite slow move towards Siberia and

into Asia. Two centuries after Yermak, Vidkum Bering, the Dane (commissioned by Catherine the Great) carried the Russian interest by sea around half the world to the shores of Alaska (5).

To all seeming there is no spring in Russia. In this immense continental land the snows of winter begin to melt in April continuing long into May. The floods rise and so do the temperatures bringing quickly days of summer heat, with the mud, into the villages. This is a dangerous time for the people. Saratov quickly became hot, muddy, dusty and (even more) dirty. I began to understand what King Canute must have felt when, in truth, he faced the opposition. By the time I had completed my Saratov assignment and a relief system, however inadequate, was up and running, I had to move on. I went to the shops to buy some kind of memento of my visit to this city, for it certainly seemed improbable that I would ever be here again. I was surprised to find a number of quite well-stocked shops in the main streets (6) and I finally bought a very fine Bokhara rug, two metres square for the miniscule sum (to me) of 800,000 roubles. (This was after much bargaining, for I had been advised that it was absolutely 'de rigeur' so to

do, otherwise you would be taken for a fool.)

The floods were rising and the situation all around was deteriorating day by day. Samara beckoned and I was glad to be able to leave Saratov. Grateful, polite and ever unpunctual, the students gave me a send-off party. It lasted for several hours, touching midnight; speeches were made and I said something in Russian. I am not sure that I understood the words they spoke to me and I am fairly certain that they were unable to comprehend my responses but the messages, in both directions, were really quite clear. I had obviously done something for them that they valued - I think this was more to do with the demonstration that the rest of the world did care, rather than simply finding food - and, for my part, I had been deeply moved by what I had seen and what they had been able to do for me.

Next day I was on the Volga sailing North towards Samara (Kuibyshev). In my tiny cabin there was scarcely room for the narrow bed and myself and my gear. I had with me a strong, rectangular basket containing my spirit-burning cooker, the fuel for it, tea, condensed milk and whatever food I was able to rescue day by day. All this time in famine-bound Russia I never drank anything unless I had seen it actually boil and, when travelling, I fed myself and never accepted anything else. The relief to be away from the hot, muddy, sick city and breathing clean river air under the big sky was immense. I had not had time to process the images of chaos, disaster and death that I carried with me but I knew they were still with me. They still are. Heavy, lumpy, bearded peasants lay all around spread out on the two decks, along with various pieces of cargo; it seemed all

(5) In 1922 the University of Alaska was in Matanushka, (a Russian name); off the southern shores of Alaska are the Baranoff Islands and off the west side are the Fribiloff Islands (Russian names) where thousands of seals congregate every year to breed.

(6) That year, 1922, Lenin had introduced the NEP (New Economic Policy, known in Russia as the "Piatiletka") which meant, in effect, that trade for private profit was once more allowed. Even if viewed as a temporary measure, this gave a green light to the myriads of small Russian traders and shopkeepers and the shops and bazaars all over Russia at this time had resumed their customary place in society.

rather haphazard and the greeting 'Nichevo!' was constantly ringing in my ears. I never did discover if it had any real meaning but it had a positive ring to it so I adopted it too. If there was any direction or organisation on the boat it was not in evidence but everyone, apart from myself, seemed quite relaxed and knew what to expect. It all seemed very Russian to me. It was all too evident that I was different both in person and in my dress and I recall that I seemed to hold a particular fascination for a young Russian boy on board. He followed me like a shadow, quietly gazing at me, the stranger, at all times. He never spoke, no more did I and, at times, it felt like a sequence from the theatre, or a novel by Maxim Gorky. I smiled at him more than once but he remained quite impassive. I intended to try to talk with him before leaving the boat on the last day but he had disappeared and I never saw him again. I have always wondered why he was on that boat and what were his thoughts about me. A straw in the wind of time. Sometimes I do still wonder.

Throughout this time my innermost thoughts had been constantly with Irene, staying with my sister Kate in London, awaiting our first-born. Her time by now was imminent, if not already

past. How would it be? Why was I not there? Might not some disaster strike us? My faith in God was beyond doubt and I never questioned it, indeed all my recent experience had only served to strengthen it, but I was aware, in the recesses of my mind, that what was changing for me was not my faith but my understanding of the nature of the God in whom (in which?) I reposed that faith. The view was growing in me at this time that my God, that sublime, all-powerful truth, the '"everlasting Yea" of Carlyle, that creative principle in which we could all utterly trust, while holding always 'the grand design' did not necessarily concern itself with the minutiae of the everyday life of each individual creature, be it human or other. God might, indeed, be aware of every sparrow that fell but did not necessarily have to be the direct agent of each such event. We were all equally at risk, it seemed to me, to Nature's laws of chance - indeed that 'grand design', it seemed to me, actually required it. So I no longer felt able, as I had done in the past, simply to pray to my God to take care of Irene and the child. I had to await some news. "You have your faith, and I have mine...." as my father had said. And I had agreed. Here was a demonstration of the difference.

I had been lucky to get some mail before I left Saratov but there was none of this news that I so eagerly awaited therein. I knew I would get no more before leaving and had therefore, to make arrangements for further mail to be sent back to Moscow for me, knowing there was no guarantee that it would catch up with me on my travels. The prospect of no letters for some weeks was depressing to the spirit, let alone in these circumstances. So - my first concern on arrival in Samara, after finding my lodgings, was to write to Irene, who might very well by now be a mother. This I did, to the best of my ability, sending all my love and support to her through the words and the spaces between them. It was not a long letter. It was simply a love letter. I did not keep a copy.

Then, before retiring that night I put my pen to the next piece of paper, to write home to Evelix:

Samara, with the Swedish Red Cross,
Saturday night, May 13th 1922.

"I have been travelling for a day and two nights by steamer on the Volga, by far

by far the greatest river I have ever seen. The description of this journey will come to you anon. I am now safely quartered with the Swedish Red Cross as you can see. I have much the nicest bedroom I have occupied since I came to Russia and everything else seems to be of the same high quality. The other night I had some vodka, in Saratov . This is how it came about.

We had all been getting inoculated that afternoon against cholera (which is rapidly assuming epidemic proportions in some areas of Russia) and the doctor concerned stayed on to have dinner with us. So Cook, who is the head of the operation in the absence of Webster, produced a bottle of real vodka (7). It went round the table several times (it was a very large bottle!). As you might expect, I avoided it as much as possible but I did have a few shots at it, not wishing to leave out an interesting experience or, indeed, to be seen to be the only 'lemon' in the company. I was sitting next

to the doctor who always clinked his glass with mine (he proved to be a great 'clinker' and a formidable drinker) and I could not easily escape. I can't say that I noticed any real effects of the drink, unlike Tadg Mor (8), but when I finally left that company to pack my things I left a number of the others nursing their sore chests and heads!

Nowadays I seem to be consumed by 'calories'. My life, indeed, seems to be in thrall to the creatures. I have been studying my notes about the calories in the daily meals that we arranged for the students in Saratov in order to husband our resources and, so to speak, spread the butter as thinly as possible for the greatest number. At the same time it is vital that the meals are, at the very least, life sustaining. I have with me the NEM system of food values of the more important food stuffs worked out in Vienna by Dr. Pirquet. It is widely used in Austria and by ourselves as well as the ARA. I then have to transfer these values from the NEM system and kilograms into Russian 'Poods' and 'Zolotniks' and, finally into calories.

I had quite made up my mind that I should not get any more mail before leaving Saratov, but I did. Only a few hours before I left. What a pleasure. Then, on Thursday night after I had arranged all about my berth on the steamer to Samara, we were waiting until after 11 o'clock, and getting anxious as the boat was due to leave at midnight. Four of the men were playing bridge and I

(7) I put this particularly in the letter because I was - and have all my long life been - not actually teetotal but extremely economical with the alcohol and a non-smoker. I would only drink alcoholic drinks on special occasions when it might otherwise seem discourteous. ' Vodka', of course, was universally consumed by the Russian people and the consumption of this national drink had recently risen dramatically in the face of global disaster. The nature, let alone the quality, of most of what passed everywhere for vodka at that time was extremely questionable. No-one ever asked the questions, everyone drank it. Real vodka was a great luxury.

(8) Tadg Mor was one of the great highland warrior heroes in Maurice Walsh's historical novel "And No Quarter". He was always an impressive character in the story but would become twice the man 'and drink taken'.

was looking on when the telephone rang and that proved to be the Courier from Moscow who was supposed to be travelling with us, ringing from the station. He must have been even more worried than we were about this journey. At that point the Ford (and driver) that was scheduled to take us to the boat arrived and promptly set off, instead, to the station to fetch the Courier! While my anxiety levels instantly rose several notches, my Russian would-be travelling companions, with magnificent unconcern, instantly sat down to await events and continued their game of bridge. I confess that, in spite of myself, I was much impressed. There is a lesson concerning our national characters lodged therein methinks.

Half an hour later, with minutes to spare, I was on my way to the boat in that same Ford, sitting next to the Courier from Moscow, my pockets bulging with letters from Irene, from Evelix, from Geneva and Moscow. I sat up late that night in my cabin, enjoying those letters. Much later, around 2 am, with the boat under way in midstream, I went out on deck to enjoy the moonlight on the Volga. At such a time it is difficult to believe I am in the same world as the one I have so recently left behind. This upper deck was deserted with the moonlight pouring its way towards me along the moving

waters of this enormous, flooding river. First of all I was conscious of the wonderful moonlight; the whiteness, the purity - Oh! the purity - the calm and the benediction of beauty after all the hateful ugliness behind me. And with that moonlight came many memories, silvern and golden, like a breeze which drops the rain from all the branches of my mind.

And with the white ecstasy of moonlight and memory comes also the exhilaration of sailing upon this flooding river, the Queen of European rivers, Mother Volga. Volga in gargantuan flood; spreading ever wider and wider, cleansing, fertilising, vivifying, calling on life. Shimmering moonlight, leaping lapping waters all seemed to be dancing in joy together. I was conscious of the miles and miles of trees along the banks - many simply growing out of the water, trees just bursting with the power of the green life within - 'green fire' as our own Gaelic writer Fiona MacLeod would call it - leaping from bough to bough; such a wealth of life and health and perfect beauty all about. This startling trinity of shimmering white moonlight; dark, dancing waters, miles wide but a river still; and the green waving trees, continous woods singing with life and 'green fire'. Hour upon hour of this.

And then dawn, on the Volga. Cold, fresh, with all the delicate awakening colours gradually filling out into yellows and rose. A slow dawn, a Russian dawn and gradually , so gradually, the rising sun. I will never forget this.....

Don".

The next morning, my first Sunday in Samara, there was, early on, a powerful knock at the door and a member of staff standing there before me holding out what seemed to be a letter. It was not. It was a telegram which, she said must be very urgent, for it was virtually unknown for such a thing to arrive on a Sunday! I took it in some trepidation and quickly scanned the contents. My Russian was insufficient for a proper

translation , but what I did instantly comprehend were the two words "dobschka" and "chorosho" - "little girl" and "all right". I later learned all about that great event, when Helen Christina (who, for some reason has been known as 'Wendy' all her life) made her first entry into the world on 11th May, in London. I will not try to describe the reaction. Only those who have been in a similar situation could make the necessary leap of imagination to join me. But it certainly involved the whole of my being and the relief was a profoundly physical event. Certain it is that body and soul were both fully involved at that moment.

There was little time to dwell upon this stunning intelligence for there was so much to do and time was already shortening. I arranged for an instant telegraphic reply, and added a post-script to the letter I had completed the previous night. Then, with joy in my heart, I turned back to the world immediately about me. An arrangement was already in place to show me Samara that morning and to visit one of the many outlying villages of the district in the afternoon. This day and the contrast between the two events was to prove to be one of the defining moments of my time in Russia. The scene in the streets of Samara was, in truth, beyond any sort of description. I can only offer some paragraphs taken from some of the notes and the letters I wrote at the time. The streets seemed to be full of dying people, many of them older children or

adolescents and young adults. Some moaning, some silent, some still seeking help. One aged, I suppose, ten or twelve was calling out directly to me in his soft, Russian voice while he lay in his tattered clothing remnants, otherwise immobile, with his cheek against the pavement. Nearby was another smaller little boy lying forlornly in the street itself, while a little girl, who happened to be passing, stopped and stood watching him. She said nothing and he did not even move but just lay there like a stone. I cannot describe the intolerable pathos of these scenes. The very young and the old are no longer represented in these images and there are fewer women. The women who have survived are all struggling to the end to care for their children and dependents while most of the wraiths we see in the streets are the orphans and unattached adults who have nowhere else to go. The starving old and the very young are mostly no longer with us. So they lie in the street and wait. One man, rather older I think, perhaps 40 or so, lay helpless and starving in the street calling out quite strongly for help while many people passed him by without any kind of acknowledgement, like the man in the New Testament who was rebuked by the people for being there. A van in the street was unloading a group of young urchins before our eyes. These, I was told, were yet another load of recently orphaned children. The ghostly look of each one was much enhanced by the ghostly sheet each one wore as their only clothing. They were helped out of the van by the driver and many of them could scarcely walk. One fell and was unable to rise without help. I felt as though I could hear their bones rattling as they slowly shambled into the building that seemed to be their present destination. I judged their ages to be 8-10. Truly, in this huge but ravaged country, the great reaper was at work. Mulder, the Dutchman, told me that not long ago when he visited a village that had once had a population of 2000 people he did not actually see a living soul. The survivors were to be found only in their huts with many of their dead, just lying, waiting. Simply waiting to die, knowing there was no other possible

outcome, with the passive fatalism so characteristic of the Russian peasant. He also told me that the eating of human flesh was not unkown, at least in these parts, and had seensome photographs that bore witness. The possible catalogue of these horrors is seemingly endless and there were times, many times, when I felt I could stand no more of it and I would ask myself:

"Why? How can this be? What is the purpose? What can I possibly do?
Why am I here?"

and many more questions. But always another part of me came to my rescue with replies as:

"somebody has to be here to answer the call, the call of mankind, the call of Jesus.
If not you, then who?"

I did feel as if I had 'been called' to this work, and gained great relief from the idea, times without number, when other parts of me would question the wisdom of my actions or question whether I had my priorities in the right order. When people asked me what I thought I was doing in such places with my newly-wed wife abandoned, far away, having our first child..... I always knew that I felt this work was the imperative and that I had Irene's unswerving support in these decisions. In this way we both knew the other, and the decisions were made together. It was not

easy. But I had known from childhood that there was never any promise of ease - the Bible had already taught me that.

Then, just when I felt I could not look at Samara any more, my guide said it was time to stop and took me back for a sandwich and a glass of water. Then I set off for the afternoon's work with my Red Cross guide a Mme. Sett - she, clearly, with some enthusiasm and I with an excess of anxiety for what these next hours might bring. We were to visit a little village a few miles to the south called Voschresenka. From my notes, written at the time:

"Ten minutes through the streets of Samara in a large, powerful Benz motor- car and we reached the Volga, or a small arm of the Volga. Blazing sun, cool water, boys bathing, peasants waiting on the bank, one ferry boat already full. A tall young man stands up in the boat, doffing his sheepskin hat the while, to make room for us. We thank him and he tells us he comes from Voschresenka. The boat pushes off. The bank on the other side is crowded with people, carts, horses, camels and diverse other forms of transport. These people come from a score of villages, having crossed back from Samara where they have to go to fetch such supplies as they can afford and their meagre rations of food from the ARA or the Red Cross administration. A long, winding embankment with water all around - the 'overflow' of the Volga in spring; and tall trees along the way. Cool, even in the hot afternoon sun. The road ahead is a Russian road, that is - no road at all. Only a local could tell where this road is, and even they have trouble at times! There was a thunderstorm last night, which makes it a little easier because the holes are all full of water and easier to see. Seventeen versts (9) to

(9)A Verst is a Russian measure of distance approximately equal to two thirds of an English mile.

Voschresenka. Gently undulating plains run away in every direction, sometimes small woods can be seen and a village or two as we pass. The grass has begun to grow again on the steppes and is already long and fresh. The skeltons of the many horses out on the wide steppes will now be hidden for a while while nature makes her preparations for receiving them into the earth and the sky. We pass a string of carts drawn by small horses or by camels; about seven carts all close together, and making for a village scores of versts away, with the corn they have just received from the ARA in Samara. When night falls the people simply unyoke the carts wherever they happen to be and lie down to sleep beside their carts. We move on towards our destination.

Voschresenka lies in a hollow with a small stream meandering through. When we arrived, Mme. Sett and I (she is a Swedish lady), all the villagers we met took off their hats and said "Sastravitschi" meaning "Good-day". We stayed about four hours in that village and visited some families in their homes. Here, although privation is still the order of the day, disaster has not (yet?) arrived. There is a sense of togetherness and domestic-ness and tomorrow is still a prospect. We visit a communal kitchen where 2500 are fed every day, the bakery, the Children's Home and, finally, the new house with its own orchard, which is being completed and nearly ready, for Mme. Sett to live in! I take a few snapshots.

I am invited in to have a look and a rest. How pleasant and cool it is to find a nice well furnished room when one is very tired and the afternoon is hot. Especially when the room has warm, soft colours and a restful atmosphere! Several beautiful Persian carpets on the floor, warmly shaded hangings already on the walls, tasteful ornaments here and there and the large,

open, south-looking windows to welcome the sun. And a meal is already prepared for us! What a prospect. What luxury!

Evening approaches and we prepare the cart to leave. The colours are deepening into blue and amethyst and a pale green over the far western horizon. The crows have ceased their concert and the plains are full of quiet and of distance. The promise of peace descends. The village begins to be lost to the dark and the feeling of night comes upon us. The rough road winds away into the distance, across the plains, the Asiatic steppes of Russia. The lightly sprung Russian cart, like a crude junior phaeton, swings and bumps along from ditch to ditch and from hollow to hollow but the horse never stumbles and never wavers - for him it is always like this. There is one star in the sky away to the left there and in the other directions can be seen several campfires marking the place where peasants are camping for the night, far away from their villages".

I never was able properly to accomodate the two experiences of that day in the Volga basin in 1922. The contrasting images belong to such totally different spheres that, had I not actually been there in each case, it would have been impossible to allow that they co-exist within a few miles of each other and in the same time frame. But they did and, in my mind, they still do. There is no reconciliation here, there is no space for the two pictures at once. As if one were contemplating the Hell of Hieronymous Bosch while trying to listen to the slow movement of Beethoven's 'Pastoral' symphony. The impact was like a diabolical fire-work in the Garden of Eden. Perhaps, indeed, that is what it was. I have no other view.

CHAPTER XVI

With the experience of Saratov behind me I managed to organise the programme of student succour for Samara in less than a fortnight. There in my second Volga city, I found a French-speaking student (of Agronomy) ready to be my interpreter. A member of a wealthy, estate-owning family, Tanya had been educated in Paris. Her people had belonged to the very upper stratum of society before the revolution. Now, of course, all their property and wealth had been appropriated by the state and she was poor. By our standards very poor. But, like most of the Russian young that I met, she was philosophical about this turn of events. The future, she said, held more interest for her than the past. So she was studying. Studying for that future. She was of boundless assistance to me in that short time as I laboured to set up a carbon copy of the Saratov organisation that I had called into being. In Samara it was much easier and I was soon able to contemplate the next move. Mindful 'a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step' I had the feeling that, while I was, indeed, embarked upon such a journey I had now taken a lot of steps and that each new step was bringing me nearer to my own, personal, destination. That destination was Irene.

So now, the sooner I could complete my mission in Samara and return to Moscow, the sooner would I find myself on the home stretch - to Berlin, to Vienna, to London. Time, with

its own illogical caprice, had slowed down in order, it seemed, to torment me. But the time did come for me to leave Samara and I remember it well. That last evening as I walked back to my lodging, the church bells were ringing in my ears as the life departed from the huddled and famished form of a young man in the street. "Down there" in the heart of the city there were several streets along which I did not care to go because of such sights, and the smells, and the multiple coffin shops, each competetively displaying its goods. I was weary of it all, weary in my soul and profoundly disturbed by the magnitude of the obscenity. I felt tarnished and in need of cleansing from the spiritual residue of this city of smells, of corpses, of refuse heaps, of foul corners, of starving beggars, of ghostly children, of crawling misery and despair. I found my way back and at once sat down to write a letter. To Irene. No matter what was to be said, it was an act of purification that somehow put me back in touch with the creative principle. I began to feel some renewal at once:

> ".....not so long now, my darling. I leave for Moscow tomorrow and I am homeward bound....."

Unfortunately, fate had not quite done and I discovered the next morning that the carriage that was due to take me from Samara back to Moscow had been held up for some undeclared reason and it would be many days before it could be rearranged. So, rather than

wait in lonely uncertainty, I elected to take another boat up river on the Volga to Kazan - another famine-stricken city - in the hope that I could make some earlier connection to Moscow.

From my letter home (written on the boat):

> "Mother dear, It is getting quite late Saturday night and I am again sailing up the Volga. If you look at a good map you may find Simbirsk on the river, half way between Samara and Kazan. The boat is at present halted at Simbirsk..... I am inclined to be a little melancholy, with much delay and surrounded by misery. I know nobody here, nobody on the boat and as yet have discovered no-one who knows any French, German or English. I exchanged a few words in Russian with a young fellow who took me as belonging to the ARA and, to save impossible efforts at explanation, I said yes. As a matter of fact, the ARA in Kazan is indeed my immediate destination. So, as you enjoy the wonderful quiet and beauty of Evelix t o m o r r o w evening, I shall be endeavouring to get a Russian droshky-driver to take me to the ARA at an address I do not even know. And in the forenoon, when you are all sitting round Sunday morning ham and eggs and toast and tea, I shall have already made my tea in my little cabin and be thinking of you.....
>
> I am now on my way to see the student work in Kazan and hope to be able to take a train from that city to Moscow. I have been very bored these last few days because of delays and am in a hurry to reach Moscow..... "

Two days and two hundred and fifty miles further up the Volga brought me the view of a city whose towers were crowned by the Muslim crescent. We had reached Kazan.

revolution had started something seemingly deep and renewing in Mother Russia after the centuries of repression.(2) Now, on my way west, I felt that I was rejoining the human race, but the sights and awareness of the real famine were still dominant in my mind. I knew that I would be called upon to relive these scenes daily and to speak of famine, death, disease and human suffering - deep and wide - borne with incredible patience and unbelievable fortitude, with aphasia even; the image of the 'grim reaper' moving across the land not "like a wolf from the fold" all sudden-like, but coming slowly, quietly, with stealth in the springtime and into the summer..... this would have to be part of my presentation when speaking - as soon I must - to the audiences that awaited me on my return to London. And I had those photographs, scores of photographs, of actual 'cases' alive and dead - starved, emaciated, eked out in misery. The 'risus sardonicus' (a supposed characteristic of late tetanus) on the face of so many corpses was here also evident. The pictures were so repulsive to me that I could

(1) I did not then know it, but I was to meet Beulah many, many times in the distant future, in the New World.

(2) Clinging memories lingered with me of this devastated, but exciting, 'new' Russia for decades, until the emergence, after the 1939-45 war, of the pure terror that was Stalinism, which put an end to all hope for a really creative new Russia in my lifetime.

not bear to use them and, in the end, I had to destroy them. The pictures in my mind would, I knew, haunt me to the grave but I felt that I must burn the photographs. A symbolic gesture no doubt but, in the end, we all have need of symbols. I knew then I could and must work to raise funds for relief work, my own and others', but I would have to do it without the aid of these pictures from hell.

When I reached Moscow I learned that I had been asked to serve another year in Austria - indeed it would have been strange had I not - and it was a relief to have my programme endorsed again. Now it was early June and I hoped to be able to reach London on 20th or soon after. I began to feel that my own life was being returned to me and the last six weeks were already beginning to acquire the sense of a bestial interlude in a time that, in some strange way, was not mine.

From a letter home to Evelix:

3. 6. 22

"Dear Mother,

It is again Saturday afternoon and I am in Moscow. I have just reread the enclosed letter which I wrote to you while I was on the boat to Kazan. You will see from that letter what I was thinking. It is possible, and even likely, that this letter which I now write will go by the same train as myself to Riga. From there, however, it will travel more quickly than I to England. I shall go to Berlin, Vienna and Geneva. I hope to get to London by the 20th of the month.

I have been reading about the golf championship with great interest and I look forward to the next papers to see how it goes with Willie Hunter. I hope that he will meet with Roger Wethered in the final. I see that Scotland beat England all right in the

This city was different again from all the others I had so recently visited: Vienna, Budapest, Bucharest, Belgrade, Berlin, Riga or, even, Moscow. Here there lingered a kind of Siberian remoteness with shadowy images of Mongol Khans and ancient Tartary - Kazan is the capital of the Soviet Tartar Republic. Here there was more colour and more ordinary supplies in the shops and the bazaars than I had yet seen anywhere in Russia, even in these times of famine. But I was only too glad not to stay. The next day, in hot dusty early summer weather, a sweating Trans-Siberian train rolled into Kazan from Tashkent and the far reaches of Siberia and I was aboard when it pulled out, one hour later, to cross the Volga heading for Moscow. A quiet evening with a new moon in the sky switched me back instantly to 'the other world' - the world where there was life and hope. And, as if to endorse that, I heard a nightingale trilling away to my left on the high bank of the river. The incongruity of this event, in juxtaposition to my recent experiences simply took my breath away. Now I had a vivid sense of relief, moving westwards towards the Kremlin, towards ' European ' Europe and, finally, to London and Irene. And then the best, undisturbed sleep that I had had for a long time.

In Moscow I handed over the papers and reports for Harold Gibson who was to succeed me in the student work in the Volga region. He would meet some of the gentle professors whom I named to him and he would, I hoped, be able to secure the assistance of Wilhelm in Saratov and Tanya in Samara whose willingness to be involved I had already ensured. Here I also met Beulah Hurley and other members of the American

Friends Service Committee (two years earlier Beulah and I had both been members of the "Mission des Amis" in the devastated regions of France). At this time Beulah was having a brief vacation after recovering from a bout of typhus, which very nearly killed her, while working at Buzuluk, 200 miles east of Samara. (1)

Faring westwards, in June, having completed the task that had called me to Moscow and the cities of the Volga I could not but continue to turn over in my mind the impressions these events in revolutionary Russia had left behind. I had encountered no terror, on the contrary I was, day by day, impressed by the patience and the resignation of the acutely suffering Russian people. This land of such unbelievable contrasts beggared the imagination and the antennae of mystery, brooding rather than hovering, frisked one's mind from one Russian day to the next. The government was, indeed, a tyranny just as the old Tsarist regime had always been, but with a different agenda. A tyranny 'of the people, by the people and for the people' ? Perhaps. That government seemed to be doing its best to develop the country and bring it towards the twentieth century. It was, of course, openly anti-religious and the propagation of all religious 'propaganda' was prohibited, be it Christian, Mohammedan or other. I had not myself observed any form of overt religious persecution though I had met many who personally suffered from this policy. The churches, however, remained open and continued to be supported by huge numbers of people. There was a very strong Youth Movement (The Komsomol) with a huge membership which seemed at that time to be a very healthy development. The young members that I met and talked with all seemed to be filled with a powerful motivation and devotion to the 'new Russia' and ready to serve wherever and whenever required. They did not know at that time, no more than did I, how closely this was soon to be mirrored in the development of the Nazi Youth Movement in Germany. Against this backdrop I cherished the hope, nay, the expectation even, that the

international match. Good. I see also that my hero George Duncan broke the record at St. Andrews with a 68! Not only did he do that, but he chose 11th May last to do it. Clearly there is something very special about that date!(3). Thankyou for your letters and all the cuttings you sent.....

I have been in to see the Friends here and have been asked out to dinner with them tomorrow evening. I shall be very glad to go for I always feel so at home with them. Hewson, with whom I came in from Riga, is in Moscow just now and he asked me to come along. Stanley Parris from Vienna is here also and several new members are expected tomorrow.....

I received your letter on Thursday 1st June and it was only written on the 25th May. That was quick, was it not? That was your birthday and I did not forget it as you will know by this time. I am so glad to hear about Fload" (pronounced Flodd) "and the sales and the run to Wick, and all your other doings. All these things are of great interest to me for I feel so far away from it

(10) That date was, of course, Wendy's birthday three weeks before!
This would have been the British Amateur Championship. Willie Hunter was the holder from 1921. In the event neither Hunter nor Wethered reached the final. The Championship that year was won by my good friend and oftime golfing opponent Ernest Holderness.
George Duncan had long beenone of my golfing heroes. I loved his style and I loved his attitude to the game. He it was who taught me one of golf's most important lessons: "miss 'em quick!"

all. I hear from Hoffman (4) that the Federation committee and Dr. Mott wish me to continue for another year in Austria so that means that I shall return to Vienna after some time in Britain. I don't know how long.....

My love to all at home and to all the other branches of the family

Donald ".

and again:

Thursday, 8th June

"Dear Mother,

Now it is the 8th June and I am still in Moscow. Just now the man who gets visas and tickets for us came in to say that he hopes it is now allright and that I shall travel on Friday to Warsaw..... I have not much new news. Two days ago I went with Harold Gibson to the Tretykov Gallery. I have never before seen such a gallery..... the Russians are such wonderful artists.

Yesterday I visited the Church of the Redeemer, possibly the greatest church in Moscow. Here there are 450 churches, if this is the best of them it is, indeed, very fine! It has five domes, the one in the centre being 100 feet in diameter. The domes and many other parts of the building are invested in gold leaf and it all looks very celestial in the sunshine..... We spent an hour in that church and I was aware of the sense of peace there. Some of the mural paintings are by Verestchagin, one of the greatest of Russian painters.

I expect to travel tomorrow with two of the Friends who are taking the same route

and that will make the journey more tolerable. I am still trying to get my Austrian visa here so that I will not need to get it in Warsaw and I am sending a wire to Manry there telling him that I am coming although I cannot yet tell him when I expect to arrive. When one travels in Russia one writes only the time when one has left! I feel as if in a dream - things are not quite real until I get back to Vienna. I suppose I shall realise that I am really in things again when I get there.

The Open Championship will take place very soon after my return to England. I do not remember where it will be held this summer, but I have the feeling in my b o n e s that I, too, should like to play some golf. More than usual I have felt the desire t h i s summer. I do hope that I shall get some golf <u>this</u> time. I suppose I really have lots to say but I do not find it easy just now, while I am still living on the surface of things, until I get back into Life again. I shall write next time, perhaps, from Vienna perhaps from London. I am longing to see you all and longing to see Irene again. It is nearly 3 months since Irene and I were at Mitterbach together, and we have been separated by most of

(4) Conrad Hoffmann, an experienced and able YMCA secretary and graduate in agricultural science from the University of Wisconsin in the USA, was sent to Europe along with many others from America in 1921. At my suggestion he became Director of the ESR (because my work necessitated endless prolonged absences from Vienna such as this present period in Russia). The organisation needed someone at the nervecentre and Conrad was appointed. I became his Associate Director. Irene and I became very close friends with Conrad and Louise Hoffmann and we worked together very closely until our departure for New Zealand nearly four years later.

Europe for more than two and a half months. Ask yourself how you would like that. Father
would be calling for you very loudly after one month!

My love to you, Mother, and to Father and to all the family,

Donald ".

We left Moscow at 5pm on the Friday and arrived in Warsaw the following Sunday afternoon. We were all struck by the contrast that the city presented after the rags and the filth and the beggary of Moscow, let alone the horrors of the Volga cities. The previous September when I was there Warsaw had seemed a spectacle of neglect and poverty. But now I discovered that such judgements are all relative and Warsaw seemed a haven of civilization. The next day, Austrian visa in my pocket, I was on the train to Vienna, en route to London and - Irene. The next few days, as I travelled back to London (via Vienna for what is nowadays called a 'debriefing') I struggled to suppress the images and memories that I carried so unwillingly from Russia, to make more space for what I really wanted to think about. About Irene. About Wendy (I already knew that she had become Wendy, but why?). About Donald-and-Irene. In fact, what I wanted most of all was to start thinking about 'the family'. I had not had a family before - not in this way - what did it mean? where would it take us? Where did we want to go? Could a family go there? If so, how to make it happen? I did not, so to speak, sit there thinking these thoughts in any obsessive way, for my mind was also much occupied with other things, but I knew the questions were there, hovering in the recesses and that they would keep on returning. I also knew, in the depths of my being, that I could only begin to address them with Irene. Only the

Irene/Donald personality would be able to find the necessary answers. The 'bitter/sweet' paradox of life had never been so poignant for me as I travelled and travelled, seemingly without end, towards my destined goal.

The bleak days stretched ahead of me without peace. "To travel hopefully is better than to arrive" said the philosopher. True but not a universal truth, for I knew better than he that there are times when the knowledge of arrival is the more profound experience. It seemed to me that this knowledge is really what we all seek in our relationships, one with another or, indeed, in our search for the proper relationship with God. And if, in truth, God is love, then perhaps the two phenomena are inextricable. Whatever else, I knew in my soul that my return to active life-with-Irene had a sacramental, a blessed, ingredient which embodied my relationship with God and was the source of fuel for my life.

There is a dream-like quality about this next brief interlude in my Odyssean life. In London I met again with Irene, when I arrived at my sister Kate's house in Acton. I found her rather pale, ethereal looking but, nursing "dobschka" (Wendy), she was alive, vibrant and wonderful as ever. We set off together for Evelix and spent the next many weeks there. My parents were delighted; we met everybody - Wat the shepherd, ploughman, Skipper the cattleman and the families. We greeted again the river, my Highland river, swam in Pool Chraggan and swam again in the North Sea. We would walk from Evelix to Clashmore School and take the little road southwards skirting Carnegie's Skibo estate and its dark, exciting pinewoods down to 'the low road' which

ended at the ferry. The Meikle Ferry (5). And there, more often than not, we would have a crack with Old Roddy the ferryman in his 'cheesecutter' cap and listen to some of his tales of far away places long ago.

And I played some golf! It is difficult indeed to explain to others the profound satisfaction of this very singular pastime (singular not from choice but of necessity for, whatever other arrangements may be made, in the end the game is simply played out against the ultimate opponent - oneself - and in that fact lies the pain and the pleasure). To stand there in those magnificent surroundings and address a little white ball with a big, long club and, through the medium of only mind and muscle, tell it to fly two hundred and thirty yards and then turn a little to the left towards the end of its journey and sit down on the green, not too far away from the pin, to tell it what to do and then watch it do exactly that engenders a romantic form of spiritual satisfaction that only the golfer can understand. But it is so! The undertaking was very good for my wounded spirit.

I took myself to the hills and wondered if I should come back to live in the North with my family or should I, perhaps, return to some other parish in Scotland as a Presbyterian minister which, of course, I was well qualified to do. We had long discussions about all these matters, Irene and I and slowly we began to agree that our way of life was not to be along that path and that we might make a better contribution to the 'New Europe' elsewhere. My own way of life and the guiding principles for it were becoming clearer and clearer and my commitment to them stronger than ever. From Irene I always received unswerving support in all these matters of

the spirit and, children or no, she was always content to move forward into life wherever our destiny might take us. Of the two of us Irene was, if anything, the more adventurous and we never got in each others' way in these strategic decisions which so stretched the imagination. As for the outlook, the prospects for us, I knew that now, after I had already done so much, had been around so far, continental fashion, that ways would open up for us. I think neither of us ever really doubted the future.

From time to time the even tenor and steady pace of even this Northern idyll would be disturbed by some intelligence from abroad reminding us all of that wider world that was, at the same time, so far away and yet so very near. The papers told us that on June 24th the German foreign minister

(5) This small ferry (known to us all at the time as the 'Big Ferry' to distinguish it from the 'Little Ferry' to the North at Loch Fleet!) formed a very important link between the two counties - Sutherland to the north and Easter Ross to the south. 'Old Roddy' the ferryman who still operated the ferry, as he had done since the turn of the century, was so called to separate him in the local mind from his son, known,of course, as 'Young Roddy'. Throughout my youth Young Roddy had been one of my greatest heroes, for he had been a sailor and sailed all over the world!

Walter Rathenau was shot dead outside his Berlin home.(6) Six weeks later, as we were beginning our preparations for the return to Europe, we heard that Albert Einstein (also Jewish, of course) had been forced to flee his home land by continuing threats from these extremists.

Meanwhile, we enjoyed the quiet peace and the home atmosphere of Evelix, of the neighbours and the extended farming community, the "going on for ever" of the river and the eternal beauty of the county of Sutherland. We were not completely aware of it at the time, Irene and I, but this time of rest and reappraisal was in fact the great watershed of our early lives together. The times in life when we arrive at crossroads are not always perceived in clarity and great opportunities so often are lost to us, but we seized this one with joy and enthusiasm and, after the refreshment of home, of Evelix and the County and - not forgotten - the Royal Dornoch golf links, we returned to Vienna in the quiet fall of 1922.

(6) Rathenau was a jew and thought by some to be too 'left-wing' for his negotiations with the emerging Soviet state and his apparent sympathies with Lenin's communist government had made him the arch enemy of the extreme right-wing German Nationalists. This assassination was thought to be the work of that, still embryonic, National Socialist party and a few weeks later two such extremists were arrested for the murder.

CHAPTER XVII

Dornoch to Harwich to Hook of Holland and then Hamburg, Berlin, Prague and Vienna. Tedious journey. Wendy complained and we all suffered. A picture postcard home to Evelix survives, from a village named Stentsch, postmarked 1st Sept. 1922:

> This place is on the Polish / German frontier. It is 10 am Thursday and we have been here already for an hour. We hope soon to move on our way to Berlin. At the last station we had to wait for one and a half hours. That was the Polish 'revision' place for passports and luggage.
>
> Don.
>
> Some journey this, Nannie. Pockets all have to be turned out....
> We'll be two days in Berlin I expect - then Dresden and then Vienna.
>
> Much love to all, Irene."