Albert Rhys Williams' second memoir of the Russian revolution and civil war is an interesting account. While written somewhat in the old true believer mood of the 1920's and 1930's, Williams manages to avoid the flatness of most such writers, and instead catches again the flavor of revolution. He summons up a vision of the turmoil, the confusion, the enthusiasms, the fears which characterized that era, when the outcome of the revolution was still in doubt and men's minds swung from the exaltation of visions of a grand new world to despair of possible defeat and return of the old order. Williams writes vividly and well.

The main value of the book is in its many vignettes, its glimpses of persons caught up in revolution. While he recounts his meetings with the great men of the Bolshevik revolution — Lenin, Trotsky, Bukharin, others, most interesting in many ways are the accounts of the views and activities of lesser leaders, the non-commissioned officers of the Bolshevik movement. Especially interesting are his portraits of the "Russian-Americans" who were active in the lower Bolshevik leadership. This kind of information is to a considerable extent available only from sources such as Williams, and hence the usefulness of such a book. The historian will find that the book covers much the same ground as his Through the Russian Revolution, published in 1921 and reprinted in 1967, although this book centers primarily on his Petrograd experiences and gives much less space to his later Siberian activities. Moreover, the author has made a distinct effort to avoid repetition, and there is a great deal of new information. On several occasions he points out that he is giving accounts of meetings, or publishing records, that for various reasons he did not feel he could publish in the earlier work. Typical are his comments, scattered through the book, on John Reed, with whom he worked closely in Russia. He spends considerable effort trying to set the record straight on the views and activities of Reed, especially the famous appointment as Soviet consul in the United States.

Williams writes from a distinctly political point of view. Still, the present volume is rather less emotional, more reflective, than the earlier one. Nevertheless, he was as firm a believer in the Bolsheviks as Reed, and worked for their success in the revolution and civil war. He was not, however, a party hack, and this comes through in his book. He was a man who could speak of his great idol, Lenin, and of his own exploits humorously, as in a wry suggestion to "shake the hand that shook the hand of Lenin." Fortunately, his political commitment is sufficiently apparent to warn all but the most uncritical reader, but not so obtrusive as to hopelessly mar the account.

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After C. H. Smith's and F. H. Epp's monographs on the emigration of the Russian Mennonites, we have here another account of the sad experiences of this religious minority in modern times. Its originality lies in the fact that the author has been able to make extensive use of the records and various manuscripts which some of the major participants in the drama have left. While acknowledging his debt to two other students of the subject whose preparatory
efforts proved helpful, the author deserves credit for selecting and assembling a seemingly disparate and uneven collection of evidence material.

The first Mennonites settled in Russia in the late eighteenth century, at the invitation of Catherine II whose successful campaign against the Turks had ended with the acquisition of fertile districts north of the Crimea and the Sea of Azov. The prospect of broad religious and educational freedoms attracted these descendants of the Anabaptist branch of the Reformation movement. Already during the sixteenth century their ancestors had had to flee from persecution in the Low Lands into Prussia and, later on, into the Vistula valley. The partitions of Poland in the late eighteenth century expanded Prussian rule well beyond their settlements. Clashes with the new administration, especially about the question of bearing arms, opened their ears to Catherine's invitation. Hundreds of families made their way into the southern Ukraine, soon to be followed by others. While settlements sprang up elsewhere as well, mostly in the Samara and Saratov districts and at the foot of the Caucasus, the Ukraine colonies kept something like the rank of senicr, if not model establishments. In general, living conditions under Tsarist rule were acceptable, considering the fact that the minority not only kept apart in religion and language, but that economic prosperity could have made it the target of the envy of a less well-to-do environment.

These facts, however, proved to be embarrassing distinctions once World War I had begun. German speech made them suspect to the Tsarist administration, and their capitalistic outlook separated them from Anarchists and Bolsheviks alike. Little wonder that the German occupation of the Ukraine in 1918 and subsequent waves of the White Army's offensive during the Civil War were regarded in the settlements as more welcome than the respective adversaries; little wonder also that these adversaries felt animated to punish and correct what they saw as antipatriotic and reactionary attitudes. The result was devastation, hunger, disease, and, worst of all, discouragement. A large number of refugees from other settlements aggravated the situation. When the Red government consolidated its position, a general feeling of despair spread throughout the colonies. Hunger and need soon became less important reasons for this than the conviction that Mennonite and Communist Weltanschauung were basically incompatible with each other.

American and above all Canadian Mennonite help having alleviated the worst conditions during and after the Civil War, the idea of emigration soon gained momentum among the colonists. The larger part of Toew's book deals with the tiring and often despairing negotiations between the spokesmen of the Mennonites and the Communist authorities and with the implementation of the agreements which finally were secured. All in all some 20,000 refugees out of an estimated 100,000 colonists left Russia, mainly for Canada (Manitoba) where they found shelter and a new hope for the future.

The author fulfilled the task of coordinating and synthesizing his source material well, thus presenting a somehow coherent tale of the various episodes and chains of events. The limitations of such an undertaking are rooted in the subject itself and in the approach chosen. The narration centers primarily on activities in Ekatgrinoslav, the sources are apparently more abundant here; though such concentration might be justified by the larger number of settlers and the stronger initiative of the leaders in this region. But the fact that no Russian source material seems to have been available for the topic at issue, or in any case was not consulted, leaves at least one major question for further discussion: Did the conjectures and interpretations by the Mennonite negotiators of the attitudes in Khar'kov and Moscow correspond to reality; In other words, it might be rewarding to go beyond the settlers' viewpoint and attempt to