

then one would awake, yawn, slip a cartridge clip into his rifle and lazily fire four or five times before lying down again and resuming his slumbers.

Thus was passed a day by which every citizen of Athens honestly fancied he had demonstrated his dignity and good judgment.

*(Le Figaro (Liberal Nationalist Daily),
December 7, 1920)*

FLEEING FROM CRIMEA

BY F. DE BAILLCHACHE

I AM still suffering from the shock at what I have seen during the last few days — worse things than it has ever before been my experience to witness. Early in the morning of November 10, startling news arrived from Sebastopol. The Reds had rolled up the White army, and M. de Martel, the French High Commissioner, sent urgent dispatches calling for transports. We left at once.

On the 11th, we are already before Sebastopol. It is a beautiful day, recalling our own delightful Provence. We are in the back sweep of a battle, surrounded by French, English, and American torpedo boats. Nothing is to be seen. A deep, dull, agonizing silence rests over the bay.

On the morning of the 12th, General Wrangel comes on board the Waldeck-Rousseau. He says that his six divisions, although they fought superbly, were not able to withstand twenty-seven Bolshevik divisions commanded by German officers. To-morrow those twenty-seven divisions will be at Sebastopol.

At one o'clock P.M., several Frenchmen, including myself, land. A Russian pilots us to the city. Everything is calm. People are reading the newspapers as fast as they leave the press. These report the Reds already near by.

Dense, picturesque groups are clustered here and there. Old bearded Russians in garments made of hides; Cossacks in tall sheepskin caps or red shakos. The latter wear poniards and curved sabers with jeweled handles at their belts. Here and there are women refugees, very Oriental in appearance with their heavy veils. All we see of their features are their magnificent blue eyes, still dilated with the terror of their flight.

All shops and hotels are closed. The ruble continues to fall. Yesterday, a franc would buy 10,000; to-day, 20,000. A box of matches costs 1500 rubles. The banks have no money in their vaults.

We ascend Malakoff Tower, which the Reds will possibly destroy tomorrow with all the memories it preserves for France. Night is falling when we get back. The wharves are packed with a countless silent throng. Many a face is wet with tears, but there is no noise.

We embark, finding General Brusard, M. de Martel and his Cossack guard, secretaries, dignitaries, and princes in ragged boots, already aboard the vessel. Their clothing is in rags. They are wearing no collars and their faces are pale and lined with fatigue. They are introduced to us by famous names, those of former nobles and grandees.

No blood and thunder romance, no sensational film, could reproduce what is now occurring every day in Russia. Princes of the highest lineage, noble ladies and their families, a whole world of people with strained, emaciated faces, dilapidated clothing, makeshift garb, who speak the most cultivated French and possess the breeding and manners of the most courtly and refined society, are crowded here.

A little girl, almost a child, showed

me a photograph of the palace which her parents owned near Petrograd. This, together with a beautiful miniature representing a young man in the picturesque uniform of a lancer of the Guard, are all that she has saved. She added in a far-away voice: 'He wore that uniform when the Bolshevik murdered him.'

This evening, a woman arrived running, her hair down, her eyes wild with terror: 'I come from Simferopol. The train was at the station. A bold patriot suddenly started the locomotive, and in spite of the Reds, we — a few of us — got away. They already held the town. They slaughtered my husband and my brother like pigs before my eyes.' Later in the night, the first fires started, throwing long, lurid beams of blood-red light over the harbor and the shifting, silent mass of the refugees crowded on the wharves.

On the evening of the 13th we set sail. The Reds tried to sink us with machine guns, but without success. We are leaving for Yalta, that city of sumptuous seaside palaces. We pass by little tugs towing barges and boats of every kind, loaded to the gunwales. Happily the sea is as smooth as oil: for otherwise there would be uncounted tragedies.

Pillaging had already started at Yalta. A few Frenchmen who had taken refuge at the harbor front were received on board. We learned that the Reds had captured Theodosia, and fired upon one of our torpedo boats which had replied. We went to its support, and then turned our course toward Constantinople.

The Russian cruiser, General Korniloff, followed us, together with the entire South Russian naval and merchant fleet, which Wrangel turned over to the French Admiral.

On the morning of the 17th, we were back at Constantinople, greeted by

thousands of the Russians who had already reached that city, shouting: *Vive la France!* All the vessels in the Bosphorus saluted us.

I was detailed to disembark 600 Cossacks in the middle of the night. Taking an interpreter with me, I presented myself on the Don, a Russian freighter. Everyone was sleeping. The decks were cluttered with recumbent forms wrapped in bear skins. I tried to rouse the Cossack leader who took me for a Bolshevik and resisted. Finally I succeeded in getting hold of the captain of the boat. Just then, the commander of an American ship came on board. He loaned us a torpedo boat to disembark our Cossacks. In a moment they were on their feet, still half asleep. We were to take off only Don and Kuban Cossacks. The latter hardly look like human beings with their high cheek bones and slant eyes. They have the reputation of being terrible fighters, and I am quite prepared to believe they justify their reputation. They had been on the steamer for a week, packed so close that they could hardly move, and exposed to the weather on the open deck. I made no effort to inspect conditions closely. Happily typhus is not so contagious in winter as in summer. A clutter of indescribable objects, arms, equipment, apparel, refuse, and garbage covered the deck. There were some women among them. All were equally terrified at the dangers of disembarking, for the swell had suddenly begun to rise. In their fear lest they fall into the water, they forgot their baggage and even their arms, except the great curved sabers which never leave their side for a moment. The latter are wonderful weapons, some of them beautifully engraved and inlaid, and they have been bravely used against Turks and Bolsheviks alike.

We reach the shore. My temporary charges are loaded on wagons and depart for an unknown destination. Unhappy Russia!

[*Svobodnyia Mysli* (Paris Liberal Russian Newspaper), November 29, 1920]

THE REDS IN SEBASTOPOL

[The following account of the arrival of the Reds in Sebastopol, the largest city in Crimea, is told by a refugee from that city, who remained over after Wrangel's withdrawal and escaped several days after the Red occupation. He is now in Constantinople. It is interesting to note from this account that Bela Kun, the former Communist dictator of Hungary, is now the Commissar for the Red army on the southern front.]

THE first Red detachments entered Sebastopol on the morning of November 16. From the time when the French battleship, Waldeck-Rousseau and the Russian warship Korniloff left the harbor, and up to the time when the Reds came in, the whole city was at the mercy of mobs, which robbed and marauded without cessation. Warehouses, stores, and even private dwellings were looted. A party of marauders broke into the cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, and finding nothing there, perforated the altar and the icons with bullets.

Budonny's cavalry reached the city ahead of the main forces. His soldiers look well fed and are well dressed. Immediately upon entering the city, the cavalry scattered in small detachments. Soon after that shots were heard in many quarters. The soldiers were ordered to deal summarily with the marauders: caught in the act, the latter were either shot or sabered on the spot.

By noon the infantry began to enter the city. The Moscow 'Red Cadets,' the Lettish battalion, and the Lenin Communist Regiment were among the first to arrive. After occupying the

port and all the government buildings, the Red command immediately sent detachments to different parts of the city for the purpose of finding and arresting the 'Whites.' The orders were to search all houses. The Red soldiers broke into dwellings and apartments, demanding passports. Some of those searched were let alone; others were taken out into the street and shot on the spot. No exceptions were made even for women and children.

In the meantime, the Sebastopol War-Revolutionary Committee, which was formed at the time of the evacuation, issued a series of orders concerning the life of the city. The inhabitants were forbidden to go out after six o'clock; all Don currency was declared null and void; all arms were ordered immediately delivered to the authorities; all 'Whites' were ordered given up. By the evening of the same day, an Extraordinary Commission was organized, headed by Zavyalo-Bestuzhe, a member of the Moscow Extraordinary Commission, sent to Crimea for the purpose of organizing the work of terror there.

All that night Red soldiers roamed through the streets of the city. Every person in a military uniform was seized, and if signs of removed epaulets were visible on his shoulders, he was immediately killed. Many civilians were also killed that night. Only those were not touched who had in their possession documents proving that they were originally inhabitants of Crimea.

On November 18, Colonel Kameff, the 'soviet Commander-in-Chief,' and Bela Kun, the Commissar for the southern front, arrived in Sebastopol, which was already full of soldiers and sailors. Kamenef remained in the city only a few hours, leaving in the direction of Kerch, where the Reds were still fighting the remnants of the Cossacks.