

AN AUTUMN VISIT TO BAVARIA

BY AURIOL BARRAN

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I HAVE just returned from Munich. Taking this town as an example of economic conditions as they are to-day throughout the German Reich — here events have come to pass in the space of a few months that ordinarily would have taken years to become complete realities. There is a marked difference between the cost of the smallest commodity in May of this year and that in October. In the spring I paid 800 or 900 marks for a bedroom at a first-class hotel; in October, from 1,500 marks upwards, with an additional tax of 675 marks per day, compared to the previous sum of 405 marks. For a light French breakfast, consisting of tea, rolls, and coffee, I was charged 90 marks recently, ~~instead of 40 marks.~~ These prices are *prix d'étrangers*, but they serve to illustrate the increase in the cost of living; for, although foreigners are made to bear the brunt, and are fleeced more than ever, yet even Germans have to pay according to the new tariff.

An ordinary table d'hôte luncheon cannot be had for less than 800 marks. A portion of spinach alone costs 90 marks, an omelet 80 marks, a portion of salad 50 marks, a fruit compote 100 marks, bread and a portion of butter 40 marks, trout 370 marks, and half of a chicken 820 marks. These quotations can only be rough estimates, for the standard of living changes daily. If you, or a German, go and dance at a night club or cabaret, your bill will come to something like 3,480 marks. In most places you are obliged to order

champagne. A bottle of 'Bubbly' will cost you 1,800 marks at least. A plate of fancy biscuits which is served with the wine is valued at 300 marks, a Prunier is the same price, and a small half-bottle of soda-water is 40 marks.

But, again, these figures are approximate, and can only be indicative of the change that has taken place recently, for these prices form a complete parallel to those existing in Austria last year. Even the ordinary taxi fare starts at 150 marks or more. The porter who carries your luggage at the railway station has a fixed tariff of 16 marks per parcel, and a tramway fare is 15 or 20 marks in Munich, though a little less in Berlin — compared to the nine kronen charged in Vienna in the early autumn of last year!

This sets one thinking. One has literally to train one's brain to get accustomed to reckoning everything in hundreds and thousands! You cannot buy anything — except a pencil — in a shop without starting at a hundred marks, and any article of clothing bears a fancy price of some thousands of paper notes. For any extensive purchasing it would be necessary to carry a suitcase to contain the requisite amount.

As I wrote during my last visit to Munich, the foreigner is fleeced mercilessly. Passports must be produced on arrival, and your expenses are assessed in dollars, pounds sterling, or francs, as the case may be. You pay according to nationality. The porter at your hotel has to vouch for this when ordering tickets at the theatre, where any stran-

ger is charged doubly, trebly, or five times as much as any German or Austrian. If you purchase the tickets yourself you have to declare your nationality before doing so. The same applies to museums, where an *Auslander* pays an entrance fee of something like 150 marks, a German or Austrian 50 marks or even less! The Bavarians are determined that no one with a foreign currency shall come and economize *chez eux* or profit by the exchange, and all sorts of more rigid restrictions are in force to prevent visitors from entering the country, owing to the shortage of food. Recently for a police permit authorizing me to remain a week in the Bavarian capital I was charged 4,000 marks on my British passport. And for a longer stay I should have to pay a further sum. One is often made to feel *de trop*, and held responsible — at least the country one represents — for the nation's individual hardships. Many people are getting 'sore' and take no pains to hide it; these give free vent to their feelings, blaming the Allies for everything, including the war. In the case of France no words of abuse are strong enough to express their hatred and loathing and the desire for revenge. I think one and all would fight against this neighbor if they had the means!

Though the bulk of Germany is no longer militarist, Bavaria is so still, because an army to them represents part of the appanage of a monarchy. How ultra-conservative Bavaria is it is perhaps hard to realize; also how much the entire nation lives on traditions handed down to them by their ancestors. These sentiments form a good and substantial buffer against attacks from the Bolsheviks.

With regard to militarism and the danger of a future war at some remote — or possibly not so remote — future date, it is probably not fully appre-

ciated how great is the influence of education upon the nation. It was the State schools and not so much the army that instilled patriotism and thoughts of revenge in the youth of the country. In these institutions young Germany received an excellent education and learned strict discipline. It is significant that up to 1913 only 40 per cent of young men served in the army, and in many cases their military service only extended over a period of twelve months. Contrast the school curriculum. This absorbed the youth of the nation — boys and girls alike, from five to fourteen; the most impressionable and malleable period of life. Here the lessons of discipline — merely another name for coöperation — were learned, sometimes at bitter cost: for flogging, although forbidden by the State, was effectively practised by severe schoolmasters.

Very much the same position exists to-day. Both schools and universities are potent factors in forming the character, the thoughts and sentiments of the nation. I mention this because recently I visited a school in Munich where a kind of active propaganda was taking place against the Allies by means of colored illustrations, cartoons, and maps on the walls of the classrooms. These illustrated the despoiling of Germany of her richest possessions by the Treaty of Versailles, and served to foment popular indignation against her present hardships — a result of the payment of Reparations and other evils. Such a poison cannot but permeate the masses in time and lead to far-reaching if not disastrous results.

It is well-nigh impossible to conceive how some of the ancient régime live. The Royal House of Bavaria itself is in a state of penury. Its various members can just afford to live in a small flat, with, perhaps, one or two servants at the most. Prince Ruprecht of Bava-

ria himself occupies only a floor of his Royal palace. The rest is let out in flats. This is partly due to the state of his finances, I imagine, and partly to the *Zwangseinquartierung* in operation here, as in other parts of Germany, owing to the acute shortage of houses. This law decrees that anyone in possession of rooms adjudged superfluous shall sublet these to the houseless. The House of Bavaria has no more saleable assets.

Formerly most of the Crown property, and even many of the personal effects of the Bavarian princes — such as family pictures, which were bequeathed to the national galleries — were renounced for the benefit of the State and for the endowment of the Civil List. Now, thanks to the revolution, this list is closed, and the new Government has appropriated these donations for its own uses. Thus, many who benefited or who derived their main source of income from this form of pension are in a bad plight.

It is necessary to visit the Bavarian nobility in their own homes and to talk to them to appreciate the full truth. During my stay in Munich I was fortunate enough to meet several of the prominent families who once lived in luxury. To-day the most luxurious keep a cook or a general servant, but the majority do their own housework or exist on the sale of their family portraits, if these have any intrinsic value, and any works of art, china, or porcelain they had been able to collect in happier days of affluence.

The wife of a prominent official with whom I was having tea said to me: 'You have no conception how terrible things are for us. My husband has an income of 60,000 marks, which before the war represented about £3,000. Compare what it represents to-day and what it purchases with what it meant in 1914! If I had not private means of

my own and did not hold foreign securities, I do not know how we should exist. In those days we lived in comfort. We had a motor, we always traveled first-class, and I took a maid everywhere. At present we picnic with one or two domestics at the most, having been accustomed to several men-servants. And yet we are infinitely more fortunate than most people in our situation, for a great many are completely ruined.'

The same lady told me of a sort of asylum for destitute ladies, which had recently been formed to assist cases of acute poverty. There were houses where impoverished gentlewomen could find a home by means of a payment of a small sum of money. Often these ladies deposited their entire fortune — a capital of some 20,000 marks — which ensured them a home for life. But as the cost of commodities soars daily their comforts must necessarily diminish, for these *Stifte*, as they are called, could no longer continue to keep up the same standard of living. Already they had been deprived of many of the necessities of life, reduced to one meal a day, and meat once a week, for the sum of 20,000 marks, although it sounds fabulous, is a mere nothing. One dress alone costs 60,000 marks.

Another lady, who also belongs to a well-known Bavarian family, showed me a dress which she had bought ten years ago, saying that she intended to wear it all the winter. 'We simply cannot get new clothes,' she said. 'My most up-to-date friends wear their 1914 wardrobe. We are only too thankful if, by some lucky chance, we have kept our old rags of another century.'

In whatever house you are invited to tea (the only meal they can afford to offer) you are given no fresh milk — generally no milk at all. Sometimes, as a great treat, a tin of condensed milk is placed on the table, with injunctions

from an abashed hostess to use it sparingly. She will hastily explain that with milk at 50 marks the litre they cannot possibly run to such an extravagance. This is a great hardship for young children, for professors' families and even workmen's children have to go without milk — also without butter, which stood at 380 marks to the kilo during my recent visit.

In this way the health of the nation will soon be affected. Already one notices passers-by in the streets with pale, drawn faces and traces of suffering and underfeeding. Individuals present a different appearance from what they did some months ago. One cannot but tremble at the approach of the winter, for what may not take place when people get really hungry and have no warm homes to go to? During my meeting with Prince Ruprecht of Bavaria he told me of a personal friend of his, a former general, who had commanded an army on the Eastern front, who remarked that he was 'feeling extremely weak, as he had not tasted meat for a month.'

I visited an orphanage supported by voluntary contributions. Here everything was scrupulously clean, and the children presented a well-cared-for appearance, but their faces were of a peculiar parchment color. This is not surprising, for, as I learnt later, they existed solely on a diet of potatoes, with a substitute for their morning coffee — a curious unwholesome mixture that took the place of this homely beverage. As the head of this institution remarked, 'They are healthy only because they lead an open-air life.'

With regard to the suffering of the upper and middle classes, it is significant to notice that a workman in Germany to-day earns 100 marks per hour, which, reckoned on a yearly basis, is equal to a Prime Minister's salary in 1914. And even so the laborer is not

better off than formerly, although he presents a prosperous appearance and is often better clad than a Herr Graf or a professor, who frequently cannot afford to buy a warm coat for the winter. But very soon there will be unemployment and labor trouble, due to the increasing shortage of funds for State enterprises. The communal purse is not elastic, and is not capable of adjusting itself to the ever-increasing rise in the price of commodities and the cost of labor. Another grave problem is the shortage of raw material. Ere long the supply must fail entirely. This cannot be renewed on account of the sinking value of the mark. A sinister outlook!

When one considers the discomforts of European traveling it is astonishing that one ever travels at all. The indignity of the customhouses and the rudeness of the officials must deter many from crossing the border. Boxes are ransacked and turned topsy-turvy, dirty hands finger your most alluring dresses, and you are not allowed, apparently, to have any article of clothing that is not a hundred years old. Whether a thing looks new or not, your integrity is questioned. I argued for twenty minutes with a Czech official about a fan which had been in my possession for two years and had lately returned from the shop where it had been mended. At the Czech-German frontier I saw a large cupboard full of *objets confisqués*. Among these were several books, ordinary novels. On inquiry I was informed that each traveler was only permitted to bring two books for his personal use into the country, and these must bear his signature on the front page. Chocolate is also forbidden, and any traveling trunk which does not present a battered appearance on leaving Germany is appropriated by the *douaniers*, or its owner is made to pay a tax amounting to more than the original cost. I heard of a case when an en-

tire trunk was emptied, its contents flung upon the floor, and the offending purchase confiscated! Another time a child was deprived of its shoes, as the soles looked new, and literally forced to continue his journey in midwinter in his stockinged feet! The very clothes on your back are examined, and fur coats are liable to be taxed unless you can prove where and when they were bought, or have had them previously stamped at another frontier.

Such are the joys of traveling to-day! I think things are made unnecessarily uncomfortable and disagreeable; and I have never seen such a muddle and confusion as at Strasbourg, where one has to pass through the French and German customhouses respectively. The space is so narrow that one is bumped and pushed and jostled, and almost has one's clothes torn off one's back. Travelers and porters carrying heavy suitcases knock one's shins and knees till one is black and blue all over with bruises. There is no courtesy, no help from the officials. . . . On arriving at the Gare de l'Est there is not a single porter to carry one's luggage!

But journeys are not without the comic element. Coming from Milan to Munich I was a witness of an incident which savoured of pure musical comedy — afterwards, *bien entendu*, for at the time it was singularly unpleasant. In the middle of the night a man entered my compartment. He insisted that there was room for him and a friend, turned up the light, and began to fight the other two male occupants of the carriage.

When they protested against this measure, pleading a righteous fatigue — for we had none of us been able to

sleep owing to the repeated demands for passports and tickets from innumerable ticket collectors and continuous visits from customs officials at the different frontiers all night long as it seemed — 'You are all going to do as I say,' he shouted wildly. 'Now we are in the Tyrol, and I am a Tyrolese, and you have to do as I wish.' So saying, he seized the two men by the scruff of the neck and flung them into the corridor.

This state of affairs continued for some time, and the situation was becoming alarming, when the lady in my carriage pulled the alarm signal. The train stopped, and after five minutes a sleepy guard appeared with a leaking lantern. Everyone shouted at once to the amazed official, each telling his side of the story.

'You must all get out at the next station and explain to the stationmaster,' was the humble reply to our excited adjectives. For he had not understood a word that anyone had pronounced! Accordingly we marched out at dead of night and declared our names, our nationality, our status and so on.

After listening to our story the stationmaster turned to the unfortunate man who had been attacked and, quite seriously, remarked, 'I am afraid I must fine you for pulling the alarm signal. You see, you should not have done so. This is done only in cases of extreme urgency — death, or something of the kind. Of course, if you had been killed —'

This was adding insult to injury; for the man who had attacked us all and made himself objectionable escaped scot-free, and the offended party was made to pay!

FUNDAMENTALS OF POLISH POLICY

BY A WARSAW CORRESPONDENT

[*This is a companion article to 'Fundamentals of French Foreign Policy,' printed in the Living Age of December 2.*]

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DURING the first years of its existence the Polish Government has been compelled to struggle with formidable problems, both foreign and domestic. Some of them were thrust upon Poland when she was liberated, and were unavoidable; others she owes to her own greed for territory and the chauvinism of her leaders. One third of the population of Poland consists of Germans, Jews, Ukrainians, Russians, and Lithuanians. A prudent policy, designed to promote peace at home and power abroad, would try to reconcile these discordant nationalities by a federal form of government. And indeed, Pilsudski and his Foreign Minister Narutovich, who has lived almost his whole life in Switzerland, proposed to do this.

However, the chauvinism of the National Democrats has defeated this wise and moderate policy. Pilsudski and Narutovich warned their countrymen against making Vilna and East Galicia integral parts of Central Poland and urged that these territories be granted extensive autonomy as federal States. But the Polish Nationalists insisted upon outright annexation. The result is that to-day Poland has an Ireland of her own in Ukraina, and has a mortal enemy in the Lithuanians, who refuse to have even postal and telegraph intercourse with Poland, and incontinently shoot any Pole who is imprudent enough to cross into their territories.

The Germans are indignant over the

way the German schools are discriminated against, and embittered by the unfair treatment that German settlers have received. They intend to be loyal citizens of Poland, but propose to preserve their language and customs. Any Government that assures the Germans these incontestable rights will have their hearty support and find them devoted helpers in restoring the economic prosperity of the country. Pilsudski's Government seems inclined to do this, although its good intentions have so far borne little fruit.

The Jews are divided into numerous groups and factions. At one extreme are the advocates of assimilation, who share the tastes and sentiments of citizens of Polish blood. This class consists mostly of bankers, wholesale merchants, professional men, and scholars. At the other extreme are the Jew Nationalists who are laboring tirelessly to erect a Hebrew State within the State. Pogroms, which were common two or three years ago, have ceased, and the Government is prompt to nip in the bud new demonstrations of that character. Nevertheless, the anti-Semite movement is as powerful and as bitter as ever. It aims to exclude the Jews from all social relations with the Poles, from scientific bodies, social clubs, and other organizations, and from the schools — although with notable exceptions to this policy in case of individuals. Since the Jewish population is more