CHAPTER VII

Siberia*

RUDOLF BOLLING TEUSLER served his country and humanity well in peace. And in war, his contributions were equally notable.

Most of the setting of this story is in Siberia itself—that land of mystery and drama. Here in the heat of the short, burning northern summers, and in the numbing chill of the long, freezing winters, he set up and administered one of the great public relief projects of all time.

It was done through and in the name of the American Red Cross. And no man ever more loyally and conscientiously served the "Greatest Mother in the World" than did Rudolf Teusler. Yet the war work of the American Red Cross in Siberia reflected the bold initiative, the fearless disregard of precedents, and the dauntless will-to-do that were the lifelong characteristics of the physician from Tokyo.

This story harks back to the summer of 1918.

* This chapter on Colonel Teusler's services in Siberia was written by Mr. Riley H. Allen, editor of the *Honolulu Star Bulletin*. Mr. Allen went to Siberia with the American Red Cross in November, 1918, on call from the Siberian Commission, and later was designated acting commissioner with rank of lieutenant-colonel. As secretary and director of publicity for the Siberian Commission during the greater part of his service, he was closely in contact with Dr. Teusler, travelling with him when on his field trips and otherwise having an exceptional opportunity to observe his "extremely effective" work.

On the west front, the Germans were making their last great thrust. America's two million men sent overseas were bringing the war toward its end—with victory for the Allies. Italy, nearly paralyzed by her bitter reverses, was still holding on, buoyed up by the Allies and Americans. And down in the Near East, General Allenby was capitalizing on that dramatic "revolt in the desert" engineered by the romantic Lawrence of Arabia, and others, and forcing the Turks to their knees.

For a few months longer, on that torn western front, the great war machine was to grind on, with its terror, its devastation, and its countless unknown and unsung heroisms. But the end of that was in sight. In September and October the Germans, halted in their desperate smashes on the Allied lines, yielded, retreated, broke under the mounting pressure of the fresh American troops—and on November 11 the roar of guns died down, and an appalling quiet came over the long line of bloodshed and misery and ferocity.

But the summer of 1918 brought no relief from war to the far land of Siberia. And the signing of the Armistice in November brought no peace to this remote arena torn and bloodstained by the far repercussions of history's greatest combat up to that time.

In October of 1917 had come the revolution in Russia. The tumultuous months went by. Kerensky and the Social Revolutionary government fell. Bolshevism rode the saddle. The separate peace made by the new Russian leaders with the Germans at Brest-Litovsk took the Russian armies out of the war and started millions of men streaming homeward from the lines in Poland, the Carpathians, Austria, the Balkans.

The German-Russian peace treaty did not end the conflict

in European Russia or in the great Russian hinterland of Siberia, across the Ural Mountains.

Civil war was developing between the Bolsheviks, with their Red Guards, and the conservatives, who later set up their "white" regimes and created their White Guards.

There was another group in Russia—one which was soon to furnish history with one of its greatest sagas of adventure, fortitude, and final success in military achievement. This was the Czecho-Slovak soldiery.

The Czechs and Slovaks were subjects of Austria-Hungary under the old Dual Monarchy reigned over by that ill-fated emperor, Franz Josef. By the tens of thousands, these Czechs and Slovaks were drafted into the Austro-Hungarian armies when the World War broke out, drafted unwillingly, because they were unwilling subjects of the Hapsburgs. For centuries, under duress, they had submitted to this overlordship. But always in their hearts burned the fire of national patriotism. These highly intelligent, courageous and devoted Bohemians and Slovaks always hoped for the day to come when again they would be free.

The World War brought the day. And later President Woodrow Wilson recognized them as an independent people, and urged on the Allies all encouragement to their efforts at freedom. Czecho-Slovakia was set up on paper, and agreed to as an independent country, by the Allied leaders, long before the unwieldly Austro-Hungarian monarchy finally crashed.

The collapse of the Russian monarchy and the signing of peace between Germany and the Bolsheviks at Brest-Litovsk late in 1917 found nearly sixty thousand Czecho-Slovak soldiers in European Russia. Most of them, when as conscripts they were thrust out on the Austro-Russian Front

by their hated Austrian commanders, had seized the first opportunity to go across the lines, fraternize with the Russians, and turn to bear arms against their late oppressors. Some of them had been taken prisoners by the Russians, and were later released to join Russian regiments. Finally there were so many of these skilled soldiers on the Russian side that they formed their own Czecho-Slovak legion.

Poorly armed, poorly clothed, in an alien land, this mass of Czecho-Slovakian soldiery was left in a tragic and perilous position when in 1917 the German-Russian peace treaty was signed. They could not go home. The World War was still on. They would be shot as deserters or, at the very least, put back into the lines, this time on the west front. They could not safely stay in European Russia. They were not Bolsheviks. They were deeply, passionately devoted to political democracy. They were classed by the Bolsheviks as "whites" and as "enemies of the revolution."

During the long winter of 1917–18, slowly these tens of thousands of Czechs, scattered widely over Russia, worked their way into military groups. By spring they were acting in concert. When in the summer of 1918 the Allies and America recognized the Czecho-Slovak National Government, they were ready for action. In the railway stations and on lonely sidings; in their box cars and freight cars and their few passenger cars, they were strung out over a thousand miles of railway in a land whose new rulers, the Bolsheviks, were hostile, and getting ready to turn them over to the Austrian armies. The Czechs emerged; within twenty-four hours, by preconcerted signal, they rose over a thousand miles of railway and took it. They gathered scant supplies, ammunition, food. And they started then to fight their way across European Russia, across Siberia, and

down to the Siberian port of Vladivostok on the Japan Sea, where they hoped the Allies would evacuate them by steamer to France, so that they could join the armies on the western front.

It was a bold and hazardous project; an undertaking of extreme technical difficulty, involving a drive through an alien and largely hostile country—the drive of a few tens of thousands against millions.

The Allies and America were pledged to support the Czecho-Slovakian National Government. By implication they were committed to such aid as they could afford that gallant Czech legion fighting its way up from South Russia to the Ural Mountains, across the sprawling slopes and through the passes, and down through the gloomy Siberian *taiga* (forests) and steppes and river valleys toward the distant Pacific seacoast.

The first move of the Red Cross into Siberia was made to carry relief to the hard-pressed Czechs. Later that initial effort was to grow into a gigantic operation of military and civilian relief, prison camp relief, campaigns against epidemic disease, Red Cross service to the troops of the American Expeditionary Forces in Siberia, and similar work. But at first it was a single and apparently simple task of getting medical and hospital supplies and clothing to the Czechs bringing their echelons (military trains) across Siberia and down to the port of Vladivostok.

The first call for help from the Czechs in Siberia reached the outside world in June, 1918. A representative of the American Y.M.C.A. was with the Czech troops in Siberia. He had been travelling with them for months, as a part of the overseas activity of the Y.M.C.A. for soldiers in the field. This representative, Dr. Russell M. Story, cabled to

the Japan Chapter of the American Red Cross: "Will Red Cross work among Czech troops? Need is serious. Czech organization is prepared to furnish full cooperation and bear expenses not usually assumed by Red Cross."

Dr. Teusler was then engrossed in his increasing work as the directing head and medical chief of St. Luke's Hospital in Tokyo. His reputation as a leader in welfare enterprises and as a physician was widely known. He had been for many years one of the leading American residents in Japan —indeed, of the Far East. He was well known to the American Ambassador at Tokyo; in fact, for a long time he was close to the U. S. State Department through the American diplomatic service.* Professionally as well as because of his intimate contacts with American policy in the Far East, he was a logical choice to head the important Red Cross mission to Siberia that had now been decided upon in Washington. In addition, he was a man of action and an indefatigable worker. Nothing daunted him. Obstacles merely challenged him. The Japan Chapter moved without delay on the message from Dr. Story urgently requesting Red Cross aid for the Czechs. Dr. Teusler was asked to go to Vladivostok to investigate.

The Doctor left Tokyo July 1, 1918. He spent eight days in and near Vladivostok and returned to Japan July 14th. He brought news that not only was the situation of the Czechs serious in its dire need for medical, surgical and hospital attention, but that the breakdown in the Russian Government, and the civil wars threatened an even worse situation in epidemic disease, starvation and general debilitation of the Siberian people.

* Dr. Teusler held the appointment of Medical Attache to the American Embassy, and for years served as physician to other foreign embassies, including the British, Russian, Mexican and Italian.

National attention had been drawn to the plight of the Czechs while Teusler was investigating. The Red Cross in Washington received from the U. S. Navy Department a message from the navy's Asiatic station commander. The U.S.S. *Brooklyn*, then lying in Vladivostok harbor, had been called on to aid badly wounded and sick Czech soldiers. The Navy asked the Red Cross to organize relief work.

The request involved more than direct relief activities. There was in it a factor of national policy. As already indicated, the new Czech nation had become a part of the structure of the Allied Powers opposed to the Central Powers in the World War. As such, they had the political support of the United States. Further, President Wilson and that "grand old man" of Czech nationalism, Thomas Masaryk, were not only personal friends but shared a determination that the Czechs should win and retain their political freedom. The Wilson administration and the State Department therefore took special interest in the relief of the Czechs in Siberia. So when the admiral in charge of the Asiatic station cabled for Red Cross aid, the call reached sympathetic ears. The State Department agreed with the President that American aid should be given cordially, expertly, and immediately.

Obviously the American Red Cross was the agency to handle the situation. It had done splendid service in France; it had trained personnel—and some of that personnel was not far from Siberia. The Fourteenth Division of the Red Cross was the overseas division, and it included not only the American territory of Hawaii but also the Philippines, China, Japan and Korea. In all these countries there were chapters, and at least the nucleus of a Red Cross flying

squadron. Their work had for a year been devoted to the service of America's troops in France and sailors at sea in the war zone. This experience in organization of personnel and making and forwarding material was now available for America's new task of relief in Siberia.

So Dr. Teusler of Tokyo was drafted to head the work in Siberia. The call came from Washington, first cabled through the United States Ambassador, Roland S. Morris, at Tokyo, and it was sharp and urgent, for there was no time for delay. It was a call that Teusler could not refuse. It was not only in the name of country but in the name of humanity; moreover, it was just the sort of thing that appealed to him. It had drama and immensity of scope—an immensity, however, that few but he then saw. Twelve days after his return from Vladivostok, he was bound again for the Russian port—this time on a long, arduous and often dangerous duty, as chief of the American Red Cross Commission that had been set up.

With him were three fellow-Americans of Tokyo, Everett W. Frazar, Langdon Warner, U. S. Consul-at-large and George S. Phelps. The first was—and is—one of the veteran Americans of the Far East. He is easily to be rated as one of America's foremost businessmen in Asia. His intelligent grasp of business problems and his unfailing patience, courtesy and kindliness were tremendous assets to the Red Cross in the two years that followed. G. S. Phelps was an American of long residence in the Far East. He was Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. in Japan—a loyal, sterling worker. It was a good team.

Their steamer across the Japan Sea was crowded. They slept on deck, rolled in inadequate blankets, and arrived in Vladivostok on July 29, 1918.

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Characteristically, before leaving Tokyo he had acted to get actual relief under way. Telegrams and letters sped to the Far Eastern chapters of the Red Cross. It was a summons for men and women and a request for material, and the chapters quickly and splendidly responded.

He did more. Knowing that it would be weeks before American workers could get to the scene even from the nearest chapters outside Japan, he had called into Red Cross service a nursing unit from St. Luke's Hospital. These little Japanese nurses, under the direction of St. Luke's superintendent of nurses, Mrs. Alice St. John, were made ready post-haste for Siberian service, and were soon on their way.

At the same time he moved to provide immediate hospital facilities in Tokyo for wounded and invalid Czechs, so that these might be transported from Vladivostok at once. He established at St. Luke's a special section of 100 beds. This became the "Base Hospital" of the American Commission to Siberia and was used for cases that could be moved at once from Vladivostok. Later, as the Vladivostok hospital facilities of the Red Cross were developed, the Tokyo Base Hospital work was eliminated. But in those first days of urgent need, Dr. Teusler's quick thought in using existing facilities close at hand proved extremely useful.

Among the four who first went to Vladivostok the work was divided roughly as follows:

Teusler—medical relief
Phelps—civic relief
Frazar—finance
Warner—general assistant

But actually each was soon doing a little of everything.

Phelps was dispatched by train to Blagovyeshchensk,

far north of Vladivostok, where Czechs were fighting Russian Bolsheviks. He found the wounded Czechs in dire straits—no medicines, no disinfectants, no anesthetics—men suffering cruelly.

At Vladivostok Frazar improvised an office, also an accounting system that, with amplification and elaboration but essentially the same in principle, later served for the expenditure of millions of dollars and thousands of tons of relief supplies.

While Teusler was putting the Base Hospital into service and dispatching a corps of doctors and nurses from Tokyo to Vladivostok, the mission hospitals in the Far East answered his call magnificently. Doctors and nurses and other workers, called by the chief's telegraphed summons, came in from Korea and from China. The far-flung phalanxes of missionary workers were called upon to supply what personnel they could for six months' emergency work in Siberia. Teusler's faith in the ability and willingness of the mission hospitals' personnel and his wide knowledge of how and where to call for these workers, now bore fruit. In an incredibly short time the Siberian Commission was actually at work.

These early workers set the pace for the entire Red Cross effort in Siberia. They knew little of Red Cross rules, and most of them had no uniforms—or home-made uniforms of remarkable diversity of design. But they were trained to racing-speed in the exacting field of mission hospitals. They were used to long hours and to strange foods. They were able to get along with meager equipment, and to improvise all sorts of things. Further, they could deal with alien peoples, and hardships and danger were nothing new.

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In this way the pace of the American Red Cross Commission was set to the martial swing of "Onward, Christian Soldiers," and that quality of crusading zeal never left it, even in the long months of work that necessarily was largely routine.

At first the mission was under the Fourteenth or the Insular and Foreign Division of the Red Cross. But on August 21, 1918, Henry P. Davison, Chairman of the War Council, advised Dr. Teusler by cable that in view of the increasing activities of the Red Cross with the military forces, the supervision of the Siberian operations would rest in the hands of the Red Cross War Council at Washington. This placed the Red Cross personnel in Siberia on a quasi-military basis. American troops—also in pursuance of the policy of the Wilson administration—were being sent to Siberia, and a part of the duty of the Red Cross was with these troops. Thus the Red Cross contingent was officially attached to two bodies of troops—the Czechs and the Americans. In being thus attached, the Red Cross was not listed as a combatant group. Its function was entirely non-combatant and the activities were definitely in the sphere of relief, though in this sphere they were strikingly varied.

The Red Cross in Siberia, as in European countries, quickly broadened its work from service with the troops to service with the civilian populations. As in France, Italy, and the Near East, later in Poland and the Baltic countries, it embarked on a program of general assistance to peoples stricken by war and the aftermath of war.

The Red Cross at Washington had formally authorized Commissioner Teusler to undertake this broader work on July 22, 1918, in a cablegram that said in part: "Can we rely upon you to assume entire charge organization and

medical work necessary Vladivostok and vicinity? Should like your opinion as to work possible and advisable among civilian and refugee population. Consider this problem on broad and constructive basis." Teusler needed no spur to consideration on such a basis, but the official authority gave him the power to go ahead. And ultimately that relief operation at "Vladivostok and vicinity" stretched from Vladivostok to beyond the Ural Mountains, into European Russia, and became the largest relief project ever carried out by the Red Cross.

Even on his first trip to Vladivostok, Teusler heard about the appalling situations along the 6,000 miles of Trans-Siberian Railway. Part was the strait of wounded and ill Czechs in their echelons, and part was the plight of civilians suffering from disease.

When Teusler, Frazar and Phelps reached Vladivostok, the Czechs were stretched in a thin, uneven line from European Russia to the sea at Vladivostok. That is, their military forces were thus strung out, holding, though tenuously, the railway in their power, with the substantial aid of non-Bolshevik Russian contingents at many points. Presently a "White" military coup was engineered at Ekaterinburg, and a White Russian government was set up under Admiral Kolchak, and its headquarters established at Omsk in western Siberia, not far from the Ural Mountains.

Soon the troops of the Allies began to arrive—Americans, British, and a few French and Italians, some Chinese, many Japanese. Each of the foreign commands was given control and direction of a sector of the railway (under Inter-Allied arrangement and upon the agreement of the Allied governments at home), and the Czechs were asked to hold the western front against the Bolshevik armies, who

then controlled Moscow, Petrograd (renamed Leningrad) and other parts of European Russia.

This arrangement of Allied diplomats by which the Czechs were held on the Bolshevik front (until a strong White Russian army could be organized) necessitated a quick expansion of Red Cross operations. There was now need for Red Cross relief work out as far as the Ural Mountains, and to many a Czech echelon between middle Siberia and the Bolshevik front.

Teusler saw the need and with the approval of the Red Cross War Council acted upon it. Additional personnel was called from the Far East chapters, including Manila, and from Hawaii. Teusler cabled Washington for American doctors, dentists, nurses, clerical workers, and people competent to go into civilian refugee relief work. He cabled for supplies for the needy civil populations as well as for the tens of thousands of Czechs—hospital supplies and equipment, dental supplies, warm clothing, shoes, foodstuffs. The cargoes began moving from America, to supplement the thin trickle that was coming in from the Far East. As Teusler had turned first to the nearby missions and chapters for pioneer personnel, so he turned first to nearby cities —chiefly Tokyo, Osaka, Shanghai and Manila, for the most urgently needed medical and other relief material and supplies. But from overseas, from great-hearted America, the trickle of Red Cross relief material soon swelled into a stream and then into a river.

The World War was ending. Germany was already beaten, though the Armistice had not been signed. And with the end of the war in sight, there was no further need to send to France, Italy and Belgium the huge cargoes of medical and hospital supplies the Red Cross had been dis-

patching—the free and glad gifts of the American people. A large part of that stream to France could be, and was, diverted to Siberia.

It has already been stated that the Red Cross personnel in Siberia was placed on a quasi-military footing. Its male personnel was commissioned by the War Department. On November 8, 1918, Dr. Teusler was formally appointed Red Cross commissioner for Siberia, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

He was then just starting for western Siberia. Already there had been set up at Vladivostok hospital service for the Czech wounded and invalided in that district, by the Red Cross. Civilian relief stations had been established. The beginnings of a large base of supplies and living quarters for personnel had been made. Ultimately this expanded into an extensive group of warehouses on the shores of Vladivostok Bay, the famed "Bay of the Golden Horn," where a three-story Russian naval barracks was rehabilitated and fitted up for American personnel.

A hospital had been opened at Buchedu, on the Manchurian sector of the Trans-Siberian Railway, and the little Red Cross chapter set up by loyal American residents at Harbin, Manchuria, had aided in establishing a hospital there.

The Red Cross was extending aid to the Czechs, service to the American army, it was distributing clothing and food to hungry, ragged refugees, and battling epidemics of typhus, cholera, dysentery, smallpox, and other dread diseases within a few weeks after Teusler, Frazar and Phelps landed at Vladivostok, and slept on cots in a schoolhouse —when they slept!

On August 2nd the tireless Teusler had gone back to

Tokyo to mobilize a reserve corps of American nurses from Japan, China, Korea, the Philippines and Hawaii. These took the place of the initial unit of Japanese nurses from St. Luke's, who had been sent to Vladivostok only until registered and enrolled nurses could reach the spot.

The first Red Cross hospital in Siberia was established on Russian Island about two and a half miles from the city of Vladivostok itself. A Russian hospital, then unused, was turned over to the Red Cross, and the wounded and invalid Czechs who had been cared for as best that could be done in the warehouse on the city waterfront which housed them, were moved to Russian Island, this hospital being designated as Base Hospital No. 1.

Dr. Teusler soon returned from Tokyo and within a few days the doctors and nurses from the Far East mission hospitals began to arrive. There were not many of them—not from the lack of desire to serve but because the mission hospitals were themselves chronically undermanned, and only a few of the personnel could be spared. But they made up in devotion and efficiency what they lacked in numbers.

II

From this time—August, 1918—until the end of American Red Cross work in Siberia nearly three years later, the story is one to thrill with pride the heart of any American who reads it or hears it. In this far country—over an area greater than that of continental United States—the American Red Cross developed and carried on a work of impressive magnitude and extraordinary variety. The original mission to bring hospital facilities to wounded and invalid Czechs ultimately became only a small (although always notable) part of the operations. Within a few months the

Red Cross Commission to Siberia was organized into the following departments:

Department of Medical Relief. Hospitals, sanitary trains, medical and nursing service, transportation of wounded and invalid Czechs from Vladivostok to their homeland in chartered ships.

Dental Department. Operated first for the Czech army, later broadened to include refugees and other indigents of all races. Dental units were established in hospitals, on sanitary trains, in refugee camps and in personnel barracks.

Department of Nursing. Directing and supervising nursing service spread out over more than 4,000 miles of Red Cross field and base units.

Department of Military Relief and Camp Service. First established to aid the Czech army, soon thereafter greatly amplified to serve the American Expeditionary force in Siberia.

Department of Civilian Relief. Established to give direct relief in food, clothing, health and sanitary supervision, in the crowded cities and towns of Siberia, swarming with ragged refugees, many of them diseased.

Personnel Department. To deal with the large personnel, both American and of other nationalities, which was necessary to handle this enormous Red Cross operation.

Department of Supplies and Purchases. Established to handle the millions of dollars' worth of supplies brought from America, from the Far East and locally.

Department of Warehouse and Transportation. Devoted to receiving, storing and shipping of cargoes and trainloads of hospital, medical and refugee relief supplies.

Treasury Department. Handling the finances of the great operation—in itself a complex problem because the Red

Cross in Siberia dealt in at least four and sometimes five or six different currencies—American (gold dollars), Russian (ruble), Chinese (Mexican dollar) and Japanese (yen). And exchange values of the American dollar or the ruble or the yen or the Mexican dollar changed with kaleidoscopic rapidity.

The physical size and extent of the Siberian Red Cross work may be realized from the following:

From the Vladivostok main base on the Siberian Pacific coast, to the most advanced hospital, at Turgoyak on the European Russian side, was 4,300 miles. All along this line of Trans-Siberian Railway there were, in the spring and early summer of 1919, American Red Cross hospitals, refugee relief stations and military and camp service units with the Czech and American armies.

From the original base hospital at Tokyo to the most advanced unit, a refugee relief distribution depot at Ufa, European Russia, the distance was as great as from New York to San Francisco and back to St. Louis.

More than 90 per cent of the Red Cross goods distributed in Russia came in on steamers from America, shipped from New York and San Francisco. Often goods were distributed 3,500 miles inland in Siberia after travelling more than 5,000 miles by water.

At its peak, the Red Cross in Siberia had a personnel of more than 1,000 "regulars." Of these about a fourth were American—business executives, doctors, nurses, relief workers, camp service workers and the like. The others were mostly Russians, but there were also numerous employees of other races. More than 75 American doctors and more than 150 American nurses and nurses' aides were at one time on the Siberian Commission staff.

During the first year of Colonel Teusler's work the following hospitals had been set up:

Base hospital at Tokyo—100 beds
Russian Island hospital—250 beds
Vladivostok Refugee hospital—190 beds
Nikolsk Anti-typhus hospital—200 beds
Buchedu Anti-tubercular hospital—110 beds
Irkutsk hospital—225 beds
Tomsk University Medical School—200 beds
Novo-Nikolayevsk Anti-typhus hospital—275 beds
Omsk hospital—1048 beds
Omsk Anti-typhus hospital—350 beds
Tumen hospital—260 beds
Petropavlovsk Anti-typhus hospital—300 beds
Chelyabinsk hospital—1100 beds (just established when it had to be evacuated)
Turgoyak hospital—150 beds (just established when it had to be evacuated)
Equipment for travelling hospital trains on European front—200 beds
Anti-typhus expeditionary train, traversing the Trans-Siberian Railway, designed and built by the American Red Cross in Vladivostok and operated by the Inter-Allied group of American, British, French, Czech and other nationals.

Interesting glimpses of Colonel Teusler at work are given by E. W. Frazar, mentioned at the beginning of the chapter as the veteran American businessman of Tokyo who was treasurer of the American Red Cross mission to Siberia. Some twenty years later, in reviewing his experiences with the Red Cross in Siberia, Mr. Frazar described the "delousing" train and its work as follows:

"As time went on typhus fever became very rampant and was causing terrific loss of life. Colonel Teusler arranged

for the construction of a special train consisting of an engine, two or three cars with tanks of water, a boiler to heat the water and produce steam, another car with sterilizers, next a car where the patients could remove their clothing, which was at once placed in the sterilizers. Other cars were filled with fresh clothing. This train would proceed along the line, stopping at stations where the people were corraled, disinfected, given baths and furnished fresh clothing. This proved to be a very important and very necessary part of the work. It assisted in controlling the epidemic."

The Siberian Commission, not only in extent and magnitude of operations but in variety of work, carried on larger duties than those of any other American Red Cross overseas unit in the World War and post-war period. In Siberia the Red Cross men and women not only operated hospitals, trains and relief stations but directed refugee schools, refugee homes, nursing training schools, employment bureaus. They had a large share in the repatriation of tens of thousands of war prisoners who had been left, long after the war ended, in the bleak Siberian prison camps. They set up immediate and direct relief for sick and starving Germans, Austrians and even Turks and Bulgarians found in these fearsome concentration corrals, and later, in collaboration with the Allied governments and the German and Austrian Red Cross, sent the prisoners home on chartered ships from Vladivostok or on trains through European Russia.

As one single phase of this gigantic enterprise in humanitarianism, the American Red Cross rounded up many small groups of refugee children, from 3 to 15 years of age, in Western Siberia, cared for them in a colony during the spring and summer of 1919, brought 778 to Vladivostok

as the Red Cross itself withdrew from Western Siberia in the fall of 1919, housed them during the winter of 1919–20, and in the spring of 1920 chartered a ten-thousand-ton steamer and sent them to their family homes in and near Petrograd in late 1920 and early 1921.

To its Siberian enterprise of relief to the suffering and the homeless, the American Red Cross devoted more than $20,000,000 in direct expenditure. The value of donated relief supplies shipped to Siberia, the majority of which was sent by American Red Cross chapters in the United States, including territories, insular possessions, etc., exceeded $6,000,000.

This brief and incomplete outline of the Commission's work gives some idea of the great organization developed by Rudolf Bolling Teusler under the mandate of the President of the United States and the Chairman of the American Red Cross. But the outline of the activities in the large can give no conception of the difficulties and often the dangers that attended the work. The country was torn with civil war. Not only disease and hunger but guerilla warfare, banditry and political feuds were rife in every zone of operations. The struggle between the Bolsheviks who were taking over Russia and the various White governments or temporary pretenders in Siberia; the destruction of transport; the breakdown of a people's morale, and the intrigues of a host of international adventurers added enormously to the difficulties of solving the relief problem.

But it was done. And the man who from the first saw the magnitude of the problem, and from the first prepared to meet not a small but a great emergency, was Dr. Teusler. His vision, energy, and resourcefulness set the tempo for the entire organization. He was a man with quick flashes

of enthusiasm, and not infrequently his optimism outran the possibilities. But he had two qualities that in such an undertaking as the Siberian work were essential to a great success. One was an ability to see a whole complicated situation in the large and to plan accordingly. The other was his confidence in the ability of his associates in important or in minor positions to do the duties entrusted to them. He would survey some new piece of work, some extremely difficult operation, gauge its possibilities, sum it up in a few brief words or a penciled memo, and turn over details to his subordinates with an implicit confidence which immediately inspired them to do their best—and more than their best.

His courtesy was unfailing. He freely shared with the entire personnel credit for accomplishment. He was anything but an autocrat, often asking and acting on the advice of others. But he never swerved in driving for his main goal.

As an example of Colonel Teusler's determination not to be balked in his work, Mr. Frazar relates the following incident: "A hospital train was required to go out to the West. The usual orders were given and the train was to assemble at the main station of Vladivostok about eight o'clock in the evening. Every preparation was made. The doctors, nurses and various assistants gathered at the station and awaited the arrival of Colonel Teusler who in due time appeared.

"He looked over the cars and immediately spotted that one of them, the office and staff car, was not there. He called us together and said—Where is the staff car? We said, 'We don't know.'

"Then we marched in to the office of the head station

master, a great big Russian some six feet two, in a gorgeous uniform, and Colonel Teusler said—Where is my staff car, No. 223?

"The station master began in voluble Russian, translated by one of our interpreters, to explain that he was very sorry but there was some difficulty about this car.

"Colonel Teusler said—I don't want explanations, I want the car. What is wrong with it?

"It seemed there was something wrong with the wheels. Colonel Teusler demanded—I want that car at once!

"We had good reason to think it was being held for somebody else. Colonel Teusler then went and sat down in the chair of the station master and said—I will sit here until that car is produced.

"The station master continued to expostulate to Colonel Teusler, who turned to me and one or two others of the staff—You will proceed up into the city and bring down the representatives of the various missions.

"I remember it was my duty to fetch Colonel Jack of the British staff. I cranked up my old Ford, roused Colonel Jack (it was past midnight) and explained that Colonel Teusler desired his immediate attendance at the station.

"When I got back I found representatives of the various missions, the French, Italian, and British. Colonel Teusler explained to these officers that he had given instructions to take this hospital train out West, that he insisted on having his staff car, and would sit there until the car was produced. In thirty minutes the car was brought and in our combined presence the train pulled out with a hurrah for the Colonel."

The Siberian Commission reached the peak of its operations in the summer of 1919.

Earlier in the year the White Russian armies were suc-

cessful against the Bolsheviks. But as the year went on, the Bolsheviks began to get the upper hand—aided by the frightful disorganization, incompetence and corruption of the remnants of the monarchy that clogged the camps and governments of Kolchak, Denikin, Udenich, Wrangel and others. Many of the White leaders were of high ideals, devoted to Russia. But the old régime had been long sapped from within—it could not now be saved. Trotsky's Red armies on the Ural front began driving the White army back into deep Siberia. The Kolchak armies lost their western front and began the long, tragic retreat eastward toward Vladivostok. The Czech legions at last started their withdrawal from the Trans-Siberian Railway to take ship home at Vladivostok. The British, French, American and other contingents were all in Eastern Siberia, or moving there.

And so the far-flung line of American hospitals and relief stations was forced to contract. The American Red Cross could not operate in territory conquered by Bolsheviks, even though it was a non-combatant organization. The Red armies were promptly, and naturally, taking over everything in conquered country, seizing it outright. The few American Red Cross workers later captured by Bolsheviks were held by them for a long time, though not badly treated, and later released.

From the summer of 1919 until final withdrawal of the Red Cross in Siberia the story was one of continual diminution of operations. Hospital after hospital was evacuated, its patients and equipment and supplies put on trains and headed for Vladivostok. Refugee relief stations were closed. Often the supplies were left, turned over to whatever trustworthy person could be found, for always these supplies could be used. Little by little at first, then rapidly, the per-

sonnel were brought to Vladivostok, and in the fall and winter of 1919 many of them were sent home to America. Operations in and within a few hundred miles of Vladivostok, and in the vicinity of the American 27th Infantry then stationed in middle Siberia, were continued. In the spring of 1920, the American troops were withdrawn entirely from Siberia and most of the famed Czech legion had been repatriated by sea.

Final operations of the Red Cross were to complete the repatriation of the "Petrograd Children's Colony" already referred to, and to carry forward the repatriation of German, Austrian and other prisoners of war. The gigantic operation was closing down; barracks and warehouses were turned over to the Vladivostok authorities; such supplies as were salable under regulations were sold; the remainder distributed to the needy; and a few Red Cross men remained to direct the prisoners-of-war repatriation.

Colonel Teusler's work in Siberia was ended in the winter of 1919. As he had then given a year and a half of unremitting and exhausting effort to that work, and as his hospital and medical center at Tokyo badly needed his vitalizing presence, he withdrew from most of his active work with the Siberian Commission. However, he never lost contact with it or interest in it; at Tokyo he was closely in touch with its details and continued to help in the closing phases of its duty.

Recognition of Colonel Teusler's work as Commissioner was given in many ways. He received from the All-Russian government in January, 1920, the Russian medal of St. Vladimir of the Fourth Degree, "for distinguished and self-sacrificing activity in rendering help to the wounded of the fighting forces and relieving the suffering of the civil

population." He also received the Czechoslovakian War Medal. Dr. Livingston Farrand, chairman of the Central Committee of the American Red Cross and its active head at Washington, wrote to express the gratitude of the organization for the many sacrifices Dr. Teusler had made in directing the affairs of the Siberian Commission, and to congratulate him upon the excellent results of his work. Perhaps what pleased him most was a brief, matter-of-fact comment from the accounting department of the Red Cross at its national headquarters. This was a statement to the effect that of all the overseas commissions sent out by the American Red Cross during the World War and post-war period, the Commission in Siberia scored highest in the promptness, completeness, and the accuracy of its accounting, and in the evidence this accounting gave of a perfected organization in the field.

The commendation of the auditors and business analysts at Washington; the commendation of two special commissions sent from Washington to check on the Siberian operation—one in early 1919 and one in early 1920—placed on the complex and far-reaching work the stamp of official approval. Dr. Teusler could now return wholly to his work at Tokyo, to the medical center of which he dreamed, confident that the major Siberian task had been accomplished—with credit to the Commission over which he presided and with honor to America and America's boundless sympathy for suffering peoples.

*An interesting sidelight is thrown on Colonel Teusler's experiences in Siberia by the following reminiscences of his friend and companion in Japan, the Rt. Rev. Henry St. George Tucker, D.D., then Bishop of Kyoto, and now the Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America.**

When Dr. Teusler went over to Vladivostok the first time on his Red Cross Mission, I was in Kyoto. When he returned to Japan, he found me in Karuizawa and told me he was anxious to have me go back with him. We went over together. Previous to this Everett W. Frazar of Sale & Frazar, Ltd., Yokohama and Tokyo, George S. Phelps of the Y.M.C.A. in Japan and also Executive Secretary of the Japan Chapter of the American Red Cross, and Langdon Warner, United States Consul-at-large, had gone to Vladivostok. We lived in a girls' school at Vladivostok, used as a general dormitory by almost all the foreigners.

After about three weeks Teusler asked me to go and take charge of the office in Harbin. Langdon Warner and a railroad engineer had been negotiating with the Trans-Siberian Railroad to organize a hospital in Harbin and to provide equipment for Czech soldiers. I stayed there some time. Later on I received instructions from the Red Cross headquarters in Washington to look into the need for relief of the Buriat tribes in Mongolia. They were Russian, speaking Mongolian. Teusler came up to Harbin, and we had a special train to go on up to the northern part of Manchuria to

* Bishop Tucker was Director of the Department of Civil Affairs of the American Red Cross Siberian Commission, with the official rank of "Major," although he did not know about this rank until six months afterwards.

a station where General Semenoff, the head of the Trans-Baikal Cossacks, had his headquarters. We had a very interesting interview with him. He told us that the Czechs under General Gaida were on the other side of the Onon River but he did not know whether they would be friendly to us. General Semenoff offered us an engine to take us to the headquarters of the Czech General, provided we would take with us his chief of staff. We reached the river at ten o'clock at night. The bridge crossing the river had been blown up, so there was only a temporary bridge. We started across, reaching the other side about one or two o'clock in the morning, and went immediately to General Gaida's office. We conferred with him until about three or four o'clock, and then started back. Teusler and I were walking along and talking, forgetting about any sentries on the other side. We then heard some one yell. We paid no attention and kept on going. Then we heard rifles firing. We stopped then—realizing what the trouble was.

The next day we went over again and spent the night with General Gaida. These negotiations resulted in our taking General Gaida's chief of staff back with us to Vladivostok in order to make some arrangements as to what the United States was going to do to cooperate with the Czechs. We also took an English correspondent, a brother of Putnam Neale. We had not gone very far before a Japanese officer had a car attached to our train. From then on we stopped at every station and were kept waiting until whatever business to be transacted had been accomplished. The correspondent was much annoyed at being kept at each station, and at a convenient stop had the Japanese officer's car detached. As soon as it was discovered, the train was halted and we were all threatened with arrest. After we had made it clear to the

Japanese officer in charge that we of the Red Cross knew nothing of the detachment of the car and that the correspondent would want nothing better than to be able to report the arrest of an Englishman in Siberia, they decided to let us go.

We spent the next two weeks in Vladivostok negotiating with Admiral Austin M. Knight, General William S. Graves, Commander of the American Expeditionary Force in Siberia, United States Ambassador Roland S. Morris, and several others in regard to the whole policy in Siberia. These meetings took place in Admiral Knight's cabin on the U.S.S. *Brooklyn*, the Flagship of the U. S. Asiatic Fleet at Vladivostok. As a result of these conferences, Dr. Teusler decided to send me out in charge of a hospital train to western Siberia to build up a medical service for the Czecho-Slovak army.

Quite a large hospital train was organized, consisting of thirty-one freight cars loaded with supplies, and five passenger cars for wounded soldiers. There was a force of five or six American doctors, several English and Czech doctors, some Czech nurses, and a working staff of the Red Cross. I went out to Chelyabinsk, about four thousand miles west of Vladivostok. Here, upon the advice of General Sirovy, the last premier of Czecho-Slovakia, a base hospital was established at Tumen in a former commercial college building, with a staff of doctors and nurses.

From Chelyabinsk we went on to Ekaterinburg. It was here we met a Russian woman, a princess I believe, who told us of large groups of children who had been sent to the border of Siberia for safety and who, as she expressed it, were practically running wild. She asked whether the Red Cross could do something for them. These children the

Red Cross finally gathered in and shipped from Vladivostok to Finland.

On the way east, Teusler and I again met at Omsk when he came to take charge of affairs at that end. While there, a French Commission invited us to lunch. They said they were going to have the first news about the war from the outside world. The telegraph wires had been cut but that very day they had secured a man to rig up a wireless that got the news—it was the news of the Armistice! The Frenchmen cried like babies.

Teusler showed his ability as much in Siberia as any place I have ever seen him. He had the ability to do things in places where to most people it would seem hopeless to attempt anything.