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Carpathian
Ruthenia

on the warpath.

CARPATHIAN RUTHENIA
ON THE WARPATH

by
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Where is Ruthenia ? What are the Ruthenians like ? Those questions were often asked on the eve of the Armistice in 1918. One by one the people of Europe were putting forward their claims to national freedom.

Among them were the Ruthenians. They are a pastoral and ancient people living on the slopes of the beautiful Carpathian Mountains in the heart of Europe.

They knew that they were only a small people. Their country is smaller than Northern Ireland. They number less than a million. They asked for freedom, not for complete independence. They knew that they were too small to run a well-defended State of their own. They wanted to live in partnership with the Czechs and the

Slovaks. Their leaders went to the Peace Conference in Paris and told the Allied leaders that they wanted to enter into a close union with the Czechs and Slovaks. They wanted to become an integral part of the new Czechoslovak Republic.

They had their way. The Treaty of St. Germain recognised that Ruthenia was an autonomous part of Czechoslovakia.

So Ruthenia is marked in all the post-Versailles maps of Europe. She lies between Eastern Galicia and Hungary. She is Czechoslovakia's bridge to Rumania ; the link between the oilfields of Rumania and the Skoda works of Czechoslovakia.

So long as Czechoslovak frontier guardsmen stood near the snowy peaks of the Carpathians, Germany's eastward aggression was checked. Rumanian oil could flow smoothly to the engines of civil aircraft and private cars. The frontier guardsmen on the Carpathian mountains stood between Germany and the Ploesti oilfields. Sooner or later, since she had made up her mind to rule all Europe, Germany would have to drive the frontier guardsmen off the Carpathians. For Germany the destruction of Czechoslovakia was a necessity of war.

Six years ago Hitler marked Ruthenia down for certain destruction. He boasted that he would create a greater Ukraine under German patronage. Ruthenia was to become part of his Greater Ukraine. He set out to win the active sympathies of the Ruthenians. He then planned to make their peaceful country a base for his attacks upon Poland and the Soviet Union.

He was greatly mistaken. Ruthenians are a shrewd countryfolk. They know that their destiny as a free people is bound up with the fortunes of the Czechs and the Slovaks. They refused to pay any heed to Hitler's blandishments. At the time of Munich their patriotism was as firm as a rock.

A few months later Hitler pretended to alter his plans. He took Bohemia and

Moravia—the two Czech lands—for himself. He gave a mock independence to Slovakia. But Ruthenia he handed over to the Hungarians. They lost no time in occupying Ruthenia. So Hungary shared with the Germans a common guilt for the total dismemberment of the Czechoslovak Republic in March, 1939. The gods feared those who came bringing gifts. The gift of Ruthenia merely bound the Magyars to the German war chariot. Hitler meant in the end to number Hungary among the occupied countries.

The Ruthenians resisted. They are still resisting.

And now the once invincible Germany Army has been driven back to the Ruthenian mountains. The German Army is still retreating. Already part of Ruthenia's frontier has been reached by the advancing Soviet forces. With them are Czechoslovak units formed on Soviet soil. Many Ruthenians are fighting with them. They all wear British battle-dress.

The more the Germans retreat the more they find the difficulties of the mountain-country magnified. Ruthenian guerillas allow them absolutely no rest. They are in constant touch with Soviet soldiers and with conscripts eager to desert from the German lines. They read the mind of the advancing Soviet Army. They know every yard of their own mountainous and rugged country.

Thus the day of their liberation is fast approaching. For century after century the Ruthenians have struggled against the restless and rapacious Germans and Magyars. Once, in the distant past, Ruthenia belonged to a great Bulgar Empire, but the greater part of her recorded history is one of bondage under the Magyars,

THE ★ REPUBLIC ★ OF
CZECHOSLOVAKIA



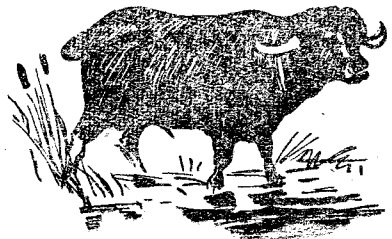


who held sway over the Slovaks as well. The Magyars shattered the old Ruthenian nobility. A few they allowed to make common cause with them, but the others they put to the sword or else reduced to a state of serfdom. They turned all the farmers and cattle grazers into vassals.

The nineteenth century was a century of hope for all downtrodden people in Europe. Byron fought for Greece. Gladstone and nearly all the enlightened people in Britain gave their blessing to the unification of Italy. Bulgaria won her ill-used freedom. The Slavs living within the Austrian Empire were eager to gain their freedom. The revolutionary year of 1848 seemed for a time to bring them

near their goal. The Ruthenians had an admirable leader in Adolf Dobrjansky. They actually won a certain amount of administrative autonomy and the right to make full use of their own language. Less than twenty years later came the great administrative division—the Ausgleich—between Austria and Hungary. Ruthenia was bound hand and foot to Hungary. Magyar tyranny was once again complete.

No wonder hopes were revived when, in 1914, the Austrian Empire found itself engulfed in the first World War. There were many profound disappointments and anxieties. Brave Russian troops, ill-armed by incompetent Czarist masters, were driven back. Their revolutionary leaders were compelled to make a humiliating peace with Germany. But in the end the Allied cause was victorious. The Austrian Empire was broken, and for ever. The Magyar shackles fell off Slovakia and Ruthenia. They were free. Before them dawned the years of happiness and contentment. They happened to be pathetically few.

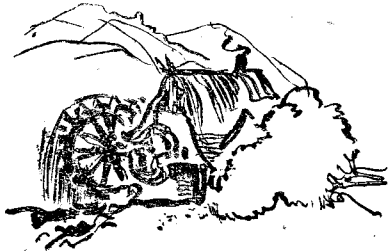




Ruthenia was free, but poor and badly undeveloped. Enormous tasks lay ahead. They needed for their success all the talent and ability that the new Czechoslovak Republic had at its command. Profound changes were inevitable. The Ruthenians did not want to remain backward. They clamoured for new houses, new schools, new businesses. They wanted to revive their ancient crafts, to found banks in which they could put their savings and to bring a general air of prosperity into the marketplace. They had good wine and fruit to exchange for the industrial goods of Bohemia and Moravia. They wanted to repair the neglected highways and to build new bridges. There was everywhere an air of gay confidence.

But the difficulties were many. The old Magyar administration had been careless and hopelessly corrupt. Administration had to be good, simple and cheap. Only a few Ruthenians had been trained for administrative work. Time was needed.

The new Czechoslovak administration set out to be as simple as possible. Simple folk like to have their affairs settled on the spot. They do not want a lot of formalities. They must talk with officials who speak their own language and who try to be as helpful as possible. The written word was usually in Russian or Ukrainian, though the Ruthenians, the Czechs and the



Slovaks have very little difficulty in understanding each other.

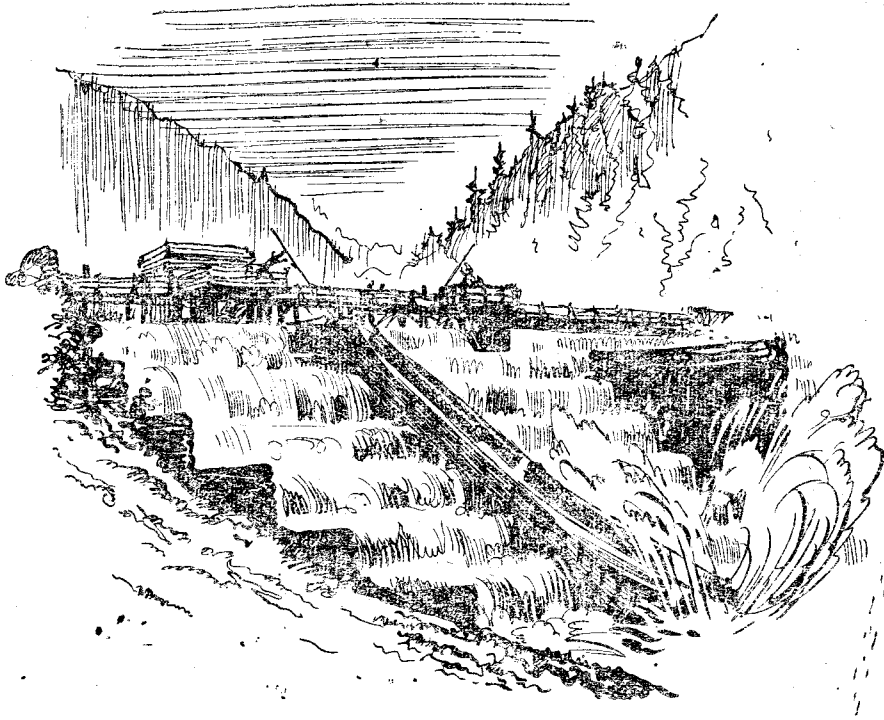
The Ruthenians had been oppressed by the old administration, and won that was swept away. They were also oppressed by their former landlords. The landlords had gone. The land remained. But the system of land tenure was in desperate need of reform.

Within 15 years nearly 30,000 Ruthenian tenant-farmers or farm workers had received grants of land. Another reform was the establishment of many self-supporting estates. Their sites were carefully chosen and they worked well.

To each estate was attached a fair proportion of meadowland and forest. Everything was done to increase the acreage under pasture and to make cattle-breeding a great national industry. The dairyman came into his own and a fine Ruthenian cheese held its own with cheese from Switzerland and the Argentine as among the finest in the world.

But although the forests gave place now and again to new pasture land the Czechoslovak administrators never misunderstood the vast forest wealth of Ruthenia. They knew that good forestry and good farming go together. A treeless farm can never be a really good farm. There was never the slightest danger of soil erosion. But what have the Germans done with these fine forests? The forests of Europe are not inexhaustible. A second World War has, in fact, brought us within reach of a tree famine with disastrous results for Europe and North America. Have the Germans ruthlessly hacked down the old Ruthenian giants in their desperate desire to have enough timber for their war needs?



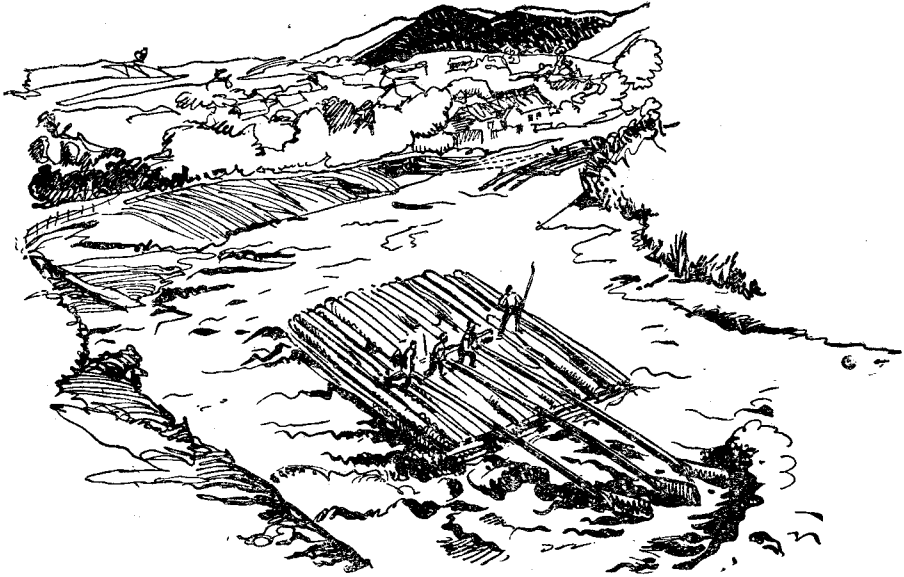


Nearly half the country, it is true, is covered with virgin forests, Nature has been bountiful. But man is careless, and the German is ruthless. Unless he is driven out quickly, the damage which he is doing may bear its mark for centuries to come.

Ruthenia does not pretend to be anything but an agricultural country. Her people are deeply rooted in the soil. Her vineyards yield cherished wines for the citizens of Prague and Brno. Her abundant fruit has given a world-wide fame to the jams of Moravia and Slovakia. Czechoslovak tobacco is grown in Ruthenia.



But Ruthenia, though a country of land-workers, is not without subsidiary industries. A number of factories sprang up when the Ruthenians became free. Before the last war the Magyars took care that there should be no more than 27 factories in the whole of Ruthenia. Fourteen years ago Ruthenia had nearly 20 times that number. Food factories, timber works, printing works, brick making and glass-making factories—all were flourishing. So



were metallurgic centres and chemical works. The country was given an abundant supply of cheap electricity.

Czechoslovakia set out to be an ideal democratic Republic. She had complete freedom of worship and opinion. She had advanced systems of social insurance. All these benefits flowed freely to Ruthenia. Moreover, the Ruthenians insisted always upon giving something themselves. They were fully represented in the Legislature. Their sons had a fine record of service as soldiers or airmen. They were, in fact, co-authors of Czechoslovakia's democracy.

At the time of Munich only two European countries to the south-east of the Rhine still remained faithful to their democratic traditions. One was Switzerland. The other was Czechoslovakia. In setting foot upon Ruthenia the advancing Soviet troops have set foot upon a country pledged to the democratic way of life.

High wages were paid in Bohemia and Moravia. They reacted most favourably upon agricultural Ruthenia.

But man does not live by bread alone. He wants, among other things, health





and a good education. In the days of the Republic, Ruthenia gained both in abundant measure. She had many new hospitals; ante-natal advice centres and tuberculosis clinics. A close watch was kept on the hygiene of every village. Marshes were drained, rivers canalised and the towns provided with a proper sewerage system. The effect of all these measures upon the health of the Ruthenian people was almost instantaneous. Under Magyar rule tuberculosis and spotted typhus raged throughout the country. Within 15 years they had become only a memory;

	HUNGARY :	CZECHOSLOVAKIA :	
	1913	1921	1936
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS WITH RUTHENIAN AS EDUCATIONAL LANGUAGE :	81 [house icon] [stick figures]	476 [house icon] [stick figures]	630 [house icon] [stick figures]
HIGHER ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	[house icon] [circle]	15 [house icon] [stick figures]	
SECONDARY SCHOOLS	[house icon] [circle]	10 [house icon] [stick figures]	

a tale told to the children now living under German rule.

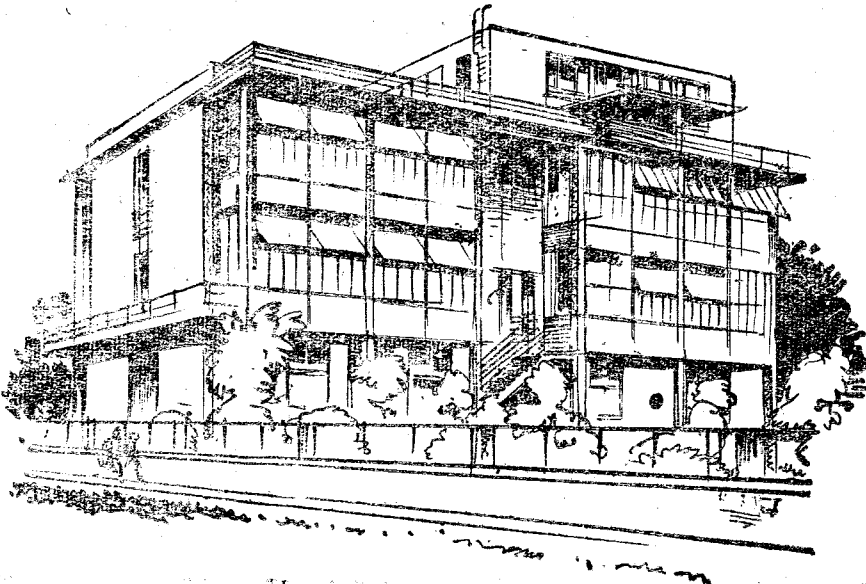
The health centres were not alone responsible for this providential change of affairs.

More than half the improvement was due to the reform of education. The Magyars had kept a fundamentally good people in ignorance and poverty. They encouraged superstition and tolerated dirt. They did not want the Ruthenian people to become conscious of

their heritage. All this was to be ended by the new Republic. From the evil effects of a faulty education there is, perhaps, little chance of a full escape. The young were grand material. Schools were enlarged and increased. Illiteracy became a thing unknown among the young.

Hundreds of books were printed in the Ruthenian language. Ruthenian periodicals made their appearance. Ruthenia was making a very definite contribution to the culture of Czechoslovakia and Central Europe.




But she had her growing pains. The evil consequences of the centuries-old Ma-



gyar tyranny were not completely overcome in a year or even in a decade. Thomas Masaryk, the great President-Liberator of Czechoslovakia, used to argue that Czechoslovakia needed a full half-century of peaceful development if she was really to solve all her minority problems. Czechoslovakia was never given a full half-century for peaceful development. She had but two decades of peace.



FLATS (LIVING ACCOMODATIONS) IN UZHOROD

1910	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>HUNGARY:</i></p> 	
1930		<p style="text-align: center;"><i>CZECHOSLOVAKIA:</i></p> 
1937		

They were not really decades of peace at all. Early in 1933 Hitler came to power in Germany. From that day the dream of peace was ended.

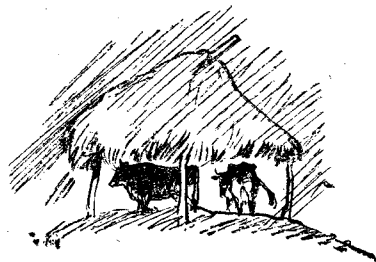
Hitler was obsessed by the greatness of the Ukraine. He argued that Ruthenia was part of the Ukraine. He was determined to become her master. In 1940 he had the rich prize of France. Britain lay exposed to attack. The British people expected their island-fortress to be invaded. But the loss of the Battle of Britain sent Hitler back upon his insane lust for the Ukraine. The Ukraine, he shouted, should be "free."

He forgot the freedom of the Ukrainian people the freedom of choice.

The Ukrainian people fought with their life-blood. Their great cities were taken. Their rich cornfields were laid waste. The granary which Hitler coveted became a scorched earth. The Soviet people had the will to resist. Back across the Ukraine went a wounded and desperate German Army—denied Leningrad, Moscow and Stalingrad; denied the collapse of the Soviet people.

That stature belongs also to the Ruthenian people.

After 20 years of freedom within the Czechoslovak Republic have come five years of oppression. Their Magyar masters entered into possession again and it is certain that nearly all the reforms were swept away. Magyars from Budapest made their claims upon the well-run land allotments. Land owners took away the peasants' heritage. If those new factories are still working, they are under





Magyar or German management. The schools, in all probability, are once more in decay. Over the Nazi Empire hovers the spirit of death.

The past five years have been a severe testing-time. For long, victory seemed doubtful or remote. Hitler was master of Europe Far as the eye might range from a Carpathian mountain the land was Hitler's. What were the Ruthenian peasants to know of British sea power, or, except in letters sent home, of the vast potentialities of the United States? Yet the Ruthenians never gave way. They had tasted freedom. They would be content with nothing less.

They saw, more than three years ago, that Hitler was preparing to attack the Soviet Union. The lust for the Ukraine had made him crazy. It gave the Ruthenians high hope. They believe sincerely in the greatness of Russia. From Russia and Ukraine comes their culture and the form of their religion. These are things which their Magyar masters were always quite unable to destroy.

Hard days lie ahead—perhaps for all the Czechoslovak people. Czechoslovakia is the fortress of Europe. The Germans will do the best to defend her, though the revolt and sabotage of the Czechoslovak people will make things infinitely difficult for them. No Ruthenian, no Czech, no Slovak will shirk the tasks of to-day. None have asked that his country shall be spared the scars of battle.

Hail to the Ruthenian. He sees the Soviet soldier encamped in the Carpathians. He knows that the German order in Europe is doomed. For his long refusal to make common cause with the enemies of his country will come at last the reward of freedom. He looks to us to shape the coming peace that the Carpathians will never again be made a citadel of iniquity.

SEE RUTHENIA AFTER THE WAR

When the armistice is signed, what will you do? Plan a holiday in Europe? That is a long way off. The people of Europe have still to be freed, clothed, fed, resettled in the homes from which the Germans drove them. A host of temporary officials will be wanted in Europe. The tourist will have to wait.

But not for ever. The tourist will have the freedom of Europe again. It will be a greater freedom. Wherever he goes the tourist will meet men and women grateful for the stand which the British made in 1940.

Where then will you go? Why not to Ruthenia? Book your journey early. Ruthenia will have many memories for those who fought for freedom on the Eastern front. Many a Ruthenian village is likely to get a world-renown before this war is over.

Taste the wine of Ruthenia. Swim in her tree-sheltered rivers. Climb her mountains. Walk through her beautiful forests. Ride across country. Hunt the wild boar. Examine the rugged castles which remind you that Ruthenia's brief freedom was not won until she had borne many centuries of war.

There are spa waters and brine baths. There are shepherd huts and many beautiful wooden churches. The forests and the mountains have a beauty unsurpassed in Europe. There are springs of ice-cold water in which to bathe after a long walk.

You may not be able to speak the people's language. That is a pity. They are friendly. Their language is poetical. Their folk-lore is exceedingly rich. But here and there you will find a young man—or, maybe, even a middle-aged man—who fled from his country so as to fight for her freedom. He has learned in exile to speak English. He will explain the customs and festivities which are crowded around the wooden church. The songs which the Ruthenians sing will not sound strange to you. Throughout the war you have been listening, even if a little unconsciously, to the music of Dvorak and Smetana. Both found good foundations in the folk-songs of their own country. Some of those songs belong to Ruthenia.

Ruthenia is, indeed, a land of song. Sorrow and song may seem to go together. But life in Ruthenia is virile, tough, eager. The will to live has kept the Ruthenians together through the grimmest years. Above the hardness there is gaiety, sympathy, a nimbleness of wit. The sun shines and the air is vibrant with music.

If you want a luxury hotel, keep away from Ruthenia. She has never built up a tourist industry. Go to Ruthenia only if you are sound in limb and wind. Go to Ruthenia if your heart is young and if you like the simple things of life—mountain air and scenery, rocks and springy turf, the wind and the heather, loneliness and the companionship of youth. Go to Ruthenia if you travel light—if you want swimming

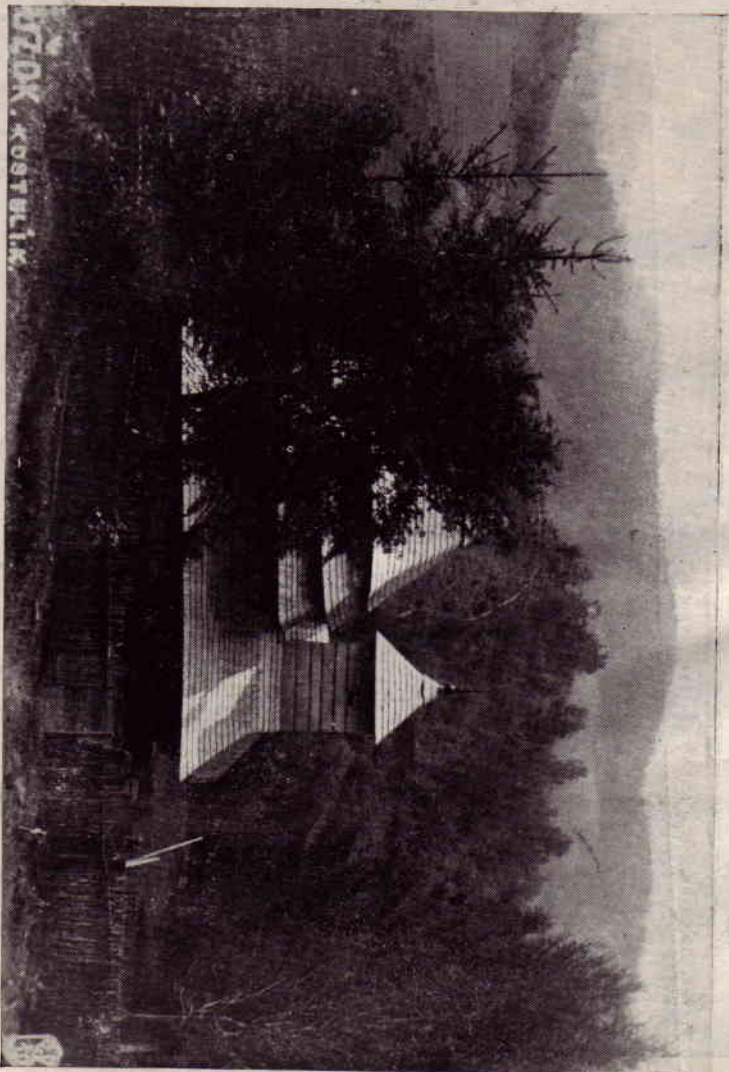
shorts for the summer and skis for the winter. Go to Ruthenia if you are a man with a gun. Go to Ruthenia if you want snow-covered slopes and frozen mountain-lakes. Go to Ruthenia if you want wild, sun-clad beauty. Go to Ruthenia if you want to see where the West meets the East ; the mountain fastness of Central Europe.

If you have seen Ruthenia, you are at least a well-travelled man.





Ensemble performing in a room with a woven wall. The ensemble includes a flutist, a clarinetist, a pianist, and a drummer.

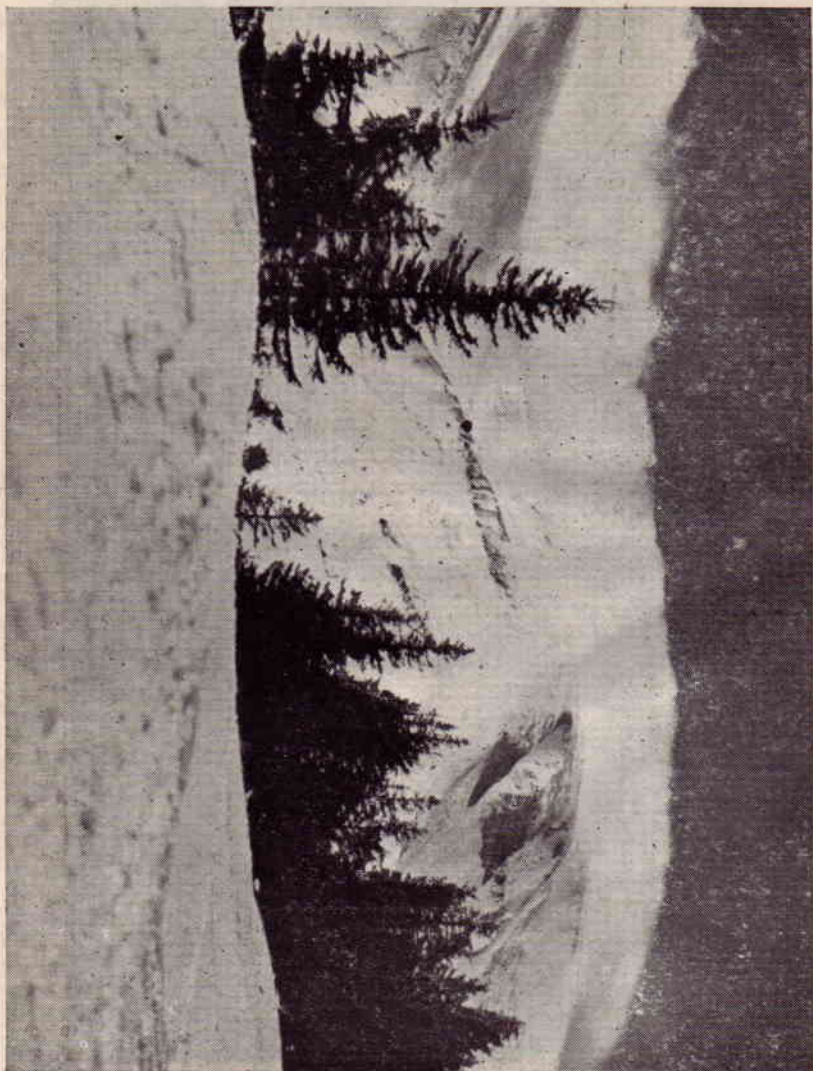


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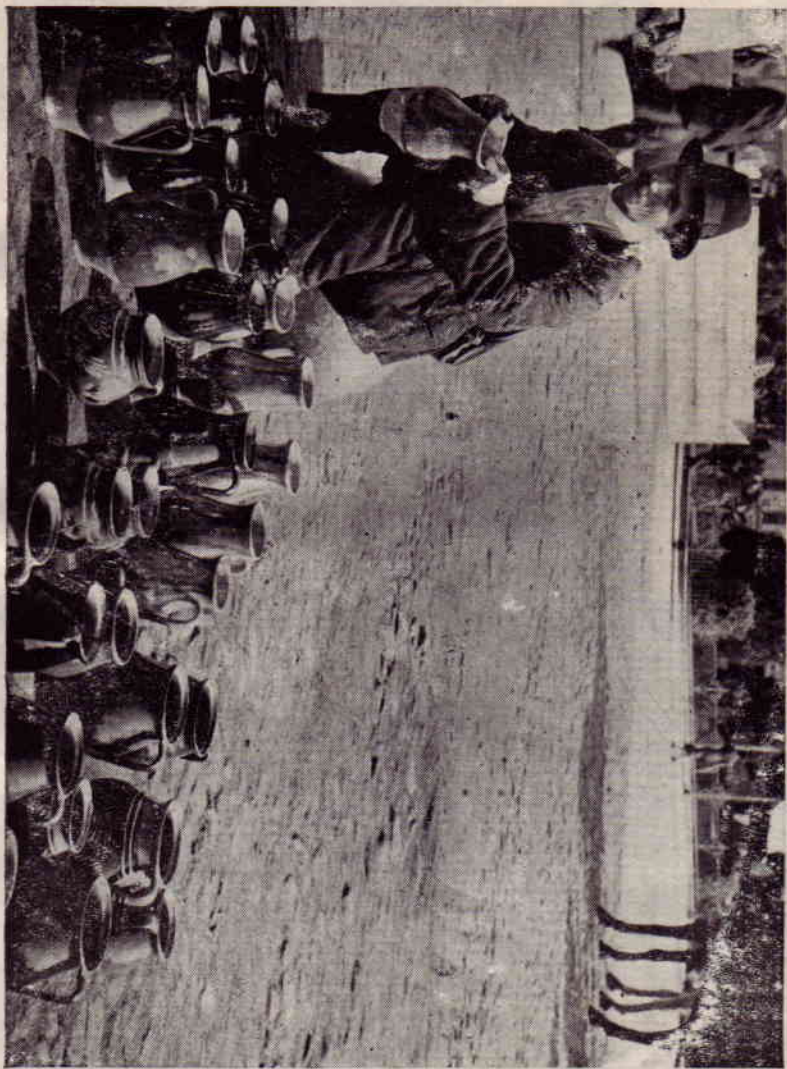


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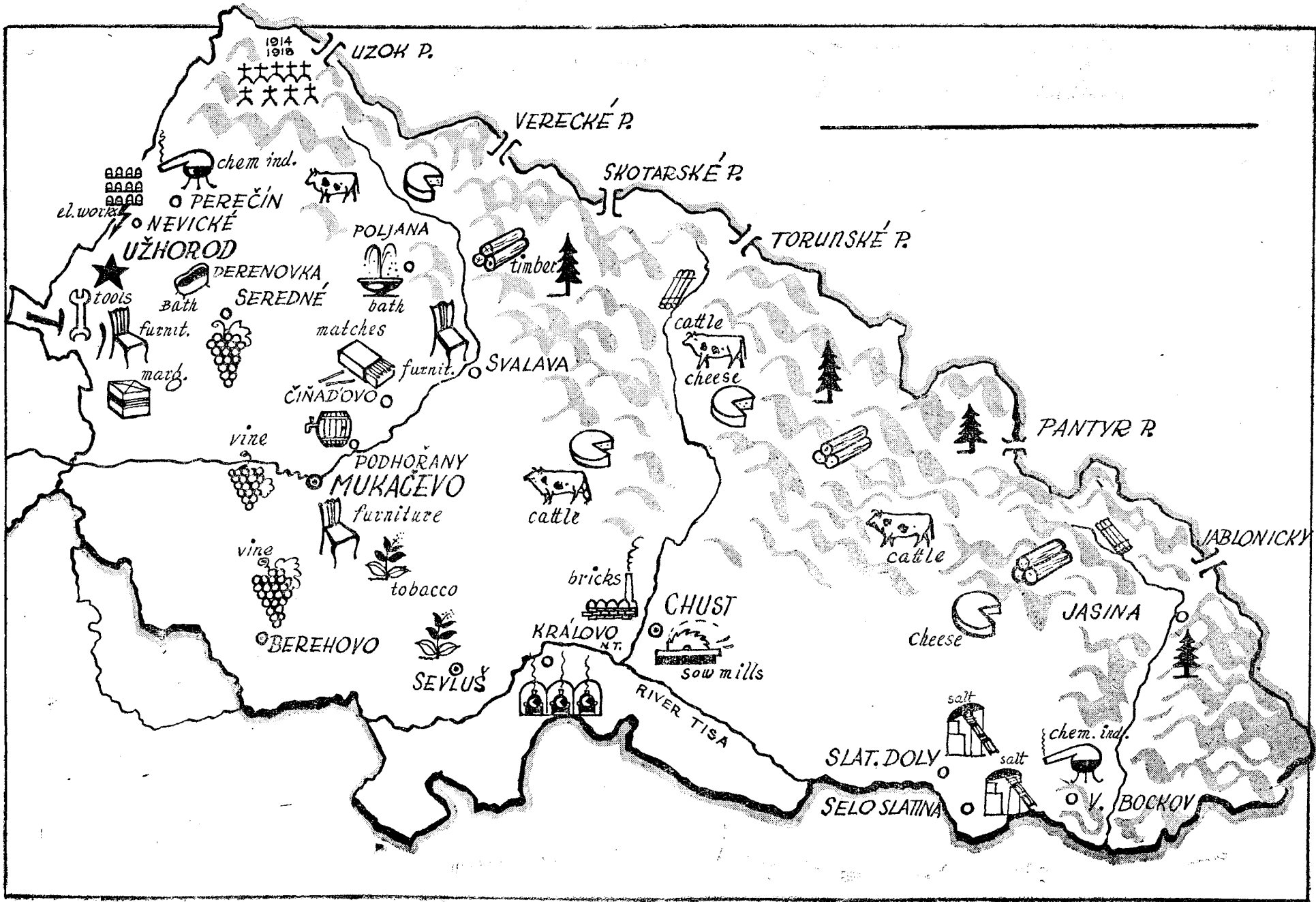
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Books on Carpathian Ruthenia

Sunrise on Ruthenia

By HENRY BAERLEIN

... a bald outline of Ruthenia's story; and in this book there are filled in some details, lurid and beautiful, with tragedy in them and even comedy.

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