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ACROSS BURNING FRONTIERS

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Across Burning Frontiers

In Collaboration with

PAULINE FELIX GEFFEN

New York

ROY, PUBLISHERS

1943

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New York

**PRINTED AND BOUND IN THE U. S. A. BY
KINGSPORT PRESS, INC., KINGSPORT, TENN.**

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ACROSS BURNING FRONTIERS

PRE - WAR TIMES

From the windows of my workroom — M.S. "Pilsudski" — "Indian's" birth — Gdynia — The late Mr. J. N. Willys — The "Gdynia tempo" — My shipping business — "Go-to-Hel" — My Gdynia home and its inhabitants — Cousin Ada — War clouds — The Ambassadors of Poland — Non-aggression pact with Germany — Friend Goering and sincere Himmler — "Heil Poland" — My Berlin talks — "Drang nach Osten" — Arms for Poland — St. Christopher — Slovakia — Budapest — First encounter with German agents — Transcarpathian Ruthenia — Lithuania — Szaltupie's 400 years — Fortifications on the frontier — White nights in Petsamo — Bathing in Arctic Ocean — Indian has antlers — First escape in East Prussia — Last day in my Gdynia home — Hunting on the German frontier — Delayed mobilization — Budapest again — "Eljen Lengyel Orszag" — First bombs on Gdynia

FROM the windows of my workroom overlooking the port of Gdynia I had a view of the sea and the main entrance to the harbour. Beneath my windows was the quay, where the ships were loaded and unloaded. Every third week one of the big transatlantic liners of the Gdynia-America Line anchored here. These modern

16,000-ton ships, M.S. "Pilsudski" and M.S. "Batory," built in 1935, were the pride of Polish shipping. When one of them arrived from New York, it was like a holiday in our port. Gdynia never failed to welcome them with a festive yet solemn reception. Crowds gathered to watch the arrival and docking of the ship; the Naval orchestra played on the quay; the passengers, mostly Polish-Americans, waved their Polish and American flags.

On December 10th, 1938, I was particularly intent upon watching the arrival of M.S. "Pilsudski." Two harbour tug-boats towed the liner and brought it close to the quay. The ship was quickly moored and the gang planks were lowered. Thus it was during the quiet pre-war times, and neither I nor anyone else would have supposed that this same beautiful ship, a year later, would be at the bottom of the sea, as one of the first victims of the war.

On this day my special reason for being interested in the arrival of the liner, was my newly bought Chrysler car, which it was bringing from New York. For many years I had been loyal to Chrysler. Previously I had also tried cars of other make, but in the end I came back to Chrysler and remained true to it.

I went down to the ship. A big door swung open at the ship's side, and my chauffeur, Paul, rolled the car out to the quay. I drove it home and my children cheered as we came into the driveway. My two elder daughters were particularly glad to see it, as I had promised them that when the new car arrived, they would have the old one for their own use. One of my

friends presented me with a mascot, an Indian head of shining metal which I fastened to the radiator of the car. The emblem at once gave the car individuality. My youngest daughter, Mary, taking her cue from the mascot, christened it "Indian," and this pet-name has clung to it. We introduced the Indian to its new home-garage, where my old Chrysler and my wife's Packard jealously eyed the newcomer. It was my thirteenth automobile—and that was one reason more why I celebrated its arrival, for thirteen is my lucky number.

I liked my thirteenth car, but at the time I could not know how important a role it was to play in my life. Sometimes a most innocuous happening may mark the inception of the most portentous events. The arrival of my new car was just such an innocuous happening that preceded the momentous occurrence—the war that plunged me into the most extraordinary adventures and, finally, brought disaster and disruption into every phase of my life. This entire period of my life—the most dangerous but most interesting, the most exciting but also the most tragic—was curiously connected with the car. The Indian accompanied me everywhere, traveled with me through all Europe, from Rome to Petsamo and from Budapest to London, visiting more than 20 countries; shared with me the dangers of the war, was repeatedly bombed and machine-gunned, escaped with me from East Prussia, Gdynia, Warsaw, from the Bolsheviki, from Lithuania, and afterwards from Holland, Nice, France and England; nine times it crossed the seas, and, finally, went with me to Amer-

ica, its birthplace. In war-torn Europe it was my war-mascot, and now it is for me a part of Poland, and a reminder of my happy pre-war life.

The 12 happy years before the war I spent in Gdynia. To me the name Gdynia represents all my life, and to every Pole it is the symbol of freedom and independence. The story of the creation of the port of Gdynia is, in truth, a romance.

In the year 1922 on the site of present-day Gdynia there existed nothing more than an impoverished fishing village with some 350 inhabitants. In the year 1939 there stood in its place a great city of 130,000 inhabitants. The port itself was not only the most modern port in the world, but also one of the "big five" in Europe; with its annual goods-turnover of nearly 12 million tons it ranked immediately after such ports as London, Rotterdam, Hamburg and Antwerp. Compared to the ports of the United States, Gdynia had a greater volume of traffic than any port here, except New York, Philadelphia, Boston, New Orleans and Los Angeles.

And all this was created within only 17 years! More than 1,200 million cubic feet of sand and turf were dredged out along the shore at the far end of the quiet bay of Gdynia, to create three huge port basins. But the waste sand was not simply thrown away into the depths of the sea; it was hauled beyond the new construction and used as fill for four additional piers that jutted out into the sea. Along the basins and the piers more than 11 miles of solid concrete quays were built, equipped with railway tracks, cranes and warehouses.

This equipment was modern and performed splendid work, beating all records of speed and efficiency. Captains of ships calling at Gdynia were of the unanimous opinion that no other port in the whole world was so well built, convenient and modern as Gdynia. There was seldom an empty place at Gdynia quays, the warehouses, representing more than 2½ million square feet of storage space, were always filled to overflowing, the 150 miles of railway tracks of the port were continually crowded with railway cars, loaded and empty. The big investment of the Polish nation which cost about \$200,000,000, worked at full capacity.

Fate offered me the greatest opportunity I could have hoped for—the chance to cooperate in the creation of the port of Gdynia. I was present at its birth, I took part in all the phases of this gigantic work, and in the years 1930 to 1932, before I engaged in my own shipping business, I was Commercial Director of the port.

It happened at that time that the late Mr. John N. Willys, then the United States Ambassador to Poland, came to visit Gdynia. I brought him to the port in a motor-boat, so that I could show him all the details of the new facilities. I told him:

“We are very proud of our work. As you see, sometimes here in Poland we also build at an American tempo.”

The Ambassador replied:

“Oh, no! It is rather the other way 'round. When we build something exceptionally quickly in America, we say that it was built at a Gdynia tempo.”

This was, of course, a compliment on the part of the polite diplomat. But nevertheless the "Gdynia tempo" was a new and vitalizing force. The blitz-creation of the port and of the city gave momentum to everybody who worked in Gdynia. We had no time to lose. There was activity in the port for 24 hours daily. Not only our labourers but also the clerks in our offices worked in three daily shifts. The restaurants, bars, the railway, the post and customs offices also were open throughout the night. Our taxi-drivers, barbers, shop-keepers knew the exact meaning of the word "speed." Even our government employees were different from their colleagues in other parts of Poland; they were proud to have a part in the development of our port and of their ability to cut through bureaucratic red-tape. In all Poland the fact of having participated in the work of Gdynia was the best recommendation anyone could present.

In my firm also, we developed a good tempo. Everyday I started my work punctually at 8 A.M. The three telephones on my desk were busy constantly. The nature of my business—international shipping—required that I be in contact with all the world. From my headquarters I was continually in communication with our branch offices and agents in nearly every European country as well as in the United States. Ships in service for my firm called at several dozen ports, and every year nearly 2,000,000 tons of goods passed through my hands. For me each day brought something new and interesting. We continued to develop our firm and made good profits, as we cooperated in establishing new

shipping lines, built new docks, and encouraged the growth of new trades and industries in Gdynia.

We of Gdynia traveled much. We were more nearly at the hub of the big routes than was Warsaw, and we often said in jest that the real capital of Poland was Gdynia. And I did not know of anyone in Gdynia who would willingly change his residence. We had all the conveniences of a big city: good modern houses, clubs, restaurants, shops, sport grounds. At the same time we had also the delights of country-life close at hand. In the big garden surrounding my villa on the sea-shore, I could easily forget that I was in the heart of the city. To reach the wilderness of my hunting terrain meant a 10-minute drive in the car.

And we had many places where we could go for excursions, as the environs of Gdynia are exceptionally beautiful. The land is hilly, and there are large forests and hundreds of lakes. The most attractive of Gdynia's environs were to be found, of course, along the coast-line with its exceptionally wide sandy beaches. They were peppered with modern sea-side resorts, but there were also many parts of the shore that retained their primitive beauty. It was here the unique Hel-peninsula jutted out for 25 miles, a strip of land that, in some places, was only 400 feet wide. It was covered with pines, and a winding narrow but very picturesque road ran the length of the peninsula. From many points on this road one could see the two seas: the open sea, violent and turbulent, bringing huge waves and cold winds, and the bay, quiet and peaceful as a lake, although it was also large and wide. Mid-

way along the road was a sea-side resort—Jurata, the rendezvous of all Polish society in the summer season. On week-ends there was a migration of all Gdynia to the peninsula, a general “go-to-Hel.”

My house in Gdynia was the kind of home to which it was a pleasure to return. Huge old trees flourished in the garden. They were something of a curiosity in a town where everything was new and young. My roses were reputed to be the loveliest in the neighbourhood. The house was on a hillside that rose from the sea some 150 feet. The trees hung over the escarpment and the growth continued downward virtually to the level of the beach itself. From the house and from the garden I could overlook nearly the entire gulf, a part of the port and, in the distance, the long line of the Hel-peninsula. To complete the interior of my house took many years not only of my own effort, but also of many preceding generations. There was antique furniture, a collection of paintings, a library of more than 10,000 books.

Thus I lived with my wife and our three daughters. The eldest, Wanda, was then, at the end of the year 1938, 17 years old; Barbara was 15; and the youngest, Mary—just 10.

Our next-door neighbour in Gdynia was Ada, my cousin. She spent her childhood in my parents' house, until she married. But even then we were not separated, as she lived in Gdynia with her two small children and with her husband. Ada and I spent much time together, and she was my companion on innumerable voyages, long and short. Soon after Indian ar-

rived at Gdynia, I took him to Warsaw for his "maiden voyage." Ada accompanied me.

*

From the middle of the year 1939 we, in Poland, became certain that war was approaching. We were well acquainted with both of our dangerous neighbours, Germany and Russia. The Polish Ambassadors in Paris, London and Washington persistently warned the friendly nations as to the significance of events in Germany, presenting to them the even more alarming reports of the Polish secret service. But Paris, London and Washington took no heed of these warnings. They said that the Polish Ambassadors were tiresome and that they indulged in terrifying tales about the dangers of Germany's growing militarism. As early as 1938, Pilsudski, the Polish leader, suggested that the allied countries enter a preventive war against Germany, but this proposal was not accepted. Finally Poland, seeing that her allies did not realize the real danger of the German threat, tried to make direct contact with the Germans. As a result, a non-aggression pact was signed between Poland and Germany. Criticism followed its signature. Even in Poland many people were not aware of the portent of events, and Foreign Minister Beck was attacked for what was supposed to be a pro-German policy.

I wanted to understand the exact meaning of the new pact and turned for an explanation to one of the Polish high officials who, as I knew, had participated in its negotiation.

"What do you want?" was his answer. "If your house is invaded by bandits, you call for the police and if the police do not come—what will you do? Especially if in addition to receiving no outside assistance you have only your fists as weapons against the revolvers of the bandits? If you are unwilling simply to surrender and be robbed, you will try to negotiate with the bandits, in the hope that in this way you will be able to delay the robbery, and that perhaps the police will finally come to your rescue. We did not intend to surrender—and so you have the non-aggression pact with Germany."

In time the world began to understand that Poland had not turned away from her natural friends in western Europe and in America. The talks in Paris and in London continued but not so openly as before.

In the spring of 1938, when Germany threatened Czechoslovakia, Poland again suggested to the allied governments an active policy against German aggression, namely—if Germany should invade Czechoslovakia—England, France and Poland would enter the war against Germany. England and France refused, and advised Czechoslovakia to make a compromise with Germany.

Only one year later these two countries began to understand the situation—and thereupon Poland immediately joined them in signing an agreement of mutual help in case one of the three countries should be attacked. At the identical moment open conflict began between Poland and Germany.

In January, 1939, the German Foreign minister von

Ribbentrop arrived at Warsaw and still spoke about friendship between the two countries. Goering, as a private guest of mine and my friends at a hunting party in Poland, assured us in my presence of his sympathy for Poland and explained to us how in the future Germans and Poles together would colonize Russia. At the same time, however, at another hunting party in Poland, another Nazi dignitary, Himmler, the famous head of Gestapo, not so skillful but perhaps more sincere, expressed himself differently. Having imbibed several glasses of Polish vodka, he began to draw such a beautiful picture of the future conquest of all the world by Germany that two Polish generals present felt obliged to leave the room.

But while the Nazi leaders still tried to delude the Poles with friendly words, the German people had probably received new orders from these same leaders, as they changed face completely. As late as the autumn of 1938, when a Polish car appeared in Germany, it was greeted by the street boys with a "Heil Poland." But by January, 1939, the same boys threw stones at a Polish car. It was intended, no doubt, as a demonstration of the "people's indignation." Obviously it was done by order. The Germans respect authority and do as they are told.

Early in the spring of 1939 I visited Berlin. We often went there for business reasons as well as for pleasure. But it would have been hard to find a Pole who would say that he liked Berlin. In Paris or Budapest, in Scandinavia or Switzerland—we felt ourselves at home; in Italy, in Spain or in the Orient we admired

the old monuments and the beauty of nature; even in London, where we found many things that we could not understand so easily—we felt comfortable and sure of ourselves. But when we were in Germany, and especially in Berlin—we always had the feeling that we were in the enemy's camp and we were always glad to leave the grim capital of the "select people." Personally I had this feeling even during the "honey" years of the so-called Polish-German friendship. The smiles with which the Germans at that time greeted the Poles, seemed to be false. By the spring of 1939 there were no more smiles. As soon as a German learned I was a Pole, his face became rancorous, his lips narrowed and he would not look me in the eyes.

This time it happened I lunched with a business friend, a German Jew who, by special dispensation, had been allowed to remain in Berlin, because he was a well known specialist in a particular branch of commerce. Surely he was not a friend of Hitler! And I dined with two of my hunting companions, retired officers in the German army, members of the aristocracy, faithful to the old régime and to the Kaiser. They too, were anti-Nazi. Nevertheless, in both conversations, as soon as we discussed the international political problems, my companions opposed me, and their arguments were parrot-like recitations from the Goebbels' vocabulary.

"We know," they said, "that Hitler and his gang are the worst enemies not only of Poland but also of Germany and that they can easily bring disaster to our country. But why does Poland insist upon holding

this 'corridor' of Gdynia, which cuts eastern Germany in two? Wouldn't it be better to give up this position to avoid a quarrel? Germany does not want more and would like to live in peace with the whole world."

German propaganda, often naïve and ineffective abroad, finds roots in Germany itself. Even the extreme oppositionists will agree with Hitler on every point, when his action is in line with the imperialistic ambitions of Germany. I was unable to explain to my friends that the "Gdynia corridor" was a purely Polish province, the single province that Poland possessed on the sea-coast, that a country of 35 million people cannot exist without free access to the sea, that there is no reason for giving up a part of Polish territory to Germany, because she managed to Germanize the neighbouring Polish territory, finally—that it is not merely the "corridor" that Hitler wanted, but domination of the entire world. My friends refused to believe all this, because unconsciously they had absorbed quite different ideas from Dr. Goebbels.

After the signature of the mutual help pacts with England and France, Poland arranged her internal affairs so that she could concentrate on preparations for the coming war, which seemed to be imminent. She produced and purchased arms and munitions to the limits of her modest financial capacity, reducing to the minimum all other public expenditures, even for schools and social welfare. The people contributed on a large scale to this effort.

At the same time there was an increasing enthusiasm for defending the country against the possible aggres-

sor. The Poles had reached the point where even a struggle was preferable to the German threat that had menaced their country for more than one thousand years, an eternal threat that made productive work difficult and discouraged the collaboration of foreign capital in the development of the country's rich natural resources. We were all aware that this time, too, in the background of the coming German aggression was not the problem of French Alsace and Lorraine, and not even of overseas colonies, but the impulse to continue the old "*Drang nach Osten*," in an attempt to rob and colonize the neighbouring rich Polish territories. A new war with Germany for Polish soil was inevitable sooner or later.

Gdynia was in the centre of all these developments, and therefore we were in a key position to observe how the war danger continued to grow and advance. We were also close to that bubbling cauldron, the odd "Free City" of Danzig, the bastard of the previous war and the product of the ingenuity and kind-heartedness of the makers of the Treaty of Versailles.

We ourselves were soon enmeshed in the preparations for the war in our own field—transportation.

It was known that if war with Germany broke out, communication between Poland and western Europe would be extremely difficult. Practically we would be cut off from western Europe, and all goods coming from there would have to be shipped by a long circuitous route. For the purpose of preparing transports in case of war a special new organization was created in Warsaw, and I was given the task of build-

ing up the transport apparatus in the Scandinavian and Balkan countries. This work assumed even greater importance and urgency when, in the spring 1939, Poland signed big contracts with England and France for their immediate delivery of arms and munitions.

Our task was not easy. We had no illusions. We knew that, in case of war with Germany, Russia would not help us, and the small countries adjacent to us would be under such pressure from Germany that they would be forced to obstruct the transit of war materials into Poland. Rumania, Poland's ally, might be an exception. Except for transports through Rumania, we did not prepare to move any bulky freight, but concentrated rather on the smaller parcel traffic such as spare parts, rare and valuable raw materials, special apparatus, medicine—for this kind of goods could be camouflaged more easily. All of our preparatory work was, of course, done in secret.

When late spring came and afterwards the summer, my Indian set forth on visits to the countries through which the war transports should be directed. Here the Indian made his first appearance in his proper role, and from that time on he remained in "war service" for nearly 18 months.

My first "war voyage" was to Hungary, in June, 1939. I had gone frequently to Hungary, for this beautiful country appealed to me, and I liked the Hungarians. I was also the Hungarian honorary Consul in Gdynia. This time on the Polish-Hungarian frontier

and in Budapest I was to organize secret delivery places for that part of traffic which would take the southern route. My two elder daughters, Wanda and Barbara, had just finished their school-year. I decided to take them with me partly because in this way my trip would have the appearance of a *partie-de-plaisir* rather than that of official business.

I drove to their school at Rabka in the Carpathians. There, in the mountains, is a small wooden chapel consecrated to St. Christopher, the patron of car-drivers and cars. It is like a toy nestling in a bouquet of dark fir-trees at the top of a mountain, where the visitor can view a mighty panorama. It is the Mecca of Polish automobilists, and we, too, came here to honour our patron before launching my new car on its first long voyage and before undertaking my new and interesting work. We motored afterwards through Zakopane and the Tatra mountains whose giant snow-covered peaks glistened that day in the fullness of the sunlight. The Tatra spruce that have no equal in the whole world marked our way, which went relentlessly uphill. My daughters had left their books behind them, their summer vacation had really begun. Their fresh, childlike exultation infected me. I could not bear to think about hard times to come. All three of us were happy on this joyful journey through beautiful country.

We arrived at the frontier of Slovakia. The smiling faces of the Slovakian customs officers, the exchange of cordialities with the representatives of a friendly Slavonic people—and then, unexpectedly, confusion: I did not have a Slovakian visé! For my daughters I

had obtained visés in Warsaw, but I had not even thought of my own passport. I had an excellent secretary who took care of every detail for me. Every year she filled my passport with all possible visés, but this time she forgot about newly created Slovakia! And now I was in trouble. But the good mood which the pleasant morning had induced was still with us. I remembered a joke that I had recently heard. Somebody is stopped by a guard and asked to present his ticket. "I don't need a ticket," he answers. "Why?" "Because I am a homo-sapiens." This strange word had a magic effect on the simple man, the guard: he allowed the traveler to pass. I now resorted to the same trick, with the same result. I told the customs officer: "I do not need a visé, I am a Consul." The good fellow, perhaps yet not sufficiently experienced in his new job, saluted me and let me go through. I hope that by this ruse I did no harm to the young Slovakian Republic.

The next day we reached Budapest. It was my children's first visit to Hungary. They were the guests of the Hungarian boy-scouts, our friends, while I attended to official business. Before leaving Budapest, I showed my children its greatest wonder—the view of the city at night from Janos hill. The Indian brought us there at a late hour. We looked at the immense sea of dazzling lights lying far below us. No sound came up to these heights, and on a summer night the flowers smelled very sweet.

In Budapest I had my first adventure with the German secret service. In my car, parked on the street, I

found a sheet of paper on which was written in German: "All this is hopeless; better read this book." The note was attached to Hitler's "Mein Kampf." The German secret service worked skillfully in all of Central Europe, but there were Polish agents, too. They helped me to find a suitable address, where I hastened to deliver my return gift. It was an illustrated album of the Polish Army. The attached note said: "I thank you for Mein Kampf. I will read it through carefully." I read it through indeed. As I did so I was convinced that the politicians in western Europe and in America should do the same. They probably have, but why do they not believe the open threats of Hitler?

We returned home stopping at wonderful Lillafüred, the Hungarian Banff, and crossing again by the way of the Carpathian mountains. This time we passed through Transcarpathian Ruthenia, probably one of the least civilized corners of Europe, hidden and isolated from the entire world.

Shortly afterwards I left Poland again, this time going northward, to Lithuania. I was accompanied by my whole family. Lithuania is my real homeland. In the environs of Kaunas, Lithuania's capital, is the landed estate of Szaltupie, which has belonged to our family for more than 400 years. Following the previous war Lithuania, an independent state, introduced radical agrarian reforms, and my uncle, the proprietor of Szaltupie, was left only 150 acres. But he is a thrifty man and he continued to administer this small piece of land successfully. In 1940, when Lithuania became a Soviet republic, my uncle was deprived of the

rest of his estate. I do not know what has happened to him, any more than I know anything regarding the fate of the greater part of the intelligent Polish population, who remained in Poland under the Bolshevik rule. But at that time, in July, 1939, Szaltupie still retained the good old traditions of a Polish country estate: hospitality, thriftiness, cordiality.

The Szaltupie homestead is more than 300 years old. It is almost hidden by the branches of huge trees. A big linden-tree stands in front of the house. Nearly 80 years ago, after the Polish insurrection of 1863, the estate was confiscated by the Russians. My grandfather, to whom it belonged, was interned in Siberia for about 15 years. Upon his release he bought back his estate and planted the linden-tree on the day he re-entered his home.

In Szaltupie I spent my childhood, and I know here every place. In the big garden there is a path over-shadowed by jasmine which has grown so prodigiously that the branches meet over the roadway forming a shadowy arch. In another part of the garden is an old chestnut-tree. Its trunk is irregular and forms a flexion. When I was a small boy, I liked to sit in this bend of the trunk and read a book. I called the tree "the arm-chair." In the old garden there are also ponds overgrown with reeds, in the wagon-shed are old-fashioned coaches, the barn still is pervaded by the same mixed smell of corn, hay and humidity, as when, forty years ago, we children went there secretly to jump down from the high stacks. And in the forest of Szaltupie there are small romantic glades hidden in

the thickets, to which I alone could find the way. Here I put into words my first love.

I showed my daughters all of these old places and favourite haunts, as this was their first visit to the old homestead. Relations between Poland and Lithuania had previously been such as to make a visit of this kind impossible. For nearly 20 years a situation without precedent had existed between these two countries. It was not war and it was not peace. The frontiers were closed. From Poland Lithuania claimed Wilno, the former Lithuanian capital. But since the XVIth century Wilno and its surrounding district were entirely polonized, and the population feels today Polish and not Lithuanian. It was impossible, however, to convince the Lithuanian nationalists that the past historical memories are not sufficient cause for annexing a country. They clung stubbornly to their demands and refused to establish normal relations with Poland. Not until the year 1938 an end was put to this abnormal situation.

The Lithuanians have many excellent qualities; they are honest, loyal, thrifty, they like their country and its soil. But their nationalism still is very young. Their good qualities came to the fore a little later, when the northern provinces of Poland were invaded by the Bolsheviks and thousands of Poles escaped to Lithuania. The refugees were received cordially and cared for by the Lithuanians. But when a few months later the Soviets offered them Polish Wilno, Lithuanian nationalism again found occasion to express itself. The Lithuanian rule in Wilno was of short duration. To-

day, like the Polish exiles, Lithuania's political leaders have been sent to Siberia and Turkestan by the Bolsheviks. Poles and Lithuanians have met again in misfortune.

My third and last pre-war journey by car was the longest and most interesting one. On this trip Indian attained the most northerly point in his career. We crossed all of Finland, passed the Arctic Circle and reached Petsamo on the Arctic Ocean.

Already half of August had passed. I had just returned from a trip to London and Paris, in connection with the transporting of arms. Not only in Poland but in all of Europe each day brought new signs of the approaching war. The future enemies did not exchange notes or make demands or issue ultimatums. Their leaders merely made speeches. Hitler tried to frighten his neighbours with threats; the Polish leaders declared that Poland would defend herself if attacked; Chamberlain and Daladier once more gave assurances that they would help Poland. America kept silent. Who knows what shape events would have taken in the late summer months of 1939, if America at that time had uttered words of strength and significance?

In Poland only the very naïve could believe that war might be averted. Both Germany and Poland were preparing openly for war. On both sides of the frontier fortifications were being built hurriedly, guns were mounted, tank-traps, barbed-wire enclosures made ready. In East Prussia large German armies were manoeuvring on the Polish frontier. In the Free City of Danzig German military units made their appear-

ance. At first they were disguised as Danzig police, but later on began to wear their uniforms openly. My German friends in Danzig refused to attend a function at my home, and afterwards explained to me privately that the Nazis warned them against even social contacts with Poles. In Gdynia we began secretly to remove the harbour stocks. The drums of war beat louder still.

Precisely at that time I was ordered to go to Finland, to investigate the possibilities of sending the transports through the Finnish port of Petsamo on the Arctic Ocean. In this way we might avoid the transit through Norway and Sweden, where, as we supposed, the main difficulties would arise. My task was not simple, as Petsamo has no railway connection with the interior, the nearest railway station being some 400 miles distant. But the Finns had built a modern highway to Petsamo, which might make it possible to transport the goods in trucks. All this I was now not only to investigate, but to organize as expeditiously as possible.

My chauffeur Paul groomed the Indian carefully before we set out upon this long and difficult journey. For the second time Indian was put to sea, being shipped from Gdynia to Helsinki in a Polish freighter. I traveled by plane to Helsinki with three companions, two of my shipping friends and a woman, an actress from Brussels. Thus we camouflaged our journey.

Petsamo is some 1,000 miles from Helsinki. But 1,000 miles on Finnish roads correspond to 3,000 miles on good European or American highways. It was a difficult task for the Finns to cut their roads through

rocky terrain. The surface of their roads is good, but they are narrow and winding and rise and fall like waves. Driving a car on such roads is at times an acrobatic feat, which often makes the passengers seasick. Indeed, I was obliged to stop several times while my companions made excursions into the woods.

July and August are the loveliest months in the far north, and, in addition, we had splendid weather. During our sojourn at Petsamo the sun set behind the hills only for one-and-a-half hours, but even during this "night" there was no darkness at all. It was also very warm. The Arctic Ocean belied its harsh name, for every day we took a bath in its polar waters. We also spent long hours on a rock on the sea-shore. Exceptionally beautiful was the far northern landscape seen during a white night! Everything was perfectly quiet. I could not envision that even in this remote and forgotten corner of Europe fighting would begin in a few months and forces of evil would be set in motion.

My work in Petsamo yielded definite results. The way for our transports stood open. Even in the winter months our traffic would move freely as the port of Petsamo never freezes over. And the highway would be kept clear to traffic throughout the winter with the help of snow-ploughs.

I was fascinated by the port of Petsamo. The exceptionally favourable natural conditions would facilitate the creation of a big modern port. It was as if everything had been prepared here by the Great Builder: a safe entrance to the port, protection against the winds and ice, sufficient depth in the harbour. Man

needed to add only a few minor details to make it perfect. When I returned to Helsinki, I reported all this to the Finnish officials, who would be responsible for the transport problems in Finland. I also urged that a railway to Petsamo must be built. I had the impression that the Finnish officials underestimated the importance of this. It put me in mind of the similar situation in Poland years ago, when the builders of the port of Gdynia were obliged for a long time to struggle against the passivity of public opinion, before they could convince the people that an independent state must have free access to the big sea routes, and not be controlled by other countries. As for the Finnish people they began to understand it only when they were attacked by the Bolsheviks, and their neighbours, the Swedes and Norwegians, closed their ports and so cut Finland off from the world. This way of acting was called "neutrality." After the Bolshevik war the Finns started to build a railroad to Petsamo.

My faithful Indian brought us quickly back to Helsinki. My friends remained in Petsamo, leaving the lady as my only companion. In Lapland I bought caribou-antlers and fastened them to the front of the Indian's radiator. The antlered automobile astonished the passersby and frightened little children, I am sorry to say. In Helsinki I shipped the Indian to Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, while we made the journey by plane.

It did not take long to cross the two small countries, Estonia and Latvia. We spent the night in the Latvian capital, Riga, a medieval Hanseatic city, and the next

morning made our start at a very early hour. By telephone I had arranged a gathering of friends at my Gdynia home for this particular evening, and we had some 400 miles to go. On the way we would be obliged to pass through eight frontier barriers. There was yet another obstacle that I had not reckoned with—the coming war. It was August 29th; three days later the first shots would be heard on the German frontier, and today our way led us through East Prussia, the northern fortress of Germany.

In the peaceful countries through which we traveled it was really difficult to realize that the war was approaching. All of them continued their quiet life and work, certain that even if war should flare up in Europe, they would be far from its dangers. We found the same idyllic mood in Lithuania. Only when we reached the frontier between Lithuania and East Prussia did we realize that during the ten days of our absence from Poland, the war came close to our gates. Had I known that on the previous day the German authorities had arrested the Polish Consul General in Königsberg, East Prussia, without even giving a reason—I would probably have taken another route and not risked the German dynamite. But now it was too late.

We acted as if we did not see the distrustful glances of the German guards, dressed in their field uniforms, and the detachment of soldiers in the municipal building. Our papers were in order, the car flew the Hungarian flag that I had the right to use, being the honorary Hungarian Consul in Gdynia, the car's radio

played gay music, the exotic antlers looked enigmatic, and both of us were laughing. The guards could not understand anything and let us pass. As we went westward, approaching the Polish border, soldiers fully armed became more and more numerous on the highways. Presently the military cars outnumbered the cars of civilians. Posts had been stationed at every bridge, railway station, post office and other public building. On the Nogat, the frontier river between East Prussia and the Free City of Danzig, and even on the Vistula, which is far inland within "sovereign" Danzig, the German engineering troops had built pontoon bridges.

We left East Prussia without further difficulties. Probably the guards at the second frontier decided that everything must be in order if the other guards had allowed us to pass only a few hours before. But difficulties arose where we did not expect to encounter them—in Danzig. I knew that we would not receive a friendly welcome here, but I did not know that in the Free City of Danzig the Germans had provoked the Poles on every occasion. They arrested the Captain of the harbour, a Polish commander, as well as many other Poles whether officials or private citizens. On the day we arrived, the Senate of Danzig confiscated the grain stored in elevators belonging to Polish companies, and where formerly I passed several times each day without even stopping: on the frontier between Poland and the Free City of Danzig—the Danzig police now challenged the passing Poles and arrested many of them. We were not aware of all this

change—and perhaps it helped us: we passed both Danzig frontiers with the same unconcern as when we crossed through East Prussia. The German thinks slowly. Before he realized that here he had another occasion to quibble with a Pole—we had passed the barrier. Grimly and severely the German guards looked after us.

Only later did I realize that on all these adventures I had been in real danger. Some of my friends who during these same days were arrested in Danzig, disappeared forever. I probably had met with special luck in this my first war escape. Being one of the builders of the port of Gdynia, I was, from the Danzig point of view, Danzig's "enemy No. 1."

My Gdynia house lies only five miles from the Danzig frontier. Ten minutes after having passed the last German post, we were in my home, and a quarter of an hour later my guests began to arrive. In spite of the ominous events that happened, we had a very pleasant party that evening.

Now it was evident that war was ready to strike any day. I was summoned by the Polish Government to go to Warsaw. I decided to leave Gdynia immediately, and as it was more than probable that I would not be able to come back again before war began, I gave all necessary orders and made all necessary arrangements in my business and in my house.

I had a busy day on August 30th in Gdynia. In my firm I appointed my substitute, I made all the dispositions that might be required in case of evacuation and paid my personnel three months wages in advance.

The majority of my younger employees had been mobilized the day before my arrival from Finland. The chauffeur Paul and my gardener were also called to arms. I engaged a new chauffeur, a Dane named Knud, and in place of the mobilized gardener, I established a veteran of the previous war. I did not want to remove any of my private belongings, although my daughters insisted that I do so. It seemed to me that it might provoke a panic. Of course, I will never again see the things I left in my home.

Often in my life, when something of major importance hung in the balance or when events marched so quickly that it was difficult to encompass them—I would cut sharply into the action, withdraw to a quiet corner and in the silence try to think over the whole situation, taking myself out of its bewildering immediacy and surveying it as an outsider. And yet never before had I needed so much to be alone with my thoughts as on August 30th, 1939, the eve of the war and of a new period in my life.

In the court-yard the new chauffeur was preparing the two cars for the coming trip and loading the luggage, the house was full of a medley of visitors, the telephone rang incessantly—but I escaped from all this and found a secluded place in the garden. From a bench, where I found my refuge, I glimpsed the sea through the branches of the trees. Every detail of this panorama was so familiar to me! For more than ten

years I had looked from this point on "my" port and on "my" sea that I loved so much.

What was I to expect of the future? What changes would the next months bring, or the next years?

I knew that it would be impossible to defend Gdynia. Irrespective of what course the war might take, this part of Poland would be occupied by the Germans, and the occupation would continue until the end of the war. We all knew that the German armies were much stronger than our own. And, above all, we realized that strategically Poland's position was exceptionally bad. Although war had not yet begun, the Polish armies already were surrounded by the Germans: the defenders had on their right flank the East Prussian fortress, and on the left flank the German armies in Slovakia. We were even prepared for the complete conquest of Poland, and we realized fully the implications of a German occupation. Yet we believed in final victory on the western front, and to obtain this victory we were ready to risk everything.

But this day as I surveyed the sea, I was not thinking of political or military matters. My thoughts were much more egotistic and concerned just myself. The general situation was only a foil for my personal reflections.

During my early youth Poland was still under the oppression of three occupants. I was born and bred in the traditions of heroic fighting for an oppressed fatherland: my great-grandfather fought in the Polish insurrection of the year 1831, my grandfather was one

of the leaders in the insurrection of the year 1863, my father was born in exile in Siberia and all his life long took part in every Polish revolutionary action. A boy of 18–20 years lives in a world of fantasy, dreams about heroic adventures. My early youth was full of such dreams, and the secret clubs and circles of Polish students gave me so many opportunities to come closer to my dreams. I was ready to give my life for my country—and I was not an exception. All the youth of Poland at that time shared the same dreams and the same life. We all had little interest in sports and amusements. Even our professional work took second place. Our minds were full of revolutionary thoughts and plans. It was an exciting life!

Then came the World War which brought the first prospects of a better future for Poland. Our dreams about freedom seemed to be nearer to realization. Our hopes grew more and more, and simultaneously the mind of the young boy grew. It was the second phase of my youth, when I began to look for the opportunity of doing something constructive for my country rather than to give my life in a heroic demonstration.

Finally, out of the midst of war arose an independent Poland. Now we, young men, would really be able to do something! I was 26. It seemed to all of us that there were no limits to work, initiative, action. Again I found the most congenial connections for one of my age. I leaped into a whirlpool of work, I was everywhere where something new was being built. I was member of a committee which drafted the first Polish customs tariff, I took part in plebiscite work, I ex-

ported various types of goods from Poland to America, organized a Polish fair in Turkey, founded and edited an economics weekly, was active in sport and tourism, wrote books, and, finally, plunged with all my head and heart in the great work connected with the creation of the port of Gdynia.

Actually we were obliged to build everything anew in Poland. We worked day and night, rebuilt all the ruins of war, created new structures: factories, roads, schools, shipping. I was so happy that I could collaborate in this building work, in the creation of my own independent country, which, as a small boy, I had envisioned in my dreams.

Again, I was not an exception. In Poland the whole generation to which I belonged, made more than a job of their work, beating all records for effort and endurance.

Twenty years were spent at this work. There was still so much left to do that during all this time I had never been on leave and had never craved repose. But now I was no longer young, and felt the need of a change in the tempo of my life. Now I often looked behind me, I took stock of what I have done and built during the past 20 years—and new dreams came. I dreamed of going a little slower and making my life a little easier. I could count the tangible achievements through my work: although everything my family possessed was destroyed by the World War and the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, and we came back to Poland in the year 1918 without any resources, during the past 20 years in Poland I had created a new for-

tune and obtained standing and financial security. And all I had was the product of my own work! I was also happy with my family. I felt I had earned the right to begin to consume the fruits of my life.

And exactly at this moment a new war was at hand. For my country it would mean many difficult and unhappy years, and for me it would bring the necessity of a sweeping reorganization of my life, perhaps on a new and unfamiliar basis and certainly under different conditions. I did not know where I would be obliged to live and what I would be obliged to do. And it was also certain that through war I would lose much of what I had cherished. I wondered when I would sit again as now on the bench in my garden in Gdynia and look on this sea. I must leave Gdynia, my fascinating work, the many places so dear to me, this house and everything in it—all a part of myself!

It was a moment of conscious weakness, this quarter of an hour that I spent on the sea-shore. Later on events followed one another so quickly that I had no time to dream of the past, and sometimes even to think about the future.

Not until evening were we ready to leave Gdynia by car. My two elder daughters accompanied me. My wife and Mary were already in Warsaw awaiting us. In addition to myself and my girls, Indian also carried the companion of my Finland-journey, the actress from Brussels. Knud drove the Packard loaded with luggage. My cousin Ada with her husband and chil-

dren were also leaving Gdynia. They followed us in their car.

We motored through the land that was so much a part of me. We had about 250 miles to cover before reaching Warsaw and we thought it advisable to stop somewhere for the night. An idea came to me. Some 100 miles from Gdynia, on the Vistula, right on the German frontier, I had a hunting terrain. Hunting was my lifelong sport and my greatest passion. I realized that I would probably not hunt again for a long time. One last time I wanted to see the dawn breaking in a remote forest nook and a wild animal living in freedom.

I had good hunting the next morning and brought down two good deer. Dawn in the morning of my last pre-war hunt filled me with awe. On the river there was a light mist. The air was sharp but one could feel that the day would be hot. The early autumn grass was abundant this year. Morning was heavy with refreshing dew which seemed to distil an intoxicating summer fragrance out of the autumn grass. Loveliness surrounded me and made me think about the beauty of the world and life and not about the horrors of the coming war.

But when, after shooting, I straightened myself and looked at the magnificent landscape: the wooden embankment elevated high above the river, the river itself still swaddled in the morning mist, and in the background East Prussia—reality returned to sear the joy of this beautiful morning. Would I soon find myself in the position of the trailed deer?

A few hours later we were in Warsaw. On the way

we encountered the first military patrols. A young soldier examined our documents. "Would you like to fight?" I asked him. "Oh, yes," he answered. "For 200 years there has not been a generation in Poland that has not fought for the country. Now it is our turn to defend the fatherland. I am glad that I'll have the chance to do it." He was right. For hundreds of years no generation in Poland could work quietly and build quietly. Our turn to fight had come. This is what every Pole thought and said today. I saw it in the eyes and on the faces of every man and every soldier I met on my way to Warsaw. And there were soldiers everywhere. It was difficult to cross the bridge in Warsaw, because a big military unit was marching in a westerly direction. General mobilization was in full swing. It should have been proclaimed two days earlier, but under the pressure of both the British and French Ambassadors it was delayed. The effect of this two-day delay was fatal: instead of 30 Polish divisions to meet the aggressor on September 1st, only 16 divisions were mobilized and brought to the battlefield. Seven additional divisions joined later, most of them too late. And the Poles had to fight 85 German divisions!

In Warsaw I learned that there was no more hope for a peaceful solution of the dispute. Polish and allied diplomacy had exhausted all their means. For several days Hitler had refused to receive the Polish Ambassador, who was to present our proposals for peace. It was certain that Germany would not give up this opportunity to start the war.

My job connected with the transport of war materials now became especially important and urgent. Alarming news came from Rumania: German agents were buying or renting all the docks and warehouses in the Rumanian ports for the purpose of blocking our efforts in that direction. Difficulties were also reported from Hungary. I received an order to go there immediately, and on that afternoon I left Warsaw by plane for Budapest. My family remained in Warsaw.

In the evening of the same busy day, I dined in a Budapest restaurant with some of my Polish and Hungarian friends. At another table was a group of Germans. Later in the evening these gentlemen stood up, lifted their glasses and shouted: "Heil Hitler!" We paid no attention to this demonstration. But between us and the Germans there was a table of young Hungarian students, boys and girls. They knew that we were Poles and probably supposed that the Germans wanted to irritate us. Suddenly, the young Hungarians rose to their feet and began to intone: "Eljen Lengyel-Orszag, Eljen Lengyel-Orszag," which means: "Long live Poland." All the people in the restaurant joined them and intoned these words. They did not stop until the Germans left the hall. It was a significant manifestation of the sympathy Hungarians had always felt for the Poles. But it showed also that they did not like the Germans. I doubt that either of these sentiments have changed since that time.

Early next morning the Polish Envoy in Budapest telephoned me that war had begun. The German planes had dropped their first bombs on my Gdynia.

WAR IN POLAND

War! War! War! — In the Budapest-Bucharest express — Inexperienced Nazi agent — Docks in Rumanian ports — Back in enthusiastic Poland — the student-pilot — Nazi planes over Warsaw — Evacuation of Warsaw — One against ten — Paul's murdered family — Our escape from Warsaw — Bombed and machine-gunned — Child's blood in the car — Wounded Indian — Wilno — Ostrowlany — Preparing for the second round of the match — Circular voyage: Poland-Riga-Stockholm-Amsterdam-London — End of the Polish campaign — War materials that never reached Poland — On the way back to Lithuania — The good Mrs. Kollontay — Indian and chauffeur Knud — The fattest woman in Lithuania — A secret visit to the Bolsheviks — Frontier river and sleeping guards — The Soviet army — Warning — Bad news about Ada — Second night travel through the "green frontier" — Shots on the frontier — Lost children — In Lithuanian prison — "Your fathers escaped from Siberia . . ." — The new "visé science" — Gasoline from a plane — Packard, the war prisoner — The Baltic Germans — In a Soviet plane — For the third time: Riga-Stockholm-Amsterdam — The Paris refuge

FOR several years we in Poland expected that war with Germany would come. In the last months we knew this war was imminent. In the final weeks we were certain it would come any day. But when it came, I was much more startled than I would have expected. I said to myself: "Poland is really at war," and despite the certainty, I tried not to believe it.

A few hours after I had received the news that hostilities had begun, I took the express train from Budapest to Bucharest, where many urgent things needed to be done. The train was overcrowded. Tension could be seen on every face. My country was at war, and I myself was taking part in it, handling the war material transports for Poland. I must be very careful, for Hungary and the Balkan countries were full of assorted German agents. Only too soon I had tangible proof of the truth of this statement.

My neighbour in the compartment was a pretty young lady from Vienna. We had a pleasant conversation and we went to the dining car together. She told me she had left Vienna forever because she could not tolerate the new Nazi order in the old Austrian capital. She was violently anti-Nazi, but I thought her too outspoken in her sentiments, and at the same time she wanted to know who I was, where I was going and why. I was therefore doubly on my guard, and when, a little later, she left the compartment, she said for a short time, she forgot to take her handbag. I decided that all was fair in war and opened the bag. There I found a document bearing the photograph of my lady, but giving a different name from the one she had given me.

The document had been issued by the Gestapo in Berlin. The next morning, when we arrived at Bucharest, I could not refrain from indulging in harmless malice. I said good-bye to the lady addressing her by the name I had seen on the document. The inexperienced Gestapo-agent, leaving me without a word, was terrified. Of course, I informed the proper authorities about my discovery.

In the Polish Embassy in Bucharest new orders awaited me. I was to look after only the most urgent affairs so that I might return to Warsaw as soon as possible. I was glad to receive such an order, because at this extremely crucial time I preferred to be in my own country. I made my preparations immediately, and being uncertain as to railway communication between Bucharest and Warsaw, I telephoned my chauffeur, Knud, to bring the Chrysler to Czerniowce, a small town in Rumania, not far from the Polish frontier. At the same time my colleagues and I arranged for the transport of arms and munitions through Rumania. After a long telephone talk with London, we obtained the promise of the British that the first ships to leave with war materials would head immediately for Rumanian ports. This gave rise to the problem of the disposal of these important cargoes, for now the alarming news that I had heard in Warsaw two days before was confirmed. The Germans had indeed purchased or hired everything they could lay hands on in the Rumanian ports, including sheds, docks, cranes, storage-yards. It was necessary for us to act quickly. That afternoon I signed contracts which guaranteed

us the necessary loading and storing equipment in Constanza and in several other Rumanian ports. I was now free to leave Bucharest, and took the train that same evening.

My premonition had been correct. The international express took me only as far as Czerniowce. The rest of the trip to Warsaw I made by car, grateful that once again my dependable Indian was ready to carry me.

Only three days before I had motored to the same destination, coming from the north, but there was no shooting then on the frontier. Today it was different. Somewhere in the west and to the north my brothers were giving their lives for Poland. My country again was fighting for her existence as she had done so many times during the thousand years of her history. I pushed the accelerator to hurry me forward at full speed, for I wanted to be in Warsaw, to do something, be active at such an important moment in history. I felt possessed of inexhaustible energy.

With caution I observed everything along the way, scanning every face, and all I saw warmed my heart. The morale of the people was amazing. They realized that something inevitable was happening, that they must make a collective effort and sacrifice for the benefit of future generations. This common cause brought all Poles close one to another. I did not see a dull or frightened face. Everyone was glad to help, and even the passport examinations, which were many, had nothing in common with the nervousness and lack of politeness of the inspections one year later in France. The

severe expression of the soldier who examined the documents brightened into a smile as soon as he saw that the man in the car was not a German parachutist, but a Pole like himself, anxious about the fate of his fatherland.

Full of enthusiasm and confidence I motored rapidly. The traffic on the highways in southern Poland was not heavy; the battlefront was far removed from there. In Lwow, where we arrived late in the evening, I experienced my first war black-out. Someone in a group of officers was telling how that morning the German planes had bombarded the Lwow airport, which harboured no military planes, only the small sport planes of the local student airclub. One student-pilot could not bear to see the bombardiers of his airdrome go unpunished. He went up in his small craft, and, having no weapons with which to fight the foe, purposely collided with a big bomber. Both perished.

At 3 A.M. on September 4th, I was back in Warsaw. My trip was uneventful. Only once was I obliged to ditch the Indian when a large armoured unit passed by. They sped like a fire-brigade, having received news that in the south, from Slovakia, a German Panzer-division had broken through Poland's Carpathian frontier.

On September 4th Warsaw's streets still maintained their pre-war aspect. Traffic had increased somewhat, there were more uniforms, and in the air one felt the same stout determination and the same brotherhood that I had sensed on my way from Rumania.

German bombers paid us daily visits. Up to now

they had bombed only the airdromes and some factories in the vicinity of Warsaw. But the day following my arrival the first bombs were dropped on the centre of the city. From then on the bombardment of the city itself increased steadily, and when, one week later, Warsaw was surrounded and the regular siege of the city began—the German bombardment changed into a systematic destruction of the Polish capital. Much later I saw the final results of this disaster. In September I saw only the first stage of the bombardment, for 3 days after my arrival from Rumania, on September 7th, I left Warsaw again. By that time communication between Poland and western Europe had been virtually disrupted. It was impossible in Warsaw to get exact information about the shipments that should be on their way from England and France to Rumanian ports. London was the distributing centre of war materials for the allies, and only there could we negotiate for arms and munitions. I was ordered to get to London as quickly as possible and speed the transports from there.

But before leaving Poland again I made arrangements for my family. They were still in Warsaw, cut off from our home in Gdynia. My journey to London led through Wilno, Riga and Stockholm. I decided to take my family with me and leave them where, for the time being, they would be safest—in the northern district of Wilno.

I still had a few days in Warsaw in which to complete certain details in connection with my London voyage. The war in the meantime began to be felt in

the Polish capital. Bombardment from the air grew more violent. It came closer to us. Mary triumphantly brought a fragment of melted aluminium from a Nazi plane that had been shot down and had fallen in flames a few hundreds feet from the house in which we lived. I had my first narrow escape, when a high explosive bomb struck a house I was passing by. I did not react with any sharply defined emotion to the first casualties that I witnessed; they did not change my inspired and enthusiastic mood. It was as if we were all taking part in a big motion picture or were members of a hunting party. As yet we did not realize fully the dread gravity of the war.

The Germans did not bombard Warsaw during the night, but always in full daylight. They could do it easily, because the anti-aircraft artillery in Poland was more than inadequate, and the Polish planes did not enter the struggle at all during the first days. This strange fact was explained by the desire of the Polish General Staff to demonstrate that the aggressor in this war was Germany, and not Poland. Of course, that was a wasteful gesture and a mistake. By the time this order was changed, nearly all our airports had been demolished by German bombers, and some of our planes had been destroyed while still on the ground. When the war started, we had 377 planes of the first line. They were all of Polish make and proved to be good. Although they were not numerous—they represented a big effort on the part of Poland. France at the same time had some 600 planes, and England a lit-

tle over 1,000. Germany sent 3,500 planes against Poland. Of this number she lost more than 1,000 during the Polish campaign, and many others were damaged.

Beginning September 4th, wounded soldiers arrived in Warsaw, bringing the first authentic reports from the front. They all said that the army was fighting bravely but that the German war material and even the German man-power were overwhelmingly greater and stronger. It was confirmed again that Germany had concentrated all her military might against Poland, leaving not more than 15 divisions in the interior of the country, in occupied Czechoslovakia and on all frontiers, including the so-called "western front." Taking into consideration the greatly superior firing-power of a German division as compared to that of a Polish division, the military experts have estimated that during the campaign the Germans were 10 times stronger than the Poles.

What the wounded soldiers told us about the war failed to terrify us; for us these tales were echoes of a distant and, as we supposed, a chivalrous combat. But about the same time the first civil war-refugees from the territories occupied by the enemy began to filter into Warsaw, and they brought disquieting news. Now, for the first time perhaps, we felt the dread of war, horrified by the first news of the German terror. We began to understand the policy in force in occupied Polish territory. Along the German frontier, where the population included a German minority,

the occupying army terrified the Poles, forcing them to flee in fear, and thus preparing the way for future German colonization.

My chauffeur, Paul, serving in a detachment of the Gdynia garrison, now arrived in Warsaw. When, on the second day of the war, his detachment, leaving Gdynia, passed through his native village, he went to see his parents, but found only his mother. His father and two brothers had been killed by the Germans the day before. The village is one mile from the territory of the "Free City of Danzig." The preceding night a German military unit came unexpectedly from this territory. They summoned all the inhabitants of the small village, and then separated the Poles from the Germans. From the Polish group all the men were shot in sight of their wives, children and mothers.

With indignation Warsaw listened to such information, but so many stories of this kind were being told that probably some of them were not quite true. But I am certain that Paul's was authentic. The boy, whom I had known for many years, wept as he unfolded his tragic experience of a few days before.

After September 6th from every part of Poland military units, most of whom had been in battles, began to drift into the capital. In spite of this, in spite of the increasing bombardment of the city and even of the removal of the government, the population of Warsaw continued to be full of confidence. Both the retreat of the army and the evacuation of the government were easily excused as the decision of the High Command to stage the big battle on the borders of the

Vistula, necessarily would bring Warsaw into the sphere of war operations.

But on the same day, September 6th, a part of the civilian population began to leave the capital. Events had followed one another very quickly. When I left Warsaw in the afternoon of September 7th, I did not suspect that the next day a German armoured division would cut the highway on which we motored, and that two days later Warsaw would be completely surrounded.

In my Indian I carried all my family, and Knud, driving my wife's Packard, took care of our luggage. It was not easy to motor on the overcrowded highway leading from Warsaw to the east. There were long lines of private automobiles, interspersed with trucks, coaches and buses transferring mobilized soldiers to the more quiet eastern provinces where they would be equipped and organized. We could also see on the highway horse-drawn vehicles, bicycles and hundreds of pedestrians. There was some confusion, but not nervousness or panic. The spirit of the refugees was still good.

We progressed very slowly. Only when we were some 20 miles out of the town, could we move at a slightly quickened pace.

Suddenly ahead of me something inexplicable began to happen. Cars and carts stopped. Still I could not understand what was the matter. But when I saw people leaping out of their vehicles and running to the fields, I realized there must be some danger ahead. I stopped also—and only then I saw three planes over-

head approaching the road. They were Nazi bombers. Hurriedly we left our car. But it did not add very much to our safety as around us were only open fields that afforded no refuge from the bombs. We went to the side of the road and there came to a standstill. Throngs of people stood similarly transfixed. The planes were already over our heads, flying not higher than 100 feet. They could do what they wanted; there was on the highway not one armed soldier, not one rifle. They passed over us and twice came again. Each time each plane dropped one bomb. Some of the bombs did not explode, and only few of them hit their targets. But it was sufficient. Six people were killed and seventeen wounded. Among them were 10 children. Thus, for the first time, I witnessed German war methods.

All my party escaped safely. While the bombardment continued we stood in complete silence awaiting the end. The same silent waiting for the inevitable was manifested by all the people around us. I could not understand why this strange and tragic silence continued when the bombs began to fall, and even when the people themselves began to fall. Only the ones who stood near those that were hit ran to them and took care of them—but still in silence. Strangely silent were also the wounded; I did not hear even one of them crying. I will never forget this fantastically gruesome picture.

Not far from us a bomb had wounded a child riding with her mother in a horse-drawn cart. I took the child in our car and raced to the nearest hospital. For a long time my Indian bore indelible bloodstains.

So it happened that for the first time in this war I was directly under fire. It came so unexpectedly and passed by so quickly that during the event itself I had no time to note my impressions. The only one I retained was of the silent resignation of the bombed people. Reflections came later. I was troubled by the fact that the Nazis were really using the terrific weapon of cruelty. I feared that neither my country nor our allies would wish to use the same weapon against Germany. I was unfortunately right.

During all the rest of my journey I carried in the car my hunting rifle, primed for shooting. I thought I might be able to down a German plane if it flew as low as the three planes that bombed us for the first time. I knew I would not miss the plane, which presented a much bigger target than a wild duck.

I was wrong. I had not even time to make one shot when, the next morning, we were again attacked by a Nazi plane. This time the encounter took place under different conditions. We were far from Warsaw on an outlying road. We were alone on the road; even the Packard remained behind. As we passed through a forest I saw a single plane. It turned sharply in our direction. After the experience of the past afternoon, I did not linger, but drove across the flat ditch of the road and quickly plunged into the forest. The Indian's finish suffered, but at least we were well hidden in the thick underbrush. Then we all jumped out of the car and scattered among the trees. I seized my rifle, but before I could do anything more, the plane thundered directly over my head. I heard the crack of a

machine-gun, the whistle of bullets, a clinck—and then again came the silence and I heard only the distant drone of the retiring plane. It did not come back again. Anxiously I began to call together my family. This time, too, they were all safe. But the Indian was wounded! A bullet from the Nazi plane shattered the front window on the right, passed through the back of the driver's seat and remained lodged in the left rear door. The bullet would have gone through my chest, or perhaps even through my heart if I had remained in the car. Luck had been with me!

Late in the evening we reached Wilno. Only now were we fully aware of our nervous reaction to all we had undergone in Warsaw and especially on our escape from Warsaw. The children, as might be expected of children, rather enjoyed the adventures. But my wife, who has a heart ailment, was ill when we arrived at Wilno. As for myself, I was more absorbed in general problems of the war than in my personal experiences. That we all were safe was enough.

From the war front we received contradictory news, but I was inclined rather to believe the good. Everywhere I observed such spontaneous inner power that it seemed inevitable that its force would overcome and destroy all obstacles. We were also sure that German pressure would weaken when our western armies reached the interior of the country and the line of the front would be straightened and shortened. In the discussions arose only the question where the new front would be established, on Vistula or more to the east, on the river Bug. We discounted our big losses and sacri-

fices, but we did not imagine that Poland would be left to her fate.

Wilno, the most northern Polish city, situated in the wedge between Russia and Lithuania, seemed to be safe from the dangers of the war. Of course, nobody at that time could foresee the Soviet aggression. Life in Wilno was quite normal, as in pre-war times. The waves of refugees from Warsaw and from the western provinces of Poland had not yet reached this remote corner of the country. Recruits exercised as usual; the railways run strictly according to schedules; no German planes had yet appeared.

I discussed with my wife where they would stay during my sojourn in England. My wife's country estate, Ostrowlany, was in the most northerly part of the Wilno province, close to the Soviet frontier. In this remote corner I believed my family would be secure from all war dangers. But my wife insisted that the children continue their schooling, and in Wilno the schools were ready to reopen normally. We decided therefore that my family should establish their new home in Wilno. In case of danger, they should go to my family's country estate, Szaltupie in Lithuania. For such an emergency I left them the Indian, and the chauffeur. I myself left Wilno the next morning, driving the Packard and going to the Latvian capital, Riga. Here I left my car and took a plane for Stockholm. I came to London after long and complicated travel, going from Stockholm to Malmö by train, then by plane to Amsterdam, and at last from Rotterdam to England by boat.

I reached London on September 16th, and the next day came the dreadful news that the Bolsheviks had struck at Poland from the rear. The Polish campaign was finished. For the next two weeks came the distant echoes of the heroic defence of Warsaw, which capitulated only when half of the city was in ruins and when there was no more water to fight the fires; the fortress on the cape of the Hel-peninsula near Gdynia held out a little longer; several divisions of the army continued to fight in eastern Poland through half of October,—but under the circumstances all this fighting amounted to little more than a demonstration that might give the Poles some advantage in the future. The campaign was doomed the day the Bolsheviks poured in to “defend Poland from possible disorder.”

Never before had I lived such dreadful moments as in those days in London. I had brought with me all the enthusiasm that had been overflowing in Poland. I was prepared to fight in London not only for arms and munitions, but also to urge upon our allies the necessity of fighting on their front to help diminish the German pressure on our front. Before the war we were prepared for the complete occupation of our country by Germans. But afterwards, seeing the extraordinary spirit of the Polish army and of all the population, we became confident that if the Germans, due to the offensive on the western front, would be forced to curtail the number of their divisions fighting in Poland, our armies would be able to hold at least a part of Poland and to continue the struggle. It was

evident after September 15th that the general situation of the war in Poland began to change. The daily advances of the Germans were smaller, in several places Polish divisions successfully counter-attacked, often winning local victories. And what was most important, the young Polish soldier, who began to know the hell of war, caught his second wind and was preparing for the second round. But he never had the opportunity to fight a second round, as a result of the interference of the Bolsheviks. Russian attack undermined all our calculations and hopes. The splendid morale of the Polish army, the enthusiasm of the population, the honest efforts of all Poland—were wasted by interference of the Soviets.

The campaign in Poland was at an end. Finished also was my work connected with the transfer of war material to my country. The result was zero. In April, 1939, Poland had signed agreements with England and France for the shipment of arms and munitions. It was not a "lease lend" agreement. We had to pay for every gun and plane. But from the time of signing until the end of war in Poland, we received from our allies only one shipment of tanks which arrived at Gdynia shortly before the war. These tanks were never used, because some essential parts of their equipment were never sent. The ships which were on their way to the Rumanian ports after the war began, were stopped in Beirut when Warsaw was besieged and then turned back to England. The planes which should have come by air did not come at all. We

fought with our own equipment exclusively, produced by Polish factories out of the modest resources of the country.

There was something wrong with this war aid for Poland. According to our agreements with England and France, the first shipments should come in May. But both the French and the British found pretexts for delaying the shipments: some supplementary protocols had not yet been signed, some commission had not yet arranged some formalities. We pleaded urgency but without success. Since July, in British and French ports, ships loaded with various war materials had been waiting ready to sail to Poland. But, again, we could not obtain sailing orders for these ships. We had the impression that our allies were in no hurry to send arms and munitions to us. And when it was too late to do so, I heard in England from well informed circles that perhaps it was providential that all these war materials had not been sent to Poland, because today they would be in the hands of the Germans. Maybe. But I should like to know what the British would say today if the Americans should tell them: "We cannot send you our war materials, because if Britain should be invaded by Nazis, it would all be seized by them." The British and French preferred not to risk their equipment, at a time when Poles gave up their lives.

Besides the tragedy of the Polish nation, which I shared with all my compatriots, I had now my own great fear: my family was in Wilno under the Bolsheviks. Although it may seem paradoxical, my own sorrow helped me to bear the tragedy of my country.

Concern for my family gave me an outlet that kept my mind occupied and my energies released.

We had news in London that many people from Wilno and the province had crossed the frontier into Lithuania when the Bolsheviks invaded the country. I was sure my family would be among these refugees. I cabled my uncle in Szaltupie asking whether my family had arrived there but my uncle wired back that he had heard nothing from them. Now I knew that they had remained in Wilno. I tried to conjecture the possible reasons for this, but every explanation only increased my anxiety: perhaps my wife was ill, or there had been an accident during the escape? I had no illusions about the Bolsheviks. I had lived through the Bolshevik revolution in the years 1917 and 1918 in St. Petersburg, and in the year 1920 I fought against them in Poland. I knew all the dangers of their rule, and I knew also that I had no time to waste at this point; every day was crucial. I must free my wife and daughters from the Bolsheviks. But to achieve it, I must return to their vicinity, if possible. I had no more public duties to detain me in London, and I decided to go back to Lithuania at once.

At that time it was no longer simple to travel in Europe. On this return trip I realized for the first time how difficult and unpleasant was the situation of a citizen of a defeated country. Now that the campaign in Poland was at an end, her citizens in some foreign countries became aware of the change in treatment. Visés were refused them, they were subjected to specially rigorous revisions. There were countries that

refused even to recognize Polish passports. In addition to these difficulties, many new troubles, common to all people traveling during the war began to reveal themselves. There were difficulties in obtaining railway, ship and plane tickets; new currency regulations were introduced, in addition to visé restrictions. Every voyage in Europe in war time required patience, connections and ingenuity.

Thanks only to the human understanding of the Lithuanian Minister in London I was able to get a Lithuanian visé. Once in possession of this, I obtained the other visés rather easily, but nevertheless I spent two days in different consulates, filling out a great number of forms, presenting photographs, giving fingerprints and explaining to everybody why I was going to Lithuania and why I intended to cross their country instead of taking another route.

At last I had cut through all these hindrances and was en route to Kaunas. In Amsterdam I had to wait for seat in a plane: air-line traffic had been interrupted, because a Swedish communication plane had been machine-gunned by a German fighter off Helgoland, and one passenger had been killed. In Stockholm I had allowed a plane to pass without boarding it. Communication between Stockholm and Riga was maintained jointly by the Swedish and Soviet air-lines. I received a ticket for a Soviet plane, but I preferred not to risk taking it. There had been instances when the Soviet planes on this line landed on the Soviet-held Estonian island Oesel and there dropped their Polish passengers.

The first person I met in Kaunas was Knud, my

chauffeur. Naturally I asked him about my family. He told me that they were safe. "But why did you not bring them here?" I asked. "When the Bolsheviks were coming to Wilno," he answered, "according to the orders received from you, I went to Madame and told her that the car was ready for the trip. But Madame refused to go, telling me to drive the car to Lithuania. That is what I did. The Chrysler is here, but is being held by the Lithuanian customs authorities." It seemed to me that something was wrong in this story. I took the keys of the car from Knud and ordered him to come to see me in the afternoon. He did not come and, as I learned a few days later, he left Lithuania for East Prussia. He reappeared shortly in Warsaw in the uniform of a Gestapo agent. Today I realize that he must have been in the same service when, the day before the outbreak of war, I engaged him as my chauffeur. He was a Dane, and his mother was half-German and half-Polish. He was an excellent servant, spoke five languages fluently.

At last being able to surmise what was happening to my family, I decided to act. Several days before, in Stockholm, I had seen the Hungarian Minister, Mr. Matouska, who previously had been Hungarian envoy to Poland. I had the feeble hope that the Hungarians would be able to free my wife and daughters from the Bolsheviks because they were the family of an Hungarian Consul. Mr. Matouska did his best and went to his Soviet colleague, who was the well known Mrs. Kolontay. He told her the whole story, without mentioning my name, and even omitted that we were Poles,

which led her to suppose that he was pleading in behalf of a Hungarian family. Mrs. Kollontay, acting this time simply as a woman and not as a Bolshevik dignitary, gave this heartfelt advice: "You must not even attempt to rescue the family, because such an effort could only harm them. Better not suggest to our people to look more attentively after your proteges."

In Kaunas I tried another legal way. I believed the Lithuanian authorities could rescue my family through the mediation of their consulate in Wilno. But that also was an illusion. The Lithuanian authorities were not even able to contact their own Consul.

There remained, therefore, only one way to get in touch with my family: to walk to Wilno secretly, through the so-called "green frontier," that is to cross the frontier through the woods in the night, not asking either the Lithuanians or the Bolsheviks for permits. Naturally, it was dangerous, but I had no choice and was obliged to take the risks. I always believed that I was born under a happy star, and I had confidence in my hunting experience: I knew how to make my way in the wilderness, how to walk in the night through a forest without being heard or seen. I spoke all the languages which might be useful during such a journey—Polish, Lithuanian, Russian. I decided to go to Wilno and bring my family back to safety. I must do it myself; I did not dare to entrust their lives to some other person, even the most trustworthy.

I now carefully perfected a plan of action.

Among the Polish refugees in Lithuania I found a group of boy-scouts from Wilno. I had helped them

to escape from a concentration camp in the vicinity of our country estate, Szaltupie, and later on I had helped them to reach the Polish army in France. Now they helped me to prepare my masquerade for Wilno. Together we went to several small Jewish shops in the suburbs of Kaunas to buy a complete peasant outfit, for I decided to go to Wilno so disguised. I intended to be very careful about the minutest detail of my costume, because in case of an investigation the Bolsheviks would examine everything thoroughly. My boy-scouts also gave me exact information about the best place to cross the frontier, and I found that one of them had an aunt who lived not very far from the frontier. She would help me to work out the next lap of the journey.

I left Kaunas, carrying my peasant costume in my bag. As I approached the country estate in a horse-drawn carriage I met a fox. Even in Poland or in Lithuania, where foxes are fairly common, an encounter with this sly wild animal is rare. I regarded the meeting as a good omen for my risky journey.

The owner of the country estate was an exceptionally charming person. She was said to be the stoutest woman in all Lithuania, but she was very active, intelligent and brave. She was impressed by my plans, and immediately summoned her forester. We discussed the entire problem from every standpoint, after which the man declared himself willing to take me as far as the frontier, but refused to go farther. I did not wonder. My stake was the safety and perhaps even the lives of my family, and his—merely the money he might receive for his services.

We started that same night. For two days I had not shaved and I smoked the cheapest tobacco, although actually I do not smoke at all. I wanted not only to look like a peasant, but also to smell like a peasant.

From the very outset of my travel I had to be careful, because on the estate of my hostess a post of the Lithuanian frontier police had been stationed. We left the house secretly through a side door, crossed the garden and went down to the river. The autumn of 1939 was exceptionally dry. In September we cursed this fact, because it had been such an advantage to the German armoured divisions in Poland, but now it became an advantage for me. We crossed the shallow, dried up river easily and entered the forest. From here up to the frontier our route continued through the woodland. The night was quiet and clear. A new moon was high in the sky and the stars were exceptionally dazzling. Everyone of our footfalls could be easily heard at a considerable distance. We pushed forward slowly and carefully as on a hunting trip, measuring every step, stopping often and listening. It is, nevertheless, a wonderful thing, a reckless adventure like this one! The senses are sharpened, physical resources strengthened, the mind works more rapidly and effectively. At such moments man understands the rightful meaning and the charm of the word "adventure."

When, after more than an hour of walking, we reached the forest-border, we were quite near to the frontier. Here the forester left me, having shown me

the frontier river and pointed out a Lithuanian sentry-box on its bank.

I remained alone hidden under a tree, listening to the stillness of the woods that only a hunter could feel and understand. On the horizon glittered a feeble glow of distant lights. They were lights of Wilno, some 30 miles away.

I tried to decide on my next course of action. The immediate problem was how to cross the meadow ahead of me, bordering the frontier river. It was illuminated by the moon and the stars, and as far as I could see from my hiding place, in both directions along the river lay fairly wide open spaces. I decided to crawl across the meadow. I now examined the terrain to find if there were any irregular conformations that could serve me as a cover. This examination revealed several small concavities, also bushes and stones, which could, in a pinch, shield a crawling man from view.

Again my hunting experience helped me for I was now in a situation similar to that of a deer or a hare in a battue obliged to steal through a line of hunters. It happens sometimes that an animal chooses his way across the open, his instinct telling him that men would not expect this. Similarly I speculated that the Lithuanian guard in his shed probably would think that nobody would risk crossing an open and moonlit meadow, and would not watch carefully enough.

I observed the guard sitting in front of his shed. Already I had been under my tree for more than half an hour, and during all that time he had not changed his position. Might he not be sleeping? I decided to

start, and began to crawl as rapidly as possible in the direction of the river. I felt a chill in my back. It seemed as if someone was looking at me or was aiming at me with his rifle. All my senses were strained to the highest pitch, my muscles were elastic, at any moment I was ready to jump.

The 300 feet of the meadow I crossed quickly, although it seemed to me it would never come to an end. There were some bushes on the river bank that enabled me to stand erect once more and survey the landscape. The sentry-box was now hidden from me by the underbrush. On the Polish side the woods came much closer to the river than on the Lithuanian border. From this point I could not hear or see any Bolshevik patrols. Without further hesitation I waded the shallow river and, crouching again, hastened across the meadow. One minute later I was under protection of the woods, which to me are like home.

But my task was not yet finished. In a few days I must guide my family across the same frontier. Crossing the open meadow under conditions similar to those I had just met, would be impossible for my sick wife. It was absolutely necessary to find another more convenient passage. I began, therefore, to walk through the forest along the frontier. I had walked for more than half a mile, when suddenly I heard a man coughing. I had the strange feeling that he coughed directly into my ear. I stopped dead, and my disobedient heart began to beat stupidly and loudly. When my first feeling of shock subsided, I tried to determine where the sound had come from. As my eyes became better ad-

justed to the darkness, I saw a box some 30 feet away. It was on the Polish side of the frontier and therefore the man in the box was undoubtedly a Bolshevik guard. I stood very still and listened intently. Perhaps the Bolshevik had heard something and now was also listening. My heart continued to pound, I was short of breath. But now I heard a new and welcomed sound—a snore! The Bolshevik guard, exactly as the Lithuanian, was asleep in the sentry-box! Luck was still with me! I waited a few minutes and then began to retreat slowly.

But what now? I still had not found the right place where I might bring my family across the border. I was obliged to make a detour around the sleeping guard and to continue my walk along the river. A quarter of an hour later I found what I needed: two strips of woodland on each side of the river that nearly closed together. Here I would try to pass with my family. The place was marked by an old oak, growing on the Polish side.

Now I turned westward, in the direction of Wilno. At first I went straight through the woods, which were exceptionally thick, and later I came to a road that, like every road, brought me to a village. The village was asleep. I knew that here the country was purely Polish and I felt sure I could take the risk of making my presence known to the people. I knocked at the first house and found it occupied by a single elderly man, a former forester. I like this kind of people, bred in the forest and familiar with nature. I told the man frankly why I had come and asked him whether he

could take me to Wilno. He nodded, put milk, bread and butter on the table and went out to harness his horse.

We started before dawn. The old man was not talkative. When I attempted to tell him something about myself, he warned me: "Better not tell me anything. If it should happen that these rascals ask me about you, I'd prefer to be able to say with honesty that I do not know anything." I think he was right.

We followed the small forest roads, where we met no one. Some five miles from the frontier, on a broad sandy road leading across open fields, we saw a dust-cloud in the distance. "They come," said my guide. A detachment of Bolshevik cavalry passed by. I observed with great interest these first representatives of the Soviet army, against which I had fought in 1920. Soon we met more and still more Bolshevik soldiers. It suggested some manoeuvre in the direction of the Lithuanian frontier. And such it really was. My guide brought me to a Catholic priest, his friend, who gave us breakfast. He had a radio, although the Bolsheviks had severely forbidden it, and had heard on the previous day that Soviet Russia had presented her first ultimatum to small Lithuania, demanding airplane bases. The concentration of troops on the Lithuanian frontier obviously was intended to play the role of an "argument." It was very bad news for me, because it might make it impossible to cross the frontier with my family.

Through the estate Pikieliszki, which had belonged to the Polish hero Pilsudski, we reached the highway.

Here the soldiers were massed, and on the estate itself some important Bolshevik commanding officer had taken up his residence. For the first time in this war I saw an historic treasure of Poland in the enemy's clutches. I sensed a physical pain as I beheld alien soldiers camping out under the old lime-trees about this romantic homestead full of traditions.

On the highway marched armed columns of all kinds: infantry, cavalry, artillery, tanks. Most of them made a very bad impression. They marched as a crowd, and not in the disciplined formation of a military unit. The uniforms were far from being uniform, the soldiers' caps were various in kind and form, their shoes were tattered, the rifles of different calibre, often of an old-fashioned type. Much of the auxiliary equipment, such as carts, harness, field-kitchens, sanitary-cars—was left over from the World War. The horses of the Bolshevik army made perhaps the greatest impression on me. I had never dreamed that such animals could exist, much less work. Some of them were skeletons, caricatures of horses.

The material in men was poor, not a match for those splendid creatures that I had seen in the old days, in pre-World War Russia. I tried to talk to the soldiers. I had spent the greater part of my youth in Russia; I know the people very well and I must say that I like them. Even now, exchanging words with the soldiers, I felt rather sympathetic toward them. They showed the kind-heartedness typical of the Russian. But today there was something quite new to me: a frightened look in their eyes.

The Russian army, from the military point of view, has always been and will always remain, an enigma. History has shown that in several cases, for example at the end of the World War or during the war with Poland in the year 1920—Russian armies flatly refused to fight and surrendered in masses. But there were also other instances when these same soldiers revealed heroism and good fighting spirit. Like all oriental peoples, the Russians are fatalists and are prone to changing and sometimes unexpected dispositions. The primitive Russian needs primitive reasons to stir him to action. He could hardly comprehend the reasons for the aggressive move into Finland, but in a more understandable situation he would probably behave differently.

We arrived at Wilno in the afternoon of October 5th. I separated from my guide at the town line, preferring to go on foot, as someone riding a cart might be suspected by the "tovarists." The old man who brought me here refused to accept any payment. He simply said it was the duty of a Christian to help his brother.

I walked along the streets of the city I knew so well and now visited under entirely changed conditions. With emotion and tenderness I looked at the many monuments in Wilno that date back to oldest times, particularly the churches. Wilno is famous for its 100 churches. In the Rossa cemetery lies the urn containing the heart of Pilsudski. Here also are the tombs of my family, and my mother is buried here. I am completely in harmony with Wilno. There and in its

picturesque environs and in Ostrowlany, my wife's country estate, in the neighbouring Lithuanian Kaunas and in Szaltupie, my family's estate—is my real fatherland. One month ago I left it full of hope. Today I come back to my own country secretly, like a thief.

In Wilno my wife and children were living in my wife's sister's home. My brother-in-law had been a professor at Wilno University. He lectured on fine arts and architecture, and at the same time was city custodian taking care of the historic buildings of Wilno. They were neither of them young and they had no children. They loved flowers, old books, animals. They helped the needy, and everyone liked them. But in the summer of 1940 the Bolsheviks sent them into exile to Siberia—each of them separately. Now my brother-in-law is digging ditches. There is no news at all about his wife.

Naturally, I was not expected in Wilno. I went in through the kitchen, the front door being closed against undesirable visitors. All my family was at home. They were astonished and happy to see me. My wife wept a little. But the youngest daughter, Mary, found it quite natural that I came to their rescue. "I always knew that Papa would come and take us away from the Bolsheviks," she said. She still had unlimited confidence in her father.

I could now at last find out the truth about the chauffeur, Knud. He had not announced himself at all to my wife when Wilno was alarmed by the approach of Bolsheviks. He simply took the car and fled to Lithuania alone.

I had expected to stay in Wilno for a short time, to see what the Soviet army would do on the Lithuanian frontier, and then travel back with all my family across the frontier to Lithuania. But unexpected events forced me to change my plans.

The next morning, at a very early hour, I was awakened and saw standing at my bed our manager from Ostrowlany. He was a young and brave man, a former non-commissioned officer of the Polish army, who was always very loyal to my wife and me. I was very much astonished to see a red Bolshevik band on his arm. I asked for explanation. He smiled cunningly: "It is necessary to know what they are doing and what they think"—he told me. I am quite certain that it was on his own initiative that he joined the Bolsheviks in this rather dangerous role. I also think that I owe very much and perhaps even my life to his fortunate initiative, as he came to bring me the news that the OGPU was already informed about my presence in Wilno. He insisted that I leave immediately, because they may come at any moment. To this day I do not know how the Bolsheviks had been able to trail me in Wilno. Probably my sister-in-law's good old cook unthinkingly made some remark in the court-yard of the building in which they lived, for in every court-yard there is somebody eager for an easy job. At any rate, I must flee, taking with me, of course, my family. There was no other solution, although I still had no information about the activities of the Bolshevik army on the Lithuanian frontier. I decided to take the risk of an immediate travel.

The boy who brought me the bad news was always efficient. He not only warned me, but had also prepared everything for our flight. Two small peasant carts waited for us on the town's outskirts. The women easily found suitable peasant dresses for my wife and daughters: colourful head-kerchiefs, simple petticoats and skirts. Our most valuable belongings were packed in a few bundles—only what we could carry ourselves. I was obliged to postpone any visits to my relatives, but I made one exception. This exception was Ada, my Gdynia cousin. I had news that on the previous day she had arrived in Wilno with her husband and children. But, unfortunately, this information was only partly right. I found Ada's husband and children, but not Ada herself. She had been lost somewhere in the confusion of the war, between the German and the Bolshevik armies. They had no news as to her fate. I was overcome. It was the first time this war had hit me personally through someone who had always been exceptionally dear to me.

Now we made our way slowly in the direction of the Lithuanian frontier. I was still depressed by the bad news concerning Ada, and ahead of me I foresaw only troubles and unhappy surprises. My wife did not feel well herself, having always suffered from a weak heart, and having to avoid overexertion and excitement. There were few Bolshevik soldiers on the roads. This, too, was somewhat of a bad sign, as it probably signified that they were already on the Lithuanian border. The only element in our favour was the fine, warm weather, which, under different conditions, would

—we were under the oak on the frontier river! Once again I inspected the landscape and listened to the voices, and then we began the crossing. But here came the first surprise: the river at this point was deeper than where I had crossed it before, and its bottom was muddy. For my wife this was a cruel handicap. The water came to her knees, but she managed to get across. Having reached the opposite shore, however, she was so tired that she could not go on. She stopped abruptly.

There was not one second to lose. I gave my bundle to Mary, and lifted my wife on my back. Then I walked some hundred feet through the woods. Arrived at a small glade, I set my wife on a fallen tree-trunk, and for a long time I could not catch my breath. It was not only my wife that I carried on my back, but also my 48 years.

But now came the second surprise of this unforgettable journey; when I felt rested and looked around me, I discovered with consternation that we had lost our elder daughters. Mary had no idea where they might be. We were in another predicament, and this time the situation was really perilous. I must not call them, and it would be hopeless to search for them in the darkness of the forest. But the urgency of the moment gave me an idea. When I was very young I was a boy-scout and belonged to the division of the "Lapwings." Our call was the cry of a lapwing. I had often told my children stories of my childhood, and now I hoped they might remember this detail about the lapwing. I imitated the cry of this bird. I called once and then again.

Far in the woods I heard the answering cry of another lapwing. How happy I was to hear it! Now it was not so difficult to repair the loss, although I was obliged twice more to cross the frontier river. My daughters remained behind, because the bundles they carried became too heavy for them. I was so absorbed in moving forward that I did not notice they lingered behind, and they could not risk calling me. But they were clever enough to keep quiet and wait, instead of attempting to cross by themselves.

We were again united in the forest glade a few hundred feet from the frontier. I intended to find the way to the estate of the good lady who had helped me, when I crossed the first time. But I was now at a different spot in the woods. I made a fairly accurate guess of the direction and we moved again. The forest soon ended and we came to a small village. My wife felt ill again. There was nothing to do but to take her to some home in the village for a longer rest, while I would go with the children to the good lady's country estate and make preparations for the farther voyage.

But for the third time on the same day fate thwarted my designs, and this time most seriously.

At the house to which I went I met two Lithuanian guards. It was difficult to conceal what we were doing here on the frontier. The guards apparently were embarrassed. They examined our documents, conferred for a long time, and finally told us that they had strict orders to deport everybody back to Poland who came illegally from the other side. They proposed that we should go back voluntarily. And they added

a little naïvely but kindly that we could then once again try to come to Lithuania, but preferably at another point of the frontier and to enter in such a way that the guards would not see us. I tried to argue. They telephoned to the commanding officer, but that made the situation even worse, for he gave the formal order to send us back to Poland, adding that if we refused, we must be arrested, brought by force to the frontier and turned over to the Bolshevik guards.

Now that the situation seemed hopeless, the Lithuanians appeared to be even more grieved than I. They worked with me in trying to find a way out, although I could see that their position had become tremendously complicated in face of the formal order of their superior. He must have been a hard man, for he telephoned twice again to be certain that his order had been executed.

During these telephone conversations it was disclosed that the deportation order did not concern me but only my family. My Lithuanian visé that I had obtained in London was still valid, and the guards probably supposed that it also allowed me to cross the "green frontier." This fact I now put to use to clear up the whole situation. Already I had wanted to telephone to the Polish Legation in Kaunas to ask their help. But the guards refused to let me use their telephone. They wanted sincerely to help me, but they could not find a way to reconcile their good intentions with the formal regulation that a service telephone may be used only by officials. When I learned that I could be legally admitted to Lithuania, I tried to explain to

them that there were no more obstacles to bar my use of the telephone. They agreed, and I will probably never understand how I was now conforming to the regulation that reserved the use of the official telephone to officials. But at last I was able to speak with the Polish Envoy. It was a late hour and he was already in bed. Of course, he could not intervene immediately, but promised to do so the next morning. For me it was now a question of prolonging this situation. I managed to arrange with the guards that my wife would feign a grave illness—and because of this the guards would delay the ordered deportation.

But the commanding officer telephoned again. Although he was told that my wife had had a heart attack and could not walk at all, he once more ordered the immediate deportation. All of us, including the two guards, were in despair, and little Mary began to cry.

Then something happened that I shall always remember. The elder of the two guards, visibly troubled, said to the other: "I propose that we do not obey our boss. Come what may, I will not allow these children to be devoured by the Bolsheviks." The other man agreed.

We decided that my wife and children should remain in the village, and I would go to the country estate of the good lady. From there I would be able to communicate more easily with the authorities. But, of course, the situation remained serious, and there still was the danger that the commanding officer would come personally to make further trouble. I therefore exacted a formal oath from both guards that no matter

what happened they would not allow any harm to come to my family and that they would telephone me immediately if something should happen. Nevertheless I could not sleep that night, and the next morning I telephoned every hour to learn whether the prisoners were safe.

The telephone talks between the Polish Envoy in Kaunas and the Lithuanian authorities were very long and slow. The Minister of the Interior himself was involved in this big "affaire" of one woman and three children who threatened the Lithuanian Republic. At the same time my good hostess tried to intervene in another way. Her neighbour was a retired Lithuanian general, a former Minister of War. She paid him a visit and asked for help.

I do not know whose intervention was the decisive factor—but in the afternoon the case was at last settled. All of us were fined for the illegal crossing of the frontier, but we were free and could travel to Kaunas. How joyous we were, when we all gathered in the hospitable house of the charming lady who had helped us as few could or would have done! After a delightful dinner we left for Kaunas.

Much later I was told by the same lady that the two frontier guards who had befriended us, had been discharged for disobedience. At my suggestion my uncle gave them jobs in Szaltupie.



There were some 10,000 Polish refugees in Lithuania, mostly officers and soldiers, who had been interned

by the Lithuanian authorities. But the regulations were not severe, and one could see an ever increasing number of officers and soldiers in civilian clothes on the streets of Kaunas. A special Polish organization helped them to leave Lithuania and to go by way of Sweden and Norway to England and France, where a new Polish army was being organized. The Lithuanians were good to the Polish refugees and in many cases helped the soldiers even to escape from the concentration camps.

Following is an authentic report of recent occurrence which illustrates the attitude of Lithuanian officials toward their Polish internees. Three or four Polish soldiers had escaped from a concentration camp, and were so elated that they decided to celebrate their escape with a drink at a bar. Probably they drank too much and became too gay, for two of them were taken by the police and brought back to the concentration camp. The Lithuanian officer in charge was very much irritated. He said to the unfortunate boys: "Your fathers managed to escape from Siberia, and you have not been able to escape from here!"

We stayed in Lithuania for several days and felt very much at home. But we were still in a country where the hand of our enemies could easily reach us. I decided to take my family to Paris and there arrange a new life for them. We had to make a long journey under difficult war conditions, before this could be done. But, in the first line, I must secure visés for my wife and children, and this was not so easy, as thousands of people in Lithuania were trying at that time to go to

the safer countries, and there was still only one route available, via Riga, Stockholm and Holland. The difficulties were particularly great, as all the traffic between the continent and the Scandinavian peninsula was virtually dependent on plane communication from Riga to Stockholm, where only one plane was operated daily. The ships did not sail regularly and were often stopped by the Germans, which was rather harrowing for the Poles. From Sweden to France or England there were also inconvenient routes: one by plane from Malmö via Holland, and the other from Bergen in Norway by ship to England. At all these three points, Malmö, Bergen and especially Riga, was an enormous crowd of people waiting for planes and ships. Besides this, there were still great difficulties in obtaining visés. In front of legations and consulates of France, Holland, Sweden and Latvia long queues of visitors began to form as early as 5 A.M.

For three days I could not eat or sleep, as I hurried from one consulate to another for the visés. Several times it seemed to me we would be obliged to remain in Lithuania forever. But finally I obtained everything I needed. My friends said I was a sorcerer. Really I could now qualify as a professor of the new visé science.

At the same time I had to get my automobile which still was in the custody of the customs office. I ran into more of the red-tape due to the inexperience of the Lithuanian officials. The good people were very sorry to give me trouble, but they could not find a solution for this rather simple problem. Their only answers

were: "Law, regulation, prescription, order." Finally I freed my Indian from his prison, but at the same time I blessed the Lithuanian bureaucrats, because if they had been more lax Knud would have taken my Indian with him to Germany.

There remained still another obstacle—I had no gasoline, and in Lithuania this was a serious problem. I tried in every way to get the fuel, but unsuccessfully; and when I got it, it was another fantastic story. I was introduced to two Lithuanian military pilots. We drank together a large quantity of vodka and late in the evening I drove them to the military airport. There they transferred the gasoline directly from a warplane to the Indian's tank.

When the day of our departure was definitely fixed, we all went to Szaltupie. I knew I was taking leave of my family's birthplace for a long time. I walked alone through all familiar places. We were definitely leaving the last of my own lands, and going to foreign countries.

During our travel from Lithuania to Paris we had no real troubles or adventures. Indian again carried the family, speeding through the pleasant landscape of Lithuania and bringing us to Riga. Our second car, my wife's Packard, was already there, and I decided to send both to Sweden. For Indian I secured a place on board a ship that was leaving Riga on the day of our arrival. The Packard was to be shipped on the next boat. The Indian reached Stockholm safely. I met him there and transferred him to another ship bound for Antwerp. Both blockades, the German and the

British, at that time were not as rigid as they are now. But the ship carrying the Packard car was stopped by a German warship and forced to go to Swinemünde. There all Polish passengers and all Polish goods were unloaded, and among them was my Packard.

During our two days in Riga, waiting for seats in the plane, a number of ships left the port, carrying Baltic Germans out of the country. According to an agreement between Germany and Latvia, these Germans were to colonize Poland. It was an interesting picture to see this evacuation, and we decided that this new system of solving complicated national problems should be a good example for us Poles. Following it, we might possibly be able, after the defeat of Germany, to solve some vital national problems on our German frontier by the same method. The Baltic Germans were not glad to leave the country, where their fathers and grandfathers had lived, and where they had made a good livelihood. One of these ships was taking German colonists to Gdynia, and among them was a German, who for many years had represented my Gdynia firm in Riga. He openly criticised Hitler and was filled with despair. I proposed that he should take over my office building in Gdynia. He threw up his hands and said: "I know perfectly well that you will all come back to Gdynia. And then your first act will be to oust us from there." Of course, he was right!

From Riga to Stockholm we traveled by air. This time I could not avoid making use of a Soviet plane, but we weathered it safely. I must even admit that I

have seldom met such a pleasant and polite steward as the Bolshevik on this plane.

A railway sleeping-car Stockholm-Malmö, a plane Malmö-Amsterdam, a short sojourn at The Hague, and finally, the blacked-out railway-car from The Hague to Paris. We arrived at the French capital on October 19th, 1939. Here we intended to stay for a long time, and here began my life as a political refugee.

PHONEY WAR IN EUROPE

The Maginot Line, a health-resort — The French "somehow" — Polish refugees in Paris — My first personal losses — Our home in Nice — The mysterious Lilly Matthiessen — Massacre of friends in Gdynia — Ada's children — On the way to Budapest — Christmas in exile — Snow-drifts in Rome — Mussolini's unplayed ace of trumps — Triangle: King-Pope-Duce — Vatican gossips — An anti-German Italian diplomat — "Eviva la Polonia" — A tree over the precipice — New Year's Eve in Florence — Yugoslavia — My old Budapest — Balkans in Germany's service — Alarming news from Poland — A foolish decision — Second trip to occupied Poland — The frontier stone — False documents — Drunken German soldiers — "Deutsche Wirtschaft" in Poland — Training of the "Hitler-Jugend" — Martyrdom of Cracow's professors — Ruins of Warsaw — Ada — Gestapoman Knud — 50 Poles for 1 German — A timber parley — Iwan's treason — Snow in Carpathian mountains — At the limit of endurance — German patrol, dogs, trap — Sleeping-room of the Hungarian officer's wife — Kakuk — Simplon-Orient-Express — Paris — Dolce-farniente on the Riviera — Budapest for the fourth time — My niece Nina — Indian's enemies: snow, flood, swamp — The lost latch — Duce-Duce-Duce — A traditional Polish Easter — Blooming chestnut trees in Paris — A ship's trial in Holland — Soothsayers of the Paris cafés

IF I chose Paris as my new home, it was because it seemed to me the centre of the war against Germany. I wanted to be where it would continue and where, perhaps, I could be useful. But instead of this, I found myself in a gay and voluptuous city, where nobody even thought about the war.

After the Polish campaign had ended, and during the period from October, 1939, until May, 1940, there was no actual war in Europe. In the north, little Finland defended herself heroically against the Bolshevik invasion; there was the tragic struggle in Norway and encounters on the seas. But on the western front great French, British and German armies continued to lie quietly, and the big battle, so impatiently expected in Poland when Germans invaded the country—did not materialize. Even in the air there were merely reconnaissance flights, and instead of bombs leaflets were dropped. In Paris at that time, when soldiers left for the front, it was said they were going to the Maginot Line for a health cure. Life in the French capital was much the same as in pre-war times. The Boulevards and their cafés were overcrowded, night-life restrictions were rather perfunctory, even the black-out was not strictly observed, inasmuch as the German bombers seemed to have no intention of attacking either Paris or London.

At that time, although the French may not have been particularly belligerent, yet they had complete faith in ultimate victory, and, above all, they believed that the war would be of short duration. The most popular theory was that owing to the modern technique

of devastation a war today could not last very long. If the French had been convinced that this war would be long drawn out and could be won only by tremendous effort and enormous sacrifices—their attitude would probably have been different. I think one of the psychological reasons for the French collapse, which came a few months later, lay in the fact that the people were suddenly confronted by the spectre of several years of heavy fighting—and they turned sharply back from the battlefronts to their homes. But at the end of the year 1939 and during the winter and the spring of 1940, Frenchmen paid little heed to tomorrows. Everybody believed that “somehow” tomorrow would take care of itself. Polish officers, cooperating with the French General Staff, were apprehensive when they observed the chaotic state of the French army, and especially when they turned to the field of war production and war supplies. But at the same time they admitted that in fact everything was progressing “somehow.” The French high intelligence helped to mask the unfavourable aspects of their work and organization. We also began to have confidence in the future and deluded ourselves with the belief that when spring came we would recapture Poland from the Germans.

When, in the previous September, I learned in London about the Bolshevik invasion of Poland, I had been completely stunned. But my personal problems and the dangers that surrounded my family, had helped me to find a way out of my depression; I had no time to think about the general situation. Now in Paris, without any regular occupation and living among crowds

of other refugees from Poland, I began to feel the depression was about to overwhelm me again.

Polish refugees who had managed to escape through Rumania, Hungary, Lithuania or Latvia, now began to pour into France from every direction. They all tried to get to Paris, where the President of Poland and the new Polish Government had been since the end of September, and where a new Polish army had been formed. Every day I met some new arrivals. I found many good friends and a few of my relatives. There were endless talks; I heard exciting recitals of their personal adventures and extraordinary escapes; every newcomer brought news about other friends, some supplementary details about the war at home. The common cause and the common misfortune brought close together all the Polish refugees and simplified the social relations among them.

As usual after a collapse, people tried to find out who were responsible for what had happened. The Polish Government and the Polish High Command were accused of having wasted the fine spirit of the Poles and the Polish army. Only a little later, when the emotional tension relaxed and the true picture of the tragedy began to crystalize, came the realization that our own mistakes had played a much smaller role than factors entirely beyond our control: the vulnerable strategic and geographic situation of Poland, the overwhelming strength of the enemy; the fact that our allies left us practically to our own fate, and, finally, the Soviet surprise. Even the Germans exonerated the Polish soldiers of all blame, for they gave

absolutely everything they had to give. Much later, in comparing our defeat with the subsequent collapse of other European countries, especially with the French catastrophe—we realized that the Polish campaign, although of short duration, had been in no way a disgrace.

But at that time all of us were ashamed and depressed. We could not console ourselves with the boast that elsewhere it was even worse. We severely condemned our own mistakes and neglects. We were tormented by all this. Added to this were the personal troubles that every one of us brought with him to France. These multiplied from day to day as news arrived from home.

I also had fresh sorrows almost daily. I received news about the complete disruption of the life of another of my wife's sisters. She had remained under Bolshevik regime at her country estate in eastern Poland. The Bolsheviks arrested her husband, who eventually died in prison. Their eldest daughter, 19 years old, an exceptionally beautiful girl, was deported to Russia. In the fighting around Warsaw my dearest friend had been killed. At that time I also got my first news from Gdynia; my house had been destroyed by the shells of a German warship when it bombarded the port.

These unhappy personal memories, and also the enervating endless discussions about Poland's catastrophe, created an unfavourable atmosphere in which to build a new life.

Nevertheless the refugees rather quickly overcame

their depression and regained their stoutness of heart. All of us agreed that we should not have capitulated. The war had only started, and there were no indications that the cause of Poland would be lost. We had full confidence in the might of Great Britain, and in the heroism of the French army, which so recently had returned triumphantly from the historical battlefields of Verdun and the Marne. Although the French and the British had not attacked the Siegfried Line, the Germans also did not dare to strike at the Maginot Line. In the interim both France and England were arming, America was our friend, and even Italy had no thought of entering the war on Germany's side.

Our uneasiness disappeared. Confidence in the final victory and in the speedy conclusion of the struggle returned again. Restored were the enthusiasm and energies of the Poles, which had had no opportunity for complete expression during the short war in Poland. Every one of us now tried to find the most constructive way to be active and to do something for the common cause of Poland and her allies.

I too was optimistic and wanted to cooperate in the war. To have a free hand as to my personal plans, I knew I must organize the life of my family and put my private business in order. I did not want to leave my family in Paris. After all we had experienced in Poland, I was now doubly careful. I wanted to establish my dependents in a really safe place. We decided to leave Paris the middle of November and go to Nice. My family made their home there with my wife's friend and her children.

Our villa, surrounded by a large and beautiful park, was in one of the most picturesque districts of Nice. It was situated almost at the top of a high hill called Mont Boron. From our windows and terraces we had a marvelous view of the sea, the mountainous shore line and the Alps. At the foot of the nearest mountain-range was another sea—the sea of the red roofs of Nice. And in front of the town, just below our villa, was the small port of Nice. This detail was specially precious to us, as it reminded us of our home in Gdynia, where we also had a view of the port from our garden. The panorama was incomparably beautiful, especially in the evening, when the sun set behind the mountain which ran forward into the sea. Long after the sunset, even in the darkness of the night, the mountain peaks could be seen distinctly against the still luminous western sky. It is difficult to describe the perfect calm of such a warm night in Nice. And it was a striking contrast to the noise of war.

In this new home my family was now to reorganize its life. I tried purposely to put them in the company of beauties of nature, which heals wounds and makes it easier to bear the burdens of misfortune.

Now, returning to Paris, I could at last make arrangements for my own life. My first idea was to join the Polish army. It was the normal reaction to the situation my country was in. There were, however, too many arguments against such a decision: my 48 years, my obligations to my family, the fact that in the Polish

army in France there were too many officers compared to the number of privates.

I made up my mind, first of all, to arrange my own business affairs. In Paris and in London I had branches of my Gdynia firm. Today, cut off from their Polish business and facing increasing regimentation in the economic life of France and England, they were inactive; instead of gains, they brought me troubles and losses. I liquidated these firms. I also had a ship under construction in Holland, which should be completed in a short time. I decided to sell the ship, but this was not so easy. After surmounting the complicated formalities of the Polish and British Admiralties, I was informed by the Dutch shipyard that they would not be able to deliver the ship to me, because they had received a claim from the German "Treuhänder" (trustee), who had been appointed to my firm in Gdynia. According to the German interpretation, my firm was confiscated by the Reich, and I was no longer its proprietor and director. The cautious Dutchmen said to me that they would deliver the ship to that person whom the Dutch court would recognize as its proprietor. I was obliged to go to court against the shipyard.

I still had no news about my friend Indian. I had already learned the fate of the Packard car, seized from the ship by the Nazis, and I supposed that something similar had happened to the Chrysler. I cabled to Stockholm and to Antwerp, but when at last the answer came—it was really humorous.

I was summoned to the police station. The officer

carefully inspected my documents and then, with a severe face, asked me: "What are your relations to Miss Matthiessen?" I tried to recall all the Scandinavian girls I had met in my life, but could not find one bearing the name Matthiessen. "I mean Miss Lilly Matthiessen," continued the officer and eyed me suspiciously. Definitely I did not know any Lilly, either. The police officer, obviously irritated, declared: "Monsieur, don't try to conceal the truth from us; we know everything. And to give you proof that we really do know everything, I will tell you one single word: D-e-n-e-l-a-b!" This word at last gave me a clue to the situation. "Denelab" was the cable address of my Stockholm forwarding agent who was to send my car to Antwerp, and Lilly Matthiessen was, as we learned later, the name of the ship, on which Indian had sailed from Stockholm. The French censor had confiscated a telegram addressed to me, which read as follows: "Lilly Matthiessen arriving Antwerp November twentieth Denelab."

The police officer had a sense of humour. He proposed that we should have a drink to the health of the mysterious Lilly Matthiessen.

On the same day I received another telegram, from my Antwerp forwarding agent, announcing that the car had arrived and was at my disposal. As I should have to go to Holland anyhow, I left immediately, and a few days later I was again at my Indian's steering-wheel driving back to Paris.

After having crossed the French frontier, we entered the so-called "zone des armées," where one might

have expected to find nothing less than the battlefront. But even here, in November, 1939, I could see scarcely any signs of war. I passed through Lille, Arras—the future battlefields. These places were now occupied by the British expeditionary forces. Nobody asked me where I was going or who I was. These were the days of misplaced confidence and light-hearted freedom, when the German fifth column could carry on in France whatever work it wanted to. A half year later everyone in France had proof of the fact that the German fifth column had not wasted any time.

Polish refugees continued to pour into France. The big agglomeration of Poles in Hungary, Rumania and Lithuania diminished little by little. Also a number of Poles, having managed to leave their occupied country, came to France via Italy, which gave much help in rescuing them. This wandering by Polish and other political emigrants in the course of this war will some day form a separate chapter in its history. I, though a part of the first wave of this migration, nevertheless faced innumerable obstacles. Now it had become much more difficult to reach France, and sometimes fighting was necessary to overcome the obstructions. By Christmas, 1939, some 50,000 Polish refugees, mostly officers and soldiers, had gathered in France. On the Rue de Rivoli, around the Place des Invalides or Place d'Alma the Polish language could be heard more frequently than the French.

As we listened to the news brought from Poland, we

experienced contradictory emotions. We were glad and proud when we were told of the steadfast strength that dominated the spirit of the Polish people under the rule of our enemies. But at the same time we learned repeatedly about the growing misery in Poland, the famine, the Nazi persecutions. Some of the news was shocking. We did not want to believe it. Occasionally bits of it were later denied. For this reason we began to listen more sceptically to stories told by newcomers. There were also in Paris those who were not friendly toward us. They began to say that we exaggerated the German atrocities. Alas!—these stories were not exaggerated!

When, after 18 days of siege, Gdynia was finally taken by the Germans, they seized hostages from among the population. They were about 300, including the more important officers of the port authority, the city councillors, judges, priests, merchants, railway, customs and postal employees—who were transferred to Danzig. From that time no communication was permitted with the arrested men. Shortly afterwards the horrifying rumour began to circulate in Gdynia that all the hostages were to be shot. Eventually the same reports seeped into Paris. They were never confirmed, but it is a fact that these rumours had never been denied and that after more than 1½ years have passed, not one of the Gdynia hostages has ever been heard from. Three hundred people disappeared like stones dropped in water. From the most carefully guarded Nazi concentration and prisoners' camps, and even from the prisons, people managed to send some

message, if only a few words to show they still live. But from Gdynia's 300 hostages not a single clue in a year and a half! Of course they are no longer alive, although their deaths have never been confirmed. Why were they shot? Simply because they were good citizens of Poland, loyal to their beloved country. And there were those who, like myself, had participated in the construction of the port of Gdynia, lived my way of life and shared my ideals.

However, there was good news of my cousin Ada. She was alive! The most dangerous weeks she had spent in a little hamlet in eastern Poland, and then came back to occupied Warsaw. But she was in despair about her children, for during all that time she had no word from them or about them. Actually they were safe, for their father had brought them to Paris, and they had established themselves in the same boarding-house near the Seine, where I was living.

Beautiful as Paris was, the days seemed interminably long to me. I could not bear to be so inactive, spending my time discussing politics in the street cafés, playing bridge and making merry excursions with my niece and nephew—Ada's children. I had just completed the liquidation of my Paris and London firms and now was ready for some even more constructive work. From my many correspondents I concluded that perhaps Hungary offered me the best business opportunities. I had many valuable contacts there as well as many personal friends. But the deciding factor was the proposal

of the Polish Government that I look after the Polish refugees still remaining in Hungary. I decided to take up my residence in Budapest, leaving my family in Nice for the time being.

I left Paris by car, going first to Nice, where I intended to spend the fast-approaching Christmas holidays with my family.

Again my trusty Indian was at work, setting forth on a difficult winter passage across fighting Europe. I had two companions in my car: a friend who, like myself, had been appointed by the Polish Government for work in Budapest, and the wife of a member of the staff of the Polish Consulate in the Hungarian capital. Neither of my companions had ever been on the Riviera. It was a great pleasure for me to show them this wonderful country—the more so because both appreciated the beauties of nature. From Aix-en-Provence we came down to the Mediterranean at St. Raphael, and from there we drove to Nice along the winding shore-highway that twisted in and out among the red rocks. From a deserted mountain plateau we suddenly beheld a miracle of blue—blue sea and blue sky. And when we came down to the shore, we motored through the splendour of southern verdure, overlaid with sunshine, warmth, the laziness of the South. I knew perfectly well that this sudden contrast would impress my friends.

My family enjoyed Nice. They already felt at home and had made new friends. My elder daughters were corresponding with Polish soldiers in France. In Poland it was customary during the war for a soldier

to have a "war-mother" who would take an interest in her "son." Frequently they knew one another only through correspondence. One of them was on leave and for Christmas holidays came to visit his "war-mother." This "war-grandson" of mine was 40 years old. He was a simple peasant, had fought in Poland, distinguished himself, escaped to Rumania, and afterwards escaped from a Rumanian concentration camp and reached France. He was a typical Polish soldier, modest, not talkative, but always ready to fight.

These first Christmas holidays in exile were not very happy. Nevertheless we carefully observed all the Polish traditions: lay on the Christmas table under the table-cloth, three fish-dishes, a Polish dessert served only at the Christmas time—cakes with poppy and honey, called "lamance"—and after the dinner, a Christmas-tree and presents. I brought presents from Paris for everybody and arranged them on two tables in the billiard-room. Our young people forgot about the war and enjoyed their gifts, and we, older folk, rejoiced in their happy faces and voices.

I could spend only a few days with my family in Nice, for appointments had already been made for me in Budapest, as well as en route, in Rome, Florence and in Yugoslavia.

Most of the road from Nice to Rome is along the seashore. We drove on the beautiful but hazardous highway that sometimes ran down to the sea only to climb again up a mountain side, for here, as on the French Riviera, the ranges came close to the sea. We spent the next night in Genoa, and the following morn-

ing we again enjoyed motoring through the marvelous Italian mountain-land. It was a real pleasure this drive. We did not hurry; our lady-companion sung old Polish songs in her lovely contralto voice. I felt how my nerves were calming. We finally reached Rome, once the capital of all the world, and at the time we arrived, perhaps also a key point in Europe.

Italy at that time was undoubtedly at the crest of her might. In her hands was the greatest opportunity in her modern history, irreparably lost a few months later because of the morbid ambitions of one man. On the eve of the year 1940 Italy was the only country in Europe that could risk clinging to an independent policy, could defy the pressure of both fighting groups. Although the British and French diplomats liked to say that they would not pay one cent for the neutrality of Italy, it is fairly certain that if it had ever come to serious negotiations the Italians would have received substantial gains along those lines. They had advantages from the very fact that they were the sole neutral country in Europe whose military force was significant. This privileged position of Italy was evident in many fields; she was able to change in her favour a number of commercial treaties with her neighbours, and from Great Britain she obtained a substantial curtailment of the sea blockade.

Of course the Italian people never intended to fight and, until the last moment, did not believe their country would take part in the world struggle. Shortly before my arrival, in December, 1939, the well known rapprochement between the Pope and the King had taken

place. Only later did Mussolini skillfully join the alliance. When I arrived, the population was not yet aware of Mussolini's impending plans; they rightly understood that the alliance between the King and the Pope meant the federation of the better peaceful Italian elements against the adventurous policy of Mussolini, and were therefore extremely joyful. The police régime of Fascist Italy had stifled any open expressions of opinion. But in a short time, the Italian people, thinking that the position of Mussolini had weakened, began to speak their minds freely. Later they were again suppressed. So I had the unusual opportunity to see and hear authentic Italy—the Italy that dreamed of peace, that dreaded any kind of warfare and that was not by any means friendly to Germany. Indeed the aversion of the Italians towards the Germans which had always existed, grew visibly during the first months of this war. This aversion was accompanied by fear.

In the house of an Italian friend I met one of Italy's foremost dignitaries, who was largely responsible for the pro-German policy of Fascist Italy. He tried to explain to me that Italy never would join Germany in war, that she distrusted the Germans and actually disliked them. I am quite sure that his true feelings were the opposite of what he said, as he was very close to Mussolini. But what he said to me, is proof that public opinion in Italy was so strong against the Germans that even this high dignitary, in speaking to a foreigner preferred to camouflage his real feelings.

We Poles, although we had always received a friendly

welcome from the Italians, now were hailed with enthusiasm. Seeing foreign plates on my car and being told they were Polish, the people in the streets cheered me, shouting: "Eviva la Polonia!" I realized that this was their way of expressing not only their sympathy for Poland, but particularly to tell us indirectly, what they feared to say openly—that they hated the Germans, the oppressors of Poland.

I also had friends among the generals of the Catholic church, who told me some of the Vatican gossip. Of course, here too was an open anti-war front, the Pope exerting every effort to keep Italy out of the war. But I was also informed that the Pope was at the same time a good Italian patriot and that when the peace negotiations began, he would defend the interests of all Christian peoples, but at the same time the Italian interests in particular.

Our sojourn in Rome was unexpectedly long, for an unusual reason. We could not leave because of deep snow! During the first night following our arrival, there was a heavy snowfall that had seldom been matched even in northern countries. The newspapers disclosed that a similar phenomenon had happened once before . . . 400 years ago. The palms broke under the weight of the snow. The authorities did not know how to fight this white plague; they tried to flush the snow, but the water froze and the hilly streets were covered with ice. All traffic was virtually at a standstill.

When finally, on December 31st, I decided to leave Rome, the all clear on the roads still was not sounded.

I had bought shovels and chains as part of my car's equipment, and it was well I had, because immediately after we had passed the city's gate, we were stuck in the snow. The shovels were put to use, but a few miles farther we stuck again. It was no easy work to shovel the car out of such snow banks. At last, 30 miles north of the Italian capital, the roads were dry; it had been a local storm, confined to the Rome and Naples areas. I now motored at full speed, trying to regain the time we had lost. And every hour was precious, because we had all been invited to spend New Year's Eve with my friends in Florence.

At nightfall, shortly after we had passed Sienna in the Apennine mountains, we met another obstacle; snow was falling here, mixed with rain, and the surface of the highway was covered with a thin coat of ice. It was not sensible to continue the trip under these conditions, but the New Year's Eve celebration was approaching, and my sportsman's instincts forced me to go on. It was not long before I was cured forever of such sporting ambitions.

As we were crawling downhill in the darkness of the night, my car began to skid. I dared not use my brakes on that icy road and I realized, with horror, that the Indian was approaching the edge of the highway, then slid beyond it and continued his slow but relentless motion into unknown darkness. Suddenly we hit something that brought the Indian to a dead stop. We had struck a small tree. The damage to the car was negligible—but not more than three feet beyond the tree lay a precipice several hundred feet deep. And that

tree which had saved us from slipping into the depths, was so small that it bent under the weight of the car.

We always say in Poland that the most characteristic mark of a Lithuanian is his stubbornness. I have Lithuanian blood in my veins, and, true to my heritage, I did not surrender after this challenge that might have been fatal. I gathered bits of gravel and stones and spread them on the icy road around the car. Then I slowly backed away from the edge of the precipice and continued the journey. I managed somehow to pass through many other hills, and at last we saw below us the lights of Florence, and only at that point did we begin to meet other cars. In the mountains we had met only one automobile, a car without passengers, lying in the ditch. Indian had crossed the Apennines in solitude.

But we arrived on time! We found our friends in Florence at a quarter to twelve, really at the zero-hour. The party was already what the French call—"entre deux vins." They had given up hope that we could arrive, and as a result became even more joyous and hospitable in their welcome.

With stops in Venezia and Zagreb, Yugoslavia, we reached Budapest. I had the firm intention of starting immediately the welfare work entrusted to me by the Polish Government, as well as my own business. By correspondence I had arranged for various appointments and conferences. But instead of being able to proceed according to schedule, I found myself immersed in the life of the local Polish refugee colony and overwhelmed by news from home. Every day people

came to Hungary from Poland, having secretly crossed the Carpathian mountains. Budapest at that time was the distributing centre for news from occupied Poland. One of my old friends who recently came from Poland, revealed to me that my cousin Ada had been beset by numerous troubles. As soon as she received word that her children were in Paris, she tried to cross to Hungary via the "green frontier." But she had no luck, was caught by the Germans and put under arrest. She managed to escape, but now lived in constant danger of recapture. She was hiding in Warsaw under an assumed name.

I was of course shaken by the bad news about one of the persons dearest to me, and found it difficult to concentrate on my assigned work. But there was another thing that disturbed me no less than my anxiety about Ada. My fatherland was actually so close to me! I would meet someone who said: "Yesterday in Cracow or last week in Warsaw I saw this or this. . . ." My country pulled at me so strongly that I wanted to return to my countrymen, tell them that we were optimistic, that our allies were strong and determined. I wanted to encourage them, and to feed my eyes upon the Polish landscape so dear and familiar to me. The yearning for my country grew irresistible.

So it happened that my mind began to work on this new and unexpected idea—the idea of another secret journey to occupied Poland, with the task of rescuing Ada. Even to myself the prospect seemed fantastic, but nevertheless I studied the possibilities of a route through the mountains to Poland. Little by little the

fantastic idea began to assume concrete and realistic form.

At that time there were individuals in Budapest who fattened on human misfortune by smuggling of goods and men through the closed frontiers. One had to be very cautious in dealing with such people, because it was more than likely that half of them were working for one or another secret service and perhaps for several at once. Very carefully, through my Hungarian friends, I found my way to a Russian, who smuggled goods to occupied Poland. I preferred not to tell him the truth about my proposed voyage, and was introduced to him as someone who intended to go into the business of smuggling merchandise into Poland. My Russian made a rather good impression on me. He was well acquainted with the terrain and with the conditions on both sides of the frontier, and this was much. He gave me all the details about the route. On the Hungarian side the task would not be so difficult, as the railway ran close to the frontier. But on the Polish side the situation would be entirely different. There I would meet difficulties at every step. Not far from the point where I must cross the frontier, the demarcation line of the two occupations began, the German and the Soviet one. This demarcation line was placed in such a way that the railways were cut. As a result, on the side of the German occupation the nearest railway station was some forty miles from the frontier. These forty miles I would be obliged to travel in a horse-drawn cart, because there was no automobile traffic under German rule. I studied the maps carefully

and noted the names of villages and towns. The Russian informed me where I would be able to get horses, gave me the names of peasants who could be helpful, and even told me what kind of questions I might expect from the German patrolmen, if I were to meet them.

I had now traced a route. I also had the name and address of the contrabandist in the Hungarian frontier village, who would bring me across the border, when I would carry my contraband for the first time. Even the price for this service was fixed at 50 American dollars paid in U. S. A. notes. In this war, as in the World War, the American dollar was the safest international currency.

Another part of the preparation work were the documents. I could not, of course, travel under my own name. I also did not want to confide this new problem to my Russian adviser. This was a real predicament, because actually to get a false document I would probably need the assistance of someone of the criminal world, and in these circles, alas!—I had not sufficient connections. An accident helped me. I met a Pole, a timber merchant, whom I knew from pre-war times. He had just come from Poland and was in possession of his Polish credentials, which he no longer needed. He gave me this document, telling me that I could make use of it as I saw fit. I completed the falsification by substituting my photograph for his. I was glad that if eventually I did go to Poland, I would do so in the guise of a timber merchant, because the frontier zone through which I would enter is nothing but forest-

land, and the only businessmen who would normally travel there would be timber merchants.

When I made all these preparations, the unconscious conviction was deep within me that I would really go to Poland. It would be a marvelous adventure, a first class sporting exploit. Nevertheless, I did not want to decide positively, because in the meantime I had started my business interviews and my welfare work.

But fate decided differently. Again somebody came from Poland bringing more news about Ada. This time it was definitely alarming: she was preparing for a new attempt to escape through the mountains.

I decided to act immediately. I cabled to my superior in the welfare work in Paris, got his consent to leave for three weeks, and that same evening I was in the train that would take me to the Polish frontier. With one of my friends I left my money, the Indian and a letter to my wife, whom I did not want to know of my intention to visit Poland. This letter might easily become a posthumous one, but as far as I was concerned, I took this escapade rather joyously. I was still sure of my lucky star. From the window of the railway car I saw a fox. When I made my travel to Wilno I had also seen a fox, and I seized upon this as an additional omen that I might again play safely with fire.

It was already dark when our train stopped at a remote and dimly lighted station in the heart of Transcarpathian Ruthenia. On the station platform stood a crowd of people. Apparently I had been thrust into the midst of some suspect activities, because the

Hungarian gendarmes threw the light of their torches on every person leaving the railway car, asking many of them to present their documents. When my turn came and I was illuminated by the torch, I greeted the gendarme cordially in his own language and, whistling, walked on. My confident behaviour reassured the gendarme, and he did not ask for my documents.

In war time it is better to talk as little as possible. My Russian in Budapest had explained in detail how I would find the peasant who would rent me a horse to take me to the frontier town. In the centre of the village where I was now, after passing the church, I should turn to the left, walk down to the river, cross the bridge and knock at the fourth hut on the right side. Thanks to this accurate information, I had no difficulties in locating the man, named Stepan, and now we proceeded slowly uphill through a woodland in the peasant's small sled. There was much snow, but the sledge-road was excellent. The frost increased. One of those winter nights was coming, when the clutches of the frost tighten mercilessly and it seems there will be no end to this ever-increasing cold. Neither I nor the peasant could hold out against the cold when we sat in the sled, so the greater part of our journey was spent racing behind the sledge in an effort to keep warm.

Suddenly our horse reared to one side, frightened by the appearance of a tall dark form on the road ahead of us. We were stopped by a gendarme. But he did not put any questions to me and only wanted to be taken to the next village, the same to which we were going.

We did not speak during the ride, but all three of us from time to time raced behind the sledge. When we reached the village, the gendarme left us and went his way, without even saying good-bye. Only when I came back from Poland, did I learn that this gendarme, like myself, was going to Poland, although for quite different reasons. It seemed that the Hungarian had not been able to curb his desires in the presence of the beautiful wife of his superior officer. She called for help to the neighbours, who summoned her husband. It came to a fight, and the gendarme faced the double charge of violating a woman and striking his superior. He preferred to escape to the Bolsheviks.

Stepan knew exactly where he must deposit me in the frontier village. The man to whom I must now entrust my person, was tall and gloomy. He eyed me with a penetrating glance, and required that I pay him the 50 dollars in advance. "Maybe the Germans will kill you on the journey," he argued quite logically. I paid but also insisted that we start immediately.

My guide's hut was on the edge of the village close to the forest. We were in it almost immediately after leaving the house. The exceptionally cold weather had become almost unbearable. The snow crunched loudly under our feet. We climbed a narrow trail. Despite the frosty air the visibility was very poor. The mountain peaks were enveloped by clouds or fog, and even the tops of the spruce-trees were hidden from our view. We seemed to be walking in a tunnel through the woods.

As we climbed the mountain we found still more snow,

until at last it came up to our knees. Very soon I forgot about the cold, even unbuckled my coat and took off my muffler. We proceeded slowly conserving our strength. My guide quite sensibly picked our way over a mountain top instead of through a pass, where we would more likely meet the frontier guards. But this necessitated a climb of some 3,000 feet. Even for an experienced sportsman it would be rigorous exercise. I clenched my teeth, and, carrying my sack which was small but seemed very heavy, I measured my steps and resolutely followed the guide. At length, after more than two hours, the ascent became very steep and rocky. Now we crawled on hands and knees. But I knew from these signs that we were nearing the top. After a quarter of an hour we reached the peak—and that was the frontier of Poland!

Only one who has seen all that I saw during this war can understand the feelings that stirred within me when I reached the frontier-stone of my country. The stone still bore the ensign of the White Eagle, the emblem of Poland. The German "Gleichschalt"-ing machine, levelling everything mercilessly, had not yet reached this remote Carpathian mountain peak. The dark woodland below my feet—this was Poland. For the second time I had returned secretly at night to my fatherland! I stood leaning against the trunk of a spruce tree, and looked to the north. Strangely contradictory impressions and feelings passed through my mind and my heart. For more than one thousand miles stretched the country that I knew so well, now torn and imprisoned by the two destructive powers. Grief, hate,

desire for revenge rose in my heart. But at the same time my heart was filled with all the tender feelings for this land and for its inhabitants; all my precious memories revived.

Even my gloomy guide seemed to sense my emotions. Resting under another tree, he silently smoked a cigarette and from time to time sent me a stealthy look. Finally, in a strangely mild voice, he proposed that we continue our trek.

Compared to the difficult climbing, the walk down to the valley on the Polish side seemed like a wonderful rest. Very quickly we covered the two miles to the sleeping village at the foot of the mountain. There my guide told me to wait at the edge of the forest while he went ahead to investigate the situation. Everything was normal; there were no Germans in the village.

We went to the house of my guide's partner, an old Ukrainian peasant named Iwan. It was a luxury to rest in his well heated hut after the great exertion of our nocturnal climb. I took off my fur-coat and my boots and enjoyed the simple peasant meal of hot milk, bread and cheese. I insisted, nevertheless, that we start immediately on the next stage of our journey, but Iwan explained that we could not leave before dawn, because the Germans had forbidden any traffic on the roads between sunset and sunup. That meant some three hours of waiting; so I stretched myself on a bench and immediately fell asleep. It seemed to me that I had just put my head on the pillow when Iwan woke me saying that it was already morning and the sledge was ready. It was not easy to get up and leave the warm

hut, but finally they put me into a large sledge drawn by two small, strong mountain horses. Iwan wrapped my legs in a sheep fur, and we were on our way.

Smartly the horses sped along. The sledge-road was very good, and it promised to be a beautiful sunny winter day. The frost had accomplished its work during the night and had gone away. It wasn't long before I was face to face with the most dangerous part of my journey, the moment when I would meet the German inspection posts. The fiction of my travel had been prepared very carefully, but an intelligent and penetrating German soldier or agent could easily see through to the facts—and that would be the end of the joke. He would hardly believe that I had traveled from Paris to Poland for purely personal reasons. He would undoubtedly suspect me of political intrigue. And with the Germans, especially in this war, the suspicion of a crime was as good as the crime itself. I remembered that in Poland the Nazis had executed suspected persons in even much more innocent cases. But nevertheless I was in especially good humour that morning, and glad I had decided to risk this somewhat foolhardy trip.

We entered a village, and here we were stopped by a Nazi soldier. But this first encounter brought me no trouble. The German guard, huddled in a fur-cloak, unwillingly crept forth from his sentry-box and reached for my documents. In German I asked him some unimportant question, in which he took a greater interest than he took in my documents, for he returned them after the most superficial examination.

Now the road ran close to the river San and followed it for a considerable distance. The river at this point forms the frontier line between the German and the Soviet occupations. On their side the Bolsheviks had built a barbed-wire enclosure, making the crossing even more difficult than the crossing to Poland from abroad. We could see on the other side of the river armed men wearing the high-peaked caps of the Bolshevik soldiers. We approached a bridge and again were stopped by a German soldier. This time the inspection was very thorough. The Nazi asked me where I came from, where I was going and why, where my family was living, and whether I was participating in the war. He put all these questions, bethought himself, carefully reread my documents, appeared not quite certain of what to do, but finally let me pass. However, it was obvious that he was not entirely convinced by my story.

Only now I realized fully all the dangers involved in traveling illegally and showing false documents to the Germans who thought and worked so methodically. Since that moment every time I repeated my story, my efforts were bent on acting in such a way that the Nazi agent would have confidence in what I was telling him. Otherwise it might end fatally for me; a telephone call to Warsaw would be enough to bring the information that I was not known at the address I had given. On this excursion from Hungary to Poland and back to Hungary I was examined some 12 to 15 times. Every time I played a game with death, but luckily I managed

to win the confidence of the German inspectors, thanks to my good German and to my calm behaviour.

We continued to drive through a beautiful mountain country. The land was covered with snow, and the sun dressed the scene in dazzling colours. Everything seemed to contribute to make life harmonious and beautiful. But already I began to feel the burden of the foot of the oppressor, the mephitic air of the prison. We met on our way only a few peasant sledges. In the small towns, which in pre-war times had been animated and gay, we now saw frightened Jews, silently sneaking along, wearing on their arms the six-angled star of Judah which, to the Germans, designates the racial inferiority of the Jews. The shops were empty, the merchandise sold out, and there was no possibility of buying new goods. No smoke rose from the chimneys of the factories. Everywhere I could see signs of complete stagnation and of coming misery. It was still possible to get a little bread, eggs and even ham from the peasants. But they began to whisper that these were about the last they had. German regimentation began to dig its hand deeply into the life of the Polish village. The peasant-farmer was struck where he was most vulnerable: he no longer felt free on his own land. He began to be obstinate, his rancour grew, but he remained silent, knowing that today he is defenceless in his perplexity.

As we crossed a mountain pass we met a column of German soldiers. They were marching in the direction of the Bolshevik-occupied Poland. My driver told me

mysteriously: "The Germans and the Bolsheviks are going to beat one another." In this way this simple man expressed the dream that the whole Polish nation had had since the first months of the enemy occupation of their country. But at that time the days when it would be Russia's turn to be invaded by Germany were still in the distant future.

The train to Cracow had left the station shortly before our arrival, and the next train was not due until the morning of the following day. I was obliged to spend the night in the village. I had dinner at the railway station. In a small Polish town a railway station used to play a greater role than elsewhere; it was practically a social club, a meeting place. Here an oral news agency holds forth, substituting for newspapers, here too the local exchange has its seat, and all commercial transactions are concentrated there. To-day this erstwhile nerve centre was also lifeless. The Nazi soldiers were in practical possession of all the railway stations in occupied Poland. Now it was they who made the stations their clubs, their places of recreation where they could drink and amuse themselves. While I ate my dinner I observed such a German "five-o'clock." The bar-maid was unable to keep pace in serving beer to the Nazi crowd of soldiers. There was much laughing at jokes not too choice in flavour—as is usual in a soldiers' crowd.

The Germans in Poland drank a great deal. I saw many drunken German soldiers, but I never heard that they were censured or punished for this. We were surprised by this new practice among the Germans,

which we had never observed before on such a large scale. But it would be a mistake to suppose that it was a sign of relaxing discipline in the Nazi army. I think that the toleration of drunkenness in the German army is for a definite purpose, its aim being to develop the worst instincts in the soldiers occupying Poland, where terror is the corner stone of the tactics of occupation.

I had to use my wits to obtain a night's lodging. At the station I met a Polish railway employee, whose eyes had a honest look. He agreed to take me to his house for the night. And there he explained to me the plight of Polish railwaymen under the German administration. He also refused to accept payment for my night's lodging—exactly as on the Polish-Lithuanian frontier the driver had refused payment for bringing me to Wilno. Truly the brotherhood among the Poles in their occupied country is very strong.

The train I boarded the next morning was greatly overcrowded. At that time there were only two categories of travelers, the German soldiers and people of all classes, ages and sexes, carrying bundles of food. Everybody tried to buy a little food in the country and bring it to the cities, where there was nothing to eat. These "smugglers" filled to overflowing all the trains, which were now very few. I tried to find a place in a compartment where there were no Germans, but that was impossible, because the traveling soldiers almost outnumbered the civil population. In our compartment two Nazi soldiers made themselves comfortable, pushing other passengers aside. They talked loudly,

jeering at everything Polish. They openly tried to provoke their fellow-passengers and were greatly disappointed when all of us pretended we did not understand German and therefore ignored their provocations. Inwardly I was enraged, but I could not forget how precarious was my situation. This scene was not an isolated case. Throughout my journey in occupied Poland I witnessed many similar scenes. Before and after I heard from various sources, even from my compatriots, that the German soldiers, unlike the Gestapomen, behaved themselves relatively well. I am sorry to say that my impressions were different. What I saw—and I tried to look with impartial eyes—did not speak well for the German army.

Our train had stopped at some small station. From the opposite direction another train arrived taking Jews evacuated from the western provinces to an immense ghetto that the Germans had built in Central Poland. Our train carried a special excursion car filled with some 40 young German boys, 12 to 15 years old, of the "Hitler-Jugend." They were returning home from a trip across Poland made that they might see with their own eyes the booty of their mighty Vaterland. When they saw the Jewish crowd on the station platform, they leaped off of the train, ran up to the Jews and began to beat them. I did not want to believe what I saw, but it was happening before my eyes. I did not know how everyone of the boys managed to get something to beat with—a stick, a whip, a strap. All these were put into action, and everybody was beaten—women, small children alike. The Jews did not de-

fend themselves because they would only make their situation worse. Nor could we Poles help the unhappy people. I stifled my feelings of indignation and tried to play the part of attentive observer. I gazed straight into the eyes of the boys, and saw there nothing but bestial ruthlessness and fury. Then I looked into the faces of the German soldiers looking out of the windows of the railway cars. They were amused with the scene and laughed loudly. There might have been other soldiers, who did not want to look on these monstrosities, but I did not see them. However, I did see two older men in uniforms, as they stepped out of the boys' car. They smiled indulgently and a little later called the boys back in tones that said: "Enough of amusement for today, Kinder."

Not until the next morning did our train reach Cracow. Under "Deutsche Wirtschaft" in Poland it took 24 hours to cover a distance of 120 miles! Three times I had to transfer to another train waiting each time for several hours in small, dirty and unheated provincial railway stations. Many times my documents were examined; somehow I won the confidence of the Nazi officials.

Cracow, the old capital of Poland, was now a capital again--of the so-called "General-Government" in the part of German-occupied Poland which had not been incorporated into the Reich. The famous Dr. Frank was the Governor. People in Warsaw who even in these troubled times had not lost their renowned sense of humour, called the "General-Government," in honour of Dr. Frank, "Frankreich," which, in the German

language, means France. In Cracow were also the headquarters of the Gestapo. Shortly before my arrival the Germans had started the Germanization of this ancient Polish city. Nazi soldiers were stationed in Wawel castle, residence of Polish Kings since the XIth century. Most of the Kings of Poland are buried here. But it was not the first time that this old historical castle had been transformed into military barracks. Before the World War the Austrian soldiers had been quartered here. During the past 20 years the Polish nation had magnificently restored the castle and the royal chambers. Wawel added a new tomb, the tomb of Pilsudski, where the Nazis now placed an honorary guard. They claimed that Pilsudski was great because he had loved the Germans and wanted their friendship for Poland, and that for this reason he signed the non-aggression pact with Germany. But the disobedient Poles did not follow in the footsteps of their chief and attacked Germany. Thus the Germans prove themselves masters in sophistry. Even when apparently doing good, they always have a hidden aim that is destructive. The guard at Pilsudski's tomb was placed there to destroy in the minds of the Poles the legend of the great leader of their nation.

I had time on my hands until evening to visit the city and its numerous memorials. From St. Mary's church, familiar and dear to every Pole, the Nazis had taken away the high altar carved in wood that dated back to the XVth century, and was a worldover known masterpiece of Wit Stwos. The Grunwald memorial, erected by Paderewski in the year 1910 on the 500th anni-

versary of the famous battle of Grunwald when the Germans were beaten by the Polish King Wladyslaw Jagiello and became vassals of Poland—had been blown up with dynamite. The library of the Cracow University had been looted and its contents transported to Germany, and the old Polish parchment manuscripts from the XIth and XIIth centuries had been burned. The Nazis are destroying systematically everything relating to the old Polish culture. They destroy books, documents, national memorials. At the same time they destroy the best men of Poland.

All of Cracow at that time was overwhelmed by the most recent as well as the greatest of misfortunes that had yet befallen the town. Shortly before my arrival all the professors of Cracow University had been arrested and deported to a concentration camp in Germany. Cracow University is only two years younger than the University of Padova in Italy, which is the oldest in the world. It was founded 700 years ago and is the pride not only of Poland, but of all the civilized world. The Nazis liquidated this institution and its staff and the method of liquidation was unique. The Polish professors received invitations from the German authorities to assist Dr. Meyer, in his course of lecture—Dr. Meyer being the head of Gestapo in Poland. There was little doubt as to the character of this invitation: presence at the lecture was obligatory. When the auditorium was filled, Dr. Meyer appeared and really gave a lecture—about the injurious activities of Cracow University. Finally he announced that all his hearers were under arrest, and gave three

reasons for this action. He said: "You are arrested first in view of the fact that you have attempted to resume courses at the University without the knowledge of the German authorities; second, in view of the fact that you have continued your work in laboratories and seminaries and were giving examinations; and, finally, in view of the fact that *for five centuries the University of Cracow has been the bulwark of the Polish spirit* (sic!)." For these three "crimes" the 173 Polish professors were immediately seized and from the lecture hall taken directly to the concentration camp in Oranienburg near Berlin. This camp is the famous Olympia Village erected for the last Olympic Games in Berlin in the year 1936. It is not beyond speculation that when the Germans built these sport grounds, they already foresaw the future destiny of the buildings. Everything connected with today's war had been prepared by the Germans in advance.

When I was in Cracow, the first news arrived from the professors. They lived in Oranienburg under conditions obviously intended to break their health and their morale. In the middle of winter they were obliged to sleep in wooden barracks without heat. They slept two in a bed. Irritating details were carefully planned and ruthlessly carried out. It was so cold in the barracks that the water froze in the buckets. The professors, trying to keep warm, wanted to go to bed fully dressed, but they were forced to take off their clothes. The water-closet was in another building, and, as their shoes were taken from them for the night and put under lock and key, they were obliged, if they had to go to

the other building during the night, to go barefoot. The food was bad and scarce. The older men, and there were some over 80, could not endure this kind of life. During the first two months sixteen of the professors died, and the next months brought additional victims. Today these facts are common knowledge, but I experienced all this in Cracow personally and saw the wives and widows of the deported professors. Like other Poles, I carefully noted in my memory all the injuries inflicted by the Nazis upon my country and my compatriots.

Between Cracow and Warsaw there were Express trains, but the Poles were forbidden to use them. Local trains were for their use, trains that ambled along very slowly and were extremely overcrowded. I decided to try to get a place on the Express, figuring that perhaps in the disorder which was obvious everywhere on the railways, I might break through unchallenged.

The main railway station of Cracow was crowded. I managed easily to reach the platform, from which the Warsaw Express would soon leave. But the train itself was heavily guarded, and everyone trying to board it was obliged to present documents. But I was lucky again. Suddenly there was some extra confusion on the platform; the military commander of the railway station in a rather over-officious and noisy manner was guiding a lady and her little son through the crowd. He took them deferentially to a car, and from the loud conversation between the commander and the train-guard I learned that a special compartment had been reserved for the lady. I learned also that she was

a Pole. When she had taken her seat, I approached the window and tried to explain to her by signs that I would like her to invite me to share her compartment. She was probably a little ashamed that she had the comfort of a private compartment while her compatriots must travel under such pitiful conditions, and she nodded to me. Reassured, I went to the "Cerberus" who supervised the passengers permitted to enter the train, and told him that a compartment had been reserved for me. He did not ask for documents, and even helped me into the car, probably believing that I was a German.

In this way I obtained a comfortable place in the Express, which would bring me to Warsaw the following morning. I also had the company of a charming lady. The protection of the military commander she owed entirely to her aristocratic name. In this war once more the might of the "aristocratic international" was in evidence. In Poland a title was the best weapon against the aggression of the German occupants. The Germans, accustomed to respect authority, changed face immediately when they learned that they had to do with a count or a prince. The vulgar master changed immediately into the complaisant servant.

At last, on the morning of January 11th, I attained the goal of my long voyage—Warsaw. With apprehension I had looked forward to this moment. I had heard so much about the destruction of the Polish capital during its prolonged siege that I was prepared for a tremendous shock when I should see the ruins of a

town where I had lived for more than ten years before I settled definitely in Gdynia.

The Good Lord had spared me the expected shock. He had covered the ruins of the city with a thick blanket of snow that hid the city's wounds. I walked through familiar streets and looked for places and houses I had known. As I approached the centre of the city, I saw more and more devastation. There were districts where blocks of houses had been wiped out. There was no trace of the hotel where I had sometimes stayed. Opposite the vanished hotel had stood a house where my good friends lived. Even the rubbish had been removed. And what had happened to my friends? A little farther along there was another big house, half of which still stood. It had been sliced in two by a high explosive bomb. The bowels of the building were exposed, and on one of the naked walls I could see the hunting trophies of one of my friends who had lived there. In Budapest I had learned that he himself was killed when the house was bombed. Everywhere were ruins and more ruins. The snow softened the spectacle of monstrous destruction, but the wounds and the crippled members of the bombed city crept forth from beneath the snow. Warsaw had the air of a big cemetery.

The tramway lines were partly repaired and the street cars were running. The good old horse-drawn cabs, which before the war were practically eliminated by the taxis, had reappeared. Now there were no more taxis, nor private automobiles. The sidewalks were crowded, as the greater part of the population was now

obliged to go on foot. In this city I knew many people; I must avoid being recognized by any one of them. I shaved off my mustache, I put on glasses, but still feared that my friends might identify me if they saw me. Again the Good God helped me; there was a heavy frost that gave me an excuse to turn up the collar of my fur-coat and to push my hat down over my eyes. I carried my handkerchief in my hand and brought it to my face every time I felt that someone of my acquaintances was approaching. Already I had met two of my friends and they had not recognized me.

Fate compensates for bad moments and unhappy situations by giving us strong emotions, accompanied by great joys. Such was the moment when I met Ada. She was at home; of course she did not expect me. Both of us were so overcome by our meeting that we did not know how to begin our conversation. Ada's children were, of course, the important starting point. I gave her a full report; I could not tell her enough about them no matter how often I repeated every detail of their daily lives and childlike conversations. Eventually Ada told me the story of her unsuccessful attempt to escape from Poland. Naturally we decided that she should accompany me on my way back to Hungary. I spent the whole day with her, and made my headquarters where she lived.

The next morning we went out together, and were so absorbed in our talk that we forgot to be sufficiently cautious. We met a group of uniformed Gestapomen. One face seemed particularly familiar to me, but I could not remember where I had seen the man. He

seemed also to be interested in me. We looked searchingly at one another. Suddenly I recognized the Gestapoman. It was my former chauffeur Knud, whom I had seen for the last time in Kaunas, when he tried to escape with my car to East Prussia! Knud was now a Gestapoman in Warsaw, something I could not quite grasp at the moment. In the flash of a second when I recognized him, I felt certain he had recognized me also. His face puckered strangely and his eyes narrowed. I lost no more time, but made a friendly gesture toward him, laughed heartily, took Ada's hand and began to walk quickly away. Knud remained confused where he stood, and only his puzzled look followed us. I based my tactics on this moment of hesitation, because I had no illusions about him. As soon as the first shock of surprise caused by the unexpected encounter wore off, he would not dream of letting me escape.

In a second my situation had completely changed. I was certain that the Gestapo would search for me all over town, and that I was now facing far greater dangers than before. Nazis are very good man-hunters. Under these circumstances, if I stayed in Warsaw any longer, I would multiply not only my own, but also Ada's risks. I decided to leave Warsaw as soon as possible, although I had just arrived. The only thing that detained me, were the preparations for my return trip to Hungary. Ada had no documents at all, and I learned that since my journey the German authorities had prohibited all traffic in the frontier zone and required that special licences must be procured by those

intending to stay there. I now must obtain these special licences for myself and for Ada.

I found friends who seemed to know what to do in such cases. They knew the right people. In Warsaw, as in Budapest, the "profession" for arranging such illegal journeys had come into being. To this end, secret collaboration was established with the German authorities, or rather with individual Nazi officials. I discovered that in occupied Poland it was comparatively easy to buy the services of many of the Nazi officials, including the grim Gestapo. The business of the "profession" was to find out who these officials were. And news about incredible corruption among the Nazis came from so many reliable sources and the tales were so uniform that it was obvious they were not isolated cases but part of a general phenomenon.

Germany is a peculiar country from the moral point of view. Everybody who, like myself, has had business relations with German merchants, will admit that they are solid, loyal and honest. The same holds true in everyday relations with the little man in Germany. When you stop at a hotel, buy gasoline on the highway, or cherries from a peasant, you can be confident of honest treatment. But at the same time the mass corruption among the German officials that I observed in occupied Poland, existed in Germany before the war.

In the year 1930, shortly after being appointed Commercial Director of the port of Gdynia, I visited one of the biggest German ports where I was received by my colleague, the Commercial Director. It happened that twice during this visit the German Director

refused to show me certain parts of the port; one, a well known shipyard which is now one of the main objectives of the RAF bombers, and another—a long row of sheds. I did not insist, because I understood perfectly well that everywhere would be details that must not be seen by a foreigner. But the same evening, after dinner, my new friend began to apologize again for not being able to show me the closed parts of the port, and, without my asking—he explained everything to me about the forbidden places. And these disclosures were really valuable military secrets which I, of course, communicated to the Polish military authorities. The German was intelligent enough to understand that in revealing to me these secrets he had harmed his own country. What he did, he did merely out of friendship, just to be pleasant to me.

This was not an isolated case. During three years of my activity as Commercial Director of the port of Gdynia, I had many similar experiences. Competition between the Polish and the German ports was great; it was a real commercial war, where we fought with one another for the transports of the "neutral" countries: Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania. Our weapons were the rail and sea freight-rates, port taxes, rebates, premiums and other privileges. They were our "military secrets." I always managed to get these secret figures from the officials of the competing German ports, simply by making friends with them. I hope they never got anything from me. Of course, it was a sort of treason on their part, and another example of corruption.

The world knows today that Goering, Goebbels and other high Nazi leaders who began as poor men, built up big fortunes for themselves. Today every American can learn from his newspaper that even "the most honest" among the Nazi leaders, Rudolf Hess, managed to save from his earnings as a government employee some 3,200,000 dollars, which are deposited in the United States. The most fantastic stories about the careers of the Nazi leaders were told also in Germany, but nevertheless the people tolerated their chiefs. They tolerated them not merely because it was impossible to do anything to deter them, but because they were regarded as privileged. Often I met German merchants who, though honest men themselves, were not at all indignant because of the way in which their political leaders had made their fortunes. "They are different from us," they explained.

Today Germany is at war with all the world. There are some high Nazi dignitaries who have broken with Nazism, fled from Germany and are spreading propaganda abroad against Nazism. That is all very well. But at the same time they are often working not only against Nazism, but also against Germany. I could hardly conceive of a more important Briton, an American or a Pole who would give aid to the enemy, against whom his country is fighting. It would be called treason. The Director of the German port who revealed to me the secrets of his country, or a German emigrant revealing similar secrets in his book—probably do not realize that they are traitors. Isn't this further evidence of a different morality among Germans?

It would be wrong to attribute this corruption exclusively to Nazism. It is necessary to go far back into German history, to the Prussian military régime under Kaiser Wilhelm II, and even to Bismarck. It is not only since the Nazis took over the rule of the Reich that the Germans have had their lives entirely regulated and controlled by the police. For a century at least they have not been free men and have not known the democratic way of life. That is the secret of corruption in Germany.

At all events, my friends were able in two days to obtain for me and for Ada all the necessary documents and licenses, and this time these documents were not falsified. They were authentic German papers, but issued to false names. Nor did I pay much for them. The low price of this merchandise proved that traffic in such documents existed on a mass production scale.

While my friends were obtaining documents for me, I continued my investigations in the ruined city. Here was evidence not merely of damage, but of intentional and systematic destruction. The City Council still existed, although it had been shorn of executive and fiscal power. When I was in Warsaw, the Council had just completed the official figures tabulating the destruction the capital had suffered. Of course the Germans refused permission for the publication of these statistics which showed that more than 40% of buildings within the boundaries of Warsaw and suburbs, were entirely destroyed or destroyed to such an extent that they could not be rebuilt. Another 30% were partly destroyed, but could be rebuilt. Finally, the

remaining 30%, according to the official version, escaped destruction, but even they were not without small damage: broken window panes, cracked and broken plaster, holes torn by explosives. Also caught among Warsaw's ruined buildings, during 4 weeks of bombardment, were 40% of the dead and 30% of the heavily wounded. Since medieval times, not one city in the world has suffered such heavy losses as Warsaw during her heroic defence in September, 1939.

Now all was in readiness for the departure from Warsaw. But the night before we should start a neighbour rushed in with the dreadful news that near our house a slain Gestapoman was lying. I knew perfectly the implications, for the Nazis always adopted the same method when a German soldier or official was murdered. They seized all Polish men who lived in the neighbourhood and shot them by way of reprisal. There were fixed quotas for such reprisals: for a dead German 50 Poles, for a wounded German 20 Poles and so on.

Shortly before there had been a case which became widely known because of the specific circumstances under which it occurred. Agents of the Polish police which still existed and were used by the Nazi police for various auxiliary services, met two dangerous criminals, known to them from pre-war times. The Polish police were not armed, and therefore told Germans of their discovery, asking them for help. Together they went to a tavern in the suburbs of Warsaw, where the two criminals were hiding. They were armed, and there was shooting. Both bandits were killed, but be-

fore they died they killed two of the German and one of the Polish policemen. The Nazi version of the tragic affair was simply that the Poles had killed the Germans, and so must pay with 50 Polish lives for each German, and 20 lives more must be added for the Polish policeman (sic!), making a total of 120. As all of this happened in a remote place in the suburbs, where there were few homes and not enough men to fill the quota, the Nazis stopped a passing suburban train, took 120 men from among its passengers and shot them all on the spot. I am certain about the details of this case, because among the men shot there were two of my relatives. Their wives, who were with them in the train, were eyewitnesses of the murderous affair including the shooting. I spoke with them afterwards.

Naturally, when I heard that in front of our house lay the dead body of a Gestapoman, I knew I must not lose one moment. Ada and I left the house in the night despite the fact that wandering in the city after dark was forbidden. At the risk of being arrested we managed to reach the railway station, where we had to wait until 11 the next morning, before the train to Cracow arrived and we could begin the toilsome trip back to the Hungarian frontier.

This time it took the local train 48 hours to make the distance of less than 200 miles from Warsaw to Cracow. Before the war, the Express train made the same trip in 5 hours. This part of the journey was exceptionally tiring. Four times we had to change trains, the compartments were impossibly overcrowded, the air was foul and, worst of all, the Nazi soldiers were inflicting

their unprintable brutalities on the passengers. The nights were even worse; they were spent in the railway stations, in a similar crowd, among even more debauched and drunken soldiers. It was impossible to leave the station, because the train might leave at any time. We did not stop in Cracow, but changed immediately to another train. When, after another day and night, we finally arrived at the station where, two weeks before, I had begun my railway trip to Warsaw, both of us, Ada and I, were dead tired.

Ada endured bravely all the hardships and difficulties of the trip. Disguised as a peasant and carrying a sack of cheap textiles, threads and soap, she played the role of a woman peddler. I was still a timber merchant. From a Warsaw firm I had formal orders to purchase timber. I carried a portfolio full of different kinds of specifications, bills and notes. In the train we acted as if I was not formally acquainted with my cousin.

In the small town where we now arrived I wanted to see the railway employee, whose guest I had been, because he had promised, when I returned, to find me horses to take me to the frontier. But on the door of his house I found a card bearing a German name. The hospitable man no longer lived in his own house. It was safer not to search for him any further. I began to try in other ways to get the horses, but it was not so easy. The driver who would drive me to the frontier, would also take a risk.

I managed nevertheless, to find a reliable man. We proceeded now by the same route that I had taken two

weeks ago: the mountain pass where I had met the German column moving in the direction of the Bolshevik-occupied part of Poland, the bridge on the river San and the Nazi guard. On the return journey again I did not wait for him to ask for my documents, but started the conversation myself. We were laughing and joking; obviously he, too, was sure he was dealing with a German. We reached the next town. Again a passport examination. This time the guard was severe; he ordered me to follow him to the commander of the garrison. Therefore I changed my tactics and on arriving at the commander's office, explained that I had come on my own initiative to ask the commander for help. And help I received, although it was more help than I had bargained for.

To make my plea specific, I asked the commanding officer to give me a letter of recommendation to the frontier posts that I avoid further troubles and misunderstandings. In doing so, I probably told the officer too much about the big prospects of my timber business. The major, an upright elderly officer of the former Austrian army, took all I said literally. "I will be very glad to help you," he told me, "and you are in luck, because tomorrow morning the Obervorstverwalter (the forest inspector) is coming here. You had better explain everything to him." I could do nothing to save myself from this "luck," and was obliged to stay over till the next day, to discuss with an expert in the timber trade things that were utterly strange to me. They arranged a conference, at which I spoke as probably a fortune teller would, try-

ing not to show that I knew nothing about the matter, but, nevertheless, saying something. I must admit that this time I was dealing with decent, rather credulous fellows. They listened with serious faces to all I told them, gave me a letter of recommendation that I requested, and even invited me to lunch. During lunch they told me about Hitler's genius, about the coming happiness of all the world, and tried sincerely to persuade me that the future of Poland would be much better under the wise German rule than it could be if Poland remained independent. I am sure that they sincerely believed this. The Obervorstverwalter was even so kind that he offered to accompany me on my trip and to help me in the purchase of timber. With great difficulty I managed to dissuade him from carrying out his kind offer.

Having now the supplementary documents from the commanding officer, I had no more fear of the German patrols. We traveled in our sledge safely and quickly. It was already dark when we approached the frontier village, where we would leave the sledge and begin the passage across the Carpathian mountains. This time it would be much more difficult, because I was accompanied by a woman, and, above all, because during the past two weeks the snow conditions in the mountains had become much worse. Fresh heavy snow had fallen.

But even the most fantastic imaginings could not create a picture to equal what reality had prepared for us in this respect. In all my many travels and hunts, even in northern Russia and Finland, I had never experienced such incredibly bad snow conditions. If

during my first passage across the Carpathians there were times when I fell into the snow up to my knees, now we continually sank much deeper than to the knees, sometimes even to our shoulders. In addition, there had been no thaw, and therefore no ice-crust had formed. The snow was powdery and as we walked we sank through to the ground at every step. In fact, I would hardly believe the cauchemare of this night, if I had not lived through it myself.

We had just approached the village, when we saw a man, walking in the same direction as ours. We overtook him quickly. I recognized the oldest son of Iwan, who had brought me two weeks before from this village to the railway station. At that time we had agreed that if I came back he would guide me over the frontier. It was a lucky coincidence that I met him now; it enabled us to start immediately on our way. We left the sledge on the village's border and followed the peasant on foot. We walked now in a deep snow. The boy must have been going more rapidly than we were, because the distance between us grew wider and wider. When I called to him, asking him to go slower, he began to run instead and quickly disappeared from view. It was a perplexing moment for us, as the behaviour of the boy could only mean that something had gone wrong. To be sure, we began to retrace our steps back in the direction of the main road, which we had just left. Our sledge was not there, but on the road we met a peasant woman whom I asked whether there might be German soldiers in the village. "Oh, yes," she replied, "they are. As usual they are sitting in Iwan's house."

Now everything was clear to me: the Ukrainian Iwan was now in German service. The business of hunting Polish refugees probably paid better than the dangerous one of smuggling contraband merchandise into Poland.

We had no time to lose and must start immediately the crossing. But, under present circumstances, having no guide, I could not risk the passage straight across the mountains. Our only chance was to follow the main road to Hungary. Here, however, I would be confronted by two frontier posts, the German and the Hungarian. On my preceding passage I had learned from my guide that the building on the Polish side was under construction and that the German patrol during frosty nights preferred to stay with their neighbours, the Hungarians. That was all I knew about our road. But I had no choice and was obliged to take the risk, as pursuit could come at any moment.

I did not explain all this to my cousin; I merely gave her a tacit sign, and we began to march along the road in the direction of the frontier. Ada understood the situation perfectly well and asked no questions. We proceeded silently, hurrying as fast as possible.

Even on the highway there was much snow. The ruts made by sledges ended at the village border and there was no traffic at all in the direction of the closed frontier. The snow covered everything around us with a smooth thick coat. At the edge of the road there were men's footprints in the snow. We stepped into these tracks, which made our march easier. Being a hunter I can read such tracks, and so concluded readily

enough that on that morning some three or four persons had passed that way going in the direction of the frontier, but had not returned. Nevertheless I decided to continue on the road as long as possible, because I knew that as soon as we left the road, the snow would be much deeper and the walking much more difficult. Our first aim was to get away as far as possible from the dangerous village. I realized perfectly well that never before had I been so close to danger as now. During my three preceding secret passages through the enemy-held frontiers, all my effort had been directed toward one single aim: how to hide myself so that the foe would not see me. This time I had every reason to suppose that he knew about our presence and would pursue us, easily following our tracks in the snow and simply making use of the way dug by us. I felt instinctively that every minute held the key to our deliverance or to perdition. I went on ahead and apprehensively studied the road before us. At any moment we could meet the German patrol returning from the inspection tour. The night was still and clear. The moon was nearing the full, and had just appeared on the horizon. For this journey I preferred the clear night; although it might make it more difficult for us to hide, it enabled me more easily to get my bearings in the unfamiliar place.

I had been told that the frontier line was some three miles from the village. True to my hunter's habit, I counted my steps, and so, after one hour of walking, I knew we were in the neighbourhood of the frontier. We walked on cautiously. Presently we saw a road

sign, indicating a barrier ahead. The Automobile Club of Poland always puts its signs 600 feet from the object that they announce. Thus we knew that we were exactly 600 feet from the frontier barrier. We turned a sharp curve at this point and saw a big building distinctly in the moonlight, with the empty frames of the windows set into incomplete construction. I preferred not to risk the highway any longer. I looked at Ada to see whether she was tired. It was safer not to talk in this place, but Ada understood, smiled and nodded.

We abandoned the road and entered the forest. Now we put all our energies into the march, though it was no longer a march, but a digging in the deep snow. We dug with our feet, hands, our bags. After every hundred steps we changed leadership. I tried to cheat a little and to lead on longer stretches, but Ada protested every time, and energetically pushed forward through the snow. Nevertheless we advanced desperately slowly. After ten minutes of hard work, we stopped to catch our breath. I looked back; I could still see the spot where we had left the highway. Our efforts had been so great and the results so small! We moved again, but now we stopped every five minutes. Ada continued to smile, but she was becoming flushed and breathless. She looked attractive when she threw back her kerchief and her blond curls scattered in disorder.

It is astonishing that whenever I am in a dangerous situation and my nerves are strained, I react much more intensively to everything which is beautiful.

During this nocturnal passage over the mountains I noted, and to this day remember, every minute detail of the natural surroundings, which this night appeared in their most beautiful array. The huge trees of the mountain wilderness were snugly wrapped in a thick snow-furred cloak. On this quiet, windless night the branches of the trees did not drop a single flake from their snow treasures. Everything around us was clean, white, soft. The moon, old friend and ally of the wilderness, stepped from the sky to this enchanted kingdom. Here he was at home. The forest gloried in the moon, every snow-crystal sparkled to him. Near a tree trunk I noticed the sharply-etched design of a bear track. The king of the Carpathian wilderness had dug himself through the snow just as Ada and I, but here, on the hard crust under the tree, he probably had stopped and listened. I lost myself in thoughts about this fellow-traveler, our comrade today, like ourselves hiding in the wilderness from the eyes of men. Ada had the same reactions faced with this beauty of nature. There was no need for talk, because we had already come to a tacit understanding, and together we absorbed the same strong and unforgettable impressions.

I studied the landscape and found we had already passed the building on the Polish side of the frontier. We were directly above the highway which now crossed the mountain pass and descended steeply. I left Ada and approached the road alone. In the full light of the moon I could distinctly see the same tracks of men that

I had seen before. They led to the Hungarian border and did not return. The Germans must still be ahead of us.

As yet we could not see the building of the Hungarian guards, but from the topography of the terrain I guessed it was about a mile distant. So we had one mile to go through no-man's land, and afterwards another mile to make the detour around the Hungarian frontier building. There would be two miles of painful digging through snow, before we could reach safety.

We moved again. So that we would not lose our way we paralleled the road, but some 500 feet away from it, and the telephone poles kept us informed as to our direction. One hour passed before we saw an illuminated building, undoubtedly the guard shelter on the Hungarian frontier. Although we were not far from the safety zone, we were approaching the most hazardous part of our journey. The Germans probably were in that building, and they might easily have dogs. I thought it would be safer to go deeper into the forest. Again we walked for half an hour before we dared stop for more than a brief rest. We still saw the lighted building, but this time it was behind us and at a higher level, for we had already started down the mountain. Below us we could see in the full moonlight a vast valley, into which the highway was descending. No doubt, we were already in Hungary. On this southern slope of the Carpathians the sun had been able to make a better impression, and on the open glades, as a result, an ice-crust was beginning to form that facilitated walking.

But before we began this final lap of the passage, we stopped to look back; once more we gazed at the dark line of the woods on the mountain top, on the crest of the mountain chain, on the whole white winter landscape behind us. This was our farewell to Poland. And then we began to descend. Hand in hand, we sped quickly down the steep declivity, laughing and chatting as we were sure we had passed the worst part of our journey.

Suddenly I stopped, gripping Ada's hand more tightly. Ahead of us, at a distance of not more than 30 feet, I saw a small thread of smoke. It came from a metal pipe jutting from a small snow mound. It was, undoubtedly, a dug-out for guards, probably Hungarians, for we were about half a mile within the border of this country. But I preferred not to encounter even Hungarians, remembering what had happened three months before on the Lithuanian frontier. We began to withdraw slowly back uphill, following our own tracks and still keeping our eyes on the dug-out. No voices could be heard coming from it. When we finally reached the safety of the woods, I again studied the terrain. The open space of land, across which we had descended so conveniently, must now be stricken out from our strategical plans. If a guard were to stand on the other side of that shelter, he would be able to overlook the entire valley and would see clearly in the moonlight any person who might be over the open slope. It was for this reason that the trap had been erected there. Willingly or not we must take the route to our left, again going through the woods.

This meant not only a detour, but also floundering along in deep snow.

But we managed to overcome also this new obstacle. During the next two hours we dug through the snow, which on the Hungarian side was probably even deeper than any we had struggled through in the beginning of our trek. We finally fell into a deep ravine, from which, as it seemed to us, we would never find a way out. Ada gave up her attempts to play the role of an equal partner; she wept from fatigue, yet still smiled through her tears when I looked at her. I also began to feel that my forces had reached their limits. From time to time we lay down on the ground and ate the cold snow. My small bag seemed to be laden with lead. My heart beat rapidly; I was short of breath; my legs were as if made of iron. If a German patrol had found us in our present state, we would have been unable to escape or to defend ourselves. We both were exhausted and all our reserves of energy were spent. Even longer stops did not help.

I don't really know how at last we reached the highway far below in the valley. Somehow we made it. We sat down on stones. Ada offered me a cigarette, and her hands trembled when she passed it to me. I am not a smoker, but this time I craved something new. The first and only time in my life I smoked a cigarette with real pleasure.

We had already been in the forest for six hours, and it was getting late. We felt that now we must hurry to reach the village before dawn. We saw it below us. We began our final descent and walked more than three

miles before we reached the first houses of the village. The peasants were already busy with their early morning tasks. The first man I met agreed to take us to the railway station, and went immediately to get his horses while we rested in his house. The hospitable Ruthenians set out all sorts of food for us, but we were so tired we could not even think about eating; it was all we could do to keep awake.

But we did not start as we expected, for a Hungarian soldier entered the house and ordered us to follow him. We had been summoned by his commanding officer. The young lieutenant spoke severely, warning us that Poles, escaping from their occupied country, must be deported back to Poland. Exactly what I heard three months ago on the Lithuanian frontier! But before I had time to consider how serious these threats might be, the unexpected intervened again. We were by this time on the second floor of a big stone building. We heard loud voices below indicating that a quarrel might be going on. Everybody ran to the windows. Outside we saw a German ski-patrol, composed of one officer and five soldiers; they also had two dogs. In an excited voice the officer tried to explain something to the guard. The Hungarian probably did not understand German, as he answered nothing, and only saluted the Nazi officer obediently. The Hungarian lieutenant swore vehemently, took my cousin's hand, gave me a sign and led us to the adjoining room. Here the windows were darkened, there was a large bed, and, to our utter astonishment, a woman rose from it. The officer told her something in Hungarian and left the room. The

woman who, as we learned later, was the lieutenant's wife, smiled beautifully and asked me to turn away while she put on a dressing gown. Then she took us both to a small dark alcove joining the sleeping room. Woman's dresses were hanging there, and a big trunk stood in a corner. We sat down on the trunk and waited for whatever might happen.

The Hungarian lieutenant called the German officer to the room we had just left. The walls of the building were thin, so that from our alcove we could hear every word that passed between them. We heard the whole story of our flight through the frontier, as told by the Nazi officer. The German patrol had followed our tracks, which brought them straight to the Hungarian village. The German demanded that the lieutenant deliver the two refugees to him, Ada and myself. With trepidation I waited for the answer of the Hungarian. He replied quietly that it must be a mistake, that he knew nothing about any Polish refugees. The German declared then that he and his soldiers would, under the circumstances, be obliged to ransack the whole village. The lieutenant sharply refused, saying that this was Hungary and that alien soldiers would not be allowed to make inspections here, even if they were friends. However, it was finally decided that the Hungarian soldiers should search all the houses of the village, and that the German guests might rest in the interim and have a glass of good Hungarian wine. The soldiers went to the village, and the two officers began friendly conversation from which I learned many interesting things: that every day several people attempted to

cross the frontier at this point; that a few days before two refugees had been shot dead on the frontier; that another day the frozen body of a man had been found in the mountains, and from his documents it had been ascertained that he was a colonel in the Polish army. I learned also that in the shelter on the Hungarian side, where we had nearly been trapped, there were not Hungarians but another German patrol. They were probably the same men, whose footprints we had seen on the highway. The Nazi officer knew all about our adventures: that we had come straight to the shelter, that we had withdrawn and made our long detour. He said that the patrol in the underground shelter had been asleep, and that the non-commissioned officer who was at the head of the patrol in the dug-out, would be punished for his negligence.

The Hungarian soldiers did not find us in the village. The Germans stayed in the house a little longer, but left at last and went away. The lieutenant released us from our prison in his wife's bedroom and told us to disappear immediately. We could go wherever we pleased but we must not remain any longer in the village. Then he looked a little more attentively at Ada, the severe expression on his face softened, and, smiling, he said: "I have changed my mind; you will not be allowed to leave the village . . . until you have lunch with me and my wife." We had a pleasant and interesting talk at the table. The traditional Polish-Hungarian friendship found expression once again in a remote village of Transcarpathian Ruthenia.

That same evening we were on a train, which should

bring us in Budapest in the morning. In the quiet warm compartment Ada and I discussed all we had lived through during the last few days. This trip to my occupied fatherland was probably the most exciting adventure of all my life. But it was not only the efforts and the dangers that had enriched the experience. There were the overpowering impressions I brought back from enslaved Poland. I had witnessed the misfortunes of my people, and gloried in their high morale. Of course, these unhappy times developed the worst instincts of some people and brought to light a few shady characters. But an overwhelming majority faced their cruel destiny with astonishing stoicism. In public life, to counterbalance the emergence of those few dark creatures, appeared brilliant figures—and throughout Poland there are thousands and millions of them. Millions of people who are not broken and who have faith in the future despite all what happens. Defeated Poland lives under the watch-word: to endure. The consequence of this watch-word is another rule: no compromise with the foe. It is impossible for the Germans to find among the Poles a Hacha or a Quisling. The foe is still a foe; the war is not yet ended. Today, of course, there is nothing to be done; the nation's instinct of self-preservation makes it clear to everyone that any political or military demonstration would only harm the country. Today it is silently marking time.

I was in Budapest with Ada. Many times before the war we had planned to come here once together. I always wanted to show her this most beautiful of Euro-

pean cities. And at last we were here, but how different were the circumstances! We spent the most wonderful evening in the famous "Kakuk" restaurant, enjoying a bottle of "Barack-Palinka," while listening to the Tzigan music. My friends in Budapest greeted me cordially and let me tell them all the details of my adventures in Poland. One of them arranged a pheasant hunt for me. I had had neither a rifle nor a shot-gun in my hand since the deer hunting on the Vistula on the last pre-war day. It gave me real pleasure to take a few shots now.

But it was now the old story of *visés* for Ada. It took three days to get together everything she needed. We left Budapest by plane, going to Milan and from there taking the Simplon-Orient-Express, which brought us quickly through Switzerland to Paris.

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As a consequence of the month of tramping, I had now many things to catch up with—in Paris, Nice and Budapest. In Paris important conferences awaited me. In Budapest my business had been practically neglected. But, above all, in Nice my family was expecting me. I had not told them of my intention to go to Poland, and hearing of my arrival in Paris, they naturally wanted to hear all about my experiences.

But it was another month before I could go to my family. Matters connected with the transport of war material which I had transacted at the beginning of the war, took me to London. I spent two weeks in the British capital. It seemed to me that in this country,

as in France, neither the people nor the Government understood the full gravity of the war. Possibly the British did realize that the Nazis were not bombing London, because they were not able to do it, but the British explanation for this passivity on the part of the foe was most unrealistic. They believed simply that the Nazis would never dare to bombard the civil population of London. The rearming of the country still proceeded at a slow tempo. Portly and phlegmatic Englishmen had not yet found the right swing. London's life went on as normally. England was still living in the phoney war times.

When, finally, I joined my family, I was received as an ancient hero coming home from the war. On this visit I stayed a little longer in Nice than I expected to. It was really the most quiet spot in France. The Riviera was even exempt from the onerous black-out. The season was now in full swing. The Promenade des Anglais was crowded with automobiles and its customary elegant public. Old ladies, so typical on the Riviera, were here as usual; the big English colony lived its normal life. There was only one thing new, the many uniforms. During the previous war, military men could also be found on the Riviera. At that time this had been the main centre of military hospitals. Promenade des Anglais had been full of soldiers on crutches, and convalescent poilus were taken there in wheel-chairs. Today the soldiers were coming merely on leave and for recreation.

My family were already entirely accustomed to their new life. They liked their place of exile. The mild

climate of Nice had helped to relieve my wife's heart-ailment. My daughters called our villa "our home." Each of them had picked out her "own" beloved palm in our park; the youngest one, Mary, bred rabbits. All were getting along quite well with their studies. I was confident that I would be able to spare them from any further horrors of the war. After the dizzy tempo of the last two months, I enjoyed the *dolce-farniente* of life on the Cote-d'Azur. Finally, reassured, I left Nice, to go to my work in Budapest.

I intended to stay in Hungary during the entire war. I was beginning my labours after two months delay. During these two months big changes had taken place in this country. The war could be more clearly seen in the Balkans than in Paris or in London. Here I was much nearer to Germany and could better observe her huge war machine working at full speed. Slovakia was already a German province. Rumania and Yugoslavia, by means of commercial treaties, were so closely bound to Germany that there was no more opportunity for independent economic action. The situation in Hungary was similar, although this country better than the others managed to conserve her independence of action. This fact was all the more astonishing because in Hungary especially it could be expected that the Germans would more easily than elsewhere find their way to both the government and the people. For centuries Budapest had been closely bound with Vienna, and the shadow of Austria-Hungary still is hidden in the old palaces of both the Danube capitals.

Among my Hungarian friends I have one whose

friendship I value most highly. He is a University professor, and the former Prime-Minister of Hungary. He explained the present situation of Hungary:

"Actually there is no ground here for the creation of anti-German sentiment. Germany never claimed from us either territory or economic or political privileges which might endanger our freedom. They want to buy our agricultural products, and this can be only advantageous for us, especially if things change and it will not be necessary for them to pay for our products with worthless paper. On the other hand, we need German help to solve our vital territorial problems. Everything in this country speaks for collaboration with the Germans."

Despite all this, my friend was one of the leaders of a political party, which fought ardently against local Nazism and all influences that might lead to a closer association with the German Reich. The ideas of contemporary Germany are precisely the opposite of the chivalrous traditions of Hungary. The Hungarians were indignant at all of Germany's activities in Poland. Their behaviour toward the Polish refugees who came by tens of thousands to their country, was extremely sympathetic and loyal. Officially the Polish military men were put into concentration camps, but unofficially both the government and the people of Hungary did everything in their power to help the Poles. Even the mass departure of Polish soldiers to the Polish army in France was accomplished with the secret connivance of the Hungarians. The German Envoy in Budapest was furious that the Hungarians, natural allies of Germans,

had remained loyal in their friendship to Poland. Yet at the same time Rumania, the official ally of Poland, continued to hold under arrest the pre-war Polish Government.

But all this did not help me much with my business in Hungary, where the only trading that could be transacted was limited to deals with Germany. All other enterprise had gradually ceased to exist. I had an opportunity to dispose of great quantities of pit-props in England, of which the supply was plentiful in Transcarpathian Ruthenia. I was prepared to pay much more than the prices paid by the Germans. Moreover, I would pay in dollars, and the German importers paid in Reichsmark clearing. In vain the Hungarian exporter and I tried to close the deal. But we could not obtain the necessary permit from the Hungarian authorities, and the pit-props were sold to Germany. In this way, perhaps, Hungary paid Germany for peace and for the coming territorial annexations favourable to her.

I realized that my business prospects in Hungary under existing conditions were very poor. At the same time the relief work entrusted to me by my Government, had been organized by someone else during my two months absence, so that I was no longer indispensable for this activity. I decided, therefore, to liquidate my camp in Hungary and to go back to France.

This time, too, I found companions for the journey. The same singing lady, who had accompanied me on my Christmas ride from Paris to Budapest, decided to make the trip in the opposite direction for Easter. Her

husband was the third passenger, and at the last moment the fourth one joined us, a niece of mine, named Nina. She appeared quite unexpectedly the day we were to leave Budapest. I met her on the street; she wore long boots and a kerchief on the head. I well knew what this picture signified: she had come from Poland. Only two days before she had crossed the Carpathian mountains in the same way I had come. We did some shopping, and, a little later, the peasant girl in kerchief and boots was transformed into an elegant and very pretty young lady, who joined me at my lunch in the "Hungaria" restaurant. My niece is young and had been married two years ago. Her husband was mobilized shortly before the war, defended the fortress of Hel and was taken prisoner when the fortress fell. The young "straw widow"—as we in Poland call a married woman who is temporarily separated from her husband—had no plans for the future. She had escaped from the Germans, and that was sufficient to make her happy. Now she was hungry, excited by her latest adventures, glad to be well dressed again, to be in a good restaurant and to listen to the famous Magyary Imré orchestra. I wanted to take her to Nice to my wife, so that she might be under my wife's protection. But she had no visés, and I could not wait for her to get them, because then I would be late for Easter at home. My decision came quickly. I had had so much experience in the illégal crossing of frontiers that I would risk taking Nina to France without documents. This decision was ratified by Nina and also by both our companions—and we all left Budapest next morning. In-

dian, after his enforced winter inactivity, grew impatient to start on this journey that promised to be somewhat difficult. The exceptional snows of the winter were still in evidence. During the winter months the snow-drifts on the highways had been dug out and the cars passed through deep snow channels. These walls at the road sides still remained, but they were beginning to melt and the driving became more and more difficult. When we reached Balaton lake, we were obliged to leave the main road, because a river that emptied into the lake at this point had inundated all the surrounding territory. Several bridges had been destroyed and railway communication was interrupted. Twice we were obliged to cross the flood. Indian plunged in up to the axles, throwing up columns of water to an incredible height, but at least he did not remain stuck in the flood. Finally, twisting over narrow country roads, we found our way out of the low lake country, and shortly afterward we were near the Yugoslav frontier. Here, for the first time, I had to demonstrate my familiarity with the tricks necessary for crossing the frontiers illegally.

According to my plan, we would leave Nina a half mile before we reached the frontier, while we continued on our way, passing both barriers and going through all the necessary formalities. Then we would declare that we had lost something and return in search of it. So we would pick up Nina and cross the frontier for the second time, if possible without stopping. So we did. On the Hungarian frontier I won the confidence of the employees by showing them the document certifying

that I was Consul of their country. With the Yugoslavs I discussed political problems, spoke about the brotherhood of Slavonic peoples, about the role of Yugoslavia among the Balkan countries. On both frontiers they wished us cordial farewells when we left. I drove for a considerable distance before I turned. Coming back to the frontier I declared that I had lost the handle of my right front door, that I had seen it shortly before we came to the barrier, so that it must have dropped off somewhere not far from there and that I would like to go back to search for it. Both Yugoslavs and Hungarians agreed immediately. I even suggested to them that I would leave one of our passengers with them as a pawn, but they refused magnanimously. Now everything progressed according to the plan: we took Nina from the ditch, the handle, which we found in the pocket of Nina's overcoat, was restored to its right place, our contraband found a place on the rear seat with our heap of luggage, was covered with a plaid, our fellow passenger rested idly against the plaid—and so, for the second time, we passed both frontier posts. We even stopped as the guards opened the barriers to show them triumphantly the handle we had found. Both the Hungarians and the Yugoslavs bowed to us in friendly fashion.

Once more we repeated this procedure on the frontier between Yugoslavia and Italy. This time Nina was left not in a ditch, but remained quite comfortably in a café in the Yugoslav frontier town. We played the comedy even better this time, because of our previous experience and because it was dark.

There was no more snow in Yugoslavia, but we were obliged to go through almost impossible mud. Indian was as dirty as a pig and looked very unhappy. Only when we reached the excellent Italian highways, could my Indian speed for the first time since his winter sleep. The car rolled now quickly and quietly, and our headlights illuminated still new spectacles for us. From time to time we could read on walls and rocks: DUCE, DUCE, DUCE—a word that hangs over all this land and presses down on everything with its heavy impact.

The next day there was one more frontier to cross, the frontier between Italy and France in Ventimiglia. Here the inspection was so exacting that we could hardly dare repeat our trick with the lost handle. We must invent something else, and, luckily, we found a way out. The couple were traveling on a common passport, but, in addition, the lady had also a separate passport which she had used when she came with me to Budapest. The French visé on this passport was still valid, but the transit visés were no longer good. When we passed through Zagreb in Yugoslavia, the singing lady went to the Italian Consulate and, without any difficulties, obtained the Italian transit visé on her second passport. So we had a supplementary passport with all necessary visés. Now all that remained to be done was to exchange the photographs, and by this time I had become a specialist in this kind of job. However, I did not change the photographs on the single passport, but on the double one. Thus Nina played the role of the wife of our companion, while his legitimate wife was assigned to the role of his sister-in-law. May the

frontier officials understand now something from all this mess!

Everything went smoothly. The Italian officer looked with greater interest at the two beautiful ladies than at their photographs, and probably did not even notice that there were two of the same family and given names. At the French frontier a Polish officer had been assigned to work with the authorities. It happened that by mere chance he knew both of our ladies personally. But he did not say anything, nor did he ask any questions. He simply stamped both documents. It is necessary to add that the other lady also traveled under a false name. Miraculous things of this kind were happening all over Europe in this war.

We arrived on time for the Easter holidays. The house was full of guests. This time six "war sons" of my daughters arrived for their Easter leave, and among them were the boy-scouts from Kaunas, who, on my first trip to occupied Poland, had helped me in the rescue of my family. There was much hubbub and gaiety in the house, my wife being specially happy, because she could now demonstrate her cooking ability. In Poland she had the reputation of being an exceptional housewife, and her specialities were much appreciated. This time, too, there was nothing absent from the traditional Polish Easter table: cakes in the form of towers, called in Polish "baba"; other cakes, flat and thin, called "mazurek," and among them my beloved "tzigan" cake; a young pig holding an egg in its snout; a turkey and different kinds of ham; a lamb made of butter, and, finally, decorated Easter eggs.

Some twenty people, most of them young, were at the table—and once again I tried to forget that we were far from our own house and our own country. But disquieting thoughts intruded more stubbornly than ever before.

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As on the eve of the outbreak of the war in Gdynia, I found another moment here in Nice when I tried to flee from reality and have a look from a distance on my actual life and its prospects. In the park of our villa there was a wild, neglected spot. A narrow path climbed steeply over the rock. Prickly weeds were growing there and among them a huge old cactus. There was also a pond, where at this time of the year the frogs were croaking exactly as in Poland. Here I hid myself with my solitary thoughts.

Seven months had passed since the outbreak of war, and still I could not adjust my mind to it. The yearning for my country was even more intense, and at the same time my anxiety was growing greater. All of us, in the first stage of this war, believed that Hitler was foolish to start a fight against such mighty powers as Great Britain and France. But during the past months, thanks to my walk to Poland and my numerous journeys to Central Europe and the Balkan countries, I was an eyewitness to the imposing progress of Germany, where everybody thought about the war, where the war was in fact a total war. On the other side of the front, in France and in England, I observed the comfortable and agreeable life still going on as in pre-

war times. I myself lived this life and enjoyed it very much, but I realized with apprehension that in France or in England the war was by no means the most important problem. A few months before we had expected that early in the spring the allied armies would start their march on Berlin. Now everyone spoke with anxiety about the coming spring. Sometimes I caught myself speculating on what would happen if the Nazis should also win on the western front. At such moments black clouds covered the picture of the future. However, I obstinately continued to paint the picture in rosy colours.

But now the Polish emigrants in France faced another difficulty. Although we were still optimistic about the final issue, we were practically out of the war. We who had been so enthusiastic to collaborate with our allies, when our own country was invaded, were now just passive observers! It was not so easy for us to get work or to establish a business in a foreign country. My situation in this respect was much better than that of the greater part of my countrymen, because I had sufficient resources to live abroad even for a long time, if necessary. But for seven months I had been spending money, earning nothing during that time, and all my efforts to engage in new business had failed. It was for me not so much a question of earning money, but of doing something constructive, which directly or indirectly would be useful to our common cause. I tried various things but could not achieve anything that seemed worth while. Nearly all my Polish friends had the same experience, except those serving in the army.

The reason for all these difficulties was simple: we were aliens and were deprived of the protection and help of our own once strong government, and such protection is most important everywhere in any kind of work or trouble. The Polish Government in Paris, like every exiled government, was itself a guest of France, whose position sometimes was difficult. We were not even astonished that the allied governments did not use our offers of collaboration to their fullest extent. To them an alien remained an alien. Poland did its part in the war, did it well, but now it was the turn of others to act, and Poland must wait patiently until she could be useful again. Our only recourse was to live for the present day and to wait on further developments, which continually depended less and less on us. We understood all this, we were still confident that our partners would be able to do our common job well and that we could rely on them. Even if from time to time we suffered moments of doubt, we did not allow them to dominate our thoughts. But it was nevertheless painful for us to be brought down to the role of passive observers. For the first time since the war broke out, I considered myself a refugee, and that is most assuredly a wretched feeling.

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I spent nearly two weeks with my family on the charming Cote-d'Azur, before I went again to Paris.

I like Paris and all of France very much. The French tragedy was also my tragedy. At the beginning of the war I was cut off from my Poland, and later

I was parted from my France. To this day I yearn for her and her beautiful capital. I still see the noble perspective of streets and monuments along the river Seine, from Etoile down to Louvre, the harmony of evening tones on the Seine with her marvelous bridges, the view from the colonnade of the new Trocadero on the left low bank of the river, the avenues of Paris bordered with horse-chestnut trees. This year in all France the chestnut trees were in bloom especially abundantly and long. In the evening I liked to walk under these trees. I liked also to let my Indian to go at full speed along the lower part of the Champs Elysées, passing by the slow European cars one after another. I liked the late walks in the Bois de Boulogne, or a siesta in an old-fashioned restaurant. Paris had so many of them!

In Paris now I had a new occupation. The Polish Government, in accordance with the French and British Governments, started preparatory work for the impending peace conference. We were to gather material which would clear up various Polish problems. I was entrusted with part of this work, with the presentation of all data concerned with Polish shipping and maritime problems. My life in Paris began at last to be more interesting and diversified. I flew again to London, and went often to Angers, where the Polish Government now actually resided. I did not separate from my Indian, who also enjoyed the lazy and easy life of Paris after the difficult winter journeys.

The final hearing of my suit against the Dutch shipyard, which has just finished building my ship, had

been set for the day of May 3rd. It was an unusual case. There were, in fact, not two but three parties to the dispute: myself as accuser; the shipyard, the formally accused party, which was actually indifferent to the outcome of the trial, and, finally, the German "Treuhänder" (trustee) of my firm in Gdynia, who was in fact the accused. He engaged the best lawyers who prepared for the trial very carefully. It was the first trial of its kind before the Dutch court, and the verdict would set a precedent. At the same time the Germans brought pressure on the shipyard by stopping the delivery of motors for the ship ordered in Germany before the war, and threatening reprisals in case the ship should appear in German waters. Unfortunately, she was built on a canal in northern Holland, and could reach the sea only by way of the river Ems, the frontier river between Holland and Germany.

The Dutch tribunals are just. Despite the difficulties and the German pressure, the verdict was in my favour. The court ordered the shipyard to deliver the ship to me, and not to the German "Treuhänder."

This was a real triumph, and I returned to Paris very much pleased. The verdict would be valid after one week, and on that day I was to be paid for the ship, which I had sold in advance. But the condition on which I was to receive the money was that the buyer must have actual possession of the ship. The price he was to pay would be sufficient capital for me to start a good business venture. The verdict became valid on May 10th, my lawyer prepared to cash money for me—but at the dawn of that very day the Nazi Panzer-

divisions crossed the border and entered Holland. My ship was lost. I never saw my money.

But on May 4th, when I left Holland, there was nothing to presage war, although twice before there had been alarms on the German frontier. Each time these alarms had been without significance. Even the flooded areas on the Dutch-German frontier, the trenches, the barbed wire and the barricades that I saw on the Dutch-Belgian border, aroused no suspicion among the people. All this did not look warlike, but seemed rather to be a demonstration. The stiff silhouettes of Dutch soldiers, riding their bicycles, and never carrying arms, were far from the likenesses of warriors. Their heroic attitude a few days later was a genuine surprise to everyone.

Nor did anything happen on the eastern frontier of France, the so-called "war front." In the Paris cafés the professional soothsayers continued their animated discussions on reforming the world. Most of them still predicted that a general offensive of allied forces on the Siegfried Line would begin as soon as spring came.

WAR IN FRANCE

Miracle of the Loire — War on the western front at last! — With Ada in Molineuf — Abandoned Holland — Hotel Parc & Majestic, Vichy — False alarms from Nice — Molineuf again — A sack on the Somme — First uneasinesses on the rear — Dunquerque — Still Molineuf — Thunder on Italian border — Indian's third voyage to the Riviera — Mussolini on the beach — Italy at war — Night journey across the Alps — "Matresses" on the French roads — Le Puy, a fable city — The tent — War council at Vivier — Havas agency — A telephone call to occupied Paris — Towards the Atlantic coast — Migration of peoples — A frightful flight — France overrun by motorcyclists — "Les Polonais ont été toujours fous" — Cross-country riding — A little of boxing — La Rochelle — The closed flood-lock — Indian on a fishing boat — 80,000 tons of the "Normandie" and ours 265 tons — Bombs, a submarine, mines — Stowaway passenger — The fortress of Britain — What happened in France?

ON THE days of May 8th, 9th and 10th, we searched with Ada on the shores of the river Loire for a summer residence for herself and her children. At the same time I tried also to find something for my family.

Mussolini was threatening France and England too much. I preferred to locate my family closer to the place of my own residence.

The banks of the middle Loire, the so-called "Jardins de France," are probably one of the most picturesque spots in that country. When I was a small child, I imagined that the landscape in paradise must be exactly like that which I now beheld on the Loire. On the shores of the gently flowing river and her tributaries, on the verdant slopes, I could imagine even now shepherds and shepherdesses in medieval dress, the eternal idyll of the calm of country life among the beauties of the nature, in an atmosphere of song and love, far removed from troubles and sorrows. In my thoughts I painted this wonderful land in pastel colours, a land of kindly and refined people, of the best French language, of good wines, excellent cuisine, marvellous flowers, charming groves. I thought of it also as a land of countless historical memories reaching back to the most magnificent periods of French history, a land of thousands of castles and chateaux, immense and luxurious, or small and mysterious. Even today this part of France still savours of this glorious inheritance.

In this quiet and beautiful country I decided to shelter my family from all the troubles of the war, which continued to pursue us.

Ada had rented a modest house in Molineuf, a small village at the edge of a forest, not far from Blois. I had already looked at many houses, but only one really pleased to me. That was a country estate that re-

minded me of Poland, named Vivier. The house was some 200 years old, looked charming and was completely covered with vines. Large lawns, overhung by ancient trees, extended on every side. All this was set in the centre of a vast park on whose shadowy avenues the peacocks strutted. Vivier also was not far from Blois. But the owner charged more for the place than I had planned to spend.

Our search was about to end. I decided to go back to Paris without signing any lease and to return later. We were having breakfast on the terrace of a small hotel near Chambord castle, and were listening to the morning news just being broadcast. At last! At last this strange and disquieting phoney war had come to an end! The German armies at dawn that morning had crossed the frontiers of Belgium and Holland.

I immediately signed the lease of Vivier. I was quite sure that now, with war actually begun, half of Paris would try to find refuge in the country. Then we sped to Paris. On our way to the capital we met several reservists and brought them to their concentration points. France was mobilizing new contingents.

Both French and Poles hailed with enthusiasm the news that the war had begun. But the motives for this enthusiasm were quite different. For the Poles every new German invasion, every extension of the war represented an additional guarantee that it would not end with a premature peace, that more and more people in the world were interested in the annihilation of the destructive power of Germany. The Frenchmen were pleased that the war had begun, because they hoped

and believed that now the trouble would end sooner and, of course, in victory. Their belief received added strength from the good first news from the battlefront: the Dutchmen were holding their positions firmly behind the water barriers.

Then Mussolini threatened again. Some of my acquaintances arrived from Rome, saying that their Italian friends had advised them to leave the country. I began to feel uneasy about my family in Nice. In the meantime Ada decided to speed her departure to the country. I took her and her children to Molineuf. Nina went along also. Once again I spent several good days in this beautiful country, waiting for news from Nice. But instead the radio brought almost too much news from the battlefront. For strategical reasons the High Command abandoned the defence of Holland and prepared the defence of Belgium. Great French armies arrived every day in this country. The honeymoon of the war continued.

Nevertheless I preferred not to be separated from my family any longer. I left Molineuf and hastened to Nice. The Parc & Majestic Hotel in Vichy, where I spent the night, was preparing for a big season. Nobody even dreamed that exactly this place and this hotel would in a few weeks be the seat of the tragic government of defeated France.

My family protested strongly and unanimously against leaving. They could not understand why they must hurry away. Indeed nothing here in Nice indicated the possibility of a war in this part of France. Nobody had any thought of moving. My Italian visé

was still valid; so I crossed the frontier and went to Italy to appraise the situation there. Here, too, everything was quiet. The proprietor of the hotel in San Remo where I had staid once before, was busy building a new wing to the hotel.

Completely reassured I was on my way back to Paris a few days later. But I wanted to have one proof more of the fact that I could safely leave my family in Nice. Therefore I chose the way through the Alps, going on a small road along the Italian frontier. Here would be the future front if Italy should attack France. I feared that I would not be allowed to enter this section of the borderland—but *nobody* stopped me. I saw many soldiers, but no activity. I was reassured once more.

The situation on the battlefield had become serious. Belgium was also abandoned and the Nazi Panzer-divisions entered northern France. A strange sack began to form along the river Somme. The man on the street could not understand why mighty allied armies could not rip this sack somewhere near Cambrai, since the Germans had been so incautious as to penetrate deeply between the allied armies. Incurable optimists asserted even that the German advance was the result of a brilliant manoeuvre of the French High Command, who thus was drawing the foe into a trap. More reasonable people consoled themselves with assurances that the Frenchmen had always awakened and fought heroically when danger came quite close to their homes, and that this time too the big counter-offensive would start very soon. But there were others

who sensed the impending Dunkerque. Then came what was called the treason of King Leopold, and drastic changes in the personnel of the French High Command, in search for the guilty. It made even the optimists understand that the situation began really to be menacing. On the streets and in the shops crowds listened silently to the radio news and to the pathetic speeches of prime-minister Reynaud. Anxiety grew. France was really at war, danger was on the march and coming closer.

We Poles were disturbed not only by bad news from the battlefield, but also by what we observed among the people. It was the second war that we were living through, and we were in a position to make comparisons which, possibly, also means to understand. How different was the spirit of the people eight months ago in Poland and now in France! In Poland there was an enthusiasm during all the struggle, an excellent fighting spirit. Here in France there was no outburst of youthful fervour, no daring idea, no readiness for sacrifice or for serving as a good example. As yet there was no panic, but everybody hastily began to arrange his personal affairs and apparently thought only about those affairs. Passivity and apathy characterized the French in the second half of May, when on the battlefield there had been no defeat, and when, perhaps, later defeat might even have been prevented.

On the Italian frontier distant thunders could be heard again, and again I was not sure whether I could leave my family any longer in Nice. At any rate it was futile for me to stay in Paris. Conditions here began

to be so tense that it was nearly impossible to work. Some governmental offices thought about evacuation, and even sent quarter-masters to the south of France.

I left Paris on the 6th of June not realizing that I would not return here during the war. Once again I went to Molineuf. Here the war seemed very far away, and life in Ada's little house was still full of sunshine. I could have forgot here about the horrors of the war, had it not been for the wireless. It brought worse and still worse news. Dunkerque was already an old forgotten story. The sack on the river Somme had swollen, and now out of it began to pour German Panzer-divisions. Marne, Yzer, Chemin des Dames and other names of the historic battlefields of the World War now reappeared in the communiqués. The Frenchmen were fighting alone at this time, the expected landing in Bretagne of new British expeditionary forces being still delayed. The outlook for a short and easy war disappeared definitely, while at the other end of France, on the Italian border, truly ominous war clouds were gathering.

I could no longer hesitate, and left again for Nice. For the third time Indian crossed France in the direction of the Mediterranean. This time I chose the nearest and the most direct way, and made a non-stop voyage leaving Molineuf early in the morning, and arriving at Nice before dawn the next day, June 10th.

The picture I beheld on the Riviera this time was quite different. Thousands of people were leaving the southern coast. While I was still on my way I met dozens of elderly English ladies, who had lived on the

French Riviera sometimes for a half century, and were now rushing in their antiquated Rolls-Royces in the direction of the Atlantic. It was the first sign that indicated a change. In Nice there was a general belief that war with Italy this time was imminent. Everyone was preparing for such an eventuality. We too made preparations. Some of our luggage we sent by train to Blois; it never reached there and was lost. I also made arrangements about the house, and drew my money from the bank. But I had no intention of leaving immediately; I was tired, the weather was splendid, the war had not yet started. Perhaps this time also it would end with the mere clanking of swords?

Late in the afternoon my daughters and I went to the beach. The sand was delightfully hot. We ordered some cold drinks as the radio on the beach played a languorous tango. When the music ended, the voice of a man came over the air. He spoke in Italian—loud and vehemently. It was Mussolini delivering his famous speech in which he declared that Italy could no longer tolerate the injuries inflicted on her by England and France, and therefore was now at war with these two countries. He also announced that hostilities would begin at midnight.

Only history will tell what happened behind the scenes of this decision. Before Italy joined the war, everybody had speculated whether Mussolini would be able to resist Hitler's pressure and remain neutral. Now we heard from all sides that Mussolini had declared war against the wish of Hitler, who, having defeated France alone, preferred not to have Italy as his

partner. It may be true. France was dying, and directly under Italy's hand great riches were stored. It may have seemed to Mussolini that these could be grabbed very easily.

The Italian border was only 15 miles from our villa. Mussolini had announced that six hours later hostilities would begin. This meant that artillery would start shooting, planes would drop bombs. And so, we must leave Nice, which had seemed to be the most quiet spot in all France. I had managed to establish here a new home and a new life for my family. Now we must retreat again before the war and look for another shelter. And who knows where we would stop on this new pilgrimage?

At ten o'clock that evening, two hours before the promised hostilities were to begin, Indian rolled away on his new voyage of escape. We were five passengers and carried not less than 12 bags and trunks. For the first time the streets of Nice were in full black-out. In complete darkness on the Promenade des Anglais long chain of automobiles moved slowly. Where the avenue narrows, there was a congestion of cars. The policeman who regulated the traffic at this point, was nervous. With great difficulty Indian managed to get through the tangle. On the main road to Cannes the situation was nearly the same. We decided to leave the main highway and to take the Alp road. Here the automobiles were few, but we were stopped every five minutes for the inspection of our documents. We reached Grasse, climbed the mountain road, but here we run into a general order to stop all traffic during the

night. We must wait until dawn. I went back to Grasse and tried to find the official who might give me a permit to continue our journey through the night; we were not more than 20 miles from the Italian border. I saw everybody from the officer commanding the local garrison, to the mayor of the city. All admitted it was silly to stop thousands of refugee automobiles, but no one of them was sure he could give me an authorization to drive through the night, nor that such an authorization would be recognized by the soldiers in charge of traffic on the roads. All this was very significant.

I came back to the barrier where I was stopped—and here we spent the night. Probably we would have been safer in our villa in Nice than here on the mountain pass, within a few hundred feet of an anti-aircraft battery. And certainly we would have been much more comfortable at home. My wife and our two younger daughters spent the night in the car, and our oldest daughter and I slept on a plaid on the ground, close to the car, on hard, sharp stones. Later in the night I heard the distant thunder of big guns. I did not know the significance of these artillery shots, because as a rule there was no shooting on this new phoney battlefield.

It was still dark when at four o'clock in the morning we were allowed to continue our journey. Despite our delay, I was glad that we had left the main highway of Cannes, for thanks to our detour across the Alps, we were now at the head of the big refugee wave streaming from the Cote-d'Azur to Central France. The sensation of the day was of course the war with

Italy, and, as usual, there was much fantastic gossip. We were even asked about "the battle of Nice." When we crossed the valley of the river Rhone, we began to meet another wave of refugees, coming from the opposite direction, from Paris. These two waves now passed one another and crossed. Refugee cars could be recognized from afar by a mattress attached to the roof, and the heap of bags piled on the mattress. A little later these colourful mattresses crowded the French highways and became the symbol of the horror, which hastened the disaster of France and turned the defeat of the French army into the collapse of the entire nation.

We tried vainly to find a hotel in Le Puy, a dream city, where steep cliffs rise up from the centre of the town, and on their rock-ledges are built churches and huge monuments. We continued our trip, but providentially I bought in Le Puy a full camping equipment: a tent, rubber mattresses, sleeping bags, and even a rubber wash-basin. Many times during our wandering we were grateful for these things. Already on our first night we made camp in the forest in the environs of Le Puy. All four women slept comfortably in the tent, and I put my sleeping bag straight on the moss, among heather and fragrant wood grass. Next day at noon we arrived at Vivier, the country estate that we had rented near Blois. Here we intended to stay, and I still was confident that our sojourn would last quite a long time.

Some weeks before, in Paris, I agreed with one of my friends that, if it should begin to be hot in Paris,

he would come and stay with us in Vivier. He had arrived on the previous day with the bad news that the Germans were approaching the capital. My friend had once been the Polish Ambassador in Paris and still had good connections in the French governmental circles. From these sources he had the information that the chances of defending the capital of France were very small. The French Government had been moved a few days before to the chateaux of the Loire. Some Paris newspapers had emigrated to the provincial cities. All organization in the life of the big French Republic was disrupted.

From neighbouring Molineuf Ada came to Vivier with her children and with Nina. In these troubled times I preferred to gather all my dear ones in one place, and in the spacious house of Vivier was room enough for everybody.

On June 14th I made a reconnaissance trip with my friend the Ambassador. Newspapers were no longer available, and the radio news revealed nothing. All we knew was that these were the days in which the final outcome of the French campaign was being decided. We did hear the news that the Polish Embassy, after leaving Paris, had taken up its new residence in a castle near Tours. We decided to go there in search of more exact information.

We stopped first in Tours, where we visited the office of the Havas, the main French press agency. It had fled from Paris, and was huddled in a single room, without any typewriters and with the telephone disconnected. They were in the same state of ignorance

as we were in Vivier. I felt we did not need to search any longer. Did not this set-up of the Havas agency explain everything?

In the beautiful parlour of the "summer residence" of the Polish Embassy the jobless diplomats in low voices discussed the actual situation. They also knew nothing about what was happening. My friend asked whether it would be possible to speak by telephone with Paris. It was hopeless, they said, because for several hours they had not even been able to get a connection with neighbouring Tours. But in such chaos it sometimes happens that the unexpected occurs. Within ten minutes my friend was connected with the United States Embassy in Paris, which had decided to remain in the capital even if the Germans occupied it. My friend asked about news from the capital, and received as an answer that at that moment they were watching from the windows of the Embassy the Nazi troops marching through the Place de la Concorde. Thus we learned that Paris had already been taken.

Tours and Blois are some 100 miles from Paris. No mountains or rivers stood in the way of a possible farther drive onward by the German motorized columns. We must leave Vivier and go on. Our next stop would be La Rochelle on the Atlantic coast. A wolf in case of danger always tries to reach the nearest forest; so I, a sea-wolf, now preferred to reach the sea coast. Besides, in La Rochelle we could have the help of my cousin, Ada's husband, and his fishing boats. He was manager of a deep-sea fishing company, evacuated from Poland, and had six small boats, 220 to 265 tons each.

We sometimes said jokingly that if the Germans occupied France, we would use these boats to escape to England.

We had a "war council" in Vivier. The problem was not so simple, as we had at our disposal only three cars, two of them being baby-cars of French make, and there were 15 of us! We had also a great deal of luggage. It was decided that I should first go alone, taking in my car as much of the luggage as it would hold, bring all this treasure to some point half-way to La Rochelle, and come back again to Vivier. Then we would all leave together with the remaining luggage, going straight to La Rochelle. Later on somebody would bring the other luggage from the place where it would be stored.

The same evening I left, and Indian this time had changed into a truck. When I reached the main road, motoring became very difficult. Two parallel streams of heterogeneous vehicles moved slowly southward on the narrow road. In this migration of peoples in France, besides innumerable automobiles of different makes and often of ancient vintage, always overloaded, there were huge trucks, long military transports, the wagons of peasants, carts pushed by men, people on bicycles and people on foot. Every vehicle moved at a different speed; the rattling automobiles, brought from the court-yard on the road after years of disuse, stopped and obstructed the highway; inexperienced war-made drivers did the most unaccountable things, while the military units hurled all this crowd aside when they wanted to pass forward. And there was of course nobody to regulate this wild traffic.

However, these roads presented an unforgettable spectacle. As in the movies, new scenes and activities flashed before our eyes at every turn. France was on the march, and if you wanted to understand what happened in June, 1940, you should have been on the French road at that time.

On a high two-wheeled horse-drawn cart a peasant from some northern department of France had packed all his modest belongings. On the bundles set his wife with the smallest child. The peasant and the older children were making their way on foot, walking at the side of the cart, while a cow trudged behind it. They had been evacuated from their village by the military authorities, and had been given an address where they would be housed and where the local authorities would take care of them. Yesterday they had been there. The local authorities themselves were being evacuated; the peasant was ordered to proceed further to the south. A peasant is the same in every country: patient, obstinate. He continues to walk at the side of his cart.

And here is another picture: a passenger automobile with the indispensable mattress on the roof, two elderly ladies and several children in the car. The hood of the motor is raised and a young woman is working at the carburetor. She has tears in her eyes and is in despair. Of course, she is not acquainted with the bad animal known as the carburetor. I ask where they are going. They don't know: as far as possible to the south. And they have gasoline for only 50 miles. I do not understand very much about mechanics, but I turned something, the motor started and the weeping lady con-

tinued her trip. She is a heroine, but how thoughtless is her heroism!

We pass by three big trucks carrying a long row of lathes and boxes. A factory is being evacuated from the war-zone. Smaller cars must give way when these huge trucks approach.

There are many soldiers on the highways. Sometimes I see complete military units, where there is still some order and some command, but the most frequent picture is an overloaded truck. Other soldiers go on bicycles. But there are also loose groups of soldiers marching on foot. It reminds me of the scenes in the Bolshevik revolution, which I saw in St. Petersburg in the year 1917. The soldiers do not wear arms and are not in conventional uniforms. In most cases the military insignia have been taken off. All men are dirty, disorderly, noisy.

I spent the night somewhere in a forest, sleeping in a tent, and continued the next morning. That morning for the first time I observed signs of panic and hopelessness. From that moment this wave of frightened people continued to flow in an uninterrupted and irresistible stream. The cause was lost definitely. The bravest commander would not be able to stop this rushing avalanche.

The Frenchmen changed their faces entirely, and now everywhere there was much movement and agitation. But there was nothing to confirm the theory that the Frenchman becomes active only when he is in the face of real danger. All his energy was now directed to one single aim: how to save his own head, his

belongings or business. In this action the Frenchman was enterprising, energetic, sometimes brave. The common cause, the news from the battlefield, the armistice negotiations—all this no longer interested the people. Everyone was busy saving what he could save, hiding or evacuating. The human traits that now came to the fore, were: nervousness, egotism, inconsiderateness, brutality. A weak, ill or helpless human being would be left lying on the road. Again I could see a striking difference between France and my own country. This very day I saw a soldier who could not pay for his coffee. The corpulent lady in the bar said: "If one does not have money to pay for food, one must not eat." There were many people there, but nobody offered to pay for the soldier. I paid his small bill, and afterwards I could not resist saying to those at the bar that because the Frenchmen did not want to pay for their soldier's coffee, a Polish refugee was obliged to do it. This did not fluster them at all. "*Les Polonais ont été tousjours foux*"—the Poles were always foolish—one of them replied.

Not without difficulty I found a place to store my luggage in a small village near Poitiers. Then I turned back, driving this time against the stream of refugee vehicles, which was, of course, a heavy task.

It was not until late in the afternoon that I was back in Vivier. From what I had seen on the roads I came to the conclusion that we must speed our departure. This decision was reinforced when I got the news at home that the Germans were nearing the river Loire—and we were just 5 miles from that river. This morning

my family discovered that the proprietress of Vivier left hastily during the night with all her servants, without stopping for a moment to take care of us, her tenants, or of the house. The two cows that she possessed we found in the morning tied to the trees in the park. We wondered who would feed them there.

I stayed in Vivier just half-an-hour, then once again I found myself motoring through the same congested road. The veteran Indian, carrying this time 9 passengers, went on ahead of our convoy of three cars. We did not want to lose one another, and so fixed in advance some specific meeting places. The first was to be an old castle, owned by my friend, a Dutch Jew who, with his family, was also preparing to leave. I advised them to go with us, but they decided to leave the next morning. As far as I know, the next day it was too late to leave, and so they remained under the German occupation. I have not heard about them since, although I have tried in various ways to get in touch with them.

This time our entire company of fifteen spent the night in the forest, sleeping in the tent and in the automobiles. Nazis bombed the neighbouring town. Bombs were dropped not more than a mile from our camp, and one of them destroyed the bridge that we had crossed in the evening.

At dawn we sped farther in the direction of La Rochelle. We passed through the places where the Polish forces were stationed. They seemed to know nothing about the war, sentries were at their usual posts, the soldiers drilled in the neighbouring fields.

They had received no order of evacuation from the French commander.

In the evening we all arrived safely at La Rochelle. My cousin was not at home. The cable that Ada had sent him about our arrival had not reached him, and, being anxious about his family, he had hired a taxi and gone to Blois. We must have passed him on our way.

But my work was not yet finished: our luggage waited for me "somewhere in France"—in the environs of Poitiers. Once more I drove Indian back on the road. Ada went with me. Again we motored through the crowd of refugees' cars, using the side roads and making big detours to avoid the congested cities. When at last we reached the village and loaded the bags into the car, there remained no time to rest. Alarming news reached us that the Germans were not more than 10 miles from where we were. The patrols of German motorcyclists pushed forward and closed the crowded roads after them. They were expected to arrive within an hour.

It is impossible to describe the nightmare of this nocturnal drive back to La Rochelle. The evacuation transformed itself into a panic flight. Nervousness was supplanted by the emergence of the worst instincts of the human beast. Men were ready to kill to save their own lives or merely to save their belongings. On the highways, the number of abandoned automobiles, military carts, materials of all kinds was greatly increased. We saw now the soldiers of the French regular army, who were coming directly from the battlefield. The

fighting army did not exist any more in France. But yesterday hadn't we seen the Polish soldiers, who continued to do their normal daily job, simply because the French High Command had not ordered them to evacuate? The refugees told us they heard the sounds of a distant battle coming from the direction of the Polish camp.

The stream of the fleeing millions rolled on at an ever increasing speed. Repeatedly I was obliged to leave the highway and drive through the fields. At the edge of the road the corn, which at this time of the year comes to maturity, had been destroyed long ago by the wandering nomads. I also motored through these trampled-down fields. In particularly difficult places of this cross-country riding Ada went in front of the car carrying a torch to show me the traps in my way. On one occasion I found myself headed for a ditch, when another car, in front of me, turned sharply to the left. But Indian jumped over the ditch and escaped with nothing more serious than a scratch on the running board. Many times I was pushed from behind by other automobiles, but the solid bumpers of my car stood the shocks. I cannot understand how my Chrysler came safely through all these adventures. I myself had a big black bruise over my left eye. En route the long chain of automobiles had stopped. The drivers of the trucks which were behind us, got out and began deliberately to push into the ditch the cars that were blocking their way. It turned into a scuffle, and I had the opportunity to demonstrate my skill in boxing.

Our side won, but we had some wounded, and I was one of them.

Late afternoon we reached La Rochelle. I was completely exhausted. During the last three days I spent the greater part of my time at the steering-wheel and had slept only a little. I covered 800 miles in those three days, but under what exceptionally difficult circumstances!

My cousin was already back in La Rochelle. He was not able to reach Blois and had been told that the city was already occupied by Germans. It is easy to imagine his despair when he supposed that his family remained under the Germans, and his joyous surprise when he found them safe and sound in La Rochelle.

Once again we assembled a "war council." The situation was critical. There were no ships in La Rochelle that could leave that port for England. We could not continue our trip with the automobiles in the direction of the Spanish frontier, since there was a complete lack of gasoline. We began to realize that our jokes about the use of the fishing boats might turn into a reality. But for the moment even this was just a dream, as there were no crews on the ships, and, more important still, the French port authorities had refused to allow them to leave. This refusal was just as serious, as, when leaving the port, the ships had to pass through a flood-lock. The French authorities seized even the ships' compasses, maps and wireless. Once again we went with my cousin to the Captain of the port. He refused once more to free the ships, and his answer was

typical of the mentality of the officials of defeated France. The Captain said: "How can I permit your ships to leave the port, when the Germans will probably come tomorrow? What will they say when they learn that I allowed Polish ships to escape?"

The "war council" nevertheless decided to use the fishing boats and to leave the port in spite of all obstacles and against the will of the port authorities. The Captain of our fishing flotilla, a young and brave Polish marine officer, came to a secret agreement with the man who attended the flood-lock. He promised to open the lock during the night-flow. The price was 6,000 Francs. Now we hurriedly mobilized the crew and gathered the provisions.

All our party was installed on the ships, and our luggage was also loaded. Now the fate of the cars remained to be decided. I told my cousin that I would not be parted from my friend Indian. It was, however, not so simple, as the biggest of the ships was only 265 tons, and there were no cranes on the quay where the ships were moored. A special complicated scaffold had to be built, and then, with the aid of ropes, Indian was carefully hoisted onto the ship. When it was set athwart the small craft, the front wheels of the car touched one rail of the ship and the rear wheels the opposite one. The two other cars were loaded in a similar way onto the other ships.

Unfortunately, it was impossible to organize the departure of all six ships. We had neither a sufficient crew, nor adequate fuel. Only three ships could leave the port. The Captain of our small convoy sent two

men to the keeper of the flood-gate late in the evening, to make certain that the agreement would be fulfilled. They carried out their job very well. They paid the keeper the amount of francs agreed upon, but later on, to be quite sure, they plied the keeper with drink and then tied him. When the three Polish ships passed the flood-gate without any lights at 2 o'clock in the morning, Polish sailors were in service of the flood-gate. When the last ship had passed, they dived into the water, swam to the ship and climbed aboard.

Shortly before we left the harbour, the Nazi bombers arrived. Later on, in the dark, we passed quite close to a wrecked ship hit by a bomb. Another ship, under repair in a dry-dock, was burning like a big torch. German planes also dropped mines on the port's roadstead, purposely to blockade the issue of the port. Two days before a ship was blown up by such a mine. We knew this, but nothing would be gained by waiting, because nobody trawled the mines in La Rochelle. Our Captain speculated on the small draft of our ships, which should pass above the mines. He emptied the water-bunkers to decrease the draft—and we went straight across the mine-field.

Crossing of the sea in a small cutter was foolish from every point of view. We had no maps, compasses or radio. On each ship there were only two professional sailors; we made up the rest of the crew ourselves. In the last hours some Polish fliers and students came to our ship—and that was our crew. My daughters and my niece each took turns at the steering-wheel. When we were at sea, a stowaway passenger appeared; he had

boarded one of the ships secretly in La Rochelle. He was an 18-year-old Frenchman who was on his way to join the Free-French forces. Alas! There were few Frenchmen of this kind!

The ship carrying the Captain of our convoy went first. The Captain had a bracelet with a baby-compass. It was the only compass of the whole convoy. Therefore, the second and the third ships were obliged strictly to follow the first one. All the effort of the crews of these two ships was not to lose from sight the "admiral ship." Thank God we had splendid weather all the time, and also moon-nights. The Captain supposed that the routes to the southern English ports would be strongly guarded by the Nazis, and therefore he decided to go to the Bristol Channel, a longer way. Anyhow, we were to pass close to Brest, occupied at that time by the Germans; they could already easily have established a submarine base there. We knew also that in La Manche Channel the main streams come from the northeast and that sometimes they bring loose mines from the British mine-fields there. On leaving the Bay of Biscay and entering the Atlantic, we should cross these dangerous streams. Finally we could expect an additional surprise—the Nazi bombers; they had only a leap to the sea from the newly occupied Bretagne. So we could meet every kind of danger in this foolish expedition. But, of course, it was a superimposed folly, we had no choice. On our arrival in England we learned that the morning following our departure from La Rochelle, Nazi troops had entered the city, occupied the harbour and seized all the ships.

We will never know the nationality of the submarine we met on the second day of our crossing. A periscope came to the surface a few feet from our boat, exactly at noon. An alarm was sounded on all three boats, passengers and crew ran to the decks, put on the life-saving belts and waited. The submarine took a good look at the ships and went away. We saw it for a long time in full sunshine on the surface of the water. Perhaps it was a British boat, but what would she be doing in these waters, where no enemy ships could be met? It is more likely that it was a German U-boat. In its hunt for big game, it did not want to waste torpedoes on such small fry, and it didn't use its gun, because the noise of a gun might attract some British warship, and the booty would not make up for the risk.

We behaved quite differently when meeting a plane. It was ordered that in such a case crew and passengers were to put on the life-saving belts, but were to remain under the deck and lie down on the floor. Twice we had such an alarm, but fortunately each time they were British planes. They flew around the ships, saw that we were friends, and flew away.

The mines, torn from the chain in the La Manche Channel, did not neglect us either. Twice the watchman on the first ship gave the signal agreed on. Each of us had the chance to observe the swimming, prickly, balls. But the visibility was good all the time, so that we had no occasion to fear the mines.

We lived on the ships under more than primitive conditions. There were of course no cooks nor stewards, and we were obliged to help ourselves. We had suf-

ficient provisions, but there was a lack of sweet water. A fishing boat naturally has no passenger cabins. We nestled in very modest crew compartments, five persons to a room. I slept with one of my daughters in my car. Even here, on the ship, Indian served his master. The worst thing of all was the dirt. We were helpless in this respect, though happy that the boats had not been used for fishing for a long time and so did not smell of the fish. That, however, did not change the fact that we were all dirty. Everywhere there was grease, dust, rust. Our clothes, bags, plaids were filthy. The dirt clung to us, so much so that washing was a big enterprise, since the ship had no bathroom, no running water. Therefore our joy was particularly great when we saw the English coast. We landed in Port Barry near Cardiff, on the 28rd of June, 1940.

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In France the events of the tragic June days had followed one another so rapidly, we were so stunned by what had happened and so busy with the effort to save our lives—that we were not able to order our minds and to think systematically. Now, on the ship, we did not have much to do and we could at last try to answer the question: what happened in France? How could such a power as France collapse so quickly, much more quickly than Poland? The French were not surrounded as were the Polish armies, surrounded even before the war started, merely by the unfortunate geographical position of Poland. The Frenchmen had time and sufficient resources to arm; in fact they were

already quite well armed. They had the experience of the Polish campaign. They had, finally, glorious traditions of the previous war, they still had living heroes of that time. But instead of fighting, they simply fled from the enemy.

When crossing to England, we could not know that after the military defeat of France, this unhappy country would suffer another and still greater disaster—the collapse of the whole nation. What happened in France later, when the nervousness provoked by the military defeat was over, was so monstrous, so tragic and so unexpected that only knowing all this was it possible to understand the real reasons for the catastrophe of France. France, who had had a glorious history and was rightly beloved by all the world, now, within the space of a few days, turned away from her allies, delivered to the Nazis the soldiers, who only yesterday had fought with her sons and who were now trying to hide themselves on French soil. She cringed before her conquerors, and in the most tragic moment of her history was unable to bring to the surface, with the exception of a few soldiers, one single big man who would attempt to save her honour. A Frenchman today thinks and even says: "I must have peace at any price! Alsace and Lorraine?—Let the Germans take it. Indo-China, Martinique, Syria?—Why should I worry about them?—German supervisors and commissioners in Paris?—Even this I accept, give me only peace, peace at any price!"

So thinks the average Frenchman today. But the same is true of some of the most illustrious sons of France.

Many glorious pages and many brilliant names will be cut out from the modern French history after this war. Pétain, the hero of Verdun! Yesterday the symbol of heroism, today the symbol of ignominy. Darlan, strong man, creator of the modern French Navy! Personal ambitions, sympathies and hates, not the interests of France are guiding him today. Perhaps Weygand, the hero of the Marne? Alas! It is known that in June, 1940, he pleaded more than the others for surrender. For us Poles this case at least was not a surprise, because we remember that in 1920, when Weygand was sent to Poland to aid our country in our war against the Bolsheviks, he presented a defeatist policy and suggested that the Polish High Command should abandon Warsaw to the enemy and withdraw.

Is it necessary to ask or to explain further the reasons for the French catastrophe in the face of all the horrible things that happened and are still happening in conquered France?

Naturally, the spirit of the people settled the collapse of France. All other elements: planes, tanks, armaments, training of soldiers, strategical situation of the country, mistakes of the commanding generals—all these were just secondary factors. Strategically France was rather in an advantageous position, better than were the Germans who were obliged to break the strongly prepared defence lines. There was also plenty of time properly to train the armies. The mistakes of the French generals in the first stage of the war could even cost Dunkerque and make more difficult the position of the allied armies, but did not decide the issue of

the campaign. The superiority of the German armament undoubtedly existed, but was not nearly so overwhelming as it was in Poland. And what, finally, does the superiority of armaments mean? It means only that the French soldier was obliged to fight under less favourable conditions than his opponent, it means a greater hell, but a war is always a hell.

Here exactly begins the role of the spirit of a man, of the morale of a soldier. Poland, Finland, Holland, Greece lost their wars because the difference in the strength between them and their adversaries was too great, because their strategical situations were bad. But the Poles, the Finns, the Dutchmen or the Greeks did not lose their spirit even when they were defeated, and they fought until the last possibility of winning was gone, they stood under fire and bombs, received blows, gave blows back, held out in the final hell of war. The French soldier did not even think of risking his life or his health. He simply refused to fight, he lost traditional French "force de resistance," had no ambition for the fray. There was indeed only a little fighting on the French front, and after the battle of Dunkerque they gave up the combat. The French armies retired in the face of the "overwhelming enemy forces," and the official communiqués of the French High Command and the newspaper reporters spoke exclusively of this superiority of the enemy. The withdrawal of the armies changed one day into flight, and it is difficult to say when and how the French battlefield ceased to exist. Someone said that France was overrun by the German motorcyclists.

But it would be unjust to make the French soldier alone responsible for the disaster of France. A war is fought today not only by the armies, but by the entire population. Not only the French soldier, but every Frenchman showed during this war that he lacked high spirit, ambition, feeling of responsibility, love for his country. Everyone in France is responsible for the collapse of his country: the man on the street in Paris, who wasted his time in the cafés; the woman in the bar on the highway, who refused the homeless soldier a cup of coffee; the proprietress of Vivier, tying her cows to the trees and running thoughtlessly God knows where and why. The men and women of France must share the responsibility for the collapse of their country. They tolerated passively the corruption among the men who governed France in the last twenty years, the abnormal relations in the parliament, the oligarchy of the government employees, who practically formed the governing class in France. This community of egotists was no longer a community aware of common aims, interests and ideals. Every French citizen saw only his own small and particular interests, refusing to be involved in the affairs of other people or to serve the common cause. In the times of peace it marched "somehow." But when the first blow came from outside, the whole fragile structure collapsed. The poor human beings sitting on the ruins of the destroyed building continued to guard jealously the remnants of their poor belongings.

What remained of the France which gave the world the most glorious culture, who during the Great Revo-

lution fought for sublime human ideals? This splendid nation became effeminate and crumbled. In the years from 1914 to 1918 France made another big and beautiful effort. Did this effort definitely exhaust the reserves of the French spirit? It is difficult to believe. But it is also difficult to believe that the generation that is now living in France will be able to rebuild the spirit of the nation. As in Germany, where only a new generation, educated in quite different methods, would be able to create a new and better Germany, a Germany that would not be hated by her neighbours—so in France, too, its youth must breathe a new spirit into the musty atmosphere of French life. There is in France today not much of youth, dreaming Utopian dreams, committing follies, but at the same time capable of moving the elder folk from their routine, and of forcing them to look into their own consciences. In Poland we call the youth “the conscience of the nation,” and this is true.

In Poland we know also from our own experience that the tragedy of an imprisoned nation awakens the good instincts of the people. Perhaps the misfortune of defeated France will make the spirit of this unhappy country younger, and will create more boys like the stowaway passenger on our boat, who boarded the ship in order to be able to fight for a better France. When he did this he forgot his egotistical interests. The majority of Frenchmen would undoubtedly say: “Stupid light-headed boy!” There is no one except such “stupid light-headed boys” who will rebuild France and her glorious traditions.

WAR IN ENGLAND

Barry near Cardiff — London — Solitary London meditations — The Polish Government in London — I decide to go to America — A Pole from the pole — Polish-British friendship — Phoney war in England — The slow tempo — The sanctuary of the week-end — Divided family — First bombs on London — Air battles — A tactical error of the Nazis — How many today? — Polish aviators in England — The night raiders — Indiscriminate bombing of London — Three big British victories in the air war — Morale of the Britons — The old docker — Destruction in the British capital — The bent but not broken sword of Richard-Coeur-de-Lion — Game of foot-ball with incendiary bombs — A night with the delayed-action bomb — Indian on the edge of a bomb crater — The most miraculous escape in London — With Ada in her small house on the sea — There still remained something of England!

FROM beaten and broken France our small fishing cutter brought us to a different set of conditions, to the beleaguered fortress intent on defending herself—the British Isles.

The British welcomed us cordially in Barry. Prob-

ably our ships were the only ones that called at this small port carrying refugees from France. The Mayor of the city came to the harbour to greet us. Most of us had no British visés, but nevertheless we had no difficulty in landing. The formalities were not too long, and soon we were able to unpack, to take a bath and to change our clothes in the pleasant YMCA-hotel on the beach, to which we were assigned by the city authorities. We spent a few days here, enjoying a well merited rest, and then we went to London. All of us, including Ada with her husband and children and Nina, lived together at a modest hotel in the heart of the big city.

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As on the eve of the war in Gdynia, or last Easter in Nice, I felt the necessity of thinking over in solitude the new situation created by the collapse of France and our escape to England.

Even externally the moment when I tried to collect my thoughts, was quite different. In Gdynia I escaped from the turmoil of life to the seashore, in Nice I hid in a remote corner of our park. Each time nature in all her beauty helped me in these difficult moments. But here, in the centre of the city, in the midst of the sultriness and noise of the street, I had no secluded hiding-place. I simply sat down on the steps at the entrance of our hotel. The passing automobiles distracted my thoughts which were already much too distracted. Nevertheless it was better here than in the stuffy and overcrowded hotel rooms.

No matter how we might explain the collapse of France, it was now certain that the hope for a speedy end of the war was definitely abandoned, and even the confidence in the successful issue of this war had weakened. The Germans had no more opponents on the European continent. The Maginot Line had passed not only into history, but also into the humorous. Only the British Isles were out of the reach of the Germans in Europe.

No doubt, we had to admit that our French partners, upon whom we relied so much, had not done their job at all well, when they lost the battle of France. The role of passive observers, left for Poles in this battle, was perhaps the most tragic. The allied armies in France had fought not only for France and England, but also for Poland—while we were forced to remain passive observers! Even the Polish army in France was not allowed to do anything, and her fate was especially tragic: although inactive, she was partly lost. No orders of evacuation were forthcoming for the Polish divisions from the French High Command, and many Polish soldiers fell into German hands. We had sufficient reason to be in despair because of recent events. In any case, the war situation had become much worse than before. Even if the Nazis failed to invade England, years would pass before the British could take the initiative into their own hands. The war to recapture Poland and other occupied countries could be seen only in a very, very distant perspective. Before this, the war for England must be won.

And what were the prospects of such a war?

It was as yet too early to say anything about it. The first impressions were rather good. I saw a striking difference between the France that I had recently left, and Great Britain. Here, calm and spirit seemed to be excellent. I saw also a strong will to continue the struggle. But at the same time we heard that the armament of the British was insufficient, and we could see for ourselves that the tempo of work was still slow. At that time news also began to circulate that Hitler would make tempting peace proposals to England. Although it did not seem to be in the British character to make peace before all the possibilities of fighting were exhausted, there were people among us who, after the collapse of France, were ready to believe anything.

My personal situation also had changed radically for the worse. The quiet and safe life of France was at an end. We were now on the battlefield. My financial position, too, was greatly changed, since I had lost practically all the money that I had with me in France. In April, I had invested the greater part of this money in a business in Paris. This business seemed to be good, and probably was good, but now, of course, I could not get back my investment. Some money also remained in my bank account in Paris. The remainder of my francs I spent during our flight from France, having also felt obliged to lend money to people who had no resources at all and who, without my help, would not have been able to leave France. When I landed in England, I had only a few pounds in my pocket. But I was not disturbed by this fact, as my Gdynia firm had fairly large amounts due in England. Im-

mediately after my arrival in London I started to collect this money, but I obtained only a few hundred pounds, and this was now all I possessed. I tried therefore to find a job, but I saw very quickly that in England also it was not so easy under existing conditions. I was now a refugee in the full sense of the word, and for the first time in my life I learned how many sorrows and troubles have their source in the lack of money. Of course under the circumstances we could not even dream of a home of our own. It was now a question of managing somehow to survive the war. And I must add that for the first time I began to feel tired of the wandering and the irregular life that we were forced to live.



Little by little the wreck of the Polish emigration in France gathered in London. As eight months ago in Paris, there was no end of talking about the sad adventures every one of us had encountered during the escape from France. The Polish Government now resided in London and organized its offices anew, on a much smaller scale than in Paris. Important contingents of the Polish army in France crossed to England. Here they were reorganized on a new basis.

In the newly created circumstances I had to come to definite decisions about the future life of my family and myself. It was now the question not of months but of years, and perhaps even many years. The problem arose whether we should remain for the duration of the war in England or leave this country going overseas to

a quieter place. Personally I preferred to remain in England, where now all the war effort was concentrated. I also supposed that life here would be the most interesting. But precisely this "interesting life," which attracted me so much, was not desirable at all for my children. They should stay, if possible, far from the confusions of the war, go to school and spare their nerves. I decided definitely to go to America. I made this decision the week following my arrival from France, and the same day I began preparations for this, as I supposed, last leg of our war wandering. But four months passed before we sailed from England. Once more during this war I had a long and difficult battle for *visés*. Afterwards we waited for weeks for accommodations on a ship. However, the four months spent in London were not wasted, because they enabled me to observe in detail the life of England in this decisive period of her history.

Pre-war Poland had not been sufficiently familiar with England. We regarded all Englishmen as stiff and haughty lords. We were in much closer contact with France, first of all, then with Italy and, through our large emigration, with the United States. But just as certainly as the Pole was not fully acquainted with England, so the knowledge of the average Briton about Poland amounted to zero. When I was a child, I had an illustrated book, which showed among its illustrations the types of different nationalities in their characteristic costumes. There was a Pole, who wore a fur garment and stood near an Eskimo hut. The author of the book probably thought the two words identical:

Pole, meaning an inhabitant of Poland, and pole, in a geographical sense, relating to the north or south pole. Later on I had many proofs that an Englishman does not know much more about my country than did the author of the book of my childhood.

But the last year of common fighting, common sorrows and dangers brought the two nations unexpectedly close to one another. The war brought to the surface in both the British and the Poles their chief characteristics, and apparently these characteristics were similar. They are: stubbornness in resistance, the fighting spirit, courage, attachment to their respective countries and to the good traditions sanctioned over the centuries. Now we understood the sons of Albion much better; they revealed to us that they were not so stiff as they appeared to be. And Britons, too, I believe, began to understand and to esteem the Poles. The Polish army stationed mostly in Scotland, tied the thread of a cordial friendship with the Scots. This young but very strong and extremely touching friendship was soon manifested by marriages of Polish soldiers with Scottish girls; before I left England, there had already been hundreds of such marriages. The Polish fliers wrote a beautiful chapter in the history of fighting for the British Isles. In London the Polish emigrants easily found a common language with the Britons.

But it was some time before all these happy statements could be made. The war did not come to the British Isles immediately after the collapse of France. During July and August the conditions in England

were similar to those of the phoney war in France before the Germans started their May offensive. During the period of this phoney war in England, until the war in the air began, we Poles had more than sufficient reasons for being disquieted about the things we saw. The morale of the people was excellent, but the speed and the spirit of the work still did not show that England would be able to keep pace with Germany, who put all her energies into the war effort. During the seven pre-war years I had managed a firm in Gdynia, and another one in Danzig among the Germans. Thus I learned the German methods of working; I knew how persistent they were, how effective in their collective efforts, and how, thanks to this, they were able to obtain results even from undertakings that in other countries would have seemed too trivial to exploit. A little later on, as already during my war travels, I again had many occasions to note the tremendous results obtained by Germans in building their war machine.

At the same time in England, in the summer of the year 1940, that is 10 months after the war had begun, notwithstanding the imminence of the German threat—we saw everywhere, on the streets, in the offices, in the factories, the usual comfortable deliberation, the same inviolable sanctity of the week-end, the same hours of work, which made it almost impossible, for example, to send a cable after 6 P.M. We Poles, after our home experiences and after what we saw in France, now looked critically at everything. Perhaps we did not understand the British people; perhaps their

method of adhering quietly to their habits and their settled rules of action was the foundation of their strength? But I remembered how we tried in the same way to reassure ourselves when we observed disquieting things in France, and how we tried to excuse the Frenchmen by saying that matters would go forward "somehow." It is embarrassing for us foreigners to point a lesson if we are not asked. But nevertheless we went to our British friends and informed them of our impressions. It seemed to us that it was our duty to share with our friends our bitter experiences suffered at the time when we were in a similar situation. Our British friends listened attentively and often agreed with us. An Englishman is never offended when he is criticised by friends, and he readily admits his mistakes. Slowly they began to change their minds. But how slowly!

In the meantime I placed my children in a boarding school in Wimbledon near London. At the same time my wife became ill, and her doctors ordered her to go to a sanatorium. I put her in a convent where she received very good care and the protection of the sisters. Ada with her children left London and went to the western seacoast, where her husband's fishing ships, which had brought us from France, now were stationed. I lived alone and started a bachelor's life. I had not foreseen that this scattering of all my family would, in the near future, bring me so much trouble and anxiety. When the bombardment of London began, I telephoned all of them each morning to find out whether all were still alive. And how often it hap-

opened that the telephone line was cut! In that event I took the tube or a bus and sped out of the city. In case of danger it is better not to be separated, but we could not know at that time that quiet and slow moving London would change so soon and so radically.

The first bombs were dropped on London during the last days of August. From that time until I left on October 20th, nearly two months, there was not one single night, when bombs were not dropped on London. In the daylight hours also the sirens sounded the alarm, and often several times every day. There was fighting in the air over all England, with the threat of invasion hanging over the British Isles. For the third time during this war the battlefront came close to me.

An airplane was now the focus of life in England. All of us soon became specialists in aviation; we could discuss aerial warfare, the values and faults of every type of plane, and the effectiveness of different methods of air defence. Each day we saw the war with our own eyes. When Spitfires and Hurricanes chased the German bombers over London in broad daylight, big crowds gathered on the street corners to watch the dogfights. Policemen vainly tried to drive the people to the shelters; eventually the bobbies also turned their heads skyward and watched the battle. How tremendous is the enthusiasm of the London crowd when a Nazi bomber lags behind its formation pouring smoke from its tail, and finally falls in view of the people! Or when against the blue sky the small white cloud of the parachute appears, and a Nazi airman lands on a city roof!

In the first period of the air war only a few planes attacked England during the night, but in the daylight hundreds and sometimes even thousands of them left the French and Belgian airdromes to bomb old England. With great stubbornness the Germans repeatedly attacked the same objectives on the southern and eastern shores, trying to break through in the direction of London. This enabled the British to concentrate its reserve squadrons on the threatened sectors. It was one of the reasons for the great successes of the RAF over the "Luftwaffe" in the first stage of the war in the air. One month passed before the Germans recognized their mistake and scattered their attacks, forcing the RAF to bring back the reserve squadrons to their original airdromes. But before the Germans changed their tactics, they lost thousands of planes. London was full of enthusiasm. The people were much more interested in the number of Nazi planes shot down than in the destruction of London's buildings during the night raids. On their front pages the newspapers published the losses in planes of both fighting forces, and the Londoner woke up asking the question: "How many today?"

The British press censorship was liberal. Besides official war communiqués, the London newspapers also published the German bulletins, enabling their readers to realize the great disparity between the British and German figures. I trusted only the British statements. The lie is one of the officially sanctioned weapons in the arsenal of German verbal fighting, while in England the smallest children are taught that to lie is a most

reprehensible and revolting offence. Of course, many of us had personal contacts with the fliers. I often heard from the young pilots that their command had refused to give them credit for a plane they had shot down, because there had been no witnesses. Only a grounded plane, or one shot down in the presence of two eye-witnesses could be listed as having been shot down. A fighter-pilot, hunting alone somewhere over the sea, could very rarely prove a successful attack. Therefore the British figures rather tended to be lower than was actually the case.

The air fights over England in September must be considered as the first big air victory of England.

We Poles at that time had our own emotions: our pilots were fighting along with the R.A.F. This part of the Polish army had to a large extent escaped defeats both in Poland and France. Thus our Air Force in England consisted of some 8,000 men, including some 2,000 trained pilots. It represented an appreciable unit of strength rich in the experience of two wars. The Polish fighter squadrons defended London, Polish bomber squadrons dropped bombs on Germany. We idle ones were all jealous of them, because once more they were able to take an active part in the war. And our boys were ready to go headlong into the danger, for each one of them had some personal reckoning with the foe, and also, because they started to fight later than their English colleagues, they tried doubly hard to outdo them. When I left England, the Polish pilots, after two months of air fighting, had shot down more than 400 planes according to the official acknowledg-

ment of the Air Command. And there was also more than one Polish tomb hospitably accepted by the British cemeteries.

At the end of September the Germans changed their tactics. The daylight fights became rarer, but they greatly increased the night bombardment, concentrating it almost exclusively on London. Today the Germans admit their real aims in the bombardment of the British capital. It was and is to throw terror into the Londoners, and destroy everything that could possibly be ruined. From the first day the Nazis dropped bombs indiscriminately on the city without even being able to see their objectives or to control their activities, for they flew above the clouds, in fog and in the darkness of night. Every day I took a walk through the bombed areas trying to find out what the German objectives might be. But I noted every time that the bombs were spread equally over all of London. The ribbon of the river Thames served to orient the Nazi bombers even during the night, enabling them more easily to locate the London docks. We thought they would concentrate on the docks, but later on we found that this was not the case, as the docks were no more heavily bombarded than the other districts. My business connections often brought me to the docks, and twice I was there during the bombardment. I could not find any traces of purposeful bombardment, and I saw that the damage to the London harbour at that time was not great, for nearly all of the important docks were still busy, and the transportation companies continued to work normally.

From different parts of England we heard that the Nazi bombardment was of the same character as in London—indiscriminate and not effective. The damage caused to the British productive industries was astonishingly insignificant. Somewhat later I saw two big ports on the western coast of England, and also a large training centre of the RAF. These objectives should be tempting morsels for Goering's bombers, but they remained practically intact.

The ineffectiveness of the bombardment of England was the second British victory in the air, especially because at the same time the RAF bombers scored every day successes over their targets in Germany.

But even if the Germans had little success in destroying the British war machine, there still remained the indiscriminate bombing of London and other cities. Besides sowing terror among the civil population, the Germans could perhaps expect that by continuing to bomb London they would finally disorganize this vital life centre of the British Isles and of the entire British Empire. It must be admitted that in no other of the world's capitals is the life of the entire nation concentrated to such a degree as in London.

When I came to America, two questions were often put to me concerning England: are the British people terrorized by the Nazi bombing; and is the life in the British capital disorganized? I never hesitate to answer that also on the front of indiscriminate bombing of England, Great Britain has won—and this is the third great air victory of England. The morale of her people has not broken; on the contrary, they have become

more stubborn in their decision to resist. The British war machine is now working better than before the bombardment started, and the life in London is quite normal. That is why we Poles learned to regard our British friends so highly, and began anew to be optimistic when we contemplated the final outcome of the war.

Shortly before leaving England, I had the opportunity once more to see the reaction of the British people to the Nazi "punitive" bombardment. It was in the port at Liverpool, where I had occasion to talk with the dock-hands. One of them, a wise elderly man, was the leader of the Liverpool workers. The discussion naturally turned to the problems of the war in the air. His reactions were extremely interesting. During August and September the Germans had dropped some 2,000 high explosive bombs on Liverpool. Of this number not more than several dozen were dropped on the harbour itself, and several dozen more on the centre of the city. All the rest had fallen in the districts where the workmen lived. It was probably one of few cases of purposeful bombardment. The aim was to shake the morale of the working class which, as the Germans supposed, was not enthusiastic for war. What was the result?

"If Hitler," said the old docker, "wanted us to oppose the war he should not have tried to terrify us. Our men, seeing their homes in ruins, turned their hearts against the man who ordered the destruction. We are now Hitler's greatest enemies."

Similar was the story of how the Englishmen adapted

themselves to work and live under the bombing. During the first weeks there may have been some disorganization. The wardens, perhaps, were too ardent in driving the people to the shelters; shops and offices closed quite unnecessarily during an air warning; buses and tubes stopped running; the air-raid squads worked ineffectively. It can also be said that the adaptation of England to this new kind of warfare took longer than in Poland or France. But there came a moment when all the inevitable terror passed. The buses and the tubes in London no longer stop when the Nazi bombers are at their usual job; shops remain open; work in factories and in offices continues; air raid shelters are empty during the day. Men who fight against the raiders, including air wardens, fire brigades, rescue squads—constitute a big army, which already has its own fine traditions and its many heroes.

At the end of October, when I left England, London streets appeared more normal than at the end of August when the air bombardment started, and in January, as I heard from all sides, they looked still better than in October. The big producing and distributing machinery in the British capital is now working regularly and skillfully in spite of bombs. The war effort is now bigger than before. Still better is the spirit of this fighting nation than it was when the Britons looked from afar at the battlefronts on the European continent.

When the heavy night bombardments started in September, the night life in London changed entirely. Everybody tried to be at home by dusk. When his job

required his presence in the evening, he usually remained in his office or shop the whole night, sleeping where he worked. In the districts where houses were small and defenceless, people went to public shelters for the night, and the city authorities tried to make these shelters as comfortable as possible by heating them and installing cots. Where the homes were larger, people usually remained at home through the night, but often all slept together in the basement. This was not a proper shelter, but at least the security was greater. A Londoner knows that there still remain today risks to his life.

In the night, when the Nazi bombers begin to cruise over the British capital, anti-aircraft guns fight the enemy planes. Anyone going out on such a night must be wary not so much of the Nazi bombs as of the shrapnel splinters of his own guns. More and more guns are being set up in the parks; some of them are motorized, scurrying in the night from one part of the city to another. It is impossible to foresee where on a particular night such a battery will start shooting. Sometimes the guns thunder unexpectedly close to one's house, so that the windows rattle. There are nights when the sky is bespangled with hundreds of searchlights, there are others when the searchlights are blind because the night fighters are chasing Goering's raiders. From afar can be heard the familiar roar of a Nazi bomber. The expert eye of the Londoner can easily distinguish the enemy plane from one of his own. The AA-fire increases. Will the bomber drop a bomb or not? The low interrupted roar of the motor grows softer—the

plane has passed. But when the dreadful whistle of a falling bomb can be heard, it nearly always gives the impression that the bomb is falling directly on one's own head. Only by the explosion do you realize that the bomb actually has fallen quite far away. And if it does explode closer, at a distance perhaps of some 300-500 feet, the whole house shivers and the windows are shattered. The air warden whistles and in some neighbouring house the rescue work begins.

What is the extent of the destructions in London? That is another question put in America to everyone arriving from England. It is a difficult one to answer. It would be most nearly accurate to say that the destruction is not great, but the losses are heavy. Comparing the destruction of London after the first—and the worst—nine weeks of the bombardment, to the destruction in Warsaw after a four week bombardment, we Poles might think what happened in London to be insignificant. The official statistics of both city authorities show that in Warsaw more than 40% of the buildings were completely destroyed, while in London, at the end of October, 1940, it was just less than one percent. These statistics, however, do not change the fact that in London the Nazi bombs heavily damaged St. Paul's Cathedral; that the marvellous old St. James church on Piccadilly is a total loss; that the famous Guildhall suffered the same fate; that Westminster and the Houses of Parliament have been damaged; that Richard-Coeur-de-Lion holds in his hand a bent sword, and that many romantic landmarks of the old London are in ruins. These old small private houses in May-

fair or in Kensington are perhaps the most unfortunate victims of the Nazi raiders. St. Paul's Cathedral will be rebuilt, the "bent but not broken" sword of Richard-Coeur-de-Lion will be straightened, but who will restore to life the small cottages, the medieval walls and gates? The heart of every Briton and of every cultured man is filled with grief, but at the same time the hearts of the British grow still stouter, strengthened in their decision to put an end to all this barbarity. London is fighting against the enemy. Hesitation and the early fumbling have passed. The effort is increasing. In the Briton his best traditions of knighthood and sportsmanship have been roused. My apprehensions about the war diminished rapidly. Although we had proof that Great Britain was still insufficiently armed, and although the general war situation continued to be unfavourable, I was now certain that in England there would never happen anything akin to what happened in France. There were no more talks about peace. England had decided to fight until the end, until victory. We Poles were confident that this time our common cause was in good hands. Dakar, Lybia and Singapore came later—and at that time we didn't know how much there remained to be built and rebuilt in the British Empire—and perhaps in all the English-speaking world—before there could be talk, not even of victory, but of successful defence.

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The tragedies in the British capital at that time were so many and so diverse that nearly every Londoner had

a considerable repertoire of stories of personal tragedies and escapes during these two months. Everyone in our family, including the children at school, my wife in the convent and myself, had windowpanes shattered in their sleeping rooms during night raids because the bombs fell too near. The convent where my wife lived received a direct hit, and though it struck on the other side of the house from where my wife slept, part of the ceiling in her room fell down. When the windows were broken in my room, the shock threw over a wardrobe which fell on me as I slept. As a result I decided to change my sleeping quarters and went down to the basement, where the rest of the boarders had gathered.

Sometimes I took part in the rescue work. One evening as we were playing bridge at the home of one of our friends, incendiary bombs fell on the roof of their house, and it was necessary to act quickly. We rushed to the roof and kicked down the bombs to the street, where they were extinguished by the wardens. We kicked them as if we were playing football, and we worked so rapidly that we did not even spoil our shoes.

On another occasion, not far from the boarding house where I lived, I helped a rescue squad in digging people out of the basement of a house that had received a direct hit. While we were at work, fresh bombs were dropped, this time incendiary ones. The firemen began to extinguish them, but the bombs exploded for a second time. These new explosions were not very terrifying, they resembled rifle shots. I could never learn what kind of bombs these were, and I suppose the Germans were trying out a new invention in the form of

small explosives acting as delayed action bombs, to supplement the incendiary bombs.

One evening as I was returning home late, I was stopped by an obstacle which could be seen very often on the streets of London in these days: a rope stretched across the street and bearing the sign: "delayed time bomb." A policeman who stood on guard explained that the time bomb had fallen an hour ago and was still "warm." I was obliged to make a long detour before I reached the square where I lived. Here, too, was a similar rope and a similar sign. My house was inside the prohibited zone, but only some 100 feet from the rope. I wondered what I should do. The hour was late, the AA-guns began a concentrated firing, and there was no policeman. I knew that whenever a time bomb fell, comparatively large areas were isolated, and I reasoned that since my house was so near the limit of the prohibited zone, it was practically out of the danger area. I passed under the rope, entered the house and soon was asleep. The next morning I went down for breakfast—and only then discovered that the house had been evacuated during my absence and that I had slept in it alone. I learned later that the time bomb had exploded that night, but on the far side of the closed zone. I had felt only a strong shock, but there were so many shocks of that kind the same night, and also other nights that I thought nothing of it.

My most interesting escape in London was in the company of my Indian. I drove the car very seldom, because excursions out of town were difficult, requiring special permits for every trip. Therefore I drove al-

most exclusively in the city, and always tried to get home early, because it was not exactly pleasant to drive during the black-out. But one evening I was late nevertheless. The night was exceptionally dark. The German planes had already been at their usual work for a long time. I drove carefully and slowly, until I came to where a building was burning. Now I could speed, because the fire lit up the street. I passed by the burning building. The fire brigade was at work, and Indian jumped when it passed over the fire hoses lying across the street. On the other end of the street another building was set afire by the Nazi incendiary bombs. A policeman stepped on the running-board of my car and asked me to take him to it. I sped again.

Suddenly something slid and cracked in front of me. Something had fallen, and I felt as if it had been aimed directly at me. I was momentarily blinded, but I slowed down automatically as quickly as I could. The car listed to one side, struck some obstacle and stopped. Still I could not see anything; the only thing I knew was that I was alive and unhurt. With a flashlight in my hand I leaped from the car—but only when the heavy dust began to settle could I see that we had come to a stop at the edge of a 15-foot bomb crater. The bomb had fallen not more than 250 feet in front of my Indian, and probably only a fraction of a second decided my fate. I escaped safely, but the poor bobby was hurled by the blast from the running-board, and so seriously injured that he had to be taken to a hospital.

The time was approaching when I could leave Eng-

land, so I made my farewell visits. The day before my departure I had an audience with the President of the Polish Republic, Mr. Wladyslaw Raczkiewicz. He had just changed his residence, moving from an ancient picturesque abbey in Kensington to a more solid building on Grosvenor Square, where the Embassy of the United States was also in residence. But when I came to Grosvenor Square, I could not find the President's house. It had received a direct hit the previous evening and lay in ruins. Before I could recover from the shock and ask someone for details about what had happened, I saw the President himself standing in the ruined doorway. He told me that a heavy high-explosive bomb had struck the left wing of the building and, glancing off, had also destroyed the ground floor of the main building. Two of the President's servants were killed in the ground floor hall. The second floor of the main building remained hanging in the air. When the explosion occurred, the President happened to be exactly in that part of the building now hanging, seated at his dinner table. A lamp had fallen on the table, and every window in the room was broken, but the President and the members of his suite were unharmed. It was said in London that his was the most miraculous escape during all the bombardment of London.

On October 20th, on a foggy morning, I left London. Indian for the seventh time took me out of a place menaced by war. Both of us were glad to leave the noisy town, and drive on a quiet highway across meadows and through groves. I drove alone. My family

had left London two weeks earlier and were with my cousin Ada in a seaside resort near Liverpool, from which port our ship would soon sail.

I passed through two big industrial towns, which had often been mentioned in the German war bulletins. In vain I tried to find traces of the work of Nazi bombers. There still remained something of England!

THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

Polish freighter leaving a British port — Farewell bombs — Idyll on the "Irish lake" — Eire from both tourist and political points of view — Ship on a mine — Ship on a rock — Ships, ships, ships — Old Gdynia friends — Are we really in danger? — Our armament — Departure of the convoy — Emergency preparations — First storm, first submarines, first losses — The convoy's flight from the surface raider — A deserted Scottish fiord — The cook's antelope — Second convoy — Two more battles with submarines — The worst storm in last 40 years — Lone fight with the ocean — New storms — SOS of a neighbour — Three victims of Neptune — Newfoundland — Struggle with the island, sea and sky — We beat the record of Jacques Cartier — St. John, N.B.

ON OCTOBER 26th, 1940, I sailed with my family from Liverpool to America. Ada and her family remained in England, but they intended to follow us in spring.

We sailed on board a Polish freighter. She was a ship of 5,200 tons, built in 1925, with a top speed of 9

knots. I had an opportunity to make a crossing under exactly the same conditions as most of the ships working under the Ministry of Shipping and taking part in the Battle of the Atlantic. Now the main battlefront of the war was here, on the Atlantic, and the outcome would depend on the ability of Great Britain to keep open her sea routes. I was therefore glad to be able to observe this phase of war also—the fourth war for me.

Our ship was going to Canada. She carried other passengers besides ourselves—five women and three children, the families of Polish sailors. On freighters there are no passenger accommodations, so we all were berthed in crew cabins. It was not very comfortable but we managed and were satisfied. To us a Polish ship is like a part of our own soil, and the Captain, the officers and the crew were exceptionally hospitable.

In the small quiet seaside resort, where we had spent our last week before leaving England, we enjoyed welcome respite from Nazi bombs which had been our customary fare during our four months stay in London. But the Germans could not desist from reminding us of the war. Late in the evening the pilot brought our ship to the roadstead. We were to sail the next morning. During that night the Nazi bombers came. Most of the bombs fell on the city, but a number dropped into the harbour and on the roadstead. They must have fallen quite close to the ship, for we were thoroughly shaken every time. In fact, some of the passengers imagined we had been hit by a torpedo. The following morning we saw the masts and smokestack of a sunken ship. In war time everything that

happens at sea is a mystery and, accordingly, our Captain tried to tell us that this was nothing more than an old wreck, but it was a simple matter for us to discover that she was a victim of the previous night's bombardment.

In the morning we left the harbour alone, without convoy. Our ship had just arrived in England from New York and was about to deliver cargo to Dublin. We sailed quietly and safely through the Irish Sea; quietly—because there was neither wind nor waves; and safely—because the Irish Sea today is like an interior lake. Its south end is closed by a minefield, and the narrow northern entrance is patrolled by the powerful British fleet. So that part of our crossing became unexpectedly a wonderful *partie de plaisir*.

In Dublin the ship unloaded some cases and sacks. Indian was drawn forth from the dark hold, put on the quay, and took us far into the interior of the Emerald Isle which we were seeing for the first time. Ireland is a beautiful country, full of surprises. We crossed the Irish "Riviera" near Killiney, where we were quite amazed to find magnificent avenues of palm and orange trees. Also the great number of old historic monuments surprised me. Dublin itself was another surprise. It is a large and beautiful city with a character and style of its own, in no way resembling English towns.

I was, of course, greatly interested in the politics of this country. In Dublin there are some old Polish-Irish political contacts, dating from the times of the insurrections in both countries. I traced the thread of

these old relations and so found my way to some of the Irish leaders, and spent a most interesting evening in their company. They contributed to my understanding of political relations in Eire, or perhaps they just darkened the horizon! The Irish question is one of the most complicated and restless of contemporary problems.

The most active party and the best organized, though not strong in numbers, is the nationalistic Irish Republican Army. Its slogan is: the worse the situation is in England, the better it is for Ireland. They would welcome a German victory, and Nazi parachutists would surely receive their help. On the other hand, thousands of young Irishmen from Dublin, Cork or Tipperary have left for England to join the army. It is said that the pro-British circles are more numerous than the nationalist groups, but not as well organized. And between these two extreme wings, there are many other groups. The masses, as everywhere it seems, are indifferent. The De Valera Government stands somewhere between the nationalists and the pro-British. Its principal objective is to remain neutral at any cost. It has a small but well organized army. I asked my new friends what would happen if the Nazis tried to invade England through Eire. Their answer was that general confusion and civil war would result.

We were in Eire just as tourists, and after more than one year of war we were glad to be in a neutral country. We were astonished to see the lights on the streets, to stay in a country, where food was not rationed, where traveling permits were not required, where there were

no prohibited zones. While we were in Ireland we did our best to forget about the war.

For three days we unloaded in Dublin and then proceeded to a small port in Northern Ireland, to receive definite instructions for the crossing to Canada. We spent only a few hours there and then sailed to a port in northern Scotland, where the convoy was to be formed. Here again there was a delay of three days before we could start across the Atlantic.

For a shippingman like myself this tramping from one port to another, and even the inactivity while moored in a roadstead, offered many interesting points for observation. I could not forget that before my eyes the most important part of the war tragedy was being enacted. These men of the sea had been fighting constantly for more than 14 months. Moreover, they face an added danger, because they must also fight the sea. Although man has been fighting the oceans for thousands of years, no one can ever tell who will be the victor. This voyage served to remind me even more forcibly of this truth.

There were nearly 200 ships in the Scottish port from which the convoy was to set out. We were not allowed to go ashore, but I observed the panorama of the surrounding mountains through field glasses. From my vantage point on the bridge I could see in every port and on their roadsteads innumerable ships: big, small, cargo-ships, passenger liners, men of war. In Gdynia, thousands of them had passed beneath the windows of my work-room in the port, and I came to know many of our Gdynia guests "personally." In the ships' crowd

I distinguished now some old friends: Swedes, Norwegians, Poles. And there was also a ship that I had cleared many times in Gdynia. In those days it had flown the Hungarian flag, but now I read on the stern: Panama. The owner was a Russian Jew who lived in Rome. Typical international shipping!

And I saw one more familiar "face," a destroyer that passed quite close to us. On the stern flew the flag with the White Eagle. We salute the ship; she returns the salute. That is one of our Polish warships now fighting with the British fleet. In Gdynia the warships had often been stationed on the roadstead in front of my house. For years I looked at them from my garden and I see them now, framed by my beloved beech-trees, in full sunshine, and sometimes in moonlight. On this day, after my long wandering through strange countries, I met one of ships that had been a part of the setting that surrounded my own house.

There is life and movement in the British ports. A modern cruiser passed so close to our ship that I saw every detail of it. Far in the fiord lay an airplane-carrier. A submarine was returning home from the hunt. Two tug-boats were drawing a net, to be used against enemy submarines. British planes of different models were cruising constantly over the roadstead. A convoy of ships entered the harbour led by a big three-stack liner. Here one was bound to feel the might of British sea power.

However we felt the first real emotional impact of the sea war already while we lay in the North Irish port. There a small Danish freighter, loaded with timber,

struck a mine and was blown up. I happened to be on deck at the time and could see the tragedy from beginning to end. First a column of water mounted 100 feet into the air, and a half minute later there sounded a distant roar. Then the freighter appeared, lying on its side and obviously sinking. All of this happened no farther than a mile from our ship. Through our binoculars we could see tug-boats hurrying from the harbour to the rescue of the crew, life-boats pulling away from the sinking ship, and, finally, five minutes later, the ship sinking from view.

The following day I witnessed the sinking of another ship. It happened in the Scottish port, and had nothing to do with the war. A three-masted sailing vessel had carelessly approached too close to the shore; it struck an underwater reef and sank within one minute. Only the tops of its masts remained above water. To me this symbolized a warning of the sea, reminding man that ships can be sunk other than by submarines, planes and mines.

Nevertheless submarines, planes and mines were at that moment the main subject of our conversations. Do they really constitute a serious menace? If to date they have sunk more than a thousand ships—it would be foolish to ignore the fact. But we must also bear in mind facts and figures which prove that perhaps the danger is not overwhelming. It has been stated, for example, that only one voyage in 200 ends with the sinking of the ship. Which of the two extremes is right? We put this question to the Captain and, his

officers. Their answers were conflicting, and the sum total amounted to about this: whatever must happen will happen. It is a most simple conclusion, but perhaps it is the right one.

On its latest voyage from America our ship was twice engaged in battle. Once it encountered a 4-engine Fokker-plane that dropped about 20 bombs on the convoy, and afterwards machine-gunned the ships. There were no casualties nor was a ship damaged. On another occasion, during a quiet night when the moon was at the full, two submarines emerged exactly in the centre of the convoy, which made it impossible for the ships to make any use of their artillery. Three ships were sunk, one of them being near our ship. Within two minutes it had sunk from view. In such cases the convoy does not stop, and the rescue of the crews is undertaken by the destroyers.

Our ship was well armed. On the stern we had a 4-inch gun, as well as an anti-aircraft gun. The bridge was protected against machine-gunning by a concrete armour. On the bridge also was a special anti-aircraft weapon, a catapult. When an enemy plane flies low, this device throws out a fine silk line 150 feet long, to which are attached small parachutes that keep it suspended in the air. If such a projectile is shot out at the moment when the plane flies closest to the ship and is unable to turn, the plane's propeller will become entangled in the line causing the pilot to lose control.

Our ship had three life-boats and five rafts. All were plentifully equipped with supplies. Waterproof boxes

contained sufficient food for a week, drinking water, alcohol, sweaters, blankets, signalling rockets, sails and first aid necessities.

At last, on November 5th, we set sail for America! Now we were indeed in convoy. Our Captain, the day before, had gone ashore for a conference with the captains of the other ships of the convoy. The commander of our convoy was a retired British admiral who, like many of England's old sea-wolves, had been recalled to active service for this special duty. We were assigned to a good place in convoy—No. 45. Convoys always move in column formation, usually 7 to 8 columns, of 4 to 6 ships each. We were in the rear of the fourth column, which made us feel comparatively safe, for submarines usually attack the front or the flanks of the convoy, and avoid attack from the rear, as the guns are mounted on the ship's stern.

I was on the bridge at 2 A.M., when the convoy left the port. At the moment we were only 5 ships; the rest we would meet at sea. By 11 that morning we saw another contingent of ships and the first destroyers.

Now the convoy was well under way. We were 32 merchantmen all told, escorted by 8 destroyers. There was actually only one good warship, the others being small old-fashioned crafts. Then we had an unpleasant surprise: two ships of the first column and all the ships of the second and third columns failed to arrive at the gathering place. The order of the ships had to be rearranged, and in the shuffle, we became No. 14. From a good place we were moved to one of the worst—a side position.

Most of the ships of the convoy were of the same class as our own: 5 to 6,000 tons. There were also 2 or 3 larger ships, of 7 to 9,000 tons, as well as several much smaller ones, some even less than 2,000 tons. To our left I saw another Polish ship belonging to the same firm as ours. So excellent had been the conspiring that brought us all together that I was taken completely by surprise by this meeting. Our other neighbours were two British tankers, carrying water-ballast. Two other ships carried large cases, probably containing planes. Their destination was Africa. The planes were to be used against the Italians in their African Empire. Although British vessels were in the majority, I saw one Swedish boat, two Greeks and a Frenchman. Further along there were also Norwegian and Dutch ships—an international company.

We passed the northern gate of the Irish Sea, and found ourselves on the Atlantic. Our crossing began in earnest. We had entered the danger zone and would continue within it for the next 600 to 700 miles, representing 4 to 5 days sailing. The Captain ordered a test boat-alarm. How different from pre-war times on the big transatlantic liners when such a boat-alarm was regarded as one more deck-sport! Today we took it seriously. We listened carefully to the instructions. From now on we must sleep fully dressed. We must leave our cabin doors open during the night, because if shut they are apt to jam, if a torpedo hits the ship. We must wear life-belts even during the day. In Dublin I bought a flashlight for each member of my family which must be always on hand at night. In case of an

accident, we were not allowed to take any possessions to the lifeboat. Documents, money, some small mementos, I put in a small oil-cloth sack, which I fastened to my life-belt.

Now the ship was ready for its ordeal. A guard stood at the gun, another scanned the horizon from the crow's nest. The wireless was disconnected for the duration of the hazardous first week. The convoy moved on. Our first night on the Atlantic was approaching—a beautiful moonlit night. The submarines have a particular liking for moonlit nights.

This first night was uneventful. We were now far out at sea, which began to grow rough. Again I stood on the bridge and observed the interesting conformation of great numbers of ships marching in lines and columns like soldiers. I began to distinguish the features of individual ships. For a shippingman every ship has a face of its own, its own habits and caprices. Also, each has a characteristic way of behaving when the sea is rough. The ship behind us was one of the newest units of the Polish merchant fleet. It was not big but strong and speedy. When going in ballast, it was helpless on the waves, and on this rough day it gave a fantastic exhibition, its nose frequently disappearing under the water. In sailor parlance the ship was playing submarine. Our tanker neighbours were not rolling sideways very much, but they were trying to sit on their sterns. Not far from us was a modern Norwegian motorship. Probably it had no ballast at all—for it danced on the waves like a nut-shell, spinning as if it were trying to turn around on its own tail. There was

also a Swede, a serious old tramp, the largest ship of our convoy numbering more than 9,000 tons and more than a few years. It bore itself with dignity on the heavy sea, but its engines were no longer quite reliable. Twice it lagged behind, but every time managed to regain the lost distance.

The destroyers were at the head of the convoy and on its flanks. The big destroyer at the head, being much more speedy than the ships in the convoy, from time to time described a large circle, to inspect the whole works. The destroyers signalled to the Commander. Naturally they were in contact with other warships that patrolled the sea beyond us, also with the British patrol planes and with the shore. The convoy was being guarded by a network of planning and forethought made in accordance with some calculated design. British knowledge and experience of the sea would foil the sly schemes of Germans on the hunt.

One of our officers came directly from the navy, where he had served on a submarine. He revealed to me many interesting details about this dangerous weapon. The German submarines, he said, are equipped with modern and very sensitive sound recording apparatus. They can hear the convoy from a great distance, and it is on this sound apparatus that they base their entire system. However, he added, the British destroyers have the same apparatus that enables them also to hear an approaching enemy submarine. Against the submarine the British have a terrifying weapon—the depth-charges. It is quite sufficient if a depth-charge explodes some 400 feet from the subma-

rine. The concussion of the waterblast has nearly the same disastrous effect as the mine itself, for a submarine is a fragile organism, and if any part of it is injured, it must leave the battle and take care of itself.

Something now appeared to be wrong, something began to happen in the convoy! The Commander's ship signalled to the convoyed ships. The officer on duty sent for the Captain. The reserve crew appeared on the deck. The destroyers disappeared. Behind us I heard something that sounded like distant shots. I also felt shocks, similar to the shocks we felt on the roadstead in Liverpool when German bombs fell close to our ship. But today the shocks seemed somewhat less violent. Were they depth-charges? I put this question to the officers, they said: "No." But soon we passed a large puddle of oil. Could one of the motorships ahead of us have discharged so much of its burned oil? Now the convoy sped forward and later on it changed its course. Again it changed its direction—and now we were sailing eastward. I no longer attempted to guess the answer to the riddle. All I knew was that our engineers were making every possible effort to remain in line. Some of the other ships could not keep up the pace and began to lag behind the convoy. Why was the Commander speeding so today? We were still going at full speed when night came. Our Captain did not leave the bridge.

At 4 A.M. I was awakened by a suspicious silence: the ship was no longer rolling, the engines had stopped. With my head still full of dreams, I made some silly conjectures: "Are we perhaps already in Canada; or

are we at the bottom of the ocean?" I hurried to the bridge. Although the night was dark, I could see land distinctly. The Captain was no longer on the bridge. But not until morning did the Captain explain everything to me. Because I was the only man among the passengers, and a man of the sea, I might share the secret. But the women must not be told.

I had been right yesterday. The shots I heard and the shocks as well, had been made by depth-charges. We had been attacked by two submarines. One of them attacked a lone ship of our convoy, which remained two miles behind us, and the other appeared ahead of the convoy. The lone ship was torpedoed and sunk, but the greater part of its crew was saved by a destroyer. The other submarine probably was sunk by our escort before it could harm the ships. The oil that I had noticed on the water was the result of a hit scored on the submarine.

But we turned back to Scotland for still another reason. The Commander had received a message that a German surface raider had appeared on our course. It might be a cruiser or even a battleship. It had attacked a convoy coming from America and had sunk five ships and also the escorting vessel, the armed auxiliary cruiser "Jarvis Bay." It was from the "Jarvis Bay" that our Commander received the warning which made us seek refuge in a deserted loch in far northern Scotland.

I thought these were enough adventures for the beginning of our voyage, though actually we had not even started our Atlantic crossing. Now we were

obliged to abide our time. The sun was rising from behind the wilderness of the hills. Higher mountains in the background were covered with snow. The country was beautiful but rough. A squadron of 9 Gladiators passed over our heads, probably setting forth to clean the ocean.

Again the days on shipboard were an idyll. We lived an unimportant life, filled with small pleasures and small sorrows. The women were on the deck, enjoying the last rays of the autumn sun. I gave lessons in English to my children, and in the evening we played bridge. We all became acquainted one with another and with the crew.

It is astonishing how our Polish sailors learned so rapidly to be real sea-wolves. Our merchant fleet was not only small, but perhaps the youngest in the world, the first ships under Polish flag being launched in the year 1924. Nevertheless among international shipping circles the opinion prevails that the Polish sailors are born sailors. The sea-going talents must be in the blood of some nations, just as there are nations that will never develop good sailors, as, for example, the southern peoples. The young Polish merchant fleet earned a good reputation. Our Captain is a case in point. Twice during this war the British put him in command of small, unescorted convoys. On the bridge and in the sitting-room he and I discussed the prospects of the Battle of the Atlantic. Usually two of the older officers joined us, while the younger officers preferred the company of my daughters.

Among our crew were many interesting fellows. Our

boatswain hold the record for all Polish boatswains as to duration of service; for 41 years he has been on the sea, and his two sons were sailors on the same ship. Our cook was wonderful. Not only was he an excellent cook, but also a first class drunkard: twice weekly he must drink his usual portion of whisky. Then he became funny and ingenious. He liked animals, and had with him an antelope that had been given him a few months before in Dakar. He gave the animal the Polish name of "Macius." "Macius" became a mascot and the favourite of all the crew. Our steward left us in Dublin, where the Captain replaced him with an Irish boy, Jim. His hair was tousled and jet black, he wore his father's vest which was much too large for him, and was in terror of his boss, the cook. There was also another boy, English, named Alfred. We rescued him from a sinking ship, and though he barely escaped drowning, the adventure did not excite him. Vivid Jim and phlegmatic Alfred were a strange but amusing team. However, there was too much work for the boys in serving so many passengers. So everyone of us did a share of the task. We could not do otherwise—this was not a luxury liner!

On November 10th our convoy moved for the second time. Exactly two weeks had elapsed since we sailed from Liverpool. We hoped that while we stood waiting here in the fiord, our way through the ocean had been thoroughly patrolled and cleaned.

We were now only 26 ships in convoy for some had decided to remain in the fiord. Again we were on the ocean. Adverse winds brought clouds. Scotland ad-

hered to tradition: it rained. The rain changed into hail; it began to grow cold; the wind became stronger, and the waves were still higher. The faces of the passengers grew longer, the lounge emptied. Land disappeared from our sight.

In the evening the storm broke and continued throughout the night. Nearly all the passengers were seasick. Bags, chairs, glasses fell and rolled on the cabin floor, the doors banged, salt sea water spurted through a porthole which was not entirely water-tight, the sick man in his bed tried to stand on his head. Even if he began to doze off, he was soon interrupted: somebody else feels not quite himself and runs through the corridor; the steward in the kitchen drops a plate and breaks it; the Captain loudly shouts some orders—and so the disturbed head of a newly awakened man imagined that this was a boat-alarm, that danger was at hand.

I could not sleep and went on the deck. From the bridge I looked at the rough sea lighted by the moon, which was nearly full. In this clear light the ships of the convoy were distinctly silhouetted against the sea. They clung close to one another like a frightened herd. On the bridge two officers, the helmsman and the watchman, were still busy. It was no easy task to stay in the line with a convoy at night.

The storm abated the following morning, but in the evening it began again with renewed force. And so it continued through the next three days. As a result we were obliged greatly to slacken our speed. We were making 4 to 5 knots and were still in the danger zone.

Twice during these three days our Commander signalled alarms and the destroyers ran in pursuit of submarines, throwing depth-charges. On both attacks the submarines emerged behind the convoy, and the battles took place much farther to the rear than in the first attack. We heard no shots and felt no shocks. Not until we arrived in Canada did our Captain learn that this time also a submarine had sunk a ship that was rather far behind the convoy.

On the fifth day of our passage there was a radical change on the ocean and on the ship. On November 15th and 16th we ran into two very heavy storms following one after another, which dispersed the convoy, ended all our war adventures and let us forget about the danger of submarines. But during these two days our ship had to fight a new battle with the ocean to save its own life. The Atlantic proved once again that it is not man who governs here. The Admiralty of the strongest sea-power in the world had made fine plans; the complicated machinery started to operate—and one simple storm destroyed all the ingenious projects of man. There was no more convoy. No formalities attended its dispersion, no solemn ceremony. The Commander gave no orders. It was the storm that liquidated the convoy and scattered the ships. The storm also sent the Nazi submarines far below the surface of the water and for all we know chased them to their bases.

Even our boatswain could not recall a storm as violent as this one. Wind and waves reached their maximum. Wind showed 12 degrees, and for several hours

the waves were more than 50 feet high. I heard that once a 60-foot wave had been seen off Cape Horn. Maybe. At any rate, I think our 50-foot wave was quite sufficient.

Today the waves were often higher than the ship. We took them crosswise portside. The Captain explained that it would be impossible to expose the starboard side to the waves, although that would be exactly our correct direction. I could not understand why it would be impossible; it is the result of some complicated formula derived from a consideration of waves, wind and the velocity of the ship. It was also impossible to go straight against the waves. This I understood: the waves were too strong, and even if the ship pitted all her force against them, we would still be practically at a standstill. We could of course have gone with the wind, but that would have taken us back to Scotland. There was nothing to be done—we climbed askance on the back of a huge wave, only the next second to fall down the deep precipice. But on the other side of the precipice a new water wall was already rising. Sometimes the ship was inclined 45 degrees. A mountain of water hung over the ship. On the top of the wave a white billow was forming and preparing to leap on the ship. Sometimes the wind ripped off the white comb and hurled it over us in the form of penetrating foamy spray. But it was much worse if such a "white devil" remained unbroken by the wind, for then the whole mass of water tumbled down. A sea wave is a gentle animal; it has an up and down

motion, and the greatest harm it can do to a ship is to make it rock. But the white comb of the wave has its own progressive motion, its own striking power. We could feel it every time such a billow struck our ship. If it comes from some special direction and from a distance that augments its force—it can do great damage: pluck off a life-boat, lift a man from the deck into the sea, break a mast, and—what is most dangerous—open the ship's holds and flood the interior. Even our ship, although she was more than 5,000 tons, must be spared from such shocks. That is why our Captain did not leave the bridge for 48 hours; he was fighting with the ocean, fighting to save the ship from being stricken by the bad "white devils." The first day he challenged the storm, but then he capitulated and turned back. When the storm subsided we calculated that we had drifted back about 150 miles, and that again we were only 400 miles off the coast of Ireland. This meant that we were still in the danger zone—and we had been exactly one week on the ocean!

Now we slowly recovered the gains we had lost. It was necessary for us to proceed even more cautiously than before, because now we were alone in the submarine zone.

The two most crucial days passed without accident. Other days passed. We reached the so-called "safe waters"—if there can be complete safety anywhere on the seas during a war. However, the rigours of our life on the ship were relaxed; we could sleep undressed, we got back our wireless. Now we were counting the

miles to Canada, but the distance diminished slowly because we still had an unfavourable west wind against us.

Storms came and went. When we were off Cape Race, Newfoundland, we encountered another extremely severe storm. Although it was not so heavy as that of November 16th the danger was even greater, because the waves were shorter and steeper, and the "white devils" struck more violently against the ship. The Captain did not even attempt to fight, but turned back immediately. Ships that did not turn at the right time, were severely punished; three sunk in this storm—and all three were larger than our ship! Our radio operator was very busy. From all sides we received SOS calls. It was difficult and dangerous to go to the aid of other ships, as every manoeuvre in the storm might provoke an accident. One of the sinking ships was on our route; we arrived at the spot only one hour after we heard its call for help, but we found nothing of the ship, nor of the life-boats. We learned later that the ship, a 9,000-ton Canadian freighter, had sunk with all hands.

We drifted more than 200 miles. We had no more water and another storm was on the way. Our Captain decided to take refuge in the port of St. John's, Newfoundland. We cheered this decision, and gave vent to real enthusiasm when we caught sight of the land! But the Atlantic still refused to surrender. Time passed before we entered the port.

We were only three miles from the harbour when darkness came. A storm, approaching from the west,

from the land, was drawing near. Every moment the wind grew stronger, the waves became higher. The speed of our ship diminished alarmingly. Now began the fight with the ocean for a safe shelter in the port. We attacked and slowly advanced, as the sea, the land and the sky united in counter-attack. It was nearly night. Fog wafted down from the island's rocks, and soon enveloped the ship completely, hiding the entrance of the harbour, which under the best conditions is very difficult to navigate. But our Captain had already determined the course. We proceeded despite the fog, and a quarter of an hour later we again saw the lights of the port entrance. Nevertheless this was not yet the end of the struggle. St. John's is in a small bay, and there is only one entrance from the sea, leading through a narrow pass between two rocks. We neared the entrance. Wind and waves renewed their fighting as we approached it. A pilot-boat came to guide us. In vain the pilot tried to come on board; the sea was too high. Finally, he gave the order: "Follow me," and the pilot-boat went ahead. But our Captain knew his ship too well. Instead of following the pilot, he steered the ship straight toward the southern rock, and only when he reached the entrance of the straits did he turn and allowed the wind and the waves to bring him to the centre of the pass. This manoeuvre saved the ship from being thrown against the northern rock.

We arrived in Newfoundland on November 28th, 1940, having made the voyage from Scotland in 18 days. In his 50-ton schooner, in the year 1534, the famous French traveler and explorer, Jacques Cartier,

crossed the Atlantic from St. Malo in France to Newfoundland in 20 days. We beat this record by 48 hours!

We reached our final port, St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, on December 5th, 40 days after we first boarded the ship in Liverpool! We stopped for two days in Newfoundland, where Indian again was put ashore to take us on a tour of inspection. On the 6-day passage between the two St. Johns, we had one more storm, big snow falls, frost. For nearly 24 hours we floundered in the fog, only a few miles from the entrance to the port of our destination. Until the last moment the Atlantic defended her rights and tried to demonstrate that she is stronger than man. But man, the obstinate, passed through all obstacles, and finally landed in America.

AMERICA, A SAFE SHELTER

Indian on Indian Lake — A tourist camp — First night in the United States — Two moons — Once again through sixteen months of war adventures — Indian, my faithful companion — Towards a new life — Force of comparison — I accuse all Europe — Blindness of peoples — Examples: Lithuania, Latvia, Sweden, Hungary — Like chickens in a hen-house — Isn't it similar in America? — Poland at the bottom of the German sack — Chopin and Copernicus condemned — Extermination of 9 million Poles — The hunting guide — "You are wrong!" — Fight of two worlds — Different states of war — In the safe shelter of America — Among friends — Hurry, friends!

ONCE again during this war Indian served us, bringing the family from St. John, New Brunswick, deep into the American mainland. For a long time the highway followed the sea-coast. It was a beautiful sunny day, and the Atlantic for the first time smiled on us as a friend. We crossed into the United States at Calais, Maine.

Our first night in the United States we spent in a

tourist cabin on the shores of Indian Lake. While my wife and children were asleep in the small house, I spent a few quiet moments on the cabin porch which was built out over the water. The night was so still that my ears tingled from the silence, there was fog on the lake, and the forest on the other side could hardly be seen. The moon again was nearly full, as one month before on the Atlantic, but how different the moon was this night! One month ago we looked disparagingly on the traitor who facilitated the job of the Nazi U-boats. The moon on this first night in the States brought to me a feeling of repose and peace. For a long time I remained on the porch looking at the dreamy northern wilderness. Once again I subsided into my own thoughts and memories.

There had been nearly sixteen months of wandering. The war had followed me everywhere. I had seen much and survived many potential disasters. Some of the events seemed to be far distant today, but at the same time they were all still vivid though unfinished, not sufficiently assimilated and crystallized by my mind.

I see Poland in pre-war days, my home, my work, my strictly regulated family life, my aims partly attained and my further plans and projects. Then the war approaching nearer and nearer, bringing for me the fascinating new work of transporting war material into my country, the great plans along those lines that were never realized, three trips in connection with this work—to the Balkans and to Petsamo at the northernmost extremity of the world. My first encounters with the Nazi secret service, and the final pre-war days: the

dangerous leap across East Prussia, escape from Gdynia on the eve of the war, fleeing on the same day to Budapest, and, finally, the long expected outbreak of the war: the enthusiasm in Poland, the total effort of the nation—and for me again travel upon travel: Rumania, the return to bombed Warsaw, the escape with my family to Wilno encountering bombs and machine-gun bullets on the way, the circular voyage through Sweden to London, the tragic news about the fall of Poland with my family remaining under the Bolsheviks, the return to Lithuania, the adventure with my former chauffeur, now a Gestapo-agent, the secret trip to the Bolsheviks, the two night passages of the frontier, the successful rescue of my family, the Lithuanian prison, and the third voyage through Sweden to the west, this time with all my family. The beginning of refugee life: Paris, Nice, Holland, Rome, two more journeys to Hungary and Yugoslavia, and perhaps the most fascinating memory—my second secret trip to Poland, this time to Warsaw: dangers, adventures, strong impressions of the defeated but never broken fatherland. Once more France, wonderful *dolce farniente* on the Riviera, on the Loire and in Paris, and again a momentous event: the war on the western front, collapse of France, my breakneck voyage to the Italian frontier to rescue of my family, another even more hectic flight out of France, ending with a ridiculous crossing on a fishing cutter to England. Then nearly sixty days of bombardment in London, and finally the most recent adventure, the passage through the most dangerous of battlefronts, the Atlantic, facing the hazards

of submarines, mines, airplanes, storms on the ocean. I realized that I was weary from all these adventures.

In front of the cabin stood my Chrysler car, my faithful Indian. The Indian head on the radiator was silhouetted distinctly against the white snow. Indian, my friend, who had accompanied me in nearly all my wanderings and shared with me nearly all my adventures, was back in America, the land of his birth.

In my Indian's own country I was now obliged to plan a new life, an entirely new and difficult life. It was not easy, for it was no longer a question of months, but of many years. I came to America with hardly any resources, and at my age I have had sufficient experience to know how difficult it is to create a new existence, especially in a foreign country. I also knew that here in America I would have many competitors in nearly every field, and that besides Americans I would compete here with thousands of other refugees like myself, looking for jobs. I could count only on myself, my wife being ill and my children still a responsibility.

But I did not worry much about a job. I felt I would always be able to earn the few dollars I needed for a modest life. We had already become accustomed to a very different mode of living than that before the war in Poland. And even if it takes years, they will pass, the war will end and we will go back to Poland. I am too much bound to my country to be willing to build a permanent new life abroad. It is only the problem of outlasting the years of war.

But now, more than at any time during this war, my

thoughts veered from my own troubles to the general problems concerning my country. I feel so far from Poland, I can do so little for my country, and there is so much to be done! But above all I am disturbed by my own reactions to my first impressions of America.

I had passed through four wars: in Poland, France, England and on the Atlantic. I had seen nearly all the official and unofficial partners of the world conflict: Poland, France, Great Britain, also the Germans, the Bolsheviki, Italy, Belgium, Holland, the Scandinavian, Baltic and Balkan countries—virtually all Europe. I have a basis for making comparisons, and the force of comparison is compelling. Only by comparison can one appraise what was good and what was bad in Europe, what was right and what was wrong, or at least a mistake; only through comparison is it possible to arrive at general conclusions.

I accuse all Europe of lack of solidarity, lack of mutual understanding. Not one single country in Europe can escape this accusation. And it is the reason why Europe lost the war against the Huns in its first stage.

If in the year 1938, when Czechoslovakia was threatened for the first time by Germany, all the other European countries, including Poland, had backed her strongly, even at the risk of being involved in war, I am sure we would not have had any war at all. Even when Czechoslovakia was refused military help, she should not have hesitated to defend her frontiers alone, as Poland did one year later. I am sure that in that event the other countries, again including Poland,

would, *nolens volens*, had been obliged to go to war against Germany, and under those circumstances, likewise, we would have no war today. Of course, Czechoslovakia would be in ruins, like Poland. If at the moment when Hitler invaded Norway and Denmark, the Danes would have opposed him as did the Norwegians, Hitler's task would have been more difficult. If before this all three Scandinavian countries had helped Finland in her struggle against Soviet Russia, probably we would have today a very different picture in the north and east of Europe: Similar "ifs" could be cited also for the Balkans and Central Europe.

It was astonishing how in all these cases the picture was exactly the same, and how all the peoples, conquered later or encircled and immobilized by Germany or Russia, believed until the last moment that there might perhaps be danger for others, but not for their own country; they would be left in peace if only they would remain neutral and indifferent to what happened to their neighbours.

I remember the days of October, 1939, when Soviet Russia demanded that the three small Baltic republics, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, give her the right to establish air and naval bases on their territories. At that time I was in Kaunas, the Lithuanian capital, and spoke to one of the members of the Lithuanian cabinet, and later in Riga I spoke with a Latvian Minister and another high Latvian official. The upshot of all three conversations was identical: the men I questioned not only insisted that their countries were too small to resist 180 million Russians, but also that the concessions

asked by Russia were of little importance to the future of the Baltic States. They had only to remind themselves of the sad experience of Poland, but nevertheless they still believed that their countries would escape danger. They were quite sincere in their belief. Any Lithuanians, Latvians or Estonians who would not subscribe to this belief at that time, probably would have been called warmongers by their respective governments.

At about the same time, when it was already officially known that the annexation of the Baltic countries by Russia had been perpetrated under an agreement with Germany, I spoke with a man of influence in Sweden and asked him if he believed *Scandinavia was in any danger of being involved in the war*. He answered, not very politely, that my question was "childish."

In March, 1940, the leading men of Hungary told me that there was no question about permitting the Germans to send troops through Hungary. "Rather than let that happen, I would leave the country myself," one of them told me, a man of spirit and splendid character. Some months later, when Hungary was virtually surrounded by Germany, there was no question about refusing the German claims. The suicide of Count Teleki throws light on the situation.

Thus one tragedy after another came to Europe, and the people learned nothing from the experiences of other people. Germany took her victims one after another like chickens from a hen-house. I saw such a hen-house once, attacked by a hawk. The hawk seized a chicken from the flock, then swooped down for an-

other, while the rest of the frightened birds remained sitting on their perches clinging to one another, awaiting their turn.

When I spoke with the Swede, I remembered my recent talks with the Lithuanians and the Latvians. When I spoke with the Hungarians, I remembered all of my previous conversations in Lithuania, Latvia and Sweden. And I made comparisons. All these conversations were dishearteningly similar!

And what I hear now in America is much like all these European exchanges of views! It seems as if here, as it was in Europe, there are people who still imagine that it is possible to go back to medieval times and isolate one part of the world from the rest, who have exactly the same illusions as the leaders of European countries had before they were conquered, after defending themselves, or occupied or encircled without fighting.

That's why I was worried by my first impressions of America.

And these unhappy reflections were accentuated by letters received that same morning and bringing bad news from Poland. My country today is at the very bottom of the German sack, and all of us are powerless to change the situation. The news from Poland reveals the behaviour of the Nazis when they have a free hand because no one is able to obstruct them. They continue systematically to destroy all evidences of the Polish culture and of the glorious history of Poland. In Warsaw the Nazis demolished all the street monuments; even the statues of Chopin and

Copernicus were blown up. And in the western provinces of Poland the Nazis relentlessly continue their "Drang nach Osten," the complete extermination of Polish people; of the 9 million Poles living there for thousands of years, more than 2 million already have been driven out.

*

I was interrupted in my lonely thoughts by the proprietor of the tourist camp. Seeing me on the porch, he joined me and we began to talk. He was also a hunting guide, and he told me about hunting in Maine. Then we turned to politics. I told him about my first impressions and fears. The man seemed to be impressed.

"You are wrong!" he said, "wrong also in your impressions of this country. I myself took part in the previous war and I know my country well. There are some people who will oppose every activity of the Government, but the only thing of real importance in America is public opinion. And American public opinion definitely maintains that this new war is no longer an internal quarrel among the European peoples, but a big struggle between two different worlds for the domination of their ideas and their way of life. There cannot be anyone who is not concerned in this struggle. Do you think that America is out of the war? No! All the world, directly or indirectly, is involved in this biggest of all struggles. There are no more free seas, no international trade; neutral countries are blockaded exactly in the same way as the fighting ones; 'fifth col-

umns' of different kinds are working in neutral countries in the same way as in fighting countries. In the old days there was a state of war and a state of peace. Today also there is a state of half-war, of quarter-war, of non-belligerence, of 'collaboration' of all kinds. Of course, we are at war, and we will collaborate still more closely with the honest part of Europe. Don't worry, you are among friends!"

Yes, I am among friends. After my war tramping I have come to America, a safe shelter. But it is not the first time that, escaping from the war, I was truly convinced that I was coming to a safe shelter. So it was in Lithuania, then in Nice, finally in England. They all gave the impression of safe shelters. But war pursued me everywhere. Will it follow me here also, in America?

And if it is so, if I am still on the terrain of war—it is something that I prefer, of course! I am among friends, who have the same desires, the same troubles as I, and who join their productive effort to our fighting.

But, friends, do not forget that all of us who fight, with our arms or with our minds or spirits, on battle-fronts, in concentration camps, in conquered and silenced countries, as war refugees spread through the whole world, that all of us are growing weary!

Hurry, friends! . . .

*

Many months have passed. I have established the provisorium of a new life in America. Together with the Americans I have lived through many new emo-

tions, and finally the formal entrance of America into the world struggle. Now also the New World is in the war, in the same camp as we are!

From my Old World every month brings me more bad news: my brother has been sent to a concentration camp by the Nazis; the partner in my Gdynia business and my close friend died in another concentration camp; not less than a dozen of my relatives were deported by the Soviets to Siberia; my wife's country estate, Ostrowlany, has been razed from the face of the land; twenty-five million Poles are living in prison—in misery and humiliation.

Oh, hurry friends! . . .

