

LESZEK KIRKIEN

Russia,
Poland

and the

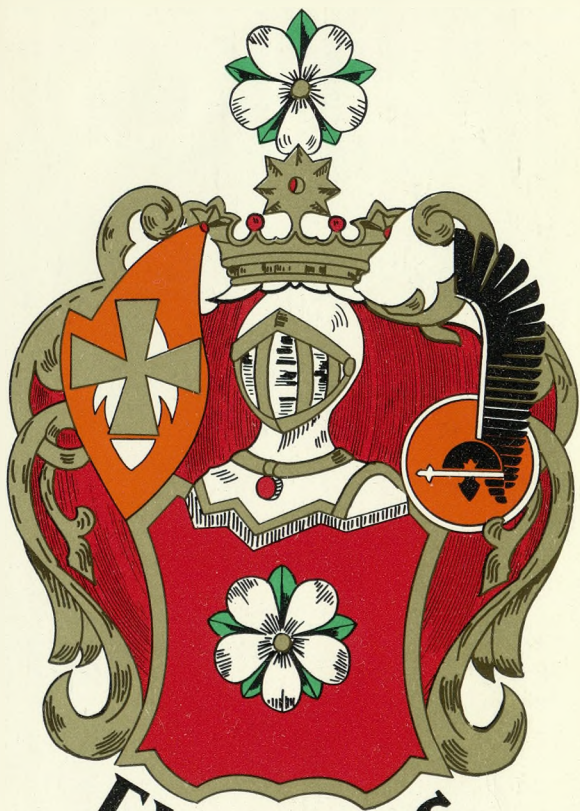
CURZON

LINE



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RUSSIA, POLAND
AND THE
CURZON LINE

By
L. KIRKIEN

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NOTE

LESZEK KIRKIEN, born 1897, is D. iur. et sc.pol. of the University of Lwow.

From 1921 to 1923 he was Assistant Director of the Union of Polish Textile Industries. From 1923 to 1931 he was joint-director and joint-editor in chief of the "Republika" Newspapers Publishers Ltd. in Lodz. He then did research work in Economics for two years on the theory of production. In 1933 he joined the Polish Foreign Ministry and was Press-Attaché at the Polish Embassy in Berlin from 1933 to 1936. From 1936 down to the outbreak of the war in 1939 Dr. Kirkien was Managing Director of "The Transcontinental Press," a news-agency in Warsaw with branches all over Europe.



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INTRODUCTION TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE "Curzon Line" is a catchword for a suggested Polish-Soviet frontier which was proposed to Moscow as an armistice line by the British Government on behalf of the Spa Conference of 1920 at a time when the Red armies were moving on Poland. Diplomatically and legally it makes a rare case. The published text differs substantially from that which was actually drawn up. The Polish Government had no need then to voice its objections, because Soviet Russia at once turned down the proposal.

The proposal is again in the limelight, because on 11th and 17th January 1944 Soviet Russia herself urged it on Poland as a basis for the future territorial settlement.

This, as Mr. Churchill revealed¹ in his House of Commons speech on 15th December 1944, arose directly out of the Teheran Conference of 27th-30th November 1943. In October 1944, when M. Mikolajczyk, then Polish Premier, on his second visit to Moscow, was closeted with Stalin, Churchill and Eden in the Kremlin on this very question, the Soviet Foreign Commissar, M. Molotov, told him that it was no use bargaining about the "Curzon Line" because it had already been adopted at Teheran as the future Polish-Soviet frontier.

The secret arrangements at Teheran explain much of what has happened since. First Mr. Churchill stated in the Commons on 22nd February 1944 that "the British view in 1919 stands expressed in the so-called 'Curzon Line' which attempted to deal, at any rate partially, with the problem."

¹ *Hansard*, Vol. 406, No. 11, col. 1485.

But when the Polish Government stood by the principles of the Atlantic Charter, the British Prime Minister in his speech of 15th December 1944 went further and said plainly that he would "not hesitate to proclaim that the Russians are justly treated, and rightly treated, in being granted the claim they make to the Eastern frontiers along the 'Curzon Line' as described."

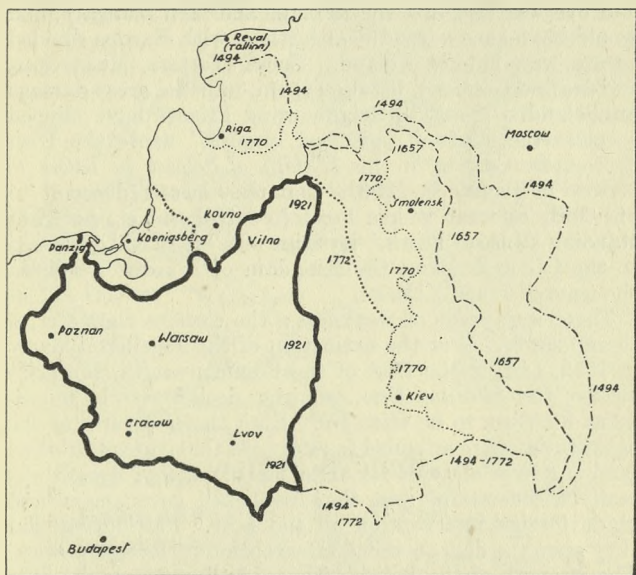
The present book is written to enable the reader to judge for himself how far the resolutions of the Conferences at Teheran and Yalta (Crimea) accord with the ethnical, cultural and economic realities in the disputed areas of Eastern Poland.

NOTE.—In his speech in the Commons on 15th December 1944 Mr. Churchill referred to a "Curzon Line A." The confusion caused by the introduction of such terms as "Curzon Line A" and "Curzon Line B" is discussed in the Appendix.

HISTORICAL REVIEW.

Until a hundred and seventy years ago the central fact in the Great Plain of Europe which stretches from the North Sea to the Urals, was the existence of the Commonwealth of Poland. This, formed mainly by successive voluntary acts of union between Poland and Lithuania in 1385, 1413 and 1569, at its greatest extent stretched from the Baltic in the north almost to the Black Sea in the south, and from within a few miles of the River Oder in the west to within a few miles of Veliki Luki, Smolensk and the River Donetz in the east. In the east, and especially in the south-east, this frontier was a fluctuating thing—the very name *Ukraine* means "frontier-land"—but it fluctuated about the defensive line of the River Dnieper, which was in turn backed by the marshlands of its tributary, the River Pripet.

The Golden Age of Polish history is the sixteenth century. The peak of political power coincided with, in literature and enlightenment, an "Elizabethan Age." Polish learning gave the world Nicolas Copernicus of the University of Cracow. Predominantly Catholic as the country remained throughout the Reformation, Poland



This map shows the Poland of 1921-39, and, in fainter outline, her earlier eastern frontiers, beginning with that of 1494 extending nearly to Moscow, then the successive frontiers until Russian encroachment culminated in the Partitions shown in the three succeeding Maps.

offered freedom of religion as well as freedom of thought to Protestant refugees from all parts of Europe, among them Scots, at a time when wars of religion and intellectual intolerance overclouded the rest of Europe. Some members of the Greek Orthodox Church in the more easterly provinces of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth entered into com-

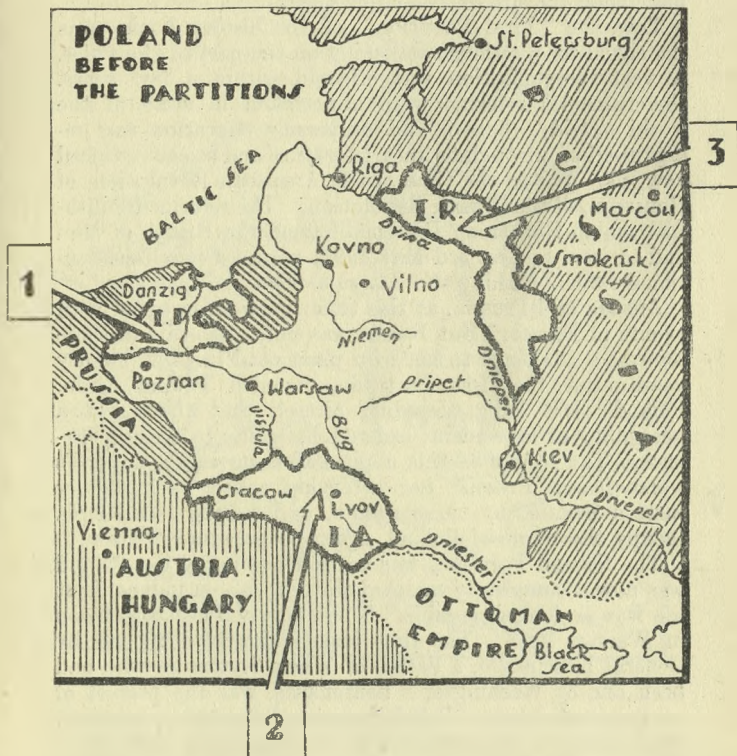
munion with Rome and began the present notable feature of religion in Eastern Galicia, Catholic allegiance with Orthodox rite.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were a time of troubles. The largest and most powerful state in Europe could not but have enemies. It had, moreover, assumed a good deal of Europe's burden of holding up the Turks, who had overwhelmed first the Balkans and then Hungary, and would have gone a good deal further, with Europe divided as she was, but for Poland. Turks, Tartars, Muscovites, Swedes and Germans, between them, inflicted great damage on Poland. ". . . the neighbouring Princes have clipped so close the skirts of this vast empire," wrote the Irish doctor, B. Connor, in his *History of Poland in letters to persons of quality*, in 1698, "that they have reduced it to one-third of what it has heretofore been. Yet, notwithstanding all these losses," he went on, "it is still reckoned to the full as large as the Kingdom of France." This in the time of Louis XIV.

There were seeds of weakness: the elective character of the monarchy, after the extinction of the Jagellon dynasty in 1572, and, in the Diet of the Commonwealth, the principle of the *Liberum Veto*, requiring decisions to be unanimous for them to be effective. Both these features of the constitution were intended to safeguard the rights of subjects (and of groups of them, for under the monarchy, Poland was really a federation), but they weakened government and made foreign intervention all too easy. Particularly did they open the door to veiled intervention by foreign powers. The strength of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was sapped before the body was butchered. By the same methods it was all too easy for foreign powers to check any movement on the part of the more public-spirited of the Polish, Lithuanian, and Ruthenian ruling classes to cut out these causes of weakness by reforming the constitution. On the pretext that Protestants in Poland, or, it might be, members of the Orthodox Church, were thereby endangered, war would be threatened. The elective monarchy in this period first resulted in Poland being caught up in Sweden's ambitions, only to be dragged down in its fall, and then in the succession to the Polish crown being a matter of European

diplomacy. Poland, by this time, therefore, was in no condition to resist threats.

When it served Prussia's and Russia's purposes, Poland's



This map shows the Poland of 1772, *i.e.*, on the eve of the First Partition. Arrows 1, 2, and 3 show respectively the Prussian, Austrian, and Russian shares in the First Partition.

territory was still further reduced, Frederick the Great of Brandenburg-Prussia and Catherine the Great of Russia persuading Maria Theresa of Austria to join them in the task. Though the latter felt the partition would be "the source

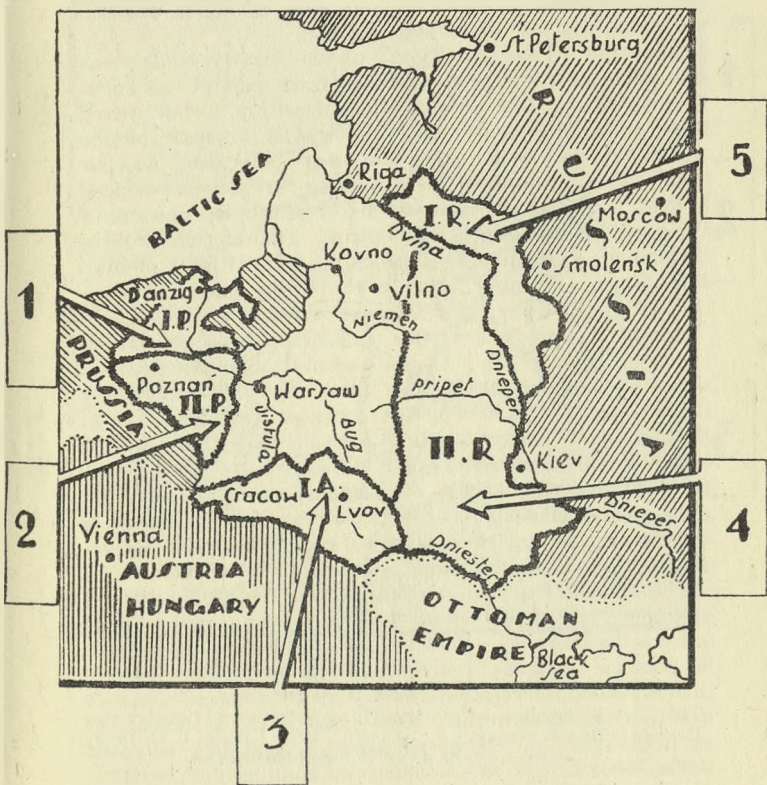
of future political evil," to use her own words, she participated in the design. On this occasion, 1772, Poland lost one-fourth of her territory (though what remained was still more than the size of Poland of 1939).

This, the "First Partition" of the history books, was the signal for a serious awakening on the part of the Poles. A vast reorganisation was effected within a few years. Governmental reforms were undertaken in spite of the world outside. School and university education was reorganised on up-to-date lines, literature and science evinced new life. It was the time of the American Revolution, of Rousseau, of the French Revolution. The reformed Polish-Lithuanian-Ruthenian Diet proclaimed the Rights of Man and Citizen, and on 3rd May 1791, passed a new Constitutional Law abolishing the *Liberum Veto*.

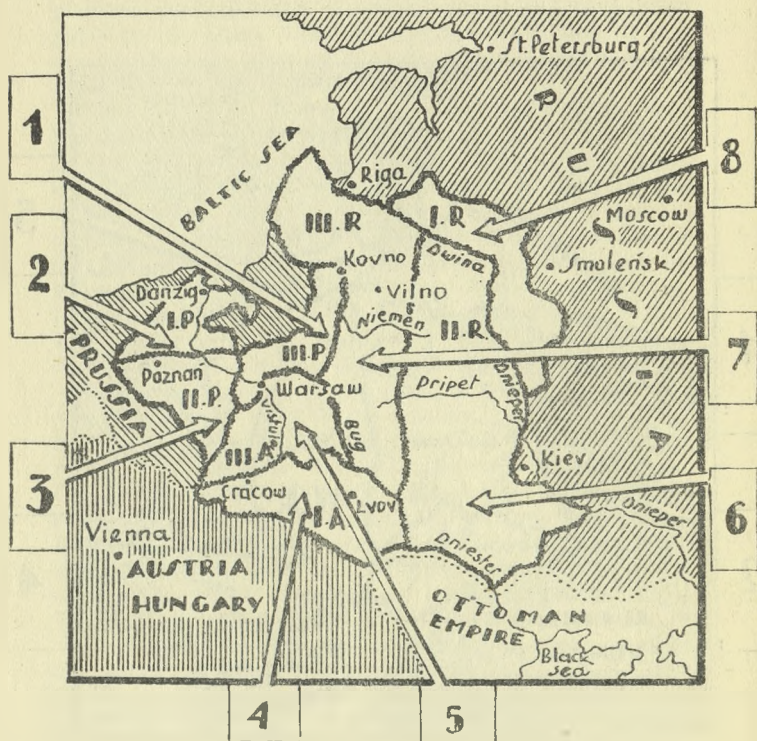
Austria and Prussia, at this time, were preoccupied with events in France. But Russia was not. She saw in these reforms a challenge to her own plans, and in 1792, twenty years after the first Partition, invaded Poland again. Poland's last King, deluding himself that there was a possibility of agreement, ordered his army to cease resistance. The results of this capitulation surpassed anyone's worst fears. Prussia, her attention called back to her eastern frontier by these events, and fearing lest Russia occupy the whole of Poland, again proposed a partition.

The Second Partition was carried out in 1793. Poland was now a completely maimed state, to whom independent life was no longer possible. There was a Russian garrison in Warsaw itself. The first insurrection of 1794 led by General Kosciuszko, a native of White Ruthenia, who had been one of Washington's lieutenants, was the protest of an enslaved nation. Polish peasants fought as volunteers. But resistance was smashed by the combined strength of Russia and Prussia. The epilogue came in November 1794, with the Russian massacre of Warsaw's population.

A year later, 10th October 1795, the Third Partition blotted Poland from the map. In his *History of Europe*, the Warden of New College, Oxford, Professor H. A. L. Fisher, has this sentence on the destruction of the Polish State: "The story is one of the most shameful in the annals of the Continent." Another Englishman, Lord Eversley,



This map shows, on the same background of the Poland of 1772, the Prussian (arrows 1 and 2) and Russian (arrows 4 and 5) gains in the Second as well as in the First Partitions. Austria took no part in the Second Partition (1793).



This map shows how, after the Third Partition (1795) by these Powers (Prussia, arrows 1-3; Austria, 4-5; Russia, 6-8), Poland ceased to exist as an independent State.

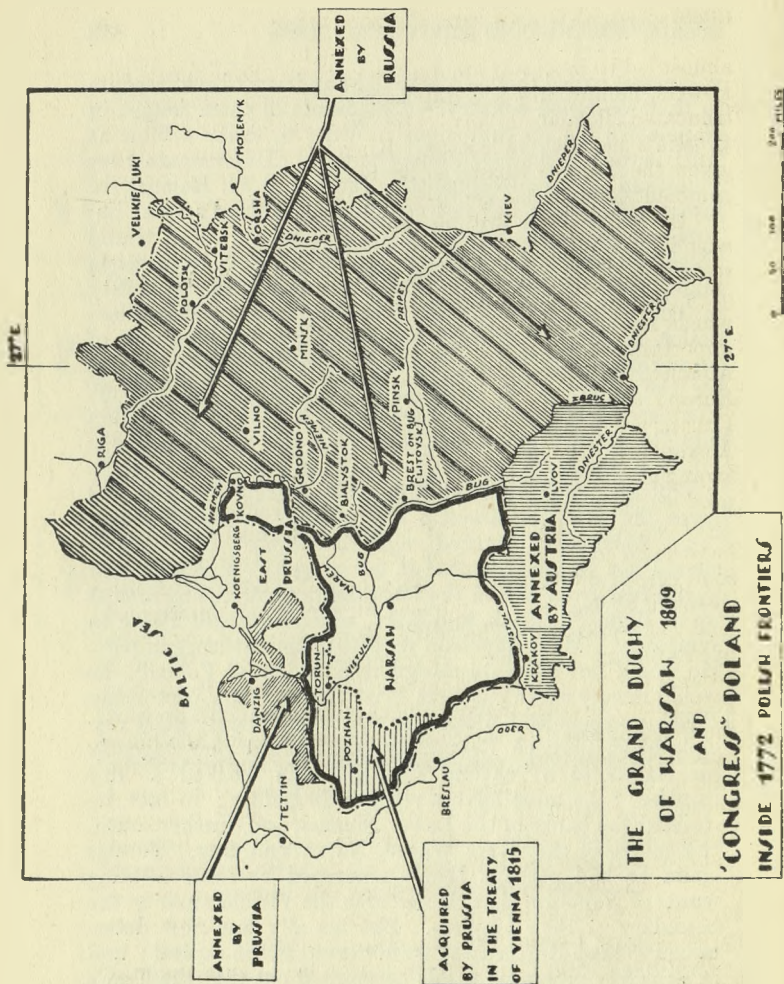
has written: "We may affirm, at the bar of history, that the destruction of the Polish Kingdom, and the partition of its territory, were political crimes of the greatest kind, unequalled in the past of Europe."

Poles, ashamed and grieved, looked around for help, and no help was forthcoming save from Revolutionary France. Then, as now, thousands of Polish, Lithuanian and Ruthenian

volunteers exiled themselves to fight and carry back freedom to their occupied country. Thousands of them fought in Napoleon's Italian campaigns in order to strike a blow at Austria, one of the partitioning powers. Unfortunately for Poles and (as he subsequently admitted at St. Helena) for himself, Napoleon did not comprehend Poland's vital importance in the European balance of power. The Grand Duchy of Warsaw, which he set up in 1807, even when augmented in 1809, was a miserable rump. In the Treaty of Tilsit, Poles were sacrificed by Napoleon to Tsar Alexander, I., his new friend, the enemy of yesterday and of to-morrow. At Tilsit, he discussed with Alexander his plans for the conquest of India and the partition of Turkey. The new friend was to be rewarded with the incorporation into Russia of Finland and with what else was available—Polish territory.

Professor John Holland Rose (*The Life of Napoleon I.*) gives the following account of the negotiations at Tilsit: ". . . Alexander required some assurance that Poland should not be reconstituted in its integrity—a change that would tear from Russia the huge districts stretching almost up to Riga, Smolensk, and Kiev, which were still Polish in sympathy. Here Napoleon reassured him, at least in part. He would not re-create the great Kingdom of Poland; he would merely carve out from Prussia the greater part of her Polish possessions. Alexander was a sufficiently good disciple of the French Revolutionists to plead very cogently his claims to a 'natural frontier.' He disliked a 'dry frontier': he must have a riverine boundary: in fact, he claimed the banks of the Lower Niemen, and, further south, the course of the rivers Wavre, Narew and Bug. To this claim he had perhaps been encouraged by some alluring words of Napoleon that thenceforth the Vistula must be the boundary of their empires. But his ally was now determined to keep Russia away from the old Polish capital; and in strangely prophetic words he pointed out that the Tsar's claims would bring the Russian eagles within sight of Warsaw, which would be too clear a sign that that city was destined to pass under the Russian rule."

When the Napoleonic wars were over, the differences about the Polish question at the Congress of Vienna in 1815



In this map the thick outline shows the Grand Duchy of Warsaw in 1809. The horizontal shading shows the extent by which it was reduced for Prussia's benefit in 1815, after which it becomes known as "Congress" Poland. The other shaded areas show Polish territory annexed by Prussia, Austria and Russia in the Great Partitions (Maps on pp. 9, 11 and 12) which the Vienna Congress, 1815, left with those Powers.

almost led to fresh war among the victors. Eventually, the Powers compromised. Napoleon's "Grand Duchy," a truncated Poland in any case, was further reduced for Prussia's benefit; called the "Kingdom of Poland;" and given the Tsar of Russia as its King. An official British comment later in the century¹ on this transaction was:

"In 1815 Great Britain, Austria, France and Prussia would have preferred, to the arrangement finally made, a restoration of the ancient Kingdom of Poland as it existed prior to the first partition of 1772. . . . The great army which the Emperor Alexander then had in Poland, the important services which Russia had rendered to the Alliance, and, above all, a fear of the renewal of war in Europe combined to make Great Britain, Austria, and Prussia accept the arrangement proposed by the Emperor Alexander, although it was, in their eyes, of the three arrangements in contemplation, the one least likely to produce permanent peace and security in Europe."

"Congress" Poland, as it is known to history, was to have had a constitutional monarchy, but the Tsar Alexander soon ceased to respect the oaths he had taken. His successor, Tsar Nicholas I., pursued an even more determined policy of repression. The year 1830 was a year of revolution by European Liberalism, beginning in France. When it became known in Poland that the Tsar proposed to use the Polish army to crush the movement in France and to prevent the Belgians asserting their national independence, the Poles rose. For nearly a year, the small Polish army fought valiantly against its mammoth opponent, but there could be only one end. It had to succumb. In 1832, Congress Poland was done away with; the land and people declared incorporated into the Russian state, and the rule henceforth was Russian autocracy. Everything was done—in vain—to obliterate Polish national sentiment. There was another revolt against Russian rule in 1863.

Meanwhile Poles elsewhere—in the areas of Prussian and Austrian occupation—were maintaining their national identity. Polish national sentiment, indeed, under tribula-

¹ Earl Russell to the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, 1863, quoted from *State Papers*, Vol. III., by Oakes and Mowat, *Great European Treaties of the Nineteenth Century* (1921), p. 27.

tion, was being stimulated. Adversity combining with the economic and social changes of the century gave it a popular basis it had never had in the days of the old Monarchy. A new social class rooted in the peasantry grew up—an industrial working class which was the backbone of the independence movement at the beginning of the present century, and which is the backbone of Poland to-day. A growing population under adverse political and economical conditions led to a great flow of Polish emigration, especially to the U.S.A., where, by 1914, there were about three million American citizens either born Poles or of Polish descent. This fact helps to explain President Wilson's awareness of Polish sentiment when in the thirteenth of his Fourteen Points of 1918, he called for the reconstitution of independent Poland, with free and secure access to the sea.

THE GENESIS OF THE "CURZON LINE" PROPOSAL.

The thirteenth of President Wilson's Fourteen Points proposed the reconstitution of an independent Polish State which, besides "free and secure access to the sea," should include "territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations." This, as we shall see, must, in any case, have proved to be a little academic and difficult to draw, where the eastern frontier was concerned, but it was to be rendered still more so by an event which had already occurred: the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917, after the original Russian Revolution of the previous March. This was as propagandist as the French Revolution at the outset. M. Stalin himself has written in *Foundations of Leninism* that after the October Revolution their object was "to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat in one country (the Soviet Union) in order to use it as a base for destroying imperialism in all countries." Certainly others besides the Poles were alarmed.

The Treaty of Brest-on-Bug (Litovsk) of 3rd March 1918 had handed over Poland to Austria and Germany. The

Bolshevik declaration of 29th August 1918 that "all agreements and acts of the Russian Empire with Prussia and Austria which refer to partitions of Poland are declared null and void. The Poles' inalienable right to independence and unification is fully recognised" ought to be read remembering that Poland was still under Austro-German occupation. Austrians and Germans, indeed, were still far to the east of Poland, deep in Russian territory. But things were very different before the end of 1918. The German offensive on the western front failed, the Armistice followed in November, the polyglot Austrian Empire rapidly disintegrated, German officers and other ranks were disarmed by civilians, by children even, in the streets of Warsaw. Away in Paris, a peace conference was foregathering. In Poland itself, the secret Polish military organisation, P.O.W., built up during the occupation from the followers of Pilsudski and the Socialists, was the real master of the situation. Pilsudski and Sosnkowski—this latter Commander-in-Chief Polish Forces in succession to General Sikorski—regained Poland from the fortress-prison of Magdeburg, where they had been detained by the Germans for about two years.

Pilsudski, who was given full political and military powers, had to face tremendous difficulties. He was the man on the spot, and had to face forces that the peace conference at Paris could not control. The Germans, who did not want to give up any more Polish territory than they could help, had to be evicted. There was irregular warfare in western Poland, and a large German army still intact in north-eastern Poland. The Czechs, in defiance of an agreement of 5th November 1918, invaded Teshen Silesia on 23rd January 1919. There were counter-forces at work at Paris. It was known from P.O.W. observers in Russia that Lenin, in spite of the civil war between the "Reds" and the "White" (Tsarist) Russians that was still at its peak, was contemplating overrunning Poland as the first step towards carrying the Communist Revolution into Western Europe. As Pilsudski told a representative of the newspaper *Il Secolo* of Milan (issue of 18th February 1919), the war which was finished for the rest of Europe had begun again for his country. Indeed, while in November 1918 the Red

Army was still on the Dnieper, in February 1919 it pushed towards the River Bug. "Militant international Bolshevism urgently required contact with revolutionary Germany, and this could only be won over the body of Poland" (Sir Bernard Pares: *History of Russia*, p. 483).

To meet these dangers, especially the Bolshevik threat, there was a force of only four thousand men,¹ made up from various units, and scarcely enough to maintain order, let alone face invasion. But an army was improvised. Communism in Poland was, and is, negligible. The Polish working class is Socialist, but it is also as fervently Polish. It had grounds for discontent, but it was also extremely happy to be free and, faced with a new threat to that freedom, it regarded its social programme at that moment as of secondary importance.² The nation rallied to Pilsudski.

Help was expected from the Allies. But Britain, France and Italy waited on events. Until they could agree on a policy towards Bolshevik Russia, it suited them very well that Poland should bear the brunt of the hostilities that, despite the Peace Conference, were still being waged in Eastern Europe. It won precious time. The improvised Polish army was, as a matter of fact, pushing the Bolsheviks from the River Bug, step by step, back towards the Pripet Marshes. By 19th April 1919, Novogrodek, Baranovitche and Vilno had been taken, the seizure of Vilno cutting the main line of German supplies from East Prussia for the Red Army. Sinister influences were at work, too, preventing Allied help to Poland. On 9th April 1919 a body styling itself "The Russian Political Conference," headed by M. Sazonov, the former Tsarist Foreign Minister, and claiming to be the representative of "New Russia," submitted a memorandum to M. Clemenceau, the chairman of the Allied Supreme Council, asking to be consulted in the matter of Poland's eastern frontier, and proposed that it should be drawn along the River Bug. This body was really a committee of ex-Tsarist dignitaries, *émigrés* acting as spokesmen in Paris of the Tsarist generals Koltchak and Denikin and the other leaders of the Russian

¹ Figure given by Pilsudski when interviewed by *Kurier Warszawski* (19th December 1918).

² Interview of *Journal de Genève* (28th and 31st May 1919).

“White” armies. It was an unofficial body, but it had excellent connections, and its influence on the statesmen at Paris, still more on the Foreign Offices of the Allied Powers, was far from negligible. *The Times* of 22nd May 1919 greeted M. Sazonov’s arrival in London in an article which gave the substance of the Conference’s proposals. According to this, “responsible Russians acquiesce in the considerations that have prompted the Governments of Great Britain and of the United States to recognise the independence of Finland. They wished Poland well in her new-found liberty. . . . But they feel strongly that the sovereign rights of the Russian State cannot be alienated or impaired save at the discretion of the nation as a whole.” This meant, in other words, that M. Sazonov and his “Conference” meant to put pressure on the British Foreign Office not to satisfy Polish claims to recover the territory which had been annexed by Russia in the Partitions, and above all in the Third Partition of 1795. M. Sazonov offered instead a pledge of “the largest autonomy, both cultural and political,” to the population of these areas. The Powers—Britain, France, Italy, even, while Count Della Torretta was her foreign minister—misjudged the prospects of the Russian “White” Armies and the possibility of a restoration of the Romanoff dynasty was taken seriously. In so far as the Powers had a common policy at all, they put their faith in counter-revolution to avert Bolshevism from themselves. That and indecision explain the failure to render military help to the Poles. In fact, for concessions which a restored Tsarist Russia would have to make in the Middle East, the plan was to compensate her out of Polish territory. On 25th June 1919 the Supreme Allied Council authorised the Polish Government to take measures to “safeguard the integrity of persons and property of peace-loving population in Eastern Galicia (see pp. 49-50) against dangers arising from Bolshevik gangs,” and by 17th July, when the Polish army reached the River Zbrucz, the 1914 Austro-Russian frontier, this had been done. But Article 87 of the Treaty of Versailles (to which Poland was a signatory) had been signed on 28th June 1919, laying down the German-Polish frontier, and reserving to the Powers the definition of Poland’s other frontiers.

Through 1919 Polish arms, unaided, continued to do well, while at Paris Allied policy was marked by division and indecision ; with their hopes still pinned to counter-revolution, the Powers all wished to retain a free hand for dealing with some future non-Bolshevik Russia. To compensate this future Russia for abandoning imperialistic designs on the Balkans, the Dardanelles, Persia, Afghanistan, it would not be wise to commit themselves too soon on the question of the Polish-Russian frontier. At least it would be prudent not to commit themselves beyond the very minimum that could be passed off as a restoration of Poland—the eastern frontier of Napoleon's Grand Duchy and "Congress" Poland. Yet, in view of public opinion and its endorsement of President Wilson's principle of self-determination, it would be necessary to pass this frontier off as also an ethnically just frontier. But it would not do to commit themselves too deeply to this either. Poland, if victorious over the Bolsheviks, might object to the 1809-15 eastern frontier being imposed on her in defiance of her historical position previous to 1772 and in defiance of the ethnic and other realities in the area concerned. It would be safer, therefore, to offer it as a provisional, minimal frontier. Behind this indecision at the Peace Conference there was also division.

In the year 1907 the then head of the Western Department of the British Foreign Office, Sir Eyre Crowe, had drawn up for the British Cabinet a confidential memorandum, in which he defined the aims of British foreign policy. "British policy," he wrote, ". . . must display a direct and positive interest in the independence of small nations." Britain had to consider herself, he went on, as "the natural enemy" of any nation which threatened the independence of smaller nations. The doctrine of the Balance of Power, in his opinion, meant that Great Britain must be "opposed to the political dictatorship of the strongest single state or groups of states at any given time."

The formula of Sir Eyre Crowe was applied at the time of the negotiation of the Treaty of Versailles. France, at the end of hostilities the greatest military power in the world, might achieve hegemony in Europe, especially if (as was quite possible) she drew into alliance with her in eastern Europe the restored Polish State. But it was obviously

more convenient to oppose France indirectly. Defeated Germany must not be over-weakened. ". . . we shall do our best to help the German nation on its feet once again," wrote Mr. Lloyd George on 25th March 1919, in his famous Fontainebleau Memorandum, in which he outlined his proposals for the peace treaty. Poland must not be made too strong. It was Mr. Lloyd George's policy to raise a great Czecho-Slovakia as a counterpoise to Poland in eastern Europe. His treatment of Czech interests at the Peace Conference contrasts strongly with his hostility to the Poles. "He could scarcely give a reason for opposing the Poles and enthusiastically siding with the Czechs," wrote Emil Ludwig of him in his *Leaders of Europe*. Mr. Lloyd George vehemently opposed the restoration to Poland of her historical territories of mixed population on the ground that Poland would have too many non-Poles. On the other hand, he supported Czech claims to territories which were not Czech-speaking, and which had no historic connection with Bohemia, e.g., Carpatho-Ruthenia, whose historical associations were with Hungary and which had neither geographical, economic nor ethnical connection with the Czechs. But large, purely Polish districts in Silesia were left with Germany even without plebiscite. About 1,500,000 Poles were left within Post-Versailles Germany. Mr. Robert Lansing, the American Secretary of State, wrote of Mr. Lloyd George, "When it was shown to him that his argument was based on a false supposition, he changed the supposition but not the argument. The cleverness with which he ignored logic bluffed everybody. In the Council of Four . . . he denied facts, he became sarcastic, he was better in attack, because defence calls for more knowledge. He broke in with sharp questions and coughed loudly when the argument was going against him."

An eminent American journalist whom *The Times* credits with having done "much to secure national unity when the day came for his country to join the battle," Mr. Frank H. Simonds, wrote in *The Times* of 26th April 1919: "As we approach the end of the Paris Conference, it becomes more and more unmistakable that the crowning tragedy of the Congress of Vienna is to be repeated. A century ago the conquerors of Napoleon perpetrated a crime against Poland

which was contained in the several partitions begun by Frederick the Great in the interests of Prussia.

“ To-day, under the direct impulsion of Mr. Lloyd George, Poland is again to be sacrificed, indeed, has been sacrificed, so far as the present draft of the Treaty of Peace is concerned . . . and for the sacrifice of Poland, the most disappointing and tragic of all, the responsibility must rest uniquely with Mr. Lloyd George, since up to the moment of his arrival in Paris Polish prospects were of the brightest, and to his persistent attack has been due their almost total collapse.”

Such were the influences which produced the resolution of the Supreme Allied Council of 20th November 1919 provisionally demarcating the southern sector of Poland's eastern frontier. In defiance of all the factors other than the ethnical which in the course of history had made Galicia one—an organic unity—it drew a line between western and eastern Galicia. It acknowledged definitively Polish sovereignty over western Galicia, including the town of Przemysl; but the rest of southern Poland (Eastern Galicia) was given to Poland for twenty-five years, in trust for the League of Nations. We shall examine in the second part of this booklet the ethnical and other realities in Eastern Galicia.

The “ 20th November 1919 Line ” had been accepted by the Supreme Allied Council under British pressure, though, as Professor H. T. Paton has stated, “ All the Delegation in Paris, except the British, were, however, strongly in favour of assigning the whole territory as a natural unit to Poland. . . . ” (*A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*. Edited by H. W. V. Temperley, Vol. VI., p. 271). The resolution of 20th November was rescinded on 22nd December 1919. But the “ 20th November 1919 Line ” did not die; it reappeared in 1920, at Mr. Lloyd George's hands, as the southern sector of the “ Curzon Line.”

The other parent of the “ Curzon Line ” was another resolution of the Supreme Allied Council of 8th December 1919 fixing Poland's provisional eastern frontier in the lands which before 1914 had been in Russian occupation (Galicia had been taken by Austria at the First Partition in 1772). This said that “ without prejudice to later terms which may be designed to fix the final eastern frontier of Poland ” the

Principal Allied and Associated Powers "recognise the rights of the Polish Government . . . to establish a regular administration of the territories of the former Russian Empire lying westwards from the line described below." The line described began in the south "from a point where the former frontier between Russia and Austria-Hungary meets the River Bug," and ran along the Bug to Brest on Bug (Litovsk) which was left out as being on the eastern bank. From Brest the line followed the River Bug for about thirty miles, then turned sharply to north-east, towards Grodno, passing it almost along Grodno's western suburbs, then along the line of the River Niemen to the East Prussian frontier, leaving the district of Suwalki to Poland. The resolution stated explicitly that the line drawn was a provisional frontier, and concluded with an assurance that "the eventual rights of Poland to territories situated east of the above-mentioned line are expressly reserved." Professor Paton states that the line "at the time it was drawn up was only a provisional *minimum* frontier, and that both the French and the Americans believed that the final frontier line should be farther to the east" (p. 275).

This line of 8th December 1919 was, in fact, simply a version of the eastern frontier of the "Grand Duchy of Warsaw" (1807) and "Congress" Poland (1815), except that the district of Bialystok was added, while the district of Kovno was now given to Lithuania.

By the end of 1919 the front line between the Polish and Russian armies ran along the River Dvina and Beresina (with the town of Mozyr on the Polish side of the front) southwards (with Novograd-Volynsk, Starokonstantinov and Bar also in Polish hands). This was one hundred miles to the east of the frontier which was finally agreed on in the Peace of Riga in 1921, and which was Poland's frontier down to 1939, and 250 miles east of the "Curzon Line," but it was still on historic Polish territory which had become Russian only in 1793. On 22nd December 1919, M. Julian Marchlewski, a Polish communist, was sent on a secret mission to propose the existing military front line as the future frontier. On 29th January 1920, the proposal communicated by M. Marchlewski was repeated formally in a Soviet note signed by MM. Lenin, Tchitcherin and Trotsky. The Soviet Gov-

ernment pledged itself not to advance west of the line which was marked out by the Rivers Dryssa and Dzisna and the localities Polotsk, Borissov, Parichi, Ptich, Byelo, Korovichi in White-Ruthenia, Cudnov, Pilava, Deraznya and Bar in the Ukraine. The Soviet note concluded, "... so far as the real interests of Poland and Russia are concerned, there is no territorial, economic, or other question which cannot be solved in a peaceful manner by means of negotiations, concessions and mutual agreements, such as are taking place at the moment on the occasion of the negotiations with Esthonia."

These specific Soviet proposals were discussed in a joint secret meeting of the Committee of Foreign Affairs and of Military Affairs of the Polish Parliament on 6th February 1920. Marshal Pilsudski was not present at the meeting. He had his own opinion of the value of these proposals. This was elicited by Mr. Lumby, of *The Times*, in the interview on 9th February which was reported in the issue of 14th February 1920:—

Lumby: Do you consider that the Bolsheviks are contemplating an offensive against the Polish front?

Pilsudski: Most certainly. They are strengthening their forces from day to day, and getting ready to attack.

Lumby: That is hardly in keeping with the tone of their peace note, which is very conciliatory. Do you consider the offer was sincere?

Pilsudski: Is it possible to be sincere in politics? They must have an alternative ready in case their offer is rejected."

The Bolshevik peace proposals, as a matter of fact, were accompanied by strong propaganda in Western Europe. Unfortunately, M. Clemenceau had resigned on 18th January 1920, and had been succeeded by the weak M. Millerand. Mr. Lloyd George became virtual dictator of the Supreme Allied Council.

Pilsudski's doubts about the value of the Soviet peace overtures were based on two premises, one political and the other military. 1. He knew of Trotsky's letter of 1st September 1919 to three French Communists, Lorient, Péricat

and Rosmer, in which the Chief of the Red Army wrote: "When we have finished with Denikin we shall assault Poland": 2. He had military intelligence of heavy Russian concentration in progress round Borissov. Field-Marshal Ironside states in his article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* that from January to March 1920 the Red Army was reinforced by thirteen infantry and three cavalry divisions.

In other interviews round about this time, Pilsudski exposed his opinion of Allied Russian policy—or want of it. To *L'Echo de Paris*, 12th February 1920: ". . . I wish to state pressingly that Poland needs an immediate decision whatever this might be. It is disastrous for our country that the Entente does not take a precise and clear decision. We have to face the Eastern Problem alone because Europe does not know what to do." To *Le Petit Parisien*, 6th March 1920: ". . . The worst policy is that of contradictions."

The Powers were moved to a reply, though it was not addressed directly to Poland. It was rather a manifesto "to whom it may concern," bearing the inscription "to the Communities bordering with Russia." The text of it was not less enigmatic than the address. It stated that the Principal Powers "are neither able to take the responsibility to advise a further prosecution of the war which might become harmful to their [those communities—Author] interests, nor can they advise an aggressive policy against Russia. If, however, Soviet Russia should assault them [the communities] within their legitimate frontiers the Principal Powers would give them every assistance." This note coincided with French strenuous efforts to persuade Poland to co-operate with the anti-Bolshevik Russian forces of General Wrangel. Poland turned down these advances. The concentration of Red Forces around Borissov was progressing speedily.

In an interview on 15th February to *Le Matin* [20th February 1920] Pilsudski had announced a constructive proposal. "At the present time we are working at a plan for the creation of a legal order in Eastern Europe. Soon it will be submitted to the Powers of the Entente. It may be not suitable in all its details. Perhaps some of its clauses will have to be discussed; anyhow, it could be adopted as a basis for discussion and the starting point for a final solution."

The Polish Note to the Principal Powers thus announced was despatched in March. It expounded a plan to create several non-Communist, democratic, ethnically non-Russian, independent states in the area between the meridian 27° E. (passing through the Pripet Marshes) in the west (*i.e.*, the Polish frontier of 1793) and the Dnieper, in the east (*i.e.*, the Polish frontier of 1772). The population of that area should decide of itself whether it wished to live within national, Christian, politically independent states, or join the neighbouring Communist, totalitarian society. The plan had the strong backing of the Leftish groups of the Polish Diet.

At the same time Poland's reply was sent to the Soviet Union. These two were concerted moves. Poland was trying to weigh up simultaneously the Principal Powers and the Soviet Union. M. S. Patek, Poland's Foreign Minister, informed the Soviet Government of Poland's readiness to enter into peace negotiations. The town of Borissov, which would be a Russo-Polish frontier town if the negotiations came to anything, was suggested as the place of meeting.

The result of these moves was as expected. They proved : (1) that the Principal Powers could not agree on a policy towards Russia ; (2) that the Soviet peace overtures were made only to gain time to concentrate for an attack on Poland in force. The triangle, Vitebsk-Orsha-Tolochin, the latter on the railway line to Borissov, was chosen as the base for the Soviet offensive.

The Supreme Allied Council replied with a sharply worded rebuke that according to Article 87 of the Treaty of Versailles signed the year before, the establishment of Poland's eastern frontier was reserved for the Principal Powers, and no plebiscite might be held "under military occupation."

The Soviet Government refused to negotiate in Borissov, without giving any reasonable ground for the refusal. The Polish Diet, by a majority, formed of the parties of the Left and of the Centre of the House, agreed that the Soviet Union had not seriously meant peace. Strategical considerations, which were evidently at the bottom of Soviet policy, had to be thought of by Poland too. Mr. Winston Churchill, in his *World Crisis (The Aftermath)* assesses the situation perfectly : "The Poles naturally assumed that the Soviet Government was only procrastinating, and was endeavouring to create a

delay in which to undermine the morale of the Polish troops and population by propaganda, while preparing for the renewed offensive."

On the obvious dictates of strategy, on 23rd April 1920, Poland signed a treaty of alliance with the Directorate of the Ukrainian Independent People's Republic, and pledged herself to liberate the Ukraine as far east as the River Dnieper. The future Polish-Ukrainian frontier, it was agreed, should divide the Pripet Marshes and follow the rivers Horyn and Zbrucz. As a result the lull on the southern Bolshevik front was broken, and on 26th April Zhitomir was taken. Two manifestos were addressed to the Ukrainian people. In one Pilsudski declared that "as soon as the liberated nation has decided what shall be its destiny, the Polish army will be withdrawn"; in the other, the head of the Ukrainian Directorate, Semen Petlura, stated that the Polish army entered the Ukraine as an ally to help her in the fight against "The Muscovite Bolshevik occupants," and that it would "return to Poland after the end of the operations." The attitude of the Ukrainian people towards the Poles was very friendly. Their arrival had put an end to severe requisitions of cattle and food which the Red Army was taking to feed Moscow and Russia. But the active co-operation was not great, and the numbers of volunteers for the army of the Directorate small, partly because people were still under the mental strain of the horrors of revolution and there was little will left to fight, but more because social and economic questions came before political for the average Ukrainian, who has no tradition of a state of his own. Poland, therefore, had to carry on the fight alone. A small army had occupied the Ukraine in twelve days, Kiev itself, the capital, being taken on 7th May. Events, however, were soon to take a different turn.

At the end of May 1920, the Red Army, which was concentrated under (Marshal) Tukhatchevsky in the region of Vitebsk-Orsha-Tolochin, *i.e.*, north-east of Borissov, began its offensive. The Polish Army, though undefeated in the Ukraine, had to begin to withdraw. The Polish Cabinet and the Diet got shaky when the Red Army pressed forward in the central and northern front, though it was still far away from the 1921-1939 Polish frontier. There was a

change of government, and the new one wanted to conclude an early peace.

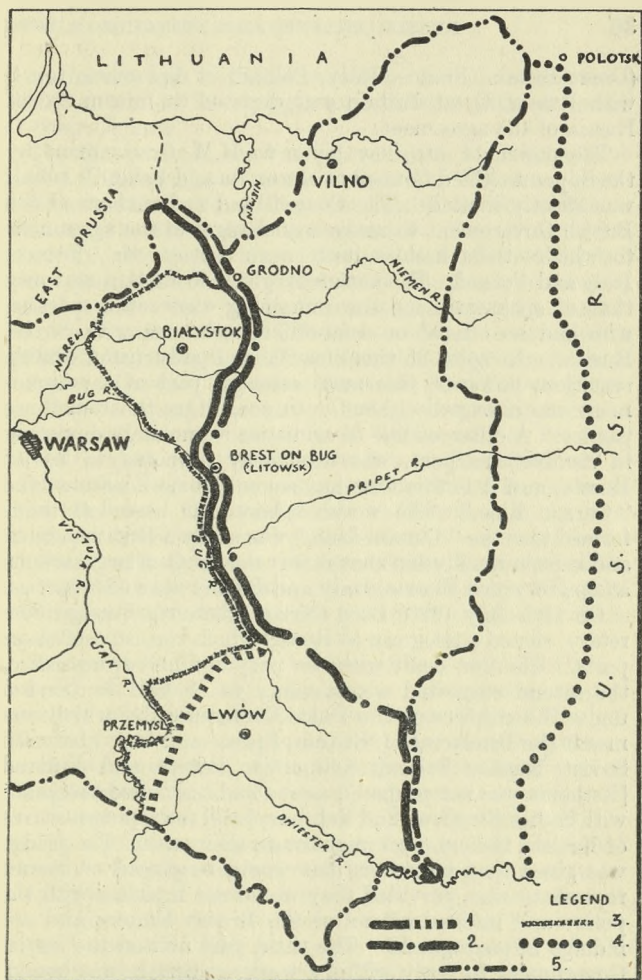
Yet the situation at the front, even by the beginning of July, though grave, was by no means desperate. The army was intact, the people—Poles, Ukrainians, White-Ruthenians, Jews—determined, but the Government became gloomy. Pilsudski has something to say in his book, *The Year 1920*, about being weary of the lack of moral strength of the Polish politicians at this time.

On 6th July M. Wladyslaw Grabski, the Premier, requested the Supreme Allied Council, which had met at Spa to discuss German defaults in reparations, either to give Poland military assistance or to mediate for peace. France, under the weak government of M. Millerand, refused to give military help. On the other hand, the conduct of Allied policy was entirely in the hands of Mr. Lloyd George. France had no diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, while the Soviet delegates, MM. Krassin and Kamieniev, had been in London since May. France depended entirely on British support for the fulfilment of the peace terms by Germany, since M. Clemenceau had retired on 18th January 1920. The United States of America was no longer a member of the Concert. Italy's Foreign Minister, Count Sforza, was no match for Mr. Lloyd George.

The Polish delegates, headed by M. W. Grabski, the Premier, arrived at Spa on 10th July 1920. The Soviet Army had as yet crossed what was to be the Polish 1921-1939 frontier only in the extreme north. The terms which they accepted under the strongest pressure were as follows: "The Polish Government agrees that: 1. An armistice shall be signed without delay and the Polish Army withdrawn to the line provisionally laid down by the Peace Conference of 8th December 1919—whereas the Soviet armies shall stand at a distance of fifty kilometres eastwards of the line. *In Eastern Galicia both armies shall stand on the line fixed at the date of the signature of the armistice after which each army shall withdraw ten kilometres in order to create a neutral zone.*"

This line we shall call in our booklet "the Spa Line."

There was also a vague promise of Allied help to Poland. Finally, as the only one of the parties to the agreement



This map shows Polish territory east of Warsaw. Line No. 1 is the Curzon Line of 11th July 1920; No. 2, the Spa Line of 10th July 1920; No. 3, the German Soviet frontier arranged between M.M. Ribbentrop and Molotov on 28th September 1939, and which lasted until the outbreak of war between Germany and Russia; No. 4, the Armistice Line proposed by the Soviet Union on 29th January 1920; No. 5, the 1921-39 Polish-Soviet frontier established by the Treaty of Riga (19th March 1921).

(Great Britain, France, Italy, Poland) in diplomatic touch with Russia, Great Britain was deputed to inform Soviet Russia of the agreement.

The power of attorney given to H.M. Government by the Supreme Allied Council to act on its and Poland's behalf was strictly limited. The Council had not authorised the British Government to make any changes in the agreement to which others besides itself were parties, viz., France, Italy and Poland. The authority given to Britain was only that of spokesman for the remaining contracting parties, who had no official or semi-official relations with Soviet Russia. In spite of this clear and legally incontestable situation, however, this most essential part of the agreement was changed without even consulting the remaining parties. A different line of armistice, completely deviating in its southern part, was arbitrarily proposed to Soviet Russia, and it is this that has since become known as the "Curzon Line." The world opinion has been left uninformed that the "Curzon Line" was solely a British project and kept in the illusion that it was the result of negotiations at Spa to which France, Italy and Poland were also parties.

On 11th July 1920, Lord Curzon, Britain's Foreign Secretary, signed a telegram to Russia which consisted of three parts. The first dealt with the proposed line of armistice, the second suggested a conference to be held in London under the auspices of the Peace Conference [by which was meant the Directorate : Britain, France and Italy] between Soviet Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Finland [Esthonia was not proposed as she had concluded the peace with Soviet Russia on 2nd February] and the representatives of Eastern Galicia, who might state their case. The pledge was given that no restrictions would be placed on Soviet representatives, provided they would not interfere with the policy and internal affairs of the British Empire and not indulge in propaganda. The third part invited the Soviet Government to reply within a week, as Britain was bound, under the Covenant of the League of Nations, to defend the integrity and independence of Poland. Should Soviet Russia, contrary to her repeated declarations regarding the recognition of the independence of Poland, take action hostile to Poland in the latter's own territory, the British

Government and its Allies would be bound to assist the Polish nation in its struggle for existence with all means at their disposal.

The first part of Lord Curzon's telegram which gave birth to the "Curzon Line" reads verbatim: "That an immediate armistice be signed between Poland and Soviet Russia whereby hostilities shall be suspended. The terms of this armistice should provide on the one hand that the Polish army shall immediately withdraw to the line provisionally laid down last year by the Peace Conference as the eastern boundary within which Poland is entitled to establish a Polish Administration. This line runs approximately as follows:—Grodno, Vapovka, Niemirov, Brest-Litovsk [Brest on Bug—Author], Dorogusk, Ustilug, east of Hrubieshov, Krilow and thence west of Rava Ruska, east of Przemysl to the Carpathians. North of Grodno, the line which will be held by the Lithuanians will run along the railway running from Grodno to Vilno and thence to Dvinsk. On the other hand, the armistice should provide that the armies of Soviet Russia should stand at a distance of fifty kilometres to the east of this line: in Eastern Galicia each army will stand on the line they occupy at the date of the signature of the armistice."

The proposition of the "Curzon Line" was shortly followed by a British suggestion to the Polish Government to conclude an agreement with the ex-Tsarist General Wrangel. This very little known episode is of tremendous importance for the comprehension of the plans and mentality of a group of diplomatic "back-room boys" who were responsible for the design of the "Curzon Line." Harold Nicolson,¹ who was in a position to know what was going on in the "back rooms" when these events took place, had good reasons for stating that Lord Curzon himself had very little to do with the origin of the line attributed to him. The "back-room boys" were the real promoters. They counted on the victory of ex-Tsarist generals. Their ardour was dictated by several considerations. Firstly, it was a non-Communist Russia represented by "The Russian Political Conference" in Paris, that was expected to abandon the traditional drive towards the Balkans, the Dardanelles and the Persian

¹ Harold Nicolson, *Curzon: The Last Phase, 1919-1925*, p. 204.

Gulf; secondly, it was the phantom of a very strong France whose strength was conditioned by a strong Poland.¹ A very clever game was afoot. Wilson's principle of self-determination was used as an excellent screen, statistics were dexterously, though not always fairly, handled, facts, basic for drawing frontiers, were carefully hidden from the unsuspecting and benevolent public opinion.

Frontier problems, as settled at Spa, looked like this: The "Spa Line," as we shall call the armistice line dictated to Poland on 10th July 1920, was composed of two parts: the northern, which passed through the territory of former Russian-Poland, and the southern, through former Austrian-Poland (Galicia). The northern part of the "Spa Line" was exactly fixed, while the southern one was vaguely described by the clause that: "in Eastern Galicia both armies shall stand on the line fixed at the date of the signature of the armistice." The armistice which was planned at Spa did not materialise. On 10th July, the Red Army was outside the territory of East Galicia, and even in the first part of August, at the peak of its successes, it never pushed further than about thirty miles east of Lwow. Thus the southern part of the "Spa Line" was traced in July 1920 by the former Austro-Russian frontier. The "Curzon Line," however, though conforming with the northern part of the "Spa Line," was, in its southern part, arbitrarily changed, contrary to the stipulations insisted upon at Spa. The southern part of the "Curzon Line" was pushed from 70 to 160 miles to the west to coincide with the "20th November 1919 Line." By this operation an area of 12,800 square miles with about 5,000,000 people was additionally classified as "disputable." There are also important points to be referred to: (1) the acceptance of the "Spa Line" by the Polish Government was conditional upon the fulfilment by the Principal Powers of their pledge to give Poland both military help and supplies: this pledge was never fulfilled; (2) the Polish Government did accept the "Spa Line," but never did accept the "Curzon Line." Consequently, neither the "Spa" nor the "Curzon Line" materialised owing to the military development, though in the mind of an uninformed public the "Curzon

¹ *Ibid.*, pages 55, 198, 210.

Line" remained synonymous with a fair proposal based on ethnical premises.

The comment of *The Times* of 18th August 1920, on the "Curzon Line" was: "Those (terms) which Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Curzon had recommended Poland to accept are on the true Russian pattern. They are so drawn—like the Tsarist treaties with Turkey—as to afford the Russian rulers a pretext to interfere in the internal affairs of Poland as the champions of a Red Polish party whenever they think fit. . . ."

THE RESURRECTION OF THE "CURZON LINE" PROPOSAL.

Having given the origin of the "Curzon Line" proposal for a Polish-Russian frontier, a little must be said of events between then and 11th and 17th January 1944, when the proposal again came into the limelight.

The Soviet Government, in its note of 17th July 1920, rejected Lord Curzon's proposal and declared that (a) they would negotiate only directly with Poland, and that on the basis of a territorial settlement more favourable to Poland than the "Curzon Line" would be; (b) they refused to conclude an immediate armistice. On 20th July, Lord Curzon acknowledged the receipt of the Soviet note and reaffirmed the British pledge of giving to Poland "every assistance" should the Red Army advance beyond the "Curzon Line."

Consequently, the British Government, in a note of 22nd July, suggested to the Soviet Government the opening of direct negotiations. The atmosphere in which the negotiations would take place can be reproduced from the note of 5th August 1920, sent by MM. Kamieniev and Krassin, the London Soviet representatives, to the British Government, which stated: 1. The Soviet Government "desire to make it perfectly clear that they recognise the liberty and independence of Poland and manifest their good will by agreeing

to a more favourable frontier" than the "Curzon Line ; 2. Poland to reduce her army to 50,000 men and establish a " militia of working people for the maintenance of order " ; 3. Poland not to be allowed to manufacture armaments and munitions ; 4. Poland to grant free land to the families of her citizens who were killed, wounded or crippled in the Polish-Soviet War. Mr. Winston Churchill's comment in *The Aftermath* on these conditions reads : " Thus under a fair seeming front of paper concessions about independence, frontiers and no indemnities, the Soviets claimed nothing less than the means to carry out a Bolshevik revolution in a disarmed Poland."

The Polish Parliament and Government had not enough moral strength to withstand the mental strain caused by the critical trend of the operations. They did not realise that (Marshal) Tukhatchevsky, by the way in which he conducted his operations, was taking an even greater risk than Pilsudski had done in April and May in the Ukraine. The great Soviet defeat which was very soon to materialise was hidden from them. Mentally, they were ripe for capitulation, and they committed a degrading action. They went to ask mercy, where mercy was not to be expected. There was no alternative but victory or complete defeat. How little chance there was of compromise is clear from (Marshal) Tukhatchevsky's order of the day on 2nd July 1920, which ended with these words : " The fortunes of the Revolution in the west are at stake. The way to setting the world on fire leads over the corpse of Poland."

On 14th August 1920, a Polish delegation, representative of all parliamentary parties, left for Minsk, the headquarters of (Marshal) Tukhatchevsky. At Minsk, they were given a house with the advice not to leave it, and Soviet sentries were put on guard. On 19th August M. Danilov, the Chairman of the Soviet delegation, put before the Polish delegates the conditions of peace, without telling them that on the three previous days, 16th-18th August, the Battle of Warsaw had been fought and the Red Army routed. To the conditions foreshadowed in MM. Kamieniev and Krassin's note of 5th August, mentioned above, were added the following :—1. The Polish army to number only 10,000 men in all, while the strength of the " People's

Militia" was to be 40,000; 2. All equipment to be handed over to Soviet Russia, except small arms for 50,000 men; 3. The strength of the Red Army garrisons at the Polish frontier to be 200,000; 4. The frontier to be a "Curzon Line" substantially modified in Poland's favour; 5. Soviet Russia to have the right of unhindered transport through Poland of persons [troops included—Author] without passport control, and of goods [arms and munitions—Author] without customs control.

On 20th August (Marshal) Tukhatchevsky issued a manifesto to the people of Minsk in which he said that the Polish Delegation "was composed of spies and counter-espionage agents who do spying by taking advantage of their position, and are responsible for breaking the peace in a most disgraceful manner." Actually the "position" of the delegation was scarcely one in which they would embark on the doubtful pleasures of espionage for the sake of forgetting the disgrace of capitulation. The delegates knew enough of Russia to realise at once that something must have gone very wrong for such a primitive trick to have been employed. Their strong suspicion became almost certainty when the head of the local "Cheka"—the forerunner of "Ogpu" and the present "N.K.V.D."—appeared and informed the delegates that he would do everything to save them from the anger of the indignant population, though he doubted whether he would succeed. The riddle was solved when the wireless operator of the delegation succeeded, in spite of Soviet jamming, in catching a part of the Polish war bulletin. The members of the delegation refound their spirit. At the next meeting with the Soviet delegation, they protested against the manifesto and rejected the Soviet's dictated terms. Whereupon M. Danishevsky disowned the manifesto and apologised, explaining that the conditions were not meant to be final, but only a basis for negotiation. Soon, M. Radek, then still a leading Soviet personality, turned up in Minsk. The Polish delegation informed him that Poland: 1. Neither desired the destruction of the Russian Empire nor wanted to interfere in its domestic affairs by taking sides in the Russian Civil War; 2. Declared her *désintéressement* in the Ukrainian question; 3. Desired Soviet Russia not to interfere in

Lithuania ; 4. Claimed the territory which beyond question lay within the limits of Western civilisation ; 5. Abandoned her historical claims to the frontier of 1772. Consequently it was agreed with M. Radek that the negotiations would be continued but in a neutral country. Riga, the capital of Latvia, was chosen.

The instructions of the Polish peace delegation which went to Riga were that : 1. The peace should be such as to end the territorial dispute and establish good relations ; 2. The frontier formula should not be based on the historical claims of 1772—Poland would not impose a victor's peace : instead, the figures of the election to the first Russian parliament, " The Duma " of 1906, were accepted as a fair index (the territory between the " Curzon Line " and the 1921-39 frontier of Poland returned twenty Polish members on that occasion) ; 3. The parties to guarantee to abstain from interference in each other's domestic affairs : 4. Several hundred thousand Poles deported by the retreating Tsarist armies in 1915 to be repatriated ; 5. Libraries and works of art removed by the Tsarist Government to be returned ; 6. Poland's claim for the restoration of her share of the gold of the Imperial Bank of Russia to be settled.

The delegations met on 21st September. On 5th October M. Joffe, the chairman of the Soviet delegation, declared that there were no obstacles to agreement on the frontier question if Poland would agree to reduce her claim to the gold of the former Imperial Bank. Though Poland agreed to this, she never, in fact, got even a part of her legitimate share. The preliminary Peace Treaty was signed on 12th October. The number of Poles who were left by it inside the Soviet Union exceeded 1,500,000 ; by 1938, according to the Russian census, there were only 800,000. The military armistice began on 19th October 1920.

The final draft of the Peace of Riga was ready for signing on 18th March 1921. In Article 3 Soviet Russia, Soviet Ukraine and Soviet White Ruthenia declared that " they renounce all rights and claims to territories west of the frontier settled in Article 2 of the Treaty." By the Treaty of Riga, Poland renounced her claim to 120,000 square miles of territory which Russia had annexed from Poland.

M. Joffe, after signing the treaty, declared : " The peace

negotiations lasted for several months and encountered considerable difficulties, especially in the settlement of economic and financial problems. . . . We have been calmly negotiating a peace without having shown any aggressiveness. The concluded peace gives full satisfaction to the vital, legitimate, and essential interests of the Polish nation." To all seeming the Treaty of Riga had given the final blow to the project of the "Curzon Line."

None of the recent wars has so been misinterpreted as has the Russo-Polish War of 1920. The Communists represented the war as provoked by Anglo-French policy out of opposition to the Soviet Union. Actually, it was a defensive war imposed on Poland by militant Communism. The fact that in the course of it Poland undertook a great offensive operation which culminated in the taking of Kiev, does not alter the circumstances of its origin. The motive of Pilsudski's Ukrainian campaign was primarily strategic, as already explained; political considerations were of secondary importance. It is a historical fact that Poland never wanted to annex the Ukraine. Moreover, Bolshevik propaganda represented Poland as a "feudal state," and her army as "white, aristocratic and bourgeois." At the time of "The Battle of Warsaw," in 1920, the Polish Government was headed by a peasant, whose deputy was a Socialist. It was a Government of National Unity, like that of Great Britain in 1944. The backbone of the army was formed by volunteers drawn from peasants, workers and intelligentsia alike.

Bolshevik policy in 1919-1920 was peaceful and conciliatory in its pronouncements, but aggressive and annexionist in action. On 2nd February 1920, "The All Russian Central Executive Committee" addressed "the Polish people" directly, professing that "the new Government of Soviet Russia cannot be made responsible for the crimes committed by Tsarist Russia and the Russian bourgeoisie . . . they regard an independent Poland as an indispensable condition for the progress and development of Russia." Three years later (Marshal) Tukhatchevsky provided (in effect) in his lectures given at the Staff College in Moscow, 7th-10th February 1923, a commentary on this.

"There is no doubt about it," he said, "that had we

succeeded in depriving the Polish bourgeoisie of its bourgeois-noble army, the Polish working-class would have started a revolution. In that case the revolutionary conflagration would not have been confined to Poland. Like a rising flood it would have spread and swallowed up the whole of Western Europe. The Red Army will not fail to draw conclusions from this unsuccessful experiment in provoking Revolution abroad. Should the European bourgeoisie provoke another war, the Red Army will defeat it and then support and spread the Revolution all over Europe."

(Marshal) Tukhatchevsky was wrong about the attitude of the Polish working class. His subordinate (General) Sergieyev, C-in-C. Fourth Army, took the opposite view. In his book, *From the Dvina to the Vistula*, he wrote: "The outbreak of a Polish Revolution was considered seriously only by those Soviet authorities which were far from the front. The Red Army did not believe in it. The failure to enrol a Polish Red Army in Bialystok was ample evidence that the hope was without foundation."

Ill-understood as was the 1919-1920 war by the general public, there were in Great Britain a few men who appreciated the issues. Viscount D'Abernon ranked the Battle of Warsaw as "The Eighteenth Decisive Battle of the World," in his book of that title. "Had the Soviet Forces," he says, "overcome Polish resistance and captured Warsaw, Bolshevism would have spread throughout Central Europe and might well have penetrated the entire Continent. . . . A definite programme had been prepared—leaders had been chosen—lists of victims had been drawn up—undermining intrigue would have been followed by ruthless assassination and murder." Professor H. A. L. Fisher sums it up this way: "Pilsudski earned the gratitude of Europe. He had saved Poland from Bolshevism."

The Riga frontier coincided roughly with that which Poland had with Russia from 1793 to 1795, *i.e.*, between the Second and Third Partitions. It was the frontier with Russia which Poland kept down to 1939, running through the Pripet Marshes, roughly along meridian 27° E.

The era of peace did not open under good auspices. Heavily armed gangs crossed the frontier from the Soviet Union at night, killed people in the frontier hamlets, robbed

and burned farms and dwelling-houses, and led off cattle and horses. Poland had to form a special selected corps of Frontier Guards (K.O.P.) to establish peace and preserve the lives and property of the border population.

The Polish-Soviet frontier settlement, brought into harmony with Article 87 of the Treaty of Versailles, got full international recognition by the resolution of the Council of the League of Nations of 3rd February 1923, and by the decision of the Conference of Ambassadors of 15th March 1923. The U.S.A., not being a member of the League of Nations, recognised the Polish-Soviet frontier by a Note of 5th April 1923.

The Treaty of Paris, known as the Briand-Kellogg Pact of 27th August 1928, which renounced war as an instrument of international politics, was the next diplomatic agreement to which Poland and the Soviet Union were partners. The Soviet Union proposed to her neighbours—Esthonia, Latvia, Poland and Rumania—that they should put the Briand-Kellogg Pact into immediate operation, and for this purpose a document, known as the Protocol of Moscow, was signed on 9th February 1929.

Polish-Soviet relations generally became friendlier, and this showed itself in the Pact of Non-Aggression of 25th July 1932, which was concluded for three years. The sense of security afforded by this diplomatic measure was strengthened by a further act known as The Convention for the Definition of Aggression, signed in London on 3rd July 1933 between U.S.S.R. and the seven neighbour states: Esthonia, Latvia, Poland, Rumania, Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan. Article 2 defined an aggressor. According to Par. 2 of the Article, the act of aggression was committed when the territory of one of the signatories was invaded by the armed forces of a state with or without a declaration of war. The Parties to the Convention declared that it was concluded "in the interests of general security in order to define aggression in as detailed a way as possible, and thus to avoid any pretext for its violation." The signatories pledged themselves to recognise each others' "equal right to independence, security, and to act in defence of their territory and of the free development of their institutions," and expressed their desire "in the interest of general peace and

their territorial integrity," to define "precisely the principle of aggression," in the hope that "in future this definition will be universally adopted." In order to eliminate quibbling on legal or political grounds, Article 3 provided that "no political, military, economic or other consideration may serve as an excuse or justification for aggressive action as defined in Article 2."

The London Convention for the Definition of Aggression of 3rd July 1933 is, and will remain, a document of primary importance for historians in the assessment of the subsequent actions of the signatories to it.

It was followed by a Protocol signed in Moscow on 5th May 1934. This provided for the prolongation of the Non-Aggression Pact of 1932 until 31st December 1945, being "a new proof of the unchangeable character and solidity of the pacific and friendly relations happily established between them." The Final Protocol of this Protocol of 5th May 1934 stated that the Peace Treaty concluded at Riga on 18th March 1921 "constitutes the basis of their mutual relations."

On 26th November 1938, *i.e.*, shortly after the Munich Agreement, a joint Soviet-Polish *communiqué* was issued, in which it was again stressed that the Non-Aggression Pact "has a basis broad enough to guarantee the inviolability of the peaceful relations between the two States."

On 17th September 1939, the Red Army invaded Poland.

On 28th September 1939, U.S.S.R. and Germany signed a treaty of partition of Poland along what became known as "Molotov-Ribbentrop" line. Article 2 said that "both countries recognised the frontier as final . . . and will resist any interference with this decision by other powers." The Polish Government, in its note of 21st October 1939 to all governments, protested against "the flagrant violation of the two aggressor States," and declared that "Poland will never recognise this act of violence."

Conditions under the German and Soviet occupations since then were referred to in a note of the Polish Government to the Allied and neutral Governments dated 3rd May 1941. After enumerating the treaties to which U.S.S.R. was signatory, and after recalling how "Poland was stabbed in the back while being entangled in heavy struggle with

the German aggressor, and how eleven days later, while Warsaw was still gallantly defending itself, Russia concluded in Moscow a new agreement with Germany by which the occupied territory was annexed . . ." and after once more solemnly protesting against "so flagrant a violation of international law," the Polish Government states that it has "no knowledge whether U.S.S.R. regards herself bound by the provisions of the Hague Convention, which was signed by Russia in 1907, regarding the conduct of the enemy in occupied countries. Should this not be the case, then this would be another indictment against a Government which refuses to recognise the rules of morality, international law, and the principles of humanity."

In appendices the Note then gives evidence of the following acts committed by the Soviet Occupation Authorities against all the people living within the "Curzon Line" area:—

1. Mass deportation of all "anti"-Soviet elements in cattle trucks into Asiatic and Arctic Russia; regarded as "anti"-Soviet elements, and so treated, were magistrates, police, judges, lawyers, Members of Parliament, prominent members of political parties, non-political societies, clubs and the Red Cross, civil servants, retired officers, officers in the reserve, priests, tradesmen, landowners, owners of hostels and restaurants, clerks of chambers of commerce and any class of person engaged in trade or correspondence with foreign countries, even stamp-collectors and esperantists. Many artisans, peasants and labourers, agricultural and industrial, were deported too; so that no Polish element was spared. The families of these unfortunate people were also deported; in many cases they were broken up—wives separated from husbands and children from their parents.

2. Besides individuals, deportation of the inhabitants of whole villages and whole districts of the major towns.

3. Mass executions, especially of judges, policemen and army officers.

4. Extermination of the intelligentsia.

Besides such acts of violence, the Soviet occupation authorities—

1. Forcibly introduced the Communist system.

2. Ordered instruction to be given in Communist ideology.
3. Limited instruction in Polish to three hours a week.
4. Banned the teaching of universal history.
5. Replaced native teachers by Russians.

The Soviet authorities took steps to undermine the family life and morality; children were invited to denounce their parents; non-adults were encouraged to enter into free sexual intercourse.

In the domain of spiritual life, religion was banned from the schools; about 4000 churches and convents, Catholic and Orthodox, as well as synagogues, were converted into cinemas, garages, restaurants, Communist clubs, atheistic museums. Anti-religious and blasphemous posters were displayed, clergy executed or deported, theological colleges closed.

On 6th October 1939 the Soviet C.-in-C., "Western Front," ordered elections to be held on 22nd October for "Popular Assemblies." The Soviet military authorities conducted the elections and there was no adequate attempt to inform the electorate of the purpose of these assemblies. In Lwow, the Municipal Council announced that the assemblies were to decide the future status of Eastern Galicia. A similar statement was published in the Moscow paper *Izvestia*. The electorate as a whole remained unaware of the purpose of the elections. The electorate had no voice in the nominating of the candidates it was to vote for; most of them, as a matter of fact, came from Russia. In one Volhynian constituency (Kshemienietz-Krzemieniec) the candidates were M. Molotov and Marshal Voroshilov. Agitators, too, were imported. In the elections the Russian military authorities had the co-operation of the Secret Police, once called Ogpu, now N.K.V.D.

The electors were allowed to vote only for the one candidate whose name was on the ballot paper, and they were watched so that they should not cross out the name or scribble some remark. Many Russian soldiers voted. Agents of the Secret Police called at the houses of the electors to warn them of the consequences of abstention from voting. In some constituencies polling was preceded

by numerous arrests ; many men fled. There were numerous cases where secret police and troops rounded up constituents and escorted them to the polling stations. In Lwow, where the size of the town defeated even these measures, the percentage of votes cast compared with the population was only 44%. The Soviet authorities ordered a new poll, but it was never held.

The published figures of the results of the elections were :—

Western Ukraine (*i.e.*, Eastern Galicia and Volhynia) : of 4,776,275 electors, 4,433,997, *i.e.*, 93%, voted ; in Western White-Ruthenia (*i.e.*, Polesia and part of Vilno district), of 2,763,191 electors, 2,672,280, *i.e.*, 97% voted.

The figures for individual constituencies in these areas were not published. Out of 1495 candidates for Western Ukraine, 1484 were declared elected. They were formed into two " National Assemblies," which, by a show of hands, not by ballot, passed unanimously the following five resolutions :—

1. That " Western Ukraine " and " Western White Russia " pass into the hands of the working class.
2. That " Western Ukraine " and " Western White Russia " be " admitted " to the Soviet Union.
3. That the big estates be confiscated.
4. That the banks and industries be nationalised.
5. That homage be paid to " the great Stalin."

These are the facts of the proceeding which the Soviet Declaration of 11th January 1944 refers to as " the plebiscite."

When the signatories to the Soviet-German Pact of 23rd August and the Partition of 28th September 1939 went to war on 22nd July 1941, Polish-Soviet relations entered on a new phase.

On 30th July 1941 an agreement was concluded in London by which the U.S.S.R. admitted that " the Soviet-German treaties of 1939 concerning territorial changes in Poland have lost their force," and agreed that it " will grant an amnesty to all Polish citizens who are at present deprived

of their liberty within the territory of the U.S.S.R. either as prisoners of war or for other proper reasons." The Soviet Government also declared its "assent to the raising, in the territory of the U.S.S.R., of a Polish army, whose commander will be appointed by the Polish Government in consultation with the Government of the U.S.S.R."

The British Government made a declaration the same day in which it assured the Polish Government that "His Majesty's Government does not recognise any territorial changes made in Poland since August 1939."

On 25th April 1943, the Soviet Union severed diplomatic relations with the Polish Government when the latter asked the Committee of the International Red Cross at Geneva to investigate the circumstances of the murder of about 9000 Polish officers at Katyn.

On 5th January 1944, when the Red Army again stood on Polish territory, the Polish Government stated that it considered it "highly desirable" to resume diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. To this the Soviet Government replied on 11th January, denouncing the Polish Government as "isolated from its people," and "playing into German hands," and stated that—1. Eastern Poland had been incorporated into the U.S.S.R. by "a plebiscite which was carried out on a wide democratic basis in 1939"¹; 2. the Treaty of Riga was unjust and imposed upon the Soviet Union²; 3. the Soviet-Polish frontier should be drawn on the base of the "Curzon Line"; 4. Poland should recover her "ancient lands" from Germany.

The Polish Government replied on 15th January that it could not recognise unilateral decisions and accomplished

¹The Soviet Declaration refers to the "plebiscite" which was carried out inside the area east of the "Molotov-Ribbentrop" Line, and not the "Curzon Line."

²"The Great Soviet Encyclopædia," published by the Soviet State Institute in Moscow in 1940, comments on the Treaty of Riga in Vol. 46, p. 247: "The new Soviet-Polish frontier was far less advantageous for the White Poles to that offered by the Soviet Government to the Poles in April 1920; it runs from 50 to 100 kilometres to the west from the frontier line which was proposed to Poland at the beginning of the war. This fact proves that Soviet Russia has won the victory over the counter-revolutionary forces."

facts, and would ask the American and British Governments for mediation "in the interest of the victory of the United Nations and harmonious relations in post-war Europe."

On 17th January the Soviet Government replied that:—

1. In the Polish declaration the question of recognition of the "Curzon Line" as the Soviet-Polish frontier is entirely evaded and ignored, which can only be interpreted as the rejection of the "Curzon Line."

2. . . . the Soviet Government is not in a position to enter into official negotiations with a Government with whom diplomatic relations had been severed . . . because of its active participation in the hostile, anti-Soviet slanderous campaign of the German invaders in connection with murder at Katyn.

3. . . . the present Polish Government does not desire to establish "good-neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union."

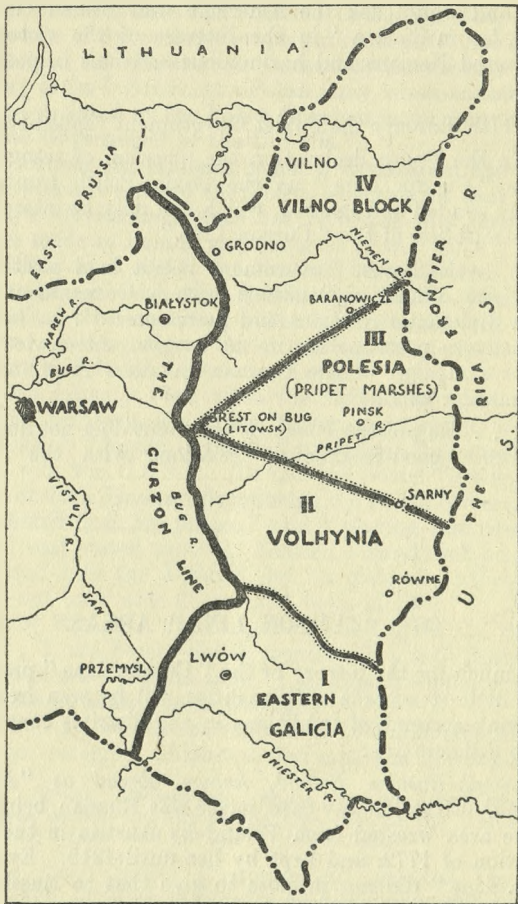
THE "CURZON LINE" AREAS.

So much for the history of the "Curzon Line" proposal. How little it accords with realities will be seen from the following account of conditions in the districts concerned. These districts are:—

I. *South-Eastern Poland, known abroad as "Eastern Galicia."*—This, in any case, never was Russian, being part of the area wrested from Poland by Austria in the First Partition of 1772, and kept by her until 1918. Even the "Spa Line" did not propose to give that to Russia.

The rest of the area is that which Russia took in the third of her partitions of Poland in 1795. For present purposes it may conveniently be considered in three regions:—

II. *The southern block of Volhynia, between the Pripet Marshes and the projection of S.E. Poland (Eastern Galicia).*



III. *The Central or Pripiet Marshes block, known as Polesia.*

IV. *The N.E. block, between the Pripiet Marshes and the 1939 frontier of Lithuania, with Vilno as its chief centre.*

These four territorial blocks will be considered first as a whole and then in turn singly. Taking them first as a whole, we see that while ethnic conditions are too mixed for any people to have an absolute majority over all others put together, Poles practically equal in number any other element in the population. Russians formed only one per cent. of the population. The figures at the 1931 census were :—

Ukrainians - - -	4,010,000 (37%)
Poles - - -	3,914,000 (36%)
White-Ruthenians -	928,000 (9%)
Jews - - -	899,000 (8%)
Polesians - - -	711,000 (7%)
Russians - - -	102,000 (1%)
Germans - - -	80,000 (1%)
Lithuanians - - -	76,000 (1%)
Czechs - - -	32,000 (—)
Others - - -	16,000 (—)
Total - - -	<u>10,768,000 (100%)</u>

The size of the area is 70,000 sq. miles (approx. 47% of Poland's total area). The population involved, 10,768,000, would be 34% of Poland's total population—32,133,000 at the same 1931 census.

Now, let us take the districts in turn.

I. S.E. Poland (" Eastern Galicia ").

I. S.E. Poland (" Eastern Galicia ").—The name Galicia was given by Austria to that part of Southern Poland which was annexed by her in the First Partition of 1772. Galicia adjoined, in the west, Teshen Silesia ; in the east, the River Zbrucz was the frontier between it and the Russian Ukraine. Galicia—Little Poland, according to the Polish modern terminology—never was under Russian sovereignty.

Poles, Ruthenians and Jews, who for centuries have lived intermixed in Southern Poland, have given to Galicia a colourful ethnical aspect. About 1900, Austria and her

ally, Germany, lent their support to a new nationalist movement which had begun among a section of the Ruthenian intelligentsia which adopted the name "Ukrainians." Vienna and Berlin each had motives of its own; but there was also a common aim: to counterbalance Russia's growing influence in the Balkans and to check her drive towards the Dardanelles. It was thought this might be achieved by a Ukrainian independence movement, absorbing Russia's energies by adding to her domestic preoccupations a new pan-Ukrainian ideology. That, nursed first in Galicia, would, such was the intention, then radiate and penetrate deeply into the Dnieper-Ukraine. A subordinate aim common to them, though less important to Berlin than to Vienna, was the weakening of the growing political importance of the Poles, of whom each, of course, as one of the Occupying Powers of Poland, possessed large numbers. It was very important for Austria, which had representative institutions; less so for Prussia, where Parliament was a façade. In Prussia there was discriminating legislation against the Poles—a means which was not available in Austria. But what cannot be achieved directly can often be done indirectly. The old principle, *divide et impera*—to rule subject peoples start them quarrelling—was well known in Vienna. The Habsburg Monarchy stood or fell by the policy of creating friction and antagonism between its numerous nationalities, so as to maintain in its ascendancy the ruling Austrian minority.

Before 1914, the Ukrainian movement was mainly financed by Berlin. The Ukrainian extremists took orders and money from the German Consul in Lwow. The Viennese Government was eventually faced with the fact that its stronger ally, who had no scruples, had more say among the Ukrainians of Galicia than itself. Berlin had not only poured in more money, but also made greater promises. It held out to Ukrainian extremists the mirage of a great independent Dnieper-Ukraine. The Austrians, well aware of their weakness, did not aim so high. They were content to irritate the Tsarist Government, and in Galicia itself play off the Ukrainian politicians against the Polish ones. Vienna attained its aims. Berlin had less reason for satisfaction. The Polish (E. Galician) Ukrainians were unable to build

up an efficient organisation beyond the River Zbrucz in the Dnieper-Ukraine. There was the serious obstacle that Polish Ukrainians are Catholic (of the Greek rite) and the Russians Orthodox. This difference in religion turned out to be as big an obstacle as it is in the case of Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs to-day. Disparity of level of civilisation was another factor which acted much as it does in Croat-Serb relations. The bulk of Polish Ukrainians were completely foreign to Russian Ukrainians in their ways of thinking, praying and living. The only thing which they had in common was their very recently adopted name.

On the eve of the disintegration of the Austrian Monarchy in 1918, the Viennese bureaucrats, who finally realised that everything was lost, decided to try to secure a throne, if not for Emperor Charles, then at least for some other member of the Habsburg dynasty. Ukraine, at that time, still occupied by the Austrian and German armies, was selected to form the nucleus of a new Habsburg dominion. Ukrainian regiments of the Austrian army (there was compulsory military service) had been moved to Lwow and other towns of Eastern Galicia, and preparations were made by the Austrian Governor, Count Huyn, together with the Military Commander, General Pfeffer, for a Ukrainian *coup d'état* in Lwow. The Polish regiments of the Austrian army were fighting in Italy, and their depôts had been moved out of Galicia. Only youngsters and old people were at home.

The writer remembers when, on 1st November 1918, being on sick leave, he left his mother's house rather early. When he arrived in the Market Square, he was astonished to see the Ukrainian ensign flying from the mast on the tower of the City Hall. As a rule only the Austrian or the city colours were hoisted. The streets were almost empty, as it was in the early hours of All Saints Day, a holiday in Catholic countries to pay homage to the graves of relatives and friends. Soon he saw single soldiers with a Ukrainian cockade in place of the usual imperial badge in their hats. Without any good reason, as he thought, they fired single shots in the air or at the windows of frightened burghers, who rushed to see the reason for these unusual noises. At noon a few Poles who were on leave, school children of both sexes, students who were not enrolled in the Austrian

Army, some Pilsudski Legionaries and elderly men, met at various points in the town to organise resistance. This was the beginning of skirmishes which were to last for eight months, but the notable thing was that the bulk of the Ukrainians remained unconcerned.

The statistical picture of ethnical conditions in Eastern Galicia, which, however, gives only a very incomplete idea of the country's organic structure, is as follows :—

Ukrainians - - -	2,516,000 (53%)
Poles - - -	1,875,000 (39%)
Jews - - -	341,000 (7%)
Germans - - -	30,000 (1%)
Others - - -	9,000 (—)
<hr/>	
Total - - -	4,771,000 (100%)

There is not a district in Eastern Galicia where the three first-named nationalities have not been living side by side for ages. The towns are predominantly Polish. Lwow itself, the cultural and economic capital, has, out of approximately 300,000 population, 64% Poles, 25% Jews, and 11% Ukrainians. The district of Lwow has 57% Poles. Another factor adds to the complexity: there are more districts of overwhelmingly Polish majority *east* of Lwow than west of it. This phenomenon was also revealed by the Austrian census of 1910. Here are the index figures of 1933 giving the proportion of Poles living in the districts *east* of Lwow :—Skalat, 67%; Tarnopol, 66%; Trembowla, 61%; Kamionka Strumilowa, 51%; Zbaraz, 50%. The other districts east of Lwow have strong Polish minorities: Podhayce, 49%; Zborow, 48%; Zloczow, 48%; Brzezany 47%; Borszczow, 46%; Buczacz, 44%; Kopyczynce, 44%; Czortkow, 43%; Zaleszczyki, 39%; Tlumacz, 38%; Bobrka, 32%.

In the following districts west of Lwow the strength of Poles in percentages is: Lubaczow, 50%; Rudki, 48%; Drohobycz, 47%; Sambor, 45%; Grodek Jagiellonski, 40%; Zolkiew, 38%; Jaworow, 31%.

There are also districts where the share of the Polish

population ranges between 15% and 29%. The Carpathian district of Kosow shows the lowest quota—7%.

There are practically no Russians in East Galicia.

The multi-coloured pattern is still more complicated by 341,000 Jews, who are to be found all over Eastern Galicia.

The ethnical picture as a whole is one of an extremely complicated mosaic. When the factor of intermarriage is also taken into account, the ethnical complications defy statement, let alone solution. Any census is only a distorted simplification of the reality. As recently as thirty-odd years ago, sons of mixed Polish-Ukrainian (Ruthenian) marriages still took their nationality after the father, daughters after the mother. The author may perhaps be allowed to mention that he has Ukrainian blood in his veins, like many other Poles from Eastern Poland, and so can speak of this problem from first-hand knowledge.

The ethnical mixture in Eastern Galicia is the product of six hundred years of symbiosis. The political problem it presents cannot be treated without also taking into consideration the other bonds created during those six centuries: the bonds of common history, civilisation, religion, common social and economic interests. The natives of Eastern Galicia, with those of Western Galicia, constitute a social group with a distinct mentality and with their own characteristic way of living. Whatever their language—Polish, Ukrainian or Yiddish—the allegiance of the overwhelming majority of the population has been and is to Polish civilisation and tradition. It remained so during the 146 years of Austrian occupation. There are, of course, extremists who on occasion have caused even major trouble. The inspiration and money came from Berlin, as in the previous Austrian era. Such Ukrainian extremists committed in 1930 many acts of murder and sabotage, which an ill-advised Government foolishly repressed with methods which were politically unwise. But the bulk of Ukrainian people remained unconcerned, as they had done during the skirmishes of 1918-19. This attitude of the Ukrainian people made it possible for their most representative party, the Ukrainian National Democratic Union (U.N.D.O.) to conclude an agreement with the delegates of Polish parties in Eastern Galicia. The years 1934-1939 were

a period of growing mutual understanding and respect. The Ukrainian members of the Polish Diet supported unanimously the Government's request for an increase of army expenditure in 1936. On 2nd September 1939 M. Mudry, the Chairman of the Ukrainian Members, pledged in the Diet the support of Ukrainians in the fight against the aggressor. Under the enemy occupation, during this war, the overwhelming majority of Ukrainians co-operate with Poles. Between 1939 and 1941, under the Soviet occupation, all Ukrainian politicians were as ruthlessly annihilated or deported as were the Poles.

The attempt to draw the "Botha" or any other line through such conditions in 1919 was necessarily arbitrary.¹ For these and other reasons it was nullified by the Supreme Allied Council on 22nd December 1919.

To sum up the problem, it can be stated that the country and its people, by tradition, ways of life, Catholic religion (whether of the Roman or the Greek rite) are an integral part of western civilisation, and jealously think of themselves as such. Quarrelsome as they are upon many issues, loving a nice argument and fond of grousing about everything, the overwhelming majority, if given a fair chance to express its opinion, will make but one choice. But the choice must be free, in the British sense of the word—which is very different from its interpretation in countries where Secret Police have the last word.

II.-IV.—The Southern, Eastern and North-Eastern Blocks.

In S.E. Poland or "Eastern Galicia," which never was Russian and where Russians are practically non-existent, the lead of "Ukrainians" over "Poles" is more than counterbalanced by the facts of social life, intermarriage,

¹ The "Botha Line" was suggested, on 12th May 1919, by the Inter-Allied Committee for the Polish-Ukrainian Armistice in Paris, whose chairman was General Louis Botha, the South African statesman. It proposed to divide temporarily Eastern Galicia between the Poles and the Ukrainians along a line which left Lwow to Poland, but without the oil-wells of Drohobycz.

centuries of symbiosis, and the affinities of "Ukrainians" here with Poland and with western civilisation, rather than with Russia and the East. In the other districts, which were in Russian hands for a time (1795-1915) Russians in 1931 numbered about a hundred thousand (2%) and the Polish majority over any other national group is pronounced. The census figures of 1931 for districts II., III., and IV. combined were:—

Poles - - -	-	2,039,000	(34%)
Ukrainians - -	-	1,494,000	(25%)
White-Ruthenians	-	928,000	(16%)
Polesians - -	-	711,000	(12%)
Jews - - -	-	558,000	(9%)
Russians - -	-	101,000	(2%)
Lithuanians - -	-	76,000	(1%)
Germans - -	-	50,000	(1%)
Czechs - - -	-	31,000	(—)
Others - - -	-	9,000	(—)
Total - - -		-	5,997,000 (100%)

Geographically, the area which this population occupies is roughly bounded in the east by meridian 27° E., in the Pripet Marshes; on the north by the 1939 Latvian, Lithuanian and East Prussian frontiers; on the west and south by the "Spa Line," which was to pass close to Grodno and Brest-on-Bug (Litovsk), and then along the former Austro-Russian frontier. This area was annexed by Russia in 1795. The 1939 Russo-Polish frontier, which was established by the Treaty of Riga in 1921, was almost identical with that which obtained before 1795. The "Spa Line" of 10th July 1920, had it gone through, would have left Russia all her gains by the Third (1795) Partition as well. The "Curzon Line" (11th July 1920) would have added to this Eastern Galicia, giving Russia something she had never had. The three eighteenth-century partitions of Poland were not, of course, based on ethnical considerations. The eighteenth century did not know the word, and it cared less for the principle. Queerly enough, the would-be ethnic solution of 1920 turned out almost exactly identical

with the act of violence of 1795. In the perspective of history, the "Curzon Line" modifying the "Špa" and "1795" line, is just a change to Poland's disadvantage. Was the ethnical argument superimposed merely to confuse an idealistic but ill-informed and unsuspecting public opinion?

It is time to study the three districts individually:—

II. The Southern Block (Volhynia).

Volhynia lies between Polesia and S.E. Poland (Eastern Galicia). It has a strong Ukrainian majority of 68% (1,494,000). Yet it would be a mistake to confuse the Volhynian Ukrainians with those of Eastern Galicia. In creed, the former belong to the Orthodox Church, the latter to the Catholic; while there is a world of difference in the form which their Ukrainian nationalism takes. In Eastern Galicia the Ukrainian nationalist movement was fostered, as was explained, by Germany and Austria, being used also against the Poles; in Volhynia it was a native reaction against the Russification that Moscow would have them undergo. In Volhynia, therefore, Ukrainians and Poles had a strong common bond in common opposition to Russia. It was for this reason that the Volhynian Ukrainians fought side by side with the Poles in the Polish-Soviet War of 1919-1920. And during the whole life of the Polish Republic between 1919 and 1939 there was no discord between Poles and Ukrainians. Their political representation in the Polish Diet, "The Ukrainian Union of Volhynia," pursued a policy of close co-operation. While the East-Galician Ukrainians, therefore, are closely tied to the Poles by common civilisation and religion, the Volhynian Ukrainians are bound by common understanding of, for them, the political necessity of union with the Polish Republic.

Another strong bond with Poland was the liberty which the Orthodox Church enjoyed in Poland. The Volhynian Ukrainians were again, after their return to the Polish State in 1919, captains of their conscience, having got rid of the Tsarist State Orthodox Church, which was one of the instruments of forced Russification. Their clergy were

henceforward educated at the College of Orthodox Theology ; their Church had complete autonomy, and was run by the Episcopal Synod.

The strength of the Polish minorities in the eleven districts of Volhynia were : Vladimir Volynski, 27% ; Kostopol, 22% ; Luck, 19% ; Horochov, 17% ; Sarny, 17% ; Zdolbunov, 15% ; Rovne, 15% ; Dubno, 14% ; Lubomla, 14% ; Kshemienietz, 11%.

III. The Central or Pripet Marsh Block (Polesia).

The area of the Pripet Marshes (Polesia) is a triangle whose peak is at Brest-on-Bug (Litovsk) ; its northern arm runs from Brest south of Baranovitche, its southern from Brest to Sarny ; the base is the meridian 27° E., which cuts the Pripet Marshes. Geographically, physiographically and ethnically, the Polesia block is different from either the Vilno or the Volhynia block.

The natural conditions—marshes, lack of roads (there is a railway line from Brest through Pinsk, Luniniec to the Soviet border) mostly river and lake traffic—determine the ways of life of the Polesians. They speak an archaic language which is neither White-Ruthenian nor Ukrainian. They live dispersed in small communities, even in single cottages, and, being very little in touch with each other, are very individually-minded. Polesians grew ethnically to a distinct race, with, however, the consciousness of dissimilarity from others rather than that of a nationality of their own. They classify themselves at census time as “ native residents.”

Polesia, in 1931, had 1,132,000 inhabitants, who spoke :—

Polesian, local dialects	711,000	(63%)
Polish - - -	163,400	(14%)
Yiddish - - -	112,000	(10%)
White-Ruthenian -	74,000	(7%)
Ukrainian - - -	53,100	(5%)
Russian - - -	16,200	(1%)
Miscellaneous - -	2,300	(—)
Total - - -	<u>1,132,000</u>	<u>(100%)</u>

In no district do Poles form more than a quarter of the population. Here are the figures :—Niesvitz, 24% ; Brest-on-Bug (Litovsk), 23% ; Pinsk, 16% ; Stolin, 15% ; Luniniec, 15% ; Kosov, 10% ; Kobryn, 9% ; Drohitchyn, 7% ; Kamien Kosyrski, 7%. Other nationalities, however, make an even poorer showing. Polesia really has no national allegiance, and it has no national consciousness of its own.

IV. The North-Eastern or Vilno Block.

The economic and cultural centre is the City of Vilno (200,000 inhabitants), which has—Poles, 66% ; Jews, 28% ; Ukrainians, 4% ; Lithuanians, 1% ; White-Ruthenians, 1% ; The percentages of Poles in the various districts of the Vilno block are :—Vilno-Troki, 84% ; Shtchutchyn (Szczuczyn), 84% ; Oshmyana, 82% ; Lida, 79% ; Volozyn, 67% ; Braclav, 66% ; Sviencyany (Swieciany), 52% ; Stolpce, 52% ; Postavy (east of Vilno), 48% ; Baranovitche 47% ; Vileyka, 46% ; Slonim, 43% ; Dzisna, 39% ; Molodetchno, 39% ; Novogrodek, 23%.

The number of Lithuanians in the Vilno block is 76,000, *i.e.*, 5% of the total. The Russians, about 40,000 in number, live dispersed in the area. Most of them are of old immigrant stock which found refuge from the religious persecution of the Tsars in the seventeenth and at the beginning of the eighteenth centuries. They belong to a sect of "Old Believers" (Staroviery) who govern themselves in ecclesiastical matters on the presbyterian principle, and who use the old script and ritual. The sect was savagely persecuted in Russia.

Jews in the Vilno block are a numerous community. Vilno itself was the seat of "The Jewish National Institute," a centre of Yiddish research with connections all over the world. The Hebraic Seminar in Vilno trained teachers of Hebrew. At Radun, the Rabbinic College had a world-wide reputation among the Jewry. The Jews of Vilno, Polesia and Volhynia blocks have quite a different mentality from that of their co-religionists in East Galicia.

The White-Ruthenians predominate in four districts

only ; in others they are either no more than equal with the Poles or constitute only a small minority. The White-Ruthenians, as a rule, are not interested in politics, except the problems of local government. They are industrious and determinedly individualist, regarding any social order which would seek to deprive them of personal liberty and property as hostile. Ethnically they are neither Poles nor Russians ; their tongue is phonetically more akin to Polish than to Russian. There is nothing like a White-Ruthenian culture. Under Russian rule, its middle class preferred to join Polish intellectual circles rather than Russian.

This fact, together with the prevailing Polish majority, makes the Vilno block an integral part of Western civilisation. This was acknowledged even by Tsar Alexander I. when he agreed to the re-establishment of the Polish University in Vilno—which dated back to the Academy of Vilno (1578)—though it was closed later when the country was subjected to strong Russification. The Germans, who occupied this area during the First World War, also recognised the Polish-Western quality of the country in their first manifesto to the people of Vilno.

Under Polish rule a great educational work has been performed in the four blocks whose fate is involved in the "Curzon Line" proposal. The Tsarist Government especially had regarded primary instruction as a menace to autocratic rule. The Polish census in 1921 revealed that in the former Russian-occupied territory (Polesia, Vilno and Volhynia blocks) 65% of the adults were illiterate and 41% of the children in the 10 to 14 age group ; in the former Austrian-occupied territory (E. Galicia), 32% and 26% respectively. In the ten years between 1921-1931, the figures for the three provinces fell to 41% illiterate adults and 17% children ; in Eastern Galicia to 24% adults and 8% children.

In 1910, the number of primary schools (with instruction in Russian only) was in the three provinces 3698, with 242,100 pupils ; in 1937 it was 6312 schools with 841,500 pupils (instruction being given in all the languages concerned ; schools with Polish only as the language of

instruction are not included in these figures). By 1937 in the "Curzon Line" four provinces (East Galicia, Polesia, Vilno, Volhynia) the number of children who were given instruction in Ukrainian alone was 335,400; in Polish and Ukrainian, 532,200; in White-Ruthenian and Polish, 2300; in Lithuanian alone, 1100; in Polish and Lithuanian, 2200. In a different type of primary school 335,400 children were taught Ukrainian; 8200 White-Ruthenian; and 8600 Lithuanian.

The following figures refer to a higher type of school:— 45 Ukrainian grammar schools—5700 pupils; 4 grammar schools—1200 pupils, with Polish and Ukrainian instruction; 5 Ukrainian professional schools—600 pupils; 1 Ukrainian College for Teachers—100 students; 2 White-Ruthenian grammar schools and 2 Lithuanian ones. There were a number of Jewish schools with instruction in Yiddish.

To fight illiteracy in the adult population evening schools were established, and courses were given by "People's Universities."

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To sum up. In the "Curzon Line" areas:—

1. There are ten different groups, some national, some with no national consciousness. After six centuries of symbiosis, they are so intermixed that it is impossible to draw any completely fair line of ethnical division; in many cases so intermarried that it is impossible to draw any line at all that will not be artificial.

2. The application of an exclusively ethnical standard in drawing up frontiers in this area must do injury to other affinities—social, religious, cultural, historical and economic—that have grown up in the heterogeneous population of this area in the course of six centuries.

3. We observe close to the 1939 Polish-Soviet frontier two concentrations of Polish population: in the north, the compact Vilno block, and in the south, the belt with a Polish majority east of Lwow, along the River Zbrucz.

4. Vilno in the north and Lwow in the south are two great and old Polish intellectual and economic centres—the last bulwarks of western civilisation in Europe.

DISCUSSION.

From the above statement of facts it will be realised that there is no solution on purely ethnical grounds. At least the Riga (1921) Polish frontier is a closer approach to ethnic perfection than the proposed "Curzon Line," and where it falls short, the population is so mixed that a solution is not possible on purely ethnical lines. It has already been suggested that in such circumstances other considerations may properly be entertained, and will in any case make themselves felt in practical politics. Foremost among these considerations we placed, in our view, the welfare of the peoples themselves (though on this they should, by a free vote, be allowed to express an opinion themselves) and the welfare of Europe, which demands at this point a state capable of independent life. For this the proposed "Curzon Line" gives less than the minimum required. This may be considered under three aspects:—(1) Geographical; (2) Economic; (3) Strategic.

GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS.

Western, Central and Eastern Europe, north of the Alps and the Carpathians, form a geographical unity. This is a vast plain, shaped somewhat like an irregular quadrilateral. It is bounded on its northern side by the North, Baltic, White and Arctic Seas, while mountains form its three remaining sides: the Ardennes and the Vosges in the west; the Alps, the Erzgebirge, Sudeten, Tatra, Carpathian, Balkan ranges and the Caucasus in the south; the Urals in the east. It is scored by major rivers. Those in the west flow from south to north; the Rhine, the Elbe, the Oder, the Vistula, the Niemen and the Dvina; those in

the east from north to south—the Dniester, the Dnieper and the Volga. Though a unity, this vast plain has a distinct line of division cutting it into two parts, a western and an eastern. This line runs north to south through the Pripet Marshes, Meridian 27° E. It is also the boundary between two civilisations—the Western-Latin and the Muscovite-Byzantine. It is, of course, no hard and fast division. Nevertheless, broadly speaking, it is an historical fact that people living west of the Pripet Marshes, Meridian 27° E., look to Warsaw, those living east of it to Moscow.

ECONOMIC ASPECT.

The "Curzon Line" area is predominantly agricultural, about 80% of the population deriving its livelihood from the land. But there are also, especially in Eastern Galicia, important mineral resources.

The land is chiefly in the hands of smallholders who hold passionately to their property. 400,000 new proprietors, natives of the area, acquired 3,370,200 acres as the result of the Polish Agrarian Reform, whose aim was the complete abolition of great estates. As a result, the acreage of the farms exceeding 125 acres forms no more than 16% of the total arable areas. Owing to natural conditions the portion of waste land is rather high—Polesia (Pripet Marshes), 21% ; Vilno area, 16% ; Volhynia, 12% ; East Galicia, 7%. About 600,000 acres were reclaimed from the Pripet Marshes during the decade 1927-1937.

The following index numbers of Poland's total yearly production show the importance of the "Curzon Line" area for Poland's national economy, and what a crippling blow its loss would be.

Proportion of
Poland's total
production.

100% <i>i.e.</i>	560,900 tons	Potash Salt.
100% ,,	23,700 ,,	Linseed.

Proportion of
Poland's total
production.

100% <i>i.e.</i>	13,700 tons	Flax Fibre.
100% "	700 "	Ozokerite (which was 80% of the total European production).
79% "	397,000 "	Petroleum.
73% "	93,700 "	Light Gasolene.
49% "	3,058,000 cub. yds.	Sawmill products.
40% "	909,700 tons	Wheat.
39% "	549,200 "	Barley.
39% "	975,200 "	Oats.
33% "	11,306,700 "	Potatoes.
29% "	1,867,400 "	Rye.
	3,420,000 galls.	Spirit.
	66,000 tons	Sugar.

The Percentage share
in Poland's
natural resources.

74%	<i>i.e.</i> , 26,000,000,000 cub. yds. of earth gas, used in power plants and for lighting and heating purposes.
55%	<i>i.e.</i> , 18,300 sq. miles of forests.
54%	quarries.
32%	<i>i.e.</i> , 2,000,000,000 tons of salt deposits.

The "Curzon Line" area includes 37% of Poland's railway and 29% of her road systems.

STRATEGICAL ASPECT.

The writer has been concerned to explain the complexities of the "Curzon Line" question : it will be for politicians to solve it. But the strategical argument has been advanced as an important part of the Russian case for the "Curzon

Line " frontier, since there is obviously no strong argument in favour of carrying the Soviet frontier so far west on historical, ethnical, or economic grounds : it is well, therefore, to see what it involves.

It is questionable, in the light of the experience of this present war, whether the " Curzon Line " would in fact give Soviet Russia the security she seeks. The even more westerly frontier which she obtained under the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement, and which she was given two years to fortify, did not hold up Germany in 1941. Against a phantom, therefore, of security we have to set the lives and happiness of mixed millions who fit no ethnic categories but whose affinities, given free play in freely-held plebiscites, are assuredly with the West and with Poland rather than with any other single State. Moreover, the strategic argument is double-edged. Stability in the Great Plain of Europe demands an independent Poland. This Poland's 1939 frontier, the defensible Pripet Marsh frontier, secures ; the " Curzon Line " would not.

The most essential element, after all, in the security of the vast European plain is not the pushing of frontiers into territories that are historically, ethnically and culturally foreign, but the elimination of sources of potential conflict. Were Russia to force the " Curzon Line " frontier on Poland, the psychological consequences could only be compared with those resulting from the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine from France by the Germans in 1871. Were Russia not to press this claim, which, as we have seen, even strategically is dubious, she would win a durable friendship with Poland that would in itself be one of the strongest imaginable forms of security for her against aggression from further west.



APPENDIX.

DURING the Polish Debate in the Commons on 15th December 1944, the Prime Minister employed a new term: "Curzon Line A," which, he said, "comprises on the Russian side the city of Lwow."¹ The author himself confesses that he cannot follow Mr. Churchill's distinction unless by "Curzon Lines A and B" are meant the demarcation lines which, for an entirely different purpose, were proposed by the Commission for Polish Affairs to the Supreme Council in Paris on 26th April 1919.

The above reference is historically inexact, as was also Mr. Eden's subsequent statement in the December debate: "In the extension of the 'Curzon Line' to the south, two alternatives were recommended to the Supreme Council's Commission on Polish Affairs."²

In this connection, the following explanations may be found helpful:—

1. The "Curzon Line" was a demarcation line which originated in the situation arising from Soviet military operations in July 1920. It is therefore historically inaccurate to refer to it as existing at an earlier date. As we have pointed out on pp. 28-33, the "Curzon Line," as a catchword, was born on 11th July 1920.

2. Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden both spoke of "Curzon Line A." The reader of this book will see that when the "Curzon Line" originated in 1920 there was no such distinction made. The terms "Line A" and "Line B" were used by the Supreme Council's Commission on Polish Affairs in a report, dated 26th April 1919, on the Polish-Ukrainian skirmishes which began in November 1918 and went on for eight months.³ These two lines had nothing to do with the discussions on territorial questions conducted by Poland and the Soviet Union in 1920.

"Line A" was the proposed boundary of an autonomous Eastern Galicia within the Polish Republic. "Line B," which included within the Polish Republic the city of Lwow

¹ *Hansard*, Vol. 406, No. 11, col. 1481.

² *Ibid.*, cols. 1569/70.

³ See above, pp. 49-50.



There is nothing like "Curzon Line A or B."

"Line A" was proposed on 26th April 1919 by the Commission on Polish Affairs to the Supreme Council as a boundary of an autonomous Eastern Galicia inside the Republic of Poland.

"Line B" was suggested as a boundary in the event of the creation of an independent State of Eastern Galician Ukrainians.

Neither "Line A" nor "Line B" materialised because the Supreme Council invited Poland to assume control of the whole of Eastern Galicia.

and the oil-wells of Drohobycz, was suggested as a boundary in the event of the creation of an independent State of Eastern Galician Ukrainians: In a word, "Line A" was never intended to be a state frontier between Poles and Ukrainians. Moreover, had "Line B" been adopted, 1,188,000 Poles would have been left in the Eastern Galician Ukrainian State.

The area between "Line A" and "Line B" is 4725 sq. miles=12,239 sq. km.

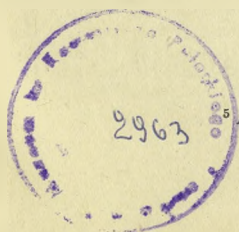
The total population for the area is 1,512,000, divided as follows:—

Poles	-	-	-	687,000	(45%)
Ukrainians	-	-	-	668,000	(44%)
Jews	-	-	-	143,000	(10%)
Germans	-	-	-	10,000	(1%)
Others	-	-	-	4,000	(—)
Total	-	-	-	<u>1,512,000</u>	<u>(100%)</u>

Mr. Eden has suggested that the population was composed of "500,000 Ukrainians, little more than 250,000 Poles and the rest Jews"¹ (*i.e.*, about 750,000—the author). It is difficult to see on what census Mr. Eden based these figures.

Neither "Line A" nor "Line B" materialised as a boundary, because on 25th June 1919 the Supreme Council adopted a resolution authorising Poland to assume control of the whole of the territory of Eastern Galicia.

"Lines A and B" were thus suggestions for a settlement between the Galician Ukrainians and the Poles, and had no connection whatever with the "Curzon Line," which originated fifteen months later. The use of the terms "Curzon Line A" and "Curzon Line B" is thus historically, legally and diplomatically unjustifiable, and merely confuses the issue.



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