

HANDBOOKS PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
HISTORICAL SECTION OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE.—No. 48.

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THE
ÅLAND ISLANDS.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE.

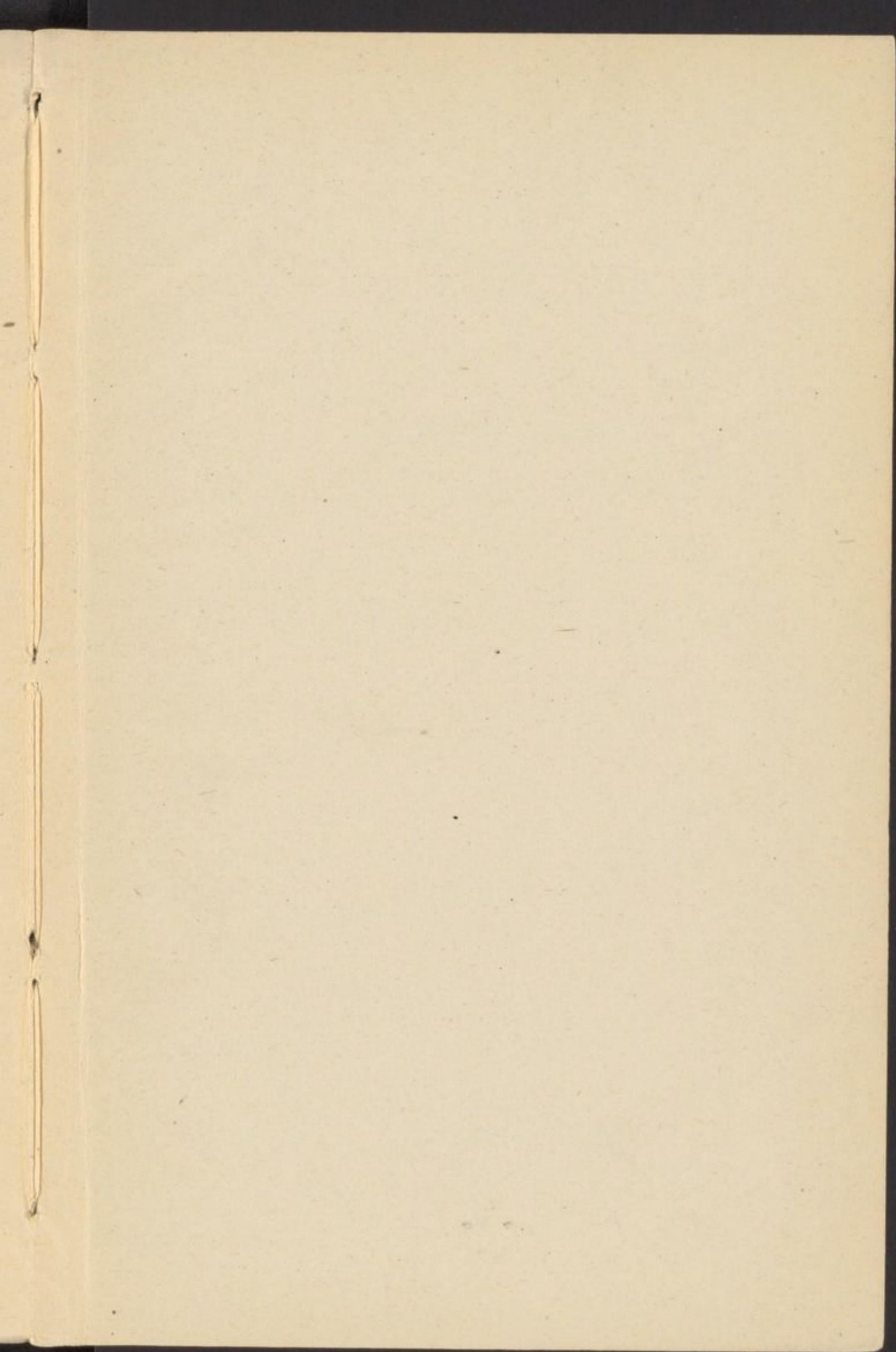
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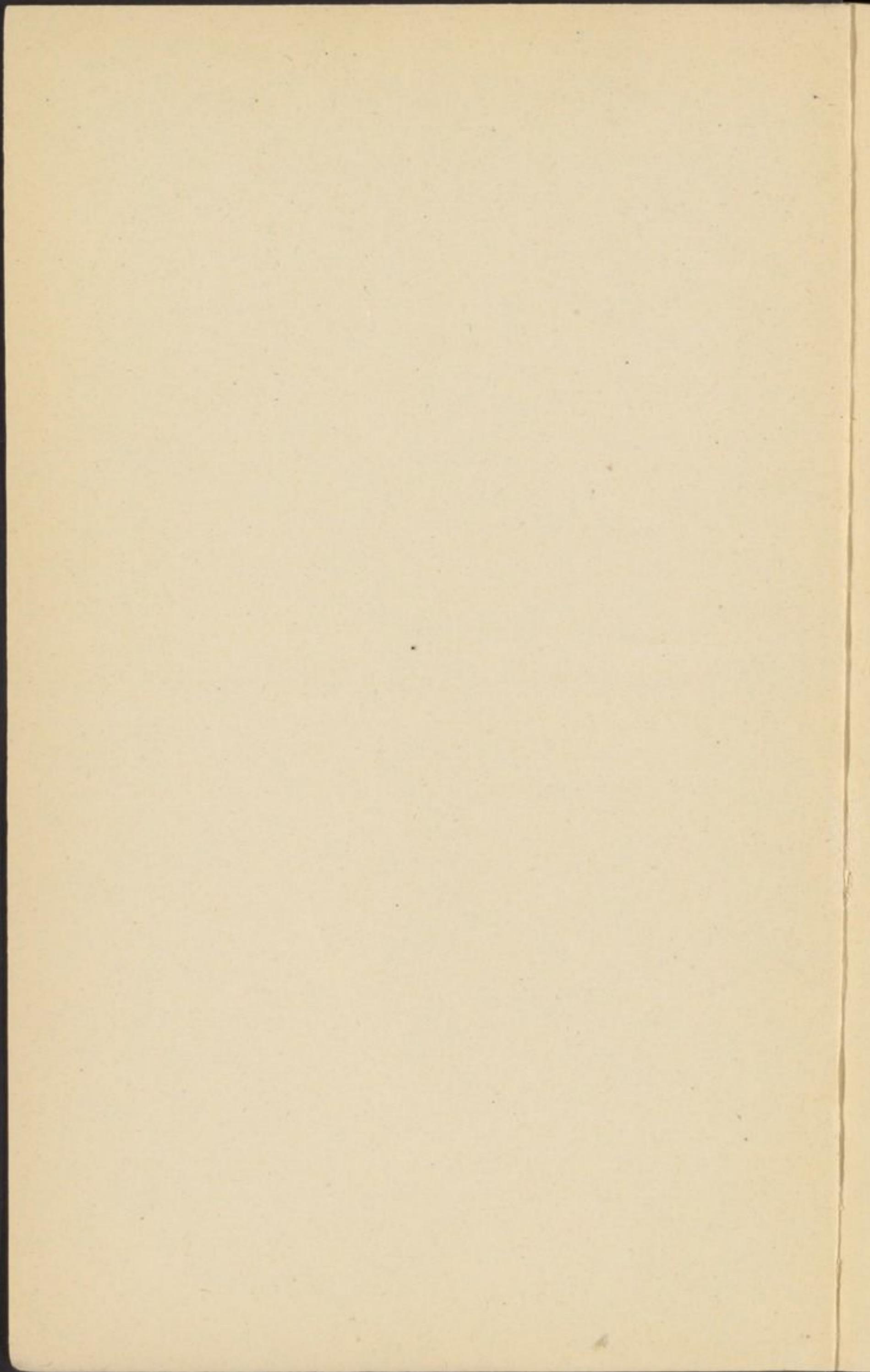


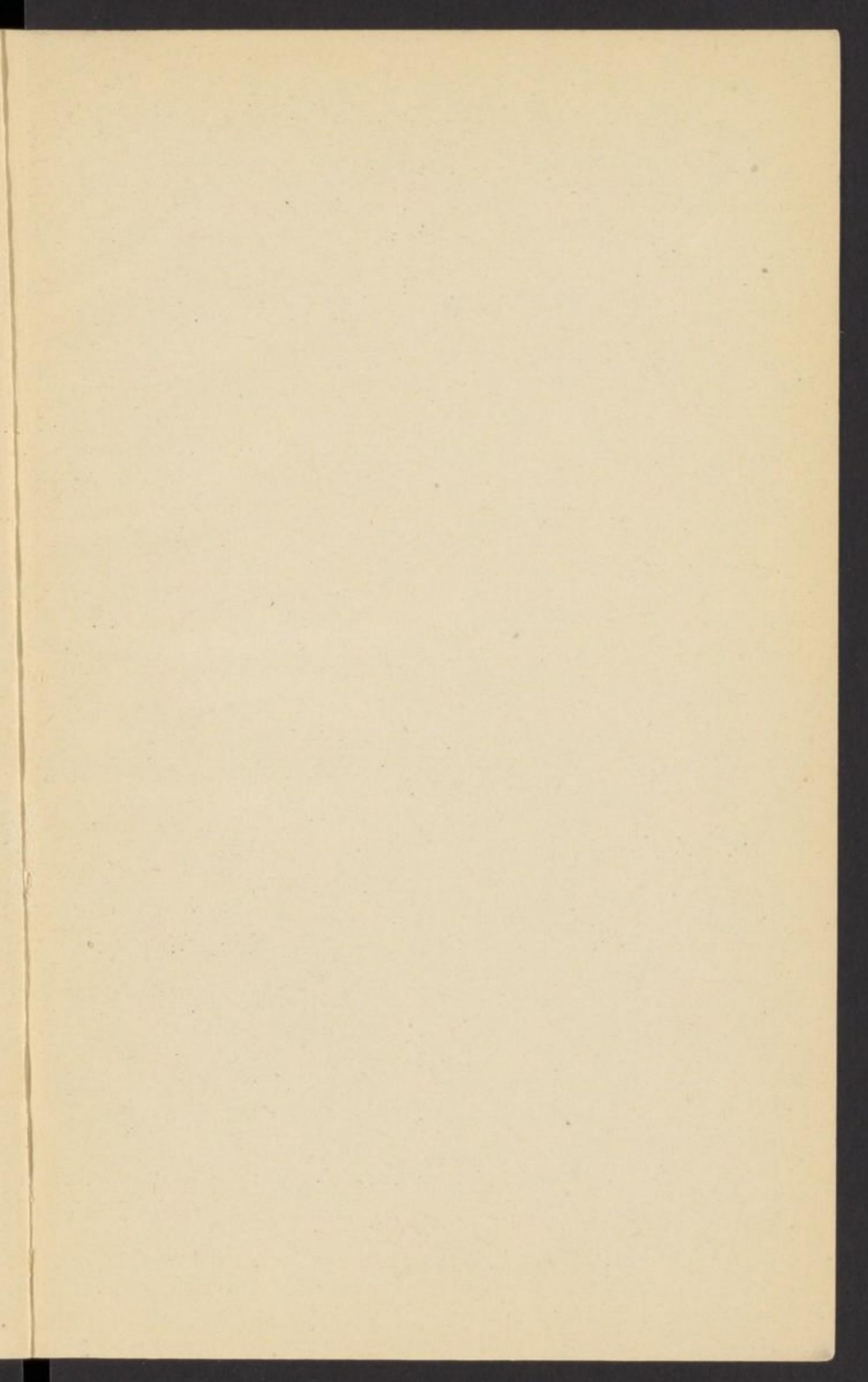


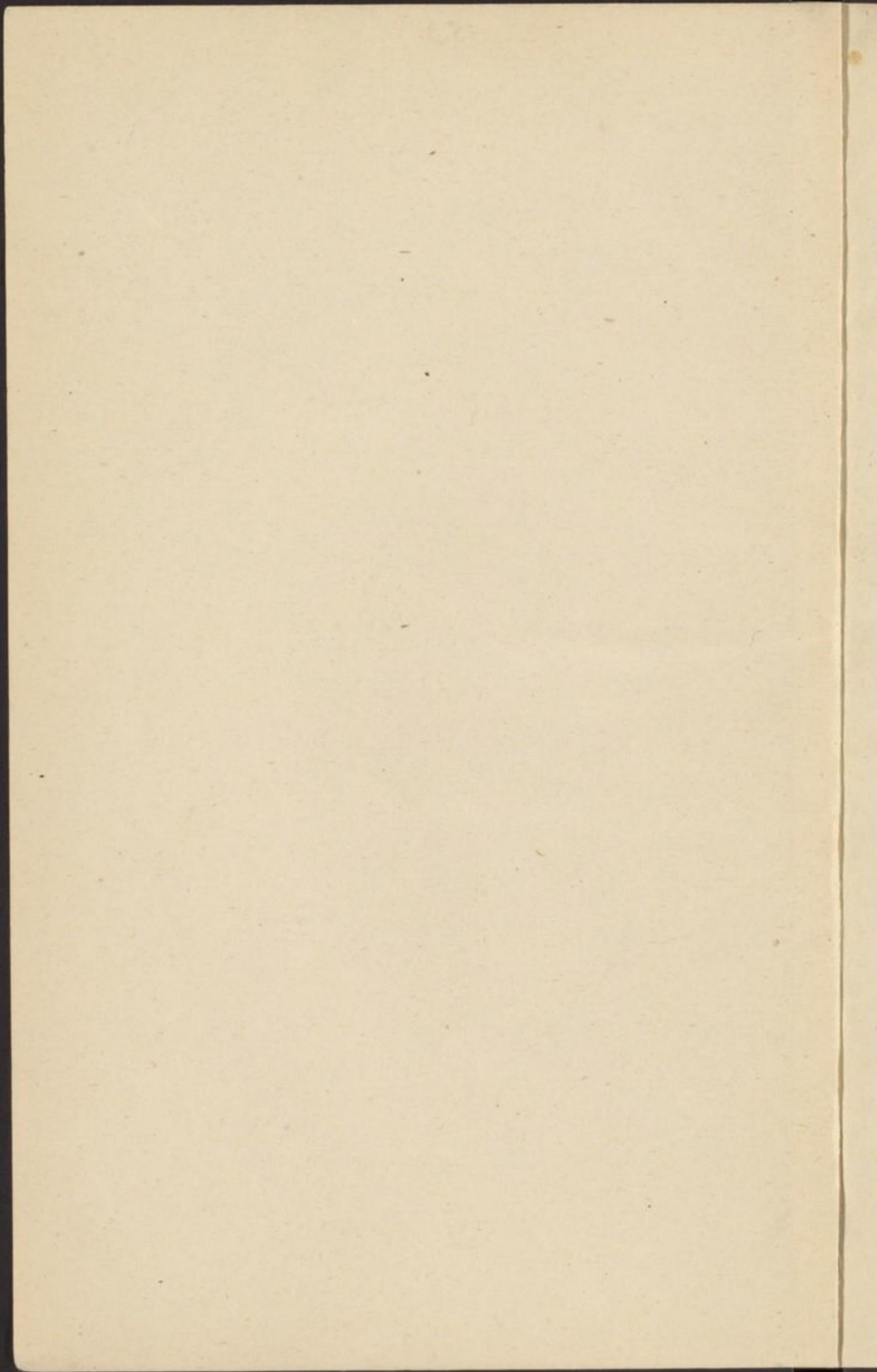
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EDITORIAL NOTE.

IN the spring of 1917 the Foreign Office, in connection with the preparation which they were making for the work of the Peace Conference, established a special section whose duty it should be to provide the British Delegates to the Peace Conference with information in the most convenient form—geographical, economic, historical, social, religious and political—respecting the different countries, districts, islands, etc., with which they might have to deal. In addition, volumes were prepared on certain general subjects, mostly of an historical nature, concerning which it appeared that a special study would be useful.

The historical information was compiled by trained writers on historical subjects, who (in most cases) gave their services without any remuneration. For the geographical sections valuable assistance was given by the Intelligence Division (Naval Staff) of the Admiralty; and for the economic sections, by the War Trade Intelligence Department, which had been established by the Foreign Office. Of the maps accompanying the series, some were prepared by the above-mentioned department of the Admiralty, but the bulk of them were the work of the Geographical Section of the General Staff (Military Intelligence Division) of the War Office.

Now that the Conference has nearly completed its task, the Foreign Office, in response to numerous enquiries and requests, has decided to issue the books for public use, believing that they will be useful to students of history, politics, economics and foreign affairs, to publicists generally and to business men and travellers. It is hardly necessary to say that some of the subjects dealt with in the series have not in fact come under discussion at the Peace Conference; but, as the books treating of them contain valuable information, it has been thought advisable to include them.

It must be understood that, although the series of volumes was prepared under the authority, and is now issued with the sanction, of the Foreign Office, that Office is not to be regarded as guaranteeing the accuracy of every statement which they contain or as identifying itself with all the opinions expressed in the several volumes; the books were not prepared in the Foreign Office itself, but are in the nature of information provided for the Foreign Office and the British Delegation.

The books are now published, with a few exceptions, substantially as they were issued for the use of the Delegates. No attempt has been made to bring them up to date, for, in the first place, such a process would have entailed a great loss of time and a prohibitive expense; and, in the second, the political and other conditions of a great part of Europe and of the Nearer and Middle East are still unsettled and in such a state of flux that any attempt to describe them would have been incorrect or misleading. The books are therefore to be taken as describing, in general, *ante-bellum* conditions, though in a few cases, where it seemed specially desirable, the account has been brought down to a later date.

G. W. PROTHERO,
*General Editor and formerly
Director of the Historical Section.*

January, 1920.

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I. GEOGRAPHY, CLIMATE, SANITARY CONDITIONS AND PEOPLE.

1. *Position and Extent.*—The Åland Islands are an archipelago of about 300 islands, forming a district (*härath*) of the Finnish Government of Åbo-Björneborg. They are situated in the Baltic Sea, at the entrance to the Gulf of Bothnia, between latitudes $59^{\circ} 45'$ and $60^{\circ} 40'$ N. and longitudes $19^{\circ} 30'$ and $20^{\circ} 30'$ E. The western part of the Baltic, which extends from the Högsten lighthouse to that of Lågskär and separates the Åland Islands from Sweden, is called the Åland Sea (*Ålandshaf*); between Grisslehamn in Sweden and the most westerly of the Åland Islands, the sea is about 25 miles broad. The sea to the eastward, separating Åland from the coast of Finland, is full of small islands and islets, 80 of which are inhabited. The rest are rocky islets, reefs and skerries. The largest island is that which gives its name to the group, Åland proper (*Fasta Åland*); its length is 23 miles and its greatest width is 20 miles.

The other principal inhabited islands are Eckerö, Lemland, Lumparland, Kumlinge, Vårdö, Brändö, and Föglö.

The total area of the Islands is about 550 square miles. The surface of the small islands is rocky, red granite predominating. On the larger islands the soil is lighter and contains a large amount of lime. In many places there are shell beds, which add to the fertility of the soil. On the island of Åland there are three hills of red granite varying in height from 328 ft. to 492 ft.

The coast of Åland is deeply indented by bays and fjords, which form excellent sheltered harbours for vessels of draught not exceeding 19 ft. The large islands of Eckerö, Lemland and Lumparland are separated from Åland and each other by narrow shallow straits. The islands of Föglö, Vårdö and the archipelago of Geta are more massive, with steep cliffs and a less indented coastline. The open bay of Lumparland lies in the centre of Åland. Many small lakes exist on the larger islands.

2. *Climate.*—In the Åland Sea currents of salt water from the south cause the climate to be comparatively mild and temperate. The seasons pass gradually into each other without sudden changes. The mean annual temperature is 1° C. higher at Mariehamn than at Helsingfors; the average temperature for the year is $+5^{\circ}$ C. The coldest month is February, but the lowest temperature recorded at Bogskär does not exceed -3° C. If we reckon as winter those days when the temperature is below 0° C., the winter is 25 days shorter at the Bogskär lighthouse than at Hangö.

The heaviest rainfall on Åland is usually in October, not in July or August, as in Nyland (on the mainland of Finland). In this respect the Åland Islands resemble Western Europe, *e.g.*, Norway. Snow does not fall, as a rule, to a greater depth than one foot. The summer is temperate, and the autumn long and beautiful. The winds are generally mild and delay the formation of ice. In the eastward sea ice appears towards the end of January; at Bogskär not before February. In severe winters the bays, and sometimes even the Åland Sea, freeze sufficiently hard to allow horses to cross the ice. In the last century it was possible to cross the Åland Sea in sledges between Grisslehamn (Sweden) and Eckerö in 1809, 1836, 1844, 1855, 1871, 1881, 1888, 1893 and 1895.

3. *Sanitary Conditions.*—The climate is healthy. The conditions of life are primitive, but epidemics are rare with the exception of malaria, which has been endemic in the Åland Islands for at least 150 years, and of which several very serious outbreaks are recorded; the severest occurred in the 18th century and in 1853 and 1862. This prevalence of malaria is attributed to the mosquito *Anopheles claviger*, which breeds abundantly in Åland.

The yearly average of deaths, calculated on the period 1898–1907, of persons 15–60 years of age is, in Mariehamn, 8·1 to 9, and in the rural areas 6·1 to 9 per 1,000 inhabitants. Of these, in 2·1 cases in Mariehamn and 1·6 cases in the rural area, death is due to tuberculosis.

4. *People.*—Of the inhabitants of the Åland Islands, 96·2 per cent. are Swedish by descent and language. They are taller than the Finns, have blue eyes and fair or light brown hair. The only exception is on the island of Kökar, where the natives are brown-eyed and dark-haired. The Ålanders are said to have migrated from Roslagen, in Sweden, but at what period is unknown. The inhabitants of Houtskär claim to have come originally from Dalecarlia. Many relics of the Stone Age, with tumuli and dwellings of the earlier and later Iron Age, have been found on Åland.

The average height of the Åland Islanders is 5 ft. 6 in., 5 per cent. being over 5 ft. 9 in. in height. In Finland the average height ranges from 5 ft. 3 in. to 5 ft. 9 in., according to the district. Like the Swedes, the Ålanders are dolichocephalic.

The Ålanders are industrious, temperate and frugal. The houses are not large, but are well built and well kept. Each house usually contains a kitchen, dining room, bedroom, and one or two attics. In summer the owners often live in small cabins and let their houses to visitors from the mainland. Many of the men of the Åland Islands

have served for a time as sailors in foreign countries. Many emigrants leave the Islands every year, chiefly for the United States. Some of them return in a few years and settle down in the Islands again. For the years 1899-1908 the average yearly rate of emigration per 10,000 inhabitants was : east of Skiftet, 28·4 ; west of Skiftet, 122·4.

Every rocky islet, if there is a landing-place sheltered from tempests, is inhabited by crofters. Towards the open sea there are many crofts with no cultivated ground except little patches of potatoes. The houses on these islands are small and built of wood, and the inhabitants live by fishing. Each family usually has a cow, and in some cases a few sheep and goats.

5. *Administrative Districts.*—The Islands are divided into the following districts,¹ viz. :—

<i>Town—</i>	<i>Population.</i>
Mariehamn	1,264
<i>Rural Districts—</i>	
Eckerö	1,443
Hammarland	2,149
Jomala	3,423
Finnström	2,625
Geta	1,228
Saltvik	2,965
Sund	2,059
Vårdö	1,249
Lumparland	645
Lemland	2,119
Föglö	1,890
Kökar	881
Sottunga	399
Kumlinge	1,027
Brändö	1,262
Total	<u>26,628</u>

The total area of these districts is 545½ sq. miles.

¹ The particulars given in the text are from official sources dated 31st December, 1908.

II. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.

1. *Education* is general. There are several primary schools ; a people's high school on the Swedish model, at Finström ; a mixed secondary school and a school of navigation at Mariehamn. Instruction is given in the Swedish language, which is spoken in all the Islands. The Islanders are fond of reading and have public libraries.

2. *Mariehamn*.—This, the only town on the Islands, is on the south coast of Åland. It exports wood, pit-props, and butter. The harbour is safe and commodious, and free from ice nearly the whole year. There are no tides. There are no dry docks, but vessels up to 1,000 tons register can be hauled down for repairs. The only proper loading place is Haraldsby, vessels of 18–19 ft. draught loading there. The town has no sewers and no public water service. Nevertheless, its population has increased from 258 in 1870 to 1,027 in 1900 and 1,234 in 1908. It is a popular sea-side resort and bathing-place.

In 1909 the municipal income was 59,297 Finnish marks (25·22 F.M. = £1), and its expenditure 56,857 F.M. The taxable revenue of the town (in 1908) was made up as follows :—

House property and real estate	. 140,000	F.M.
Industries and business	. 450,000	„
Salaries and pensions	. 310,000	„
	<hr/>	
	900,000	„
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A printing works was established in 1891. There are also a soap factory and sawmills in Mariehamn.

The workshops and factories produced in 1907 goods to a value of 210,000 F.M. yearly.

3. *Means of Communication.*—The only internal means of communication are roads. There are buoyed channels among the Islands. Mariehamn has steamship connection with Åbo and Stockholm all the year, with Hangö, Helsingfors and Petrograd during the summer.

Since 1877 a cable has been in use from Mariehamn to Nystad. There is also a cable between Grisslehamn and Mariehamn. Telephonic connections exist between all the larger islands. The telephone was first installed in Mariehamn in 1892. There are now 164 subscribers in the town, who pay an annual charge of 15 to 30 F.M.

4. *Industry.*—Wheat, barley, oats and rye are cultivated in the Åland Islands—not for export. The corn mills are driven by wind. Cattle breeding is carried on, and there are several co-operative dairies. Butter is exported. There is a co-operative slaughter-house in Åland. From 60 to 80 per cent. of the population are engaged in agriculture, and a few in forestry. The land is farmed by small proprietors. The holdings range from 12 acres to 247 acres.

The average number of live stock per 1,000 inhabitants is as follows:—Horses, 150–200; cows, 500–600; pigs, 50–80. Recently, the breeding of pigs and sheep has received attention.

After agriculture, the chief occupation of the Islanders is fishing. Large quantities of fish are caught off the Islands, the chief being the small Baltic herring and cod. A certain amount of fish, both fresh and dried, is exported. A short time ago, 6,000 barrels (*tonnes*) of herrings were exported yearly.¹

The only minerals found and utilised are granite,

¹ *Grande Encyclopédie, s.v.*

used for building, and clay, from which bricks are made in the tile and brickworks on Åland.

The mildness of the climate and the richness of the soil tend to the growth of a more luxuriant vegetation than that on the mainland of Finland. Pines and firs, birch, aspen, elm, ash, and lime grow, and oaks occur in small woods all over Åland. Timber, which has the reputation of being good for shipbuilding, is exported. There are saw-mills driven by wind.

Flocks of sea-birds live on the rocky islets. Migratory birds are hunted by the inhabitants. The native sea-birds are protected, and their eggs are used as food. On the islets of Lågskär, Klåfskär and Signilskär are colonies of eider-duck; the down is collected from the nests after the young birds have left it, and is exported.

5. *Commerce.*—The following table gives the exports and imports of the islands in 1908—the last statistics available—the values being in Finnish marks :—

Customs House.	Value of Imports.	% of Total Imports.	Value of Exports.	% of Total Exports.	Total Trade.
Mariehamn ...	858,000	91·7	563,000	47·3	1,421,000
Eckerö ...	6,000	·6	48,000	·4	54,000
Degerby ...	71,000	7·7	580,000	48·7	651,000
	935,000	—	1,191,000	—	2,126,000

The Islands west of Skiftet possessed in 1918 a fleet of 229 vessels (including one small steamer), of a total tonnage of 59,843 tons. Of these, 20 were steel ships. Those east of Skiftet had 201 (including six steamers averaging 54 tons), of a total tonnage of 19,561 tons. Twenty more vessels were then in process of construction west of Skiftet.

6. *Finance.*—In 1908 the assets of the Åland Savings Banks were 1,060,000 F.M., belonging to 1,584 depositors.

Four co-operative associations had sales varying from 150,000 to 500,000 F.M., and one had sales between 500,000 and 1,500,000 marks.

The income assessed for taxation per inhabitant in Mariehamn in 1908 was 700 to 900 F.M.; in rural areas, 100 to 200 F.M. In Mariehamn 432 inhabitants were insured for a total sum of 1,610,000 marks.

III. POLITICAL HISTORY.

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY.

- 12th cent. Åland Islands occupied by Eric the Saint.
- 1323 Peace of Nöteborg. Finland and the Islands incorporated in Sweden.
- 1284 Finland (including the Islands) constituted a Duchy.
- 1397-1523 Union of Calmar : Danish Ascendancy.
- 1581 Finland a Grand-Duchy.
- 1634 Swedish Constitution : the Islands form part of the Government of Åbo (Finland).
- 1714 The Islands conquered by Peter the Great.
- 1721 Peace of Nystad : Finland (excepting Viborg) restored to Sweden.
- 1743 Peace of Åbo : part of Finland ceded to Russia.
- 1808 War between Sweden and Russia.
- 1809 Treaty of Frederikshamn : Finland and the Islands ceded to Russia.
- c. 1835 Fortress of Bomarsund begun.
- 1854 Bomarsund destroyed by the British Fleet.
- 1856 Treaty of Paris : Convention forbidding the fortification of the Islands.
- 1906 Russian garrison established in the Islands.
- 1907 France and Great Britain requested by Russia to cancel Convention of 1856.
- 1907 Secret Treaty (Russia and Germany) giving Russia a free hand as to the Islands.

- 1908 Baltic Treaty: Declaration of Sir Edward Grey about fortification.
- 1914 Outbreak of the Great War: Russia fortifies the Islands.
- 1917 The Russian Revolution: Finland declared independent. The Islanders by *plébiscite* (25th-29th December), demand reunion with Sweden.
- 1918 Independence of Finland recognised by Soviet Government, Sweden and Germany. Bolshevik force landed in the Islands. Swedish military expedition (February). Germany occupies the Islands (March-October).
- 1918 3rd March, Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. 7th March, German-Finnish Treaty. Agreement (Sweden, Germany and Finland) not to fortify the Islands.
- 1918 Appeals of Islanders for reunion with Sweden—to Finland, Germany and Sweden (March); to United States, France and Great Britain (November 9th); to Finland (18th November).
- 1919 Swedish Government brings the question before the Conference (18th March).

1. *History, 1157-1809.*

The history of the Islands, as of Finland generally previous to the emergence of the present dispute, falls into two distinct periods:—(1) The period of Swedish domination, 1157-1809; (2) that of Russian domination, 1809-1917.

Primitive.—Of the original occupants of the Islands in prehistoric times, and even of their inhabitants prior to the 12th century of our era, nothing definite seems to be known. The matter is not unimportant, for the question whether the present inhabitants are, by descent, pure Swedes

or Swedised Finns, has a distinct bearing on the controversy. The support of archæology is claimed by both sides, but all that the Finns seem able to say, is that it indicates very early relations between the Ålanders and certain parts of Russia. The Swedes, on the other hand, assert that the early remains found in the Islands prove that they were never inhabited by any but a Swedish race, and that no language other than Swedish was ever spoken there. The two assertions are not incompatible. Without going so far as the Ålanders just quoted, an excellent authority, the Swedo-Finnish historian, M. G. Schybergson, says¹:—“That, even in Pagan days, a Swedish population had set foot firmly in Åland and the neighbouring islands, is proved by the archæological discoveries made there, and by the opening of prehistoric graves.” According to the Finnish memorandum quoted above, some historians say that the Islands were incorporated with Sweden so early as the 10th century, and that their inhabitants were baptized long before those of the Finnish continent. Such statements seem to be unfounded; but it is at least highly probable that the earliest inhabitants who have left any traces on the Islands were of Swedish extraction. The name Åland is Swedish, meaning, apparently, Sea-land.

Swedish Conquest.—The history of the Islands really begins when they were occupied by the Swedes, under King Eric the Saint, soon after the middle of the 12th century.² From Åland, the earlier Swedish immigrants would easily have passed to the mainland of Finland; and, according

¹ *Geschichte Finnlands* (in Heeren and Ukert's series, *Gesch. der europäischen Staaten*), Gotha, 1896; preface dated from Helsingfors. The other leading authority on Finnish history—Yrjö-Koskinen (*Finnische Geschichte*, Leipzig, 1874)—has nothing on this point.

² Réclus (*Nouv. Géogr. Univ.*) says the Swedes had already occupied the Islands in 1130.

to Schybergson (*op. cit.*), "numerous circumstances (place-names, etc.) point to a settlement of heathen Swedes in Nyland," *i.e.*, New Land. Thus the way for an advance was already paved, and the occupation of the Islands was a stepping-stone to the conquest of Finland—an enterprise straightway begun. It thus preceded, by about 70 years, the conquest of Prussia by the Teutonic knights, to which it bears a close resemblance. In both cases the conversion of the heathen was the ostensible motive of invasion, and the justification of conquest. The early acquisitions of the Spaniards in South and Central America afford a close parallel.

The Swedes at first made large and rapid advances, and speedily overran the south and west of Finland. But they met with considerable resistance from the Karelians, and still more from the Russians of Novgorod, whom they might have failed to overcome but for the Mongol invasions about the middle of the 13th century. It is here that we come upon the central and dominating fact of Finnish history—the age-long strife between Sweden and Russia for the possession of Finland, amplified later into the question whether the Baltic was to be a Swedish or a Russian lake. Late in the 13th century the Swedes conquered part of Karelia, but the struggle with the Russians continued for another generation; and it was not till the Peace of Nöteborg (1323), which defined the boundaries between Finland and the Principality of Novgorod, that the Swedish conquest of Finland could be said to be complete.

Finland—as it now began to be called—including the Islands, was thus incorporated in the Swedish Kingdom, but it was not treated like a conquered province. The government of Finland was enlightened and sympathetic; the chief racial or rather tribal divisions of the people obeyed each its own laws; in 1362 the Finns were admitted

to take part in the elections to the Swedish throne. No attempt was made to enforce the use of the Swedish tongue or otherwise (though a university was founded at Åbo in 1640) to "Swedise" the inhabitants. The period of Danish ascendancy during the Union of Calmar (1397-1523) saw apparently no change in these conditions. In short, Finland, though constituted a Duchy in 1284, and a Grand-Duchy in 1581, and preserving a certain unity of its own, with a considerable degree of local autonomy, remained for more than six centuries an integral portion of the Swedish dominions.

The Islands and Finland.—The connection of the Åland Islands with this province was for a long time somewhat loose and irregular. A Finnish partisan allows that:—"At the beginning of [their] history they formed no part of any other jurisdiction; they had their own general assembly and their own laws." Another authority,¹ writing long before the present dispute began, says that in the Middle Ages they were a separate fief of the Crown; that in 1569 they formed a dower-estate for the Queen-Dowager Catherine; and that, so late as 1680, they were similarly given in fee to Queen Ulrica Eleonora. Professor Hamnström asserts that, before 1634, the Islands formed a territory and sometimes a government apart; and that, in spite of the administrative unity then established, there were considerable financial differences between the Islands and the other portions of the Åbo Government. "For long periods" (says M. Sjæstedt²) "the archipelago had a separate Governor, who resided in the fortress of Kastelholm and depended directly on the prefecture of Stockholm. From the ecclesiastical point of view,

¹ Léouzon le Duc (a well-informed writer on Baltic matters), in *Les Iles d'Åland*, Paris, 1854.

² *La Question des Iles d'Åland* (Paris, 1919), p. 10.

the archipelago . . . always [*i.e.*, during the Swedish period] formed part of the diocese of Upsala." As a rule, however, the Islands were combined, for administrative purposes, with Finland; the author of the memorandum cited above quotes several 14th century documents proving this. In 1556 King Gustavus I enfeoffed his son, John, with the Duchy of Finland, including the Islands¹; when the Grand-Duchy was constituted (1581), they were comprised in it; and the Swedish Constitution of 1634, at which date the kingdom was divided into provinces, "states expressly that the Islands form part of the Government of Åbo," to the archbishopric of which they were also ecclesiastically subject. The Swedish negotiators in 1809 attempted to draw the boundary of Finland at Skiftet—the channel dividing the Islands to the east of Åland—but the Russians refused to recognise it. In 1808, during the last war with Russia, the Islands were, for a short time, administratively incorporated in the Government of Stockholm.

The Russian Wars.—Meanwhile the wars between Sweden and Russia for the possession of Finland and (later) of what are now known as the Baltic Provinces, continued. The war with Ivan III, towards the close of the 15th century, lasted for twenty years, but left the frontiers of Finland undiminished. Two wars in the following century—one of two, the other of twenty years' duration—were similarly resultless. During the great days of Sweden, in the 17th century, Swedish power advanced in Finland as elsewhere; but Sweden exhausted herself under Gustavus Adolphus and his immediate successors. The coming of Peter the Great, and his administrative reforms in Russia, turned the scale. In the Great Northern War, which synchronised with that of the Spanish

¹ This is supported by Schybergson (*op. cit.* p. 121).

Succession, Russia made great advances and occupied Finland for seven years. The Åland Islands were conquered by the Tsar Peter in person in 1714. He made them a naval station from which to attack the coast of Sweden. Nevertheless, in the Peace of Nystad (1721) which concluded the war, Finland, together with the Åland Islands—which are not specially mentioned in the Treaty¹—was restored to Sweden, excepting Wiborg, a place necessary for the defence of Petersburg. In the war of 1741–3 Russia was again successful; and in the Peace of Åbo (1743) Sweden was forced to cede a considerable portion of Finnish territory. The war of 1788–90 made no change, but that of 1808–9 brought the long struggle to an end.

Russian Conquest.—This war was due to the refusal of Sweden to join the Continental System. She thus incurred the enmity of Napoleon, who, at the Congress of Erfurt (1808) promised his consent to the incorporation of Finland in the Russian Empire. In the war which followed Sweden could make little resistance; and the whole of Finland, together with the Islands, was speedily conquered. Nevertheless, the Åland Islanders made a stout resistance, and in May, 1808, aided by Swedish reinforcements, took prisoners the Russian troops occupying the Islands. Next year, however, the Russians, crossing the ice from the mainland, drove out the Swedes; and Sweden gave up the contest, ceding all Finland to the Tsar. In the Treaty of Frederikshamn (September 5–17, 1809), the Islands are specifically mentioned as

¹ Given in Dumont, *Corps Universel Diplomatique*, Vol. VIII, Part II, p. 36. See Article V.—

“Sa Majesté Czarienne s’engage en échange et promet de restituer et évacuer à sa Majesté et à la Couronne de Suède . . . le grand Duché de Finlande, excepté la partie qui en a été réservée ci-dessous dans le Règlement des Limites, laquelle apartiendra à Sa Majesté Czarienne.”

included in the ceded territories; and it is perhaps noteworthy that the phrase, "The Government of Åbo and Biörneborg," appears not to be regarded as necessarily including them.¹ Professor Hamnström, in the pamphlet mentioned above (F.O. Paper 409) shows ground for believing that Napoleon had not originally contemplated the annexation of the Islands as well as of Finland, and that he was only induced to consent by the wish not to alienate Russia during the Austrian War. At the Finnish Diet of Borgå (March, 1809) the Islands were not represented, the Islanders refusing to send representatives; and in the same year a member from Åland sat in the Swedish Diet.

2. *History, 1809–1917.*

The Islands under Russia.—With this treaty the second period of Swedish history—that of the Russian domination—begins; it ends with the establishment of Finnish independence as a consequence of the Russian Revolution of 1917. The efforts of the Finns to maintain or to recover their constitutional rights during this period do not

¹ *Article IV.*—"Sa Majesté le Roi de Suède renonce en faveur de S.M. l'Empereur de toutes les Russes à tous ses droits et titres sur les Gouvernements ci-après spécifiés, qui ont été conquis par les armes de Sa Majesté Impériale dans la présente guerre sur la Couronne de Suède; savoir les Gouvernements Kymenegård (*sic*) de Nyland et Tavastehus, d'Åbo et Biörneborg avec les Iles d'Åland, de Savolax et Carelie, de Wasa d'Uleaborg, et de la partie de Westrobothnie jusqu'à la rivière de Tornéa, comme il sera fixé dans l'article suivant sur la démarcation des frontières"

Article V.—"La mer d'Åland (Ålando Haf), le Golfe de Bothnie, et les rivières de Tornéa et de Muonio, formeront dorénavant la frontière entre l'Empire de Russie et le Royaume de Suède. . . ."

"A distance égale des côtes, les îles les plus rapprochées de la terre ferme d'Åland et de la Finlande appartiendront à la Russie, et à la Suède celles qui avoisinent ses côtes."

(Martens, *Nouveau Recueil* (1817) I, pp. 23, 24.)

concern us here ; but it is the breach of the political connection with Russia following on that revolution that has raised the question of the Åland Islands in the acute form in which it exists to-day.

Fortification of the Islands.—During most of this period the history of the Islands was uneventful ; they shared the fortunes of Finland under the sway of the Tsars. The Russians, who (as we have seen) used the Islands as a naval station during the war of 1808–9, were well aware of their strategic value. Hence the erection of the fortress of Bomarsund,¹ so called from the fiord which it commanded. The fortification was apparently begun about 1835²; Léouzon le Duc says (*op. cit.*) that the works were in progress for twenty years. A recent writer asserts³ that “forts were planned and built comparatively early (after 1815) ; but, representations having been made by Great Britain about the undesirability of such fortifications, Russia undertook to discontinue them.” Be that as it may, they were completed by the middle of the century. They did not, however, amount to much in the end, and were easily knocked to pieces by the British Fleet, under Admiral Napier, in 1854. In a special convention between Great Britain, France and Russia, dated 30th March, 1856, it was stipulated (Art. I) that “the Åland Islands shall not be fortified, and no military or naval establishment shall be maintained there.”⁴ By Article XXXIII of the Treaty of Paris, signed the same day, it was agreed that this convention

¹ Its name in the Islands is Skarpans, from the village close by. The inlet is described (*Grande Encyclopédie, s.v. Åland*) as “a safe and magnificent harbour.”

² Sjæstedt (*op. cit.*, p. 14) says that in November, 1833, the British Government, interested in the growing supply of wood from Sweden to England, called the attention of the Swedish Government to the danger.

³ Hugo Vallentin, in *The New Europe*, No. 71, p. 185.

⁴ Hertslet, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. II, p. 1272.

should be regarded as part of the Treaty.¹ The writer of the Finnish memorandum already quoted says that in the Congress of Paris (1856) the Swedes demanded (1) the cession of the Islands, or (2) their neutralisation, or (3) the prohibition of their fortification. Had the first of these courses been adopted, or even the second, this paper would probably have been superfluous.

For fifty years after the Peace of Paris nothing of note seems to have happened in, or in connection with, the Islands. But in 1906 the Russians began again to contemplate the possibility of fortification. In that year a Russian garrison of 750 men was established, ostensibly to prevent the import of arms. In 1907, says Mr. Vallentin (*op. cit.*), the Russian Government—taking the opportunity of the negotiations which led to the Anglo-Russian Entente—requested France and Great Britain to cancel the clause of the Treaty of Paris prohibiting fortification; but they were less successful than they had been in a somewhat similar demand in 1870. Trotski has recently revealed the fact that Germany, hoping perhaps to prevent or damage the Entente, gave Russia, in the secret treaty of 1907,² a free hand regarding the Islands. In the

¹ Hertslet, *Map of Europe by Treaty*, Vol. II, p. 1272.

² According to Sjæstedt (*op. cit.*, p. 23) this Treaty was signed on 31st October, 1907; and he quotes from an article in the *Temps* (February 10th, 1918) relating to it. It was believed in Sweden that France had similarly consented; and it is to be observed that M. Pichon, in his reply to an interpellation in the Chamber of Deputies on 27th December, 1917, did not deny this. What he repudiated was something quite different. "You know," he said, "that nothing could be more ridiculous than the idea of representing us as having left Russia free to seize a portion of Swedish territory, of the Åland Islands, or of Poland, . . . In truth, in the documents published by Trotski, nothing has been found that can be interpreted as involving us Frenchmen in self-contradiction, as revealing aims on our part that could not be proclaimed," etc.—(*Journal Officiel*, 28th December, 1917.)

Baltic Treaty,¹ made between Russia, Germany, Sweden and Denmark, in April, 1908, nothing was expressly said about the Åland Islands; but the memorandum appended, taken in conjunction with the above-mentioned permission on the part of Germany, appears to point to the maintenance

¹ "Sa Majesté le Roi de Suède, Sa Majesté l'Empereur d'Allemagne Sa Majesté le Roi de Danemark et Sa Majesté l'Empereur de toutes les Russies reconnaissant que leur politique, par rapport aux régions de la Mer Baltique, a pour objet le maintien du *status quo* territorial actuel;

"Leurs gouvernements déclarent par le présent acte qu'ils sont fermement résolus à conserver intacts les droits de Sa Majesté le Roi de Suède, Sa Majesté l'Empereur d'Allemagne Sa Majesté le Roi de Danemark et Sa Majesté l'Empereur de toutes les Russies sur leurs possessions continentales et insulaires respectives dans les dites régions. . . .

"*Mémoire.*—Au moment de signer la Déclaration en date de ce jour, les sussignés, d'ordre de leurs Gouvernements respectifs, croient devoir préciser que le principe du maintien du *status quo* consacré par la susdite Déclaration ne vise que l'intégrité territoriale de toutes les possessions actuelles, continentales et insulaires, des hautes parties contractantes dans les régions de la Mer Baltique; et que, par conséquent, le dit arrangement ne pourra d'aucune manière être invoqué lorsqu'il s'agira du libre exercice des droits de souveraineté des hautes parties contractantes sur leurs possessions respectives susmentionnées."—Fait à St. Petersburg le 10/23 Avril, 1908. (*State Papers* 101 (1907, 1908), pp. 974, 975.)

According to Sjøstedt (*op. cit.*, p. 21), this particular phase of the question opened with the recognition of the new Kingdom of Norway, and of its integrity, by the Treaty of 2nd November, 1907, between France, Germany, Great Britain, and Russia. This led to the negotiations which ended in the above-mentioned treaty, and to another signed on the same day between Germany, Denmark, France, Great Britain, Holland and Sweden. These Powers, "recognising that their policy with regard to the regions bordering on the North Sea (*Mer du Nord*) is directed to the maintenance of the existing territorial *status quo*, declare that they are firmly resolved to preserve intact and mutually to respect the sovereign rights which their countries at present (*actuellement*) enjoy over their respective territories in those regions." There is in this treaty no such limitation as is conveyed in the Memorandum appended to the other treaty.

of Russia's intention to fortify. Mr. Vallentin, however, says—on what authority is not clear—that “the signatories [to the Baltic Treaty] appear to have been in agreement that this [clause] would not concern” the continuance of non-fortification.

Sweden and the Fortifications.—Be this as it may, the rumours of these projects seriously alarmed the Swedes; and early in 1908 a unanimous protest was made in the Swedish Parliament. The matter was taken up in the English Press; and a question was asked in the House of Commons which led to a declaration by Sir Edward Grey that Great Britain was opposed to the Russian demand. Nevertheless, when the recent war broke out, the Russians lost no time in fortifying the Islands.¹ In January, 1915, the Russian Minister at Stockholm assured the Swedish Government that the fortifications were only temporary. This assurance was repeated in writing in the following year, and was confirmed by the British and French Ministers. Nevertheless, the Swedish press attacked Russia and England; and a Swedish general advocated an immediate occupation of the Islands. The agitation² became so violent that a crisis was hardly avoided. It died down, however, but was renewed at intervals during the next twelve months. The Russian Revolution introduced a new period in the history of Finland; and the question of the Åland Islands, no longer one of fortification merely, became acute.

¹ W.O. Paper, J.2. Mr. Vallentin says (*op. cit.*, p. 187):—“There is no doubt that when the war broke out the Islands were fortified.”

² In reply to this agitation, M. Sazonof, in a declaration to the Press, May 27, 1916 (*Times*, May 29), repudiated the idea that Russia had any designs on Sweden. “I hope and believe (he said) that the recent agitation in regard to the Åland Islands will prove the last error or suspicion of the Swedes in regard to Russia that this century will live to see.”

IV. THE ÅLAND ISLANDS QUESTION.

1. *The Question, 1917-1919.*

Swedish Alarm.—Swedish interest in the Åland Islands was revived by the Bolshevik Revolution and the consequent disintegration of Russia. It was stimulated by the publication by the Soviet Government of the secret treaties, especially the Treaty of 1907 (referred to above), and of communications between Petrograd and Paris, from which it appeared that the French Government “was prepared to recognise Russia’s unrestricted rights with regard to the regulation of her western frontier.”

The Islanders and Sweden.—The Åland Islanders themselves now enter on the scene. On 20th August, 1917—that is, three months before the fall of Kerenski—a communal assembly was held in the Islands, to consider the question of reunion with Sweden. After a discussion, four representatives were chosen, with instructions “to convey to the Swedish Government and Parliament the lively desire felt, for special reasons, by the people of Åland, that the Islands may be incorporated in the Kingdom of Sweden.” Four months later, on 25th to 29th December, 1917, a “*consultation populaire*”—i.e., a *plébiscite*—was held in the Islands, at which 95 per cent. of the adult male and female inhabitants voted for reunion. An appeal (dated 31st December, 1917, and signed by 7,135 inhabitants) “to the King and People of Sweden” was accordingly drawn up,¹ in which the Islanders, after declaring that their devotion to Sweden, so apparent in the war of 1808, had

¹The appeal is printed in a pamphlet entitled *Les Aalandais sur la Question d’Aaland*.

not been extinguished by the Treaty of 1809 or by any later events, state the grounds of their demand for reunion, and end by expressing to the king, personally, the hope that a solution of the difficulty may be found "in concert with free and independent Finland."¹ This petition was presented in Stockholm by a deputation headed by the Mayor of Mariehamn, on 2nd February, 1918. The king, in his reply, reciprocated this desire and took note of the hope expressed by the petitioners that a solution would be found in accord with Finland. "I consider (he said) that this would be the best course."

Action by Sweden.—Meanwhile the Swedish Government, doubtless apprised of the movement in Åland, had sent a Note to the Governments of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey (23rd December, 1917) requesting that the Åland question should be considered in the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk, "in order to safeguard vital interests of Sweden in those islands." Some important members of the bourgeois *bloc* in Sweden were urging their Government to occupy the Islands, with a view (as they put it) to use them as a point of vantage for crushing the revolutionary forces in Finland. Apparently to anticipate such a movement, a Bolshevik force of 2,000 men had, some time before, been landed in the Islands; and these were joined by a certain number of "Red Guards" from Finland.² Outrages on the inhabitants were committed; succour was demanded from Sweden; and the Swedes, acting on humanitarian motives, as the Finn, Dr. Holsti, admits, sent a military expedition (February, 1918) to protect their co-nationals there.

¹ The independence of Finland, claimed on December 6, 1917, was recognised by the Soviet Government on January 4, 1918, and shortly afterwards by Sweden and Germany.

² Islanders' Appeal to Finn Senate, etc.

They appear to have forced the Russians and the "Reds" to retire; but shortly afterwards, the "Whites" in Finland having implored aid from Germany, German troops landed on the mainland (3rd March), and three days later occupied the Islands. The Swedes thereupon withdrew, but German troops remained in Åland till October, 1918.

Brest-Litovsk.—To return to the Brest-Litovsk negotiations. On 28th January, at Brest, von Kühlmann stated that it would have to be settled whether the question of the Åland Islands should continue to be dealt with by Russia or by Finland; and that Germany desired that to any new agreement on the matter the Baltic nations, and especially Sweden, should be parties.¹ Sweden appears to have fully expected an invitation to discuss the matter at Brest; and, despite the obvious objections to such a course, which were urged by the Allied Ministers, the Minister for Foreign Affairs gave Sir E. Howard to understand that such an invitation would be accepted. Since, however, the Germans did not proceed to invite Swedish representatives, a difficult situation was avoided; while by Article VI of the Brest Treaty itself (3rd March, 1918), in addition to Russia evacuating Finland and the Åland Islands, the fortifications on the latter were to be removed as soon as possible, and a special agreement as to their permanent non-fortification was to be made by Germany, Russia, Finland and Sweden; the other Baltic States also to be consulted. A similar clause was

¹ On February 9, in the course of the discussions, the same speaker said: "As regards the much discussed question of the Åland Islands . . . if he were asked what was his maximum aim in this connection, this was contained in the proposal at which he had often hinted, namely, to bring about the complete neutralisation of these islands, in co-operation with the peoples bordering on the Baltic Sea."—*Deutsche Reichsanzeiger*, February 15, 1918.

contained in the German-Finnish Treaty of the 7th March, 1918.¹ On 8th May it was announced that the Swedish, Finnish and German (but not the Russian) Governments had agreed to open negotiations at once for the demolition of the Åland fortifications; but the commencement of these was delayed until 27th June, and again till the 21st August.

Agreement about Fortifications.—On 4th November, 1918, Swedish papers announced that the negotiations had been concluded, and that a treaty would shortly be signed. On 18th November it was stated that the Swedish Senate was discussing the proposed treaty for the demolition of the fortifications. On 31st December an official communiqué was issued, stating that an agreement had been signed in Stockholm between representatives of Sweden, Finland, and Germany with regard to the demolition of the Åland fortifications, and that it was to be ratified at once. On 24th March, 1919, a telegram from Sweden stated that the new Åland expedition

¹ Article XXXVI of this Treaty runs as follows:—"The contracting parties are agreed that the fortifications erected on the Åland Islands shall be removed as soon as possible, and that the permanent non-fortification of these islands and their treatment in other respects from the military and technical shipping points of view, shall be regulated by a special agreement between Germany, Finland, Russia and Sweden. Should Germany so desire it, other States situated on the Baltic shall also become parties to this agreement."—*Deutsche Reichsanzeiger*, March 8, 1918.

Referring to this treaty, Herr von Kühlmann said in the Reichstag (June 24, 1918):—"A diplomatic agreement has been reached that fortifications erected contrary to treaty on the Åland Islands should be removed. A final decision has not yet been reached about the future of these islands. We hope and desire that this important question will be so settled that the maximum of guarantee can be given that, to the advantage of all dwellers by the Baltic, the non-employment of these islands for military purposes will be a certainty for all time."—*Deutsche Reichsanzeiger*, June 25, 1918.

under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Wikner would leave Stockholm on 31st March to commence the destruction of the fortifications.

Attitude of Finland.—During the early part of 1918, the attitude of the Finn Government, as shown by official utterances, was somewhat enigmatic, but, as a rule, it showed no sign of yielding. Apparently wishing to conciliate the Islanders by granting some sort of autonomy, the Government, on 9th March, 1918, issued a decree declaring their intention of forming the Åland Islands into a separate province, under a civil and a military governor. The decree did not produce the effect desired; on the contrary (we are told), it excited lively apprehension among the inhabitants.

Appeal from the Islanders.—It seems to have been on this occasion that the islanders addressed an appeal to the Senate of Finland, the King of Sweden, and the Emperor of Germany. It was in the form of a telegram, and was signed by 15 inhabitants, whose names are appended to the document.¹ The petitioners rely on the promise made by Germany, together with other belligerent States, "that the peoples liberated by the war from their political dependence should have the right to decide themselves on their future lot." They point out that large parts of the Russian Empire have been granted this right, and that Finland itself has recovered its liberty in the same way. After a reference to the *plébiscite* of 25th-29th December, 1917 (*see p. 21*) and to subsequent events (described above) they express the "almost unanimous" desire of the Islanders for reunion with Sweden, and end by declaring their intention to hold another "*consultation populaire*," while Swedish and German troops are

¹ This document is referred to in *The Times* of March 14, 1918.

still in the Islands. To this appeal the Finnish Senate replied as follows: "Without for a moment discussing a movement which has led to the landing of Swedish troops without Finland's consent, it is necessary to issue a grave warning against any action inconsistent with the integrity of Finland, as such action cannot be tolerated."¹ What reply, if any, was returned by the other Powers concerned does not appear.

Second Appeal.—No further steps seem to have been taken by the Islanders for some eight months—owing, probably, to the uncertain conditions of military affairs in general—except that, in July, they refused to obey the order of the Finnish Senate, which called up the classes of 1892 and 1896 to take part in the civil war; and a number of them emigrated to Sweden to avoid such service. But on 9th November, 1918—*i.e.*, two days before the signature of the Armistice—they made another appeal. This was in the form of a letter signed at Mariehamn, in the name of the Landsting of the Åland Islands, by six inhabitants forming the Executive Commission of that body, and addressed to the President of the United States, the President of the French Republic, and the Government of Great Britain. The petitioners rely, as before, on the acknowledged right of self-determination; and they refer to their previous appeal to Sweden (*see* p. 25), while expressing "the ardent desire and the unbreakable will of the people that the former (*ancien*) county of Åland should be reunited to Sweden."

Petition to Finn Government.—Having, presumably, despatched this appeal, the Ålanders applied, on 18th November, 1918, to the Finn Government, "asking to be allowed to give expression

¹ *Arbetet*, March 16, 1918.

to their desires"; but this petition met with no success. In reply to their efforts, Dr. Holsti, the Finnish representative in London, drew up a memorandum dated 1st December, 1918, in which the "irredentist" movement in Åland is attributed to accidental circumstances, especially the presence (in the spring) of Swedish troops in the Islands.¹ The movement (he says) is without any real foundation, and the fear of denationalisation is groundless. He adds that Sweden "has proposed to Finland a *plébiscite* in the Ålands—a suggestion to which Finland had made no reply." On the other hand, the Government is preparing a Bill to safeguard the interests of the whole Swedish population in Finland, including the Ålanders. Whether as a first instalment of this measure or not, the Government of Finland announced, on 16th January, 1919, the appointment of a Commission "to draft proposals for administrative measures calculated to promote the economic and cultural (educational) interest of the Åland Islands."

Deputation sent.—It was not likely that this sop would appease the Islanders' hunger for reunion; and early in February, 1919, a deputation² of five persons proceeded to Paris,³ to lay their case before the Powers. About the same time General Mannerheim discussed the question with the King of Sweden, the Swedish Prime Minister, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

¹ As the foregoing narrative shows, it dates from much further back. Dr. Holsti's general arguments will be dealt with later.

² There are said to have been several previous deputations to Stockholm.

³ According to the *Temps* of March 18, the Delegates, on their return, were forbidden by the Finn Government to leave Åland, under pain of imprisonment.

Question submitted to the Conference.—Finally, the Swedish Government suggested, in a Memorandum dated 18th March, 1919, that, as no reply has been received to the proposal made by it to the Finn Government in November, 1918 (see p. 26), the Peace Conference should take the question of a *plébiscite* into consideration, along with that of the recognition of Finnish independence.

(2) ARGUMENTS AND CONSIDERATIONS.

Having traced the history of the dispute about reunion down to a recent date, we pass to the arguments which have been brought forward by the parties concerned, and to certain general considerations which have a bearing on the problem.

(a) *Historical.*—The Ålanders claim that from the beginning of their history down to 1809 the Islands were part of the kingdom of Sweden; the Finns, that throughout their history they have been part of Finland. In a sense, both are right. Except for brief periods, the Islands have always been administered as part of Finland;¹ but for more than six centuries Finland itself was part of the Swedish kingdom. Strictly speaking, however, the Islands have never “belonged” to Finland, for Finland was never an independent or sovereign State till two years ago. The Islands have “belonged,” first to Sweden, and subsequently to Russia.

It may be argued—though it does not appear that the Finns have made this point—that the Russian (Soviet) Government, when recognising the independence of Finland, transmitted to the Government of Finland its rights—rights derived from conquest—over the Åland Islands. The

¹ But see what is said below (p. 30) about early maps, and *supra*, p. 14.

rights of Russia are, or were, clear enough, for they were unconditionally recognised by Sweden in 1809. But this is a point of law rather than of history.

(b) *Geographical*.—It is argued by the Finns that the Islands are geographically part of Finland; and it can hardly be denied that, at least geologically, they are so. The sea between Åland and the mainland of Finland is nowhere more than 60 ft. deep, whereas Åland is separated from Sweden by a channel of great depth—the Ålandshaf—sinking in parts to 900 ft. Moreover, Åland is connected with Finland by a large number of rocky islets—about 80 of which are inhabited. Further, the sea to the eastward, being very shallow, freezes every winter, so that communication by means of the ice is, at that season, generally easy; whereas the deep sea to the westward does not freeze, on the average, more than about once in ten years.¹ These facts point, undoubtedly, to a close geographical connection between Åland and Finland.

On the other hand, it should be observed that, while Mariehamn is equidistant from Åbo and Stockholm (70 miles), Åland is far nearer to Sweden than to Finland. The western sea is only 25 miles wide at its narrowest point, while the eastern is at least twice that width. Moreover, while the eastern sea is so studded with rocks and islets that navigation cannot but be somewhat dangerous except in clear weather and daylight, the western sea is unobstructed, and large vessels can make the passage to Mariehamn in safety by day or night and in any weather. The consequence is that Åland, while linked—under water—with Finland,

¹ Ackermann (*Beiträge*, etc.) says the western sea freezes almost every winter, but he appears to be wrong in this respect. See also *supra*, p. 2.

is actually more in touch, for commercial and other purposes, with Sweden.

It is also to be remembered that between Åland and Finland there is a comparatively deep channel, called Skiftet, which divides the archipelago into two parts.¹ It runs nearly north and east, passing to the west of the Kökar group and east of the Brandö group. In a map of Åland,² dated 1714, this channel is marked as the boundary (in the northern part of its course), between Åland and Finland; but in the southern part the boundary deviates from the channel and includes the Kökar group in Åland. In another map of Åland, dated 1789, Skiftet is marked as passing to the east of the Kökar group. It is noteworthy that in this map, as well as in two other old maps³—one of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, the other of Denmark and Sweden—the Åland Islands are coloured like the neighbouring province of Sweden, and unlike Finland.

(c) *Ethnographical*.—The population of the Islands is variously reckoned at from 25,000 to 27,000. These are almost all of Swedish descent (*see* above p. 3), the only exception worth mentioning being a few Finns who inhabit some of the islands in the south-eastern part of the archipelago.⁴ Dr. Holsti, in the Memorandum already referred to, allows that the population is Swedish,

¹ Brockhaus (*Conv. Lexikon*) says that this channel "separates the Islands from Finland."

² A facsimile of this map is given in the pamphlet, *Les Alandais sur la Question d'Åland*.

³ *Ibid.* These maps are undated, but the contents and titles show that the first was made before 1721, and the second between 1714 and 1721. Similar colouring is used in two other maps, one dedicated to Peter the Great, the other nearly contemporary.

⁴ The *Grande Encyclopédie* says that Mariehamn contains 3,000 inhabitants, "almost all Russians"; but this, if it was ever correct, is not so now.

but regards them as only a small portion of the total Swedish population of Finland, from which (he says) they are not to be distinguished ethnographically any more than geographically.

(d) *Economical*.—The trade of the Islands is mostly with Sweden. The authors of the Memorandum already quoted state that the relations of the Islands with Sweden since 1809 have been much closer than those with Finland, and that most of their produce is sold at Stockholm. Fresh-water fish is mostly sent thither; salted herrings go to Finland and Reval as well as to Stockholm.

(e) *Strategical*.—The danger for Sweden of a naval base on the Islands in the hands of a hostile Power is obvious; and such considerations were all that counted in the Åland question from 1809 to 1917, when that question was merely one of fortification. When one considers that fast torpedo-boats stationed at Bomarsund could reach Stockholm in four or five hours, and that the capital of Sweden could be bombarded by a *grosse Bertha* placed at the western extremity of Åland, it is clear that the Swedes have some cause for anxiety.

It is not, however, for Sweden only that a navalised Åland constitutes a danger. The Island holds the key to the Gulf of Bothnia, for submarines lurking in its many fiords could absolutely close the entrances to that sea, which extends northwards for nearly 400 miles. Moreover, if Bomarsund, Reval and Libau were in the hands of a single naval Power or confederation of States, they would appear to constitute one of those triangles to which naval strategists attach such importance, and would dominate the whole of the Baltic.

Lastly, under this head, it is argued by the Finns that Sweden has no more right than Finland

to control the Gulf of Bothnia, the shores of which are equally divided between them. This may be conceded; but the argument cuts both ways. The two rights cancel each other, and leave the field open to other arguments.

(f) *Self-determination*.—The wishes of the population most nearly concerned have been generally recognized, in similar cases, as the most important factor. Of the nature of these wishes there can be no doubt. Writing in 1854, Léouzon le Duc says (*op. cit.*): "Swedish by origin, the Ålanders are so at heart. They love Sweden, which gave them their language, their institutions, and their religion." From this attitude they have never swerved. Their desire for reunion with Sweden has been shown by the all but unanimous vote of the people and has been expressed in numerous appeals. So far as has transpired, no voices in Åland have been raised on the other side.

It appears that the Svecoman population in Finland, numbering some 400,000 souls, objects to the separation. This is not surprising, for, though the Islanders form but an inconsiderable accession to the Swedish *bloc* in the Diet of Finland, the Swedish vote would, *pro tanto*, lose by their secession.

It is also argued on the Finnish side that to apply the doctrine of self-determination to so small a district and to so minute a fraction (one seventeenth) of the Swedo-Finn population is to reduce the doctrine to an absurdity; and that, if applied on behalf of the Ålanders, it should also be granted to the Svecomans. Such an application would obviously be impossible.

APPENDIX.

UTTERANCES OF PUBLIC MEN IN SWEDEN AND FINLAND.

- (1) KING GUSTAV V. Speech from the Throne, Riksdag, January, 1918.

"The Government gladly recognise the independence of Finland, and it is their hope that Finland will unite with the other Scandinavian countries in the cause of peace and progress, and that the independence of Finland will contribute to a satisfactory solution of the Åland problem."

- (2) HERR TRYGGER. (Swedish Opposition Leader). Speech in Riksdag, 23rd January, 1918.

"The Government's first duty is to solve the question of the Åland Islands in the only way which accorded with Swedish interests and with the wishes of the inhabitants themselves, who had declared that they desired to be incorporated with Sweden."—*Times*, 25th January, 1918.

- (3) HERR TRYGGER (Swedish Opposition Leader). Speech in Riksdag, 23rd January, 1918.

"Åland in foreign hands is a danger to Sweden. The Treaty of Paris has proved worthless. A new situation has now arisen, and a solution in accordance with the wishes of the Islanders may be hoped for."

Afton Bladet, 24th January, 1918.

Dagens Nyheter, 23rd January, 1918.

- (4) HERR BRANTING (Swedish Socialist Leader). Speech in Riksdag, March, 1918.

"The final settlement of the Åland question should be left to the General Peace Conference, and not treated as a matter which concerns only the Baltic Powers. The Swedish working classes and many others are opposed to the idea of taking sides in a civil war or giving armed support to the Swedish element against the Finns."

Afton Bladet, 6th March, 1918.

- (5) HERR EDEN (Swedish Prime Minister). Speech, March, 1918.

"As to Åland, the Government never entertained the dishonourable idea of converting an expedition intended for the protection of the Islanders into an instrument of annexation. The petition of January last, which made clear the wishes of the population for reunion with Sweden, has placed the question on a new footing, and though the Government have been unwilling to press the matter during the present crisis in Finland, they stand by the answer given by the King to the deputation, viz., compliance with the wishes of the Islanders, provided that a free Finland consents to that solution."

Stockholms Dagblad, 21st March, 1918.

- (6) HERR LÖFGREN (Swedish Minister of Justice). Speech, July, 1918.

"The Åland problem is a complicated one. It is the aim of the Government to bring about by agreement with the Powers concerned such a settlement as may conduce, as far as possible, to Sweden's security. If that can be achieved by the fulfilment of the wish of the inhabitants for reunion with Sweden, so much the better. The limited objects which we have, up to now, set before us have been attained. The Islanders have been preserved from the horrors of civil war, and an agreement has just been reached with regard to the demolition of the fortifications constructed by the Russians during the war."

Dagens Nyheter, 23rd July, 1918.

- (7) KAPTEN FRIHERR PALMSTIERNA (Minister of Marine, Sweden). Speech, 28th July, 1918.

"The issue in regard to the Åland and Finland problems has been obscured because they have been used by the Activists in furtherance of their plans for inducing us to take sides openly with Germany. As regards Åland, the most important point is the demolition of the fortifications. On this we have throughout insisted, and are now in a fair way to carry our point. For the rest, all democrats must sympathise with the aspirations of the Islanders, but these can only be realised by agreement with Finland. . . . Finland is alive to the danger of getting out of touch with Scandinavia, and this explains the great efforts which have been made to attach Sweden to Germany. This line of policy is quite comprehensible, but it does not accord with our interests. What is now happening on the Murman coast should serve as a warning."

Social Demokraten, 29th July, 1918.

- 8) DR. A. LILLE (Swedish Party in Finland). Article, *Svenska Dagbladet*, July, 1918.

“Finland desires friendly relations with Sweden, but she cannot possibly part with Åland. Sweden has done nothing to justify her claim to the Islands, and to speak of self-determination in this connection is a *reductio ad absurdum*. Nationalities cannot be split up into small fragments. War between Finland and Sweden is inconceivable, and Finland would oppose any attempt to use the Islands as a base for an attack on Sweden. The existing arrangement, therefore, involves no danger to Sweden, especially in view of the recent convention between Germany, Finland, and Sweden. For the same reason, a powerful Finland, including Russian Karelia, would be an advantage to Sweden.”

Svenska Dagbladet, 29th July, 1918.

- (9) HERR ISAKSSON (Finnish Governor of Åland). Proclamation, July, 1918.

“I am convinced that no official will venture on any step which might tend to destroy the friendly relations between Finland and Sweden, or involve the Swedish Government in the difficulties which might arise from a Chauvinist agitation in that country in regard to the so-called Åland question. That Government—to quote their own words—has not the slightest intention of disregarding the principle, so frequently asserted during the present war, of the rights of small nations, or of dishonourably abusing their power by forcibly annexing the Åland Archipelago, which constitutes Finland’s outlet to Scandinavia and the West, and, as a matter of history, has always from a legal and administrative standpoint formed part of Finland.

“Neither the Swedish Government nor any right-minded person in Sweden or Åland, however much some people may be impressed by this false picture of Fenoman tyranny, can respect an official, who, forgetful of his oath and his duty, persists in maintaining a disloyal attitude towards his own country and its lawful Government.

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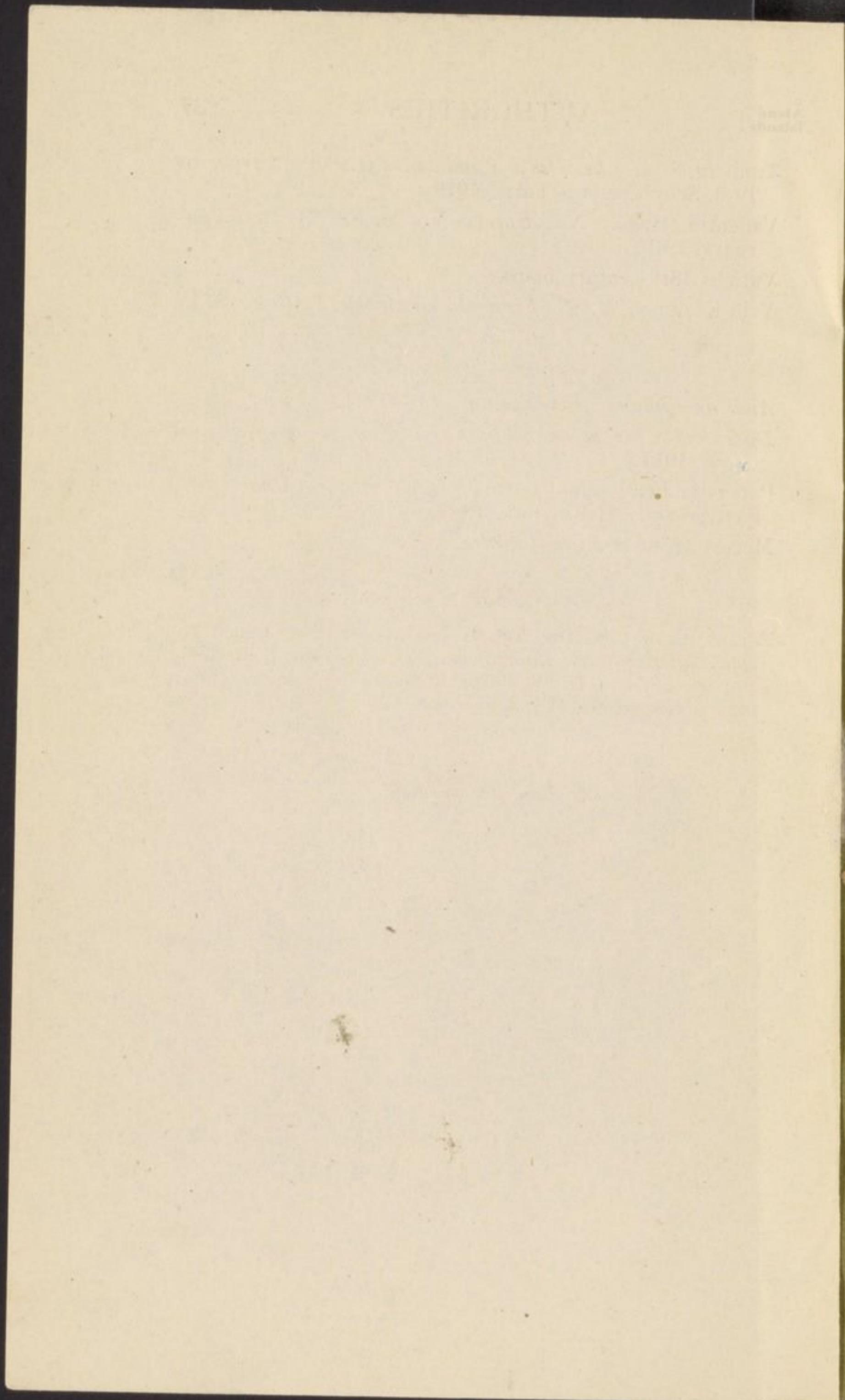
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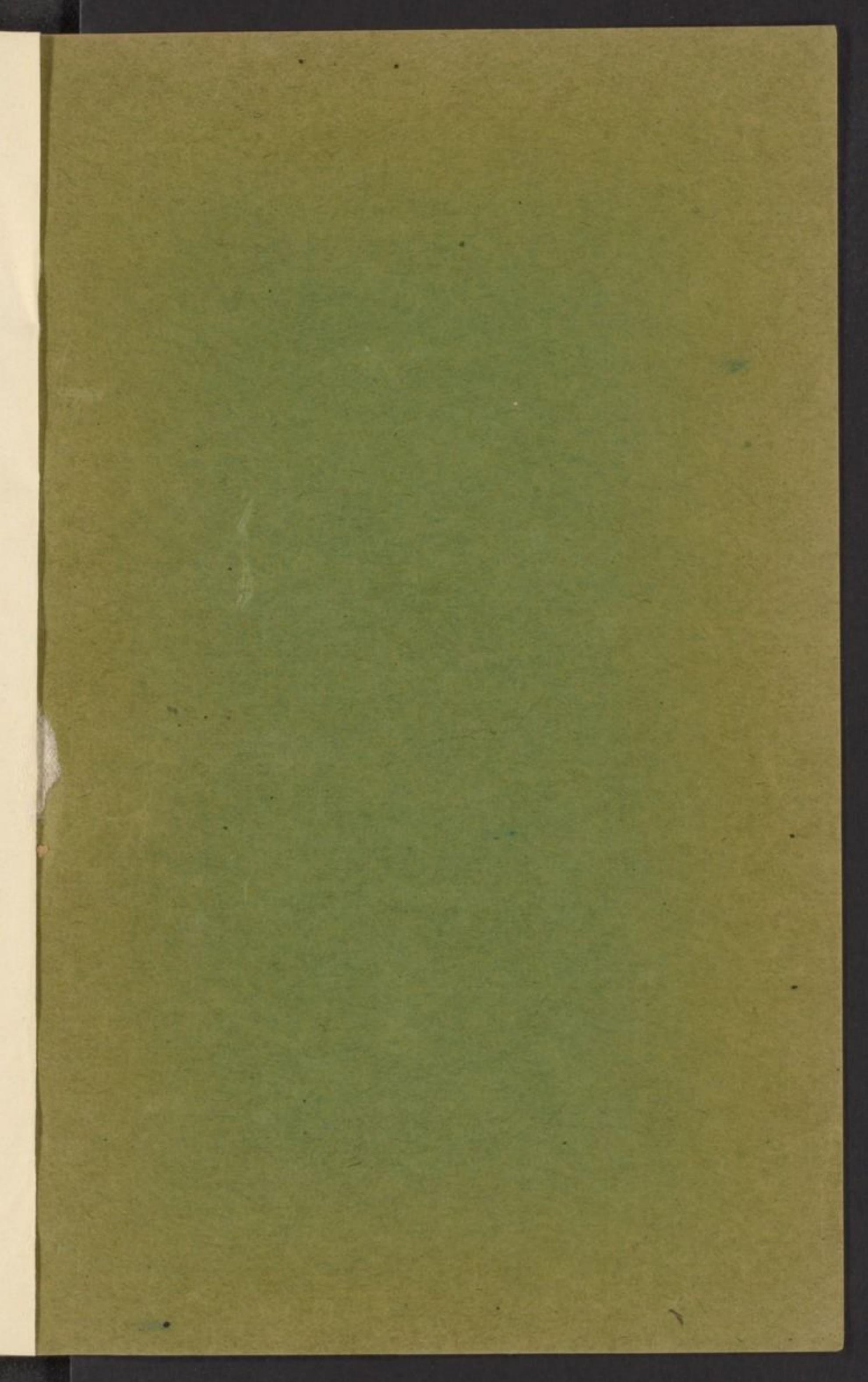
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MAPS.

A special map of the Ålands Islands has been issued by the *Generalstabens Litografiska Anstalts Forlag* (Sweden), on the scale of 1:400,000, and has been reproduced for this series by the War Office (G.S.G.G. No. 2928).





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