



BAKU: OIL CITY OF THE CASPIAN

The recent outbreak of a revolt in Russia against the Bolshevik regime... Baku is a city of Asia, now surrounded by Bolshevik governments, will be once more thrown open to world commerce.

The city of Baku, built in the form of an amphitheater on the south side of the Apsheron peninsula... The city of Baku, built in the form of an amphitheater on the south side of the Apsheron peninsula, which juts far out into the Caspian sea, is the Tamopico of the Slav domain.

According to a census the year before the outbreak of the war, Baku was a city about the present size of Providence, R. L. Columbus, Ohio, or Louisville, Ky. It was the chief city of the Russian province of the same name, but in recent years the province has formed a government of its own under the name of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The upper part of the city, corresponding to the back rows of an amphitheater, is the picturesque Tatar quarter, with its many narrow lanes and oriental bazaars. A fifteenth-century palace of the khans is in a very dilapidated condition, and has been used for many years by the Russians as a military magazine.

Four fifths of all the oil produced in the Russian empire comes from the Baku fields. The high-water-mark of production was reached in 1902 when the output of the district was nearly ten million tons of crude petroleum. In 1905, however, there was a disastrous fire which considerably curtailed production for a time.

The town derives its name from the qualls (badkne) which are frequently very violent on this part of the Caspian coast.

A ROMANCE OF BANANAS AND COFFEE

When the American small boy eats his daily quota of bananas, and when his father and mother sip their breakfast, luncheon, or dinner coffee, they are making important contributions to the prosperity of fellow Americans of whom they know very little—the residents of the five Central American republics which have lately reached a preliminary decision for the formation of a sort of "United States of Central America."

Central America illustrates strikingly the effects of geographic factors on a region's development. All the five republics lie on the relatively narrow isthmus between the narrow ribbon of Panama on the south and Mexico on the north. The Spanish settlements made soon after the discovery of America were all on the Pacific side of the isthmus, for the most part on the plateau and mountain slopes and in the mountain valleys of that region, which temper an otherwise tropical climate.

At the time of the throwing off of the Spanish yoke in 1821, the Central American settlements were as effectually cut off from the United States as if they had been many thousands of miles away instead of being only across the Caribbean sea. With the

settlement of the Pacific coast of the United States, the building of the Panama railroad, and later the construction of a trans-Mexican railway, the Panama canal, and railways across Guatemala and Costa Rica, Central America has become easily accessible.

Shortly before the construction of the Panama railroad, coffee was introduced into Central America from the West Indies, and was found to grow to perfection in the lava soil on the slopes of the volcanic mountains along the Pacific coast of most of the region. Coffee soon became an export of prime importance and has brought much money into Central America.

The remainder of Central America's horticultural romance has as its motif, the banana. In order that the great American hunger for that slender golden fruit might be appeased, large fruit growing and distributing corporations from the United States acquired extensive tracts of land in the Atlantic plain, reclaimed it from the jungle, and planted great banana groves which produce millions of bunches of bananas yearly.

The by-products of this development have been as valuable to Central America as the money that has flowed directly to laborers and to the government. Important cities have sprung up along the Atlantic coast, railroads have been built, and what is probably most important of all, lines of fast, well-equipped steamers, carrying both passengers and freight have been established between the Atlantic ports and those of the United States. In effect the banana has shifted Central America thousands of miles closer to the outside world.

BATTLEGROUND AND PLAYGROUND

The Crimea was the scene of one of the latest anti-Bolshevik military efforts from outside Russia to win back a part of that old empire. This expedition, under General Wrangel met disaster as had similar forces launched against the soviets farther north, and the Crimea was overrun by the Bolsheviks.

The Crimean peninsula in which this encounter took place is a land which has aspects known to every school child. It is the land of the Cimmerians about whom Homer sang in the "Odyssey" and from whom the peninsula takes its name; the land of the Crimean war, the siege of Sevastopol, and the "Charge of the Light Brigade"; the land in which Florence Nightingale first caused efficient, ordered mercy to have a part in war.

The Crimea is known as "The Little Paradise" to the Tatars, last of the many races to overrun the peninsula before the land fell under the sway of the Muscovite. A traveler journeying from the North is likely to accept this appellation, if at all, with a strong mental reservation as he crosses the almost desert-like plains of northern Crimea; but once over the mountains that rim the southern shore he will approve the description with enthusiasm. There, nature has made a wonderful garden spot, the Riviera of Russia, a combination of sea, mountains and riotous verdure that really vie with its famed Italian counterpart in the days when Czarhood was in flower.

Though a part of what has come to be looked upon as "cold Russia," the southern shore of the Crimea brought to the old empire a touch of the tropics. On the mountain slopes and in the sheltered valleys grow grapes, figs, olives, and all the tender fruits; magnolias, bays, and myrtles; and a profusion of wild flowers and grasses. That the delights of its mild climate were discovered early is testified by the ruins of Greek, Byzantine, and Italian architecture which are to be found among the mosques of the later Tatars, the palaces of the Russian imperial family and nobility, and the magnificent modern hotels of the pleasure towns to which the prosperous classes of Russia flocked before the World War.

Yalta, in those carefree days, was Russia's Nice, Newport, and Miami rolled into one; its cafe and casino life was as hectic, gay, and expensive as that to be found in any of the world's pre-war playgrounds.

The Crimea is a peninsula that barely escaped being an island. It hangs from the mainland of South Russia down into the Black sea, like a gigantic watch bob shaped like a flounder. It is attached by the narrow ribbon of the Isthmus of Perekop, a strip of land only three-quarters of a mile wide and only a few feet above sea level. On one side is the Black sea and on the other the stagnant, shallow, malodorous waters of the Sivatch, or Putrid sea, a lagoon of the Sea of Azov. This is the only unbroken natural land connection between the mainland and the Crimea, but a few miles to the east a narrow part of the Putrid sea has been bridged by the railroad which enters the peninsula.

The greatest width of the Crimea north and south is 115 miles, and its greatest length from "head" to "tail" is 225 miles. It contains about 9,700 square miles, and is thus approximately the size of the state of Vermont or the island of Sicily. Before the World War its population was 2,000,000.

The Crimea was conquered by Catherine the Great of Russia in 1771, and remained a part of the Russian empire until that political entity's collapse in 1917. The bulk of the population remains Tatar, though there is an admixture of both Greek and Italian blood in the nominally Tatar people.

IN TURKEY REFORM SPRINGS ETERNAL

Turkey bids fair to "come back," in a limited sense at least, as a result of the proposed revision of the Sevres treaty that dismembered the Ottoman empire after the World war. It will be a changed Turkey, to be sure, but change is not new in the country that inherited Mohammed's religious empire. Paradoxically, Turkey, though it has a tradition of national inertia, also is a land of kaleidoscopic reform, and may be said to react to reforms more discriminately than any other country in or out of Christendom. The Turks have adopted some reforms bodily and some partially, and have rejected others flatly even when the prestige of the Caliph and Allah's ministers was behind them.

Turkey began its existence on a foundation of reform, the empire inheriting the comprehensive reshaping of the religious and social world instituted by Mohammed. It "went dry" just 620 years before the United States, for its "eighteenth amendment" was not an amendment at all, but a part, so to speak, of the organic act when the empire came into existence in 1259.

Even in the matter of polygamy, looked at askance by the western world, Mohammed and the government which took up his mantle were reformers. The legal maximum number of wives was placed at four.

Even the jokes of coffee and tobacco prohibition that have gone the rounds of the American vaudeville stage came near being a reality in Turkey. Mohammedan scholars fulminated against the steaming cup; and one sultan went so far as to prohibit the use of tobacco, fearing that it was taking too firm a hold on his people. But the populace refused to have the prophet's covenant changed and the ban was raised.

Though the reported passing of the fez is looked upon as a reform which to western eyes would remove something as distinctively Turkish as the star and crescent, the introduction of the gaudy skull cap was itself a reform effected less than a hundred years ago; and staunch old Moslems of that time wagged their heads in warning as the reckless reformers cast aside their dignified turbans for the new bauble. To the Turkish Tories the fez traveled in company sufficiently disreputable to damn it utterly. It was introduced forcibly into the army by the Sultan Mahmud II in the early part of the nineteenth century along with tight European trousers and frock coats.

The fez and turban types of head coverings have a definite reason for existence in Turkey, and it is to be doubted that they will be discarded entirely, especially for the brimmed hats and visored caps of Europeans. Mohammedan rules and customs call for covered heads at prayer; and they also require that at one stage of prayer the votary shall touch his nose and forehead to the ground, a feat that is impossible if he wears a hat with a protruding brim.

PACIFIC ISLAND GARDEN SPOT

With the shifting of ownership that has taken place among the Islands of the Pacific and the growing importance of that great body of water in international affairs, the holdings of the various nations in the Pacific are taking on new value. One of the most important of the French Pacific possessions is Tahiti, or the Society Islands, with steamship connection to San Francisco and New Zealand. They are described in the following communication to the National Geographic society from H. W. Smith:

"Like the Samoans, the Society Islands are of volcanic origin, rising from the low bed of the ocean, which has depths near the islands of 1,500 to 12,000 feet, while the highest peak, in the center of the island of Tahiti, reaches an altitude of 7,300 feet!

"Near Papeete the beautiful Fatoua valley may be visited in an afternoon. For a good part of the way a carriage road leads up the valley, offering changing vistas.

"Why, indeed, should the Tahitian toll? There are great leaves of the wild taro growing by the roadside; the young leaves are delicious boiled, and the curious stranger will find many other new delicacies of the table—the alligator pear, the baked papaya, the Mantis crab, the raw fish, as good as the best oyster.

"In Tahiti, as well as in most of the South Sea Islands, great numbers of coconuts are grown. The meat, after being dried into copra, is shipped in large quantities to Europe. We were much interested in the different methods of gathering the nuts in various islands. In Tahiti the natives climb the trees with the help of a strip of green, fibrous bark torn off the stem of a hibiscus tree. After knotting the two ends together, the climber steps his feet half through the circle, and standing with his legs apart, so as to stretch the thong tight, ascends the tree in a series of leaps, with a foot on each side of the trunk.

GETTING READY FOR A NEW WAR

French General Declares Germany is Preparing for Another Conflict.

ANNOUNCE TRAINING CAMPS

Posts Designated by War Department for Instruction This Summer—Three Grades Are Planned.

Paris.—Marshal Fayolle, who commanded the French group of armies at the battle of the Somme, and later commanded French divisions on the Italian front, declares that Germany is earnestly preparing for a new war and that unless the allies took firm action at once, never would carry out the Versailles treaty.

"The Germans are pursuing military preparations in an underhand manner," the French warrior declared, "and the allies must act with determination now, for later Germany will be so strong that we will be unable to impose our will upon her.

ANNOUNCE TRAINING CAMPS.

Posts Will Be Designated as "Red," "White" and "Blue."

Washington, D. C.—Tentative plans for conducting citizens' military training camps next summer are announced by the War department instructions issued to the nine corps area commanders. Preparations have been ordered for training approximately 1,200 candidates in each corps area, allocations being announced for either one or two camps in each. The number of candidates to be recruited for each area was predicated on sufficient funds being made available in the next army appropriation bill.

Of the three grades of camps the department has provided, denominated "red," "white" and "blue," and varying as to the amount of technical military training to be given, the first grade, it was said, will be emphasized in the program for the coming summer.

Many Miners Unemployed.

Indianapolis, Ind.—Approximately 100,000 members of the United Mine Workers of America have not done a day's work since January 1, it was stated at the final session of the executive board of the union meeting at headquarters here. The remainder of the miners are working on an average of about three days a week it was said. These figures don't include those unemployed because of strikes in West Virginia and Washington.

Measures Taken to Restore Order.

Berlin.—Order has been restored in Hamburg, and the communists have been ejected from the shipyards which they had occupied. President Ebert, in agreement with the government of Prussia, has issued an edict establishing measures to restore public order in the regions disturbed by the communist uprising.

President to See Newspaper Men.

Washington—President Harding has announced he would hold conferences with newspaper correspondents Tuesday and Friday of each week, following cabinet meetings. The announcement marks the formal restoration of the prewar policy at the White House.

Farm Labor Said to be Plentiful.

Washington.—Farm labor is relatively plentiful this year according to reports to the Department of Agriculture. This situation, it was declared, contrasts with a year ago when the labor supply was far below the demand.

Cow Donations Cause Trouble.

Scotland, S. D.—A pitched battle between 300 men, alleged to be members of American Legion posts of Hutchinson and Bonne Homme counties, and an equal number of farmers, was narrowly averted at Kaylor, near here, when the alleged legionnaires found that their guns numbered but thirty, while their opponents were armed to the man. The trouble started when farmer residents of the two counties started collecting cows to be donated and shipped to farmers in Germany.

Will Protect Gold Seizure.

Berlin.—The Reichsbank will sternly oppose any attempt by the entente to seize its gold reserve to apply on the reparations demands. Any such move, the bank's directorate is quoted as saying, would not only be inimical to holders of German certificates, but a violation of the treaty and in contradiction to the practice observed by Germany on French territory and the French army on German soil, when deposits in state banks were treated as private property.

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

The administration budget system bill passed the committee of the whole in the lower house. It puts Phil Bross, secretary of finance and revenue, at the head of all departments and institutions, empowers him to examine expenditures and check these expenditures when he finds their continuation will create a deficiency and gives him authority to force expenditures for the purposes set forth for them in appropriations voted by the legislature.

Establishment of a bureau of criminal identification in the state public welfare department, to keep thumb prints and Bertillon measurements of persons arrested or convicted of crime throughout the state, to assist local officials in recovering stolen property, and to furnish information when requested by peace officers, has been sanctioned by the representative assembly.

Steps toward acquiring the first state park in Nebraska were taken in the senate when that body advanced to third reading a bill to cancel the agricultural lease on a section of school land south of Chadron on the Valley Creek road. Senator James W. Good of Dawes explained that the tract was ideal for park purposes. A trout stream runs through the land.

The American Legion bill providing a fund of \$2,000,000 out of the state treasury to be invested in Liberty bonds and other securities the income from which will be used in furnishing aid to disabled veterans of the world war and their dependents, went through the house on third reading by a vote of 90 to 3.

Because the state reformatory bill has been amended to locate the new institution "near and in connection with" the state penitentiary, enough house members withheld their support from it on final passage to knock out the emergency clause. The bill passed, however, without the clause.

The movie censorship bill passed the house by a vote of 60 to 35 after some of the opponents had failed to make good their threat or promise that the measure never will become a law. The bill was held back from third reading for the staging in the house of one last bitter struggle.

The lower house has adopted a resolution empowering the speaker to appoint a committee to meet a similar committee from the senate to establish the date of adjournment. This is looked upon by the older members of the legislature to indicate adjournment will come April 15.

Indications that the assessed valuation of all property in the state would be lowered for 1921 are reported by those who attended the recent meeting of the state board of assessors. It is believed that the 1921 valuations will average 15 per cent lower than the 1920 assessment.

The house has refused to reapportion the state for congressmen, supreme judges, regents or district court judges. If the constitution had not made it mandatory it probably would also have refused to reapportion the state for senators and representatives.

The state railway commission has authorized the cancellation of the rule requiring that all boxes, drums and pallets containing goods presented to railroads should bear the name and address of the shipper and description of the contents.

The bill authorizing the erection of a \$300,000 state reformatory in connection with the state penitentiary passed the house by a vote of 53 to 43 after the emergency clause had been stricken.

House Roll No. 613, which would provide increases in salary for the state adjutant general and his assistants, was defeated in the lower house by a vote of 47 to 34.

The senate, at its opening session Monday afternoon, refused to talk adjournment and washed its hands of even a sifting committee to speed up operations.

The co-operative banking law has the honor of being the first bill out of the sifting committee of the house, which shows that the farmers on the committee have not been idle.

Allegations of excessively low rentals for school lands bobbed up again in the lower house when a bill calling for the sale of isolated tracts of school land of less than 40 acres and town lots held as school land by the state was under consideration in committee of the whole.

Without a protest the house committee of the whole recommended for passage the co-operative bank bill which has been the chief source of interest to the farmer members of the legislature.

Appointment of J. E. Hart, secretary of the state department of trade and commerce, as receiver for the defunct Castetter bank of Blair, inaugurated a policy that the department will follow in future bank failures.

Representative Nebraska farmers have gone on record as favoring the committee of 17's grain marketing plan as outlined by speakers. The meeting was attended by more than 500 farmers and only four negative votes were cast.

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