THE STORY OF UKRAINE

by

MARIE STRUTINSKY GAMBAL

Published by

THE UKRAINIAN WORKINGMEN'S ASSOCIATION

(Juvenile Department)

SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA

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TO JUNE

CHAPTER I

UKRAINE OF TODAY

"Tell Us a Story"

"Tell us a story," Helen and Peter, my two young friends said to me one day.

"A story?" I repeated. "Now what shall it be? About the Man in the Moon? Or the Fairy in the Soap Bubble?"

"Don't kid us, Ukrainka," Peter reproved me. "You know what we mean. A real story—like the one you told us long ago—you remember—about the Cossacks."

"I've got it! I've got a grand idea!" exclaimed Helen. "Tell us a story about Ukraine. From beginning until today!"

"All about the princes!"

"And the Cossacks!"

"And the Sitch!"

"And Khmelnitsky!"

"And — — —"

"Stop! Stop, children!" I laughed. "My, what a hubbub. A story about Ukraine?"

"You know you promised it to us some time ago," Helen said.

"So I have, Helen. And to convince you that I meant it, I shall begin the story 'right now'! Oh—yes—I have it ready. Not only that, but I have a surprise for you. It will be told with the aid of a Magic Carpet!"

"Magic Carpet!" the children exclaimed.

"Yes, Peter and Helen. I decided to get a Magic Carpet for the story. At first I tried to buy one, but the New York shops didn't have any. Not since the skyscrapers have been put up. So I took a bit of fancy, a little imagination, added them to the sturdy fabric of common sense, and lo!—the Magic Carpet is ready!"

Peter, who was quite practical, said:

"Ukrainka, let me see the Magic Carpet. What does it look like?"

"Well, Peter," I answered, "you can't exactly see it. You only know it's there. Ask Helen. She'll tell you all about it."

"Ah—Peter," Helen reprimanded her brother. "Don't ask silly questions. I think it's simply wonderful that we have a Magic Carpet!"

"You see, Peter," I said, "the exciting thing about Magic Carpets is this—that we can go any place, at any time. We can see everything, and yet nobody will see us. We can hear everything, and yet nobody will hear us. And although it takes about five days to get across the Atlantic by steamer, it doesn't take but a second to get there on the Magic Carpet. You just say—Ukraine, or France, or England—and presto!—you're there!"

'And we can go to Ukraine today and see it and— —" Peter asked in astonishment.

"Of course, Peter. We shall go at once. We shall begin the story with today. And after we have seen what is going on in Ukraine at present, the Magic Carpet will take us back many, many years and we shall find out how it all happened in the days of long ago. We shall learn of the princes and the Cossacks and the Sitch and Shevtchenko, until we reach the present time again."

"Gee, Ukrainka, it is exciting, isn't it?" said Helen. "Why I can sort of feel the Magic Carpet already, even though I don't see it. We're getting on, aren't we?"

"Right here, children. Better sit down beside me or you might fall off. Helen, are you comfortable? Be careful, Peter! Everybody ready? All aboard! All aboard!"

Before we had realized what happened, we had crossed the Atlantic. Our Magic Carpet sailed so fast that we could hardly see the large steamers that were making their way across the ocean. And the airplane we met was soon left behind. Even the wind could not compete with us. We were in France, we flew over Germany and Austria, and as we came to East Galicia, Helen exclaimed:

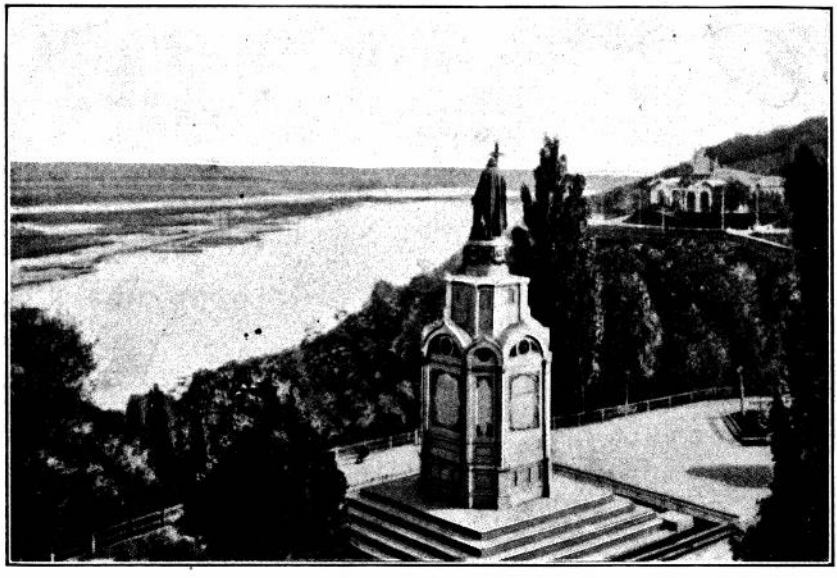
"Listen, just listen, Ukrainka. I think I can hear the people talking Ukrainian. Is this Ukraine already?"

"This is Ukraine, Helen!"

We See Ukraine

As we looked down, we saw all Ukraine spread out before our eyes. For hundreds and hundreds of miles the country extended far and wide. In the distance we saw Russia, Poland, Germany, France.

"My," Peter called out, "I never knew Ukraine was so large! Why, it's twice as large as France, and larger than Germany."



The Dnipro River in Kiev

"And look," said Helen, "see—how it stretches from the Carpathian mountains in the west to the Caucasian in the east, and how it comes down as far as the Black Sea in the south, and almost as far as the cities Warsaw and Minsk in the north."

"Gosh, it's mighty grand the way we can see it from the Magic Carpet," Peter suggested.

"And look," Helen continued, "you see that river over there? It divides Ukraine in two parts, the western and eastern Ukraine. I bet, Peter, you don't know the name of that river."

"Say, please, Ukrainka, tell her not to pick on me. Who said I didn't know what that river is! It's the Dnieper river, or rather the Dnipro, smarty! And I know something else too. That shorter river over there is Dnister. Just because you're

two years older— — —"

"There, there Peter," Helen interrupted her brother, "no hard feelings. I guess you do know something even if you don't study. But let us look at the cities. That's Kiev, Ukrainka, isn't it? Over there on the Dnipro river And the one a little to the east is Kharkiv. Down south is Odessa. And over there in Galicia—is Lviv. Isn't that right?"

"O. K. Helen. But do you know which city is the largest, and what the population of it is?"

"Let's see," Helen thought a moment. "I know. Kiev is the largest city in Ukraine. But what is its population?"

"Over 500,000, Helen. And now you, Peter, answer this one. How many Ukrainians are there in the world?"

"That's easy," said Peter. "Forty million. You know, when you think of it that's a lot of people, isn't it?"

"In fact, children, there are more than forty million Ukrainians in the world. About forty and a half, to be exact. So you see, Ukraine is a large country, there are many, many Ukrainians, and we could really be a very happy and prosperous nation, if— —"

"And especially since Ukraine is so rich in resources," Helen interrupted me. "It has coal, and oil, and iron. And it has the finest black soil in Europe. I read once that it is called the 'granary of Europe'."

"Yes, it is large, it has coal and iron, it is rich and beautiful, but unfortunately Ukraine does not belong to the Ukrainians today."

"What do you mean it doesn't belong to the Ukrainians?" asked Peter. "Whose is it?"

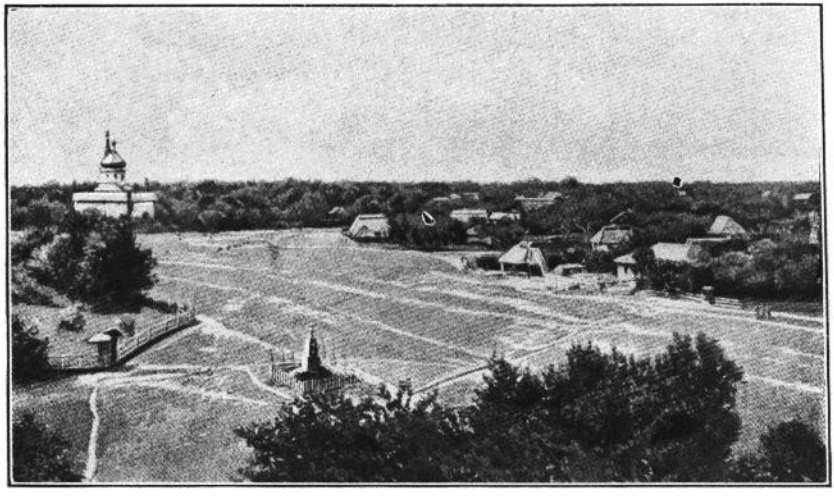
Our Country and yet Not Ours

"Well, you see, Peter, all this land down below, with its rivers and cities, with its mountains and fields, with the black soil and the wonderful resources, does not belong to the Ukrainians today. Our people, the Ukrainians live there, and once upon a time it was a free and independent country, but today it is in the hands of foreign nations. It is divided into four parts—among Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Roumania. The territory, with the cities of Kiev, Kharkiv, Odessa, is under Russia. About thirty-one million Ukrainians live there. And the territory in the west—the provinces of East Galicia,

Volhynia, Kholm, Polissia and Pidlashe,—is under Poland. About six and half million Ukrainians live there. About one million live in Roumania and about half a million in Czechoslovakia. Ukraine suffers under the rule of these foreign powers. Just imagine that some strange men came into your house and said: 'Say, that's a swell house you have there! And what rugs, and what furniture! We think we'll just settle here, if you don't mind.' And if you tell them that you do mind, they brandish a shiny pistol in your face, and that's that!"

"But gee, Ukrainka! I'd chase them out," Peter said. "They have no right in my house!"

"You couldn't very well chase them out with that revolver pointed at you."



Ukrainian Village

"Well, I'd call the police or something," Peter continued.

"Not if the police belonged to the intruders," I said. "You couldn't very well do that, could you?"

Peter, however, would not give in.

"Well—well—I know what I'd do. I'd call some neighbors to help me."

"You do some rapid thinking, Peter. But you see all the neighbors are so busy with their own troubles that they have no time for yours, and anyway, those strange men have spread so many false tales about you that the neighbors don't know

whom to believe. One man will say that he's staying in your house for your own good, another will say that the house is his, because once upon a time, long, long ago, it belonged for one day to his great-grandmother's sister's father-in-law. And another man will pat you on the back and say' 'You see, it's all the same—you and I. We're both brothers—see?' And you know that he is a rascal, but you are helpless."

Just then Helen, who had been gazing at the land below, called out to us:

"Oh, Ukrainka—look—look! What is that man doing?"

In Soviet Ukraine

We looked, and there in one of the villages of Ukraine, a Russian commissar was trying to take something away from a Ukrainian peasant. The two were struggling, and finally the Russian pushed the peasant so violently that he fell down.

"What is he doing, Ukrainka?" Peter asked.

Headquarters of the Soviet Government in Kharkov

"There you see, children. The Russians are taking away the grain that the Ukrainian peasants worked for all summer. They pretend that they are doing it for the benefit of the Ukrainians, but we know that it can't very well be true."

"And look there, Ukrainka!" exclaimed Helen. "See that building over there. It's a school, isn't it? Look—what's going on."

We looked through the window and we saw a Russian of-

ficial approach a Ukrainian professor who was lecturing in a classroom. The official grabbed the book out of the lecturer's hand.

"Why, it's a 'History of Ukraine'!" Helen was shocked. "Why did he do that for?"

"Why don't they allow the teacher to read from that history book?" asked Peter.

"Because they're the bosses, Helen and Peter. The Russians tell the Ukrainians what they should read and what they should believe, what they should eat and what they should wear, what they should write and what they should study."

"Oh my, I see now that our people don't have much liberty in Soviet Ukraine, do they?" said Helen.

"Nothing to brag about," I answered. "The Russians would like us to believe that they are doing those things for our own good. We can't very well believe that, can we? But let us go and see what our people are doing in Western Ukraine, under Poland."

In East Galicia

Our Magic Carpet took us westward, and as we approached East Galicia, we heard such cries and such sobs that we were horrified.

"Oh—Ukrainka—look!" Helen called out to us. "A man is beating a little boy!"

"What do you mean—beating a little boy!" exclaimed Peter.

The Magic Carpet brought us nearer and nearer to the scene, so that we could hear what was going on.

A Polish officer was beating a little boy. And as he beat him he shouted in Polish:

"Now will you sing the Ukrainian anthem! Now will you brag about being a Ukrainian? Tell me that!"

The poor boy was so weak from the beating that he was on the verge of fainting. I looked at Peter. His face was flushed. His eyes were filled with tears.

"Ukrainka, let's go down to help him. I'll get a-hold of that man and I'll punch him in the nose so that he won't know where he's at! Gosh—it's terrible! Please—please—let me go down!" cried Peter.

"Hush, Peter! You know that we can't do anything," Helen

spoke gently. She was crying quietly. "Let's go away, Ukrainka!"

We moved away from the horrible scene. But wherever we went, we heard cries and sobs. Men were beaten, their houses were ransacked, roofs were pulled down. School children were arrested.

"Why are they doing this?" Helen cried. "Why? It's horrible!"

The Harvest

"The Poles are 'pacifying' East Galicia, Helen and Peter. You may have heard your parents talking about it," I said.

Peter was stealthily wiping his eyes.

"And so you see, children," I continued, "the Ukrainian people are having a pretty bad time of it. Instead of being masters in their own house, they are persecuted and abused. In Roumania and Czechoslovakia conditions are not much better. But let us leave this cruelty and meanness below, and let us rise high on our Magic Carpet, so that we may regain peace and good-will once more."

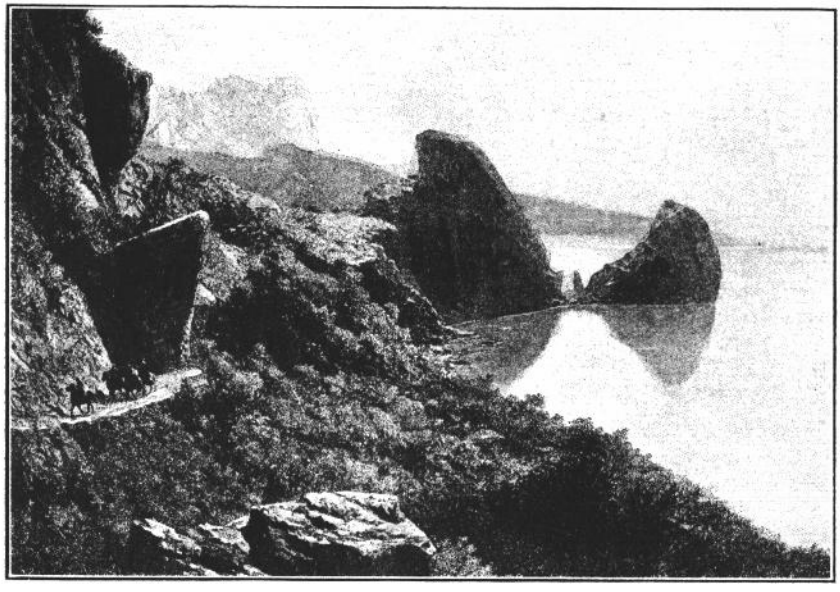
The Magic Carpet was taking us higher and higher. The river Dnipro soon appeared like a narrow ribbon, winding its way through wood and field. Kiev, Odessa, and Lviv seemed no larger that the toy cities built for children. The cries and sobs of men grew less. And ever higher soared our Magic Carpet until it seemed that we would soon reach the stars.

Helen and Peter Philosophize

"It's terrible, Ukrainka!" Peter was the first to speak. His eyes were bright with excitement and his cheeks were flushed. "Gosh when I get big, I'm going to fight the Poles and the Russians until Ukraine is free," he said. "I'm going to fight them until I get every one of them out of the country. That's what I'm going to do when I get big!"

"Well,—" I began, but Helen interrupted me.

"What I think you better do," she said, "is to study your lessons, go to high school and the university, and study until you know so much that the Russians and the Poles will be afraid of you. Isn't that right, Ukrainka? Our teacher said that war and fighting are horrible. Don't you think so? I'm going to study and work hard, so that if I'm a teacher, I'll be so good that I can be the equal of the best American, or French, or English teacher. And then when I know all about teaching,



Sea Shore in the Crimea

I'm going to Ukraine. I heard over the radio once that there are many people who do that—they study here in America, and then go to other countries, and teach there. Or maybe I'll be a doctor or a writer."

"Well,—" I began again.

"But Ukrainka," Peter interrupted me, "we've got to be prepared to fight when the time comes, don't you think so? Of course you have to study. And I know what I'm going to do. I'm going to be an engineer. Or maybe a doctor, the kind that finds new germs, or an inventor. Well—you bet your life I'll be something."

"Not at the rate you're going," said Helen. "Why you hate books as though they were poison."

"Just the same you wait and see," Peter insisted. "I'll show them that they can't beat a Ukrainian boy!"

"I see that you have been doing some rapid thinking," I turned to the children. "We have really caught only a glimpse of what is going on in Ukraine these days. It is a dark picture, but there is a bright side also. So here, up in the clouds, far from the meanness and cruelty that we saw below, I shall tell you of the gladness that is in Ukraine today. As you already know, there are forty million Ukrainians in the world. And when forty million people make up their minds to do something, they will accomplish it. The Ukrainians desire a free and independent Ukraine. Russia might know what is best for the Russian people. Poland might know what is best for the Poles, but neither Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia nor Roumania know what is best for the Ukrainian people. Ukrainians alone should have the right to decide that. They are organizing, working, studying, striving toward that day when they will once again become masters in their house. And now, Peter and Helen, in order that we may find out how it came about that a Russian commissar takes away the grain from the Ukrainian peasant, and to find out why a Polish officer is allowed to beat a Ukrainian boy, we must go back many, many years. And if you will sit quietly and listen patiently, I shall begin my story with 'a long, long time ago'."

CHAPTER II

A LONG, LONG TIME AGO

Ancestors of Ukrainians

A long, long time ago, let us say 3,000 years or so, there was no separate Ukrainian nation, just as there was no French, or English, or American nation, as we know of them today. The Ukrainians belonged to one large family, to which also belonged the ancestors of the Czechs, the Russians, the Poles, and other Slavs. They all spoke a similar language, they all had the same customs, and there was really nothing that made the Ukrainians very different from the Czechs, or that made the Poles differ from the Serbians. They all lived in Central Europe, between the river Vistula in the West and the Dnipro river in the East, and between the Baltic Sea on the North and as far as the middle of the Dnister and Dnipro rivers in the South. As you see, for thousands of years our ancestors lived on part of the land that our people inhabit today.

But who lived east of the Dnipro and in the steppe regions of present day Ukraine? Historians tell us that various nomadic tribes lived there, such as the Scythians, Sarmatians, and others. About the second century after Christ, a German tribe —the Goths—came to live in the Black Sea region. And then one fine day the Goths and all the other tribes heard a loud noise; well, perhaps it wasn't a loud noise, and maybe it wasn't a fine day. But anyhow one day, an Asiatic tribe—the Huns—came rushing into Europe. The Goths started running, the Huns went after them and drove them out of the steppes into Western Europe.

What do you think happened now?

The Grand Moving

A general commotion followed. Various nations started moving. And the Slav people decided that it was getting a bit tight for them, so they made up their mind to move too. You

know, just like in New York you find people moving when October the first comes along. Only at that time, in the fourth century, people had no moving vans, or automobiles, or railroads, or streetcars, or subways. Moving in those days was a bit more difficult than it is today even if people didn't have many things to move. It took months and years sometimes before the people found a place that they liked and in which they wished to settle.

Some of the Slavs moved west, others south, and the great-great-great-many times great-grandfathers of the Ukrainians moved east-ward and to the south-east, into that fertile region of present-day Ukraine. This grand moving or migration of people took place more than fifteen hundred years ago. I know that you don't like dates, Peter, but I thought I'd squeeze this one in without you objecting very much. Before the migration there was not much to make one Slav differ from another Slav, but after the moving, differences began to crop out, and today we find that the Ukrainian differs from the Russian almost as much as the Italian differs from the Spaniard.

It was a queer world our people lived in—in those days of long ago. There was no government, no presidents, no kings. There were no schools, no books, no stores. There were no electric lights, no airplanes, no radios. It was a thousand years before Columbus discovered America. The Ukrainian people did not know what reading or writing was. People just lived their simple life of eating, working, marrying, and worshipping. And if anyone ever thought or said anything about flying like a bird, he would have been judged insane, crazy.

But why not use our Magic Carpet, Helen and Peter. Shall we? We can just send our wishes and our thoughts a-sailing, and we can see things as they were in the days of long, long ago.

We See Ukraine of Long, Long Ago

As our Magic Carpet swept down to earth again, Helen who was ever keen and alert, exclaimed:

"Oh, here we are! How different everything looks! Only the rivers and the woods and the birds and the sky are the same as today. Is this long, long ago, Ukrainka?"

"Yes, Helen, the Magic Carpet has taken us back many,

many years. And this is Ukraine, and those men, and women, and children over there are our ancestors. They are talking Ukrainian, but it is very much different from the Ukrainian that we speak today. And by the way, did you ever hear anybody speak English as it was spoken years and years ago? What a difference! A language is like a living thing. It grows, it developes, it changes. And the Ukrainian language has grown, developed and changed during the course of the ages. But let us see what's going on."

"Ukrainka," Peter said, "there don't seem to be many people living together in one place, are there? And there are no cities."

"No, Peter. If you look carefully, you will see people living together in small groups. They are family groups, made up of father, mother, children, grandfathers, grandmothers, uncles, aunts, and so on. A group like that, of 40—50 people, lives together, but it is separated and lives far away from another group. There's plenty of room for everybody. Let us take a look at that settlement over there, near the Dnipro. No doubt people picked it out, because it is near the river. In the days of long ago it was always a good idea to live near the water, because of the facilities for transportation and because of the fishing, if for no other reason. Look children—do you see that old man, over there," I pointed to a white-haired man who was sitting on a bench enjoying the warmth of the setting sun, "well—he is probably the head, the chief spokesman of the entire family. When there is anything important to decide, the men and women go to him for advice."

Their Work, Their Play

"And over there," I continued, "you can see a young man coming home from work. He has been catching fish. You can see them dangling from a line. He's tall, and fair, and strong-looking."

"Look at the children running out to meet him!" Helen exclaimed.

"Yes, and the wife is ready in the kitchen, with porridge, cheese and bread for the hungry fisherman. And over there are two more men coming home. I wonder what they are saying. Oh yes—they're talking about the hunting season in the fall

and about trading with the Greeks. One man says that he will trade his skins for weapons while the other wants to trade his for some beads. He has a sweetheart and he wants a gift for her."

"But look, there's another group of men coming home," Peter shouted.

"They have been working in the field, Peter. They are singing and making merry. The summer has been good, neither too dry nor too rainy, and the harvest promises to be one of the finest."

Ukrainian Peasant Girl

"More Ukrainians work at farming than at fishing, or hunting, or trading, don't they, Ukrainka?" Helen asked.

"Yes, Ukrainians have always been agriculturists, and today we find more than 80 per cent living in villages. But look, the men are through with their meal. They have come outdoors. The evening is warm and quiet. The children are playing, the men are talking, and the women are putting away the few simple dishes out of which the people eat their food."

"What's that? Do you see that boy over there, Ukrainka? What does he have in his hand? It looks like a fife."

"That's a 'sopilka', Peter. And the boy has probably made it himself. He is very proud of it, and he is going to play it."

"What sweet sounds!" Helen exclaimed. "The melody is

sometimes sad and sometimes very jolly," she added, as we listened to the soft, sweet music of the sopilka.

"And there's another boy—he has a drum," Peter continued. "Did he make that himself too, or did he buy it?"

"He or his father made it perhaps. There were no stores at that time, Peter. In fact, everything the people had, was made with their own hands."

"You mean the houses and the clothes and the boots and the tools and everything?" Helen asked in surprise.

"Yes, Helen, almost everything. Even that funny little drum that the boy is beating," I answered.

"You know, I think it's simply grand to have a Magic Carpet. We can see so many things," Helen said. "But look, look, what's that?"

The Enemy

We looked, and there in the distance we saw men on horseback coming in the direction of the group of people we had been observing. They seemed very fierce and warlike, armed with all sort of queer weapons.

"Who are they?" Peter asked.

"I don't think they are friends of the Ukrainians," I answered. "They are some wild tribes, looking for plunder and —oh, my! They are heading for the settlement we have just been watching!"

"Ukrainka, that's terrible!" Peter exclaimed. "Can't we do something? Can't we get down and tell them?"

"No, Peter, not very well. We're on the Magic Carpet, you know. But, look—our friends seem to have found out about it. There they are—getting all their belongings together and running away! Let's follow them!"

"Where are they going?" Helen called out.

"Oh, now I understand, children. Look, Helen and Peter! Do you see that hill up there? There's a place atop of it, surrounded by an earthen wall. That's where the Ukrainians are running. They are coming from all sides—men, women, and children—with their horses, cattle, and bundles. And they have their bows and arrows with them. Yes, looks like a battle, doesn't it?"

"And look at the queer-looking spears they have," Peter

exclaimed. "Gosh, I hope the Ukrainians will beat those awful men!" he added.

"There are so many of them!" Helen worried.

Our Magic Carpet brought us so near the earth, that we could see the excited faces of the enemy tribes as they rushed their horses in the direction of the hill where our ancestors had hidden themselves. Nearer and nearer they came. We could not help being fearful of the outcome of the battle, for the strange men appeared very fierce and ferocious.

Carpathian Mountaineer

"Oh this is going to be terrible!" Helen exclaimed. "What is going to happen to the poor people over there?"

The enemy had reached the foot of the hill. And then, before we realized what had happened, the wild tribes were off, a-galloping on their horses.

"Why, why—what happened?" Peter asked in astonishment.

"They are gone!" exclaimed Helen.

"Well, well, this is a lucky day for our friends, children. The enemy has probably decided that the Ukrainians, or perhaps I should say the ancestors of the Ukrainians, were quite safe on top of that hill, and so away they went."

"Anyway, I bet the Ukrainians would have given it to them," Peter said.

"And now the men have gathered together in that en-

closed space on the hill, and they are discussing something. They are arguing and talking very seriously."

"Isn't a meeting like that called a vitche?" Helen asked.

"How did you find that out?" I asked in surprise. "Yes, it is a vitche. That word has come down to us through the ages, so that even today when Ukrainians gather together on some grave and important occasion, we call such a meeting a vitche. Interesting isn't it how customs, traditions, habits are handed down from generation to generation."

"Yes," Peter said, "father and mother sometimes go to a vitche. I remember."

"But let us leave the vitche and let us sail on our Magic Carpet and see whether there is anything else that might be of interest," I suggested.

They Worship

We sailed around on our Magic Carpet, here, and there, and everywhere. Helen who was always the first to see things, called out to us:

"Let's get down lower. I think I see something."

The Magic Carpet swooped low to the earth. Under a large oak tree in the woods we saw a group of people.

"Now, this is interesting," I said. "We are present at a funeral. And judging by the number of people gathered here, it must be a funeral of an important member of the family. The early Ukrainians had no churches, you know. They worshipped in the open, usually under an old oak tree, and so they have come here to offer prayers to the gods."

"Gods!" Peter said. "Did they believe in more than one God?"

"Oh yes, Peter. Our ancestors believed in many gods. They were pagans. And they thought that everything in nature had a god. There was thunder. And the thunder made a loud, rumbling noise, which set fear in the hearts of early men. How to explain it? They couldn't explain it, didn't know how. So they said that there was a god thunder who roared and grumbled when the people displeased him. This god they called Perun. Then there was the sun. The sun was warm and lovely. It gladdened the hearts of the people. Somehow it made the wheat grow and the flowers bloom. And so the people thought that it was the god in the sun that caused all

that. They called him Dazhboh, and they prayed to him and worshipped him. There was the god of wind and the god of fire. And there were rusalki and lisoviki, queer fairy-tale creatures of the rivers and the woods. To the people of long ago, however, these creatures were real beings who could cause evil or good to come to you. And many were the stories told about the good luck and bad luck that various gods and goddesses brought to people."

"It's something like fairy tales, isn't it?" Peter asked.

"Yes, and now that we know more about the world, it seems foolish to us that people were afraid of Dazhboh. However some of the old tales about the mysterious creatures are very fascinating and charming."

"Look!" Helen said. "They are putting the man into the grave and they are putting a lot of things too—food, clothing, ornaments. What do they do that for?"

"We had almost forgotten about the funeral. Well—you see, the people of old believed that when a man dies, he still needs the things which he needed when he was alive. So they put those things in the grave with his body. They placed food —so that he might eat, they placed clothing—so that he might have something to wear. People believed in all sort of things in those days, children."

"But Ukrainka, what's this? Our Magic Carpet is rising higher and higher! And there were so many things I wanted to see," Helen cried out.

'Ah gee, can't we go back?" Peter said.

"Now this is queer, isn't it?" I laughed. "But you see, we have seen as much as we can see. We must really get back to the story or we shall never get through. Here in the clouds, far from the hustle and bustle of life, we shall go on with the story of Ukraine and find out what happened next."

CHAPTER III

IN THE DAYS OF THE PRINCES

The Beginning of the Kiev State

We have had a glimpse of Ukraine in the days of long, long ago. There was no government in the country, there were no rulers, there were no cities, no armies. Instead of a government we had the "vitche," instead of cities we hade fortified walled-in enclosures where people escaped in case of danger, and instead of an army, every man was a warrior ready to defend himself and his family when an enemy came along. Life was simple and uneventful. But as time went on, conditions began to change.

The number of people in Ukraine increased, the scattered settlements became villages, and the fortified places grew into cities. As early as the 8th century we find that Kiev was a busy flourishing town. Just think of it, Helen and Peter, some 1,200 years ago Kiev was a hustling, bustling place! It was also the largest and the richest city in Ukraine, and no wonder, for it had become the trading center for people from all parts of Europe. Men from the North and the South, the East and West gathered there to exchange their wares.

The merchants who lived in Kiev and those who came to trade there needed some sort of protection. They banded together, and hired men to defend them and their property against anyone who would try to rid them of their riches. Soon a small army was organized, and the chief of the army was also the head of the city of Kiev. He was called the knyaz —the prince—and he was considered the most important personage in the city. Little by little, Kiev grew larger, more people came to live there, the number of men in the army increased, and the power of the knyaz and the wealthy men—the boyars—grew greater.

As time went on, the prince and the boyars decided that the army could be used not only for purposes of defense. With the aid of the warriors they might enlarge the territory of

Kiev, they might gain power and prestige. They set out into neighboring lands and said to the people: "If you will come under our rule, and if you will pay us, we will defend you and your property from enemies." Sometimes the people agreed willingly, and sometimes the prince and his army made them agree by force. Gradually the city of Kiev was gaining more and more territory. At the end of the 9th century, the Ukrainian historian Hrushevsky tells us, many lands belonged to the State of Kiev. It reached as far north as the city of Moscow of today. Indeed, Ukraine or Rus as it was called at that time, was growing into a very large and powerful country.

As I told you, Helen and Peter, the most powerful and important man in Ukraine at that time was the Prince of Kiev. The first princes that we know anything about are Askold and Dir. They lived during the 9th century. After them came Oleh who is known in history for his wars and expeditions. When Oleh died, a prince by the name of Ihor came to the throne of Kiev. And there's an interesting story about Ihor that I shall tell you. It sounds like a fairy tale—of how a young, and handsome, and powerful prince fell in love with a beautiful peasant girl.

The Prince and the Peasant Girl

Once upon a time, so the story goes, there lived a peasant who had a daughter. Her name was Olga. She was young, and good, and wise, and beautiful, as every heroine of a story should be. The peasant made a living ferrying across the river Dnipro. He had a small boat and he took people back and forth, from one side of the river to the other. Now it happened that one day he became ill and could not go to work. The poor old man was very much worried; he did not know what to do, for there was no one to take his place. He had no sons and he had no brothers who could take the boat across the river. There was his daughter Olga, but she was only a girl and he couldn't think of her doing it.

Olga was worried too. She said to her father:

"Father, let me take the boat across. You are ill and you most stay in bed."

"But my daughter," the father spoke, "you are a mere strip of a girl! Who will trust you to wield a boat. No, I

think it is impossible!"

"Never fear, dear father," Olga answered. "I'll just put on your boots and shirt and trousers, and nobody will know that I'm a girl. And you know how strong I am. Really—you'll see how well I can do it."

And so Olga took her father's place at the boat.

Now it happened that just at that time prince Ihor came to the river, and wanted to be taken across. He noticed there was something queer about the young boy who stood by the boat; a wisp of hair was hanging over the back of his coat. And even though the hat was pulled low over the lad's eyes, Ihor saw that "he" blushed easily and charmingly.

"I wonder," thought prince Ihor, "I wonder if she is the old boatman's daughter. I heard people saying that she is lovely and good and wise."

In the Middle Ages

He talked with Olga, and asked her this and asked her that, and when finally the boat came to shore, prince Ihor decided that he didn't want to go home yet. He wanted to be taken across to the place from which they started. Now when a prince does that you may be certain that something has happened. Olga blushed more than ever. Her heart had gone out long ago to the handsome, dashing prince whom she had seen going into the woods to hunt. But who was she? A peasant girl! A boatman's daughter!

When they reached the shore, the prince said that he must really go home, and asked Olga to take him once more across the river.

"Let me have the oars. I like to row," he said, for he saw that Olga was quite tired.

He would have liked to go back and forth across the Dnipro many times, but the two attendants who accompanied him, looked suspiciously as though to say: "Now what do you make of this?"

Prince Ihor returned to his palace, and Olga went back

to the hut in the woods. But for some reason or other, Ihor found that he could not sleep and he could not eat. He was getting so restless and finicky that the boyars and the attendants were afraid to approach him.

And Olga in her cottage grew pale and listless. She found that she couldn't wipe a dish without dropping it. At night when her father was asleep, she went outdoors to gaze at the moon and listen to the Dnipro waters.

One day Prince Ihor shouted to his men: "I'm going hunting! I'm going alone!"

"Alone!" the attendants repeated. "Who ever heard of such a thing!"

However, Prince Ihor was determined. He went alone. He rushed to the cottage where Olga and her father lived. He told Olga that she was beautiful, good, and wise, and that he loved her. He said that he could not live without her and that she must marry him.

"But Prince Ihor, you have seen me but once," Olga said, "you do not know whether I am good, or wise, or beautiful."

"You are good, my darling," Prince Ihor answered, "because you took your father's place when he was ill and could not row the boat. You are wise, my dear, for I have heard you speak and I have heard you reason. And you are beautiful, my beloved, for my eyes tell me that your hair is golden as the rays of the Sun-God, and your eyes are blue as the heavens above, and your lips are red as the crimson of the poppy."

The Prince and His Warriors

And so Prince Ihor and Olga, the boatman's daughter, married and lived happily together. Thus ends the story of the Prince and the Peasant Girl. But they did not live happily very long, for Prince Ihor was killed by enemies, and Olga was left alone with her young son Sviatoslav. She became ruler of Ukraine until Sviatoslav grew into manhood.

The Prince Who Warned Enemies

Perhaps you will wonder what the princes of old did to keep busy, Helen and Peter. After the neighboring lands were subdued and the Kiev State spread far and wide, and after the princes and the boyars had become rich and powerful—the princes thought that there was nothing left for them to do at home. They ate and they slept, and they made merry at games and parties, but they still had a great deal of energy left. Of course they could have had loads and loads of work to do at home, in their own country, if they had only wanted and thought about it. The princes and the rich men grew richer, but what about the rest of the people? The village folk, "the butcher, the baker, the candle-stick maker?" What about them? There could have been lots and lots of work if the princes had wished to make those people share in the wealth and prosperity of the country. But nobody thought much about them. They were taught to obey, to pay taxes, and to keep quiet.

And so the early princes, having nothing to do, went out adventuring. They made expeditions to Constantinople, to Crimea, to the Caucasus, to the Caspian Sea, and even as far as Persia. Sometimes they fought wisely and well, other times they fought not so wisely. But the thing was to fight, whether you had to do it or not.

Of all the early rulers, Sviatoslav, Olga's son, is perhaps the most admirable type of warrior. He was brave and fearless, honest and straigthforward. A chronicler tells us that when he set out to war with anyone, he warned them that he was coming. "I am coming", he sent word to his enemy. He did this because he considered it an honourable thing to do. And that it was cowardly to come upon an enemy unawares. That was pretty decent of him, don't you think so? We can almost forgive Sviatoslav for not staying at home and taking care of the affairs in the country.

Sviatoslav died when he was only thirty years old. He was killed by an enemy. He left three sons, but they did not exactly practice brotherly love. They quarreled and fought, the boyars fought for and against them, and finally in the year 979, one of the sons, Volodimir, became ruler of Ukraine.

Volodimir—the "Golden Sun"

When Volodimir came to the throne of Kiev, he set out to do things that the other princes had neglected. He decided that there had been enough adventuring in foreign lands and that from now on the prince of Ukraine must stay at home and make order in his own house. He cut short the power of the boyars, he regained some of the territory that had been lost, and set out to organize the affairs of his country. It was an extensive country, but Volodimir realized that the strength of a country is not in size alone.

The Entrance into the Lawra Monastery

At that time, Greece was the most powerful and glorious of all countries. Volodimir made up his mind to introduce into Ukraine the things that made Greece great and mighty. In his youth he had been a pagan. As he grew older he became dissatisfied with the old religion, so he sent men to distant lands to find out which religion was best, and decided to become a Christian, to accept the faith of the Greeks. As a matter of fact, there had been Christians among the Ukrainians before Volodimir's time. Prince Askold was supposed to have been a Christian and so was Princess Olga. Volodimir not only became a Christian himself, but he also introduced Christianlty into ancient Ukraine. He made it the state religion. The old pagan idols and images were destroyed, and in their stead churches and monasteries were built.

In those days—988—all learning was in one way or another connected with religion and the Church. When Ukraine accepted Christianity, books, art, learning, architecture were introduced into the country. Builders and artists were called from Greece to build beautiful churches and monasteries, and to decorate

them with paintings and sculptures. The alphabet was introduced from Bulgaria where the people had accepted Christianity one hundred years earlier. The first books were brought from Bulgaria also, and new ones were translated directly from the Greek. Most of the books were of a religious character, but once in while a book appeared telling our ancestors how people lived in other countries. Men grew courageous and began writing themselves. And so the first written literature makes its appearance in Ukraine.

Volodimir went still further. He founded schools where children were taught to read and to write. He was also very anxious that his subjects should like him and not fear him. He gave feasts for the people, took care of the poor, the ill, and the aged. He often called the elders of a community to the palace and asked their advice on important matters.

The people liked Volodimir. He was called the "Kind Prince," the "Glorious Sun." Most of the people admired him. Some feared him. Many were the songs that our ancestors composed about Prince Volodimir. It does not mean that he had no faults. The greatest of men have them. But the good things he did were pretty fine and many, and that is the reason why we Ukrainians speak of him as Volodimir the Great.

Yaroslav the Wise

Yaroslav, the son of Volodimir, continued with the good work of his father. He built schools, churches, monasteries, after the manner of the Greeks. A foreigner who visited Ukraine at that time called Kiev "the glory of Greece," because of the beautiful and fine buildings in the city. Yaroslav encouraged writers and artists in their work. He also saw to it that the people were treated fairly by the government officials. During his life a book of laws was compiled, called the "Ruska Pravda," in which rules were put down with regard to taxation, to courts, to justice. And it is interesting to note that at that early age, when people were not supposed to be as civilized as they are today, our country did not punish criminals by death. There was no capital punishment in Ukraine at that time.

Gradually Ukraine became one of the greatest and mightiest powers of Europe. But before we go any further with the

story, Peter and Helen, perhaps it wouldn't be a bad idea to wish our Magic Carpet to go down to earth so that we may see Ukraine at the time of Yaroslav the Wise.

The Magic Carpet Again

"That will be fine," exclaimed Helen.

"And we have to wish ourselves back many hundred of years, don't we?" Peter asked.

"Indeed we do. Not many. Only 900 hundred years or so! And just think, Peter! Perhaps—but—no, let us see what we shall see."

Anna, Queen of France

Back, back we went a-wishing, a hundred years, two hundred — until we reached the 11th century.

"And now that we are here, Helen and Peter, in the days of knights in shining armor and beautiful castles, in the days of the tournaments and maidens fair, I shall bid the Magic Carpet take us on a glimpse-like tur of Europe. It won't take long. A moment in France, a second in Norway, another in Greece, Hungary, Germany, Sweden . . ."

"Are we going to visit those countries?" Peter asked in surprise.

"Here's a cheer for the Magic Carpet," shouted Helen.

"Well, children, I'm afraid that I shall disappoint you, for if we visited all those countries, we never would end our story. And there are so many things to find out, about the Cossacks,

Khmelnitsky, Shevtchenko, Mazeppa. No, we shall stop but a moment. Ah, here we are, in the palace of the King of France, Henry I. And there is the queen. Isn't she lovely, Helen?"

"My, she's pretty!"

"And look at that crown on her head," remarked Peter. "I feel sorry for her. Gee—that thing must be heavy."

"But who is she?" asked Helen.

"Now the cat's out of the bag. She is no other than the daughter of Prince Yaroslav, of whom we have just spoken. And she is married to the French king. At that time princes and princesses seldom married for love. Usually they married to strengthen the power and the prestige of their countries. Ukraine must have been a mighty state in those days to have connections with France."

"It must have been tough on the Ukrainian princess if she didn't like the French king," Peter said.

"Unfortunately, our Magic Carpet is leaving the palace of France and we can't find out whether lovely Anna was happy or not. But here we are in Norway. And here's the palace, and the king and queen of Norway."

"Is the queen also a Ukrainian princess?" asked Helen.

"You have guessed it, Helen. The queen of Norway is the sister of Anna of France. But here we are in Hungary, and the queen here is also a Ukrainian princess. Prince Yaroslav himself was married to a Swedish princess. One of his sons married a German princess. In fact, Yaroslav of Ukraine was related in one way or another to almost every ruler of Europe at that time. But let us make haste and go to see Ukraine. Let us see whether or not the country has changed since the time we saw it last."

We See Kiev

Our Magic Carpet made it's way over hills and mountains, rivers and fields. We came to Ukraine or Rus as it was called in those days. Far and wide the country spread!

"My, Ukrainka!" exclaimed Helen. Things have changed, haven't they, since the time we saw Ukraine last. There were no villages, no cities, no buildings, to speak of in those days."

"Yes, Helen, times have changed," I answered. "Villages have appeared, cities have been built, buildings have been put

up. Books and learning were introduced into Ukraine, money was coined and used as means of exchange, an organized government appeared in the land of our forefathers. But let us take a glance at the largest, the most beautiful of all cities in Ukraine—Kiev. Here we are!"

"How beautiful it is!" exclaimed Helen. "Built on a hill, with the Dnipro river below and with all those new buildings —it is a wonderful city!"

"And what are those gates over there?" asked Peter. "They shine so in the sun!"

"They are called the 'Golden Gates' of Kiev. They are gilded at the top and that's why they shine in the sun. As you see they have been built right at the entrance of the city. And over there, Peter, is the famous Sobor of St. Sophia. Adjoining the cathedral Yaroslav built a library. If we look through the window we shall see scholars and writers reading and writing. And what queer writing it is to be sure. It is a sort of mixed Church and Slavonic languages and somewhat different from the language the people use in their everyday talk. And if you look at the 'books,' you will find that they are written by hand and not printed. For printing was not known in those days. That elderly man sitting over there is probably the monk Ilarion, one of the first writers in Ukraine. However, it is rather impolite to look through people's windows, so let us make a getaway before we are caught."

"Why, we are on the Magic Carpet, Ukrainka," Helen and Peter laughed.

"So we are. I have almost forgotten."

"And what is that building?" asked Peter, pointing to a newly-built structure.

"That is one of the first schools in Ukraine, where boys are being taught to read and to write, Peter. There aren't many students—300 or so—and the school is unlike the school of today, but in organizing it Yaroslav made a step forward in the right direction. And if we go to the churches we shall find paintings, frescoes, mosaics, the beauty of which makes people stop and wonder."

"No wonder travelers praised Kiev when they came to visit Ukraine," Helen said.

"Yes, and today historians speak of Rus of the 11th century as a 'true European State.' So you see, Helen and Peter,

Rus or Ukraine as it came to be called later, was a glorious and powerful country in those days. However, not all Ukrainians were benefited by this splendor. The condition of the peasants and the small townsmen was not always enviable. If the princes, who came after Volodimir and Yaroslav, had only followed their example, if they had continued with the good work, building more and better schools, bringing knowledge to the villages as well as to the cities, curbing the power of the wealthy boyars and landlords, Ukraine would no doubt have become a fine country for all to live in. However, things turned out differently. And to find out what happened next, we shall once more bid the Magic Carpet rise high toward the clouds; far from the noise and hubbub of the world we shall go on with the story."

The Princes Who Were Not Very Good

Did you ever stop to think, Helen and Peter, what would happen if we were able to see into future? What if a far-seeing fairy should appear before us right now and tell us that such and such a thing will happen to Peter, and such and such good or bad luck awaits you, Helen. I wonder whether we should prepare ourselves for it, or whether we would just go on, living as we have been, doing the things that we have been doing.

And I wonder whether the princes who followed after Yaroslav died, would have behaved differently, if they had seen into the future, and if they had known what the fate of Ukraine was going to be.

Before Prince Yaroslav died, in 1054, he divided Ukraine among his sons. His father and grandfather had done the same thing, but both Volodimir and Yaroslav were strong, capable men, and they managed one way or another to keep all Ukraine under their rule. The sons of Yaroslav decided differently. Each one of them thought that he was as clever and brilliant as the next one. And they tried to prove it. They quarreled. They fought. They taxed the people highly to get money to pay for the fighting. And they forgot all about the schools, the books, and the arts. They never gave a thought to the peasant who was becoming very poor, and growing discouraged and dissatisfied with each day. And although the peasant was becoming dissatisfied, he did not know what to

do; he only knew that which concerned his plot of land, and he could not take matters into his own hands when trouble came.

It wasn't long before trouble did come to Ukraine. The princes continued quarreling, the country became divided into many petty principalities, the people were growing poorer with each day. Our country was losing her power and prestige among neighbors, who were somewhat anxiously awaiting the downfall of Kiev and the Ukrainian State.

In 1097 Prince Volodimir Monomakh, the grandson of Yaroslav, tried to make peace among the princes. He called a council of the princes at Lubetch, and there they all agreed not to fight and not to quarrel. They promised to make peace and to war against their common enemy, the Polovtsi, who were giving the Ukrainians a great deal of trouble at that time. But hardly did they leave Lubetch, when the old quarrels and hatreds sprang up a-new.

Prince Volodimir Monomakh's attempt failed. Nevertheless he has come down in history as one of the good and wise princes of those troublesome days. The Ukrainian people loved him, for he was just and kind. He left his children some sound advice which we Ukrainians might read today and profit by it. Among many other things he said: "Do not be lazy, do not depend on the boyars and the voyevodas (the high officials), look after everything yourself; respect the aged man as though he were your father, and the young as though he were your brother; do not forget what you already know, and learn what you do not know."

Volodimir Monomakh died in 1125. His son Mstislav was the last powerful Kiev prince.

The Fall of Kiev

Many years had passed since the death of Yaroslav. All sort of wild tribes, Petchenihi, Polovtsi, and others were continually invading our country. In former days Ukraine had been able to repel the invaders, but now she was an easy prey to their ruthless attacks.

In 1169 an enemy from the North came to Ukraine, attacked Kiev, and caused such destruction in the city that Kiev ceased to be the beautiful and glorious capital of Ukraine. This enemy was Andrey of Suzdal. For two days, the chronicler

tells us, he and his men remained in Kiev. Buildings were destroyed, people were killed, churches and monasteries were robbed; books, icons, bells, valuable paintings were stolen and taken north into the country that was later to become the Russia of today.

For another 70 years Kiev continued to exist, but all the beauty and the wonder of the city had disappeared. Robbed of her treasures, Kiev became a second rate city. And still the princes did not put a stop to their misunderstandings. When in 1239 the Tartars, an Asiatic tribe, invaded Ukraine, the people were unable to defend themselves.

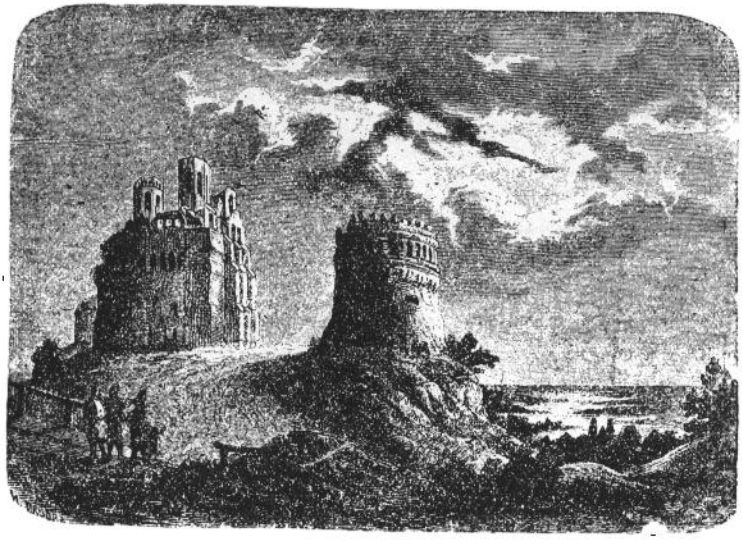
But who were the Tartars or Tatars, as some historians call them, of whom we hear so much in Ukrainian history? Where did they come from? The Tartars, Helen and Peter, came into Europe from Asia. They had lived in central Asia as separate tribes. At the end of the 12th century they became organized into one large tribe by a chieftain Temudzin whom they called the "Jenghis Khan." The Tartars were fierce and very capable warriors. Before long they became so powerful that for many centuries they were a menace to all Europe. When Jenghis Khan died, his son Batu became the Tartar chief of the Western tribes, and it was under him that they attacked Kiev in the year 1240. It was a terrible day in the history of Ukraine. The historian tells us that "the groaning of the wooden chariots, the grunting of the camels, the neighing of the horses, the shrieks of the Tartar warriors, the din of the assault—was so great that it was impossible to hear oneself speak in the city."

Kiev fell! The Asiatic warriors overran Ukraine and destroyed cities and villages. Under Batu they went into Hungary and defeated the Hungarian army. Part of the army invaded Poland and Moravia. All Europe feared the "wild Tartars," who finally decided to return east, to the steppe regions of the Caspian and Azov Seas. There they settled, and demanded that the Ukrainians pay them tribute.

After the Fall of Kiev, there remained two Ukrainian provinces in the west, which continued with the traditions of the greatness of Ukraine. These were Galicia and Volhynia. For another hundred years the two provinces remained strong and powerful. Their princes had a great deal of trouble with the Tartars, especially Prince Danilo, who fought to get rid of

their control. It was not until the rule of Danilo's grandson, George, that the Tartars ceased to trouble Galicia and Volhynia.

But even so, Galicia and Volhynia were unable to exist independently very long. The selfish boyars, and the neighbors, who were anything but friendly to our ancestors, hastened the downfall of those last two strongholds of the Ukrainian State. Separated from the rest of Ukraine they were unable to battle against the many odds that confronted them. In 1340, one hundred years after Kiev was destroyed, Galicia and Volhynia lost their independence. The boyars called a Lithuanian prince to rule the provinces. The once great and powerful State of Ukraine came to an end, and a dark and dismal period begins in the history of our people. But let us go on with the story, and see what happened next.



The Castle of Khotin

CHAPTER IV

UNDER LITHUANIA AND POLAND

Ukraine Under Lithuanian Rule

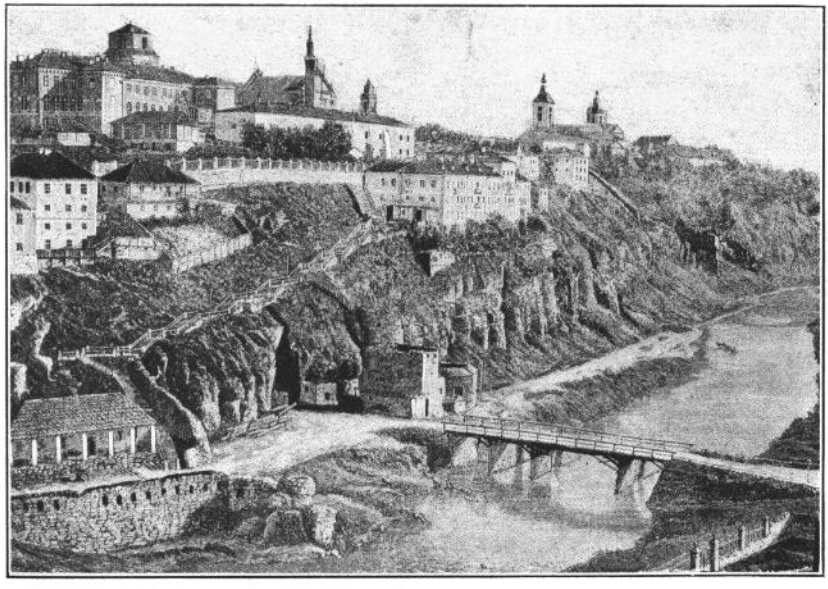
And so, Helen and Peter, we have reached the year 1340. Almost three hundred years had passed since the death of Prince Yaroslav. Great changes had come about in Ukraine. The once large and powerful State was no more. Weakened by the continuous quarrels within the country and by the Tartar invasions, Ukraine had become an easy prey for foreign peoples, the Poles, Hungarians, Lithuanians, Russians.

We find that about the time that the Tartars were invading Ukraine, the Lithuanian princes, who had a state to the northwest of Ukraine, were gradually taking over for themselves much of the land where the Ukrainians lived. Surprising as it may seem, the Ukrainian people didn't mind it very much, for the Lithuanians were pretty fair and decent about it. They left the people to themselves, didn't try to make Lithuanians out of them, didn't force them to do things which the Ukrainians did not wish to do, and because Ukraine was an advanced and cultured country the Lithuanians adopted their culture. In the courts, in the administration, the Ukrainian language was used, the Ukrainian customs were observed. Our people grew to like the Lithuanians.

In 1340, as I said before, a Lithuanian prince came to rule Galicia and Volhynia. His name was Lubart. But the Poles and the Hungarians did not like the idea of a Lithuanian prince on the throne of the Ukrainian provinces. They wanted Galicia and Volhynia for themselves. Wars and fighting followed. Together with the Hungarians, the Poles fought against Lubart and the Ukrainians for the possession of the provinces. In the end Galicia was taken by the Poles, while Volhynia remained with Lubart.

And then one day, Helen and Peter, in the year 1385, a Lithuanian prince Yagiello married a Polish princess Yadwiga. All the lands under Lithuania were annexed to Poland. To be

sure, the Ukrainians, as well as many Lithuanians, objected to this union. For many, many years, some 150 or so, they argued and sometimes fought over it. But I shall not trouble your heads with all those arguments and battles. Suffice it to say that in the end the Ukrainians lost out, and the Polish king Zigismund demanded that Ukrainian lands be joined to Poland once and for all time. He threatened that if the Ukrainian nobles and representatives should object, he would take away their lands by force and that he would rob them of their privi-



The City of Kamenetz in Podolia

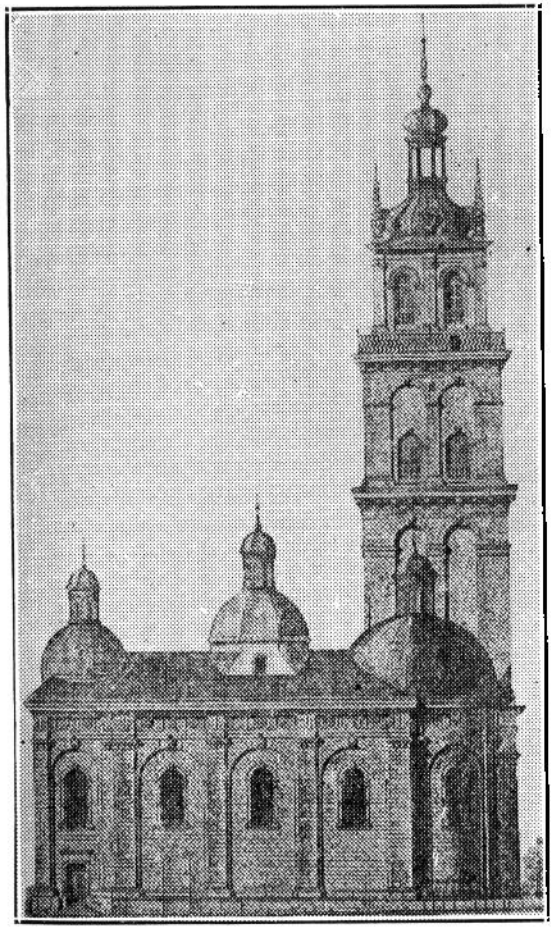
leges. Alas! There was no one strong and courageous enough to stand up against the unjust demands of the Polish king! And so, in 1569, in the city of Lublin, historians tell us, almost all the Ukrainian lands came under the rule of the Polish king.

Under Rule of Poland

While the Ukrainians remained under the rule of Lithuania conditions were not very bad. The Lithuanians allowed the people to govern themselves, as I told you before, and although the Ukrainians would have preferred to be independent altogether, still conditions were bearable. But when the Poles took the Ukrainian lands—oh—that was quite different. Of course

when I say the Poles, I mean the government and the nobles, for goodness knows the Polish peasant suffered plenty at the hands of the Polish nobility and the Polish king! And since he had no voice in the government, he can hardly be blamed for what was going on.

When the Ukrainians came under the rule of Poland, the first thing that the Poles set out to do was to make our people give up their customs, their religion, their language, their traditions. They tried to make Poles out of Ukrainians. Since the Poles were Roman Catholic and the Ukrainians were orthodox, they insisted that the Ukrainians become Roman Catholic too. They did not realize that every one should have the right to worship as he thinks best, and so they set out to make life difficult for the Ukrainians. No Ukrainian was allowed to hold a high official position in Poland. In the courts, in all public offices—Polish and Latin languages were used. In Lviv, the capital of Galicia, Ukrainians were allowed to live only on certain streets. The Ukrainian nobles and wealthy men were often obliged to give up their land and their wealth. Many



The "Voloska" Church in Lviv

weakened and rather than do that, they turned against their own people and became Poles. It is sad to admit, but those who should have stood up for the rights of the Ukrainians were the quickest to give in.

The Poles took away the land from the free Ukrainian peasant, and gave it to the Polish nobles. And not only the land, but the Ukrainian people living on it became the property of the Polish landowners. It was a terrible, cruel thing to do! The peasant was no better than a slave now. He could be sold and traded. The Polish noble had the right of life and death over him, and even the king could do nothing, for the Polish king had to do the bidding of the Polish "shlakhta"—the nobles.

A French writer who visited Ukraine at that time said that the life of the peasant was sad indeed. They had to work for the nobles, they had to do their bidding, and they were not free to seek justice, for the landowner was master and judge on his territory. And the French writer added that "the nobles live in a paradise, while the peasants suffer a hell on earth."

Such was the life of the Ukrainians after they came under the rule of the Polish nobles! At the same time the Tartars continued attacking Ukrainian lands. As I told you before, all Europe trembled before the mighty power of the Tartars. And the Ukrainians, living as they did on the boundary lands of Europe, suffered more than any other nation from those attacks. Their villages and towns were burned, their people were taken into slavery; in time a great part of the territory east of the Dnipro river became uninhabited. People ran away into western and northern lands, and one would think that since Ukraine was under the rule of Poland now, the Polish government would defend the Ukrainians against the Tartars. However, such was not the case. The Poles did not care, and even if they did, the Polish army could not do it. It wasn't strong enough, for the Tartars were exellent warriors.

It Seemed—There Was No Hope

The Ukrainian people were so badly off, children, that it seemed there was no hope for them. There they were—between the Tartars and the Polish "shlakhta." Which was worse? It was difficult to decide.

Many seemed to have forgotten that there had once been a great and glorious Kiev State which belonged to the Ukrai-

nians. Where was Ukraine? What had happened to this once mighty country?

But you see, Helen and Peter, even though there was no Ukrainian government any more, even though many Ukrainians —the nobles and the rich—had given up the idea of an independent Ukraine, even though the Poles did everything possible to make Poles out of the Ukrainians, and even though the Tartar attacks brought fear and destruction into the villages and towns where our people lived, nevertheless the people themselves—the millions of Ukrainians could never be anything but Ukrainians. In spite of all the suffering and persecution that they went through, they continued speaking their own language, singing songs of the heroic deeds of their ancestors, they kept on observing the age old traditions and customs of the past, and they instilled into the hearts of their children hatred of the wrongs, the injustice, and the serfdom that the enemies were meting out to them. The great majority of Ukrainians would not give in. They carried on!

The Way Out

Men tried to find a way out of the unbearable situation. Many of them would not bow their heads in meekness and obedience. They refused to kow tow to the whims of the Polish nobles. Before long they began to run away from the landowners to the wild and sparsely inhabited steppe regions. There in the steppes one was master of himself, and not a cringing, whining dog at mercy of another man!

And do you know, Helen and Peter, who those Ukrainians were? The Cossacks! You are right, Peter, the Cossacks. At first but few ran away—ten—a hundred, but as time went on, and news spread of the free, adventurous life the Ukrainian Cossacks were leading, more and more men escaped. There in the steppes they fished and hunted. Their life was full of exciting danger and daring. Not a day passed in peace for the Ukrainian Cossacks. They fought the fierce Tartars and the Turks. They were forced to match their wits against the wits of a Tartar, and their weapons against the Tartar weapons. But great as the danger was, anything was better than the life at home under the Polish rule. At least in the steppes one fought the Tartars on equal terms, whereas in Poland there was no sense of justice, no equality, no fairness,

no square deal. There was only the law of master and slave!

As the years passed by, the Cossacks grew in number. We find them organizing themselves, building fortresses on the island of Dnipro, and setting up their own government. They choose their chiefs. And they give allegiance to no king, emperor, or noble!

But let us see, Helen and Peter, how this came about.

CHAPTER V

THE COSSACKS

"All Men Are Equal"

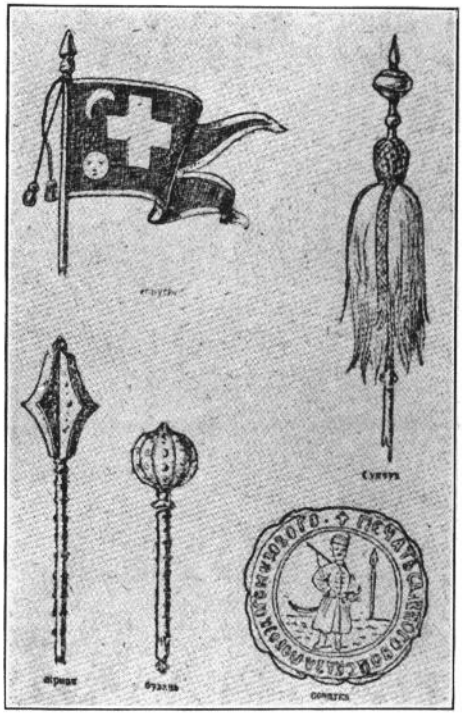
We first hear about the Ukrainian Cossacks in the year 1492. An easy date to remember, Helen and Peter. But it wasn't until the 16th century that they became organized. About 1550 or thereabouts, the Cossacks built a fortress on one of the islands on the Dnipro river. This fortress was a sort of capital, a camp for all the Ukrainian Cossacks. It became their seat of government. Neither Pole, nor Turk,

The Steppe of Ukraine

nor Tartar could reach the Cossacks there, for the way to it was very difficult to find. And they called it the Sitch.

In the Sitch the Cossacks set up a government of their own. Long before the Declaration of Independence was signed,

long before France became a republic, at the time when most of the people of Europe were suffering under the rule of kings, emperors, and nobles, the Cossacks of Ukraine decreed: All men are equal! And on that basis they formed a government where there were no rich men or poor men, where the money and property belonged to all, and where there was no king or noble to say that he was better and finer than the man who tilled the soil, and that he deserved special privileges and rights.



Cossack Insignia

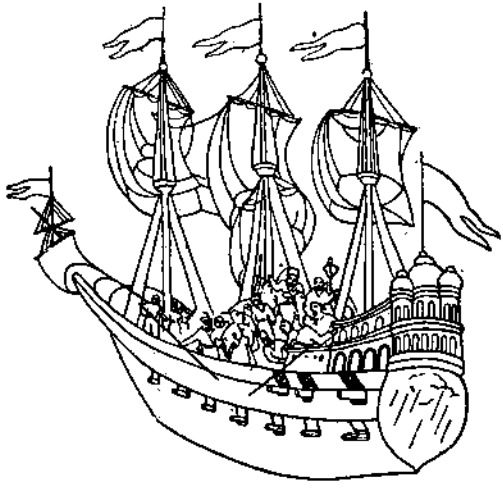
When a nobleman did come to join the Sitch, as it sometimes happened, he had to abide by the rules and regulations of the Cossacks or return to the place from which he came.

In the Sitch the Cossacks chose their own chiefs, their "starshina" as they were called. The most important personage was the "hetman." He may be compared to the president of a republic. If he proved to be a capable man, very well. If not—then the Cossacks gathered together and chose another man. But while the hetman was chief, all Cossacks were expected to obey him. This was especially true during a war, for the hetman was also the head of the army. The hetman had men to help him in his work—the "polkovniks" (colonels), the "sotniks" (captains), the "osauls" (adjutants), and so on. They were all chosen by the Cossacks, and held their positions as long as they proved capable. If the Cossacks did not approve of them—out they went.

A meeting of the Cossacks was called the "rada." It greatly resembled the "vitche" of old. Everybody in the Sitch came to it and all had the right to vote. The Sitch was a place

for men only, and you and I, Helen, would not be allowed to go and live there. The life of a Cossack was simple and strict, but at the same time they had some hilarious times together. But above all else, there was freedom and independence in the Sitch.

As time went on the number of Cossacks was growing larger, and as a result they were becoming more powerful. Soon entire families of Ukrainians left their homes under Poland and escaped to the steppes beyond the Dnipro river. They settled there, built their homes, and refused to have anything to do with the Polish government. Their government was the Sitch and the Cossacks were their defenders. Every family was a Cossack family, for every able bodied man considered it a duty and a privilege to join the Sitch for at least a year or two. Once again a new life was dawning for the Ukrainians. The eastern part of Ukraine, which had been partially deserted because of the continuous Tartar invasions, was gradually becoming a prosperous country once more. The hated Polish landowner who robbed the Ukrainian peasant of his last cent had no place there.



A Cossack "Tchayka"

But—here we are on the Magic Carpet. Have we forgotten? Once again it will take us back many years and bring us down to earth so that we may get a glimpse of the life among the Ukrainians during the early Cossack times.

We Visit Ukraine

"You know, Ukrainka," Peter said, as the Magic Carpet sailed back to the 16th century and then came down to earth, "you know, I've been waiting for a chance to say something. But you were talking so fast—I hated to interrupt you."

"Well, I guess I have, Peter, but you see we simply must get on with the story. However, perhaps I have been talking too fast," I laughed.

"Here's your chance, brother!" said Helen. "Speak up."

"Oh—it's nothing much, only it seems the Ukrainians have had such a tough time. The Tartars destroying their land, and then the Polish nobles. I suppose it would be hard to decide which was worse. And then—but anyway they didn't give up, did they? That's the thing that counts!" Peter added eagerly.

"You bet they didn't give up, son. And if we had only been left in peace to work out our own salvation!"

We were sailing over the fields of Ukraine. For miles and miles stretched the wheat fields. Here and there 'midst the stalks of grain, blue cornflowers and red poppies showed up, adding a touch of color to the gold of the wheat. We came down so near the earth that we could see the birds hopping from tree to tree and the rabbits scampering across the road.

"And look at the fish in the river!" shouted Peter, as our Magic Carpet sailed across a river.

"And the cottages! They look so pretty, all white—against the green of the trees," Helen added, as our blessed Magic Carpet made it's way through the villages. "Please, Ukrainka, let's stop here for a minute. Right by this cottage. It looks so cozy. And so many flowers everywhere! Couldn't we take a peek inside? Just for a second, please."

"Gee, sis—there's a horse right by the gate," said Peter. "And what a horse! It surely is a beauty!"

"Well, I wonder what is going on, children. I suppose we can take a look. Nobody will be able to see us."

In the Cottage

On the Magic Carpet we made our way through the wall of the cottage. It was such a pretty room we entered that Helen could not help whispering:

"My, isn't it nice! It's not fancy and there's not much furniture, but somehow it's very pretty."

The walls and the stove, which was a very complicated affair, were plastered with colored clay. Birch benches were placed against the walls, and a large table, covered with an embroidered cloth, stood in one of the corners. Everything

was as neat as a pin. Flower pots were on the window sills —blue, red, yellow flowers—that gladdened the room and made it bright and cheerful. Beautiful hand-embroidered towels were draped over the pictures which hung on the walls. Besides pictures there were all sort of trophies, proving that the men who lived in the cottage had been in the Sitch, and had fought the Tartars and the Turks. There were sabres and pistols, rifles and powder horns. On the shelves there were various precious jugs, bottles and flasks, brought home from foreign lands.

A young girl and a young man were standing near the doorway.

"But look, Ukrainka," said Helen, "the girl is crying. Why is she crying? Gee—she's pretty! And look at that beautiful outfit she has on. Why it's just like the one in the Ukrainian play."

The girl was dressed in a Ukrainian costume which was the style of the day. She had a blouse of fine linen, embroidered in red and black crossstich, a red skirt, very full and long, a sleeveless jacket of black velvet, and an apron with embroidery so fine that we wondered how anyone could do such tiny stiches. Pretty ribbons hanging from her hair, several strings of colored beads, and leather boots, completed the young girl's costume.

"Why is she crying?" asked Peter.

"She is crying, children, because the young man came to bid her good-bye. He is a Cossack and he is going to the Sitch. He promises his sweetheart that he will come back, but who knows—he might be killed in the next war with the Turks. The girl has lost two brothers in the war with the Tartars. She is afraid. She would like him to remain. But he is a Cossack, and to remain would be impossible."

"The Cossack said something to her and she's smiling," remarked Helen.

"Yes, he must have said something to cheer her up. He is grieving over the separation, but he can never show it, not by so much as a tear. Who ever heard of a Cossack crying?!"

"And now he is going for good. He is mounting his horse. He will come back, won't he? Poor girl!"

We Visit the Sitch

"Let us follow the Cossack, Ukrainka," Peter said, "and let us go to the Sitch. Gee—I'd like to see it!"

"We can't very well follow him, Peter, for it might take him several days to get there. But what do you say to sailing to the Sitch on our Magic Carpet right now? Shall we say perhaps: 'Oh beauteous Carpet, take us, oh please, to the stronghold of the Cossacks, to the wondrous Sitch!' But perhaps you could make a better plea? No? Very well—whee! Away we go! And here we are, sailing over the Dnipro river. Presto! We have reached the Sitch!"

"It's pretty swell—having a Magic Carpet!" exclaimed Peter.

"Yes, what would we do without it?!" Helen added.

Cossack Ambush on the Dnipro River

There, below the rapids of the Dnipro, was a large island —the Island of Khortitsia, the home of the Sitch, the refuge of all freedom loving Ukrainians!

"My, how wide the river is here!" exclaimed Peter.

"Do you remember the songs about the Dnipro?" I asked. "Many poems and songs have been written about this great river of Ukraine. Our pagan ancestors worshipped it as they did Dazhboh and the god of thunder. Every Ukrainian dreams of seeing it some day, for it is the symbol of the joys and sorrows of our people. Dnipro became the center of the first Ukrainian State at the time of the princes. Kiev was built on a hill overlooking Dnipro. And now once again the Ukrainians have turned to Father Dnipro for inspiration and protection in building a new life for themselves."

To the south of Khortitsia there were other islands, some high and rocky, others flat and covered with tall grass. Protected by the rapids of the river and large forests, it would have been difficult for an enemy to find his way about. From our Magic Carpet we could see horses grazing in the distance —in the steppes.

As we looked down on the Sitch, Helen exclaimed:

"Why there isn't a woman here!"

"Of course not," Peter answered somewhat haughtily. "Who'd want a woman around here! This is a man's place, isn't it, Ukrainka?"

"Well, Peter, times have changed, you know. Perhaps if there were a Sitch today, women would join it too. But in those days, you're right—Sitch was a man's world. But let us get down lower and see what we can see. It's lucky the Cossacks can't see us, isn't it, Helen. Or they would tell us to move away. Now, Peter and Helen, tell me what you see."

"Well," Peter began, "I see a lot of large wooden buildings. Is that where the Cossacks live?"

"Yes, those are the 'kurens,' large barracks or sheds, built of wood and covered with horse hides. And that's where the Cossacks live."

"But how funny!" exclaimed Helen. "All the Cossacks have their heads shaved except for a lock of hair on the top."

"That's the scalp-lock, Helen. It was the custom among the Cossacks," I said.

"And gee, Ukrainka, they look so strong!" Peter went on. "I bet each one of them could put Dempsey down in three rounds! Boy! And there are so many Cossacks here!"

"Yes, it does seem as though all the men of Ukraine had come to the Sitch, doesn't it, Peter? What do you see, Helen?"

"Well," said Helen, "some of the Cossacks are dressed in the same kind of costume that uncle John wears when he sings on the Ukrainian stage. It's a beautiful outfit. Wide blue trousers, bright red coats. And beautifully embroidered shirts, and such handsome red boots. I once saw a girl dressed up in a Cossack costume. My, she looked pretty."

"Eh, you're just like a girl," Peter interrupted his sister. "You only notice clothes! And anyway there are many who aren't dressed in 'costumes.' Look at those two playing dice. They don't even have their shirts on."

Helen and I laughed.

"The ones in costumes are probably new-comers, Peter. But you must admit that they do look handsome."

"But, Ukrainka," Helen continued, "if there are no women here, who does all the work—the cooking, the sewing?"

"The Cossacks do it themselves, Helen. Why, a good Cossack was a good blacksmith, and a tailor, and a tanner, and a cook. He could do everything himself."

"And the bravest fighter that ever lived!" Peter exclaimed. "Gosh, I wish there would be another Sitch when I grow up," he added solemnly.

"Never mind, Peter. There will be interesting things for you to do when you grow up. You know—Cossacks' life was not all riding and fighting. There were some awfully strict rules in the Sitch. But—let us go and take a look at the square, the place where the Cossacks gather when there is anything important going on. Oh—look here—we came just in time."

"A lucky break I call it," said Peter. "Now we'll see some real dancing. Whew! But he dances fast!"

A crowd had gathered at the square to watch a Cossack dance. His head was thrown back and his arms were stretched out. The musicians played faster and faster but still the dancer was not satisfied. "Faster!" he shouted. Like a whirlwind he turned around and around until it was impossible to see his face in the quickness of the motion.

"Gee, I can dance the 'hopak,'" Peter exclaimed, "but I've never seen anyone dance as fast as that Cossack."

"It's marvelous," shouted Helen.

"Oh yes, children, the Cossacks had their merry moments. But listen! What is that?"

The dancer stopped, and together with all the other Cossacks he made his way toward the center of the square where two men were beating drums. This was a sign that something important was going on, and that there was going to be a meeting—a "rada," as the Cossacks called it.

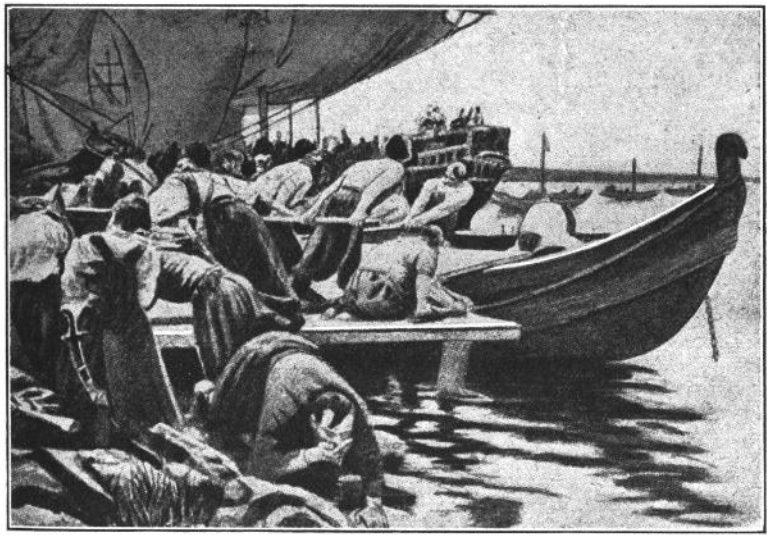
"I bet there's going to be a war!" said Peter. "And they are going to get ready."

All the Cossacks living on the Khortitsia gathered in the square. They were debating something very noisily. After several minutes all of them threw up their caps in the air.

"What do they do that for?" asked Peter.

"Don't you know?" said Helen. "That's a sign that they all agree. It's like voting 'yes,' isn't it, Ukrainka?"

"You are right, Helen. And you know what happened?



Getting Ready for the Sea

There's going to be a big fight with the Tartars. The Cossacks have espied them in the distance and so they are getting ready to meet them before the Tartars realize what is going on."

Peter watched the preparations with shining eyes and loud exclamations of delight.

"Well, the Tartars shouldn't bother the Ukrainians!" he said. "Look, some of the Cossacks went to get the horses ready. And some are looking over the boats. What long boats they are!"

"They are called 'tchaikas,' and there's room for about sixty men in one of them," I said.

Here and there men were getting the wagons ready, loading them with food, arms, heavy ropes, cannons, and all the things needed in warfare.

The Meeting Place of the Sitch

"And now, Peter and Helen, I turned to the children, "we have had a glimpse of life among the Cossacks."

"Ah—let's watch them, let's follow them when they go to fight the Tartars," Peter insisted.

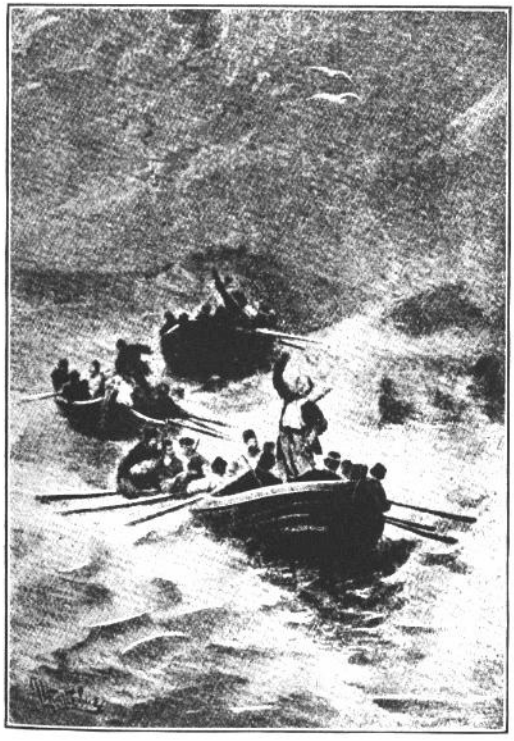
"Helen and I are a bit squeamish about seeing men fight, aren't we, Helen? And we must get along with the story. Some other day, Peter. But now, away we go. Higher and higher soars our Magic Carpet— — — And while I continue with the story, both of you will be as quiet as church mice, won't you?"

"Aw gee, Ukrainka, have a heart!" Peter objected.

"Too late, Peter! Here we are up in the clouds ready to go on with the Story of Ukraine."

Poland Worried

At the same time that the number of Cossacks increased, and the fame of their bravery spread far and wide, the Tartars and Turks were losing some of their fearlessness. As I told you before, Helen and Peter, in those days all Europe trembled before them. And so when the Ukrainian Cossacks warred against them, everybody was so surprised that they hardly knew what to make of it. "Those Ukrainian Cossacks must surely be fearless and brave to put up such a grand fight against the Tartars and the Turks!" people thought. And the Ukrainians—you can imagine how happy they were to be able to live in peace once again.



On the Black Sea

Poland, however,—well—at first she didn't mind the idea of the Cossacks fighting the Tartars and the Turks, but as time went on and the power of the Cossacks became greater, Poland was worried. The Polish nobles made a row: "What is this?" they said. "What do the Ukrainian peasants mean by leaving our lands and going to the Sitch?! Don't they know that we are their masters? Don't they know that they have to work on our fields?" And they complained to the king about it. The Tartars too decided that the Cossacks were getting to be too much for them, so they also complained to the Polish king. "The Cossacks are your subjects. Why don't you do something? The cheeky fellows—why they even dare to attack us," they said. Or something to that effect. The Polish king decided that something would have to be done.

Those Cossacks—they were really getting to be somewhat troublesome. The king knew that they were brave and that they prized liberty above all else. He decided to give them a certain amount of freedom. They would not have to pay taxes and they would choose their own officials, but at the same time they would have to be obedient to the Polish king. They would fight enemies only when the king bade them to do so. At the same time there would be but a certain number of those free Cossacks—the registered Cossacks. All the rest were supposed to return to their villages and to continue living the life of old—that is being at the mercy of the landowners. The king thought that now there would be harmony and peace. The registered Cossacks would make an excellent army for Poland, the rest of the Cossacks would return to their villages, and no Ukrainian would dare run away to the Sitch again. To make it more terryfying, the king decreed that anybody who ran away to the Sitch would be punished by death. But—it was too late! You might as well have told Lindbergh not to go flying across the Atlantic, because he might be drowned! The king had his registered Cossacks. What of it? The young Ukrainian men would have preferred death than to be denied the privilege of becoming regular Cossacks—Zaporozhtsi!

And so in spite of all the king's orders, thousands of Ukrainians went to join the Sitch. The strength and the power of the Cossacks grew. They continued living their own life, defending Ukraine from the Tartars and the Turks, giving allegiance to no landowner, and guarding the rights of those Ukrainians who had escaped with their families from the Polish nobles and settled in the eastern Ukraine.

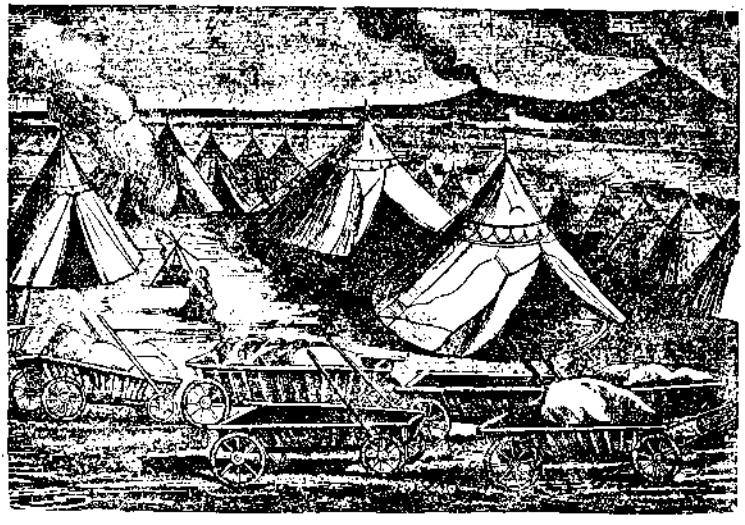
Cossacks and Polish Nobles War

A new life had dawned in Ukraine. Kiev, under the protection of the Cossacks once more became the center, the capital of the country. Schools were built, men were sent to study in foreign countries so that they may learn from other nations, writers were encouraged in their work. A university was founded in Kiev, "brotherhoods"—benevolent, educational societies—were organized, publishing houses were founded. Once again hope had entered the hearts of our forefathers. "Perhaps, perhaps," they thought, "a better, a finer Ukraine might arise, and once more take her place among the countries of Europe."

People dreamed and hoped, and out of their dreams great deeds were born! And if only the Ukrainians had been left alone. They did not want other peoples' land or other nations' wealth. They wanted the country which their ancestors had settled, they wanted the land on which they formed the majority, to be their own. Even as today the Ukrainians desired to be masters in their own country!

Because Poland would not agree to this, because the Polish landowners wished to appropriate for themselves everything that rightfully belonged to the Ukrainians, wars followed. Bitter, cruel wars followed!

The first big battle that occured between the Ukrainians and the Polish landowners was fought in the year 1591. From that time on, the Cossacks and the Poles fought continually;



Cossack Encampment

sometimes the Cossacks won and the Poles were willing to grant them all sort of privileges. And then again the Poles were victorious, and the Polish nobles tried to suppress the Cossacks altogether.

There were times when Poland carried on wars with other nations. She needed good fighting men. So whom do you think she called to help her? The Ukrainian Cossacks! The Poles would say: "Ukrainian Cossacks, we'll promise you anything you wish, we shall not stop your men from joining the Sitch,

we allow you to choose your own chiefs, but please come and help us!" Of course, Helen and Peter, these were not the exact words, but that was just about the gist of it. Sometimes the Cossacks really profited by going to the aid of the Poles, but often the Polish government made promises and the Polish nobles broke them as soon as they were able to do so..

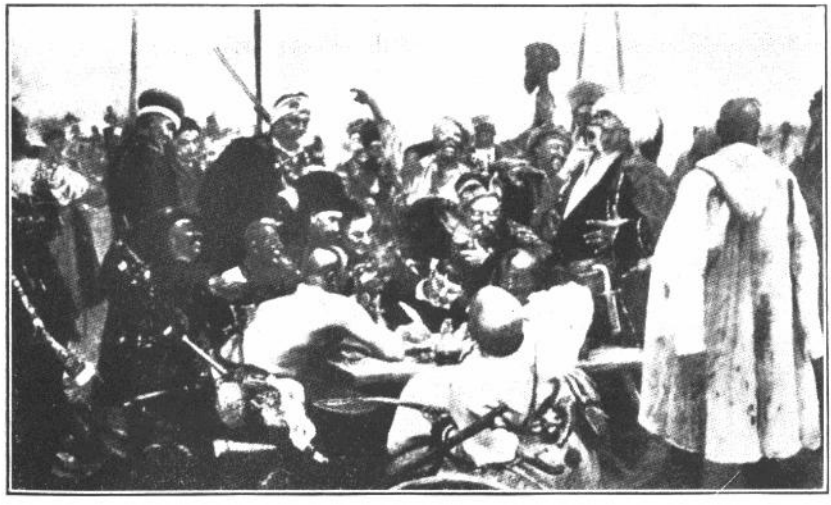
Once in 1620

Once in 1620, to give you, children, an example of how this happened, the Turks invaded Poland. The Poles were so

Peter Sahaydachny

frightened that they thought their end had come, for the Turks were very good fighters. "Come and help us!" the Poles pleaded with the Cossacks. The Cossacks would not do it at first. They

were angry at the Poles. The Polish king Zigismund promised them all sort of special rights and privileges, if they would only come to his aid. In the end the Cossacks agreed. Under the able leadership of Hetman Petro Konashevitch Sahaidatchny they joined the Poles against the Turks and the Tartars. Historians tell us that the Tartar—Turkish army numbered some 300,000 men. The Poles had about 40,000 men. And the Cossacks had about 40,000 men. The Cossacks fought so bravely



Writing a Letter to the Sultan of Turkey

that the Turks were beaten and they were forced to make peace with the Polish king. Everybody in Poland agreed that it was due to the bravery of the Cossacks that the Poles were saved. Hetman Sahaidatchny was so badly wounded that he died of the wounds. And one would think that the Poles should have been grateful to the Ukrainian Cossacks. Such was not the case. The Polish landowners, the so called "shlakhta," again started complaining to the king, saying that the Ukrainian peasants do not obey them, that the king should supress the Cossacks, and so on.

On the Dnipro river the Poles built a fortress which they called the "Kodak." Polish soldiers were stationed there to prevent the Ukrainians going to the Sitch, the Zaporozhe. In the year 1635, the Cossacks, under the leadership of Hetman Sulima destroyed Kodak. Wars followed. The Ukrainians fared

badly in the battles and as a result the Polish government used every means to persecute the Ukrainian people.

Ukrainian Rights Curtailed

The Polish king sent an army into Ukraine to keep an eye on the Ukrainians. He ordered that all the Cossack chiefs be appointed by him. And that only registered Cossacks should have the right to be Cossacks. Since only 6000 men were allowed to be registered, all the others were forced to return to their villages and towns. At the same time the fortress Kodak was rebuilt.

For ten years the Polish "shlakhta" tried to manage affairs in their own way. The autocratic, wealthy landowners were living in paradise itself. No more troubles! No worries about the Ukrainians running away to the Sitch! No rebellious Cossacks to contend with! And the Ukrainian peasants seemed quite meek and obliging. So thought the Poles. But underneath all this quiet and peace there was the spirit of revolt brewing. Freedom is too precious to be given away without a struggle, without a fight. And with the Cossacks the Ukrainians had learned what freedom was. They could not bear the thought of losing it altogether. All that was wanting was a man who would lead the Ukrainians in their fight for liberty. And such a man was Bohdan Khmelnitsky, the greatest hetman of Ukraine.

Bohdan Khmelnitsky

Bohdan Khmelnitsky was the son of a sotnik, a Cossack captain of Tchihirin. He had received a good education in his youth and when he grew up to manhood young Bohdan joined the Sitch. In the war with the Turks in 1620, Khmelnitsky was captured by the enemy. For two years he remained a prisoner in Constantinople. When hetman Sahaidatchny exchanged him for some Turkish prisoners, Khmelnitsky returned to the Zaporozhe, and from that time on continued serving with the Cossack army. For a while he held the post of secretary of the Sitch organization. It was a very important office and Khmelnitsky was well fitted for it, for he had received an education far above the average. He was well versed in several languages —French, Turkish, Tartar, Polish, Latin. There is a saying that when the fortress Kodak was built by the Poles, Khmelnitsky together with other Cossack chiefs was called by a

Polish official to take a look at it. You recall that this fortress was built to keep the Ukrainians from joining the Zaporozhe. When the Cossacks came, the Polish official asked them sarcastically:

"And now—what do you think of the Kodak?"

Khmelnitsky smiled and said in Latin:

"Manu facta, manu destruitur."

And that meant that what was made by hand could be destroyed by hand. I can see by Peter's grin that he thinks it was a pretty good answer.

In 1638 Khmelnitsky returned to Tchihirin, married, and was appointed sotnik, as his father had been before him. He had a piece of land that his father had handed down to him, but one of the Polish landowners, in a mean and tricky way decided to take this property away from him. One day Khmelnitsky was obliged to leave his home in behalf of some Cossack affairs. He left his wife and three sons at home. The Polish landowner took advantage of Khmelnitsky's absence and attacked his household. He took away with him everything that could be taken, and beat up one of Khmelnitsky's sons, a boy of ten, so badly that he died several days later.

You can imagine, Peter and Helen, Bohdan Khmelnitsky coming home, and finding his son dead and everything in ruins. At first he tried to get justice in a legal way, but he soon saw that so far as a Ukrainian was concerned there was no justice in Poland. For that matter there was no justice for a Pole either if he were poor. Not only that Khmelnitsky found no justice, but he was put into prison because of something that he had said. Little did the Poles realize what they were doing. Khmelnitsky came out of prison, determined more than ever that the Ukrainians must stand up for their rights, if they want to retain their self-respect and if they really love freedom. And the Ukrainians were just waiting for someone to lead them against the Polish landowners. They had suffered too much and their patience had reached the limit.

The Struggle for Independence

Khmelnitsky went to the Sitch. The Cossacks joined him and promised to war against the Poles. They wanted to do it at once, but Khmelnitsky told them to wait until the proper

time arrived. Then he received a promise from the Crimean Khan that he would help him in war against the Poles. In the meantime the Cossacks went into the Ukrainian villages, dressed as kobzars and beggars, and told the people to get ready, that there was going to be a great war. At a "rada," a council in

Cossacks in Battle

the Sitch, the Cossacks unanimously chose Bohdan Khmelnitsky their chief, their hetman. He was given a banner, a golden mace, and a silver army seal to signify that he was hetman from now on. Everywhere in Ukraine the people were preparing to repay the nobles and their henchmen for all the cruelty that they had suffered.

The Poles had heard of this movement among our people. They knew that the Cossacks were getting ready. So they too gathered an army, preparing to go against the Ukrainians.

Hetman Khmelnitsky lost no time. In April, 1648, he set out with his men westward to meet the Poles. Able, daring, and fearless, he led his men until they reached a river called the Yellow Waters—Zhovty Vody—where part of the Polish

army was stationed under the Polish general, Stephen Potocki. The registered Cossacks who were with Potocki, all joined Hetman Khmelnitsky. The Poles were attacked and beaten so that few men remained alive. Khmelnitsky, spurred on by success and by the bravery of his men continued moving northward. At Korsun he came upon the main wing of the Polish army and here again the Cossacks were victorious. Almost the entire Polish army was defeated. Nothing like it had ever happened in Ukraine before. The hetman and his army went to Bilotserkva and from there Khmelnitsky issued a proclamation to the Ukrainian people, telling them of the victories and calling them to the defense of their country. He said: "You have taken back this land after you had driven out the Tartars. Your forefathers bought it for you with their blood, defending it from the enemies. The Polish nobles destroy your property, they bring disgrace to your wives and children. Refuse to obey the landlords and their henchmen, as though you were their slaves! Arise, Cossacks and peasants—to fight the Poles to a finish!" And he signed himself: Hetman of the army of Zaporozhe and of all Ukraine on both sides of the Dnipro.

"There is no Finer Place"

All Ukraine answered the call of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnitsky. Those who were able, joined the Cossack army, those who remained at home drove the Polish noblemen out and set out to live a life of freedom once again. A new era began for the Ukrainians. They were masters in their country! The folksongs that the people made up in those days are filled with rejoicing over the good times that had come to Ukraine. They sang:

There is no finer place
In all the world
Than our Ukraine!
There's not a Pole
Nor noble left,
We want no change!

The Ukrainians set out to work with joy and hope in their hearts. They tilled the soil, they built schools, orphanages, hospitals, churches. They called artists from foreign countries to beautify their buildings. A traveler from Syria was surprised to find how life changed for the better since the Ukrainians drove the Poles out.

The Poles, of course, were dumbfounded. What to do? To think that the Polish nobles were driven out of Ukraine! That was a calamity. Some wanted to make peace with the Cossacks, others wanted to fight them. And the Ukrainian hetman was waiting to see what Poland would do. Just then the Polish king had died and another was being chosen. Khmelnitsky thought that perhaps the new king would somehow settle the difficulties between the Ukrainians and the Poles. In fact the Poles asked Hetman Khmelnitsky to wait until after the election. However at the same time they were secretly gathering a large army to go against the Ukrainians. This angered the Cossacks and Khmelnitsky so much that they refused to wait. Another battle followed. Khmelnitsky was victorious everywhere. With his men he passed Volhynia and Galicia, and came to Lviv. Historians tell us that if he had wished it, he could have taken Cracow and Warsaw, for the Poles were left practically defenseless. But what Khmelnitsky desired was rights for the Ukrainian people on their own land.

In the meantime the elections in Poland were over, and Jan-Casimir was chosen king. He sent a message to Khmelnitsky that if he returns to Kiev all the demands of the Cossacks would be fulfilled. In November, 1648, Khmelnitsky returned to Kiev.

Hetman Khmelnitsky in Kiev

Great was the joy of all Ukrainians when they saw Khmelnitsky! People called him their Moses! Like Moses delivered the Hebrews from the Egyptians, so Khmelnitsky freed Ukraine from Poland. Perhaps you have seen, Helen and Peter, the picture called "Khmelnitsky Enters Kiev." It was painted in memory of the day when our Hetman returned victorious to the capital of Ukraine. The Ukrainians rejoiced, for at last their country was to be free and independent once again. And they would hear of nothing short of complete independence from Poland. So that when the king's representatives came to Khmelnitsky with gifts and promises, the hetman in accordance with the wishes of all Ukrainians would have nothing to do with them. If Poland would not agree to have as neighbor an independent Ukraine, then the Ukrainians would fight to keep their independence.

Both Ukrainians and Poles realized that war was inevi-

Bohdan Khmelnitsky

table. The Poles were calling to arms all able-bodied men, the Ukrainians were leaving their homes to join Hetman Khmelnitsky. The hetman was a great warrior and with the large army that he had, there didn't seem to be any doubt about the outcome of the war. In addition Khmelnitsky had the help of the Tartar army of Crimea. A battle followed. The Cossacks were certain of their victory. The Poles were losing. Even the king despaired, and called to his men to stand by and not to desert him. But the Crimean Khan, whom Khmelnitsky trusted and believed, proved a false ally. The Poles seeing that there was no way out for them, sent messages to him with promises of big money if the khan would only give up fighting the Poles. The khan was bribed. He told Khmelnitsky that if the Ukrainians would not make peace with the Poles, he would go over to the side of the Polish king. The Cossacks were not prepared for such a turn of events. And Khmelnitsky could not forgive himself for not taking advantage of Poland's weakness at the time when he was at Lviv.

The Treaty of Zboriv

The Cossacks were forced to sign a peace treaty. It was called the treaty of Zboriv. According to it the number of Cossacks would be increased to 40,000. They were allowed to live only in the three provinces, of Kiev, Braslav, and Tchernyhiv. In those provinces they were allowed to retain their rights and privileges. Everywhere else in Ukraine the people were to return to the life of old, to the Polish landowners—the hated "shlakhta."

This was a terrible blow to Khmelnitsky, to the Cossacks, to all Ukrainians. The hetman and his men returned home sad and disappointed. Khmelnitsky saw that the people could not bear the thought of Polish rule. He knew that war and bloodshed would follow unless the Ukrainians were given greater freedom than that promised by the Treaty of Zboriv. Another war did follow. At Berestetchko one of the most terrible battles in all Ukrainian history took place. The khan of Crimea again deceived the Cossacks and imprisoned Hetman Khmelnitsky. Under the leadership of polkovnik Bohun, the Cossacks defended themselves. A Polish eyewitness wrote that the Ukrainians fought bravely, but they could not withstand the attacks of the Poles. In the end only two-three hundred were left.

They managed to reach a small island where they resisted the Poles for many hours. The Polish general, Potocki, seeing their bravery promised to spare them if they would give up, but the Cossacks threw their money out of the purses into the river as a sign that they will never give up. To the end they fought!

The battle of Berestetchko was lost. Hetman Khmelnitsky was forced to make peace with the king.

However, the idea of breaking away from Poland gave Khmelnitsky no peace. He saw that in order to do so Ukraine needed an ally. The Crimean Khan was supposed to have been an ally, but instead he proved to be a treacherous foe. News came to our hetman that Russia or Moscovy, as it was then called, would join Ukraine in her war against Poland. Khmelnitsky was undecided what he should do. He saw no way out. Ukraine could not remain under the rule of the Polish nobles.

In 1654, Khmelnitsky called a "rada" at Pereyaslav. He told the people what the situation was and asked them to decide whether they wanted to unite with Moscow or not. The people, not realizing as yet what it meant for a democratic Ukraine to unite with an autocratic Russia, agreed unanimously.

"Do you all agree?" they were asked.

"All, all!" the people shouted.

The Treaty of Pereyaslav

And so, Helen and Peter, Ukraine formed a union with Russia. By the Treaty of Pereyaslav Ukraine was to retain the right to govern herself; the hetman was to be chosen by the Cossacks; the country was supposed to have the right to confer with foreign nations; there was to be an army of 60,000 Cossacks in Ukraine; the Russians were forbidden to mix into the local affairs of the country.

However, it wasn't long before the Ukrainians realized that the Russian tsar's promises meant nothing. They found out that to Russia a union with Ukraine meant enlarging the Russian territory. The Ukrainians desired a free Ukraine—, whereas Russia wanted "the bread basket of Europe" for herself.

Khmelnitsky soon discovered that the union with Moscow was a total failure. Before long Russia was forming secret treaties with Poland. This angered the people very much, for it was against the articles of the Treaty of Pereyaslav. Khmel-

nitsky decided to look for aid elsewhere. The Poles saw that the Ukrainians were dissatisfied. They proposed to Khmelnitzky that he should return under the rule of the Polish king, but he refused, saying: "There can be no friendship between us. If the Poles leave us alone and give up Ukraine willingly, then we shall help them and be friendly with them. But what of it! If there should be only a hundred nobles left in Poland, they would not agree to it."

And so Khmelnitsky tried to confer with Sweden, Hungary, Turkey, always with the idea of making Ukraine a free and independent country. Free of Poland, free of Moscow!

The Great Hetman is no More

Our great hetman did not live to see the outcome of all this. He had been ill for some time, and now worried and upset he grew worse. In the year 1657 Bohdan Khmelnitsky died.

Almost ten years had passed since Khmelnitsky started the war for the liberation of Ukraine. He had become the hetman, the chief ruling officer of his country. He was a man who was able to lead his countrymen, and who pointed a way to a brighter future. He never gave up, never despaired. He always thought that there was some way out for his country, so that she might take her place among the free nations of Europe. To the very end he planned and worked to realize the ideal of a free Ukraine. A free and democratic Ukraine! For at the time when every country of Europe was under the rule of emperor, or king, or tsar, Ukraine stood for the ideals for which thinking people stand today. At the time when the idea of a government "for the people and by the people" was a dream in the minds of very few men, Ukraine was governed by men who were elected by the people themselves. At the time when the Polish nobility, forming only 8 per cent of all the people, ruled in Poland, at the time when Russia was ruled by a despotic tsar, the Ukrainian people dearly cherished the ideal that all men are equal.

When Bohdan Khmelnitsky died, all Ukraine mourned his passing away. Even the stern Cossack chiefs cried like little children. The great hetman was no more!

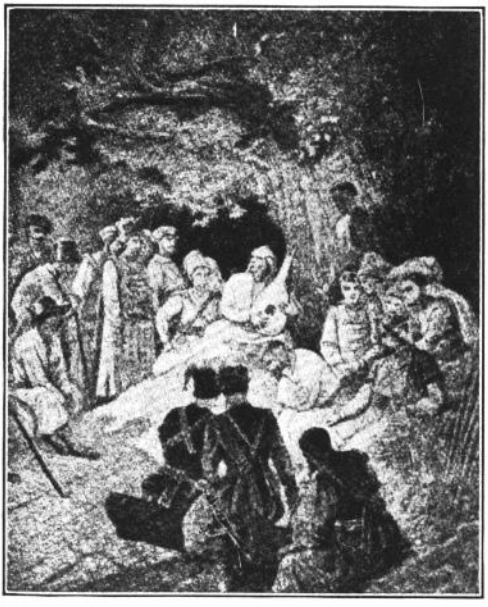
Another Visit to Ukraine

"But let us get down on our Magic Carpet, children, and see Ukraine as it was in the days of Bohdan Khmelnitsky.

Why—Peter and Helen—you seem downhearted. That's not the way to be," I turned to my young friends. "Come—we must not make long faces."

"Poor Hetman Khmelnitsky!" Helen spoke sadly. "He tried so hard to make Ukraine a free and independent country!"

"Yes, Helen, to the very last our hetman worried about the fate of his country. Somehow he felt that unhappy times were in store for his people."



A Kobzar Singing of Heroic Tradition

"But, Ukrainka, there's one thing I don't understand. You speak of the Zaporozhtsi. Are they the same as the Cossacks?"

"You see, Peter, all the Zaporozhtsi were Cossacks, but not all Cossacks were Zaporozhtsi. Literally Zaporozhtsi means—men from beyond the rapids, that is the rapids of Dnipro. The Cossacks who lived on the islands beyond the falls of the Dnipro river were called Zaporozhtsi, while the plain Cossacks could live anywhere in Ukraine. Of course almost all Cossacks had sometime in their life been in the Zaporozhe. But here we are—sailing over the villages and towns of Ukraine. And the year is 1648 or 1649 or thereabouts."

"It is spring, Ukrainka!" exclaimed Helen. "Just look at all those cherry orchards in blossom!"

"Yes, they are a pretty sight, aren't they? Do you remember that verse by Shevtchenko:

'A cherry orchard
By the cottage—'"

"Yes, I know it," said Helen. "We learned it in the Ukrainian school."

"What is it, a holiday or something?" Peter asked. "The people are all dressed up in their best."

"I guess it must be a holiday, Peter. But look—over there—"

We looked down the road and saw a group of children running and shouting:

"A kobzar, a kobzar is coming!" Even the youngest grew bold and ran to meet an aged white-haired man who was slowly making his way down the road.

"Oh—he must be blind!" exclaimed Helen. "A boy is leading him. Is he really blind?"

"Yes, Helen."

"And is that a bandura he is carrying?" asked Peter. "Is he going to play it? Let's get down and hear him play," Peter coaxed us.

"All-right, Peter. Perhaps we shall find out what is going on in Ukraine, for the kobzar usually brings the latest news to the villages."

We approached the crowd that had gathered around the old man. He was sitting on a large stone, while men, women, and children stood respectfully about him. A little girl was pulling at her mother's sleeve and saying: "When is daddy coming back, mother? Does granddaddy kobzar know? Did he see our daddy in the war?"

"Hush, my child," the mother quieted her little girl. "We'll ask him afterwards."

'Midst a hushed silence the kobzar sang his songs, and as we listened to his voice we learned of the battles that were fought to make Ukraine free. We learned of the great Father Bohdan who delivered his people from the enemy and the thousands who died on the battlefield. The kobzar continued singing, and we heard of the good times that had come to Ukraine, of the nobles who were driven out, and of the land which was now in the hands of the people. "Schools are being built, orphanages and churches," he sang, "and there is neither master nor slave in Ukraine today."

"How beautifully he sings!" Helen whispered to me. "But how is it that he is blind, Ukrainka?"

"He has probably lost his eyesight in some war with the Turks or Tartars. The Tartars often punished their enemy prisoners by burning their eyes out."

"How horrible!" Helen shuddered. "But then people are always cruel in war, aren't they?"

Our Magic Carpet sailed away. We passed over villages and cities. Many of the mansions where the nobles had lived were deserted. Since it was a holiday, there were no people working in the fields, but we saw them in groups, talking, discussing matters very earnestly. Ever higher soared the Magic Carpet, and by a little a-wishing we were able to see just what the changes were since Bohdan Khmelnitsky became hetman.

"You see, children," I turned to Helen and Peter, "the land is now in the hands of the Ukrainian people. They alone have the right to it, for they work on it, and they work hard too."

"It's better now than it was during the times of the princes, isn't it, Ukrainka?" Helen said.

"Yes, Helen, for in the days of the princes only the wealthy and the privileged in Ukraine had a fine time of it. The people in the villages were not well off, unless the prince happened to be a kind and generous man. But now the people are really masters in their own house. And look" (the blessed Magic Carpet, what would we do without it!?), look, we can actually see how Ukraine is governed. It is divided into 'polks,' or provinces. Can you count them, children? How many are there?"

"One—two—three—" Helen and Peter began.

"There are sixteen," Helen called out.

"Right—o! And at the head of each polk is a 'polkovnik.' Then each polk is divided into 'sotni,' and at the head of each sotnia is a 'sotnik.'"

"It's just like the Sitch!" Peter said.

"That's right, Peter; the Cossack form of government was adapted to all Ukraine. The most important official was, of course, the hetman. All of these officials were chosen by the Cossacks. Compared with the other countries of Europe, Ukraine was the most democratic of all. It was a government in the right direction, and if things had turned out differently, if—But perhaps there is no use speculating. So let us soar higher and higher on the good old Magic Carpet, and within a mile of the stars let us go on with the story."

Sad Times Visit Ukraine

Sad times visited Ukraine after the death of Hetman Khmelnitsky. On the one hand there was Poland eagerly awaiting the chance to get Ukraine under her rule. And on the

other hand there was Russia taking advantage of the treaty of Pereyaslav, breaking, little by little, every promise that she had made, and turning Ukraine into a province of Russia. No wonder Khmelnitsky worried so much about the fate of his country!

The hetmans who came after Khmelnitsky could not agree. They knew that Ukraine, weakened by constant wars with the

Peter Doroshenko

Tartars and the Poles, was not strong enough to fight for her rights alone. There were some who thought that it would be best to return under Poland, particularly since Poland promised the Ukrainians equal rights with the Poles. Hetman Vihovsky was one of those men who favored Poland. In 1658 he signed a treaty at Hadiatch. According to this treaty,

Ukraine was supposed to become a member of a great state of which Poland and Lithuania would be the other two members. However, the majority of the people in Ukraine could not bear the thought of having anything to do with Poland. They thought that in any case Russia was better. They chose George Khmelnitsky, Bohdan's son, as hetman. But George did not have the brains nor the determination of his father. He was weak and gave in to Russia too much. The people were dissatisfied. Discord and quarrels followed in Ukraine. Good and bad hetmans were chosen. And the masses of the Ukrainians didn't know whom to listen to, what to do. Many of the starshina—the higher Cossack military officers—had become selfish. They did not think so much of Ukraine as they thought of their own precious selves. The people seeing that the starshina was becoming too bossy and too autocratic, mistrusted it. Terrible years visited Ukraine. The historians rightly call them—"The Ruin of Ukraine."

It doesn't mean that there were no able, brave men in Ukraine who could not have continued with the work of Khmelnitsky. There were many who fought, and schemed, and gave their lives up to make Ukraine independent, but Ukraine had too many enemies, both within and without.

There was Brukhovetsky, who was anything but a good hetman, and there was George Khmelnitsky, who was weak and incapable. But there was also Hetman Peter Doroshenko, as great a man as ever lived. He was capable and energetic, a great patriot and a conscientious worker. He wanted to organize all Ukraine into one large independent state. He fought hard and well to the very end, but his plans failed. The people called him "the Sunshine of the Ruin," for in spite of the desolation and the despair all around, he dreamed and planned for a great and bright future for Ukraine. He was exiled by the Russians to northern Russia and there he died.

And there was Ivan Sirko, a fine and brave Zaporozhets, who all his life fought gloriously for his country.

And Hetman Ivan Sameylovitch who was hetman for ten years, after Doroshenko was exiled. During his office as hetman, Russia and Poland confirmed the division of Ukrainian lands between themselves. They had divided them in the year 1667, at Andrusiv, and now in 1686, at Moscow they put their O. K. on it. Sameylovitch was greatly provoked by this. The

Russians wanted to get rid of him so they sent him to Siberia, where several years later he died. Russia "advised" the starshina to choose another man. His name was Ivan Mazeppa.

Ivan Mazeppa

Ivan Mazeppa is one of the most interesting of the Ukrainian hetmans. Poets and writers have written about him, for his life was filled with exciting adventures. The Ukrainian historian tells us that he came from a long line of Ukrainian patriots. His father and grandfather had fought in many wars in defense of their country. In his youth Mazeppa received a good education; he was even sent abroad to study. For five years he served in the Ukrainian army when Doroshenko was hetman, and later he joined Sameylovitch. In 1687, Ivan Mazeppa became hetman of Ukraine—of the Ukraine on the left bank of the Dnipro, the part under Russia.

The Russian rulers were very much pleased with the choice of Mazeppa for hetman. They thought that at last here was someone who would never dream of a free Ukraine. They thought that Mazeppa was just the man for them to deal with. So they took away from our people some more of the rights that Ukraine had been guaranteed by the treaty of Pereyaslav. They decreed that Ukrainians and Russians should intermarry so that in time there would be no separate Ukrainian nation. There would be only Russians. And they ordered that the Ukrainians should go and dig ditches and canals in northenr Russia, and help build the city of Petersburg. No wonder that people said that Petersburg was built on the bones of Ukrainian peasants, for many of them never lived to return to their country.

Tsar Peter the Great, who was ruler of Russia at that time, wanted to make his country modern and civilized, so he "imported" Ukrainian teachers, writers, and artists to work in Moscow. I recall reading once that when he was building up Russia "he had to draw his staff of assistants almost wholly from Ukraine." This proves that culturally Ukraine was on a much higher scale than Russia. And indeed she was!

When Mazeppa became hetman he became very much interested in education, art, and literature. He built schools, put up new churches, encouraged men to write. He was interested in original designs in architecture and ornamentation. He was

anxious to bring to Ukraine everything that was fine and beautiful. But unfortunately not all Ukrainians profited by this interest in art and education. The privileged people, the city people, the starshina—they had it pretty nice under Mazeppa. The village people, however, were not very well off. They were getting poorer each day. They were losing the rights that Khmelnitsky had gained for them and for which they had fought together with the great hetman. But now not only did the Russian boyars oppress them, but even some of the Ukrainians were getting high-toned and "bossy." They expected the village folk to work for them as the Polish nobles wanted them to do. Naturally, the Ukrainian peasants could not be overjoyed when a new church or a new school was built in Kiev, if they themselves had nothing. Hetman Mazeppa, even though he loved Ukraine and fought for her, and even though he encouraged everything that was fine and beautiful, did not do much to make the life of the village people happier. It wasn't long before the hetman found out that he was mistaken in neglecting the welfare of the peasants, and that if he had considered them, things might have taken a different turn.

Even though outwardly Hetman Mazeppa obeyed the Moscow ruler, in his heart he dreamed of driving all Russian boyars out of Ukraine and gaining for his country the right to rule herself. He was waiting for an opportunity to do so. In the year 1708 Tsar Peter of Russia was carrying on a war with King Charles of Sweden, and Mazeppa, together with many Ukrainians, thought that here was a chance to rid Ukraine of the Russian rule. He decided to join the Swedish king and to war against Russia. The Ukrainians recalled that Hetman Khmelnitsky had thought of Sweden as an ally.

One day Hetman Mazeppa spoke to his men: "Brothers! Our day has come. Let us take advantage of this opportunity —let us repay the Muscovites for all the inhuman sufferings and the deceits we suffered at their hands. The time has come to cast off the hateful yoke of bondage, and to make Ukraine a free land, independent of everybody!"

And to the Zaporozhtsi, who agreed to join Mazeppa in the war for independence, our hetman said: "I thank you, Zaporozhtsi, for your trust in me.— — —When I decided to join the King of Sweden, I did not do it because of any benefits that I might gain, but because I love my country."

However, Hetman Mazeppa's hopes and plans to make Ukraine independent—failed. He was not supported by all Ukrainians. The peasants did not answer his call as they had in 1648, when Khmelnitsky was hetman. At Poltava, in the year 1709, the Russians defeated Charles and the Swedish army,

Ivan Mazeppa

and they destroyed the Sitch and Baturin, the hetman's capital. Mazeppa was pronounced traitor to Russia.

King Charles and Mazeppa managed to escape to Turkey, where the hetman, who was now an ill and aged man, soon died.

And so, Helen and Peter, one more attempt to make Ukraine an independent country failed. The Russian tsar forgot some more of those promises that Russia made in 1654. He made up

his mind to destroy the spirit of freedom in Ukraine altogether. He abolished the title of Hetman, and sent Russian officers to govern Ukraine. They formed what was called—"the Little-Russian Board of Administrators." Even the name "Ukraine" was not used.

After the death of Peter the Great, the Russian tsars allowed the Ukrainians to choose two more hetmans. The last one was chosen in 1750. But this privilege meant nothing, for the Russians saw to it that only men who were servile and obedient should be chosen.

In 1764, a little more than a hundred years after the treaty of Pereyaslav, the Russian Empress Catherine abolished the title of Hetman altogether, for all time. Before long all the rights of the Ukrainians were suppressed. The peasants, who had been free in the days of Khmelnitsky, were turned into serfs by the order of Catherine in 1783. Those Ukrainians who wanted to do something in behalf of their people, the Russian government sent into prison. Only in the Zaporozhe there remained a little of that freedom for which the Cossacks fought so valiantly. The Empress of Russia put an end even to this. In 1775 the Sitch was abolished. There was no more Sitch! No place where Ukrainians could escape when life became unbearable. Some of the Zaporozhtsi refused to submit to the Russians. They fled to Turkey and later settled in Kuban, where their descendants live today.

After Sitch was destroyed, all the young men of Ukraine were forced to serve in the Russian army. Everything that reminded the Ukrainians of the old democratic rule of the Cossacks was abolished. Ukraine was divided into provinces, and the tsars were determined to make of Ukraine and Russia one country, one nation, one people.

It seemed, Peter and Helen, that the end for Ukraine had come. Russia had managed to swallow up the country, the Ukraine on the left bank of the Dnipro river.

The Haidamaki

But what was going on in the Ukraine under Poland? You recall that in 1667 at Andrusiv, Ukraine was divided between Russia and Poland. What was going on in Galicia, Volhynia, Podolia, while Mazeppa and the Zaporozhtsi were fighting with Russia?

In the Ukraine under Poland, or in the Ukraine of the right bank of Dnipro as some called it, conditions were no better than in Russia. Only instead of being forced to obey the Russian tsar and the boyars, the Ukrainians were obliged to kow-tow to the Polish king and the Polish nobles. They recalled the freedom of the Cossacks, and several times tried to regain the rights that they were entitled to. These rebels, these Ukrainian fighters were called the "haidamaki." Perhaps you have heard the song:

"We are haidamaki,
We are equal all!
We hate and despite
The yoke of Polish rule!"

At one time it seemed that the Ukrainians would succeed in regaining for themselves the freedom of Khmelnitsky's days. In 1750 and 1768, all Ukrainians in the Ukraine of the right bank joined in a rebellion against the nobles. The leaders of this rebellion were Ivan Gonta and Maksim Zalizniak. The Polish government, fearful that they might be victorious, sent appeals to the Russian Empress Catherine for aid. To the Russians any movement for independence among the Ukrainians was a nightmare, so Catherine used treachery, brought help to the Poles, and the rebellion of the haidamaki was suppressed. Ivan Gonta and Maksim Zalizniak were captured and tortured in a fiendish manner. The Poles excused themselves by saying that the haidamaki had been very cruel to the Polish nobles.

Eyewitnesses say that when Gonta was being tortured —his skin was cut into strips and pulled off—he smiled and said: "They said that it would hurt, but it doesn't hurt a bit!"

Fearless and strong was Ivan Gonta! He knew that he was in the right, and no amount of suffering could make him give up the cause for which he fought!

The Ukrainians did not regain their freedom, but it wasn't long before Poland, the haughty, overbearing Poland lost her independence too. The selfish rule of the nobles and the onslaught of Cossack rebellions brought about the downfall of the country. Poland tried to swallow part of Ukraine. In the end other countries decided to gobble her up instead. In 1772 and later in 1793 Poland was divided. Russia, Austria, Prussia

—each took a slice of Polish territory. There was no Poland!

How did the Ukrainians fare in this division? Ukraine was now divided between Russia and Austria. Most of the territory that had been under Polish rule was added to the Ukrainian lands in Russia, while Galicia and Bukovina came under the rule of Austria. And this division lasted until the World War of 1914.

But let us go on with the story, Helen and Peter, and see what happened next.

Seventeenth Century Map of Ukraine

CHAPTER VI

UNDER RUSSIA AND AUSTRIA

"There is no Ukraine"

After the Russian tsars had succeeded in making Ukraine a part of Russia, they said: "There is no Ukraine! There is no Ukrainian nation!" Before long histories were written in which there was no mention of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. Instead, Russian historians spoke of Little Russia, Little Russians. And the Russian patriots said: "What is the difference between a Russian and a Little Russian? They're one and the same!" Even some Ukrainians began singing the same song: "It doesn't matter. What's the difference?" Sometimes it seemed that it was all a dream, an exaggerated fantasy—Khmelnitsky, the Cossacks, the Sitch, Mazeppa!

Yes, children, so it seemed. In the cities most Ukrainians spoke Russian, wrote in the Russian language, taught in Russian schools, worked for the Russian government. And the Ukrainians in Austria, under the influence of the Poles,—many of them spoke Polish, used the Polish language in writing, and forgot that their forefathers had been Ukrainians.

But—what was going on in the villages? Were those millions becoming Russian or Polish also? Were they forsaking their language, their traditions? Were they forgetting the days "when all men were equal?" Not on your life! Many of the city people might have forgotten that there had been a free Ukraine, but to the peasants—Khmelnitsky, Doroshenko, the Zaporozhe were real. They continued speaking in the Ukrainian. They told and retold their children the stories of the brave men who fought for their country. And even though not a single Ukrainian school was allowed in Ukraine for many, many years, at home the fathers and mothers taught their children the ways of their forefathers, the songs of Ukraine, the tales of Ukraine. Of course they could not teach them to read and to write, for they themselves didn't know how. But they taught them one very important thing—that a Ukrainian

was different from the Russian, and that he was different from the Pole. And that theirs should be the land and freedom which the enemy had taken away from their forefathers by force.

The Renaissance in Ukraine

In time many Ukrainians who had the opportunity to study began to wonder whether something was not wrong somewhere. They said: "The Ukrainian language is beautiful. Our people have age-old traditions and customs. Our history speaks of the heroic deeds of men who fought for a free and independent Ukraine. Our folk-songs and folk-dances equal the finest folk-songs and folk-dances in the world." They wondered: "Why should we fold our hands and give up? Don't we deserve something better than the Russians and the Poles can give us?"

Ivan Kotliarevsky

But naturally, by hoping, and wondering, and wishing, and dreaming alone, nothing was ever accomplished. The Ukrainians set to work. It was a long up-hill struggle, and we're still at it, Helen and Peter. Perhaps it will take some time before we reach the top, but there is no doubt in our minds that we shall reach it.

And how did the Ukrainians begin their work? They became interested in everything that pertained to Ukraine. They began to write in the Ukrainian language—folk-lore, verses, songs, novels,—even though in school they had been taught in the Russian language. In 1798 a book was printed. It was called the "Aeneid," and it was written in the language which all Ukrainians spoke. Before 1798 books in Ukraine were written in a sort of mixed Ukrainian and Church-Slavonic, with a dash of Russian or Polish for a change. It was different

from the language the people used, and so when Ivan Kotliarevsky wrote his parody of the "Aeneid," there was great rejoicing among the people. The book was written so well, so cleverly that people read it over and over again. In it Kotliarevsky described the life in Ukraine, the Sitch, the Zaporozhtsi. By using the pure Ukrainian language, the writer showed that it was beautiful, rich and varied in vocabulary, and that it was suited as a medium in literature. Kotliarevsky is rightly called the father of Ukrainian literature.

In the year 1818, the first Ukrainian grammar was written. Writers appeared: Artemovsky—a poet, Kvitka—a novelist, Hrebinka—a compiler of folk-tales, and many, many others.

Yes, Peter and Helen, the Ukrainians had awakened. Once again they gathered up their pick and shovel, pen and pencil —and began clearing the way for others to follow.

And then like a gift from heaven, a child was born into a Ukrainian peasant hut. In poverty and serfdom he came into the world. A fairy godmother had waved her wand o'er him when he was born. And she murmured those words:

"I bestow upon you the gift of the gods. Go, my son, and may your tears and your suffering guide your people in their search for truth. And may your works bring light and joy to the millions who are grief-stricken and in sorrow."

This child was—Taras Shevtchenko.

Perhaps there are fairy godmothers. Who knows?

The Magic Carpet Again

"But here I am, Helen and Peter, talking and talking, and not giving you a chance to say a word. And Helen has such a woebegone expression. What is it, my dear?"

"Oh, nothing much, Ukrainka. Only—well—do you think it will be long before the Ukrainians become free, before they get to the top? Will it take a long time? They fought so hard for their freedom, and so many died for their country. Ah—gee—it's queer people can't see things straight. Why should one nation be bossed by another? Why don't Poland and Russia let Ukraine be free? Why should people want to have everything they can get hold of? I should think all the nations would get together and sort of think things out and decide what is right. Don't you, Ukrainka? But I suppose I'm just a kid and don't understand anything."

"I wish that I could ansver you, Helen. It does seem a mix-up this world of ours, doesn't it? But people are putting their heads together and thinking things out, and when you two grow up, the world, let us hope, will be a better place to live in. And 200-300 years from now, people will perhaps wonder why one nation should have wanted to oppress another nation, and why there should have been wars and poverty and breadlines."

Nicholas Kostomarov

"Don't be a crepehanger, Helen," said Peter, "why—there's as much chance for Poland and Russia to keep Ukraine down as there is for Mexico to conquer the United States. It can't be done. Can it, Ukrainka? But of course, if Ukrainians go around weeping and crying, what can you expect? Khmelnitsky and the Cossacks didn't weep. You bet your life they didn't!"

"Ah well, Peter, you mustn't be hard on your sister. There's a great deal of truth in what she says. And nations ought to settle their affairs peacefully."

"But gee, Ukrainka, Poland won't give us our lands back, and Russia won't either. Now will they?" Peter insisted.

"It doesn't look like it, does it?"

"And Ukrainians want to be free and independent, don't they?" Peter insisted.

"Indeed, they do, Peter," I said.

"Well there you are!" Peter exclaimed triumphantly. "The Ukrainians have to fight for their freedom just like the Cossacks did, and fight until they make their country free and

independent like the United States. And when I grow up I'll be in that fight!"

"That's a pretty big speech, Peter," I smiled.

"You talk that way because you don't understand many things," Helen turned to her brother. "You're just like any boy. Fighting! That's all you know! And I think it would be better if you studied your arithmetic and your English. That might mean more to Ukraine than your fighting."

"Ah—gee—there you are, getting personal," Peter objected. "You're the limit! Just listen to what she's saying, Ukrainka!"

"There, there, children," I said, trying to bring peace between my young friends.

"Well—Ukrainka—who is right?" Peter demanded.

"Perhaps you're both right, Peter. But—here's our Magic Carpet, awaiting our bidding—to take us for a glimpse of Ukraine. We haven't been there since Khmelnitsky's times, you know," I said to the children.

"What year is this?" asked Peter.

"Oh—it's the end of the 18th century, Peter. Choose your own year, son. It's the year when many Ukrainians had forgotten that there had been a free democratic Ukraine. It's the year when the Ukrainian peasant— But why tell you about it? Here we are in Ukraine."

The Magic Carpet was sailing over a village in the province of Ukraine. It was still very early in the morning. Few people could be seen on the road. Here and there a dog barked, a rooster crowed, offering greetings to the sun which had just peered forth in all his glory from beyond the hills.

"Ukrainka," Helen whispered, "let's stop here for a minute. There's somebody in that cottage—crying—over there—see," she said, pointing to a peasant hut below.

The Magic Carpet brought us down near the hut so that we were able to look in through the window. A woman was sitting on a bench, holding a child in her arms. Tears ran down her cheeks. Over and over she repeated:

"I won't go! I can't go. If they kill me, I won't go!"

"Come, Anna, give me that child. I tell you, the master said you have to go to the fields today," a man was pleading with her.

"Let them come, let them drag me," the woman sobbed. "My boy—he is ill. Stephen, I can't leave him. I can't!"

"Don't I know it?" the man spoke bitterly. "But they'll beat you like they did Nastia when her child was sick and she couldn't go to work."

"Oh—Ukrainka," Helen whispered to me, "what does this mean?"

"Come, let us go, children," I said.

"But, Ukrainka, why should they beat a woman when her child is sick? Of course she can't go to work."

"Why, Helen and Peter? Because those people are serfs, children. They are the property of the landowner. They have to work for him, and they have to obey his every whim."

"Will they really force the poor woman to go to work?" asked Helen. "Oh—it's terrible!"

"But—look here. What's this?"

A crowd had gathered at the entrance of another peasant hut. As the Magic Carpet brought us near the scene, we heard a woman's voice:

"Why must you go? Why must they take you away from me? And we—married but a month. Darling Ivan—don't go! Oh my God!"

"What happened?" asked Peter.

"Hush—let's hear what the people are saying," I turned to the children.

"Yes, that's the way," a young peasant was saying to his neighbor. "They treat us like dogs! They separate husband and wife, child and mother, and we have to obey their every whim. God! Will there ever be justice! All we get is work,—work from morning until night."

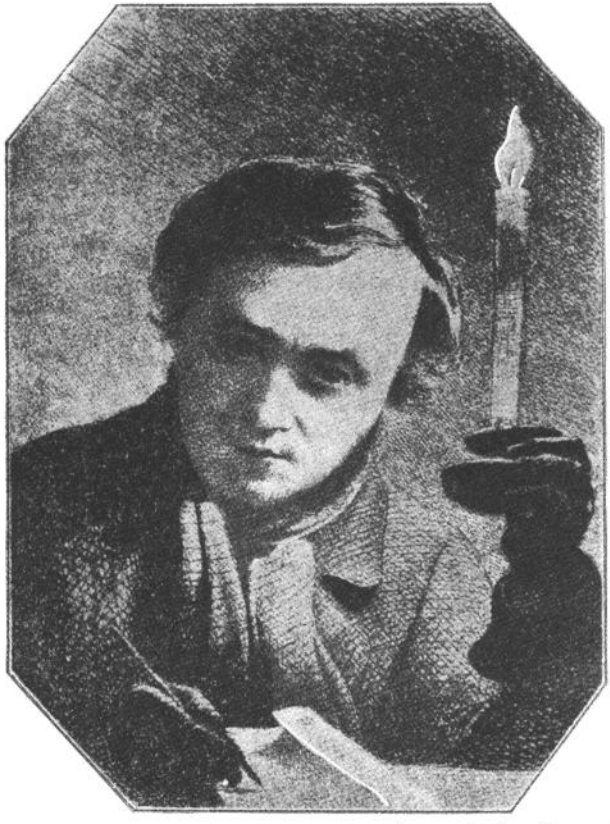
"Shut up, you fool!" an old man warned him. "There's the cursed Muscovite in back of you. You'll land where young Dmitro landed if you don't watch out."

"But, Ukrainka, what does this mean? Why is the woman crying? Where are they taking her husband Ivan?" asked Helen.

"The landlord is probably taking him to the city as a servant. What does he care about the wife's tears, or Ivan's feelings. Yes, Helen and Peter, not a very pretty picture, is it? But let us get away. Let us leave Ukraine when one man was master of another, and let us go on with the story."

Taras Shevtchenko

Taras Shevtchenko was born in the village of Morintsi, on March 9, 1814. His father was a peasant, a serf in the service of a man by the name of Engelhardt. Sad was the life of the little peasant boy. Often there was nothing to eat and little to wear. When our poet was still a child his father and mother died. People say that when the father was dying he left the few things that he owned to various members of the family. And to Taras he said: "To my son Taras I give nothing. He



Taras Shevtchenko (from a portrait made by himself)

will be no common man. Either he will be something very good or else a great rascal. To him the patrimony will mean nothing."

Now that Taras was left an orphan, his life was miserable indeed. The only joy he had was a book, a pencil, a piece of paper—if he were lucky enough to get them. He spent hours

drawing on bits of paper everything that he took a fancy to. And at the same time, his young mind was always busy reasoning things out, asking questions about the whys and wherefores of everyday life. There is a story about Taras—when he was four or five years old—which proves that the little boy was imaginative and wanted to find things out for himself. You remember, children, how he climbed a hill one day because he had a vague suspicion that there were great, big pillars on top of it holding up the sky? You see—he couldn't understand how the heavens could hang over us without something supporting them. And so he went in search of gigantic pillars! Poor little Taras! He didn't find them and I'm afraid that he even cried a bit, even though "Cossacks" were not supposed to cry.

When Taras became somewhat older, his master, the landowner Engelhardt, decided to take him to the city as a valet. Seeing how well the lad could draw, he sent him to a school of painting in St. Petersburg. And then Lady Luck smiled at the Ukrainian serf-boy. Some prominent artists and writers saw Shevtchenko's paintings; they agreed that he possessed great talent. However, they knew that as a serf Shevtchenko could not advance very much in his art. They decided to buy the young artist's freedom. They paid Engelhardt 2,500 rubles, and Shevtchenko became a free man. He was 24 years old at the time.

Shevtchenko entered the Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg, but at the same that he was studying painting, the young artist was secretly writing poetry. As he himself expressed it: "Another Muse whispered in my ear."

In 1840, the first book written by Taras Shevtchenko appeared. This was a volume of poems called the "Kobzar." There was so much beauty, such charm and simplicity in those poems that Ukrainians everywhere rejoiced at their appearance. Foreign critics too wondered and marvelled at them. Many Russians regretted that Shevtchenko did not write in the Russian language.

But what did our poet write about? What did he speak of in his "Kobzar"? He revealed to the Ukrainian people the glorious past of their country. He urged them to work and to study, and he pointed out to them the road that they should follow in the future. Knowing the cruelty and bitterness of

serfdom, he denounced the inequality that existed among men. He spoke of a Ukraine where there would be "no servants and no masters." Shevtchenko had been poor and motherless for many years; with pity in his heart he spoke in behalf of those who had but little in this world. Boldly and fearlessly he attacked all who took advantage of people's weaknesses and their poverty.

Of course the Russian government did not like the idea of this young poet writing about the equality of men and the abolishment of serfdom. "Why—why—it might set people thinking and dreaming," the officials said. "And where would we be?" they thought. Yes—they decided—the Ukrainian was a dangerous man.

Shevtchenko had graduated from the Academy of Arts and came to live in Kiev among his own people. There he joined a secret society, the Brotherhood of Cyril and Methodey, the aims of which were the abolishment of serfdom, the enlightenment of the people, and the friendly union of all Slavs. Shevtchenko continued writing, and his beautiful poems spread far and wide among the Ukrainians.

The Russian government was watchfully waiting for an opportunity to put an end to the "Brotherhood" and to Shevtchenko's writing. In 1847, nine years after Shevtchenko's freedom was bought, the poet was arrested and sent into exile. He was sent far away from his home, his friends, his beloved Ukraine! He who wrote verses "which might set people dreaming," was forbidden to write. And not only to write, but also to paint!

For ten years Taras Shevtchenko was denied his freedom. In 1857, tsar Alexander II allowed him to return and to live in Petersburg. However, it was too late! Shevtchenko was an ill man now. Four years later the greatest poet of Ukraine died.

Such has been the life of Taras Shevtchenko. If he had wished, Helen and Peter, he might have led a safe and comfortable life. He might have married and had children, and bought a house, a horse and carriage, and he might have become a prosperous man. And even if he saw that there was injustice in Russia, and that the Ukrainians suffered, he might have said—"Well—what can I do? I can't be bothered!" But he didn't! He gave up his comfort and sacrificed his life, because he knew that he was working in behalf of those who

are poor and forsaken. His dream was a Ukraine where all men would be equal, a free Ukraine—which would exist peaceably, side by side with a democratic Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia—at peace with the world.

Very few people are capable of sacrificing themselves for a cause which is bigger than their own personal happiness. Taras Shevtchenko was one of the few.

The Decree of 1876

When our poet was arrested in 1847, other prominent Ukrainians were arrested also. The Russian government grew afraid. "What is this going on?" it said. "Those peasants, thinking of a Ukraine, a Ukraine without a tsar?! Kill them out right, shoot them out right, forbid all books printed in the Ukrainian!" And so forth, and so forth. One decree followed another.

Marko Vovtchok
(Maria Markovitch)

And then a day came when the government realized that things could not go on as they had been going for these many years. In 1861, serfdom was abolished in Russia. No man could own another man as though he were a piece of furniture or a bit of property. It was a happy moment in the life of the Russian peasant and in the life of the Ukrainians.

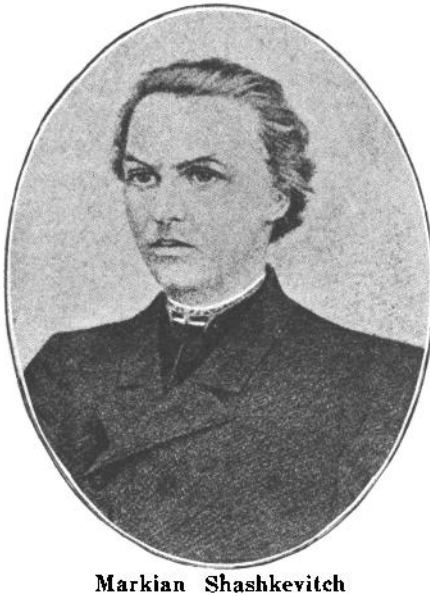
For a while our people were allowed a certain decree of freedom. Men and women—Nicholas Kostomarov, Panko Kulish, Marko Vovtchok—and many others continued with their writing in Ukrainian. But it wasn't long before another decree was issued against the Ukrainians. In 1876 the tsar ordered that no Ukrainian books, with the exception of poems and stories be published in Russia. And none were allowed to be brought into Ukraine from other countries. In addition no books for children were allowed in the Ukrainian language. Many of our people were exiled. For a time even Ukrainian songs and plays were forbidden on the stage.

For thirty years this decree lasted in the Ukraine under Russia.

In East Galicia

But let us see what happened to those Ukrainians who were living now under Austria. You recall, Helen and Peter, that when Poland fell, that part which was inhabited by the Ukrainians, was divided between Russia and Austria. East Galicia, the birthplace of your father and mother, came under the rule of Austria.

The Polish nobles continued being the lords and masters of the Ukrainians as in the days gone by. The land and the peasants were considered to be their property, and it wasn't until 1848 that serfdom was abolished in Austria. Nevertheless the Ukrainians in East Galilcia had a certain amount of freedom of which their brothers in Russia could hardly dream. They had their own grammar schools and several high schools (gymnasia). They were allowed to lecture in Ukrainian at the University of Lviv. Books and newspapers could be published in the Ukrainian language. Various patriotic organizations were permitted. Of course the Poles would have liked to put a stop to this, but the Austrian government didn't care to have the Poles too powerful. And so the Ukrainians had at least a semblance of freedom in East Galicia.



Markian Shashkevitch

At the same time that Kotliarevsky, Shevtchenko, Kostomariv and others were writing in the Ukraine under Russia, men like Shashkevitch, Holovatsky, were reviving the Ukrainian language and literature in Galicia. With the appearance of Ivan Franko, the greatest writer after Shevtchenko, our people in East Galicia were able to advance boldly and bravely, side by side with the Ukrainians across the Dnipro river.

Ivan Franko

Ivan Franko was born in a village of East Galicia. His father was a peasant, a blacksmith. He well knew the value of a schooling, so he sent his son to the city to a gymnasium (high school). In spite of the fact that the lot of a peasant

Ivan Franko

lad in a city was not an easy one, Franko passed through the gymnasium one of the first in his class.

After he had finished high school, Franko entered the University of Lemberg. When he was 18 years old, his first poem was published, and from that time on—for forty years —the poet wrote and worked in behalf of his people. Because

of his political activities and his Ukrainianism, the Poles persecuted Franko on every occasion. Three times during his life he was imprisoned, but each time he came out, determined more than ever to carry on with the work that he had begun.

Ivan Franko was a poet, a novelist, a short story writer. He translated from foreign literature into Ukrainian, wrote stories for children, produced pamphlets on various political and historical subjects. At the same time he found time to take a very active part in the political life of his people.

Franko, like Shevtchenko, dreamed of a Ukraine "without master, without slave," a Ukraine where all people would be able to share in the good things of life, and not a country where some would have too much and others would have barely enough. For forty years he worked in behalf of his people. When he died, in the year 1916, all Ukraine mourned his passing away.

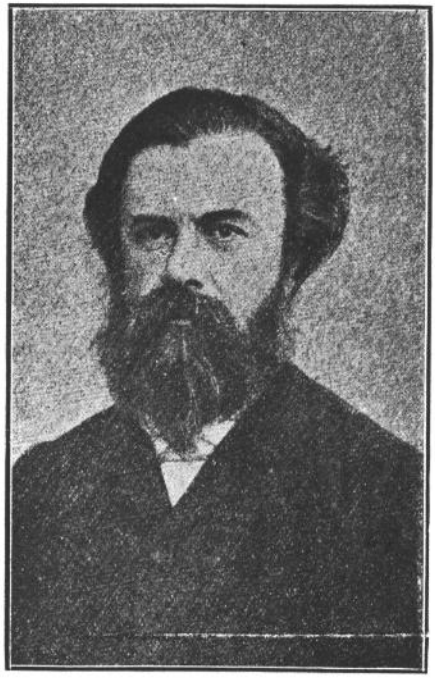
Slowly, Step by Step

When the tsar of Russia issued the decree against the Ukrainians, in the year 1876, many of our people emigrated to East Galicia. Michael Hrushevsky, the historian, Michael Drahomanow, the scholar, and many others left Kiev and settled in Lviv. Drahomanow was not allowed to remain long in East Galicia. The Austrian authorities objected to his liberal, democratic views, and he was obliged to go and live in a foreign country. He settled in Geneva, Switzerland, where he edited a paper "Hromada," wrote books, and contributed extensively to Ukrainian as well as foreign periodicals. Drahomanow is known as one of the first to bring the cause of his people to the attention of western nations. He is also recognized as one of the foremost authorities on Ukrainian folklore. Because of his liberal, democratic ideas and his extensive learning, Drahomanow is considered one of the foremost Ukrainians in our history.

Slowly, step by step, the Ukrainians forged ahead. At times it seemed that they were waging a futile battle. Many despaired and wondered whether the top would ever be reached. At other times a book appeared, an organization was founded, a great man was born—and the pace was quickened. The Russians and Poles often ridiculed our work. And then again they grew afraid. They spread tales about us—that there are no

Ukrainians, that Ukrainianism is merely a fairy-tale, invented by men. Since other nations knew of Ukraine as the Russians and Poles interpreted it, there was much misinformation concerning our history. When I went to school here in the United States, Helen and Peter, few teachers knew anything about Ukraine or the Ukrainians. And our people had so much work to do at home, that few had the time or the means to tell strangers about themselves, about their country.

Yes, children, it was a long uphill struggle. It will continue to be an uphill struggle for some years to come. But surely—the Cossacks, Khmelnitsky, Shevtchenko, Franko—surely they did not live and labor in vain!



Michael Drahomanow

After the revolution of 1905, the Russian government came to its senses for a moment, and permitted Ukrainians to print and publish books and newspapers in their own language. But even so, the Russian officials found round-about ways to censor much that the Ukrainians wrote. Before long Russia was forbidding our people to use the word "Ukraine," "Ukrainians." Even national costumes were not allowed to be worn in some provinces. At the same time it kept an eye on East Galicia and the Ukrainians there.

The Poles too were watchful. They still dreamed of a Poland "from sea to sea," even though that idea once brought about their downfall.

The forty million Ukrainian nation was becoming a force which Russians and Poles feared. "Who knows," they thought, "those Ukrainians might really want the bread basket of Europe

and the oil-fields of East Galicia for themselves. And then where would we be?!"

A Brief Review of Our Story

And so, Helen and Peter, we have come to the year 1914. We have traced the story of the country of our fathers from the early beginnings until the year of the World War. To be sure the story is not thorough or complete. Much has been left out, for as we sit here on the Magic Carpet, we must not forget that your father and mother in New York are wondering what happened to you two. And if we wanted to go into details the story would take four days and not four hours.

We began our story with "today," and we found out that Ukraine in not a free and independent country. We learned that it is divided among Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Rumania. And we learned that our people are unhappy under the rule of foreigners.

Michael Hrushevsky

We turned the pages of history and we found out a little about the early Ukrainians—in the days when there were no radios, no automobiles, no telephones, no airplanes—in the days of long, long ago. We turned some more pages and found out about the princes and the Kiev State. We learned that Ukraine or Rus as it was then called, was one of the great powers in Europe. We had a glimpse of Volodimir and Yaroslav, the two foremost Ukrainian princes. But sad times soon came to Ukraine. The princes quarreled, Ukraine became a prey to enemies, and the glory of Rus came to an end. We found out that the Moscow rulers invaded Kiev in 1169. The Tartars destroyed Kiev in 1240. And in 1340, when the last two provinces—Galicia and Volhynia—lost their independence, Ukraine was no more.

Lithuania, and later Poland became rulers in Ukraine. We found out that Ukrainians were very unhappy under the rule of the Polish nobles. At the same time Tartars continued attacking the lands where Ukrainians lived. With Poles on the one hand and Tartars on the other, our people had no peace. They decided to take matters into their own hands.

We turned some more pages in the book of time, and we learned about the Cossacks and the Sitch. We found out about Khmelnitsky and his wars for the liberation of Ukraine; we learned that Ukraine was a fine country to live in during those few years of freedom that she had gained for herself, that it was ruled in a democratic manner, more so than any other country in Europe at that time.

We came to the year 1654 and the treaty of Pereyaslav —the union with Moscow. We soon found out that the Russian tsars broke all the promises that they made to the Ukrainian people. We continued with the story and we learned of Mazeppa's attempts to free Ukraine. We found out who the "haidamaki" were. Ukraine failed in her attempts to get rid of the rule of the Russian tsars and the Polish nobles. And when Poland lost her independence, Ukraine was divided between Russia and Austria.

Our people continued being in bondage. On the one hand —Russia, on the other hand—the Poles in Austria. Both Russians and Poles said: "there are no Ukrainians." The Ukrainian people suffered persecution and untold miseries.

We learned that out of this darkness a man arose. His name was Taras Shevtchenko. He put new hope into the life of his people. Ukrainians everywhere awakened to his call.

Years passed. Many long, weary years. Slowly, step by step, fighting against all sort of odds, our forefathers made progress. We reached the year 1914, the year of the World War.

And now, Helen and Peter, let us get back to New York on our Magic Carpet, and I shall tell you briefly what happened next.

Taras Shevtchenko

CHAPTER VII

WE END OUR STORY

During and After the World War

When the world went to war in the year 1914, the Ukrainians, divided as they were between Russia and Austria, found themselves in a peculiar situation. Our people living under the rule of Russia were forced to war in behalf of the tsar and the Russian Empire, while those living in Austria were ordered to go to the front in behalf of the emperor and the Austrian government. Russia said to the Ukrainian soldier: "You must go and war with Russia's enemy—Austria and Germany." And Austria, on the other hand, said to the Ukrainians living within her borders: "Go and fight our enemy—Russia and her allies." There on the battlefield they met—the Ukrainian from Kiev and the Ukrainian from Lviv, the Cossack from Kuban and the Sitchovy Strilets from East Galicia, shooting, wounding, killing each other. In behalf of what? Heaven alone knows!

Before many weeks passed, Russian troops invaded Galicia, occupied Lviv, and a veritable reign of terror began for the Ukrainians. Thousands were arrested and sent to Siberia. Ukrainian schools and organizations were closed, books and newspapers were forbidden to be printed. The ukase of 1876 was lenient compared to this attack of 1914.

For several months the Russians remained in East Galicia, and there were many who hoped and prayed that Austrian troops might return and drive out the hated Russians. In fact there were many trusting souls who believed that somehow or other the Austrian Emperor would save the Ukrainians, and that Austria would help Ukraine regain her independence. The emperor's army did come back one day, and it did drive out the Russians, but the Ukrainians gained little by it. The pretty bubble—the Austrian Emperor in the role of Ukrainians' Messiah—soon burst. Wise men learned that other countries are interested in Ukraine only insofar as it is of benefit to them, and that foreign powers are not anxious to battle for a free

and independent Ukraine unless they themselves can profit by it.

Time went by, as time has a habit of doing... Almost three years passed... People everywhere wondered whether the wholesale killing of men would ever end. Weary, hungry, homesick, ill, the soldiers in Russia asked themselves: "What are we fighting for? In behalf of the tsar? In defense of the autocratic Russian government? What can we or our families expect from this war?" You are right, Helen and Peter, the answer was that they could expect nothing! And then, on March 17, in the year 1917, historians tell us—two regiments of Ukrainian soldiers rebelled in St. Petersburg. This was the beginning of one of the most important upheavals in the world's history. The Russian government, the despotic, narrowminded rule of the tsar and his advisers was overthrown, and the people in Russia looked forward to the formation of a government which would be based on the principles of democracy.

The Ukrainians rejoiced at the thought that at last freedom was to be theirs. Not only did they help to overthrow the imperialism of the tsar, but they thought that they had regained for themselves the right to be masters on their own land. Oppressed for centuries, struggling for years with the government's policy of Russification, our people hoped and expected that at last there would be a free and independent Ukraine.

In April 1917, a government was organized in Ukraine—the Central Rada (Council)—with Michael Hrushevsky at the head of it. A National Congress was called in Kiev. Thousands of representatives arrived from the villages, towns, and cities of Ukraine. You may imagine, children, how great was the joy of our people, when they gathered before the statue of Hetman Khmelnitsky, pledging themselves to work in behalf of their country! At first the Ukrainians tried to come to some sort of agreement with the representatives of the new Russian government, but they soon perceived that most Russians still clung to the ancient cry of "one Russia, undivided!" They realized that they could expect but little from Moscow. In January 1918, Eastern Ukraine proclaimed her complete independence.

The new Ukrainian Republic signed a peace treaty with Germany at Brest-Litovsk, and set out to organize the affairs

of the country. However, things did not run smoothly for the Ukrainians. Several months passed by. The government of Central Rada collapsed, and Eastern Ukraine came under the rule of Hetman Paul Skoropadsky. The masses of the people, the majority of Ukrainians did not agree with the hetman's management of affairs. They considered his methods too autocratic, too reactionary. Before many months went by the government of Hetman Skoropadsky failed. Another group of men—the Directory—with Simon Petlura at the head of it, took charge of the affairs of the country.

While all this was going on in Eastern Ukraine, our people in Galicia were awaiting the day when they too might proclaim their independence, when they might unite with the Ukrainians of the Left Bank of Dnipro, and form one state, one nation. Toward the end of the year 1918, the Austrian Empire went to pieces. The Poles, the Czechs, and other nations which composed the large Austrian Empire, proclaimed their independence. And on November first of that year, the Ukrainians of East Galicia established an independent state. In January 1919, they united with the Ukrainians across the Dnipro. A free, united, and independent Ukraine was proclaimed. The Ukrainians, contrary to all sort of gossip that was prevalent in Europe, proved that from the Caucasus to the Carpathians they were one and the same people. And that centuries of Russian and Polish persecution could not annihilate the Ukrainians.

Thousands of our people had died so that there might be a free, independent, democratic Ukraine. Thousands had given their lives so that those who came after them might find life a little finer and better than they themselves had found it! And now that there was an opportunity to realize this ideal, one might repeat as before: "If only we had been left in peace!" But—there was Russia, and there was Poland, our two enemies ever awaiting the opportunity to take advantage of our mistakes, our weaknesses, our lack of preparedness. The "bread basket of Europe", the oil fields of Galicia, the harbors of the Black Sea were too precious to be given back to those to whom they really belonged.

In Russia, the Communist party, the Bolsheviks, had by this time taken complete control of the affairs of the country. Even as in the days of the tsars an independent Ukraine was a menace to the Russian dream of "one Russia, undivided." And

of course, the black soil region of Ukraine always looked good to the Russian government, be it tsarist or bolshevik. Under the guise of bringing salvation to the Ukrainian peasant and workingman, the Bolsheviks fought the Ukrainians. Many were the battles waged, much blood was shed, five to six thousand peasant rebellions were listed against the Bolsheviks in Ukraine. Once again the enemy proved stronger. Once again, Helen and Peter, history repeated itself, and Russia became master in Ukraine. By the year 1921 the Bolsheviks were able to annex Eastern Ukraine to Russia by force of arms. Under the pretty name of the "Ukrainian Soviet Republic", Ukraine has become a part of Russia.

And what was going on in Western Ukraine? What happened in East Galicia after the Ukrainians proclaimed their independence? The Poles who had gained the goodwill and the sympathy of the world during the years when they were under the rule of Russia, Germany, and Austria, employed all sort of means both "diplomatic" and undiplomatic to get East Galicia for themselves. The country became a battle ground between Ukrainians and Poles. Under the false pretense that they were fighting the Bolsheviks, the Poles obtained aid from the allies in the person of general Haller and his army. The Ukrainians were defeated. East Galicia passed into the hands of the Poles. At first it was proposed that Poland should have control of East Galicia for a period of twenty-five years. At the end of that period a general plebiscite was to decide whether the territory should remain with Poland or not. On March 15, 1923, however, events took a fifferent turn. The Conference of Ambassadors decreed that East Galicia, where the Ukrainians have always been in the majority, should be placed under the sovereignty of Poland.

Ukraine was divided once again, Helen and Peter. In the year 1919 Bukovina and Bessarabia, two Ukrainian provinces, were taken by Roumania, while in 1921 Karpatska Rus entered a union with Czechoslovakia. In that same year a treaty was signed by Russia and Poland at Riga, whereby the provinces of Volhynia, Polissie, Kholm, and Pidlashe were to come under the rule of Poland, while Eastern Ukraine was to remain with Soviet Russia.

And this division of the territory of Ukraine among Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Roumania has lasted until today.

"We have come to the end of our story, Helen and Peter. It is a sad ending, for Ukraine is not free today, and the Ukrainian people are unhappy and discontented under the rule of foreign nations. But—every story for girls and boys should have a happy ending, shouldn't it? Do you know what we shall do? Let us forget all about the unhappy times in Ukraine today, and let us skip 20-30-40 years, and take a peek behind the closed doors of the times-to-come. Shall we?"

"Yes—yes, let's do it," Helen and Peter called out.

"And we'll go with you?" asked Peter.

"No, children. This time you will not go with me. I shall go alone. My Magic Carpet and I. But look—Here it is— —"

In-the-Times to Come

It is the year 1950 or 60 or 70. It is a year in the future. A day in the times-to-come. I am sitting in my room, looking over some photographs and letters. One of the letters I read over and over again. And I pick up a photograph and look at it a long, long time. It is a photograph of you, Helen and Peter, the one you gave me last Christmas.

My hands tremble as I adjust my glasses, for the time-to-come has made my eyes weak and my hands shaky. I read the letter once again, I look at your photograph once more. And I search for my Magic Carpet. It is a bit ragged—this Magic Carpet of mine, and a bit faded, but I can still use it. As I sit down upon it, I think of you two.

Away we go—o'er the Atlantic, France, Germany. We come to Ukraine.

It is a long time since I visited it last. Many years had passed. And as I look down from the Magic Carpet, I can hardly believe my eyes. Am I dreaming? Am I seeing things? I take my glasses off and wipe my eyes with a corner of a handkerchief.

It is not a dream! Not any more! The times-to-come have been kind and generous to the country of my birth. No artificial boundaries to divide brother against brother, no strange men dictating to the millions of my countrymen! A free and undivided Ukraine from the Carpathian to the Caucasian mountains!

As I look at the country of my forefathers, I wonder at

the miracle that has happened. Gone are the poverty stricken villages, the half-starved towns and cities! I wander on the Magic Carpet and marvel at the beauty around me. There are the schools—not the puny, ramshackle affairs our enemies permitted us to build, but large buildings, open to the air and sunshine as schools in America have been for many years. And there are the libraries, the theatres, the churches. And playgrounds, and green fields, and woods.

And there are no pinched, wan faces among the people. Gone are the long working hours, the fear of not being able to work. There is no one to say what one should read, what one should write, what one should paint, what one should carve. And there are not men in the country of my fathers who have more than they can use, and men who have not enough to keep body and soul together. For this country is the Ukraine of the times-to-come!

As I gaze down upon the land of my ancestors, I try to find those whom I have known. I come to a large building. There in one of the rooms I find a man bending over some architectural plans. He is worried. There is a wrinkle between his eyes. As he lifts his head—I see—can it be Peter?

"Peter," I call out, "Hello there, son. Do you hear me?"

And you, Peter, smile as though you recalled something.

I call out "Peter" again. But how foolish! Of course you wouldn't hear me.

The Magic Carpet takes me to a school. I am looking for you, Helen. I wish to see you, to talk with you. Ah—there you are! You are teaching children and telling them about America and the many things that you have learned there. I forget myself and call out:

"Helen! My, I'm glad to see you!" And I see you hesitate and stop in the middle of a sentence. A foolish old woman that I am! How could you hear me while I'm on the Magic Carpet. Sadly I leave the room. But as I gaze around me, I become happy once more.

The Magic Carpet makes it's way over hills and mountains, over woods and fields. We come to the Dnipro river. It seems to me that the roaring of his waters is less fierce, and that he chuckles and gurgles as he sings of the Cossacks and the Sitch. He has seen many things—our Father Dnipro! I ask him what he thinks of this new Ukraine. And I listen to his song:

I have seen—
You wish to know
What I have seen?
Some day perhaps
I'll sing and tell you
Of the days when
Tartars came my way.
And of the Cossacks
I shall tell,
The brave and
Gallant men.
They are not dead!
In dark of night
They come to me,
And shout with joy
Ukraine is free!

Khmelnitsky, the Cossacks, Shevtchenko, Franko—their dreams have come true! Their lives have not been lived in vain. A new Ukraine is rebuilt, a free Ukraine—"where there is neither master nor slave."

I feel like shouting with joy, but my voice is weak and shaky. It is getting late. And my Magic Carpet and I make our way o'er Germany, France, and the Atlantic—to my room in New York.

(The End)

..... *Boundaries of territory with Ukrainian majority;*

—·—·—·—·— *State and National Borders.*

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