

A JOURNEY TO MOSCOW AND ITS SEQUEL

BY W. T. GOODE

[EDITORIAL NOTE: An account of Mr. Goode's first attempt to reach the Bolshevik capital appeared in the LIVING AGE for October 18.]

I PASS over the first part of the journey to Moscow — up to Pskov — which I have already described in the account of my first attempt to reach the capital. At Pskov we sought out the Esthonian Commander. He was courteous as usual, but when in course of conversation he recognized me he became keenly interested and promised to do all in his power. While we were talking Colonel Puskar, Commander-in-Chief of this Eastern army, came in and joined in the talk. I had been his guest at Wöru on my visit to the Esthonian front, and he knew me again at once.

Our difficulty was that a strong fight was going on across the line by which we proposed to enter Russia. However, the Commander promised to send us in an automobile to his farthest outpost, Strychkova station, with instructions to the battalion commander there. We, therefore, returned, made up our luggage and food packs, got into the auto, which waited while we ate a shallow and unsubstantial meal, for which we paid 300 rubles, and drove off at a furious pace along the great *chaussée* toward Ostrov.

This frenzied ride came to an end in our being stopped by a Russian officer and piloted by side ways to the very station we were seeking. The commander came to us, but after a few minutes suggested we should go to his quarters and thus escape the

curiosity of the peasants. On following him through the station we found a long train on the line, one portion armored, with stores and ammunition wagons — a very serviceable camp on wheels. Two coupés, thrown open, were his quarters, and there we, he, the Russian and his young wife sat and discussed the situation. A stiff fight was going on ahead, we could hear the firing, and as a portion of the line was held by the North Russian Corps he dared not let us pass until he had got into touch by telephone with these, and had made sure that we should not be fired upon at sight.

He gave us coffee and food. After leaving what contributions of tea, sugar, and tobacco we could afford, we got into the car and drove cautiously forward for some versts. At an outpost two soldiers joined us, but our chauffeur was manifestly nervous, and at last I suggested abandoning the car.

We packed our goods on our backs, put up the white flag, and addressed ourselves to the road. With our luggage, food packs, coats, and the flag, we had between 60 and 80 pounds each to carry, and we did not know when or where we might strike the first 'Red' outpost.

No one could or would tell us anything, and it was not till we had toiled over many versts and come upon an obstruction across the road made with telegraph posts that we

knew we were approaching a military station. But we still had some versts to walk before a peasant working in a cultivated patch at the roadside told us the outpost was on top of the ridge in front. He joined on to us, and offered to supply a horse if one were needed.

On the top of the ridge we found the outpost, a number of young Russian soldiers, and the end of a field telephone. We were promptly searched for arms, and then allowed to drop our packs and squat on the ground to rest, while the leader telephoned to the battalion headquarters. He tried to 'phone the contents of one of our papers, but not very successfully. In the end he gave us two guards, who helped us with our luggage, and sent us across country to headquarters. This meant another tramp through fields and marshes as long as the tramp on the *chaussée*, though the last portion was made a trifle easier by two farm carts which were commandeered at a village. All the time we had been walking the fight was going on around us, and during this last portion the whizzing of Esthonian shells over our heads was added. By the time we reached Gusakowa, the muddy village of the H.Q., it was quite dark. We were taken to one of the hovels, utterly noisome, conducted up a rickety stair to the living room, where were the commander, the commissary, a number of men, and the family, the place dimly seen by the light of a tiny lamp. They offered us no food until the commandant, who went out to telephone to Ostrov, returned, saying that we should certainly break our necks if we went on to Ostrov that night, and that we were to stay in Gusakowa and leave in the early morning. We then got a glass of tea and some bread.

All too soon we were routed out in

the morning, and after a hasty cup of milk and a piece of black bread we started off on two farm carts, springless plain boards on which a heap of hay had been thrown, across country by the accommodation dirt road, through village after village, to the main *chaussée* to Ostrov.

We were held up in Ostrov for many hours, first to talk with the commissary, next with the brigade staff, which was located there. There was no difficulty about me. The former telegram of *Laissez passer* which had arrived too late to stop me from recrossing the frontier still existed, and in addition I had now papers which insured that no further hindrance would be offered to me. It remained to secure similar facilities for my companion, and I exhausted myself in arguments with the staff on his behalf. After long hours of waiting, wrangle, and debate the end came, as always, with startling suddenness. Passes were made out as far as Velikie Luki. When we got there we had a long interrogation to endure, long arguments to hold, and again I pressed with every reason I could produce for full permission for both of us to continue our journey. Finally I was taken down to the telegraph room and talked with Moscow, getting a decisive reply that I was to go forward on the morrow and take with me all the papers and credentials of my companion, who was to stay in Velikie Luki until these had been examined and a decision formed.

From the staff we went to a Soviet house, that is, a former hotel, where a bar-room was given to us, and we made from our supplies a scrappy meal. Then trouble began. Mr. Keeling discovered to our horror that his real credentials had either been lost or left in Reval. The position was desperate. After our long and success-

ful argumentative bouts it looked as if he would fail just at the finish. But he decided to make a statement in writing, and he wrote for some hours a statement, all of which was sealed up on the morrow by the commissary without my having seen it, and handed to me to take to Moscow. There was no help for it. We both recognized that this was the only course to adopt, and in the morning, after waiting a long time for the one samovar of the establishment to travel in the direction of our room, we made a rough breakfast and then divided our food and other supplies.

Hoping to see my companion, Mr. Keeling, in Moscow in some 48 hours, I left for the station in charge of an invalid Lett but recently out of hospital. I took the train for the capital. The journey lasts some fourteen hours, and they were a sorry time for me. I was really ill, and my Lettish companion, though helpful, was not much better, and we were both glad when the city hove in sight, he to be rid of his responsibility and I that I might perhaps rest.

I went from the station to the room which had been allotted to me. All hotels have been nationalized and are now used as government offices or apportioned as homes for ministerial employees and other workers. A number of great houses have also been commandeered and used in the same way. It is quite natural, therefore, that the Soviets, in whose disposal all accommodation rests, should have fixed a room for me to live in while in Moscow.

I had visited Moscow twice before, and was familiar with its appearance and life. My first impression, then, as I crossed the town was bound to be a vivid one. It was more—it was bewildering. I had expected to find evidences of great destruction and a

crushed and cowed populace. I certainly did not find the Moscow of my last visit, but I found life going on in an ordinary commonplace way, street markets flourishing, large numbers of people in the streets (the population has increased by 25 per cent), trams running, with loads of people hanging on to any excrescence that would give hand and foot hold, and on this first occasion no evidences of destruction. That came later, when I went freely about the city.

Then I discovered streets where the façades of the buildings were chipped by shot, windows pierced by bullets, the holes mended by plaques of glass, in some cases with paper, and at the bottom of one of the boulevards a *carrefour* which was a mass of tumbled brick and ruin, while a row of tall houses on one side was nothing but a skeleton of gutted brick and stone work. This was the result of the rising of the Social Revolutionaries in June last year. But on the whole the destruction was very small when the huge size of the city and the scenes that have taken place there are taken into account.

Churches and monasteries are intact. The Basil Cathedral and the glorious Church of the Redeemer are as splendid as ever; so is the Troitsky Monastery and the Tretiakov Gallery. One thing strikes strangely. The old glitter of the shops is gone. Most of them are boarded up and give a queer, desolate appearance to the line of the streets. But in many cases this was voluntary, since there were no goods to sell. And others were closed by the Soviet when stocks ran low and profiteering of a pestilential kind began in the remaining stocks. These were then commandeered and distributed from the Soviet shops, which are of all kinds and are found in every district. Their number is so large that queues do

not exist, except when certain goods—boots, stuffs for clothes—are sold on cards on days that have been previously fixed and from specified shops. There are Soviet tea houses and restaurants, but some private ones are still open at speculative rates. And a number of small trades which it would not pay to nationalize at present are still in the hands of private persons.

In fact, the socialistic and individualistic forms of distribution go on side by side, since it is not the practice of the Soviet to embark on nationalization of anything until everything is ready for the complete change. Theatres and concert halls are fuller than ever, the workers now having the best chance in the distribution of tickets. But the famous ballet and the still more famous Art Theatre have been left untouched, and for the ballet school special regulations have been made allowing promising aspirants to enter at an age much below the age legally fixed for beginning work. Concerts of excellent music are maintained, and the cost of entrance is small, and theatres for children are run gratuitously in seven different parts of the city every Sunday afternoon.

I missed the Alexander statue in the Kremlin and the Skobelev statue in front of the old Hôtel de Ville, and was informed that they had been carefully dismantled, and would be set up again in a museum, and I noted the efforts of the Soviet in the direction of monuments. The Skobelev statue is replaced by a really imposing monument by the sculptor Andreef. It is a triangular obelisk mounted on a three-sided pedestal, with curved sides, fronted by a splendidly posed female figure with uplifted and outstretched arm. At the foot of the figure is a tiny rostrum from which Kamenev and Lunacharsky made speeches to

the huge crowd below at the unveiling ceremony, which I walked to see. On the boulevards the Soviet has placed monuments of famous Russians, some meant to be permanent, others temporary. They are of very unequal merit, and some of them are in a style too ultra-progressive for my taste. But the appeal of the eye is evidently studied.

It may be imagined that as I took in all this my astonishment grew. But one thing made that even greater. I mean the order and security which reigned in Moscow. I have crossed the town on foot at midnight without fear of molestation, accompanied only by a lady with whom I had been to a concert. And again and again I was told by those whose work took them out at all hours of day and night that the security is absolute. And there is no street lighting at night. There are police and armed military in the streets but they are not greatly in evidence, and only twice in a month did I see them arresting anyone—once for an infringement of the laws relating to street selling and in the other case for creating a disturbance.

Open prostitution seems to have disappeared, and, though there are still beggars, the pest to which I was subjected in 1911 is greatly modified, and I understand that steps are to be taken to cause its complete disappearance.

'Moscow is a dead city,' said a man to me in a town which I visited on the way to Kieff. That seems to me to be too strong a statement. There is plenty of movement, plenty of noise, but on the whole life is grayer in tone, duller in flavor, than in the Moscow which I knew a few years ago.

Going to Moscow is not exactly a trip which one would undertake for pleasure. The difficulties and dangers,

the discomforts and the weariness of getting there, great as I had supposed them to be, are in reality much greater. People may wonder, therefore, what it was which could have induced me to undertake such a journey. To me, however, the reason was simple. In thinking over the problem of Russia it had been borne in on me that a government which could last for nearly two years against the colossal difficulties which have beset and are still besetting it must have some good reason for enduring when the other governments, the Provisional and the Coalition, had failed so disastrously.

Up to the moment of my departure I had heard nothing about the Soviet Republic in which the word 'destructive' did not appear, and yet it seemed to me that whether for good or for evil there must be a constructive side to it. To find out what was the reason of the endurance of the Bolshevik Government and the particular form its constructiveness was assuming seemed to me, therefore, a completely sufficient reason for attempting to reach Moscow. For I felt sure that the thing I wished to arrive at could only be found by personal contact with the government itself. It involved the putting away from one's mind of all preconceived notions gained from newspapers, conversation, and White Books, and studying on the spot the character and mechanism of the government. It involved also a study of the conditions of life, of labor, of education—in a word, of all those constructive processes which make up the economic and social life of a country. It involved an investigation into the conditions of manufactures and transport and, as far as possible, into the conditions of agriculture and the life of the peasant.

I had little hope of being allowed to

study the military organization and situation, but as in entering and returning I should have to cross a considerable portion of country, and during my stay in Moscow I must necessarily, if successful, be brought into contact with some phases of the military situation, I thought that even on this point I might secure sufficient information to arrive at an approximate estimate of its scope and value. There was a further point which weighed with me for much. An investigation such as I wished to make would perforce bring me into close contact with the leaders of the government, and possibly with many other men not directly concerned in the government, and this contact would give me an excellent opportunity of studying the men who are responsible for what is going on in Russia to-day. It will be seen, therefore, that I had proposed to myself to study Bolshevism at home in order to discover the secret of its lasting and to estimate, if possible, its chances of continuing to last.

By great good fortune I was successful in reaching Moscow, and once arrived there I drew up a formal programme of work. It is conceivable that a better programme might have been drawn, but imperfect as it was it took me over nearly the whole of the ground I had mapped out for myself when thinking over what I would do were I ever in Moscow. I had made no secret of my intentions. Why should I, since they were completely honorable? They had been discussed, with many friends who were working in the Baltic Provinces, and one and all had agreed that what I wished to do was the very thing which it was important should be done.

There are in the Moscow Government eighteen commissariats—that is to say, eighteen Ministries: I found

that my programme would bring me into close contact with the departments of thirteen of the most important. Besides that, wherever an opportunity occurred I meant, if possible, to push the investigation into concrete examples of the administration—as, for instance, in the Commissariat of Education to follow up some of their experimental programme, in the Commissariat of Industries to continue my work by investigating the conditions under which factories were run, in the Commissariat of Agriculture to go out and see some of the experiments which this Commissariat has introduced into the agricultural life of Russia. It hardly needs remarking, therefore, that instead of being met with a prearranged scheme of observation, or being taken by the hand round carefully prepared instances of Bolshevik work, I was really a free-lance, acting at my own sweet will and going in directions which I myself had chosen. When I presented my programme it created some surprise, and the remark was made that I had mapped out for myself a very thorough and probably very exhausting scheme of work, but that no hindrance would be placed in my way in carrying it out. My anticipation with regard to the men whom I should see proved correct. I was able to reach nearly all the most important men connected with the movement who were in Moscow, ending with Lenine himself.

Trotsky I did not see. He was in the south, and remained there until after I had left Moscow. Had I met these men in a full conference it is easy to imagine that the whole affair might have been a prearranged show, in which the actors maintained a definite pose and in which I took away from the conference only such

carefully selected material as was thought proper to give me. The fact is quite otherwise. I was able to get individual commissaries in their own departments, to make them talk freely about their own work and submit to a cross-examination, which is a quite different matter from a stage-managed conclave. Besides, this method gave me an opportunity of seeing what the organization of the various departments is, while frequently a chance question brought me into contact with sub-departmental heads who assisted me in my further investigations when no commissary was present. Indeed, except on one occasion, I was never in the company of more than one commissary at a time. At times, in reply to my questions, a commissary would say that fell outside his department and that it would be better for me to consult such-and-such a person who was in charge of that particular business. But at other times my question would be freely discussed, and this gave me an opportunity of controlling the statements made at a later stage on the same matter by the individual in charge of the department to which the question referred. This was conspicuously the case, for instance, in my interview with Kamenev, the chief of the Moscow Soviet, who discussed freely with me the Bolshevik judicial system, and thus gave me a valuable criterion for my interview with Kurski, the Commissary of Justice. The interviews and expeditions with the subordinate heads gave me a first-class chance of estimating the quality of the men chosen as agents, while the investigations in factories and agricultural experiments brought me up against men some of whom were by no means completely enamored of the new system and criticized it quite freely. In one case, at least, among these men

were three men from Lancashire. I mention these things somewhat in detail because attempts have been made to characterize me as a blind and unintelligent fly who walked straight into the spider's web.

In one case, my contact with work outside the government departments proved to be of great importance. It took me to the school where the officials of the district, town, and provincial soviets are prepared, and where also is a school for the special training of propagandists. I spent a long day in this school, and, as I know something of educational work and experiment, it proved for me a day of great illumination. The freedom with which I moved in Moscow enabled me to meet men who had but recently crossed the whole of Siberia, the Caucasus, and the Ukraine, and to get from them valuable information concerning their journeys.

The fact that I was untrammelled allowed me also to form a tolerably just estimate of life in Moscow, its order, its security, and even its pleasures, while the extent of country which I crossed on my four journeys and the freedom of my conversations in trains, on farms, and roads did really give me some knowledge of the conditions existing among the peasants of the west of Russia, besides giving me accurate details of the way in which the land has been cultivated and the prospects of supplies for Russia in the future. As Dr. Johnson told Lord Chesterfield, 'I have done all that I could, and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little,' though in my case it is not so much neglect which is to be apprehended as unreasoning hostility.

I think it is due to my readers that before giving an account of what took me to Moscow and the work I did

there I should state what had happened to me between the time when I came out of Russia and my arrival in England.

I arrived in Reval on the second of September, after a journey which for difficulty and danger is unique in my experience. The second and a portion of the third of September were occupied in picking up my effects, sending telegrams to announce my arrival there, and in consultation with the Esthonian authorities, who had assisted me from the moment when I touched the Esthonian outposts. It was on the second also that the interview with the *Times* correspondent and Commander Smithies, of the British Mission, took place, which produced later such very unpleasant results. On the evening of September 3, I was asked to go to the Esthonian Military Staff, where I went, thinking it was intended to hold another consultation such as had been held with every Esthonian staff with whom I came in contact in my progress through the country.

Arrived there, I was kept waiting for two hours, being interviewed, or, at any rate, attempted to be interviewed, by some clerks belonging to the Intelligence Bureau. I protested strongly at the time, but could get no satisfaction, and at the end of the two hours I was brutally told I was arrested. No explanation was given, no reason produced, but I was taken off immediately in a motor car to the Haupt Wachtel—the political prison—and handed over to the officer in charge. This prison is a strong building of two stories, with heavily barred windows and a multiplicity of armed guards. The officer in charge attempted at first to find a place in which to bestow me on the ground floor, among the common soldiers, who were herded together like pigs. Finding no place,

he took me upstairs, where eleven young officers from the Esthonian and Russian armies were located. I was placed in a cell, about fifteen feet by eight feet, with two young officers. The cell contained two bedsteads but no beds. One of the officers, a youth, had been sleeping during three and a half months on three boards. He had no covering except his thin summer uniform. The other officer had secured a rug. He had been in the cell for eighteen days, but neither of them knew why they had been imprisoned. The only other furniture was a stool, but an iron bedstead was brought in, without any covering at all, for me. The officer tried to induce me to send to the hotel for articles of bedding, the intention being to get from me my keys. This I absolutely refused to do. He then took me downstairs to his office and told me to clear my pockets on to his table. This, again, I refused point-blank to do, on which he threatened to use violence. My reply was that I could not prevent his attempting it, but that I should offer all the resistance in my power. He then changed his tone, and pleaded with me for half an hour with tears in his eyes to give up my keys, and, finding I was obdurate, he at last said he would forego the matter, and I was taken upstairs again.

I had no overcoat, rug, or bedding of any description. It was impossible to sleep on the bedstead like St. Lawrence on his gridiron, and so from eight o'clock in the evening until eight next morning I tramped up and down the twenty-foot corridor outside. My last meal had been taken when I was the guest of the Esthonian Foreign Minister at lunch on the previous day, and during the thirty hours I was in the prison I neither ate nor drank nor slept nor washed. Black bread had been brought round

in the morning, but none was given to me, and toward midday a bucket of soup strongly resembling hogwash was brought up, but as I had neither pannikin nor spoon I could eat none of it, even if I had wished. On the evening of my arrest I had extracted a half confession from the officer of the prison that the Esthonian Government was not to blame in the matter of my arrest but the British authorities. On the following morning during a second interview he, in desperation, confessed freely that it was the British authorities who had ordered me to be arrested. I had given to him notes to the British and Esthonian authorities and to personal friends in Reval, but I had no confidence they would be delivered.

On the afternoon of the fourth, by which time the officer of the prison had been changed, I wrote out a formal protest to the Esthonian Government against the unwarrantable arrest of a British subject without reason given, and a letter to the head of the British Mission demanding his presence at the prison to see the sort of thing to which he had condemned me. I also by clandestine methods had got a letter conveyed to a well-known American journalist, who was in Reval, asking him to act on my behalf. At seven o'clock in the evening I went again to the office, and told the officer that if by eight o'clock no one had been to the prison to me I should take action myself, for I had determined to smash the windows on my floor by way of attracting attention to what was being done. In less than half an hour an adjutant from the staff and the commandant of the town drove up and released me. While returning to the hotel the adjutant confessed openly that what had been done had been demanded by the British authorities.

As soon as I had washed and fed I went to the British Mission to demand explanations. The head of the Mission was not there, I was told, but I saw again Commander Smithies, to whom I strongly denounced the whole proceeding, and from whom I had again a practical confession of what had already been told me by the prison officer and the adjutant. He told me in addition that Admiral Cowan, who is the chief officer in the Baltic, offered as an 'act of courtesy' a destroyer to take me to Helsingfors, since I had lost my passage through my imprisonment. This offer I could not accept as I had much to do, but promised to consider it for the morrow if it were repeated. I then returned to the hotel, and packing together all my papers, the results of my month's work in Moscow, the documents I had brought with me, photographs, letters of prisoners of war, and all the notes, drafts, and copies of my work in Finland and the Baltic provinces, into one large parcel I took it to the Esthonian Foreign Ministry and had it sealed with the diplomatic seal of Esthonia and left it in charge of the Foreign-Minister with instructions concerning its disposal.

On the morrow, the sixth of September, I kept my word and went down to the destroyer *Venturous*, in which I proceeded, as I thought, to Helsingfors. An hour after lunch, knowing that we should then be getting near to Sveaborg, I went on deck, when Commander Smithies came to me and told me the ship was going to Björkö. To my remark that this was sheer kidnapping, he replied that a wireless message had been received from the admiral during lunch saying that he wished to see me. As there was nothing to be done I had perforce to bear the matter with what grace I could. We arrived at Björkö about

seven o'clock in the evening, when I was given a cabin on the hospital ship.

It was not until after service on Sunday that I was taken to the flagship, the *Delhi*, to see the admiral, and on seeing him I asked him, before any further steps were taken, in what capacity I was present, whether as his guest or as his prisoner. He seemed a little disconcerted, but remarked that he had wished to see me, to which I replied that I had received no invitation but had been carried off on the open sea. He then said I certainly was his guest, on which we sat down and conversed. He asked me many questions, some of which I answered, others I declined to answer. At the close of the interview I was removed from the hospital ship to the light cruiser *Danaë*, on which I remained until I landed at Sheerness on Monday, September 29. During the whole of the period of three weeks, during which I was detained, I was not allowed once to set foot on shore. My only visit was made to the admiral again after I had learned that stories of my supposed killing by Bolsheviki were circulating in the English press, and I wanted to have a telegram sent home, in order to relieve the minds of my people. I further sent to him, on September 15, a formal protest against my detention without any reason assigned, and calling on him to fulfill the promise made on his behalf to land me at Helsingfors as an 'act of courtesy.' This produced no result. I remained on the *Danaë* for another fourteen days, and was then brought straight back to England and refused any communication with the shore at Reval, Helsingfors, or Copenhagen. Of the fate of my papers I am yet in doubt, though from the libelous statements which have appeared in the *Times* it is clear that the seal must have been broken and the

papers examined, if no worse fate has befallen them.

In justice to the officers of the *Venturous*, the *Bernice*, and the *Danaë*, it must be stated that they received me with all possible politeness and good fellowship, and did everything in their power to make my detention as little irksome as possible. The sole exception to this treatment

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was Commander Smithies, who paid the ill-omened visit to my room in the hotel at Reval in company with the *Times* correspondent, and who afterwards accompanied me on the kidnapping expedition to Björkö.

I have yet to receive any explanation of the gross outrage of my arrest and detention.

THREE BRITISH CRITICISMS OF LUDENDORFF

I. BY HILAIRE BELLOC

It is a just criticism, though not necessarily a complaint, to be directed against nearly all memoirs of war that they neglect the military art. They usually err either by being too rhetorical in what should be a severely intellectual process or—much more often—by being too personal.

For those who, like myself, have an interest in military history *per se* (just as one may have an interest in chess or pure mechanics), the first thing attempted when one comes across a military memoir is the discovery therein of certain events, 'key points.' We already know, say, eight factors out of a formula composed of ten factors, but the two unknown factors lend all its interest to the problem.

Now my complaint is that memoirs written by generals as a rule shirk these 'key points,' and I find the memoirs of General von Ludendorff in the English translation which has been placed before me no exception to the rule.

To show how true this is I will take

what I think everyone will admit to be three main key points in the story of the war:

(1) The chief point of all, which determines the nature of the victory of the Marne, which gives its shape to the whole war, is this:

Was that victory produced by the smashing of the Prussian Guard by Foch just east of the Marshes of St. Gond in the late afternoon of Wednesday, September 9, 1914, or had a general order of retreat *already* proceeded from German headquarters, and was the fighting in the centre, east of the Marshes of St. Gond, no more than a delaying action after such an order had been given? Well, I turn to the pages before me and I find, to be quite honest, nothing about it!

The only allusion to the matter at all is on page 69 of the English edition, and it has exactly two points and two only in the midst of a mass of generalities: (a) A series of remarks which are, so far as military history goes, valueless. The absence of two German Army Corps from the West (the Guard Reserve Corps and the XI Active) 'had made itself felt with