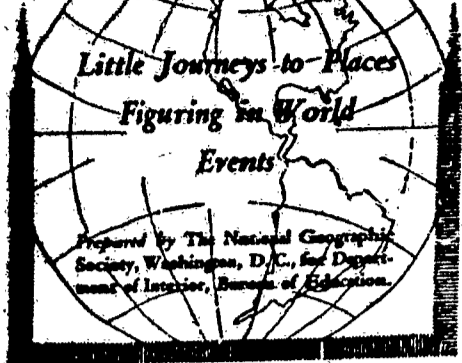


Today's Geography



ANTWERP: A LATTER-DAY ATHENS

Antwerp, where the United States athletes performed so notably in the 1920 Olympic games, was Europe's Hamburg of the sixteenth century and the Athens of the seventeenth. This city compels American admiration by its phenomenal power to "come back." Crushed by wars, inquisitions, economic bans and persecutions of its people, Antwerp always has risen again.

Figures tell the story. Population in 1568, 125,000; twenty years later, only 55,000. From 1800 to 1850 the population almost doubled. To its 290,000 in 1904, a hundred thousand more were added before the Germans came in October, 1914. The 12,100 vessels that passed in and out of its fine harbor in 1905 marked an increase of more than 50 per cent since 1888.

Not that Antwerp is a perpetual boom town. It is at least 15 centuries old. And during that time its story is one of struggle against repeated tragedies. When the Germans invaded the city its noble cathedral tower looked down on just one more, though infinitely more cruel, blow of the sort it had been receiving since the middle ages. Napoleon (some say Charles V) compared this tower to Mechin lace. Its delicate chiseling forms a network of stone embroidery against the sky that can be seen from the surrounding flat country, and from the winding Scheldt, long before any other building in Antwerp is visible.

By 1900, five hundred ships often came and went from Antwerp's harbor in a day and two thousand wagon loads of merchandise usually entered its gates. A thousand foreign business houses were represented there, its own merchant princes dwelt in almost regal splendor.

Amid this material wealth noble works of art were created. In the city's museum were specimens of its glorious school—paintings by Van Dyck, the Teniers, Memling, Massys, Jordans, Jan van Eyck and Rubens, though the last named was better represented in the cathedral by his masterpiece, "The Descent From the Cross," and two other noted works.

In the Museo Plantin were relics of that Elbert Hubbard of the middle ages, Christophe Plantin, whose press product was no less distinctive when heretic pamphlets were struck off than when devout religious works were printed and embossed.

During the religious disturbances of the mid-sixteenth century the cathedral, then considered second only to St. Peter's at Rome, was pillaged by the Iconoclasts. Its images and pictures, its magnificent cases, its 66 altars and its great organ, considered the finest of its time, were burned or broken by the torch-bearing vandals. Whitewashed walls reminded twentieth-century tourists of these deprivations.

Other churches were ravaged at that time. But what Antwerp suffered then was mild compared to the horrors of "the Spanish Fury" in 1576, when that latter day Nero, the duke of Alva, and his Council of Blood, began a reign of terror which savagery scarcely could surpass. Tying wealthy citizens to horses' tails, he would drag them miles to "trial."

Antwerp suffered grievously from this debauch of hangings, quarterings, beheadings and butcheries. In three days 8,000 of her men, women and children were slain, burned or drowned; hundreds of the fine marble homes destroyed, and the equivalent of millions of dollars worth of property wrecked.

It was seven years later that the doughty citizens of Antwerp made short shrift of the duke of Alva's plotting against Flemish liberty. When the duke and his men overcame the Flemish guard at a drawbridge, and 3,000 of the duke's troops rushed in to take the city, workmen fought furiously with their own shovels, and citizens grabbed arquebuses and chiseled coins into shape to load them.

FINLAND: WHERE WOMEN WON VOTE BY HELPING SETTLE A STRIKE

Victory for woman suffrage in the United States adds interest to the experiences of Finland, where women won the franchise by their part in quieting labor troubles similar to those which now assail the United States. Incidentally, Finland was one of the first portions of the old Russian empire to set up a constitutional government.

The advent and progress of suffrage in Finland is described in a communication to the National Geographic society by Baroness Aletta Korff as follows:

"From an educational point of view the women of Finland have been very fortunate, as there are many excellent schools for girls and a number of co-educational schools throughout the country which prepare students for the university examinations. Girls were admitted to the university in 1878, and, until the war intervened,

they not only attended lectures but took part in all branches of university life: they participated in all the celebrations and festivities, and were members of the various clubs and student organizations, in which they were on a footing of perfect equality with the men, and frequently were elected to various official positions. After they were graduated from one of the several high schools or from the university, there were many branches of work open to them.

"Having thus such an excellent foundation to build upon, it is small wonder that the woman's movement soon found many active supporters. In 1863 the diet had accorded the municipal vote to women taxpayers living in the country, and in 1872 to women living in the towns, all of whom were also given the right to be elected members of certain local self-governing bodies. In 1900 the woman's social demands included the suffrage in their program, but the special activity for the suffrage began only in the year 1904, although in 1897 a petition had been officially presented to the diet at the request of the 'Finnish Woman's association.'

"The reason why so little was done in direct furtherance of the cause of woman suffrage between the years 1897 and 1904 is that just at that time Finland was passing through a severe political crisis.

"After the outbreak of the October revolution in Russia (1905), a sympathetic strike was declared in Finland and several of the members of the central committee elected by a mass-meeting to manage the details of the strike were women.

"The first action taken by the committee was to close all the liquor shops, saloons and barrooms, and to organize a volunteer police force to keep order. After the second day the markets were reopened and the strikers were not allowed to cut off the water supply. In short, the strike was managed in a most orderly and systematic way, and no outrages of any sort were committed."

FUTURE OF SYRIA AFFECTS CIVILIZED WORLD

More and more frequently the spotlight shines to Syria. The Syrians declared their country independent, and chose Prince Faisal as king. Faisal reigned a few days. The French set up a temporary government, and now Faisal seeks restoration.

Syria's future concerns the entire world, for it is coming into its own as a result of new railways which make it once more a link land in history's chain. Explaining the significance of recent events, a communication by Maynard Owen Williams says:

"Syria closes the east end of the Mediterranean and is bounded on the north by the Taurus mountains. The



A Woman of Syria.

Syrian and Arabian deserts limit their settlement to the east and south. But in connection with world commerce it has always been closely related to the fertile valleys of the Nile and the twin Mesopotamian rivers, and its commercial life of tomorrow can not be divorced from that of Mesopotamia.

"The future of Syria depends upon the development of two ports and upon who controls these strategic centers of politics and commerce. Alexandria and Haifa attain new importance as the Dardanelles are internationalized and free passage, open to all nations, cuts across what Germany was forging as a Berlin-Baghdad route, all but 200 miles of which, between Nisibin and Tekeit, a few miles above Samarra, is now complete.

"This new line of traffic from Alexandria past Aleppo to the Euphrates river at Jerablus, connecting the oldest routes of international commerce, also separates two important linguistic groups, for Turkish is generally spoken to the north of the railway and Arabic to the south.

"Whatever political adjustment is made between England and France, Italy and Greece, Arabia and Syria, conservative Mecca and liberal Beirut, Zionist and Greek Orthodox, Christian and Moslem, Maronite and Druse, the line of division between the Turkish and Arabic tongues will be significant, for language differences as well as those of race exert a profound effect on political life in the Levant.

"Syria is the hub of the Afro-Eurasian continents, and with every rail-

road reaches out to Bremen, to Peshawar, Burma or Bloemfontein. The central region of the world's greatest land-mass achieves new significance.

"Aside from its importance as a trade route, Syria will find its greatest future as an agricultural nation, and has extensive regions which can be made to produce large crops."

RUMANIA: PAWN OF MANY

Rumania, which has attracted attention recently because of the visit of Prince Carol to this country, has been a center of European war storms for a thousand years.

Peter the Great once established a protectorate over the Rumanians and Catherine the Great later advanced a plan for the annexation of their territory to Russia. Fearing that such territorial expansion might be a menace to her, Austria persuaded Catherine to abandon that plan.

Rumania, as we now know it, was formed from Moldavia and Wallachia in 1861. Previously these principalities had been under Turkish suzerainty, following Austria's protest against Russia annexing them. Autonomy being guaranteed by the powers which agreed to the union of the principalities, following the Crimean war, Rumanians chose an army officer, Col. Alexander Cuza, as their ruler. His title was Alexander John I, prince of Rumania.

When, seven years later, the element in power at Bucharest decided for a change of rulers there were few formalities. Invading the prince's bedroom by night, leaders of the group presented a certificate of abdication to be signed, and then bundled him in a carriage and put him aboard an express for Paris.

The count of Flanders, brother to King Leopold of Belgium, was chosen by a provisional government. The powers, especially Austria, protested, and Prince Charles (Carol), who had been an officer in the Prussian army, was substituted. He set about freeing the country from the suzerainty of Turkey.

When the Russo-Turkish storm clouds arose in 1877, Charles sought to have the powers guarantee the neutrality of Rumania. He failed. Then an agreement was reached with Russia. Under its terms Russian soldiers were to have free passage through Rumania, while Russia was to respect the rights and defend the integrity of Rumania.

When the war began Rumania promptly declared herself independent of Turkey. As the war went on Russia needed help badly and finally Rumania responded to repeated appeals. Under Prince Carol, Rumanian and allied troops gained a decisive but costly victory before Plevna. Rumanian freedom was recognized in the treaty of San Stefano, and it furthermore was stipulated that Rumania was to get the swampy country known as Dobruddia, lying between the Danube where it flows to the north, and the Black sea. Russia was to have Bessarabia, territory claimed by Rumania and in part occupied by her.

Rumania protested bitterly against exchange of picturesque Bessarabia for the ugly Dobruddia region. Russia threatened to disarm the Rumanian army, and Prince Carol pluckily responded that his army might be destroyed but it never would be disarmed.

The Russo-Turkish treaty of San Stefano was overturned by the congress of Berlin, but Russia's aim in Bessarabia was not denied. Thus Rumania, after helping Russia in her plight, came out of the war with less than she had when she went in.

CANADA MAY ADOPT AN ESKIMO INDUSTRY

Conversion of the arctic and sub-arctic regions of Canada into a reindeer meat producing area is being considered by the Canadian government and is being widely discussed through out the dominion.

A communication to the National Geographic society recalls that reindeer were not indigenous to Alaska and tells the interesting story of their introduction there.

"The story of the inception and growth of the reindeer enterprise in Alaska is very interesting and is not generally known," says the writer. "During an extended trip of inspection of the missionary stations and government schools in 1890, Dr. Sheldon Jackson, then general agent of education in Alaska, was impressed with the fact that the natives in arctic and sub-arctic Alaska were rapidly losing their sources of food supply.

"Doctor Jackson saw that unless something was done at once the United States would have to choose between feeding the 20,000 and more natives or letting them starve to death. "The same moss which covered so many thousands of miles of the plains of arctic Siberia was seen everywhere in Alaska. The tame reindeer was practically the same animal as the wild caribou of Alaska, changed by being domesticated for centuries.

"On his return to the United States in 1891, Doctor Jackson asked congress for an appropriation to provide the money for importing a few deer. Congress was not convinced of the wisdom of such a plan, but several private persons were so interested that they placed \$2,000 at Doctor Jackson's disposal to begin the experiment. The first deer were brought over that year. It was not long before the government realized the importance of the movement, and in 1894 appropriated the sum of \$6,000 to continue the work. Later the appropriation was increased and by 1900 amounted to \$25,000 annually."

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