Frida S. Hudson
'07.

MEMOIRS OF A RUSSIAN GOVERNOR

PRINCE SERGE DMITRIYEVICH URUSSOV

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT AND EDITED BY

HERMAN ROSENTHAL

ILLUSTRATED EDITION

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS
MCMVIII

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Published January, 1908.

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INTRODUCTION

VOLUMES without number have been written on Russia and Russian affairs by outside observers, who reported the little they could see, blindly groping for the dark truth that lay below the surface. But never before has the truth about Czardom been told by one of the innermost circle; the truth about the intricate machinery of the autocracy; the schemes of the Police Department; the intrigues and corruption that underlie the fabric of government—never have these evils been laid bare by a Russian prince of the oldest families, a governor of many provinces, an administrator with the rare patriotism and courage to disclose the terrible secrets of a system of which he was a part. That is precisely what Prince Urussov has done in the volume before the reader.

Prince Urussov, the author of these memoirs, is not a revolutionist. He is not a destructive agitator, but a constructive patriot. A believer in a constitutional monarchy and one of the ablest representatives of the Constitutional Democracy in the first Duma, it has been his aim in exposing the legalized corruption of the civil government, the lack of harmony among the ministries, the brutality of the military and their incessant conflict with the state authorities, the unspeakable intrigues of the highest court cliques through which wholesale massacres even now are perpetrated with impunity, the wasteful extravagance of the great landholders, and the ignorance and the superstition of the masses, to arouse earnest, right-thinking men to sweep away these foul abuses and to co-operate in the sane upbuilding of the New Russia. As Governor of Bessarabia shortly after the terrible massacre of Kishinev, Prince Urussov inexorably traced the responsibility for that crime to the very government he served, and the secrets thus unearthed form an impor-

tant part of his memoirs—memoirs that will for all time remain among the most notable documents in the history of revolutionary Russia.

Prince Serge Dmitriyevich Urussov, a descendant of a noble family distinguished for honorable services to the nation during a period of five hundred years, was born in the province of Yaroslav, March, 1862. He was educated in the classical gymnasium at Yaroslav and at the University of Moscow. After brilliantly completing his final examinations, he retired to his estate at Razva, in the province of Kaluga, where he displayed marked ability as administrator and landlord. He was elected Marshal of the Provincial Nobility, was re-elected three times, and served also as president of the provincial zemstvo and chairman of the justices of peace in the district. In 1902 Plehve, then Minister of the Interior, appointed him Vice-Governor of Tambov, where for the first time Urussov came to a full realization of the corruption and sycophancy prevailing among the office-holders. Six months later he was appointed Governor of Bessarabia, where he arrived soon after the terrible massacre in Kishinev, the details of which are so vividly described by Urussov in the following pages.

In November, 1904, he was transferred to Tver, then the centre of liberalism, in order to adjust the conflict between the peasants and the landlords. Shortly after his arrival in Tver he learned that the notorious Trepov, Chief of Police of Moscow, had been created Minister of Police with the rank of Vice-Minister. Urussov wrote a spirited letter to Bulygin, then Minister of the Interior, and insisted that he could not carry on his work of reconciliation under the control of a man opposed to the spirit of conciliation and known to be the author of many calamities. In spite of his slender means, grown slender because of his devotion to public service, Urussov voluntarily resigned his remunerative official position and returned to Razva. Here he was soon elected to represent his district in the first Duma. A few weeks later he was suddenly called to St. Petersburg by Count Witte, who was attempting to form a cabinet in accord with the Manifesto of October, 1905. Urussov was urged by Witte to accept the portfolio of Minister of the Interior, yet the Prince could only promise at the last moment to serve as associate to Durnovo, a man unwisely selected by Witte, who was responsible for the riots in

the Jewish Pale and the bloody repressions throughout Russia after the publication of the Czar's Manifesto.

Urussov withdrew from the cabinet, and was elected by a large majority of his constituents to the first Duma. His conduct in the Duma was noted for its frankness and broad democracy, and freedom from narrow party affiliations. His maiden speech may be regarded as the most notable address delivered before the first Duma. In this now celebrated utterance on the pogroms,[1] he declared that one must perceive in them a uniform system of attacks carefully planned by the government as a matter of policy. Since that utterance events have demonstrated that the several ministries, and the inner court circles are the active instigators of the pogroms by means of the organizations of the so-called "True Russian Men." These men and their supporters at the court were designated by Urussov, in his speech on the Byelostok massacres, as "watchmen and policemen by education and pogromists by conviction."

After the dissolution of this first Russian Parliament, Urussov attached his signature to the protest drawn up by the Constitutional Democrats, even though he did not fully agree with the contents of the document. He then returned to his estate and began writing the memoirs of which the present volume forms a part. The Russian original was received with remarkable favor, and passed through many editions.

Of this work it may be truly said that sincerity of purpose and breadth and fairness of judgment are reflected in every sentence. The author is typical of the New Russia now slowly rising from the wreckage of the old. One of the ablest of the Constitutional Democrats, he is rendering yeoman service in fashioning constructive policies for the nation that is to be; and, though it may be years before the great ideal is realized, while such men as Prince Urussov are laboring with unselfish patriotism, no one can doubt that Russia will be free.

HERMAN ROSENTHAL.

New York Public Library.

[1] Pogrom. Devastation, Destruction. An organized massacre in Russia for the destruction or annihilation of any body or class; chiefly applied to those directed against the Jews.—Murray's *New English Dictionary*, 1907.

MEMOIRS OF A RUSSIAN GOVERNOR

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I

Appointment as Governor of Bessarabia—Journey to St. Petersburg—Peterhof and my presentation to the Czar—Plehve—First acquaintance with the Jewish Question.

AFTER completing my studies in the University of Moscow, in 1885, I was engaged, for a long time, in directing the elections of the zemstvo and the nobility in the province of Kaluga. Later I removed to Moscow. In November, 1902, I was appointed Vice-Governor of Tambov, and a few months later, at the end of May, 1903, I unexpectedly, and without previous notice, received a telegram from the Ministry of the Interior informing me of my appointment as Governor of Bessarabia. I waited for the issue of the *Pravitelstvenny Vyestnik* (Government Messenger) containing the decree of my appointment, and at the urgent advice of the Minister of the Interior, Plehve, I hurriedly left for St. Petersburg, arriving there, I remember, on June 9th.

At that time I knew as little of Bessarabia as I did of New Zealand, or even less. Kishinev was to me only a name, somewhat familiar because of the continued reports in the papers concerning the notorious anti-Jewish riots of 1903. These riots the Russian government was openly accused, in foreign publications, of having organized. Indeed, a letter had been published, supposedly written by Minister Plehve to Governor von Raaben, containing an ill-concealed hint not to interfere with the rioters. All these facts passed out of my mind at the time, leaving barely a trace. I had no interest in the Jews. I knew nothing of their

condition, nor of the laws specifically applicable to them, and I considered the rumor of the participation of the government in the organization of pogroms a foolish or wicked invention. I was more interested in the external features of my new position: how to arrive there, how to receive the persons presented to me, how to become acquainted with the staff; these and similar questions of the etiquette of my official position disturbed me much more than the expected difficulties of governing a province entirely unknown to me.

On my way thither I carefully read in the second volume of the Code the sections dealing with provincial institutions, and also acquainted myself with the sections in the first volume pertaining to the various ministries—particularly the privileges of the Minister of the Interior. From what I read I reached a certain conclusion, and was undeviatingly guided by it as governor of the province during my incumbency. In it I found a confirmation of my view that, according to law, the Governor is at no time the mere representative of the Minister of the Interior, and should not deem himself merely an official of this ministry. As a provincial official, a direct appointee of the Emperor subordinate only to the Senate, he enforces the legal orders of all the ministers, without being directly subject to any one of them. The Minister of the Interior is more intimately connected with the governors because of the nature of his duties, but not because of greater authority than the other ministers; and the fact that the pay-rolls of the governors are a charge of the Ministry of the Interior does not invest the latter with any special privileges. In other words, I decided to avail myself to the full extent of the independence granted by law to the governors, and in accordance with this freedom so to demean myself in my personal relations with the Minister of the Interior that, while maintaining the appearance of the official respect due the senior from the junior, I should not allow him to criticise my actions and to treat me as one directly subordinate to him. I decided to maintain strictly official relations with the heads of the departments and persons of equal rank, to communicate with them only in extreme cases, and generally to endeavor to diminish communications with the ministers as far as possible.

I refer to these details because one of the grave faults of contemporary governors is voluntarily to burden themselves with

the yoke of the ministries and departments. Before presenting themselves to the Minister, most of the governors visited the departments, sat a long while in the waiting-room of the Director of the Department for General Affairs, and asked his advice as to the subject to be discussed by them with the Minister, also the best mode of its discussion. After their presentation to the Minister, they hurried to report the result of their audience, entering all departmental nooks, fearful lest they should overlook a single influential official, and bent on establishing such relations as would facilitate their private inquiries from the province about the plans and intentions of the central government, and to pave the way for instructions in cases of misunderstanding or doubt. Many governors even deemed it necessary to draw upon their own limited means to entertain department officials in the expensive restaurants of St. Petersburg.

Long had I been sceptical about the information of the government bureaus of St. Petersburg, and about the value of the measures for local administration ordered by the central bureaus. I remember in this connection a story about a governor, Prince Shcherbatov, who, after governing a province for three years, won the reputation of a splendid administrative officer. When ill-health compelled him to resign, his successor found in the Governor's office all his ministerial packets, each bearing the inscription "Secret—to be handed to the Governor," and each unopened. This story came from V. K. Plehve.

My plan of maintaining strictly formal relations with the officials in St. Petersburg I first carried into effect in my relations with the Chief of the Bureau of General Affairs, S——, whom I went to see about my forthcoming audience with the Emperor. When S—— asked me what I had discussed with the Minister, I replied, "Nothing was said that in any way concerns your Excellency's department." When he began to tell me of the difficulties of my new task, instructing me that "A Governor should be a rock against which all currents break," I watched my opportunity to interrupt him, and, offering my limited time as an excuse, asked him to inform me briefly as to the day of the audience; after which I rose and took my leave.

Thus I was preparing myself in the Minister's waiting-room to maintain the dignity of my new position, but Plehve, as I found out later, had long ago elaborated his method of throwing cold

water on the governors. On entering his cabinet the day of my arrival at St. Petersburg, I was surprised at the change in his manner towards me. Simple, gay, and genial as he had been during our last meeting in January, now in June he was, on the contrary, proud, cold, and reserved. In answer to my thanks for the imperial confidence shown to me because of his mediation, he smiled with a faint movement of his lips and asked me to be seated. After this he said a few words about the Kishinev pogrom and the inefficiency of the Kishinev police, informed me of the expected transfer of the Bessarabian Vice-Governor, and told me that I was to be presented to his Imperial Majesty at Peterhof. After this he lapsed into silence. I rose, and on bidding him good-bye I inquired when I could call on him before leaving for Kishinev. He replied, "I would ask you to call here after the audience," and we parted.

My brother-in-law, Lopukhin, who was at that time Chief of the Police Department, was very much amused when I acquainted him with the details of my interview with Plehve, and remarked that such was his system of reminding newly appointed governors that they were not to be filled with an exaggerated sense of their own importance.

As it was summer, there were but a few ministers in St. Petersburg. I called on two or three of them, but remember nothing of interest in connection with these visits. On June 12th I received an invitation from the office of the Master of Ceremonies to go to Peterhof. In accordance with the direction accompanying my ticket, I arrived at 10 A.M., on June 13th, at the Baltic Railroad Station, and found a seat in the car for official persons going to the Palace. As it turned out later, this was not one of the regular receiving-days, and besides myself there was in the car only Prince Khilkov, the Minister of Ways and Communication, whom I had not yet visited. On leaving the train at Peterhof, I was met by a court lackey, who inquiringly called out my name, and showed me to the carriage waiting for me. I was taken first to one of the court buildings reserved for persons to be presented to the Emperor, where a suite of three rooms—a bedroom, a study, and a reception-room—was assigned to me. Tea was served me, and I was told I had twenty minutes to myself. I drank a cup of tea, wrote a letter home on paper bearing the imperial letter-head, and again entering the car-

riage, started on my way to court. We drove slowly through the park in a gently falling rain. We slackened our pace while passing through the gate guarded by sentinels, and as I looked out of the carriage window I beheld an unexpected scene. On the lawn beside the road I saw two newly ploughed furrows and two ploughs, to each of which was attached a team of horses. Standing by were several persons in military uniform and also a civilian in an overcoat, who was apparently excited and was explaining something. It seems that a trial of the Sharapov plough was to be made in the presence of the Emperor and the Minister of Finance, Witte, and it was feared that the Emperor would be kept back by the now increasing rain. This was all explained to me by the court officer on duty when I entered the small drawing-room adjoining the Emperor's study on the second story of the small and modestly furnished Palace. Prince Khilkov, the Court-Adjutant, and I were the only persons in the drawing-room. It was twenty minutes to twelve. Witte came out of the Emperor's study, greeted Khilkov, shook hands with me in response to my greeting, and left after a few words from the Court-Adjutant. Khilkov went into the study, and the Adjutant told me, meanwhile, that the Emperor had intended to take a walk and to witness the trials of the ploughs, but would not go on account of the rain, and that, as the Emperor had no other business until breakfast, I had before me a rather protracted audience.

I entered the Czar's study soon after twelve o'clock. . . .

After my audience with the Emperor, I was again escorted to my rooms, and breakfast was served with wine and coffee. This finished, I was taken in the same carriage and by the same court servant to the railroad station in time for the two o'clock train.

I devoted the entire day following to the study of the four-volume report of the Police Bureau concerning the Kishinev riots, and gained from it the impression that the riots had their beginning in a quarrel between a Jewess, who owned a carrousel, and a working-man, who wanted a ride free of charge. The local authorities and the police lost their heads and did nothing. The only person who foresaw the possibility of anti-Jewish disorders at Easter was the Chief of the Kishinev Bureau of Public Safety, Baron Levendall, who, in his report to the Department of Police on the Friday of the preceding week, had pointed out

the dangerous fermentation in the city, and complained that the Chief of Police and Governor had paid no heed to his warning. The report included copies of strongly worded telegrams from the Minister to the Governor, urging measures for putting a stop to the disorders, and concluded with the last telegram informing the Governor of his recall, and ordering him to transfer the government of the province to the Vice-Governor.

I also found in the report a reference to the belief current among the common people that rioting was permitted for three days, and noted that the disorders ceased very soon after the chief of the local cavalry detachment began to arrest the rioters.

In the few days of my sojourn in St. Petersburg, I succeeded in acquainting myself superficially with the laws concerning the Jews, with the Temporary Regulations of 1882 concerning their residence in rural districts, and with the current views in relation to the recent events at Kishinev. The papers of the day reflected two opposite opinions. One threw the responsibility for the riots entirely on the Government and on the anti-Jewish agitation, at once ignorant and criminal, fomented by certain individuals; the other saw in the pogroms the uncontrollable outburst of the native population to exact revenge for their exploitation by a people regarded in Russia as strangers and enemies, who were endeavoring to place the country under the yoke of economic slavery. One even had to read in certain publications, like that of the notorious Krushevan, that the Jews themselves started the pogrom for their own advantage.

It was becoming more and more evident that my activities in Bessarabia would be inseparably bound up with the so-called Jewish question, and that it was my task, in the midst of raging passions and conflicting opinions, to define immediately and clearly my plan of action in so far as the Jews were concerned.

My own observations concerning the part played by Jews in Russia were very limited. Some time ago, in the province of Kaluga, I had met on several occasions a Jewish trader, Zuse Kalmanok Treivas by name, who in going to fairs with his merchandise stopped at times at the country estates and created a very favorable impression. He was universally liked, and his goods sold readily. On rare occasions there came to our districts Jewish agents, who bought grain and other produce. Their arrival was always welcome, for it was accompanied by higher

prices for produce and a prompt meeting of obligations. Subsequently, in the government of Tambov, I was confirmed in the opinion that Jewish buyers constitute a desirable element in rural production. With the exception of the local Christian competitors, all of the rural producers were opposed to the regulations restricting the Jews to a temporary sojourn at the grain centres and railway stations.

To these accidental and superficial observations I could add, in favor of a broader conception of the Jewish question, those general principles of justice and tolerance impressed upon me by the schooling I had received.

At that time all that I could discover in my mind against the Jews was only a certain indefinite racial antagonism and distrust. I cannot clearly explain the source of this feeling, but think I was unconsciously influenced by the anti-Semitic productions, picturing the negative and ludicrous features of the Jew.

In a general way, I knew also of the accusations made against the Jews by their enemies--of their desire to conquer the world. This opinion of the Jews, as founded on their history and religious code, is well known, and I shall not stop to consider it here. The events of the very recent past—the very tangible facts of forty-two corpses and material losses amounting to millions, the result of the April riots, to say nothing of the verbal attacks of a certain portion of the public and the press against the victims in attempted justification of violence—made a deeper impression upon me than the philosophical discussions concerning the rôle of the Jews in the world's history and their coming triumph.

As a result of my reflections, I came to the following conclusions defining my future relations, as Governor of Bessarabia, with the Jews living in the province.

I decided, in the first place, that the existing laws limiting the rights of the Jews must be enforced by me in all cases without deviation or hesitation. This was to be my policy, notwithstanding the statement made to me in St. Petersburg by many competent people that the regulations of May 3, 1882, were a governmental error and had failed in their purpose.[1] O. N.

[1] It is here to be noted with interest that the regulations of May 3, 1882, as I found out later, were ostensibly prompted by the desire to protect the Jews against violence from the Christian population.

Durnovo, at that time Associate Minister of the Interior, was particularly emphatic in his demand for broader rights for the Jews and against the existing "senseless" laws concerning them. I understood clearly even at that time that it was dangerous to introduce into the government of provinces personal tastes and prejudices, and I considered it necessary, therefore, to keep strictly within the law in dealing with the Jewish question. After this I was strongly resolved not to manifest towards the Jews a feeling of aloofness and preconceived distrust. On the contrary, it was my intention always to endeavor to adhere consistently and firmly to the view that the Jews are just as fully Russian subjects as all the other inhabitants of Russia, and, in regard to personal safety, equally entitled to the protection of the law and the Government. I was resolved openly to take the position that the Kishinev riots were a crime, adhering in this respect to the view expressed in the Government communication made in the month of May, and to avoid countenancing any insinuations against the Jews, such as were industriously circulated at that time by certain newspapers.

It was asserted with much pleasure, even in Government circles, that the Jews themselves were to blame for the riots—they had been the attacking party, and, meeting the resistance of the people, suffered defeat because of Russian bravery and their own cowardice. However, I had read the actual facts in the case, and realized that this was an exaggerated interpretation.

With this meagre store of views and intentions, with a hazy conception of Bessarabia and the problem I was to encounter in the future, I again called on the Minister of the Interior just before my departure for Kishinev.

Our interview was short. Plehve was evidently disinclined to express his views on the administration of Bessarabia, either because he was not acquainted with its peculiarities, or because he could not think without irritation of the uproar which had arisen in Russia, and the still greater indignation abroad, over the Kishinev affair. After listening to my account of what was said to me by the Emperor, he merely requested me to familiarize myself as quickly as possible with that portion of Bessarabia which was for the second time annexed to Russia in 1878 as the Ismail district, and was still governed by the Roumanian laws. It was desirable, he thought, that I submit a report as to the

possibility of introducing into this district the Russian general code of laws, provided that local conditions should present no insurmountable obstacles to this unification of the province.

There was one thing I did not like in the Minister. I told him, among other things, that I had reason to think that General Raaben would remain in the Governor's house at Kishinev for about two weeks longer. I should involuntarily be obliged to reconcile myself to this circumstance in order to allow the old gentleman to arrange his affairs and to say good-bye to his friends in the city. Plehve remarked, in answer to this: "I would not stand on any ceremony with him. After this, any stranger might settle down in your house, and would you tolerate it? Raaben has been dismissed, and has no business to be in a Government house; let him go to a hotel."

The last words of Plehve, when he bade me good-bye, were literally as follows: "I am giving you neither advice nor instructions; you are quite independent. But all the responsibility rests on you; act as you know best. All we want is good results. I would merely say to you as we part, please let us have less speech-making and less philo-Semitism."

I often thought later of this concluding phrase of the celebrated reader of human character, as Plehve was considered by many. Indeed, in this case he showed his insight. I had reason to make many a speech in Kishinev, and I left the place with an established reputation as a philo-Semite.

II

Journey to Bessarabia—Bendery—Arrival at Kishinev—Public feeling—Reception and visits—Raaben and Ustrugov—Reception of a Jewish delegation—Change of public feeling—The burial of the Torah—Daily work of the Governor.

I LEFT St. Petersburg on June 17th, stopped in Moscow for the clothes I had ordered there previously, and for some other things, and spent two days at our estate in the province of Kaluga. On the evening of the 21st I left the station Vorotynsk for the south, going by way of Kiev - Razdyelnaya - Kishinev. Members of the family and several neighbors saw me off to the station. I was alone during the entire journey, and spent my time in studying the guide and directory of Bessarabia sent me by the Chief of the Provincial Bureau. I tried to fix in my memory the family names of the officials I was likely frequently to meet, and even their Christian names,[1] as well as those of their fathers. I also read with much interest the book *Bessarabia*, published by the local publicist Krushevan and purchased by me in St. Petersburg. This book, a sort of guide, with photographs and drawings, helped considerably in acquainting me with the city and the province.

Early on June 23d I was transferred at the station Razdyelnaya to a special car placed at my disposal by the railroad authorities, and moved on towards the Dnyester, the boundary of the province of Bessarabia, where I was destined to see the town of Bendery, one of the district cities of Bessarabia.

I wrote to the Vice-Governor, Ustrugov, asking him not to announce the time of my arrival in Kishinev. It was my desire to avoid the formal greeting which the local authorities would certainly prepare for me, as Governor, at the station. Such greetings are customary, though not binding on any one. They

[1] Colloquially in Russia the father's name is frequently added to the Christian name of the individual.

are objectionable because many of the officials in the city go to meet the Governor against their will, and abuse him for it in their inmost hearts. Others, because of the greater independence of their position, do not go; and yet at the same time they involuntarily wonder whether their absence will be taken as a protest or as unwillingness to show proper respect to the Governor. They all watch one another, agree among themselves not to go, but at the last moment prove unfaithful to their promises. Some of them become suddenly ill, or they find it necessary to go to the station with relatives who, by strange coincidence, are to take the very train on which the Governor is to arrive. Hence, without going to meet the Governor, these people meet him after all. In a word, this matter always causes discussion which it is pleasanter to avoid.

For this reason I asked the Vice-Governor to limit the number of people meeting me at the station to five—the Chief of Police, the Chief of the Rural Police, the Chief of the Provincial Bureau, and two adjutants. I expected, besides, to see with them the Vice-Governor himself, then acting Governor, "if," as I expressed it in my letter, "his Highness will be willing to grant me the honor and pleasure, allowing me thereby to become acquainted with him at the very moment of my arrival at Kishinev, and through him also with the other persons officially subordinated to me." However, our meeting occurred earlier than I expected. As we approached the station at Bendery, I saw through the car-window a platform crowded with people, kept in order on either side of a passageway. In the passageway I saw the City Mayor, clad in uniform, a chain around his neck, and with bread and salt on a platter. Behind him stood his subordinates. A great number of policemen were gathered around the railroad station, and at the head of the crowd stood the gray-haired Ustrugov, Vice-Governor, in full uniform, and with a ribbon across his shoulder. He came into the car accompanied by the Chief of the Rural Police and adjutants L—— and S——. I hurriedly greeted the people who came into the car, and exchanged a few words with them. Leaving the car, I went over to the Mayor, returned his greeting, and accepted his bread and salt. I spoke for a few moments to most of the officials present, and took occasion to display what familiarity with the city and the district I had gained from the Krushevan guide during my journey.

Returning to the platform of the car, I turned to the public, raised my hand to my cap, and thanked them for coming out to meet me. The people took off their hats and loudly yelled "Hurrah!" The Jews could be easily distinguished by the excited attention and eager curiosity with which they regarded me. They pointed their fingers at me, nudged one another, and compared notes on the impression created by me. The train started, and I went again into the car, where Ustrugov and I occupied a separate compartment. The hour and a half to the capital was devoted to a talk with the Vice-Governor.

He conveyed to me the unpleasant news that disorders were liable to break out in Kishinev any day. This was largely due to the fact that the Jews who composed one-half of the one hundred and forty thousand inhabitants of the city, refused to engage Christian working-men, were dressed in mourning, and avoided places of amusement, giving as an excuse their ruined state and the unsatisfactory industrial and commercial conditions. As a result of this there was, on the one hand, a sharp racial isolation and mutual estrangement among the population, and, on the other hand, the presence of a large number of unemployed, ready at any moment to start disorders. The local military, who were not allowed to go to camp, were, according to Ustrugov, discontented, and in general ill-disposed towards the Jews. Ustrugov himself was also unfavorable to them, and warned me that nothing could be done with this "plague." Still under the unpleasant impression of this conversation, I entered Kishinev.

Ustrugov and I drove in an open carriage drawn by a team of white horses, first through the suburbs of the city, and then through the long Alexandrov Street, the main artery of Kishinev, which divides the lower commercial and more ancient part of the city from the upper and newer portion. Men, women, and children stood in crowded ranks on the sidewalks. They bowed, waved their handkerchiefs, and some of them even went down on their knees. I was quite struck by the latter, not having been used to such scenes. The Jews evidently comprised the greater part of the crowd. We drove directly to the cathedral, and thence to the Governor's house, where I was cordially received by General Raaben, and invited to take breakfast with him. After breakfast I visited the archbishop and the bishop of the

diocese, the Armenian Archbishop, the Vice-Governor, three generals and provincial and district leaders of the nobility, the President of the Court, the Attorney-General, the President of the Provincial Zemstvo Bureau, the Superintendent of the Government Bureau, and the City Mayor. I announced that I would be ready to receive all wishing to present themselves to the new Governor at eleven o'clock of the following day. After this I spent my day in conversation with my predecessor until seven o'clock in the evening, and then, having redressed in civilian garb, I went out of the garden gate in the company of Adjutant S——, with the intention of taking a stroll through the city. We first went to that portion of Kishinev which had suffered most from the riots. Their effect was still quite evident. Rough boards covered the broken windows and shattered doors of many houses. Here and there were damaged roofs and partly destroyed chimneys.

However, I soon understood that the main effects of the pogrom were not in the external injuries, but in the undermining of the daily work, in the stagnation of commerce and industry, and particularly in the mental attitude that maintained division and enmity among the population. The re-establishment of friendly relations was prevented as much by a feeling of sorrow and injury, and perhaps also a desire for revenge on the part of the Jews, as by the feeling of resentment on the part of many Christians. This feeling of resentment could be expressed approximately as follows: "On account of these Jews we must now bear the responsibility for the crime." The majority of the local Christian population took no part in the pogrom, and they deplored its occurrence. Yet by no means all of them can honestly say that they did not at some time and in some way contribute towards maintaining the racial antagonism between the two portions of the Kishinev population. The circumstances noted by Ustrugov in our conversation in the train rendered the situation still more critical. Having passed through the more interesting parts of the city, we descended to its lower portion, adjoining the bed of the Byk, where the poverty-stricken Jewish inhabitants had established themselves. On the Asiatic and adjoining streets I saw striking pictures of Jewish life. In the diminutive houses one could see the entire furnishings of the rooms through the open windows. There were sleeping children,

adults preparing for sleep, a belated supper, the reading aloud of a book by an old Jew to the family about him, etc. Many of them slept on the verandas built around the houses, and those still awake regarded us with curiosity. Nearing the end of the town, I vainly tried to see the river mentioned in the geographies. For a long time I could not bring myself to identify it with the little ill-smelling pool, in places not wider than a yard, without current, and with no green on its banks. Thus the first statement I gained from the experience of others—that Kishinev is located on the river Byk—proved to be incorrect. There is no river, rivulet, or even brook, in Kishinev.

On the following day, the 24th, at eleven o'clock in the morning, the drawing-room of the club-house of the Bessarabian nobility, in which Pushkin had danced at one time, was filled with all possible sorts of uniforms. There was no government house for the Governor in the city. He rented, for six thousand rubles a year, a very attractive mansion of about fifteen rooms, occupied by Emperor Alexander II. during the Turkish War. The house had attached to it a good-sized garden and an annex used by the provincial bureau.

The Vice-Governor came into my study to tell me that I was awaited by those who wished to be presented to me. They were arranged in a semicircle of several rows, in such a manner that every department chief was in the front row with his subordinates back of him. Starting my rounds on the left, I spoke at first to the chiefs of departments, who were presented to me by Ustrugov, and then moved into the circle and made the acquaintance of their associates. I then went again to the centre of the semicircle, and moved forward until, having made a complete circle, I found myself again at the door of my study. Standing at the door, I thanked those present for having honored me with their visit. I then added a few words, the nature of which I no longer remember, although I had carefully prepared my short address by writing it out and memorizing it. Under circumstances like these it is important to weigh every word—mistakes are not readily forgiven, and much depends on first impressions. The entire affair lasted forty-five minutes. Immediately after the general reception, I was visited by the archbishops, generals, the President of the Provincial Nobility, and almost the entire staff of the Circuit Court, headed by its president.

I had to pay sixty return visits, a task that I accomplished in four days, thanks to the fact that I found but few of the people at home. I was the victim of only a single misunderstanding. It had been my intention to call on the Associate Attorney, Königson, but instead I rang the bell of lawyer Königschatz and left my card. I rectified my mistake later, but, as I learned subsequently, this visit was recorded against me in St. Petersburg, since the man I thus accidentally called upon was not only a Jew, but was also considered "politically unreliable."

I learned to know General Raaben fairly well in the ten days which we spent together in the Governor's house. His presence relieved me at the beginning from trouble in establishing my household. He retained his servants and looked after all the expenditures, having agreed, at my urgent request, to accept half of the expenses from me.

I wish to protest here most emphatically against the accusation which would make Raaben guilty of having deliberately permitted the rioting, and I also wish absolutely to discredit the legend about the letter supposedly written to him by the Minister of the Interior for the purpose of influencing him to countenance disorder.

Apart from the facts that Plehve insisted before the Emperor on the peremptory dismissal of Raaben, and that the latter remained for a long time in ignorance of his ultimate fate, it seems incredible that the Minister should have recklessly intrusted himself in this matter to a man whose gentleness and uprightness would have precluded the possibility of his carrying into effect so cruel a plan. I do not mean to say by this that I regard the Minister capable of being the initiator of a pogrom. On the contrary, I think that with all his hatred towards the Jews, Plehve was too shrewd and experienced to adopt such an expedient in his fight against them. Yet if Plehve could consider the Kishinev pogrom injurious to the government in its consequences, Raaben, because of his habits and temperament, could not have assumed the rôle of the executor and organizer of this slaughter. This is not merely my personal opinion. I am confirmed in my belief in the innocence of my predecessor by the opinion of all his associates and subordinates, and also the opinion of many representatives of the local Jewish community, whose views in this matter are deserving of careful consideration.

Raaben belonged to those governors who regard their post as an honorary and remunerative position given them as a reward for former services. A lieutenant-general, the recipient of the order of St. George, decorated with four stars, including the White Eagle, he lived alone, without family, was fond of society and cards, was an admirer of the gentler sex, and gave very little time to official duties. He devoted his mornings to the reception of petitioners and claimants, presided at meetings without previous preparation, and never worked after dinner. The government of the province was actually turned over by him to three persons. To the Chief of the Provincial Bureau was delegated the care of all matters personally concerning the Governor, the Vice-Governor was to look after the administration of the province, and one of the members of the provincial bureau had jurisdiction in all matters concerning the government and the legal status of the peasantry. These three persons had long ago agreed as to their respective spheres of activity, which they dominated without interfering with one another, and all three were capable and energetic officials.

Vice-Governor Ustrugov combined with these attributes many failings, because of which he enjoyed neither the good-will nor the confidence of Raaben. Yet the Governor's love of comfort conquered, and Ustrugov remained chief executive officer of the provincial administration, which had jurisdiction in all matters concerning the Jews.

The general policy of the government administration consisted in the repression of the Jews, involving at times a wilful misinterpretation of the law. In individual instances the Jews were occasionally allowed concessions, which indicated that the officials were not disinterested.

Raaben was noted for his weakness for the fair sex. In the house of the Chief of Police—an exceptionally foolish and lazy Cossack officer, brought by Raaben from the Don region—there lived, under the guise of relationship, a so-called "yellow lady" occupying a semiofficial position in the city. She was invited, together with the Governor, to evening parties, occupied the Governor's box at the theatre, and disappeared from the city when Raaben received leave of absence. The women in the city liked Raaben for his amiability and gallantry, and he had no end of invitations both in town, city, and elsewhere in the

province. Thanks to this, his inspection tours were prolonged holidays.

I must admit that, with the exception of a certain impressive manner in receiving reports and accepting petitions, Raaben had not a single qualification that could exert a positive influence on the administration of the government. Let me cite a striking instance of his slight familiarity with the laws. Among the exhibitions of incompetence that caused his dismissal from his post was the following: Having called out the troops, having transferred his authority to the chief of the division that had been called under arms, and having entirely ceased to issue orders himself, he ordered the chief of his bureau before him, and excitedly exclaimed, "Now, show me those regulations about ordering out troops for co-operation with the civil authorities that there is so much talk about!"

It was his business to know these regulations, as he had served both as colonel and commander of a division, and it was his duty to know them as ex-civil governor who had held his post for four years.

"I had scarcely begun to become acquainted with the province when I find myself obliged to leave it," said Raaben to me, after a four years' sojourn in Bessarabia. Yet even after this I feel convinced that Raaben would have continued to govern Bessarabia successfully, receiving rewards and being generally beloved, had it not been for the April occurrences. A certain decency in official relations; a disinclination to fault-finding, and to that excessive inquisitiveness which is due to a desire to assert authority on every occasion; a kindly disposition towards everybody, and hands unsoiled by bribe-taking, are qualities of no inconsiderable value in a governor. Besides, Raaben was suited excellently to the general character of the region, where laziness and a care-free spirit reigned among great natural resources. The peaceful, well-to-do peasant population was but little developed and uneducated. The landlords were thoughtless, and fond of gayety and good living. Society was tolerant towards its own failings and those of others, was fond of outward show, and naturally gravitated towards persons in authority. There was but little work and true character; there was much good-natured hospitality and a certain looseness of morals. Such was Bessarabia in its general features, and

one must admit that it formed a fitting frame for its governor.

I told Ustrugov of his forthcoming transfer, of which I had been informed by the Minister. I could not, however, satisfy his curiosity as to the place of transfer, of which I was myself ignorant. Swayed by hope of advancement on the one hand and the fear that he would be attached to the Ministry without any definite position, Ustrugov lost all interest in Bessarabia. I was quite pleased with this, since I could not rely on his disinterestedness and integrity. I gladly offered him the opportunity to go for two weeks to the province of Podolia, and was pleased at the prospect of immersing myself in the approaching work and care without his intercession and advice.

There came to me, on the third day after my arrival, a deputation of twelve persons representing the local Jewish community. It was composed of merchants, physicians, lawyers—all people of influence and position. It was readily evident from their serious and agitated expressions that they came, not as a matter of mere courtesy, but for an answer to a question that deeply agitated them all. What was yet to happen, what were they to expect, what were they to hope for? Their greeting described the situation in most gloomy colors, and on the same day I wrote down my answer. I will cite my words here as a proof of how little it is necessary to promise in order to gain the confidence of the local Jews, and to establish friendly relations with them. My statement was almost literally as follows:

"Gentlemen, I do not regard you as representatives of any particular class or social unit, of any particular society or institution. To me you are a portion of the Russian subjects living in Kishinev, united among yourselves by a common religion, and wishing to greet the new Governor and to speak to him on matters intimately concerning you. In view of this my answer will be a personal one—a family counsel, as it were. You are interested to know what my attitude will be towards the Jews comprising a considerable portion of the population of Kishinev. I will grant your wish readily and with pleasure. You have not the right to expect religious intolerance, racial hatred, and biassed views from the highest representative of government authority in the province. Our laws and the will of the Czar, repeatedly expressed, establish freedom of worship

in Russia, and the ruling religion of our fatherland teaches not enmity, but peace and love. I would add to this that I am personally averse to racial and religious antagonism. For this reason it will be easy for me, in my relations towards the Jews, to follow strictly the dictates of the corresponding laws without injecting into their interpretation any foreign or personal element. These are the general rules by which I shall be guided. You could not expect any other rules from me.

"Passing over from general to more particular questions, I wish to say a few words concerning the abnormal condition in which I find Kishinev. It is abnormal because of the disturbed, suspicious, partly hostile attitude of one portion of the population towards the other. I will do everything possible in my power to turn the current of our life into its proper channel, to provide for the undisturbed progress of its peaceful, every-day labors. Yet, in order to attain this blessed end, the endeavors of one person are inadequate, as are even the endeavors of an entire administrative bureau. The end can be attained only through the intelligent co-operation of the people themselves. And since you have elected to appear before me as representatives of the Jewish portion of the population, I would tell you what I expect in this connection from the Jews. I must insist, first of all, that the Jews comply faithfully with the limitations of their personal and property rights established by the law without attempting to break or circumvent them. I have a right to expect, moreover, that the Jews, as a highly gifted and strongly united people, and as such frequently gaining economic victories over the local population, shall enjoy the fruits of their victory carefully and tactfully. The native Moldavian population, and likewise the Russian population, are good-natured and unresenting. They are not noted for ready mobility, and desire to accumulate riches. The first direct producers of wealth, the local inhabitants, do not know how to take care of it and to exchange it for other commodities. In this you will always prove more than a match for them. I would ask you, therefore, to use these advantages wisely, and to be fair in your dealings with the people among whom you live. I am certain that if you will be guided by this advice there will never be a conflict between you. I would ask you more particularly not to allow the results of the April disorders to remain the occasion for

maintaining hostile relations among the people in the city. The participators in the April crimes have already suffered, or will suffer, due punishment; the victims have, in a large measure, received aid, both material and moral; the time is now ripe for peace for all. Disorder is a temporary and transient phenomenon, while the normal work-day life is permanent. Do everything in your power to bring quick oblivion of the sorrowful days just past. I would ask you, furthermore, in all serious emergencies, to come to me; my doors are always open to you."

It is interesting to note here that not later than a week after my reception of the Jewish deputation I received a letter from Lopukhin, in St. Petersburg, in which he told me that Plehve wished to know very much what I had told the Jews. I sent him a copy of my answer quoted above. Having requested the members of the deputation to sit down, I spoke with them for half an hour longer, after which we parted. One may gain a conception of the fear under which the Jews labored, and of the slight assurance they required from the administration, from the fact that they departed quite content, with their fears almost at rest, after my words, which were, in essence, scarcely complimentary to them.

After carefully considering my position, I decided that it was necessary to make my début in the administration of the province with some measure that was unexpected and unusual and calculated to give a new direction to the popular mind. I determined to use for my purpose the protest of the military against the interference with the summer camp by the civil authorities, who demanded the retention of the troops in the city. By releasing the troops I could gratify the wish of the soldiers. I wrote personally to the commander of the garrison that I considered the presence of the troops in the city unnecessary for the preservation of order. This was immediately afterwards communicated to the commander of the troops for the entire military district in Odessa.

The result was quite startling. The order for the troops not to go to camp in 1903 had been discussed and disputed over by the Minister of War and the Minister of the Interior. A report concerning it had been made to the Emperor; telegrams had been sent to the commander of the district and to the Governor. The inquiries had been renewed at the instance of

the Minister of War, and finally the military authorities had been compelled regretfully to submit to the order. Now the troops unexpectedly received permission to return to their normal occupation, which was quite welcome to the military authorities.

A great commotion arose in the city, for I had given no warning to any one of my decision. The Jews became excited and sent their petitioners to me. Many of the officials of the city warned me of the danger of remaining without help in case of disorders. The Chief of Police, quite recently appointed by Ustrugov in place of the dismissed Cossack officer, was particularly frightened. But the deed was done, and it remained for me to answer calmly that I was quite confident that order would be maintained, and that I had no reason eternally to regard Kishinev as a volcano, liable to eruption at any moment. I am puzzled to this very day at the truly wonderful transformation in the life and temper of the city during the few days after my arrival. The facts are as follows: I came to the city, if I am not mistaken, on Tuesday. I received the officials on Wednesday and the Jewish deputation on Thursday. I finished my visits on Saturday, and on the evening of the same day the police had to assign a double number of men to the city park, through which, on account of the Sabbath, the Jewish public, clad in holiday attire, was parading in dense throngs. The rumor that the Jews had ceased to wear mourning, and had appeared in places of recreation, rapidly spread through the city. The streets were again filled with people, who regarded one another with curiosity, exchanged remarks, and, on the whole, the public mood was changed to one of gayety, almost of joy. On Monday people hurriedly began to repair the houses, stores, and buildings which had suffered from the pogrom. The working-men returned to their work, trade became more brisk, and a few days later one could not find a person in the city who would seriously have considered a possibility of renewed disorders. Everything quieted down, and Kishinev returned to its former existence.

It may be in place here to refer to still another venturesome undertaking which I planned secretly and carried into effect suddenly, and which, because of this planning, ended happily. During the pogroms the violence of the rioters was not confined to murder and robbery; they broke into the synagogues,

and destroyed the furniture and the utensils. The most sacred object of Jewish prayer-houses is the Ark, in which are preserved the scrolls of the Torah with the text written on parchment by certain ecclesiastical persons. The government rabbi and also the orthodox rabbis of the city came to me and explained that, according to the Jewish law, it was necessary to bury in the cemetery the sacred relics which had been desecrated by defiling hands. They warned me, however, that this burial service would attract an immense throng of the faithful. I was convinced upon inquiry that the Jewish religion assumes towards the scrolls of the Torah the same attitude as the Greek Orthodox Church does towards the Holy Communion, which is the transformation of the bread and wine into the body and the blood. It was undoubtedly clear that the burial ceremony should be permitted. This was conceded both by Ustrugov and the Chief of Police; yet up to my arrival they had delayed giving the permission for fear of disorder. I requested the rabbis to furnish me a plan and description of the route which the procession was to follow. I assigned the hour (nine o'clock in the morning) for the beginning. I learned that about thirty thousand people would participate in the march, and informed them that I would send my permission in a few days. I warned them, however, that I would not make the date known to the rabbi prior to the evening preceding the day selected by me for the burial services. Moreover, I explained to the rabbis that the entire police force, with the exception of ten or twelve men, would remain in the city to watch over the market and stores. Hence, the procession was to be organized by the Jews themselves, order was to be preserved on the streets, and the crowd was to be protected from the accidents almost inevitable in the massing of several thousand people in one small spot.

I can hardly describe the horror of the Chief of Police, to whom I sent my permission for the announcement to the proper people only on the eve of that memorable day. He became as white as a sheet, and would not believe his ears. I was obliged to help him lay out the order of march on the city map, but as our task neared completion his nervousness was to a considerable extent allayed. The forenoon of the following day, from nine until one, I spent in the house, within reach of the telephone. My carriage stood in the stable, ready for instant use, and while occupied

with routine work I was somewhat distracted. About one o'clock the Chief of Police returned, his face wreathed in smiles, and reported that the public was returning to the city; that everything had passed off satisfactorily, and that there had been no disorders, barring a few hysterical outcries at the tomb where the torn scrolls had been buried. After one o'clock I went to the sessions in one of the provincial departments, where I heard the news. I was informed that the Jews were up to something, for they were closing their stores. Members of other departments, who came in soon after, added that the stores were open, and that Jews, clad in their holiday attire, were strolling about the town in groups of ten or twenty. I told them that they had buried the Torah, and created thereby a good deal of wonderment. It seems to me that since that day there has arisen within me a certain feeling of good-will and thankfulness towards the Jews of Kishinev which I retain to this day.

In their eyes I acquired from that time the right to be trusted as a man who not only desired but was also able to assure their safety. Subsequently I became confident of the full recognition of my authority on the part of the Jews of Kishinev. On one of my winter visits to St. Petersburg the Minister of the Interior expressed his views on the demoralization and disobedience of the Jews, in reply to which I, half jokingly, half seriously, offered to make the following experiment. "Would you like," I said to him, "to test this? I will send immediately to Kishinev a telegraphic communication giving whichever of these two orders you may choose. Either all of the Jewish inhabitants shall go out of the city and remain standing for two hours on the commons, or they shall lock themselves in their houses and shall not go out for the same length of time. Make your choice between the two; I guarantee that the command will be carried out with exactness." Of course the Minister did not consent to make the experiment proposed, yet, as a matter of fact, this jest had its serious side. I maintain that under the still vivid impression of the pogrom, the Jews were capable of carrying out even so senseless an order.

The rumors of the burial of the Torah went abroad, and reached St. Petersburg with wholly incredible commentaries. It appeared, according to these, that I had given the Jews the opportunity to celebrate their victory over Christianity; that I had

personally participated in the procession and in the burial ceremonies; that, on account of the Jewish celebration, business was suspended in the city as if it were an imperial holiday, and other nonsense of the same sort. All this was told me by Colonel Charnolusski, the chief of the local gendarmes, one of the few persons to whom my plan had been communicated in time. It seems that it was only after great effort in his conversation with the Minister that he succeeded in presenting the matter in its true light, and even then he heard Plehve make some remark about the "Governor's stupid risk."

The first days of my administration passed by. Raaben left, after an impressive and even cordial farewell. Ustrugov, who had been transferred to Tiflis, left soon after. I devoted myself to every-day, uneventful tasks, in the midst of which I gradually became acquainted with the province. There was much to do. I arose daily at eight o'clock, and at times even earlier, when the visitors in the Nobles' Club in the house opposite remained longer than usual. On occasions like this, the band, which was engaged by the members to play all night, came out into the street to play a parting fanfare for the belated generous guests. This fanfare, which meant to them that it was time to retire, awakened me to my daily work. At half-past eight I began to receive the petitioners, who came into the court-yard early in the morning.

The formal reception of petitions, as practised at Kishinev, is a custom unknown in Great Russia. My waiting-room was filled, usually, three or four times a day, so that I was obliged to come out to the petitioners every hour. They spoke in about ten different languages, with only two of which I was familiar. Great Russians, Little Russians, Poles, Jews, Turks, Greeks, Armenians, Bulgarians, German Colonists, Swiss from the village of Shabo, some sort of Gagaus,[1] and, finally, in great numbers, Moldavians, who completely overwhelmed me at the beginning. The Moldavians were on their knees, holding their petitions on their heads, and muttering their requests while looking on the ground. The Jews, and particularly the Jewesses, gesticulated, and were so insistent that one had to back away from them. All, as they presented their written petitions, wanted to explain

[1] Christians from the Black Sea, who speak the Turkish language.

themselves orally. I usually allowed them to have their say, and then dismissed them, for which purpose I learned to speak a few Moldavian words. In cases where the matter appeared of unusual importance, I found at hand interpreters, who performed their duties admirably.

Receptions of this nature are very tiresome. It was a great strain on the nerves to find one's self unable to judge of the validity of the complaints. The petitioners, particularly the Jews, always exaggerated their cases to such an extent, and ornamented them with such extravagant details, that it was absolutely impossible to give full credence to them. Besides, they almost always requested immediate preliminary action. It usually appeared that a single day's delay would ruin everything—the family and property. Involuntarily I found myself forced to dismiss the petitioners until further inquiry; but on the following day they would come again, assuming that I had already succeeded in investigating everything, and was in a position to act accordingly. It required much patience and firmness to establish a semblance of order in this mass of petitions—to pick out the urgent cases, and to keep them in view. I was especially apt to be provoked by the Moldavians' habit of travelling long distances in order to hand me personally some documents in civil lawsuits which I could not even examine, as they came within the jurisdiction of the provincial courts. The usual result was that a petitioner of this character ordinarily spent, aside from his travelling expenses, about five rubles on the preparation of a worthless petition. It is exceedingly easy to swindle a Moldavian. He is seemingly anxious to be imposed upon, and he is contented, it would appear, when he succeeds in turning over a considerable sum of money to the swindlers, who lie in wait for him at every corner. Simultaneously with the reception of the petitioners, reports and visitors were received in the office. Officially the reception was over at twelve; practically, however, it was seldom that I could lunch peacefully before one o'clock. The Chief of the Provincial Bureau came at one, and at two I presided at one of the sessions, following this practice at least four times a week, and, at times, daily. When the sessions ended early I made several calls while on my way home; sometimes, however, the sessions continued until six or seven in the evening, and under such conditions it was

hard for me to find an hour for dinner and for a walk in the garden.

At eight o'clock I took up documents comprising seven or eight portfolios from various bureaus. I was fond, before retiring, of taking a stroll through the city, clad in civilian clothes. However, I could not always do this, for sometimes my work kept me busy until midnight. I was in the habit of selecting, for my walks, secluded spots, where I had learned that thefts and robberies occasionally occurred. The police soon came to know of this habit of mine, and the policing of the city was considerably improved. I should add here that with the departure of the troops for camp the thefts and nightly disorders were reduced one-half.

I lost about ten pounds in weight in the first two months. The new Vice-Governor, Block, came from Ufa in August. He was a never-to-be-forgotten companion, a trusted assistant, and an ally with whom I lived and worked in harmony until my departure to Tver. A Terrorist bomb cut short the life of this incorruptible public man in 1906, when he was Governor of Samara. Block's arrival was of great help to me. It lightened my burden, and gave me an opportunity of making a tour of inspection throughout the districts of the province.

III

Police—Provincial administration—Block—Basket tax—Treatment of Jewish conscripts—Troublesome foreigners—Compulsory furnishing of relays—Illegal taxes for the benefit of estate holders.

I FOUND myself obliged, at the very beginning, to turn my attention to the local police of both city and district. It soon appeared that the ability and energy of its personnel were quite satisfactory. This became especially apparent in the city of Kishinev, after the city police came under charge of Colonel Reichardt, an experienced and active administrator, who was at one time Chief of Police in Riga. Of the five police captains, two were good, two were quite satisfactory, and it was necessary to remove only the fifth for his extremely unceremonious bribe-taking. I must dwell on illegal levies at some length. With the help of one of the members of the Attorney-General's staff, I once attempted to calculate approximately a portion of the levies made by the police in the province. I figured it at more than a million rubles a year. In order to rehabilitate the Bessarabian police in the eyes of the masses who may some time read these lines, I shall mention here that the police of St. Petersburg, according to the results of the careful inquiry of an expert who had served in the police prefecture, received annually about six million rubles of subscription money only. This subscription money is given, not to hide breaches of the law, not to hide illegal practices in Government service, but is paid by house-owners, store-keepers, hotel-keepers, and manufacturers to secure immunity from annoyance. Levies for the breach of the law in the interests of the givers are not taken into account here, because of the impossibility of estimating them.

Hence, I was soon convinced that bribe-taking played an important rôle with the Bessarabian police. One could easily con-

vince himself of this by seeing how the police captains drove out in style in their four-horse carriages, travelled first class on railroads, acquired houses, and lost hundreds, and even thousands, of rubles at cards. Nor was it difficult to discover the source of their income. The blame for the demoralization of the police seemed to fall again on the hapless Jews — the plague of Bessarabia.

In accordance with the temporary regulations of 1882 the Jews could not lease lands. The lands of the Bessarabian estates leased by Jews was the first source of income to the police. Fictitious agreements, whereby the estates are leased by dummies behind whom there is usually the actual lessee—a Jew —may be declared void by the courts after due legal procedure, the provincial administration appearing as the plaintiff. It is almost impossible to make out a complete case of this character. Such cases are usually lost, and legal expenses are paid from provincial, or government, funds. The Government refuses to grant these costs and the provincial administration undertakes them very reluctantly, and therefore does not encourage the police to investigate such actions. On the other hand, the lessee, thus holding property illegally, would gladly pay fifty kopecks per desyatin of land rather than have trouble with the authorities and be dragged into court. In consequence, he keeps a set of books, in which he enters these payments in two semiannual instalments, either to the county marshal who assesses them, or, if he take no bribe (I had three such), to the police captains.

The levy may be less than fifty kopecks per desyatin, but under such conditions the police officials farm a part of the estate, and force the lessees to supply food to their cattle. On one occasion, when I dismissed one of the police captains, he found himself obliged to sell about seventy head of cattle on different estates. A dispute was raised by one of the lessees, and thus the case came to light.

Just before my departure from Kishinev, when I had been appointed Governor of Tver, I wished to combine my observations concerning illegal leases. I turned for information to one very respected Jew, F——, who, rumor had it, leased several tens of thousands of desyatins of land in the province. I asked him whether he made payments to the police, and how much. I found that he had formerly paid twice a year (in all from thirty to fifty

kopecks per desyatin), but of late he had attempted to withhold payment. "What were the consequences?" I asked. "Nothing; they resented it a little, but did not oppress me," he replied; and added, thoughtfully, "I suppose I shall now have to pay also for the past half-year."

The second source of the levies is the right of Jews to live temporarily in country districts. They have no right to live in villages, but they are allowed to stay there temporarily for commercial and other reasons. Now what is the meaning of the term "temporarily"? What may be taken to signify that business is finished? These questions are answered, in the first place, by the local police, who immediately enforce their decision. Afterwards one may complain and insist upon his rights, appealing even to the Senate, yet the police official is not taken to task for expelling Jews from the village. His actions are legal; that is his interpretation of the law; and, in fact, the question, from the stand-point of the law, is always debatable. Furthermore, its solution always depends upon the inquiry made by the self-same police. It is, therefore, profitable to pay the police in order peacefully to wind up one's business in the village. Moreover, I should add here that, under the guise of temporary sojourn, a considerable number of Jews live in country districts practically all the time. The number of Jews thus illegally resident in the district of Khotin was, in my time, estimated by the president of the local nobility at about eight thousand. Those acquainted with this region and district repeatedly asserted that this number is not exaggerated.

It is beyond the power of the provincial administration to cope with this evasion of the law by the Jews. The village authorities frequently conceal these facts from the police, the minor police officials from the district police, and the district police from the Governor. Although the expulsion of the Jews from the village is continually going on, and although the number of expulsion cases before the courts is very large, the majority of the Jews illegally resident in villages make some arrangement whereby they are allowed to remain there unmolested. But for fear of exaggeration I would compare the activities of the authorities in relation to the Jews scattered in the villages to a hunting expedition in a locality fairly teeming with game. It is to be understood that the right to hunt must be restricted to a very few

persons, and certain classes of game should, in accord with the hunter's code, be protected.

Along its entire length Bessarabia borders on Austria and Roumania. The inhabitants of the border zone have the right to cross the frontier without passports. They merely need a ticket from the local police official when they wish to search for lost cattle or desire to go across for business purposes. The Jews are busy traders, and, thanks to this fact, the police have a third source of income. It is more profitable for the Jew to pay three rubles to the police official than to apply for a fifteen-ruble passport at the provincial administrative bureau. This applies to all whom the official does not recognize as merchants.

Such are the special sources of the police income sanctioned by tradition and kept in force by the special legislation concerning the Jews. I will pass in silence here the secondary, minor levies; nor shall I speak of the bribes collected by police officials from non-Jews, in cases of misdemeanor, established by the common law.

One may obtain from the foregoing a general notion as to the complexion of the Bessarabian police. It consists of several persons who never take bribes; of many persons who take bribes that local custom recognizes as legitimate; and, finally, of a small proportion of bribe-takers who are always and everywhere regarded as corrupt. Complaints are made against them, they are prosecuted by the Attorney-General's office, and the provincial administration finds itself obliged, from time to time, to assign them to the provincial bureau or to exile them to some neighboring province—sometimes in exchange for exiles of the same type.

As chief of the entire provincial police, I felt it my duty to take steps towards checking the abuses just described. I was soon convinced, however, that the task of abolishing such illegal levies was beyond my power. I only succeeded in getting rid of the most notorious bribe-takers, who imposed illegal levies under the eyes of everybody. Thanks to careful investigation and the free access of petitioners to me, the instances of granting privileges within the law for money, instances of trading with the law, were perhaps somewhat diminished under my administration. But the custom of rewarding the police for liberal interpretation of the evasion of the law remained in full force even in

my administration. I do not believe that this evil can be rooted out as long as a portion of the population is deprived of the natural rights of existence that are enjoyed by the rest of the population. There were also other reasons which made the abolition of bribe-taking in Bessarabia difficult. To illustrate, I shall cite two instances. I had once decided to go into the office of a captain of police in one of the districts of Kishinev to acquaint myself with his work. My attention was attracted, in the first place, by the office-rooms, which were large and comfortably arranged. They contained a number of desks, at which I found six men working, notwithstanding the late hour. I asked each of them about the salary he was receiving, and secured the following figures: The senior clerk received 600 rubles a year; two others, 420 each; and three assistants received together 660 rubles. The office expenses amounted to from two to three hundred rubles a year. The total expenses, therefore, were from 2300 to 2400 rubles. As the entire sum alloted to the captain, including the office expenses, did not exceed 2500 rubles a year, it merely remained for me to look through the books and the office administration, taking care not to ask on what the captain himself lived.

Another instance concerns the district police. The position of captain in Novoseltzy, on the Austrian frontier, was considered the best in the province. According to current belief, it brought to the incumbent about fifteen thousand rubles a year. So large a sum naturally created much talk, and I found it absolutely necessary to order an investigation of the administration in this district. This investigation revealed the following facts: The police captain sold to one of the local Jews the right to issue identification tickets, by means of which the inhabitants of the boundary zone could cross the frontier for business or other purposes. Those wishing to secure a ticket came to the lessee, received his indorsement, and on the strength of this they obtained at the police office a ticket free of charge. In return for this privilege the lessee maintained at his own expense the entire office force of the police district. I dismissed the captain and appointed another in his place, but soon learned that the illegal levies continued in another form. I then secured from one of the provinces of Great Russia a man upon whose integrity I could rely. I persuaded him to accept the

position at Novoseltzy, and promised to promote him as soon as he had satisfactorily arranged his work there. A month later the new captain handed me his resignation, for, try as he would, he could not get along with the money allotted him. He not only had insufficient means for his living expenses, but he was also obliged to neglect his work, for the maintenance of the clerical force, reduced by one-half, required all the funds assigned to him.

I failed to understand at first the enormous accumulation of work in all the administrative police bureaus of Bessarabia. It required several inspections to convince me that, apart from the duties of a purely police character, and from the problems that have gradually come under police supervision, the police departments in Bessarabia are affected by a special petty legislation which places almost every Jew in the position of a permanent petitioner and plaintiff. This has come with the development of other institutions. The police really have no end of trouble with Jewish cases. I frequently observed that the hatred of the police officials towards the Jewish population is partly due to worries, annoyances, complaints, explanations, mistakes, and responsibilities, which constantly fall to the members of the police in consequence of the senseless and ineffective legislation concerning the Jews.

The provincial administrations in central Russia have long been regarded as institutions that have outlived their usefulness. With the exception of special departments, such as the medical, the surveying, and the construction departments, the provincial bureaus, frankly speaking, have almost nothing to do in those provinces not included within the Pale. One seldom sees petitioners in the office buildings; hence the commissioners, secretary, and clerks usually have much leisure. In Bessarabia, however, conditions were quite different. The provincial administration there had to consider ten thousand cases annually, apart from those in the special departments. The clerks were overworked in the preparation of reports. The Jewish cases, especially, added to their burden, compelling them to work unremittingly, not only during office hours, but also evenings. The skill of the officials in the preparation of reports was of a high order, and their ability to prove anything and everything in accord with precedent and the rulings of the Senate was,

indeed, astonishing. The system introduced here by Ustrugov consisted of a resort to various tricks and interpretations, the purpose of which was to carry out to the utmost the oppressions of the Jews by the laws limiting their rights. It must be confessed that the persecution of the Jews was developed by Ustrugov into an art. His inventions for the evasion of the law to the injury of the Jews were, at any rate, not less original than those invented by the Jews themselves for the evasion of the law in their own favor. The judicial decisions of the Senate are full of references to Bessarabia, and there is no other province where the decisions of the provincial administration in Jewish matters were so frequently reversed. However, this did not embarrass Ustrugov. The decisions of the Senate are of little significance to the plaintiffs themselves, for they are usually rendered after conditions have changed and the petitioner can no longer avail himself of the results favorable to him. As to the precedent of such decisions for similar cases, Ustrugov followed a very simple plan. He was not guided by the decisions of the Senate, and even went to the extent of not carrying them into effect. He was finally called to account for this conduct. In 1906, in my capacity of Associate Minister of the Interior, I took part in the Senate's consideration of Ustrugov's case. He was to be indicted for systematically refusing to enforce the Senate's decisions, and for submitting in his defence a copy of one of the rulings of the provincial government on a Jewish matter which he knew to be incorrect. But even here the famous trickster escaped punishment. His earthly existence ended the week preceding the date set for the investigation of his case by the Senate, and the case was necessarily dropped.

It required much energy and labor on the part of the new Vice-Governor, Block, to bring the activities of the Bessarabian provincial administration within legal limits. The minds of the officials, trained for the business of Jew-baiting, could not at once regain their equilibrium, and Block, poor fellow, was many a time compelled to revise their reports. For this reason he even sacrificed his 'cello-playing, his sole recreation. He frequently came to show me the oddities of the Ustrugov régime, which he encountered in his examination of cases. I am tempted to cite one here:

A special tax, known as the basket tax (box tax), is imposed

on Jewish communities. Like many others, I supposed, when I first heard the term, that it referred to some box-making guild, the manufacture of boxes, or something of that sort. In reality, however, the basket tax is a duty collected for the slaughter of cattle, the killing of domestic fowls, and the sale of meat, according to schedules published by the municipalities under the supervision of the provincial administration. In accordance with the practice in vogue almost everywhere, the right to collect the basket tax in Kishinev was farmed out under conditions prescribed by the provincial administration. The tax farmer paid in the sum which he bid at the public auction (as I remember it, seventy-five thousand rubles a year), and then collected a tax on every pound of meat and fat. In the conditions prescribed the taxes on meat and fat, or tallow, were calculated separately, a usage which allowed some very ingenious combinations. The tax farmer compelled the butchers to cut the fat from the meat in order to weigh the two components separately, thus reducing the value of their merchandise to such a degree that it might be refused by customers. In order to avoid this damage to their wares, the butchers were willing to make large concessions in favor of the tax farmer. When the demands of the latter passed all reasonable limits the sufferers complained to the provincial administration against the infringement, by the tax farmer, of the stipulated conditions. Under such circumstances the abilities of Ustrugov shone forth in their full glory. A report was prepared to show very convincingly that the tax farmer was wrong; that he had acted contrary to the regulations, the tax contract, and contrary to common-sense and the law. The report was signed and confirmed. But it happened, by some strange coincidence, that the tax farmer discovered in time the danger threatening him. As a result of his urgent representations a new report was prepared to show, on the strength of certain considerations held in reserve by Ustrugov, that the complaint of the butchers had no justification whatever. They were informed to this effect by the police. In this manner the provincial administration made a number of contradictory interpretations of the contract within the period of a single lease, while in the end the butchers always remained at the mercy of the tax farmer, who, in turn, was altogether in the hands of the administration.

An illustration of this condition is interesting, of course, only in so far as it characterizes certain persons and their influence in administrative matters. After the arrival of Block, and even before, when the provincial bureaus were administered by officials whose honesty I had no reason to question, such antics were not permitted.

Other methods which, openly applied, had become second nature with ruler and ruled, and were continued without any protest from either side, were of even greater moment to one judging the oddities of the administration of Bessarabia. I wish to cite a few.

The following order is always observed in the examination of conscripts at the provincial military bureau: After all the conscripts are examined, and the orders deciding their fate are signed, they are allowed to dress, and are sent into the assembly-rooms to listen to the reading of the list. After this all of the recruits subject to re-examination are permitted to return home, while those enrolled are obliged to report on a stated day at the recruiting centres in the districts, where they are placed in charge of the military commander.

While presiding at the Kishinev bureau I noticed, quite accidentally, that some of the recruits passed out through the exits at the end of the session, while others went into the neighboring room, whither they were followed by several policemen. In reply to my inquiry why all of the recruits had not left, the official in charge answered, "Only the Jews remained." I was tired and somewhat absent-minded, and, therefore, asked no further questions. On my way home, however, the thought recurred to me that I had really received no answer to my question. On the following day I therefore asked for an explanation of this circumstance from one of the members of the bureau. I learned from him that, after being accepted for service, the Christian recruits alone are allowed to go home, while the Jews are sent to the police prisons, and at the proper time are sent, under military guard, to the recruiting centres, where they are again incarcerated, and are finally transferred to the military commander. "Why is this done?" I asked. "Have we a right to do it?"

"I have no doubt about it," replied the official. "I found this system here when I came. I do not remember when this regulation was made, but there is no doubt that it exists."

This official came to me on the following day and announced that he had investigated the matter very carefully, and found that the treatment of the Jewish recruits by the bureau was arbitrary and unjustifiable. We had no right, no legal authority, to deprive the Jewish recruits of their liberty. Four years ago one of the Jewish recruits escaped across the frontier, after which Ustrugov, in the absence of the Governor, established what he considered a convenient precaution against the recurrence of such escapes. It should be added here that the authorities are not responsible for the evasion of military service by recruits, that they are not obliged to watch them, and that they have no right to deprive them of their liberty. Several weeks intervene between the date of examination and the date for reporting at the recruiting centres. During that time the Jewish recruits are kept in confinement or travel under military convoy with criminals—an unheard-of procedure.

I was obliged to display "sentimental philo-Semitism," and to abolish this arrangement. At the following session of the recruiting bureau the Jews were told that they could go home. They began to dispute the decision, pointed to the policemen, and were resolved to be placed under arrest. I left the bureau, instructing the official in charge to communicate by telephone with the Chief of Police in regard to the matter. The Chief of Police told me subsequently that he, too, was surprised at the new treatment of the recruits, but supposed that it was based on "special order."

On my visiting the prison I came across a similar phenomenon—this time not concerning the Jews. While I was passing through the prison wards several people asked me, imploringly, to interfere in their behalf, stating that they had been kept in confinement several months after their sentence had expired. Investigation confirmed this. When I asked the prison superintendent why more people were not allowed to go, he saluted in military fashion, and pronounced the unintelligible verdict, "They are vicious foreigners, your Excellency." I said nothing because of my inexperience, but upon inquiry, on my return home, I discovered that on the recommendation of the provincial authorities the Minister of the Interior had the right to expel from Russia all foreigners found guilty of misdemeanors by the courts. It is customary, therefore, to detain all foreigners sent to prison,

even after the expiration of their term, until the ministerial order is received. When I asked what objection there might be to the liberation of the prisoners at the proper time, I was told they might leave the country, and then it would be impossible to carry into effect the Minister's order for their expulsion. This reasoning appeared to me very abstract or simply absurd. I was inclined to accept the latter interpretation, and the vicious foreigners were given their freedom.

There is still another specifically Bessarabian crime with which one may become acquainted by reading the numerous police blotters. It is the crime there entered as "gay life and playing on the guitar." But let us pass over this farce and go on to more serious things.

I wish to cite here a striking instance of the long-continued exploitation of the country population of Bessarabia in the interests of government officials. This will show how patient, submissive, and ignorant the contemporary peasant population of Bessarabia was. My story must necessarily be dry and tedious, yet it has some significance in characterizing the time which I am describing, particularly on the timely question of land reform.

Among the so-called rural imposts is included the ancient transportation tax, levied exclusively on the peasantry. Officials of certain classes have the right, on the strength of an open order or pass, to demand horses in villages for a specific mileage charge. Such passes are issued by district bureaus, free of charge, only to district attorneys, members of the district police, and gendarmes in the execution of official business.

The inconveniences of this method of transportation, and the evident injustice of levying this imposition on the peasantry alone, has been long recognized by almost all the Zemstvos. In most of the districts of Russia the transportation tax is derived from the general district funds. The Zemstvos usually furnish the transportation expenses directly to the officials, or pay them to the peasants, or keep horses for official service. In Bessarabia, on the other hand, the custom under which the peasantry alone bear the costs of transportation of officials is firmly established; the horses of peasants are used free of charge by almost every official person, and, finally, the travelling facilities thus provided are arranged entirely with a view towards the greatest comfort of the official traveller.

The township authorities award the contract for maintaining the horses to some contractor, usually a Jew, and pay him large sums of money from the township funds. The contractor places his equipages at the disposal of all holders of passes, which are given out by the district administration with great liberality. Apart from the official already mentioned, the right to use the peasant horses is accorded to marshals of the nobility, officers and clerks of the district administration, and district chiefs, with a double illegality in the last instance, as these officials receive travelling expenses from the government. These horses are used by the families of officials, their servants, and even their acquaintances. Frequently officials of different districts allow one another to avail themselves of free transportation, and I knew of instances where officials thus came to Kishinev from the most remote districts. Thanks to this quite illegal method of procedure, every township is compelled to maintain twenty, forty, or even sixty horses, taxing every family from one ruble seventy-five kopecks to two rubles fifty kopecks annually. The aggregate transportation tax in the five districts of the province, according to my calculation, amounted to about three hundred and sixty thousand rubles a year, all of it levied on the peasantry without the least aid from the other tax-payers in the district.

When I first visited one of the district cities in the province, thence continuing my journey through the district, with stops at the township offices, I was accompanied by ten local officials. To each two persons was assigned a carriage and four horses. It was then that I found out the system just described. In response to my expression of surprise, I was informed that it was immaterial to the peasants how many horses were to be used, or by whom they were to be used, since they had already made their agreement with the contractor. It was useless to waste pity on the latter, for he had the horses, and to keep them standing in the stable brought him no extra profit. When I ordered payment for the use of my conveyance everybody was surprised —among others, the contractor, whom my private adjutant could hardly persuade to accept the money.

I did not succeed, during my sojourn in Bessarabia, in abolishing these abuses. I collected the necessary materials, asked for the information relative to the subject, and left it to the Zemstvos to deal in their own way with the policy of unjustly burdening

the rural population with so archaic a tax. Recently I learned, with much pleasure, that all of the Zemstvos in question have changed their method of providing transportation for officials, charging all of the travelling expenses against the general Zemstvos fund.

I wish to cite the following as a final example of the peculiarities of Bessarabia, which make it unique in the relations of its various social elements. It was there that I first became acquainted with the landlords' assumption of special right to impose duties on produce brought into villages established on their lands. The house-owners and leaseholders, and, in general, all the inhabitants of such villages, were obliged to pay to the landlord (proprietor of the ground) a tax on grain, wine, and other produce of various description. The tax was collected by a special guard, with the co-operation, in cases of misunderstanding, of the general police, and also the local township and village authorities. Such was the accepted custom for time out of mind. In some way, however, the question as to the right of the landlords to collect this tax was brought before the courts, was appealed and reappealed up to the Senate, which finally decided the case against the landlords. It declared that objects of the first necessity could not be taxed either on the basis of private agreement or on that of ancient custom. The peaceful collection of taxes was henceforth interrupted. Meeting everywhere protests and refusals to pay, the majority of the landlords found themselves obliged to give up their incomes from these imposts. A few of them, more stubborn than the rest, did not give in, and continued to insist on their fictitious rights. The most ingenious of these, Landlord B——, of Ungeni, continued to collect dues from his tenants even in my time. He depended upon the co-operation of the police authorities, which he could command, thanks to his acquaintance with my predecessor and his intimacy with an unsuccessful musician but successful card-player, P——, who lived in the house of General Raaben in the capacity of a friend. The ancestry and antecedents of this person were known to no one, yet he was a welcome guest everywhere in Kishinev. This man, P——, went out to Ungeni at the request of his friend, and personally superintended the activities of the police and the pacification of the refractory inhabitants of the village, who had become encouraged

in their hopes by the judicial decisions. They were now shown whom they were to believe and whom they were to obey, and this so effectively that the collections from Ungeni continued to pass into the treasury of the landlord even after the departure of Raaben. The trick in the entire affair was made possible by the fact that no receipt was given for the money collected, and consequently no claim could be made for the return of the money, and here the co-operation of the authorities was needed. Information concerning these acts reached me through a complaint handed to me, which I myself verified. In this complaint one of the householders in the village stated the following: On approaching the village with a load of flour he counted out the necessary money, and asked the guard to accept it in return for a receipt. The guard refused to issue a receipt, and held the wagon. The householder then went to the offices of the town administration and submitted the money, with a statement concerning its application. The elder refused the money, and suggested that it be turned over to the guard. The householder, who wanted a receipt or a witness to the offered payment, suddenly conceived the idea of leaving the money on the table in the township office. He did that, and ran away as fast he could, notwithstanding the shouts and protests of the elder. This marked the most interesting and significant moment of the entire incident. The township office made out a protocol concerning the failure of the hapless householder to comply with the legal demands of the authorities. The protocol was transmitted to the township court, and a copy of the court's decision, imposing a heavy fine on the defendant, was submitted to me by the latter. Having learned from the County Police Marshal all the details of the case and the history of the special tax, I also became convinced that the police were quite ready to withdraw their support from the landlord in his illegal requisitions. The Marshal declared that they were all annoyed by B——'s pretensions, and that even the police subalterns would be glad if they could, with impunity, decline to perform this special custom-house service. Indemnity was granted them, and the requisitions were, indeed, abolished. This, according to his own statement, entirely ruined Landlord B——, who had levied an annual tax of ten thousand rubles for the right of importing produce into Ungeni. B—— saw me more than once in ref-

erence to this case, until he finally reconciled himself to the loss of his revenue. He never forgave me my interference with his affairs. I must state here that in general the Bessarabian landlords always took good-naturedly my efforts to abolish some of their antiquated customs. With the majority of them I established the best relations, and all in all I love Bessarabia much, and recall with pleasure the time passed there.

IV

Threat of massacres of the Jews (pogroms) — Arrival of an English diplomatist and of an American correspondent—Pogrom-feeling and the efforts to suppress it—Pronin and Krushevan—Dangerous symptoms — Dr. Kohan — Attitude of the Jews — Jewish self-defence—Temper of the police.

I EXPERIENCED at Kishinev many new impressions. These came as a result of the April massacre or in anticipation of new disorders due to the same causes.

The foreign press, especially the English and American, continued to comment in various ways upon the Kishinev pogrom. Then, as now, the Jews were credited with great influence in the press of West Europe and America. But the interest manifested at that time towards Kishinev by the English Parliament and American statesmen can scarcely be explained by attributing it to Jewish efforts alone. The great uneasiness called forth in St. Petersburg in the summer of 1903 by the news of the expected interpolation in the British Parliament concerning the relations of the Russian government to the pogrom, and the diplomatic actions that became necessary with America, in order to relieve the Czar from receiving the grandiose address of the Americans requesting his protection of the Jews from further massacres, showed clearly that, outside of Russia, large groups of the population, and even the governments of the great powers, found it impossible to acquiesce in the antiquated methods of settling old scores with a hated race as manifested in Kishinev, and also that foreign opinion opposed the attitude towards the pogrom which was reflected in the Russian anti-Jewish press —an attitude regarded as almost obligatory by the Russian officials.

Now, for the first time, a malevolent attitude towards the Jews was manifested in the highest court circles. Until then only the Grand-Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, the Governor-General

of Moscow, had the reputation of being an implacable enemy of the Jews. But after 1903 it became apparent to everybody that a hostile feeling towards the Jews was also entertained by the Czar's immediate family. All efforts to induce the latter to express some condemnation of the pogroms, or even to give vent to some sympathy for the sufferers by granting them any material aid, met with complete failure; yet a single authoritative word or action in this direction would have helped immeasurably the maintenance of order in the provinces of the Pale. This would have destroyed the firm conviction of many, made stronger by the pogrom, that such methods of the population in evening up with their ancient enemies was, from the government standpoint, a useful policy, and acceptable to the authorities. At all events, the position of the Bessarabian Governor in 1903 was peculiar. The head-lines as to the "Kishinev pogrom" did not disappear from the pages of the newspapers, and were constantly repeated far and wide—now in the form of a reminder, now as a warning or note of apprehension.

During one of my reception hours there came to me an Englishman who spoke fairly good French, but who, of course, did not utter a single Russian word. He presented himself as a tourist who had come to Odessa, and handed me a letter of recommendation from the British Consul in that city. Notwithstanding his reservations and his guarded manner of speech, it soon became apparent that he had a burning desire thoroughly to acquaint himself with the conditions of the Jews in Kishinev. He also wanted to know, especially, the results of the preliminary investigations into the late disorders. I directed the Englishman to our District Attorney, and gave him the addresses of some Kishinev Jews. I also promised to notify the Chief of Police that no obstacles be put in the way of the stranger should he desire to visit the Jewish quarters for information. But the Englishman seemed particularly delighted with my suggestion that he accompany me at once to the prison which I had to visit that day. At first he was surprised that the rioters were put into prison (about three hundred of them were there); also, he couldn't apparently believe that a formal investigation of the April affair was to be instituted. These doubts were removed on the following day by the District Attorney, and finally he was delighted with the thought of seeing the rioters in prison, of

talking to them, and even of having an opportunity to visit a Russian prison. We drove over to the prison and began to make the rounds of the cells. I addressed a large group of prisoners, and told them how famous they had become through their heroic deeds; that the Englishmen had sent over their official to behold them! My companion began to question the prisoners through me. He asked them a number of questions about the causes which called forth the pogrom: what led them to massacre the Jews; what harm the Jews had done to them, etc. The Englishman seemed astonished at the replies of the prisoners, which I interpreted for him. In the first place, they manifested such good-nature and joviality, exchanged playful jokes, and admitted naïvely that they had sinned a little, but of murder—"God forbid!"—they were innocent of that! They assured him that the Jews are a nice people; that they lived with them in peace; that everything may happen; that sometimes a Greek Orthodox Russian is worse than a Jew. They added, however, that the Jews were much affronted by the pogrom, and are now vexing them by false evidence, attributing to many of them crimes which they had not committed. I went to the window to talk with the warden of the prison. When I finished my conversation with him I was astonished. My companion, closely approaching the prisoners, examined them animatedly in Russian, shook his head, and almost choked himself in his eagerness to satisfy his curiosity. I went still farther away, giving the Englishman a chance to talk freely with the prisoners. He overtook me as I reached the second ward.

Two days later the Englishman came to take leave of me; he was delighted with the prisoners, with the District Attorney, with myself, with the Jews, and, in general, with everything he had seen. He told me that in England they have a wrong idea about matters in Bessarabia; that he had convinced himself of the correct administration of justice in Russia; of the loyalty of the officials; of the impartiality and high standard of the procurator's office; that the civil order in the city appeared to be model; and that all the rumors of the destruction of the town, and of the stagnation and decay into which commerce had fallen, were false. He spoke of many other things which I do not now recall.

Two months later I received from the British Consul in Odessa

a pamphlet—a report of the condition of the city of Kishinev after the pogrom—presented by the British Foreign Secretary to both Houses of Parliament by his Majesty's order. The report ended with the assurance that all is well in Kishinev.

This case serves as a good example for the need of independence in the Governor—that he should avoid, as much as possible, communication with the St. Petersburg authorities. Imagine what a farce the investigation of the English diplomat would have become if it had been regulated by instructions from St. Petersburg. It may be stated with certainty that such a report of the condition at Kishinev, which was of great value to the Russian Government, would undoubtedly never have appeared.

A real surprise came to me from America. Before Christmas, 1903, rumors of imminent disorders increased, as usual. During the holidays an elderly, portly gentleman came to me, styling himself a correspondent of a New York paper. He said that he was sent to watch the Christmas pogrom, and after five days of sojourn in Kishinev he was beginning to realize that his coming to Kishinev was evidently useless. On assuring him that he would not have a chance to see any disorders, I noticed in his face a certain disappointment. After a short meditation he asked me whether I authorized him to state in his paper that he left Kishinev only after my categorical assurances of the futility of his further stay here. I gave him the requested authorization, and the correspondent departed.

Christmas, indeed, passed without disturbances, and only a certain apprehension led me to hold myself ready during the first three days, that I might not be unprepared in the event of disorders. Besides, it was a cold Christmas; all kinds of promenades, dances, and gatherings of the suburban inhabitants of Kishinev were therefore limited.

The following Easter, however, in the spring of 1904, public sentiment had changed materially. Symptoms appeared, showing that the bacilli of fear on one side and of hatred on the other were still alive in the city, and were capable of multiplication.

With the first swallows of spring, and the awakening of the half-forgotten fears and the latent hatred, there appeared in Kishinev two individuals—Pronin and Krushevan—who played a very significant rôle in the pogrom movement of 1903 and

1905. Both had somewhat quieted down after the Kishinev massacres of 1903. Krushevan had removed to St. Petersburg, where he started a kind of patriotic paper, *Bessarabetz*, in charge of a trustworthy man. Pronin, who remained in Kishinev, was much agitated in expectation of being changed from a witness into a defendant at the investigations preliminary to the trial of the rioters. Pronin was a few times very near indictment, a position that, indeed, restrained his activity, and induced him from time to time to come to me to develop his ideas of a peaceful struggle with the Jews. Since the beginning of the Japanese War, however, in February, 1904, both patriots raised their heads again. Krushevan had found a new theme for his paper about the aid given the Japanese by the Jews, and Pronin began to interpret his theme into the popular language of the masses. The police again began to report nightly sessions in the back room of one of the market-place taverns. Again the public bazaars and tea-houses were flooded with leaflets enlightening the people as to the treachery and the heavy sins of the Jews. The Jews also became agitated in anticipation of danger.

Let some one else tell in his memoirs about Krushevan. I do not care to express an opinion of a man whom I have never seen, and of whom I have heard so many diverse views that his moral physiognomy is not clear to my mind. Moreover, I was informed that he nourished an irreconcilable animosity towards me. This went so far that he ascribed to me all kinds of impossible misdemeanors, and endeavored to explain my philo-Semitism by imputing to me the most ignoble motives. I shall, therefore, permit myself to pass over this original Moldavian celebrity. I may say of him, however, that his literary productions and newspaper articles which came under my observation manifest some talent and the love of their author for his native province. Pronin I could understand more clearly, since he represented the well-known type of a Great Russian contractor with a tight-fisted hand, who had arisen from a common burgher to a merchant; who had enriched himself with all sorts of government contracts, and had oppressed his workmen, with whom he was constantly engaged in lawsuits about money matters. A shrewd emigrant from Orel, Pronin quickly made a fortune at Kishinev, thanks to the ignorance of the Moldavians and the easy-going ways of the Bessarabians. He acquired land,

a house, and considerable capital. The Jews, however, limited the growth of his wealth by competing in the city contracts, and reducing prices to such an extent that there was no more room for the Great Russian to expand. Pronin reduced his business transactions, and began to occupy himself with public affairs. He became director of the Kishinev prison committee, a representative of some Persian interests in Kishinev, and began to wear a frock-coat with Persian medal attached. He even attempted to write poetry, imitating Koltzov, and forced the unfortunate *Bessarabetz* to publish it, for the paper was heavily indebted to him, and feared that Pronin would present his notes for collection.

Moreover, I was interested in another aspect of this many-sided gentleman. Willy-nilly, I was forced to look into the dark corners of Pronin's character, where lurked the instincts of a demagogue of the lowest stamp. Pronin often liked to play the rôle of a protector and leader of the poor working-man, and did not hesitate to spend money to gain influence in labor circles. Posing in the double rôle of a protector of the Greek Orthodox people from the Jews and of a true Russian patriot, the shield of autocracy, Pronin had some connections in St. Petersburg and with the local gendarmerie. Finding in me a man who was prejudiced against his past career, and annoyed at my ignoring his attempts to ingratiate himself with me, Pronin repeatedly hinted at his close relations with the Minister of the Interior, relating to me his conversations with Plehve, how the Minister received him in private, and how he had long talks with him. Among other things, Pronin told that at the conclusion of one such talk he had said to the Minister, "Your Excellency, there are only two true Russians in Russia devoted to the Czar and the fatherland—you and I." After which the Minister—supposedly—smiled, and heartily shook his hand.

During Lent, I began to receive information that Pronin was zealously trying to agitate the working-people of Kishinev, making use of Krushevan's articles, distributing them, and announcing that he had subscribed to suitable newspapers—with the aim of starting an anti-Jewish propaganda—and while visiting the prisons he endeavored to interview the imprisoned rioters, instructing them how to defend themselves in court. I succeeded in removing Pronin from among the directors of the prison

committee, after which he fortunately ceased to annoy me with his visits.

Soon afterwards the news spread through the city that the Jews were trying to get Christian blood for ritual purposes. The first case which excited such rumors occurred in the coal-yard of a Jew, to whom a Christian boy was sent for coal. The Jew took a knife in his hand, and the frightened boy ran away. Talk began immediately about the unsuccessful attempt at ritual murder. Pronin drove to the Police Department, and arranged that the boy's parents report to the police. But the matter came to nothing, because Christian witnesses present at the coal-yard declared that the knife was taken for the purpose of cutting the unopened bag of coal. The presence of disinterested parties must evidently exclude the probability of an attempt at murder. But not long after a three-year-old girl disappeared in the outskirts of the town. A few hours later the police found a mob in front of the house of the girl's parents. Already loud voices were heard accusing the Jews of kidnapping the child. Outcries and threats began to be heard. The excitement grew, and the child's mother persistently demanded a search and a reckoning with the kidnappers. Fortunately, just then some relatives, on whom she had been calling, appeared with the little girl. The strange side of the above incident lies in this: that the girl's mother apparently did not rejoice in her return. She had so positively accused the Jews of the kidnapping of her child that she felt something akin to disappointment at her reappearance. Roughly snatching the girl by the arms, she forced her into the house, and in every way showed anger more than joy. The last case that roused much town talk happened just before Easter—I think on the Wednesday of Passion week. A young Christian girl who lived as the servant of a Jew—a drug-store clerk—was brought to the hospital suffering from severe burns about her body. The patient soon died without having regained consciousness. The betrothed of the deceased began to threaten the pharmacist, accusing him of being the cause of her death. Pronin immediately interposed, and began his investigations, going from the family of the deceased to her betrothed, and from the hospital to the police bureau. In the evening, at the club, he told the tale: how a depraved Jew, having poured kerosene over a virtuous Christian girl, burned

her because she resisted his attentions. This time the threats of the girl's betrothed, the outcries of the parents, and the agitation of Pronin excited the populace to the highest pitch. The burned girl became the heroine of the city. The police reported that they were unable to restrain the indignant Christian Orthodox masses. Riots were expected at once. I had to make use of my rights as Governor, in time of disturbances, so far as to send Pronin out of Kishinev, by administrative order, until the holidays were over.

The effect of this expulsion was excellent. I think that the paragraph regulating city affairs in time of disturbances was never applied in Russia with greater success. Neither Pronin nor the Chief of Police would believe that my decision was an earnest one, but I myself wrote out the order of expulsion, and handed it to the Chief of Police for immediate execution. Pronin took to his bed, called a physician, complained, threatened, but nevertheless departed from the city after I had given the order to transfer him to the detention-house at the police station.

A careful inquiry into the case was conducted and made public, with all details. It appeared that the druggist had spent the whole day outside of his residence, engaged in filling prescriptions at the pharmacy, while his domestic, in preparing the samovar, poured some kerosene over the glowing charcoal. The oil exploded, and the girl naturally was burned. There was no little excitement about this matter, and altogether I had small peace during the Easter days of 1904. Our repulses in the war, associated with rumors of aid given the enemy by the Jews, were the chief causes of the growing excitement.

Whenever I was called upon by circumstances really to come to the aid of the Jews for their own safety, signs of dissatisfaction and resentment appeared in the city. The vague feeling that took hold of the police, the military, the masses, and even the educated classes, might be formulated as follows: "Note how the Governor troubles himself only about the Jews"; or, "Order is of course a good thing, but the Jews should not receive too much power." I had to consider this sentiment, because the special rôle of a "protector of the Jews" is in many ways inconvenient for a governor. Besides, it was unwise to antagonize the forces on whom I could count in maintaining order in the city, or to provoke angry feelings against that part of the

population which was always exposed to attacks. In a word, it became necessary to avoid making it seem to the people that not alone the Governor, but also the police and the military, were a special guard unto the Jews.

The various measures taken, just before Easter, to check the influence of the pogrom literature on the population of Bessarabia, the explanation of the groundlessness of rumors compromising the Jews, together with the expulsion of Pronin, might well have excited feelings of envy and perplexity among the Christian population of Kishinev, and very probably did so. Detailed reports of the Chief of Police, and a free discussion by him of the necessary precautions taken, convinced me that also among the police officials a bad feeling manifested itself towards the Jews because of what was considered the too friendly attitude of the administration. The incident of Dr. Kohan which I am about to relate put an end to all unnecessary gossip, and satisfied both sides of the populace. In Kishinev a long-established regulation forbade the holding of meetings in private houses without special police permission; whereas in Odessa, in virtue of standing orders of the City Prefect, after the police had received preliminary notice, meetings might be held without awaiting a formal permit. Now, Dr. Kohan, who was one of the physicians of the Kishinev Jewish Hospital, had attended a meeting of the Jewish Charities Society in Odessa, at which he was chosen to represent the society in his home city; and on his return to Kishinev it occurred to the doctor to acquaint the educated members of the local Jewish community with the results of the proceedings of the Odessa general meeting. Accordingly, he invited to the house of a Jew from forty to fifty hearers to whom he wished to read his report. But the police were on the alert. Before he had a chance to put his constitution and projects on the speaker's table, a police captain entered the room, drew up an official report, took all the names, and confiscated the papers. This incident occurred during our Easter, when we were acting in the rôle of body-guards to the Jews, and here it appeared that the Jews themselves were simultaneously organizing illegal gatherings.

The indignation of the Chief of Police was great, the police captain exulted, and all waited to see what attitude the higher administration would take. I examined the constitution, and I

questioned Dr. Kohan and the landlord, and consulted also the District Attorney. He, like myself, was a new-comer in Kishinev, and was also considered a judophile in the eyes of the anti-Semites. Upon inspecting the documents, we became convinced of the innocent aims of the meeting, but we looked at the matter, so to say, in its local light. As a result of our consultation, our philo-Semitism, together with our sense of justice, yielded to considerations of a practical nature. To the great joy of the Chief of Police, I fined the landlord one hundred rubles, and sentenced Dr. Kohan to be locked up for two weeks at the police detention-house. I cannot say that the thought of the time Kohan spent in confinement was to me a very pleasant one. To tell the truth, every evening found me in poor humor, mindful of the fact that I had committed an injustice upon an innocent man. I awaited an influx of applications from relatives and friends of the prisoner. Two weeks passed, however, and no applicants came. But if it is true that, according to the experience of the wise, a service done a fellow-man never goes unpunished, so an act of injustice should not want for a reward for its perpetrator. The truth of this paradox I learned a few days later.

A deputation of the Jewish Society for the Improvement of the Poor of Kishinev was announced—the same society the interests of which partly suffered by the sudden police raid. I invited the applicants in, and saw a few respectable Jews, who presented to me the title of an honorary member of the society, together with a diploma in a case of black leather and silver. The case was in the hands of the secretary of the society, Dr. Kohan, who also read aloud to me the contents of the diploma.

I would not assert that this action was a manifestation of "Jewish revenge," which may be taken as a rule, but it is good enough to serve as a proof of Jewish tact and ingenuity.

I now come to relate the unique way in which the Jewish population of Kishinev aided the administration in maintaining order.

This happened during Christmas week of 1903. Early on the morning of December 26th the Chief of Police came to me with a perplexed countenance, and asked whether I had driven about town the night before. Upon hearing that I had slept peacefully the whole night, Colonel Reichardt told me the reason

of his inquiry and bewilderment. Report had come from different parts of the town that a gentleman in civilian dress, apparently the Governor himself, had driven around in the Governor's carriage, patrolling the police posts, and asking whether all was well. The carriage and the bay horses looked like my team, but it was hard to recognize in the darkness the face of the occupant. It soon developed that this was a case of Jewish shrewdness. The Jews did not fully trust our watchfulness, and in any case frightened the police by a night inspection of the posts.

During Easter week the following happened: Two Jews were sitting on the porch of a house. Two drunken Russian workingmen, passing by, began to annoy them. The Jews did not reply. Finally, one of the laborers slapped the Jew on the face. The Jew shook his head and did not move from his place. Another slap followed. The Jew again stood the insult. The working-men, angered by the passive resistance of the Jew, went their way. Then the Jews rose, followed the offender from a distance, overtook him at the police post, and then only began to scream. All necessary elements for a lawsuit were on hand —the sufferer, the offender, the witness, and the official police report. The case came before the Justice of Peace, the workingman was found guilty, but the plaintiff then and there pardoned him. In this way a chance for starting a general fight was fortunately lost, and all ended well. I want to remark here that the conduct of the offended may be explained by the strengthened confidence of the Jews in the police force, which Colonel Reichardt had at that time brought into comparatively good order.

I have often heard of a Jewish self-defence organization, and of the danger to the peace of the country from an armed and disciplined population. The Kishinev administration in my time watched carefully the efforts of the Jews, mostly young men, to organize a sort of militia. It was the general opinion that, being armed, they might be used for attack as well as for defence. But I must say that the fear of the armed Jews and the importance attached to the Jewish militia were, at least in my time in Kishinev, grossly exaggerated. There were gatherings of Jewish minors at the outskirts of the town; target-shooting was often heard; but the investigations of the police and the gendarmerie

disclosed that the Jewish masses never took part in these gatherings. They were mostly organizations partaking of the fancies of youth and the frolicsome tricks of children.

An indubitable division was apparent between the old generation of the Kishinev Jewry, who were peacefully inclined towards thinking only how to earn their daily bread, and the youths, who were carried away by the idea of an active participation in the revolution. On the whole, the Israel of Kishinev was not warlike. I gained the conviction that among our Jews the inclination towards a peaceful, bourgeois life and an indifference to the more ideal side of politics may be stronger than among the other races in Russia. At least, the Jewish revolutionists of Kishinev, in the poorer strata of the population, were almost entirely from among the very immature. A young married man, as soon as he acquired about fifty rubles, went over to law and order, and all his energy was directed towards finding means for the support of his family. I therefore came to the conclusion that the Kishinev police were too much frightened by the prevalent belief of the prominent rôle played by the Jews in the revolutionary movement of Russia, and hence exaggerated the importance of the power and organization of the local Jews. Here is an example corroborating my opinion:

The chief of the local secret police was fortunate enough to obtain information of an order secretly given to a Kishinev factory by a Jew inventor for a new weapon. This inventor had ordered a few hundred metal balls, each weighing five pounds, covered with sharp points. An iron ring, through which a cord could be run, was attached to each ball. The investigation, which ended with the arrest of the inventor and the confiscation of the material, was quite cleverly conducted. Much importance was given to the case.

When all the threads of this highly secret plot were in the hands of the police it became clear that it was but a plan of Jewish self-defence. Some unfortunate Jew conceived the idea of coming forward for the defence of his co-religionists in case a pogrom should be repeated. He reasoned that the Jews, barricading themselves in their houses, and withstanding the attacks of the assailants, could successfully defend themselves by throwing at their opponents these metal balls, with sharp points, attached to a long cord. After dealing a blow to one

enemy, the besieged could pull in the ball and repeat the act an endless number of times.

Several times during my service I had to go, unaccompanied, among agitated crowds. I always experienced the sensation of watchful courage which is usually aroused by the anticipation of danger. I would not have felt this agitation, however, if I had found myself in a crowd of Jewish mutineers. To me they appeared, somehow, like toy revolutionists, with rubber balls instead of bombs, with a masquerading outfit, and a childish passion that could be quieted without much effort or danger. I must mention, however, that in forming this opinion of the Jews in the revolutionary movement I had in view only Bessarabian Jews, and that two years later, even when the revolution had grown considerably, the Bessarabian Jews did not establish in that province any active revolutionary organization.

I have already mentioned the difficulties which many governors of the Pale of settlement must have experienced from the common belief that had taken hold of many government officials that the Jews themselves were to blame for the violence done them. They considered these acts of vehemence as a natural result of the unbearable Jewish exploitation, as a struggle of a healthy organism with an inoculated infection. I could not then fully understand the reasons for this biassed view of the disorders from persons whose office was to maintain order. I was inclined to admit that, as a new-comer to Bessarabia, I had not yet been able to observe to the full extent the unsightly and injurious rôle of the Jewry. I therefore did not consider it possible to conduct a philo-Semitic propaganda among my subordinates. I never disputed their opinion about the bad influence of the Jews on the population, or of the injury done the Jews, and of the hatred felt towards them by other nationalities. I only endeavored to impress upon the functionaries the necessity of fulfilling their official duty in maintaining public order and safety. "We do not guard the Jews, but the public order," was the watchword I gave the Bessarabian police. But whenever I gave instructions to the Chief of Police of Kishinev, and when we worked out plans together for the safety of the city in times of disturbing symptoms, I felt that some mysterious bar stood between our respective conceptions of our duties. There was always some hidden thought in the head of my subaltern that

could not be explained, but which prevented him from fulfilling his duties as Chief of Police. In our conversations there was a certain stiffness that prevented a full mutual confidence. Just before Easter, 1904, I succeeded, however, in getting at the Chief's "point of view," as some of the officials call it. One night I received a long cipher telegram from Plehve, who, as I recollect, for the first time determined to interfere with my activity. In the wording of the telegram his intolerable manner of urgent demands and threats was apparent. He informed me of symptoms indicating preparations for a new pogrom (of which I knew more than he did), demanded that strict measures be taken, and warned me that the least manifestation of anti-Jewish disorders in the province would be considered as a want of foresight on my part, and a proof of the unpractical nature of my arrangements. I should add that I give the gist of the telegram from memory, and that it was written in much sharper words. I immediately sat down to write and cipher my answer. I had hardly finished the telegram to the Minister, reciting that I had taken measures for the maintenance of order, solely with an eye to my official duty, and not from any sense of possible personal responsibility, when the Chief of Police entered with his report. During our conversation the lucky thought struck me to show Plehve's deciphered telegram to Colonel Reichardt. I shall never forget the change in the face, manner, and the entire conduct of the Chief. A kind of screen that had heretofore obscured his mental expression suddenly fell from his face. He revived, grew cheerful, became brave and clear, like a man who from now on knows which of the two roads to choose. His report ended with the following remark: "Be at ease, your Excellency; there will not be any disturbance at Kishinev."

V

The military courts at Kishinev—Three generals—My attitude towards the military courts—The rôle of the military at Kishinev—Lieutenant K——; Lieutenant X——.

AT the time I was Governor of Bessarabia the following troops were stationed at Kishinev: Two regiments of the infantry division, one artillery brigade, and one regiment of cavalry.

B——, the oldest among the local generals and chief of the cavalry division, was well-bred, quite well-to-do, and very pleasant in his personal intercourse. His wife and daughters were distinguished for their amiability, unassuming manners, and hospitality. The family were highly esteemed at Kishinev; their house was, socially, one of the best in town. I valued highly the tactful and business-like methods B—— showed in dealing with the civil authorities. He always felt ill at ease and anxious whenever, in his absence, the duties of the chief of the garrison devolved upon S——, commander of the infantry division. This general's ways were entirely different. He assumed a "Bourbonic" tone of swagger, regarding himself as a soldier to the core. His interest was monopolized by the military whose advantages, martial fame, and a clearly outlined course of action put them, in his estimation, above the "civil service gentry." Beyond this narrow range S—— refused to consider anything, which made official intercourse with him anything but easy. A third general, commander of the infantry brigade, was a sort of maniac, of a vicious, envious disposition, and a great gossip. His friends were dumfounded when he was sent to the front. The confidence in the success of Russian arms entertained by the people of Kishinev was then for the first time shaken. The fourth general, an old artilleryman of a very sweet temper, spent his leisure time playing the violin. I did not come in contact with him officially.

I would have had nothing to do with any of our generals save B——, with whom it was pleasant to keep up an acquaintance, had it not been for the "Regulations about the co-operation of the troops with the civil authorities." These regulations were drawn up long ago, when occasions for restoration of order by the military were of an entirely different character than those arising at present, and were consequently altogether inadequate. In the first place, the military aid should now be furnished without delay—within half an hour; secondly, military operations should now be carried on simultaneously in different parts of the city. The Governor, however, according to the antiquated regulations now in force, in case the troops are to be called out, applies to the chief of the garrison for troops. He must state the purpose of the call, the place where the troops are to report, and even a rough estimate of the necessary military force. The representative of the civil authority then directs the operations of the military; he proposes the work to be executed, points out whom to arrest, and so on. It is only after he suggests armed action that the head of the military forces takes charge of the troops during such action.

The effects of literally carrying out the above regulations were apparent everywhere during the periods of riots. The troops called out almost always appeared late. Although drawn up at the place where the riots were going on, the soldiers stared indifferently at the scenes of devastation of property, plunder, and violence which unfolded themselves before their eyes. They kept up a merry round of jokes and witty sallies in cases where the riots were directed against Jews. Cases of military punitive expeditions—plundering and assassination, perpetrated by the military under the guise of restoring order—had not then taken place. I shall not speak of them here. What I want to say is that the regulations by which I was guided afforded the military ample opportunity to be inactive during riots without in any way incurring responsibility for their inaction. This was the case at Kishinev in 1903. There was a time, from 2 to 3.30 P.M., when a single company, in the hands of a capable man, could have localized, stopped, and smothered the riot flames near Chuflin Square. Instead of this, the whole Kishinev garrison, arriving later and occupying half the city, kept inactive for two days, and thus corroborated the legend of the three days' plun-

der granted by the Czar. This went on until General B—— decided that it was necessary to save both the city and the honor of the troops. After his order to arrest the rioters, the riot ended in the course of two hours.

It will now become clear that, in the interest of general security, I could not maintain a purely official attitude towards the military authorities in the face of existing regulations. I had to bring to bear the cunning of the serpent and the mildness of the dove in soliciting the military to deal gently with the population intrusted to my safe-keeping. I had to establish my own Bessarabian regulations in the manner of calling out the troops to co-operate with the civil authorities.

This object was attained with the co-operation of the distinguished General, Count Musin-Pushkin, then commander of the forces of the Odessa military district. The arrangement inaugurated by me I maintained with B—— by means of frankness, persuasion, and appeal; with S——, by cunning; with G——, the third general, I was persistent, often to the menacing point.

I submitted a memorial to Count Musin-Pushkin, in which I set forth the inadequacy, borne out by facts, of the regulations for calling out the troops. I suggested a supplementary article to these regulations, to the effect that every chief of an army division that has been called out by the civil authority should pledge himself to take executive action in all cases where, in his judgment, riots endangering life and property were imminent. The Count gave me and my suggestions his kind attention, but warned me that the Ministry of War would, of course, oppose such an arrangement, as it would shift the responsibility of executive inactivity from the civil to the military authority.

This consideration, however, did not deter Musin-Pushkin from giving me his valuable co-operation. He promised to permit the chief of the Kishinev garrison to communicate with me in regard to a more speedy method of calling out the forces in case of necessity. In reality, he went even further by giving, instead of a simple permission, his authoritative recommendation to the military to co-operate earnestly with me in furthering my plans, as far as consistent with the statutes of "Garrison Service." Musin-Pushkin and I, with General B——, laid down regulations to the following effect:

We made up a monthly schedule of alternating squads for day duty, consisting of one company and one troop. The Chief of Police and the police inspectors were notified of the places in the barracks where the day squads were distributed. For every month a special password was provided, which could be communicated personally, or by telephone, to the head of the day squad by any police officer authorized on my responsibility to apply to the military force for co-operation. The commander of the squad, after receiving the password, within ten minutes marched to the appointed place without waiting for orders from his superiors. The latter I notified of the movement by calling upon them officially for troops. Such was the order of partly mobilizing the troops. For a general calling-out of the forces the city was divided into districts, according to preliminary arrangements. This plan enabled all the effective troops to know their station beforehand, and to keep up communication with each other by a telephone system. One more difficulty had to be overcome. General B—— occasionally left for Odessa, and then I had to deal with S——. This General was pre-eminently a Jew-hater, only second in his anti-Jewish sentiments to General G——. He refused to consider the precautionary measures above described other than a plan to lay upon the army the disgraceful task of defending the Jews. Once I had to invite S—— to a conference, in which the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, the Chief of Police, and the District Police Captain participated. It was necessary to change, for certain reasons, the plan of disposition of the military division. Sullenly submitting himself to necessity, S—— applied himself to the task of working out the new plan, which had been set down in writing by the officer attached to him. At last S—— rose, and, taking leave of me, uttered the following: "Why are you worrying, Prince? Trust yourself to us; we will shake up the Jews in the best shape." I had to treat these words as a witty sally. But this is not all. I often had to use cunning, informing S—— that the revolutionaries were about to march with the red flag, and that something was apparently brewing among the Jews, and that we expected some hustling revolutionary activity on their part. In such cases he gladly gave in, and issued the necessary orders for keeping the peace at various solemnities, as at the meeting of the Icons and other processions of a similar kind. In those

cases, fortunately rare, when the command passed to G——, I trusted more to luck and to my own resources. I had firmly determined, after a few trials, to apply to him only in cases of emergency.

The general conclusion I reached at the end of my official career at Kishinev, relative to the military authorities, was that, in the interest of securing order, it was better not to apply to the military at all whenever the Jews were concerned. And really the feelings the officers of the Kishinev garrison entertained towards the Jews gave little hope that the former would offer me real co-operation when anti-Jewish disorders arose.

Two examples which I will presently cite will serve to illustrate the methods the local military officers employed in dealing with the Jewish population.

Lieutenant K——, a native of Kishinev, served in the dragoons while I was in that city. The young officer's good looks were apparently meant to conquer women's hearts, while his massive build warranted the assumption that he was quite a devotee of all worldly blessings, including the sumptuous board and the wine-bottle. But the truth was entirely otherwise. K—— settled in two small rooms of a burgher's house, one of which he equipped as a sort of chapel. A large image of the Holy Virgin, with an ever-burning image-lamp, a copy of the Gospel, and a cross adorned this retreat. Here the Lieutenant prayed ardently, preparing himself for exploits that should call to mind the times when knights devoted themselves to the struggle with the unfaithful for the glory of God and the triumph of Christianity. In the early dawn K—— would saddle his horse, and, together with his orderly, would launch forth beyond the city toll-gate to fight the Jews. The latter were grain-dealers, who, in violation of a city ordinance, bought grain in the carts of peasants on their way from the village to the market square, where most of the grain trade was carried on under municipal inspection.

Rushing boldly at these law-breaking forestallers and dealing them unexpected blows, the intrepid paladin would always come off triumphantly victorious, disperse the frightened Jews, and escort the carts to market. But sometimes it was too late: the illicit transaction was concluded, and the cart-loads of wheat were already bought by the Jews and hauled away to their

yards. K——, even in this case, would not permit Jewish exploitation. Giving chase to the carted-away grain, he would find the forestaller's house, break in through the gate, take away the purchased grain, and, dealing out generous blows to the buyer and abusive language to the seller, would compel the latter to take back his produce and haul it to the market. The religious intolerance of this idealistic officer led him sometimes to undertake even more remarkable exploits. Once, while with his company in front of the cathedral, the occasion being some festival, K—— caught sight of two Jews ascending, out of curiosity, the church porch, and evidently trying to get into the cathedral. He at once dashed into the vestibule, and with a few kicks sent these heretics flying down the porch and away at full speed. All the Jews knew and feared K——, who, as they put it, "punched hard on the jaw."

Owing to my unlucky fame as "the good Governor," as the Jews dubbed me, I was flooded with scores of complaints against Lieutenant K——. I did not use them, schooled as I was by the experience gained in my dealing with the military department. I went over the matter with the commander of the regiment in an informal way, and had Lieutenant K—— sent to me for explanations. The Lieutenant proved to be a first-rate, kindly, sweet-tempered, good fellow, who gave me the opportunity of taming his ardor. He earnestly entered into my view of the matter, and agreed with me on many points. I thought it proper to return his visit, and on this occasion I saw the image that inspired him to fight the "Christ-sellers," who received at the hands of the devout Lieutenant the reward for the ancient sin of their ancestors.

I do not remember the name of the second officer of whom I am going to tell. He was an infantry lieutenant. Like K——, he enjoyed the notoriety of being a Jew-hater. It is worthy of note, however, that K——, the ardent cavalryman, who punched Jews unceremoniously, in the rightful capacity of a Christian and protector of the poor, was not as much hated as feared by the Jews; but the correct, calm, and distant infantryman, though he seldom launched into jaw-punching, they could not stand at all. The predicament in which, as will be shown later, the infantry Lieutenant found himself, could not have involved K——, despite his manual exercise on Hebrew faces.

Lieutenant X——, as I must call my infantryman, once stepped into a Jewish store located on Kishinev's principal street, and impassively called out, "Gloves!"

"Directly," answered the salesman, waiting on another customer, who came first.

"Gloves!" repeated X——, louder, but without losing his temper.

The salesman took the liberty to remark that "first come, first served." The officer's hand immediately administered a blow on the clerk's cheek, with the result that the clerk ran out of the store screaming. After suggesting that fighting is unlawful, the proprietor got the same slap, and fled into the street, followed by all of his customers. Soon after, seeing that there was no one to sell gloves, the officer, too, walked out into the street. Joining one of his fellow-officers of the same regiment, X—— strolled down the wide sidewalk without expecting any serious consequences from what took place. Anybody else would, in fact, have been allowed to escape, but, as I said, the Jews hated X——. Soon a dense crowd, consisting of Jewish young men, salesmen of near-by stores, surrounded him. They jostled him, touched elbows with him, and stepped on his feet. Looking around and seeing the crowd growing, the two officers turned from the sidewalk to the street. The ring around them thickened and tightened—jeers, whistles, and threats were heard. The officers, with sabres drawn, moved on slowly to the opposite sidewalk. The military cap of one of them came off, a noose was thrown over the sabre of the other. When the police at last arrived they rescued, with the help of some persons from the crowd, the two officers, pale and abashed, and took them into a confectionery. Then the police started to make arrests—twenty men were arrested at random.

I learned immediately of what had taken place. I bent all my efforts to take action and get through with the case before S——, then commander of the garrison, could reach me. I felt that demands would be presented to me of such a nature that I could not consent to satisfy them. I would not be able to refrain from condemning the Lieutenant's freakish sally; our interview would probably end in a rupture, for which the store-keepers would pay not later than the next day.

I immediately invited both officers to my house, and took them

to the house of detention, where the arrested Jews were just brought. I asked the offended officers to identify their offenders. After long hesitation they picked out five men. These five were then held by administrative process for unlawfully congregating at a public place. The officers were requested to rest satisfied with this measure, to which they cheerfully agreed. The persons beaten at the store refused to follow my recommendation to bring an action at law. The military authorities hushed up the whole matter to such an extent that none of them alluded, in my presence, to the disagreeable incident when the representatives of the Russian army were insulted in a public place.

During General Raaben's term of office as Governor, officers used to cross the streets in foul weather astride on constables. This was, so to speak, innocent fun—one of mutual favors among the military. Nothing of this sort happened during my term of office; but then I could not boast that the military service had any affection for me.

Of the soldiers of the Kishinev garrison I have almost nothing to relate, except the fact that, with the return of the troops from camping-grounds into the city, night-larceny, street brawls, and debauchery in nocturnal dives were always perceptibly increasing.

VI

Nobility in Bessarabia—Landlord P.—The Krupenskis—The noblemen's school — The Zemstvo — The court — The April pogrom before the court—My view on the causes of the pogroms—The office of the Public Prosecutor.

I WAS quite familiar with the mode of life, character, traditions, and peculiarities of the nobility in the Great Russian provinces, especially in the provinces of the Moscow section. I knew most intimately, because of the conditions of my past life, the landed nobility, who themselves farmed their old hereditary estates. In the eighties and nineties of the last century one found not infrequently in the provinces of Yaroslav, Kostroma, Tula, Smolensk, Orel, and Kaluga immense manorial estates with traces of their former grandeur. There were very old parks, artificial dikes, sometimes even peach-tree conservatories, precious furniture, rare bronzes, family portraits, and libraries in spacious apartments of houses grown old but still habitable. It was apparent that the former seigniorial life in these manors tended to decay, that the old houses and the old customs would not be restored to their former grandeur; but the spirit of the ancient nobility was still alive in whatever had been preserved. To contemplate all the remnants of this ancient splendor afforded one a kind of æsthetic pleasure.

I was still more in touch with the middle-sized manorial estates, where the resident owner himself, without manager or college-bred agriculturist, took charge of the farm-work, aided by a bailiff or steward. The farming itself was simple and well adapted to the surrounding conditions. In most of these estates there were neither luxuries nor fancy contrivances. A few dogs for the fall chase, three home-bred horses and some pet stallion, the object of sanguine but mostly illusory hopes—these made up the luxuries of the land-owner. A modest but certain income

was all the simple farm yielded—the rubles which, as the Russians put it "are slender but lasting." Indeed, large returns, quick acquisition of wealth, were not to be expected from such manorial farms. Still, in spite of complaints of poor crops, dear farm help, and the bad faith of neighboring peasants, the owners of small estates lived modestly but in plenty. Their names, it is true, sometimes adorned the foreclosure notices of banks, but, on the whole, they were steadily growing rich because of the slow but continuous rise in the price of land.

I knew many such solid landed noblemen, especially in the provinces outside of the black earth belt, and I must say that they were an exceptionally desirable element — on the whole, making for good. Their relations with the peasants, in spite of occasional misunderstandings, were mostly cordial. Cases of tight-fisted dealings with peasants, or attempts at otherwise exploiting their poorer neighbors, were rare. On the contrary, in their relations with the toiling peasantry, one could observe a sort of solidarity springing from a long-continued common activity. It is just this concessive and good-natured attitude towards the former serfs of their fathers that very favorably contrasts the local landed nobility with the whole range of land-owners of the other classes. The latter, close-fisted, forestalling commoners and peasants grown rich, were far more domineering and merciless to their poor brethren than were the nobles. The latter generally evinced, though sometimes feebly and unconsciously, a certain amount of sympathy with the peasants, perhaps partly theoretical, and partly arising from the noble's attachment to the land, to farm-work, and to those who live by it. The cultural value of farming carried on by nobles on their estates in North Central Russia, where the peasantry are exempt from famine and rack-rent, cannot, in my opinion, be denied.

Plain living, absence of fine-drawn class distinctions and class arrogance or vanity, a rustic life of toil, an insight into the needs of the common people, and even an indulgent attitude towards the invasions of neighboring peasants into manorial estates, which is always so exasperating to upstart land-owners—these are the positive characteristics of the middle-class land-holding nobles, whose acquaintance I made, especially in the province of Kaluga.

In Bessarabia I saw an entirely different picture. In Bessa-

rabian manorial estates of rich nobles one came across a good deal of luxury, but none of that old-time grandeur which, in our parts, dates prior to Catherine II. and Alexander I. Bessarabian manor-houses are sometimes lighted with electricity, but one will not there find oil-lamps of the "Empire" style, and the bronze candlesticks and chandeliers that in Central Russia mark an old nobleman's house. The bookcases of Bessarabian land-owners are full of modern novels, but they lack the French encyclopædists of the eighteenth century in gilt-edged leather bindings. None of the furniture is of the old-style workmanship of the homespun joiner; everything is new and modern, and is frequently renewed. A good deal there is, perhaps, more comfortable than in our homes, but the Bessarabian country-houses are elegantly furnished chambers, not ancient manors of the Russian nobility.

I also failed to notice among Bessarabian land-owners any affection for their estates—an affection that, with us, is independent of their beauty or paying qualities. We regard our estates as inanimate persons, and love them for their own sakes—not for the income they yield. In Bessarabia an estate is a share of land stock yielding a large dividend and easily transferable, a marketable commodity circulating among enterprising persons owing to the rapid upward movement in the price of land. Land acquired in the seventies at twenty-five to thirty-five rubles per desyatin (about 2.7 acres) passed in my time into the fifth hand at two hundred and fifty to three hundred and fifty rubles per desyatin. High yields of valuable cereals, and proximity to harbor facilities and the frontier line, have raised the lease rate of land in Bessarabia to a high level. Fertilizers were seldom used in my time. Farming with stock owned by the farmer was infrequent, excepting in the northern districts of the province. As a rule, the Bessarabian land-owner kept for himself his vineyards and a patch of land; the rest he leased—most of it to a Jew, who subleased it in small lots to peasants. The land-owner himself, living in town or abroad, was little in touch with the peasants. Outward display of luxury, enjoyment of the blessings of urban life, the tendency to get much and spend still more —these were the conspicuous traits of the Bessarabian land-owners that in Bessarabia robbed the land-ownership of noblemen of its hereditary character and of its stability. Here and

there large landed estates of the nobility were dwindling away and changing owners. I well remember the case of Balsh, once a great landed magnate and philanthropist of Bessarabia, not one of whose estates remain in his family. But the sons of his former manager had millions at their command, which the grandchildren unsparingly squandered away under my observation. I cannot deny myself the pleasure of relating here the story of five years in the life of one Bessarabian land-owner, a great friend of mine.

This story will serve to illustrate the above remarks, and will show a typical Bessarabian land-owner. In the sixties of the last century, X——, a land-owner of limited means in the Orgeyev district, applied to B——, a wealthy land-owner in the neighborhood, for a small loan. B—— refused, not trusting X——'s debt-paying ability. Thirty years after the former man of wealth lost almost all his fortune, while X——, dying, bequeathed to his son three thousand desyatins of land, free of mortgages, and a substantial cash capital. The son was graduated at the university, and married, contrary to his father's wishes, a woman remarkable for a beautiful voice and musical talent. The couple went to Italy, receiving from the offended father only one hundred rubles a month—the allowance the son used to receive as a student. They went on the stage—she as a soprano prima donna of dramatic ability, the husband, who quickly learned to sing, as a baritone. After several years of this eventful career the father's death called the two singers back to Bessarabia, where the husband entered the service of the Zemstvo elections, and took up farming in the Bessarabian style. Inlaid furniture was brought over from Italy into the father's small house in the middle of the village. The new holders ordered musical instruments, a billiard-table, and expensive plate. The Zemstvo house in the district town was refitted at the expense of the new Zemstvo worker. Carriages and thorough-bred horses were at the service of the innumerable guests assembling at X——'s. The guests ate, drank, stayed overnight, and made merry. The host, really preferring a simple, quiet life, interested in art and in service, turned epicure against his will. I accepted his invitation to his country home on condition that I be treated in a simple way, especially with regard to the table fare, as I could not bear the sumptuous Bessarabian food. X—— tries

to assure me, even now, that he took steps to please my simple tastes, but I will describe here, in detail, how we passed the day at his home. My wife and I and a relative, who never had been in Bessarabia, arrived at the railway station, and were received by the host himself in two four-seated coaches. After a ride of twenty versts we sat down, at 3 P.M., to a table set with bottles and all sorts of refreshments. Our hunger satisfied, we lazily continued our dinner, consisting of four substantial courses, without soup. After an hour and a half at the table I waited impatiently for a chance to take a walk, but it proved we had only done with Bessarabian luncheon, and that the Bessarabian dinner was to come. Two soups and seven more copious dishes were served. I was so intimate with the host that I allowed myself to express, by a mute protest, the fact that I was angry with him, which he cannot forget even now. I did not touch the dishes served, considering the unexpected continuation of the dinner as a disregard of my wishes and a menace to my health. Another guest who came with me, a Kaluga land-owner, responded in a different way to Bessarabian hospitality by falling asleep in the middle of the dinner. The footman hesitated a long time whether to nudge him on serving something for what they considered in Bessarabia as the fifth, but which was really the ninth dish. We rose from the table at 7 P.M. Supper was to be served at 11 P.M.

I learned afterwards that eight hundred rubles' worth of provisions had been ordered shipped from Odessa for that entertainment. X——, young, clever, talented, and kind, quickly found a way to squander his father's fortune. Planning to spend the winter at Kishinev, he began to look for a house. He was offered an elegantly fitted residence for seventy thousand rubles, but he preferred to buy an absolutely worthless house for sixty thousand rubles. Tearing down this one, he built in its place a small palace for one hundred and twenty thousand rubles, installed an electric plant, and refurnished the house. After spending one winter at Kishinev, selling one estate and mortgaging another, he moved the next winter to Roumania, abandoning his house, the maintenance of which, with interest on the capital expended, amounted to eighteen thousand rubles a year. While I am writing these lines X—— is again in Italy, having placed his business affairs in the care of one of his relations.

It is necessary to mention that X—— did not play at cards, ate little, and drank almost nothing. His favorite amusements were good music and a hearty chat with an intimate acquaintance. His only extravagant taste was his whim for telegrams. By means of the telegraph he communicated with everybody instead of writing letters, irrespective of the relative urgency of the communications he wished to make. I received from him many telegrams, of some hundred words each, with the usual address and closing, and long, parenthetical clauses, simply to let me know that he wished to have a chat with me over the wire.

Somewhat isolated amid the nobility of Bessarabia were the Krupenskis, an immense family, having, as was claimed, including female proxies, fifty-two votes at the assembly of nobles. The senior member of the family, M. N. Krupenski, occupied in my time the post of the Provincial Marshal of the Nobility; two others of the family served as district marshals; the rest were provincial and district assemblymen, honorary justices of the peace, and so forth. This family acted as a unit at public assemblies, were immensely influential at elections, and exerted no little pressure on the public men of Bessarabia. The Krupenskis were, therefore, not popular with all, passed as haughty aristocrats, and were charged with some family exclusiveness. Being wealthy and well connected at St. Petersburg, the Krupenskis introduced into local society the spirit they had acquired at privileged institutions, in the guard regiments, in the ranks of the court bureaucracy, and the diplomatic service. But they were not bigoted party men; they entertained, to a certain extent, liberal views, and their attitude to Plehve's administration, for instance, was free from servility and even slightly tinged with censure. In the questions of extending local home rule, and in their views on legislation affecting Jews, they were partly liberal. Especially humane and of gentle disposition was M. N. Krupenski, the Provincial Marshal, the most lovable and noble of men. Rumor had it in St. Petersburg that he was a philo-Semite, patronizing Jews, and dependent upon them financially. I argued all I could for his being a thorough gentleman. Finally, towards Easter, 1904, Krupenski received the long-expected title of Court Chamberlain, which afforded him, then already a helpless invalid, great pleasure. The part played by the Krupenskis in Bessarabia was, on the whole, good, barring a few exceptions

of a positive character. Later, however, after the dissolution of the first Duma, the Krupenskis, whose property interests were in land, strongly leaned to the Government's side. Influenced by a desire to guard their family and class interests, they lost their value as impartial men active in life. I must account for this change in their attitude by their fear of agrarian reform. That exerted, then, an appalling effect upon the majority of land-owners.

M. N. Krupenski conceived the idea of immortalizing his services as marshal by erecting at Kishinev a combination of boarding-school and sheltering home for the nobility. Not sparing labor and money, he went to St. Petersburg, tried to obtain interviews with the Czar, and succeeded in procuring from the Crown means to put up the building at an estimated cost of some three hundred thousand rubles. The nobles of Bessarabia decided to undertake the expenses of maintaining the home, as they were sure that the undertaking would be profitable and of importance to the nobility. M. N. Krupenski, not waiting for the Minister of Finance to give his final authorization of this appropriation, relying upon the word of the Czar, and not having raised a single penny from the resources of the local nobility, proceeded at once to build this home on a grand scale. The magnificent palace, with luxurious apartments, with plenty of light and room, with its own electric-power station, was almost ready when the Government appropriation was at last obtained with considerable effort. Krupenski was in debt all around to contractors and purveyors, whose demands he met by making advance payments with his own notes. The home was completed with taste, skill, and economy. The time came to think who the inmates of this institution should be. Then the easy-going unconcern of Bessarabians came out in all its splendor. There were no pupils; moreover, the contributions from the nobility would hardly suffice to maintain the pupils if there had been any. As a consequence, the building is still vacant up to this time (the winter of 1906).

The Zemstvo of Bessarabia is mainly made up of representatives from the land-owning class, the peasants not playing any conspicuous part in this institution. Baron Stuart, chairman of the provincial executive board of the Zemstvo, master of botany and biology, who took part in the famous Zemstvo conventions,

was a man of enlightened views. He appreciated the necessity of working along the line of making the Zemstvo more democratic. The Zemstvo assembly, however, did not always support him in this theory. The activity of the Zemstvo institutions of Bessarabia was marked by the peculiarly Bessarabian characteristic of outward splendor combined with detailed, consistent work in the interests of the rural masses. The provincial executive board of the Zemstvo might possibly be blamed for its undue weakness for magnificent structures. Thus, the board in my time erected the Zemstvo Museum at a cost exceeding two or three times the original estimate of forty thousand rubles. In 1902–1904 a new town was being built seven versts from Kishinev, and a Zemstvo dispensary for psychopathic patients was established at immense expense. This was Baron Stuart's pet creation. Indeed, there is hardly a dispensary in Russia which can compare with the one at Kostyuzhensk. However, even while I was there, when all its buildings were not yet equipped, criticism and complaints began about the great cost of the hospital and the difficulty of maintaining it out of the resources supplied by Zemstvo taxation. There was noticeable, generally speaking, in the undertakings of the Bessarabian Zemstvo, the same lack of mature forethought that is peculiar to all Bessarabians. They do something first, then they start to find out how to do it, after which they find that they overdid it. But, for all that, the general character of the Bessarabian Zemstvo of my time was one of enlightenment and progress. A whole line of Baron Stuart's predecessors, as chairmen of the provincial executive board of the Zemstvo, left a good influence upon the work of that body. Old Kotrutza was a type of these Zemstvo promoters of the earlier days, and so was Kristi, the father of the former Governor of Moscow, now Senator Grigori Ivanovich.

The district zemstvos, those of Bendery, Soroki, Byeltzy, Khotin, and Orgeyev, deserved full approbation for the character of the chairmen of the executive boards. Some of these officers are to be thanked for much work in developing the fruitful activity of the local public institutions. Mimy, Aleinikov, Shishko, or Lisovski would never allow either the work or the theoretical principles of the Zemstvo to fail. The only unfortunate exception to the general good character of the zemstvos in the province was in the Zemstvo district that was totally

corrupted by the Purishkevich family. The latter's reputation in the province was bad, and deservedly so, but they had considerable influence in the district, owing to their wealth and wonderful low cunning, and to their unscrupulousness in the choice of means in order to gain their ends. The progenitor who gave his name and fortune to the family was Senior Priest Father Purishkevich, originally an ecclesiastic of the Cemetery Church, famous in his time, and afterwards member of the Kishinev consistory, who gained a high reputation among the Bessarabian clergy. By gaining through long service the distinction of the St. Vladimir Cross, he conferred upon his son the rank of nobility. Purishkevich, Jr., occupied for some time the post of "perpetual member" of the Bessarabian provincial council, but was compelled to resign a short time before my arrival. His son was at one time chairman of the executive board of the Akkerman Zemstvo, and his portrait yet hangs in the assembly hall of the Zemstvo house. During my visit to Akkerman I was told the following story, in answer to my question as to why this Zemstvo member was deserving of such honorary distinction. It appears that a clerk of the Akkerman Zemstvo board for some reason thrashed the chairman of the board. To console the Purishkevich family and rehabilitate the victim of the thrashing, the Zemstvo assembly passed a resolution that his portrait should be hung in the session chamber.

While I was in Bessarabia the young Purishkevich was in St. Petersburg, and served as special adjutant in the Ministry of the Interior. At present he is known as a member of the Russian Society, and one of the ornaments of the League of True Russians. Any one familiar with the history of this family could infallibly predict that this man would find in this league a field of action befitting the Purishkevichs.

Although in my day the Bessarabian Zemstvo was altogether liberal in its tendencies, yet its work was entirely free from anti-governmental agitation. The gendarmerie had almost nothing to do within the Zemstvo circle, nor even among its unofficial employés. The so-called "unreliable" element came in only as a rare exception. All the executive boards, officials and employés, recognized the Governor's prerogative to the letter, and acted entirely in compliance with the new Zemstvo code. They tolerated no strained relations in the service, no

opposition to the Governor, either during Raaben's administration or mine. Nevertheless, in the elections of 1906, after the dissolution of the Duma, almost all the "liberal" members of the Zemstvo were placed by the local administration on the list of "undesirables," and they were then voted down, thanks to the solid front of the Krupenskis and the reactionary attitude of the land-owners, which resulted in a general "about-face."

Then commenced in Bessarabia the policy of limiting, and even completely abolishing, such branches of the Zemstvo administration as had resulted from the efforts of its progressive elements, which were already telling on the life of the local population. The provincial executive board was deprived of its power to unify the activities of the district zemstvos in matters of popular education. The sanitary and agricultural institutions of the provincial zemstvos were abolished. The Zemstvo department for land-assessment statistics was closed, and its accumulation of valuable but undeveloped material was consigned to the Zemstvo record office. Baron Stuart could not stand having his endeavors nullified, and in November, 1906, resigned his chairmanship of the provincial executive board of the Bessarabian Zemstvo.

The personnel of the Kishinev court in 1903–1904 was not in any way peculiar as compared with the circuit courts I knew in other parts of Russia. Khlopov, the presiding judge, was a charming man. I was on excellent terms with him, and was sorry when he was transferred to Riga a short time before I left for Tver.

Khlopov was characterized, among other things, by his dislike of the Jews. With all his judicial impartiality; he could scarcely consider a Jewish lawsuit, as he himself admitted, without some bias. His dislike was fully shared by his two assistants, and by at least three associate justices, so that the Kishinev "sitting magistracy" was mainly anti-Semitic. I was very much interested in the existence of such an attitude towards the Jews on the part of our judiciary, and tried many a time to account for it. All the judges above unanimously declared that not a single lawsuit, criminal or civil, can be properly conducted if the interests of the Jews are involved. In civil suits of this character the judges were disturbed by fictitious deals and contracts, worthless notes and receipts, by the concealment of property,

and usury quite apparent to the court, but hidden in legal guise. Criminal cases, the judges claim, afforded the Jews a chance to fill the court with false witnesses set one against another; the voice of every Christian witness was thus drowned by the scores of perjurers who had taken the Judaic oath. Something of this sort I myself observed when the cases of the Kishinev massacre came before the court, and at other times also. The Jews, anxious to prove more than what really occurred, get extremely excited, fly into a passion, and exaggerate matters in their somewhat unwarranted testimony. For all that, it seemed to me that the Kishinev court, composed of its three well-known members, had no justification for introducing the following statement in defence of its rulings: "Though the following witnesses testified: . . . because they are Jews the court cannot attach to their testimony any value in rebutting the evidence of the other party, Ivan Ivanov." Rulings of this kind, however unjust, were occasional in the practice of the Kishinev court.

The great case of the April pogrom began in the autumn of 1903, Davydov, Chief-Justice of the Odessa Court of General Sessions, presiding. Vladimir Vassilyevich Davydov, a Tambov land-owner, was formerly Justice of the Peace in Moscow. We had mutual relatives and friends. We welcomed him with joy as our kinsman. I soon succeeded in prevailing upon him to remove to the Governor's mansion, where he remained with us from two to three months, while the pogrom trial was dragging on with occasional halts. He brought into our home the familiar spirit peculiar to the Russian landed nobility, with its charm of tradition, together with the temper of a seasoned judge, and the joviality of a witty and vivacious conversationalist. I feel grateful even now to Davydov for the time he spent with us.

Preparations for the pogrom trial had been in progress in St. Petersburg since the summer. At the end of June, Chaplin, director in the Ministry of Justice, visited Odessa and Kishinev to determine where and how this famous case should be heard. With the confidence of a novice, I boldly declared that there was no reason to fear any disorders in Kishinev, and that in the present case I did not see any need to exclude the public from the court. Chaplin treated my statement with circumspection—a very safe and sound attitude on his part, as I had just entered into office. Later, however, when I had taken my bearings and

had written to St. Petersburg that the peace of the city would not be disturbed by the trial, it was decided to try the case at Kishinev. But the Minister of Justice ordered the exclusion of the public and the press from court. This secrecy was entirely uncalled for, as it gave rise to countless rumors at home unfavorable to our government, while detailed reports of the court proceedings were mailed daily by the lawyers, through Jewish messengers at Ungeni, Roumania, and were regularly published abroad. Thus secrecy was not maintained and agitation was not appeased.

Perceiving that this order, issued by the Minister of Justice and warmly indorsed by Davydov, was utterly groundless, I called on Muravyev, the Minister of Justice, in January, 1904, and stated to him that in the interests of restoring public peace, and with a view of putting an end to rumors unfavorable to the Government, it would be desirable to open the court-room to the public and to permit the press to report the proceedings of the court. Muravyev, flying into a passion, cried out that he had closed the court to the public on account of the Ministry of the Interior, and did not expect a governor to dispute the opinion of his ministry. I answered that I did not belong to any ministry, and that I expressed my own opinion as a local representative of the general government and in its general interests. To this Muravyev, not without some malice, remarked, "I will deem it my duty to communicate to the Minister of the Interior your opinion relative to the publicity of the trial, and this I will do all the more eagerly as the Ministry of Justice was in this case very much against the closing of the doors."

I do not know the manner or purport of the Ministers' conference on this occasion, but the massacre case, which continued for a year longer, was to the end tried behind closed doors. With Davydov's permission, a seat in back of the judges was assigned to me. We had it in mind, in case my presence should be objected to, to plead my privilege, as an honorary justice of the peace, to be present at court sessions. Once, when quite a number of outsiders, officers of the gendarmerie and the police, members of the prosecution, etc., collected behind the judges, the attorneys representing the interests of the injured Jews raised an objection. Karabchevski, Grusenberg, Kalmanovich, Zarudny, Sokolov, angered at the restraint put upon court

publicity, expressed themselves in favor of removing all outside persons seated behind the chairs of the judges. But afterwards one of the lawyers, possibly Zarudny, stated for his colleagues that they had no objection to the presence of Governor Urussov. My philo-Semitism was this time of some use to me.

It was interesting to follow the trial at the beginning, when the chief witnesses were examined. Especially interesting was the examination of Pronin. The attorneys for the plaintiffs grilled him by turns, exerting all their efforts to turn him from a witness into a defendant. Pronin was convicted of composing inflammatory proclamations and of spreading false rumors dangerous to the Jews. It was ascertained that he was the author of the articles in the *Znamya*, in which he tried to prove that the Jews themselves instituted the massacre. The lawyers tried to learn who corrected his articles. They made him admit his journey to John of Kronstadt, to receive from him the well-known "Second Epistle" against the Jews. They read Pronin's verses, compelled him to give answers betraying his ignorance, and gave him a respite only after his face gave certain evidence of an impending apoplexy. The first set of half-witnesses, half-defendants, was made the target of Karabchevski's cold sarcasm, of Zarudny's nervous vehemence, and of Grusenberg's elegant logic, as well as Kalmanovich's conclusions, implacable as the blows of a heavy hammer. Then, when the initial fire of the attorneys for the plaintiffs had been spent in the desolation of the court-room, and the testimony of the Jews began, it became evident that nothing short of the gift of clairvoyance could determine the degree of guilt of the defendants behind the bar.

Witnesses who sat in their basements during the massacre had seen what was going on two squares ahead of them. Witnesses identified different persons among the accused as the perpetrators of the murders they saw. None of them answered the questions put by the court, but all expressed their own thoughts. In short, a Bacchanalian orgy of witnesses arose, confounding the unhappy judges and interesting the lawyers for the plaintiffs but little. The latter, from the very beginning of the trial, did not at all endeavor to expose the accused, but were insistent in maintaining that those chiefly responsible for the massacre were in St. Petersburg, and that its organizers were among the witnesses just examined. This conviction took a

firm hold of large sections of Russian society, and was accepted by the press abroad as an undoubted truth.

The real cause of the Kishinev massacre still remains obscure. The April riots of 1903 gave rise to an amount of agitation and burning interest in Russia and abroad not weakened by the subsequent massacres of Jews that took place after the October manifesto of 1903 in various cities and towns, and afterwards in 1906, at Homel, Byelostok, and Siedlce. Judging from the emotional storm aroused by this first massacre, a storm thus occurring so long after its original cause, it will not soon be forgotten, and will occupy a place of marked interest in Russian history of the beginning of the twentieth century.

I must, therefore, speak of the impressions made upon me by the factors antecedent to the disorders of Easter, 1903, which deprived the Kishinev Jews of forty-two lives, and inflicted on them a loss of at least a million rubles.

But in spite of every effort to give a clear account of the entire matter, and notwithstanding my wish to detail impartially my impressions, I can but faintly sketch the events that preceded the portents of the massacre, which itself took place before my advent. These I was not able thoroughly to investigate.

First, I must say that in examining, before going to Bessarabia, the secret papers of the Kishinev case in the Central Police Bureau at St. Petersburg, I found not a thing to justify the assumption that the Ministry of the Interior thought it expedient to permit a Jewish massacre or even an anti-Jewish demonstration in Kishinev. Indeed, such a sinister policy on the part of that ministry is inconceivable; for A. A. Lopukhin, formerly prosecuting attorney at the courts of Moscow and St. Petersburg and the Kharkov Court of General Sessions, was at that time the head of this department. He was invited by Plehve to reform the police according to a broad plan worked out in general outlines by Lopukhin, and submitted by him to the Minister, upon assuming office. Whenever he was charged with being a reactionary, Plehve liked to point to the new department head to show that he, Plehve, was seeking men with broad views and irreproachable names. Lopukhin, indeed, enjoyed a high reputation with the judiciary, and much was expected of him. He became the victim of the Minister's policy of constantly post-

poning constructive work, and was dragged, against his will, into Plehve's sphere of action. The latter's motto was, "Pacification first, then reforms." Nevertheless, Lopukhin's influence more than once toned down and set within legal bounds the Minister's iron will and dictatorial ways. Plehve regarded him as a liberal, yet continued to respect him and often gave in to him. My intimacy with Lopukhin, based on our relationship and close friendship, enables me to assert that it is entirely inadmissible to suspect his department of engineering pogroms at that time.

I also entertain grave doubts of the authenticity of a letter alleged to have been addressed by the Minister of the Interior to the Governor of Bessarabia, and published in the English papers. This letter, guardedly but transparently, none the less, suggested an indulgent attitude towards any active warfare carried on by the Christian populace against their oppressors, the Jews. I read this apocryphal letter only once, and that quite a while ago, and, therefore, report its contents with hesitation and, at any rate, only approximately. But I am deeply convinced of its spurious character. Plehve was incapable of such an unguarded act, and would in no case have ventured to leave the proof of his instigations in the hands of a governor almost unknown to him, and in whom he had but little confidence. Even had he wanted to launch a policy of massacre, he would hardly have ventured on any such step. But, setting aside the last consideration as due to my personal bias, one must keep in mind that Raaben was not the proper agent to carry out any such projects. He was a very decent man, did not aspire to anything, did not court his superior's favor, and, moreover, was quite tolerant towards the Jews. He himself, losing his official position, suffered from the pogrom. For a long time he could not return to office despite the fact that the Czar was favorably disposed towards him, and he received the opportunity of partly rehabilitating himself only after Plehve's death. Confidential agents carrying out delicate commissions do not get such treatment.

Was not the massacre, then, a sudden, irresistible outburst of animosity accumulated long ago: Retribution exacted for old wrongs, the manifestation of the spontaneous force of the common people, the mob, squaring accounts with their old-time foes, the Jews, by whom they were oppressed? I answer just

as decidedly that such an explanation of the Kishinev massacre is one-sided, incorrect, and wholly artificial.

It cannot be denied that in the provinces included in the Jewish Pale of Settlement it is especially the Jews who were the victims of plunder and violence. The main cause of this is the special legislation favoring the view that the Jews are subjects beyond the law's full protection—an element dangerous to the state. Of course, it may be granted that some racial peculiarities and their religious exclusiveness place them, in certain cases, in contrast to other nationalities. It is necessary, however, to remark that the significance of this aloofness of the Jewish people is usually exaggerated by their enemies. There are also complaints of exploitation by the Jews, though this complaint is more often heard from those who merely observe this exploitation than from those exploited. But all these suggested causes do not suffice to originate pogroms. A more direct cause is necessary for the outburst of the mob's passions. A cause sufficient to start the Kishinev massacre could not be discovered. All the information that was at one time spread of a quarrel between Jews and Orthodox Christians at Chuflin Square proved false. But I must mention other factors incidental to and provocative of the Kishinev massacre of 1903.

A significant rôle in preparing for the pogrom was played by the press, this especially by Krushevan's local paper and the St. Petersburg publications of similar tendencies, shipped to Kishinev for distribution. Issues of these papers were filled with accusations against the Jews, as well as statements and arguments calculated to stir up the passions. Krushevan's authority, in the eyes of his readers, was to a certain degree supported by the open patronage of the chief bureau of the press censorship. The effect was that the local administration was powerless to temper his anti-Semitic zeal. The bureau officials proceeded against him perfunctorily, but Krushevan's complaints against the local censorship found their ready ear. I myself heard Senator Z——, head of the bureau, express the opinion that Krushevan's tendencies and activity had a sound basis, and that from the government's point of view it was undesirable to suspend his publication. Moreover, the local resident could not help noting the government's favorable attitude towards those

who endeavored to develop the "Russian spirit," in patriotic garb, thus advancing their private interests.

The monstrous manifestations of this spirit, which called into existence later on the notorious leagues of the "True Russians," are universally known. Most people free from bias doubtless noticed that these "patriotic bodies" include many persons of dubious antecedents, of unenviable reputation, and utter lack of scruple. Hatred of the Jews is one of their chief articles of faith. Among those of this notorious class at Kishinev were Pronin and his companion, and these individuals openly boasted themselves the mainstay of the Russian government and the pioneers of Russian interests in a non-Slavic province. It cannot be doubted that such people did enjoy a certain degree of protection from a government that regarded their order as a "sound foundation," a patriotic bulwark of the autocracy and Russian nativism. It was equally true that in this crowd could be found any number who were ready to beat and plunder the Jews in the name of the Orthodox Church, in defence of the orthodox people, and for the glory of the autocratic Russian Czar.

The connection of these Russians with the police, especially with the secret service, already existed at the time I describe. The Kishinev police, as probably the police in other cities where the Jewish population predominated, noted the central tendency and its manifestations in their vicinity. The police, therefore, thought that a hostile attitude towards the Jews was a sort of government watchword; that Jews might be oppressed not out of "fear," but as a matter of "conscience." In connection with this, the conviction grew among the ignorant masses that hostile acts against the Jews could be undertaken with impunity. Things went so far that a legend appeared among the people that the Czar had ordered a three days' massacre of the Jews. Early on the morning of the third day of the Kishinev riot the police captain stopped at the Skulyan toll-gate a crowd of peasants who had come a long way with a business-like air, and in full consciousness of performing their duty, "to beat the Jews by the order of the Czar." I emphasize this characteristic of the Kishinev massacre. The predominant motive actuating the rioters was neither hatred nor revenge, but the enforcement of such measures as, in the opinion of some, promoted the aims

and intentions of the government, or as, in the opinion of others, were fully authorized; and, finally, as was explained by the philosophy of the common people, in fulfilment of the Czar's order.

Thus, in my opinion, the central government cannot shake off its moral responsibility for the slaughter and plunder that went on at Kishinev. I consider our government guilty of encouraging the narrow, nationalistic tendencies. It inaugurated a short-sighted policy, coarse in its methods, with regard to the frontier country and the non-Slavic population—a policy fostering among the several nationalities mutual distrust and hatred. Finally, the authorities connived at the militant jingoism. Thus are indirectly encouraged those barbarous instincts that vanish the moment the government openly announces that a pogrom founded on race hatred is a crime—a crime for which an administration that condones it in any way must be held responsible. This was demonstrated in the eighties by the famous circular of Count Tolstoi, the Minister of the Interior. Thus I regard the charge of connivance lodged against the government.

But can one fully exonerate the government of the suspicion that—at least through its secret agents—it did take a direct part in the massacres? And can it be maintained that the immediate cause of the massacres was of a natural, an accidental character, and not the execution of "an order"? During my service at Kishinev, and long after, I did not admit the idea that the pogrom policy had its active adherents and secret inspirers in government circles. The events of 1905–1906; the investigation made by Savich at Homel and by Senator Turau at Kiev; the activity of the "League of True Russians" and the exalted protection given that organization; the response of the Minister of the Interior to the interpellation of the Duma as to the secret printing-office; Makarov's report on the pogrom—activity of Komissarov and Budagovski, officers of the gendarmerie, etc.—all these helped to change my original views. Those features of the Kishinev pogrom which, thus far incomprehensible and concealed, had puzzled me, I began to refer to wires pulled by those higher up. It is possible that Lewendal, the head of the Kishinev secret police, to whom rumor attributed the immediate engineering of the April pogrom, played a double part; that, having prepared the pogrom with one hand, with the other he wrote to the Department of State Police the report, which I saw when

I looked up the case at the department, giving warning of possible disorders.

This supposition is all the more admissible because of the fact that Lewendal, as an officer of the gendarmerie on the one hand, was under the orders of the Department of State Police, while on the other he had to report to the commander of the local gendarmerie. This post was then occupied by the well-known General Wahl, formerly Prefect of Police of St. Petersburg. He enjoyed an unenviable reputation, was capable of anything to advance himself in the service, and hated the Jews, who had made him suffer at Wilna when he was governor there.

Neither did Lewendal inspire any confidence. Two matters in relation to this individual were peculiarly suspicious and interesting in connection with the present question. These were his intimacy with Pronin, and the fact that, though he was called to explain a shortage of government money after his resignation, his career was not hurt by his failure to clear himself of the charges against him. He received, on the contrary, a good position in the bureau of the Governor-General of Kiev, Kleigel, who, like General Wahl, was a court dignitary of the type that combines military and police functions, and also, like General Wahl, had been Prefect at St. Petersburg.

One might finally look still higher for the backing and inspiration of the pogrom policy. Kropotkin's memoirs (page 399) give, in this connection, a definite and very plausible explanation.

I do not care to pass my suppositions for facts. I only pointed out the way in which the anti-Semitism of Plehve, Minister of the Interior, possibly voiced by him as a mere matter of conviction, could be interpreted by his colleague Wahl, who was guided, in addition, by other extra-ministerial influences. These influences might well have suggested to him the desirability of trying the experiment of applying the pogrom policy. Moreover, I showed how this hint, rolling down the hierarchic incline of the gendarmerie corps, reached Lewendal in the guise of a *wish* on the part of the higher authorities, reached Pronin and Krushevan as a *call* for a patriotic exploit, and reached the Moldavian rioters as an *order* of the Czar. The pogrom trial lasted a very long time, and I did not continue in office at Kishinev until the end. To the best of my recollection, the number of men acquitted was approximately equal to the number of those con-

victed. The penalties meted out were, with rare exceptions, very lenient. The suits for damages were mostly left unsatisfied, as it was impossible to prove the extent of the damage done by any one of the defendants. However, the judicial trial allayed the excitement of the Jewish population considerably by giving them something like moral satisfaction. No reflection was cast on the court from Jewish sources.

Before proceeding to a character sketch of the prosecuting staff at Kishinev, I wish to mention that I lived and parted with the members of the Kishinev judiciary on excellent terms; that there was not a single exception to this, leaving out of account one amusing incident, which I will cite here as a cheerful reminiscence of how I was unwittingly guilty of contempt of court. I had two or three guests at dinner. Our dinners were usually quite simple, but on this occasion I had the idea of giving a more formal dinner to the visiting members of the Court of General Sessions and also to the local court. Wishing to avoid the usual dishes that had palled on everybody long ago (the everlasting sturgeon and turkey of all fashionable dinners at Kishinev), I availed myself of a very choice ham shipped from Tambov, and included it in the menu of the seven courses—this to the great delight of Davydov, a native of the province where, according to the poet Schumacher, "dwell Kurdukova's descendants (the Kirgiz), and tiny grunters are raised." Dinner passed with great animation, and was seemingly a success in every respect. The next day the members of the court informally discussed, in the consulting-room of the court, the reception given by the Governor the day before, and one of them incidentally remarked that the Governor, by serving ham to the guests, thereby expressed his contempt for the judiciary. Davydov was surprised, and began to argue that the ham was excellent. "Excellent, of course," retorted the critic; "I ate three slices. But, for all that, it is impossible to serve pork at a formal dinner." The stern guardian of the dignity of the court remained alone in his opinion, the rest ridiculing him outright, and Davydov told me the story on the same day.

The staff of the Prosecuting Attorney of Bessarabia was a most respectable one. At the head of it stood the Prosecuting Attorney, V. N. Goremykin, a graduate of the Lyceum, nephew of I. L. Goremykin, formerly Minister of the Interior and sub-

sequently Prime-Minister during the first Duma. With V. N. Goremykin I became very intimate. We worked together very cordially, and often met to confer on questions in which the Governor and the prosecuting attorney have some points in common. I do not know whether we exchanged three documents during our common service, but then it was seldom that three days passed without our discussing some service question that not infrequently had but little to do with the business of the attorney. Goremykin became well posted on Bessarabian matters before I did, and was constantly informed, both by his colleagues and by the judges of instruction, of what happened in the districts. By placing at my disposal this special knowledge, he enabled me to verify the police reports, and to watch, to some extent, the conduct of my subordinate district officials.

It is an imprudent, although traditional, policy of governors to assume an attitude of cold reserve towards the judiciary. Of all the representatives of the different departments scattered over the districts of a province, it is generally the judges, assistant district attorneys, and judges of instruction who are in closest touch with life. Moreover, owing to their periodical transfers in the service, they do not stagnate, nor sink into the slime of petty interests, as do many naturally intelligent and gifted men, who thus degenerate into the droll types peculiar to a district town. I therefore always endeavored to establish confidential, business-like relations with the members of the district judiciary. I was pleased when they called at my house during their stay in the capital of the province, and always considered attentively both their opinions and the aspect in which they presented events of interest to me in the life of the district.

I had in the local attorney a very valuable adviser in all questions affecting the Jews, owing to the fact that he maintained a perfectly impartial attitude towards them, free from fear or prejudices, and at the same time understood the tactical blunder of showing an open philo-Semitism. He was not, properly speaking, a judophile, but simply an intelligent and educated man, free from animosity and intolerance towards all non-Russian nationalities. But, as is well known, with us it is just these qualities which give one the name of a judophile. V. N. Goremykin did not escape the unpleasant effects of his impartial and strictly lawful attitude towards Jews. I had the pleasure

of seeing his name coupled with mine more than once in certain Russian publications, in which we gained the title of "Jewish dad," or "Schabbes Goi."

The preliminary inquest held in the pogrom case and the indictment drawn up by Goremykin resulted in a number of charges and complaints of the prosecuting attorney's partiality towards the Jews. Not only the notorious, small-calibered, "patriotic" press, but even the *Novoye Vremya*, expressed indignation at the fact that not a single Jew was indicted in the pogrom case. Goremykin had even to furnish to his superiors an explanation of this matter. Yet, indeed, while forty-two Jews were killed during the pogrom, and none but Jewish property was looted, of the Christians only one boy perished, and he by a stray bullet. The Jewish defence, as was established by the inquest, was nothing more than that they were congregating in several places and arming themselves with sticks that injured nobody, and did nothing to hinder the success of the rioters. Not a single complaint of violence committed by Jews reached either the police or the prosecuting attorney. Still, our attorney did not escape the reproach of having conducted the preliminary inquest with partiality and one-sidedness.

Soon after I had left Bessarabia, Goremykin began to feel annoyed at the unjust treatment accorded him by the local administration, at the steady, though unsuccessful, carping and fault-finding and complaints about his actions, and he was afterwards transferred to Tiflis to assume the office of Assistant Prosecuting Attorney of the Court of Appeals.

VII

The clergy—Armenian Church property—Property of foreign monasteries—Viticultural schools—The custom-house—The Balsh Asylum.

I CAME but little in contact with the clergy of Bessarabia. The bishop at the head of the Kishinev diocese of 1903 was the type of an ordinary official of the ministry of public worship. He seemed to have none of the qualities of a spiritual pastor and minister of the Gospel. It was hard to find a topic of interest on which to speak with him, so that our conversation when exchanging a call was usually constrained. I remember only two or three topics that constantly preoccupied his grace. The first was his complaint against the hot climate of Bessarabia, and the second was the practice of the local Orthodox monasteries of allowing the monks to take meals according to the Greek regulations—that is, to eat meat. In consequence of this, the refectory table, whenever the bishop paid a visit to the monastery, was set out with roast pig, turkey, and goose, which infinitely oppressed the Orthodox spirit of the strict abstainer. He, in his native province, had never witnessed such perversion of monastic life.

A financial question next preoccupied his grace most constantly, and for its solution he repeatedly applied to me. He was puzzled by the arrangement, which had been fixed by law, of paying out monthly salaries to all state functionaries on the 20th of each month. "How is that?" queried Father Jacob. "Suppose an official resigns before the 1st of the month, or dies, what is the government to do then? From whom will it recover the surplus? It creates great confusion in the account, and is a clear loss to the treasury. They do not do so in other countries, I suppose."

With Archbishop Nerses, head of the Armenian clergy, I had business of a more complicated nature. This arose out of

Plehve's scheme to confiscate all the property and capital of the Armenian-Gregorian Church, and to place them under the administration of the state. The subsequent imperial decree to this effect was to be carried out by the governors. This circumstance involved great difficulties, as the Armenian patriarch forbade his diocesan subordinates to submit to the demands of the civil authorities for the surrender of property and money. The Ministry of the Interior, on the other hand, spurred on the governors by sending detailed instructions as to the manner of confiscation. These instructions closed with the proposition to carry out the imperial order under any circumstances and not to stop short of extreme measures. The Ministry also suggested that in taking over Armenian property and money, such members of the local administration should be selected as were in no way connected, through ties of blood or otherwise, with the Armenian population. The commission, though hard and unpleasant, had to be carried out. Accordingly, I threw out feelers and mapped out a preliminary line of action. I found it necessary to resort to means that have often been tried and almost never failed—namely, to disregard entirely the Minister's instructions, and do just the contrary. A——, an Armenian, and the husband of an Armenian woman, was very influential with the local clergy, and occupied a prominent position in the local administration. I invited him to my house, and asked him to be my go-between in taking over, in the name of the Russian government, all the Church property subject to surrender. To obtain his consent, I found it necessary to treat the question of executing the imperial order from a practical stand-point, not insisting upon the equity or legality of the measure. I made it plain that my anxiety was not confined solely to performing my official duty, but that I felt equally concerned about the consequences, unpleasant both to me and to the Armenian clergy, which might be the outcome of their actual stubborn resistance. I did not demand good-will and open submission, but insisted that the Armenian clergy afford me, in spite of their natural reluctance, an opportunity to confiscate everything needed.

Our farce began by my calling, in a few days, upon the archbishop, and expressing surprise that he had not gone to Odessa to consult physicians about some old disease of his. I left him only after he had fixed the day of his departure, without, how-

ever, introducing the subject of monastic property. After the archbishop had left, A——, accompanied by a clerk of my office, began making a tour of the Armenian Church institutions, where, accidentally, he always found the bursar at the open cash-box. My agents made a formal demand for the surrender of the cash-box and papers, which the bursar refused. Then my emissaries took the cash-book with the account just balanced in it, found the money and securities counted up and lying in good order, and right here discovered deeds, mortgages, and other documents of interest to them. This done, they made an entry in the book of the confiscation of all of the securities and money by imperial order. The bursar added his written protest against this violence, and thus certified to the correctness of the figures and the account of the documents described. Then the parties said good-bye to each other and returned to their homes.

Thus the measure, that in many places gave rise to serious collisions between the secular and spiritual authorities, was here carried out. The plan of confiscating Church property was devised by Plehve for the purpose of combating the Armenian revolutionary organizations. This aroused so much feeling among the Armenians, and proved so unsuccessful, that soon after Plehve's death the imperial order was rescinded and the property returned where it belonged.

I kept on friendly terms with Nerses, but we never afterwards referred to the violence I used in regard to the property of the Armenian clergy which had been intrusted to his keeping.

Outside of the property of the Armenian-Gregorian Church there are in Bessarabia vast possessions belonging to foreign monasteries dedicated to the worship of the Holy Sepulchre. These consist of land tracts and whole estates bequeathed to the monasteries. Moldavian princes and magnates would so grant these for the saying of mass, as well as for charitable and educational purposes. These lands, aggregating, if I am not in error, two hundred thousand desyatins, the Russian government took out of the hands of foreign monks and passed over to a special Bessarabian land-office, organized under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Agriculture and State Domains to administer the estates of foreign ecclesiastical endowments. Two parts of the income of these estates went to the foreign beneficiaries; two were laid aside for carrying out the will of the testator in Bessarabia,

where the estates were located, as a fund from which the institutions of the local Zemstvo received subventions for building schools and hospitals; and the one remaining part covered the expenses of the central and local administrations. Owing to the rapid rise in land rent and comparatively efficient management of the estates, the above governmental measure proved in some respects successful. The monasteries abroad began to get a greater income out of their two-fifths share than they had heretofore from the whole. The local Zemstvo found an inexhaustible source from which to draw subsidies for enlarging its activities, while an annually growing fund, consisting of the yearly surplus of the last fifth, was accumulating at the Ministry.

Although these estates, under the government's care, now gave far greater returns, nevertheless, the organization of the local management as to details was far from perfect. Deals of quite a dubious nature were constantly hovering around these two hundred thousand desyatins. The staff of local employés was constantly changing. Not all these auditors, agriculturists, controllers, secretaries, overseers, and foresters were in good standing in Bessarabia. In my time the heads of the land-office were changed three times within the space of a year and a half, and one of them was dismissed for the many suspicious and peculiar methods used by him in managing the estates, as revealed by Privy Councillor Pisarev's audit. Not being familiar with the case in all its details, I shall cite only two instances well known to me. In one case, relating to the timber business of the estates, it was found that while fuel wood was selling at over thirty rubles per cubic sazhen[1] at Kishinev, the relatives and friends of the land-office employés received it at eighteen rubles. The second case known to me was of a far more serious nature. Pisarev drew my attention to it, and I verified his remarks by documentary evidence.

The monastery lands were leased to the highest bidder. The bidders, neighboring peasants, had lately advanced lease rates considerably—from sixteen to twenty rubles a desyatin per year. The terms of lease were quite strict, empowering the land-office, in case lease rent became overdue, to dispossess the tenant and lease the estate to another person. Moreover, the dispossessed

[1] A sazhen equals seven English feet.

tenant was held responsible for keeping up the original lease rate by compensating the land-office in case the second rate was lower, and this for the full remaining time of the lease. The auditor found that the office, in a number of consecutive cases, had openly allowed the tenants to neglect prompt payment of rent. The land-office did not remind the tenants that payment was due, nor did it send them notices that their extension time had begun. In one case the office even declined to accept payment on the ground that it was offered on a holiday. With the expiration of the period for the extension-time payment, the officials developed an unusual activity. In the course of two or three days they made a new agreement, without bids, with some speculator, at a considerable discount. The difference in payment was annually collected from the original peasant leaseholders. The latter, however, pressed for land, continued to pay the original amount in rent—this time not to the land-office, but to the lessee. Owing to this ingenious contrivance, the owners lost nothing, while the stewards got a fat rake-off.

It would be interesting to trace the destiny of the capital accumulating at the Ministry of Agriculture and State Domains in the form of surplus from the expenses of running the monastery estates. If the capital did not run dry in the process of subsidizing the personnel of the main land-office, this fact must add largely to the credit of the Minister of Agriculture. I guarantee that in the Ministry of the Interior they would know how properly to account for these sums.

Speaking of the institutions of the Ministry of Agriculture, it would be proper to mention the Bessarabian School of Viticulture, located three versts from Kishinev, splendidly equipped by the government at great cost. The faculty, in addition to the rector, was composed of an instructor in religion, who was also prior of the school chapel; of instructors in chemistry, biology, physics, agriculture, fruit-growing, and the science of mechanics. There were, besides, a vine-dresser, wine-maker, two laboratory assistants (one in the experimental station and one in the chemical laboratory), a book-keeper, a secretary, a physician, a hospital steward, and a large staff of employés of lower grade. But I did not see any pupils. Even admitting that I was exaggerating somewhat, accepting the information given me by the director during my visit to the school, the ratio

of pupils to employés was eight to thirty. It is curious that Yermolov, Minister of Agriculture, blamed me, above all others, for the unsatisfactory organization of the ministerial school when I communicated to him my impression that the institution was absolutely useless. "It is your own fault," he said, "since you refuse to admit Hebrews. Allow them to study wine-growing, and then the school will be filled at once." My subsequent acquaintance with the nursery and orchard of the Jewish Colonization Society, of which I will tell in good time, completely confirmed Yermolov's conclusions.

Wine-growing in Bessarabia, yielding annually three million two hundred and forty thousand gallons, suffered from a lack of adequate special training and scarcity of trained and experienced wine-growers and vine-dressers. Yet add to this disadvantage the spread of phylloxera (a plague which the local Zemstvo was, in fact, fighting energetically and quite successfully), the combined evils were not quite so bad for the industry as the noxious activity of the Excise Office. This branch of the internal revenue service, aided by special legislation, successfully killed the small tobacco-growers of the province, and was now, with an amount of zeal worthy of a better cause, busy undermining wine culture in Bessarabia.

The local excise bureau naturally strove, as its official duty required, to multiply the number of places for the sale and consumption of whiskey belonging to the government's monopoly, and thus competed with the producers of grape wine. The excisemen, by pushing the sale of the monopoly article, had only to offer the heavy, dull hallucinations that our whiskey arouses for the sense of gentle hilarity afforded by the product of the grape. Naturally, therefore, they looked upon the low price of wine as a menace to their interests. This advantage of price that wine had over whiskey was due to the fact that as a product of agriculture it was not only exempt from excise, but was sold by the vineyard owner without a license. It is against this last advantage of the vineyard owners that the excisemen directed all their efforts. This crusade against the vineyard owners, owing to the peculiar conditions of Bessarabia, was carried on under the banner of anti-Semitism. The fiscal interests, clashing with those of the local wine-growers, came across the Jews. Owing to this fact the activity of the excise officials

assumed henceforth the aspect of fighting the evil usually dubbed "Jewish shiftiness."

Vineyard owners are allowed to carry on the sale of wine from their own vineyards without license or excise tax, and in this case the premises are exempt from any tax. It was discovered that Jews to a considerable number had equipped themselves with a score or two of grape-vines, planted them on a piece of land a few sazhens in area, located in cities or towns or on the few estates acquired by Jews under the old law, thus becoming, technically, owners of vineyards. Having secured a certificate from some executive board to the effect that the vineyard was his own, the vine owner then quietly conducted the sale of wine on his premises. Though this wine was bought by him in the market, yet, since wine cannot be labelled or stamped, it turned out that one grape-vine yielded the Jew more wine in Bessarabia than any vine had ever yielded even in the Promised Land, where, according to the Bible, one cluster taxed the strength of two men in carrying it. In spite of all the efforts of the Excise Office to put a stop to such open violation of the sense and purpose of the law favorable to wine-growers, it could not prohibit the sale of wine by Jews; for, as one sees, they acted, technically, entirely within the law. Then the attack began at the other end. An extensive investigation was started for the purpose of proving the imperative need of a restrictive interpretation of the rights granted to the wine-growers by the law. A mass of facts and figures was collected as proof of the assumption that the legislator, in his solicitude for the welfare of agriculture, had been cruelly deceived, and that the law of exemption only encouraged Jewish exploitation. Armed with a vast accumulation of material, the Excise Office instituted proceedings in the lower courts, and finally appealed to the Senate in one case, unimportant in itself, but involving an important principle in selling wine from the owner's vineyard, and secured the ruling of the Senate to the effect that "though vineyard owners may, without paying any tax, sell wine on their own premises, it is necessary that these premises be located near their vineyards." The Excise Office now wielded the much-longed-for weapon. The free sale of wine would have been stopped all over Bessarabia if the new ruling of the Senate had been everywhere put into practice. But the cure proved more

dangerous than the disease itself. The provincial administration, led by considerations of great moment, entered on this occasion into a contest with the Excise Office. The sense of the Senate's innovation is easy to understand. The conditions peculiar to wine-growing are such that only land otherwise unfit for cultivation is given over to vineries — hillocks, sunny uplands, stony patches, and the like. These are scattered all over the land lot of the owner. His dwelling is very rarely located next to his vineyard — so rarely, indeed, that in my counter-petition to the Minister of Finance, I cited in all only seventy such dwellings to every thousand holdings. Hence it is clear that the Senate's decision, really aimed at Jewish subterfuge, unintentionally nullified a law of importance to the prosperity of a whole section of the country. What is of more interest in this case is the fact that the new departure of the Excise Office hit anybody but the Jews, who stock in their vines mostly about their houses. The real vineyard owners, on the contrary, were caught unawares by this policy. They had now the alternative of either building a house near each scrap of their vineyard, or destroying their vineyards and planting new ones around their houses.

This last circumstance nerved me to my task, and, ignoring in advance any reproaches of my patronizing the Jews, I wrote and wired to the Minister of Finance, and even inserted in my report to the Emperor, a complaint of the ruinous effect of the new decision on the region. As a result, the ruling, which would have amounted to the final triumph of whiskey over wine, was first postponed in enforcement, and then annulled.

I will conclude my notes on the peculiar workings of Bessarabian institutions that seem to me worthy of mention by a description of one charitable endowment of which I, as Governor, was ex-officio chairman. I shall, by-the-way, have a respite from the everlasting appearance of Jews in my description.

The Kishinev Home for Orphan Girls was located in a handsome, spacious structure. Seventy girls of various ages were being brought up there under the auspices of a board, on which, besides myself, the chief functionaries of the capital were members. The board met at rare intervals, and all its duties were performed by X——, director of the home. He called it his own creation and child, and for a whole year threw dust into

my eyes by his fussy bragging and assurances that "as long as Peter Petrovich was at the helm, the authorities may safely sleep." I was already on the point, in the fall of 1904, of sending to St. Petersburg a long memorial, composed by X——, painting his fruitful activity in iridescent colors, and earnestly praying for the rank of Actual State Councillor. My wife, however, who had charge of a similar home in Moscow, drew my attention to the fact that it cost more than three hundred rubles a year to maintain one pupil, rent free, and the girls were fit for nothing after graduation, while in Moscow, under similar conditions, it cost but one hundred and forty rubles, and the results were better.

Among our intimate acquaintances the impression prevailed that the management of the home was not free from taint, that the expenses might be cut down by some five thousand rubles a year. From other sources I also convinced myself of the truth of the allegations as to the practical worthlessness of the training the pupils received. Against my will, I had to look closely into the matter and audit the books of the home. A two days' stay at the home revealed to me that employés were paid a good deal less than the salaries they acknowledged by receipt, and especially that the contributions given by local philanthropic merchants were never entered in the books. Flour, coal, fuel-wood, dress, linen, and footwear, which I had more than once gratefully acknowledged, were not entered at all in the perfectly blank contribution-book. These articles were accurately entered in the purchase-book—not at once, but from time to time, as the needs of the home demanded. In short, even though public opinion overstated the matter when by an approximate computation it reported five thousand rubles as the amount assigned to loss and miscalculation, the presence of irregularities was beyond a doubt. It was very unpleasant for me to take up the case, as the X——s were socially prominent; after the Krupenskis, they were the largest family. I had to expect quarrels and affronts, and it would seem that the case could not be kept out of court. However, I decided to call a meeting of the board and report my findings. At that time I was already preparing to leave Kishinev, and so I felt extremely unwilling to stir up this mess; but I did not think I had any right to act otherwise.

I explained to the board in full session. I gave my opinion of

the irregularities that were allowed to exist at the home, without naming or accusing any one. I cited the above facts, and asked the board for a minute investigation of the affairs of the home. The director flushed with anger and announced his resignation. He tried to explain the apparent omissions partly as oversight, partly as due to defective book-keeping. Owing to this, contributions supposedly appeared neither as income nor as expense, but were supplementary to the amount entered in the books as expenditures for the maintenance of the home. This improbable explanation did not convince any one, although all due courtesy was accorded the director.

The board postponed its final discussion, and an investigation of the home's affairs and an auditing of the books were ordered. I myself wrote out my report, and supplemented with it the minutes of the meeting.

VIII

Kishinev society—Customs and habits.

GENERAL KAULBARS, successor to the late Count Musin-Pushkin as Governor-General of Odessa, once at my house told how, twenty-seven years before, he had been invited to dine at that same house by Shebeko, the then Governor. Driving up to the Governor's house, he saw through the lighted windows the guests already seated at table. His victoria had stuck in the mud right before the Governor's house, but Kaulbars, the dashing officer of the capital, could not bring himself to get out of his vehicle and plunge into the mire in all the glory of his cavalry top-boots and riding-breeches. He had to wait until a passing cart, drawn by two oxen, towed him to the Governor's porch. Thus he entered towards the end of the dinner.

Kishinev since that time has changed beyond recognition. Alexander Street, where is located the house that once gave shelter to Alexander II. during the Turkish War, and where Kaulbars was so unfortunate with his dinner engagement, has changed from an outskirt to a central street. In twenty-five years a new town sprang up to the southwest, with elegant buildings and straight streets bordered by poplars and white acacias. The Noblemen's Boarding-school, the house of Princess Vyazemski, the Second Girls' High School, the Zemstvo Museum, the new building of the Provincial Board, the Technical High School, and the First Boys' High School would have made no unfavorable impression even in the streets of St. Petersburg. The wide sidewalks were kept in good order, and the roadway was paved with slabs. The sidewalks along the main Alexander Prospect were so wide that the street-cars ran, not on the roadway, but along the edge of the promenade. Two theatres, one in the Pushkin Auditorium, the other in the Noblemen's Club, offered stage facilities not only to a perma-

nent dramatic stock company, but also to starring actors from Odessa and elsewhere, who never missed us on their tours through southwest Russia.

Kishinev had a population of one hundred and forty thousand, six government and six private intermediate schools, two theatres and several club-houses, a large municipal park with two restaurants and special grounds with an out-door theatre fitted up as a music-hall. All this shows that Kishinev was a city of no mean rank, and, compared with the provincial modesty of Tambov, to me it seemed even more important. Kishinev lacked but one thing to give it perfect beauty and make its summer heat and dust tolerable to those who had to stay in town, denying themselves the pure air and breezes of the sea-shore or the mountain woods, and this was an adequate water-supply. The Byk River, as mentioned before, had no water at all, while the springs feeding the city's water-works supplied about one hundred and fifty thousand vedros (405,000 gallons) a day—that is, a little more than one vedro (2.7 gallons) per head of population for drinking, washing, and for use in case of fire.

I can easily stand heat, and so suffered but little. On my way to the government offices I would frequently be walking along deserted streets at 2 P.M. The daring, active, pedestrian Governor, braving sunstroke, attending to business at such an unpropitious hour, when Kishinev ladies in undress were refreshing themselves with jelly and ice-water, was an object of wonder to the fair gazers from behind closed shutters. Yet a kind of affectionate regard for the place one lives and works in, and that peculiar tendency in governors to make everything their business, more than once directed my attention to the question of the Kishinev water-supply. I used to sit down at a point near the family vault of the Katarzhi, which afforded an admirable view over the city, bathed in golden dust, or take a ramble to Dubin Square, another favorite haunt of mine, whence the outlines of the Carpathian Mountains may be seen looming in the distance, and at such times I would muse in a sentimental, Manilov-like mood of how useful it would be to convey water to Kishinev from the Dniester, eighteen versts away, and thus transform the city. What a pleasure it would be to possess great wealth! I could then contribute to the municipality as a memorial to my governorship two million rubles, the necessary

amount for the Dniester water-works. But for "lack of an adequate surplus fund," as the official phrase has it, I had to confine my solicitude for the city's water-supply within more modest bounds.

It was the custom of the local fire department, as ordered by the Chief of Police, to draw up in line on hot summer days before the Governor's mansion, and copiously flush its roof, walls, flower-beds, and garden, making the air around refreshing, cool, balmy, and pure. I had this fire drill done away with. Such economy of the city's water-supply was so favorably received by all that there was no reason to regret having dispensed with this comfort.

I was at first somewhat surprised by the oddities of Kishinev society. I constantly fought against such as were manifest in their relations with the Governor. By the close of my stay in Bessarabia I was largely instrumental in instilling into the minds of Kishinev society the simple idea that the Governor, outside of his official capacity, may come and go like any common mortal. According to Kishinev convention, I was to go out exclusively in a carriage, escorted by a mounted guard, with the Chief of Police in the van. To walk or to go out shopping was on my part a grave breach of etiquette. Kishinevites, accustomed to a succession of military governors, at first stared in surprise at the plainness of my attire. My wife was equally censured because, ignorant of local customs, she visited the stores, selected the goods, and paid for them. It turned out that a lady must, in self-respect, drive up to a store, and have the salesmen take out samples of goods to her carriage. The goods thus ordered she must have delivered at her residence. It seems that fashion condemned cash on delivery, or, at any rate, ruled that it was far more in keeping with propriety not to make delivery payments or to be over-hasty in payments.

The reception of the Governor and his wife at a Kishinev house was an elaborate function.

General Konstantinovich, for a long time Raaben's predecessor as Governor of Bessarabia, was a man of small means, with simple tastes and habits. The Konstantinoviches, having become acquainted with the family of a rich land-owner residing at Kishinev, called one evening at their residence, in Russian fashion, to have a chat over a cup of tea. The surprised foot-

man showed them into the drawing-room, and then came a hustle and bustle along the corridors, a slamming of doors and rustling of dresses. Finally the host and hostess, delightedly surprised and in full evening attire, appeared, in company with their sons, who were in full dress. An hour later a host of guests, hurriedly invited, began to assemble. By the time the punctual Konstantinovich began to think of taking leave, with the idea of retiring, there came a clatter of table-ware, and a number of club attendants began setting the table for the formal supper ordered from the club.

How delightful it would be to dine with the cheerful, sunny Bessarabian on terms of companionship, and how tedious the dinners are when given for the Governor as such! Then, again, the Governor's stomach is conceived as "pieced together of seven sheepskins," as the Russian adage has it of the parson's. The Governor has to sit by himself in the seat of honor. Though with excellent wine in front, one must keep in mind that between the drinks there is the inevitable responding toast to the florid welcome of the Governor. Finally, we must not forget the obligation of receiving company in return, for fear of passing for a miser or a man devoid of affability.

I tried in all ways to infuse into Bessarabian splendor some of the simplicity peculiar to Kaluga. I avoided, as far as possible, elaborate entertainments, and endeavored to show that I cared more for society than for edibles. I laid stress on Bessarabian wines, really excellent at home, and emphatically declared that I did not drink any imported wines, as I considered them inferior in all respects. The vanity natural to the natives of the wine belt was flattered by this recognition of the high qualities of their home product. This fact helped me to banish imported wines from dinners where I was leading guest. On festive occasions, when champagne was served, I filled my bumper with Bessarabian wine just the same, and that without pretence, as I really cannot stand champagne.

But my preference for native wines brought about results totally unexpected. I had but to say a word in praise of somebody's native wine, and the next day a butler appeared, delivering, on behalf of his flattered master, an assortment of bottled wines, frequently of venerable age, with a polite note inviting me to try his specimens of Bessarabian viticulture. I could not

possibly decline the offer, nor could I reciprocate by presents. I decided, therefore, that it was best not to show any undue fastidiousness with regard to such hearty gifts. I had a choice assortment of wines, purchased from private cellars, stored in my excellent cellar communicating with my dining-room. I classified the wines myself and catalogued them. Soon I had a pretty good amateur wine-cellar, from which we took eight bottles for our daily consumption. Good Bessarabian wines are not on sale. This is due to the fact that the vineyard owners usually sell all their crops in the crude state two months after the vintage, retaining a quantity in barrels, which they bottle for themselves but never put on sale. Such privately stored wine can be bought only of acquaintances, and with great difficulty at that. Bessarabians consider it quite improper to sell wine intended for one's own use, and endeavor to distribute as gifts all the wine they cannot themselves consume.

The general character of Kishinev society found its most conspicuous reflection in the most prominent local club, the Noblemen's Club, which did not resemble the usual provincial club of the cities familiar to me. The club-rooms were always full. The habitués of the club would gather around the card-tables as early as 2 P.M. in winter, not leaving until 3 or 4 A.M.; in summer, not until 6 or 7 A.M. Its prosperity could be gathered from the fact that the club appropriated during my stay at Kishinev, for the repair of the club kitchen, thirty-six thousand rubles; and a ten-per-cent. "kitty," established during the war for the benefit of the Red Cross, footed up a thousand rubles a month. Card-playing at Kishinev was very brisk, and the games were of a kind to oblige me to use circumspectly my privilege of honorary membership. I visited the club very rarely, so as not to give the appearance of openly patronizing games of chance. The discouragement of gambling, however, I left entirely to the Chief of Police.

Bessarabians are remarkable for their proneness to go beyond their incomes and to draw upon their capital. They manifest this propensity in card-playing. They regard the winning or losing of a whole fortune in a season as a mere bagatelle. B——, one of the local justices of the peace, a man not at all wealthy, won at the Kishinev Club, in the course of two weeks, sixty thousand rubles, and then gradually lost the whole sum within two

months. Many a player lost his all at cards and disappeared from the social horizon.

Among the club members there were also professionals, to put it mildly. One of them, as I was told, never removed his gloves except at cards, in order to keep his finger-tips sensitive while dealing.

I cannot omit to mention that Kishinev society was unduly tolerant towards many of its members. Persons notorious for their blasted reputations were everywhere received on terms of perfect social equality.

The impulsiveness of the southern Bessarabian expressed itself, among other ways, in the frequency with which the relations between friends and acquaintances changed their character. It happened many a time that people whom I supposed to be friends were put, through me, in an awkward position. For example, they were carefully seated next to each other at the table, and then it turned out that they had not been on speaking terms for over a week! Conversely, the fact that certain persons had fallen out might be still fresh in your memory, when, behold! they were friends again. The declaration of war and the conclusion of peace followed each other so rapidly that I had positively no time to keep account of the changing moods, and was therefore compelled, before inviting guests, ladies or gentlemen, to inquire of omniscient persons concerning the state of the social barometer. Offences and quarrels luckily prove to be mere trifles, involving, during the greater part of the year, no serious consequences. But when the summer heat jumped up to 46° R. (103.5° Fahr.) in the sun, a mere trifle would bring about serious consequences. The general nerve tension at this time reached its maximum, and with different people diversely manifested itself. Vice-Governor Block once during the summer lost self-control to such an extent that he wanted to hand in his resignation. It seemed to him that he was incapable of work; that everything he did was wrong; that bribery and abuses reigned supreme, and that both of us labored in vain. He seemed to have a misgiving of some catastrophe, the universal collapse of everything that was honest, good, and useful. He did not sleep nights, and wept hysterically. Others, instead of becoming apathetic, were a prey to irritability, and lost their self-control. Thus, in July, 1903, a roundsman, in answer to a

simple remark made by his superior, struck the latter in the face, and landed in court. At the restaurant tables of the city park people hurled bottles at one another. Sometimes the consequences were more serious. Once during a hot spell the local notary public shot himself on a bench in the city park, and a young lady at dinner with two gentlemen wounded one of them by firing at him with a revolver she drew out of her neighbor's pocket.

All the above cases clustered around the period of exceptional summer heat. With the passing of the heat everything assumed its normal course, and only one death case and two cases in court reminded one of the power manifested by the forces of nature in their action upon the spirit of man.

IX

Progress to Korneshty—Opposition of the rezeshi—Restoration of order —Thoughts on the allaying of popular excitement—Another case of peasant opposition to the legal demands of the authorities.

WE must now leave Kishinev and give some space to the impressions obtained during my trips through the province.

The first of these is still fresh in my memory. It was undertaken by me unexpectedly, *nolens volens*, and accompanied by a platoon of soldiers.

In the beginning of June, 1903, about two weeks after I had taken office as Governor of Bessarabia, I received a telegram from the Byeltzy County Marshal, informing me that the people of the village of Korneshty, Byeltzy County, had revolted, and not only had resisted the officers who were attaching their property for indebtedness to the private proprietor, Anush, but had taken back everything that had been attached the preceding day. Moreover, as the County Marshal informed me, the Sheriff had been beaten, and he, the Marshal, together with other police officers, had retreated with great difficulty to the public hall, where they were being besieged. The telegram closed with a request for troops. Similar despatches had been received by the Chief of the Gendarmerie and by the District Attorney.

There was no time to ponder, and I decided to go in person to the scene of action; and as the matter seemed to be a serious one, I took along a platoon of soldiers and two officers.

Knowing nothing of the affair that had resulted in the attachment of the property of the Korneshty rezeshi,[1] not understanding the Moldavian language, which alone they spoke, and

[1] The rezeshi are Moldavian small farmers, who have always tilled their own land, as contrasted with the "Czarans," who received their holdings by charter allotment from the land they farmed for the great estate owners, in the same way as the Russian serfs received their allotments.

for the first time during my career having had recourse to the aid of military force, I did not feel very calm, and was afraid of making some blunders. In this matter the sense of responsibility and danger associated with the task of bringing four hundred excited men, lost to all sense of self-control, to submit to the law, had excited the feeling incidental to the approach of peril.

I decided to act openly, to put myself forward, and to keep the soldiers as a reserve, to be called upon only in the event of violence on the part of the rezeshi.

With the Attorney-General and Colonel Charnoluski, I took the morning train, and after a two hours' ride arrived at the Korneshty station, where the local Zemstvo deputy and the County Prefect were awaiting us. According to them, the rezeshi were in an unruly spirit, and determined not to yield to the government officials under any circumstances.

The distance from the station to the village was two versts. When the soldiers, in column formation with fixed bayonets, started for the village, the clamors of women and the cries of children were heard from the neighboring hillocks. It appears they had watched from afar the arrival of the train. Soon we saw them running in disorder towards their houses. The first impression was very gloomy. As soon as the platoon entered the village I stationed them in a few neighboring barns, ordered the officers to direct preparations for dinner, and allowed the sergeant-major some tea and sugar, brought from Kishinev, to make the portions better. So far we did not see a single peasant; life in the part of the village we occupied seemed to have died out.

Having left the soldiers on the spot, I went with my escort through the crooked lanes of Korneshty to the village centre, *Kaza di obshcha* (town-hall). Not far from this kaza, about a hundred paces, speechless and motionless, stood a gloomy crowd of four hundred men—the entire male population of the village.

Before commencing my conference with them, I placed myself at the entrance of the hall in view of all, and began to study the details of the case, which, happily, Counsellor Anush had brought in the shape of duplicates of the principal documents bearing thereupon.

It was apparent that, by a decision of the courts, delivered six

years before, the rezeshi were obliged to pay Anush twenty thousand rubles for a forest they had acquired. The owner first allowed them the court fees and the interest for the time past, and afterwards entered into a new agreement with them, by which they had to pay only half of the amount due, but to pay it at once. Not having received a kopeck, he secured a writ of attachment. A thousand out of one thousand three hundred desyatins of the rezeshis' land had been sold at auction in the Supreme Court to a speculator.

The rezeshi, seeing that they were losing almost all of their property, protested, and appealed to the Court of Appeals. This nullified the sale. The purchaser, in his turn, appealed to the Senate, and Anush's attorney, not waiting for the end of the suit, and having obtained a judicial writ, started, through the Sheriff, the sale of the movables of the debtors.

The rezeshi, excited by the slow legal procedure, and in doubt whether the Senate would sustain the Court of Appeals, regarded the action of the Sheriff as unlawful, as a second execution of the same debt. And, as it often happens, the height of indignation was reached, not at the most important occasion—the sale of their land for almost nothing—but on the attachment of their cows and clothes.

It was obligatory for me to exact the money according to the writ. On the other hand, I was certain that the Senate would not regard the sale as lawful and that the rezeshi would not be ruined. With this in mind I went to the meeting, not permitting any of the officials to escort me.

On approaching the crowd and greeting them, I noticed in the mood of the rezeshi some disagreeable symptoms: their faces were gloomy, and only those in the first rows responded to my salutation, and this they did very unwillingly.

When I asked what had happened to them yesterday that they decided to resist the officers of the law, a deafening uproar arose in which not a single word could be distinguished, the more so that the few Russian words were lost in the more common Moldavian.

I soon found myself in the centre of the crowd, surrounded as if by a wide living ring. Those standing in the rear pushed those in front, who thronged so closely that I could hardly move.

Before me I saw only a few pale faces with glowing eyes and

convulsively quivering lips; those were the leaders, most excited, who, conscious of the responsibility they bore before the crowd they led, and moved, perhaps, by fear for their fate, were losing their tempers more and more.

There was no time to be lost; to avoid dangerous consequences I must act at once. I took a cigar from my pocket, and, addressing myself to one of the most desperate clamorers, I asked for a light. He stood meditating awhile, but then turned to his neighbors for matches, and, after a few unsuccessful trials to light them, offered me a burning one, having previously pushed aside some crowding neighbors.

Lighting my cigar, I turned to another of the leaders whom I had noticed and asked him for a chair. A few minutes passed before he brought it. The crowd was thus pushed aside and its attention attracted to new thoughts; the shouts quieted down; the circle around the centre widened out, and I had some freedom of motion. When the chair was brought I put it in front of me, and, leaning over its back, asked for two persons to translate my words. The interpreters were found, and I expressed it as my first wish that the crowd keep silent and allow me to explain to them the purpose of my coming there. I must mention, by-the-way, that at this time I noticed at my side the District Attorney and the Chief of the Gendarmerie, Colonel Charnoluski, who, as I presume, being uneasy about me, did not wish to remain unconcerned spectators of the scene.

I did not start my speech with what the rezeshi expected. Aiming gradually to gain their full attention and to call forth no replies at all, I talked to them about the sold land, about the decision of the Court of Appeals which annulled the sale, and about my helplessness in assisting them in their need in case the Senate recognized the rights of the man on their land, which land he had bought for almost nothing. Having compared the actual value of the thousand desyatins of sold land (about three hundred thousand rubles) with the price they had received for it (twelve thousand rubles), I began strongly to censure the rezeshi, and especially their counsellors and leaders, for their carelessness and negligence in managing not only their own business, but that of their offspring.

Having exhausted all my censure, and even all the derision of which I was capable, I began to explain to them that the Gov-

ernor was responsible to the Emperor for deeds that would lead four hundred peasant families to ruin, and that I could not allow the rezeshi to lose everything and to become beggars through the stubbornness and folly of their agents; and therefore, I told them, I would notify the Senate at once of the state of affairs, and if the Senate should decide against them I would report to his Majesty about the inexcusable waste of the rezeshi, and the need of the final revision of the case by his Majesty in the interests of their wives and children.

The more reproaches I made the brighter their faces became, and soon it was possible to proceed to the matter of enforcing the execution.

Without referring to the disorders of the day before, I expressed my conviction to the rezeshi that not alone was it legal, but that the execution of the ten thousand rubles had to be immediately enforced. The Sheriff, I told them, had the writ on which payment must follow without delay, and that it was my duty to see that the execution be enforced promptly and without any hinderance.

There was no objection raised to the rightfulness of the claim. A quibbling about the date of payment ensued. Anush's attorney was getting ready to postpone the execution, but I protested against the postponement, positively declaring that my coming here was not a farce, and that I would not go away until the whole amount had been paid; otherwise I would order the Sheriff to attach in my presence all the movables (ten thousand rubles' worth), and to store them in the county seat.

After this decisive statement I ordered a recess, for not only was I tired of speaking, but it was also necessary to give those assembled time to deliberate and to afford us a chance to refresh ourselves, for we had not eaten since morning.

We all returned to the railroad station, near which lived the Zemstvo head. His wife was kind enough to take the trouble of providing food and shelter for eight unexpected guests. After having tried for the first time Bessarabian meals—zama with mamalyga (corn-cake) and brindsi (cheese)—I wanted to drive back to the village, but the news received by the County Prefect made us postpone all our proceedings until the next day.

It was evident that an interior strife was going on among the rezeshi, and that the majority was now against its former leaders,

and ready to submit and end the affair peacefully. Meanwhile night was coming on and we were very tired.

The next morning, having previously visited the soldiers, I wanted to go to the kaza. The village elder told me that the rezeshi had sent their representatives, authorizing them to lease three hundred desyatins for six years—the full rental therefor payable in advance.

This was agreeable news, and although the projected agreement could not be convenient for the rezeshi, I tried to console myself with the thought that a lease was better than a sale, and in addition I had in mind the lavish allowance made by the proprietor.

When I arrived at the place the whole assembly was already there, and they met me with bread and salt. At the head of the assembled crowd were new leaders; the clamorers of yesterday were present, but much tamed.

I did not accept the bread and salt, saying that this was not the time for it, and that the attachment of the movables should be started at once.

The rezeshi declared that they could not collect ten thousand rubles immediately, but that they had sent to the city for money, and hoped to settle with Anush to the kopeck on the next day.

Having obtained the names of the representatives and where they were to be found in Kishinev, I sent an official to the city, ordering him to wire the result of the negotiation of the loan. Then I declared I would postpone the attachment another day, being especially willing to do so, as I had to make an investigation of the charges against those who had resisted the officials and had employed violence against the Sheriff.

"You certainly cannot expect such deeds to go unpunished; five of you must appear before the examining magistrate, on whom it will depend whether or not you shall be held. He may either hold these men in custody or release them on bail —if they are reliable and will appear in court when summoned."

Calling the names of the five charged by the County Prefect and other witnesses, we handed them over to the court. I ordered them to step out from the crowd and approach me. All five, stepping forward, protested they were no more guilty than the rest, and that if necessary all, not they alone, should be tried.

I recognized among the alleged instigators my acquaintances of yesterday—the one who brought me the matches as well as the one who ran to fetch me a chair. I turned to the District Attorney, and asked him, half in jest, to plead with the magistrate for my companions, and, if possible, to release them on bail after the examination.

The District Attorney, as previously arranged between us, said that he would write to the magistrate, suggesting that the examination be begun, and then made his way into the cottage. The police officers and the village elders followed with the defendants, who, like the rest of the villagers, offered no resistance.

After talking with the assembly a little longer upon outside matters, I said that I hoped to leave for Kishinev the next day, and would like very much to take the soldiers back with me. Thus the military officers would be able to add, in reporting the calling out of the company, that the soldiers returned without having taken any part in the actions of the authorities, as the rezeshi proved to be a peaceful and sensible people. "Had I known beforehand," I added, "that it was so pleasant to deal with you, I would not have disturbed the military authorities nor troubled the Emperor." The rezeshi were highly interested in the fact that the Korneshty incident would be brought to the attention of the Emperor, and assured me of their loyalty to the government. Indeed, I was convinced more than once that the Moldavians regarded the authority of the Czar with great reverence, and were fond of expressing their faithful allegiance.

Thus even the last matter which up to this time we had avoided—namely, the arrival of the troops—lost its severity, the ice completely melted, and I had only to wait until the money was handed over to me.

The next day the ten thousand rubles were paid, the accused were examined and released on small bail, and I returned to Kishinev. Several delegates sent by the assembly of the rezeshi followed me, and offered me bread and salt, which I had refused at Korneshty. They requested that the cost of transporting and maintaining the troops should, if possible, not be recovered from them. They seemed to remember the old law, according to which the cost of pacifying the people by the troops must be borne by the offenders. The deputation was delighted when I

informed them that now these expenses were assumed by the government.

I wrote at once to the Attorney-General of the Senate that the execution in the Anush claim had been effected. The land of the rezeshi remained untouched.

In the country news travels very fast over large sections. Rumors that the troops had been called to Korneshty, and that the Governor had arrived there, were circulated and discussed—first among the people of the neighborhood, and then in the adjacent districts. What impressed all primarily was the fact that the Governor recovered the full amount—that is, had his way—and compelled the rezeshi to submit. The fact that everything went off without any clamor, threats, executions, or shooting did not in the least weaken the effect, but rather the contrary.

As to myself, this was my first experience in the restoration of law and order in a riotous village. From it I gained the conviction, subsequently strengthened, that in all such cases it is necessary to proceed as follows: The case in all its circumstances must be thoroughly investigated, with the object of ascertaining the main cause of the disorders. Moreover, it must be firmly kept in mind that the mass of the people are always ready to meet one half-way for the purpose of coming to an understanding; that they avoid and fear violent actions of any kind. Violence is frequently the result of mutual fear. The pacificator, on his part, hastens to show force so as not to become a victim of the mob; the people to be pacified, scenting danger, see no other way out of their situation except desperate resistance, instinctively resorting to physical self-defence. But if the person called upon to restore order—the Governor, for example—finds the rebellious crowd not in the act of committing violence, but as a force yet in repose, then, no matter in how ugly a mood the rebels may be, they should be treated as an assembly of rational people. Refraining from shouts or threats, the pacificator must appear before the people not as a biassed defender of one side, not in the yet more hateful capacity of judge and avenger; he must maintain the attitude of a mediator delegated by the higher governmental authorities to secure order, so that the legal rights of all concerned may be preserved in a legal way, and the trespassers held legally responsible. A cool, dispassionate manner,

if successfully maintained, and a certain amount of bonhomie, if the occasion permits, will go far to ease many a point. Having secured mutual attention and understanding, it is not difficult to avail one's self of the feeling, latent in the consciousness of the people, which makes them recoil at the name of "rebel," and leads them invariably to declare that they want to settle a case "according to law" in the "proper manner."

It is, of course, very important in such cases to have in reserve, as a sort of *ultima ratio*, a disciplined military force. This force, however, must be held literally in reserve, in the rear, and not in front, to be used in case of emergency only, as a matter of action, not of argument. Troops stationed in the vicinity are a potent argument for peace; this is certain and well recognized. However, I think it tactful never to refer before a mob to the possibility of utilizing this last resort; besides, it is more impressive at long range than in the immediate neighborhood.

Besides the case at Korneshty, I had to deal in Bessarabia with a village in the Orgeyev district that refused to pay the Zemstvo "room tax." The lands of this village formed a wedge between the districts of Kishinev and Byeltzy, where dwellings were not taxed by the Zemstvo. The Orgeyev peasants, of course, felt aggrieved in having to pay a tax from which their nearest neighbors were exempt, and therefore refused to pay the tax for several years in succession. The Police Prefect of the Orgeyev district, being a coward, put off collecting the tax. The recovery was accomplished only by my orders, prompted by the complaint of the Zemstvo Board against the systematic dodging of the Zemstvo taxes by these villagers.

Again I received a telegram for troops to bring the disobedient peasants to terms. They positively refused to pay arrears and prevented the police from seizing their property. But I was at that time far more experienced, and had learned the character of the local population. I had no time to leave town. I therefore hastily pencilled an address to the village assembly, had it translated at my office into Moldavian, and sent it to the Police Prefect, to be read before the people.

In my address I explained the purpose and the various classes of Zemstvo taxation, and also pointed out the place and the manner of legally fighting the domiciliary tax—namely, in the

Orgeyev Zemstvo Assembly, through the people's representatives, the district Assemblymen. I further explained that any change in the methods of taxation could affect only the years following such change, and that arrears, at any rate, must be recovered. In conclusion, I said that I did not feel like dropping important business and dragging the government treasury into expense on account of such a trifling matter, and therefore suggested to the Police Prefect to proceed at once to recover the arrearage, and to inform me the next day of the full recovery of the same. By the next day the room tax had been collected without any unpleasant incidents, and the peasants, as it turned out, were very much flattered at receiving the Governor's message, addressed to them personally and in their own language besides.

The two cases above described exhaust the history of the riots and mutinies of the good-natured Moldavians during my stay in Bessarabia. Moldavians, especially rustics, are a sweet-tempered, kind-hearted, and obedient people. But they love courteous treatment, are fond of compliments, and are not quite free from some simple bragging. Thus, for example, when in the Japanese War the reserves had to be called out in Bessarabia, the Moldavians enlisted very willingly and with much pride. To themselves they explained the calling out of the reserves by saying that the Czar could do nothing in the war without them, and therefore had ordered his Moldavian braves to be sent him.

X

A tour through the province—Byeltzy—Soroki—The I. C. A.—Khotin—Izmail—Wilkowo—Schabo.

ACCORDING to law the governors are, if possible, to make a circuit of the province districts annually, and to acquaint themselves with the general and official activity. Such visits are particularly necessary for a newly appointed governor.

All matters and incidental correspondence which come under his daily observation gain a realistic interest only after a personal acquaintance with the places and individuals involved. Unfortunately, the Governor's direct participation in the administration of the province handicaps his real utility as inspector of the legal validity of acts of departments and individual officials. The actual Governor presides over at least twenty boards, and must constantly give his sanction to the altering, prohibiting, forestalling, hindering, and approving of all sorts of acts and resolutions, with the chances of falling into all sorts of errors. Thus his authority becomes inevitably weakened, and his inspection becomes in a measure useless. Applied to the Governor's authority, the term "master of the province," which arose during the time of Alexander III., and was so earnestly applied by his successor, involves an entirely wrong conception. In the proper administration of his duties the Governor should confine his authority to cases of specific importance, and even there only in a certain narrow sphere. His main office is as guardian of the law. This is well expressed in a special article of Volume II. of the Code, published as far back as the first half of the nineteenth century, though then no independent court for any local self-government was in existence.

The policy, dominant during the reign of the last two czars, of extending the administrative powers of the Governor did not benefit matters, and really weakened his authority.

Having but a few days at my disposal for provincial inspection, I was obliged to waive my intention of making it a detailed one; so I thought it useless to drag with me the members of the several boards and my bureau heads. I preferred to see little, but that with my own eyes—to get, as it were, a meagre store of observations and information, but to get this at first hand, and not from my assistant's report. My sole associate was an adjutant. He was not an expert, but he was a native well posted on Bessarabia, fluent in Moldavian, and acquainted with the inner life and local conditions.

His chief duty was diplomatically to protect me from undue ceremonial at the hands of the zealous officials, and, above all, from the unbearably burdensome state dinners. In addition he had positive orders to meet the mileage charges, and to impress upon the police the propriety of discountenancing rather than compelling showy demonstrations, such as popular receptions, spreading carpets to and from the Governor's carriage, and other forms sanctioned by Bessarabian customs. My first visit was at the county seat, Byeltzy. There I attended to a complaint against the prison warden, and had to unravel a bureau tangle due to violation of the building ordinances. I received the officials presented to me, became acquainted with them, and addressed each individually. I inspected the Zemstvo and the Jewish hospitals. On consulting with the local officials, they willingly and frankly initiated me into the fine points of those matters which in Kishinev had seemed to me hopelessly involved and insoluble. Then I visited the prison, of the management of which the worst reports had reached me. I chatted privately with the prisoners, and looked into the business management. As a result, I felt obliged to suggest to the warden his retirement. The proceedings initiated by these investigations developed the discovery of a defalcation of the prison funds by the warden, and ultimately terminated in his suicide. But when I was in Byeltzy such a sad issue to my investigation was hardly to be anticipated. Having ended my day's arduous task, I gladly accepted the invitation to dine at the City Club with my newly made acquaintances, the representatives of the different departments, who were most desirous of entertaining me as their guest.

The dinner was not a state affair, the wine was Bessarabian, and time passed in good-fellowship without any sort of stiffness.

We were even photographed in group in the club court-yard, and this group picture hangs in my studio now as a reminder of my first gubernatorial inspection.

I travelled to Byeltzy by rail, sleeping two nights in the car placed at my disposal by the railroad authorities. In this I also went to Mohilev in Podolia. From there I made my carriage trip to Soroki, sixty versts from Mohilev. We journeyed in the following order: in advance, mounted, the village constable, replaced by another at every township; then a police sergeant in a troika; then the county marshal in a four-horse vehicle, and at last myself and my adjutant, Sh——, in a four-horse phaeton. This time I could not bring myself to disturb the traditional group of the Governor's train, particularly as it was necessary that the county marshal and the sergeant, who had met me at the Mohilev station, should be of my escort. But, to my surprise, the latter was not confined to these. On crossing the Dniester into Bessarabian territory we were joined by a whole cavalcade composed of a dozen riders picturesquely clad in gay kaftans, who surrounded my phaeton, spurring and galloping their horses, spiriting them, and generally displaying their several points and manifesting a zealous chivalry. Travelling thus about two versts, I stopped my carriage and asked of the county marshal, who came running up, the explanation of this unexpected escort. He answered that they were the representatives of the local farmers, the village elders at their head, who had been detailed to attend the Governor through their respective townships; that they were chosen from among the most daring horsemen, and they valued very highly their office, and the honor of showing me their equestrian skill, together with their brilliant costumes. It appeared from the marshal's words that to have rejected their proferred escort would have been a grave offence. To this he added that to humor me he had limited their number to twelve, else my escort would have been much larger. The prospect of travelling sixty versts with ever-changing riders, and finding it impossible to get the thought out of my head that all these were wasting their time and simply torturing their beasts, and possibly at heart condemning me, induced me to take steps to relieve them of this strange traditional service. Leaving my phaeton, I addressed myself to the horsemen, praising their steeds, expressing my admiration of their skill, but asked them

to discontinue their further escort, as I was very unwilling to expose those with me to needless trouble and fatigue. With the help of the marshal and of Sh——, and not a little difficulty, I managed to persuade my escorting horsemen to return home. We then proceeded as before. But in every large village the picture was renewed: again the riders appeared on the scene galloping about my phaeton, and again I was obliged to persuade them to desist from the needless torture of their beasts and their waste of time. With this constant conflict with Bessarabian etiquette we finally reached Soroki towards evening.

I know no town in Russia to be compared with Soroki for the beauty of its situation. Rzhev, on the Volga, is beautiful, but lacks the southern sun, the varying shades of light, and the picturesque indentations in the gradually ascending river-bank. The houses of Soroki are scattered on the side of the mountain slope without fixed order; they reach to the bank of the Dniester, and in summer are lost in the green of gardens and vineyards. At the invitation of Aleinikov, the presiding officer of the Zemstvo Board of the place, I stopped at his house, in the upper part of the town, and spent an interesting evening in the circle of his family, which consisted of his aged father and mother. The peaceful and agreeable mood in which I found myself that evening was not at all disturbed, and was even heightened, by the presence of a couple of near acquaintances of this highly respected and attractive family. At last I had an opportunity to rest from official receptions and professional speeches.

I asked the Police Prefect not to appear before me the next morning until ten, and fixed the official reception at eleven. I was planning to give myself a rare treat: to take a walk unaccompanied, and to visit the fruit and wine growing school of the Jewish Colonial Association (or "I. C. A," as it was called for short), which was situated near the town.

I arose at six in the morning, taking pains to make no noise, evaded the vigilance of the policeman stationed at the door, and got safely out of the house without having been observed by any one. I already knew the way to the I. C. A. from the day before, and hence reached the—to me—interesting institution without any difficulty in half an hour. The I. C. A. deserves mention as being a model institution, in which all the work is done by Jewish pupils exclusively, with no hired laborers. At

its head was the scientifically educated agriculturist Ettinger, likewise a Jew. Under his guidance, knowledge and skill in fruit and vine growing were diffused, not only among the pupils, but also among all who were interested in fruit and grape culture; so that those living around the Jewish plant nurseries had a sort of free experiment garden. Although all the expenses of the school were paid by the Paris central committee of the Jewish Colonization Association, the managers of the I. C. A. aided, with counsel and support, and also with plant material, all owners of gardens who wished to cultivate their property. Every owner, large or small, without distinction as to nationality and social position, could come to Ettinger with his wishes and demands, and receive not only advice and material, but direct aid. The directors of the school, in response to every request, gladly drove at once to inspect the newly laid-out gardens, and afterwards visited them, from time to time, to make sure that the new plantations were being properly treated. The beneficent influence of this plantation school on the development and elevation of the garden culture of the district, particularly as regards the small growers, had been confirmed to me by many inhabitants of the neighborhood, and it was with curiosity that I approached the garden gate, which, among the fronts of other plantations stretched along the way, was not difficult to recognize.

The practical farmer always entertains a certain suspicion regarding theories of agriculture. I had once read with pleasure that a certain "black Jette," somewhere in Switzerland, had given her owner four hundred pails of milk a year, and that a French economist had harvested four hundred pud (sixteen thousand pounds) of wheat from one desyatin, but I had never thought of attaining such results from my own possessions. I had heard much of a farmer being able to conquer nature by art and labor, had heard the praises of foreign fruit and vegetable gardens, but in my own domain the course of events had always been that nature commanded me and not I her, so that the sceptical attitude not only of Russian peasants, but also of Russian land-owners, towards all learned economists seemed to me perfectly excusable and natural. The state institutions, the schools of the separate departments, the experiment stations I had seen had not instilled belief in the progressive victory of modern agricultural theories into any of

their neighbors. But what I saw in the I. C. A. led me to believe in the possibility of applying learned theories to the cultivation of plants, and for the first time I took account of the fact that agricultural books were not only a pleasant distraction for readers gifted with imagination, but were a very real force.

On the thirty desyatins of black, freshly spaded earth there were no weeds to be seen. On the large and small beds, which were separated from each other by narrow paths, stood, row on row, slender, vigorous apple and pear trees, straight as arrows, and of different ages and varieties—not a crooked one, not a diseased one, not one that was backward in growth could be seen; everything grew per order, and as if in a picture. The vines destined to bear fruit did not venture to grow upward, but nestled close to the ground with tender branches and small leaves. On the other side of the path were their rivals, one-year vines, destined as scions to be used for improving the quality of the others; they were tied to stakes somewhat shorter than telegraph poles, which, towards the end of the summer, they completely surrounded and covered with their large leaves. The fruit on the full-grown trees was flawless, smooth, alike in all parts of the tree, and the different kinds could be recognized not only by the names on the labels, but also by their perfect agreement with the pictures in the fruit catalogue.

The model drying establishment for fruit and vegetables, and also the cannery, which I found in full operation, permitted me to observe the method of preserving the garden produce, and convinced me on the spot of the clean handling and excellent quality of everything.

A very interesting sight was presented by the Jews, mostly young people, by whose labor exclusively the ground was tilled, the plants nurtured, and the fruit preserved. There were no frightened, haggard faces to be seen; no dried-up, diseased forms; no timid, uncertain movements. The brown, red-cheeked youths, with their shining eyes, broad shoulders, and muscular arms, I saw in the I. C. A. reminded me of the Jewish narratives of the strong field laborers whom the Bible contrasts with the wild men living in tents.

Towards the end of my tour of inspection I was no longer alone. The police, alarmed at the disappearance of the Gov-

ernor, had rushed out of the city, and I was transported back to Soroki under a suitable escort.

After getting through the usual official reception of the different branches of the government, at which I had to speak with every one separately, I went outside to those who had petitions to present, and received and listened to the different complaints. I then paid a hasty visit to the municipal buildings, took leave of the hospitable Aleinikov family, and at the invitation of B——, the District Marshal of the Nobility, proceeded to his estate. There I saw a flourishing condition of things not to be compared with the manner in which most Bessarabian landowners managed their estates. Whereas the latter usually lead an idle life in the city, W. J. B— worked from morning till night. He met with "luck" in everything, and quickly became rich. The extent of his agricultural plans and enterprises was very great. We inspected a model mill, which had just been built; a remarkable piggery, with a couple of hundred pigs; a beautiful stud and stables, with foals. I then drove back to Kishinev. With the conditions and institutions in Soroki I became only slightly acquainted, but with its inhabitants I entered into warm relations. I still count B—— and Aleinikov among my valued acquaintances.

I had to expend much more care and labor on the inspection of the Khotin district, because its police had a very bad reputation. Much time was taken up at Novoseltzy, where, as has already been mentioned, the police captain had introduced a wholly new commerce in papers of legitimization. But, besides this purely Bessarabian specialty in the creation of "credits supplementary to legal privileges," the administration of the Novoseltzy police captain disclosed to me still other public secrets. I had often noticed in inspecting the table registers of the county police captains that there were never any papers undisposed of; everywhere, opposite the entry mark of any order, communication, or report, there was the withdrawal number showing that every paper had been properly gone over according to the regulations. This inexplicable and unnatural speed and accuracy aroused suspicion. The key to the mystery I found in the business methods of the Novoseltzy captain. It appeared that the captains were in the habit, before the visit of inspection of the Governor, of looking through the entry registers, collect-

ing all papers and deeds, which sometimes had lain untouched for months, and of sending them, under corresponding numbers, to the next captain, who in his turn, if an inspection was in prospect, marked them with his mark. According to the books everything was in order, and later, after the chief had gone, the captains distributed the papers, which had been their guests for some time, to their respective places.

To Khotin I came on Friday, as I remember, and I alighted at the city house of Marshal P. N. Krupenski. On the same day we visited the famous fortress built by the Turks on the Dniester. The sight of this bulwark is impressive to a high degree, and the single parts of the fortification are well preserved. Then followed the usual reception, conversations, petitions, visits, inspections, which alternated with lunch and dinner at the house of P. N. Krupenski, who, as a former hussar, knew how to surround himself with the comforts of a wealthy *bon vivant* and bachelor, even in Khotin.

Of the impressions received in Khotin two have remained clear in my memory: the mass in the Orthodox Church and the Czar's prayer in the Jewish synagogue.

I had never been in a synagogue before, and hence readily assented to the request of the Jews of Khotin to attend their service. At my entrance into the sanctuary I was met by the rabbi and by some of the most influential and respected Jews of the city; all were in black coats, high hats, and white scarves. We entered a roomy hall with long wooden seats, which reminded me of school benches, except that they were beautifully carved and polished. The walls and the ceiling of the synagogue were very modest, without any colored decoration; there were no pictorial representations, and there was conveyed an impression of severe simplicity and earnest dignity. Opposite the entrance there was a slight elevation with a few steps leading up to it, and on this elevation, in front of the ark in which the Torah is kept, were seated the precentor and singers, the rabbi and a few well-dressed Jews, who, on account of their birth or social position, evidently stood in a special relation to the synagogue. I was led through the broad centre aisle to the first bench, whereupon the precentor, in a colored *tallit* (broad outer garment), began to sing a chant, in which the choir joined at times. In the midst of the unfamiliar sounds in the Hebrew tongue I heard the words

"Nikolai Alexandrovich" and "Alexandra Feodorovna," with the accent on the last syllable, and then I heard my own name also, which the precentor pronounced with especial distinctness. After this liturgy the precentor and the singers turned their faces towards the audience and sang, in splendid fashion, the Russian national hymn, "God Save the Czar." At that moment I had to decide for the first time, unexpectedly and suddenly, a difficult question of etiquette. In the synagogue it is not the custom to remove the head-covering, but the national hymn must be heard with uncovered head. I got out of the dilemma by holding my hand to the vizor of my cap in token of respect, and thus listened to the national hymn.

The second part of the service consisted in the singing of musical selections by the precentor and choir. These pieces reminded me somewhat of well-known opera melodies, to which, however, an Oriental character had been given by certain variations. Throughout the singing there could be distinguished in the choir a wonderfully sweet, strong, and pure alto voice which one could not help hearing. The rabbi, who was standing near me, told me that this remarkable voice belonged to a thirteen-year-old boy, the son of a poor tailor, and he proposed that I should hear him in a solo. I walked to the opposite end of the hall and placed myself near the entrance, in order better to do justice to the youthful singer. I say it without exaggeration that I have never heard another such alto voice in my life; it filled the whole hall, and the boy sang unusually true and with amazing dramatic feeling. He was singing a work of Mendelssohn's unknown to me, and the choir accompanied him with very soft chords. Thereby a greater effect was attained which was disturbed only at times by an undue forcing of sound in the accompaniment. I was really delighted, and wanted to thank the singer in some way for the pleasure he had given me, and asked the rabbi, on taking leave, if I could give the boy a gold piece. The rabbi became somewhat embarrassed, and answered that Jews were not permitted to take money on the Sabbath, but that the boy would, of course, gratefully accept some remembrance. I, however, had no such object with me, and was on the point of giving up the idea of a present when the inventive rabbi, who plainly wished to do me a favor, found a way out of the difficulty. He constructed a fine point of difference between

a gold piece as a coin of certain value and the same gold piece as an object of presentation wholly independent of its value. Thus was the question brilliantly solved. The rabbi said the singer might accept the gold piece from me not in its quality as a gold piece, but as a present. And that was done to the satisfaction of all.

On Saturday the Jewish rabbi showed great ingenuity in getting around a rule which forbade the acceptance of that which I myself wanted to give; on Sunday the Orthodox clergyman tried to use the Gospel to get from me that which I did not want to give.

When I attended mass in the Orthodox Church, to which a clergyman had pressingly invited me the Sunday before, I was not a little astounded at the purport of the short sermon which the minister preached just before the close of the service.

"Our Lord Jesus," began the preacher, in approximately these words, "once came to the sea of Nazareth, and there saw fishermen, who were washing their nets. The Saviour entered the boat of one of them, who was called Simon, and told him to throw out his net. He received the answer, however, that the fishermen had fished in vain the whole night and had given up hope of a good catch. When, however, at the command of the Saviour they cast their nets, they caught a great number of fish, so that there were two boats full. What lesson can we draw from this incident, beloved brethren?" cried the clergyman, with pathos. "We see that the presence of a person high in authority can be of extraordinary advantage to those whom he is visiting. Our church to-day is visited by one of the great ones of this world —the ambassador of the Czar, the head of our province. Let us then pray and hope for a great and rich blessing from this visit!"

When I had returned home from church the arrival of the clerical speaker I had just heard was announced. He had come to make a petition for his son, who was driven away from everywhere as a drunken brawler; the father thought I ought to give him the position of police inspector. My refusal greatly saddened the petitioner, who was firmly convinced of the favorable issue of his plan.

The district of Ismail, which was reunited with Russia in 1878, after the war with Turkey, occupies a special position in

Bessarabia. This district formerly belonged to Roumania, and was divided into three prefectories—Ismail, Bolgrad, and Kahul—having capitals of the same names. The annexation was simple; out of the three prefectories was formed one district, over which Shulga, who was appointed Police Prefect of Ismail in the same year, was made actual ruler. It was left to his experience and tact to adapt the Roumanian laws, which had remained in force, to the prevalent Russian laws, and to bring them into a just relationship. In the district of Ismail, which retained its Roumanian communal administration, there were neither aristocratic institutions nor a Zemstvo, neither a district nor a county government with a district chief. Every settlement, rural or municipal, formed a commune, to which all land-owners and all inhabitants belonged without distinction of property or class. The chief official of the commune was the Primar, with a communal council of twelve members; he decided all questions of administration, and performed the state duties which, in Russia, are transferred to the local authorities.

The Governor mixed little in the administrative affairs of the district of Ismail; the points which did not touch state interests were decided by the communes independently; the others depended upon the Prefect, who took the place of the former Roumanian Prefect. For the preservation of administrative unity the functions of the legal power were transferred to the Governor, and the authorities in St. Petersburg troubled themselves not at all about Ismail. Only in the Ministry of the Interior was there no cessation of the efforts to introduce into Ismail Russian institutions, Zemstvo chiefs, civil officials, statutes of nobility, and new rural and municipal statutes. The state council, however, continually rejected such projects of the Ministry on the pretext of illegality, and declared that the argument of the necessity for destroying the old local arrangements in favor of a general equalization of administration was not admissible. Thus the district of Ismail forms, to this day, an exception in the Russian district division. It will probably have to await the general reform of our local administration, unless an international agreement restores it to Roumania, which stretches eager arms to it from across the boundary river Pruth.

I was especially interested in the divided and indefinite position occupied by the Old Believers in Ismail. It will be remembered

that with us in Russia, down to most recent times, the attitude of the State Church and of the government has been very bitter against Old Believers. Whereas mosques and synagogues have a free existence and even enjoy the protection of the government, Christian churches and chapels of other denominations are only tolerated, while the houses of prayer and meditation of the Old Believers are persecuted in every possible way. Special denunciators, under the designation of Orthodox missionaries, take pains that the police are not led by the close relationship between the old and new faith, or rather by the slight difference between the old and new ritual, to make criminal concessions to the dogmatic demonstrations of the Old Believers.

With the latter denomination I had not a few vexatious experiences in Ismail. The Old Believers—and there were many of them in the district—had rendered considerable service to the Russian army during the war with Turkey, so that it did not appear fitting after their union with Russia immediately to proceed against them, as Greek Orthodox fanaticism demanded. A secret order well known to all Old Believers was issued to the Governor, declaring it to be the Emperor's will that the dissenters in Ismail should not be disturbed in their religious practices so long as their worship was not joined with especial demonstrations against the Greek Orthodox Church.

In my office I found information and recollections of this order, but the letter itself had been destroyed by some one of my predecessors, and in the twenty-five years since the annexation of Ismail the usual vexatious measures had been put in practice against the Old Believers of that place. The "manifestos" served as a dangerous and ever victorious weapon against them. As a matter of fact, no one could venture to ring bells without a "manifesto" or to hold a procession around the church. The matter ended finally, after energetic intervention on the part of the "missionary" (that universally hated representative of Russian Jesuitism and Russian inquisitorial spirit), in the Old Believers of Ismail making an agreement with the Russians in which the former got the worst of the bargain, since they considered that they had been insulted and had not been treated with the tolerance promised by the Russian government. The police naturally, as always, followed the lead of the clerical authorities, and the result may be given approximately,

by the following illustration. The bishop of the Old Believers, a dignified old man, who had ordained priests, and who was the ecclesiastical authority for all dissenters of the district, wished to go to Roumania. In the passport he was entered as the petty citizen Wassili Lebedev, and as such had naturally to appear in person at the police bureau to get his pass. He was made to wait for some time, whereupon the captain called out, so that all could hear: "Wassili Lebedev waits for his pass! Call Wassili!" The bishop entered, and had to listen without remonstrance to the insulting speech: "Dost *thou* need a pass? Here, take it."

In this way the demonstrations of the Russian government appeared as a counter-balance to the demonstrations of the dissenters.

The provisions regarding the building and repairing of Roman places of worship began to be enforced in Ismail, as everywhere in Russia. It was not permitted to put up new buildings, and old ones could be repaired only on condition that the former exterior of the building remained unchanged. As soon as I arrived in Ismail the Orthodox clergy brought complaint to me of the wrong action of the police in allowing an extension to be built to the church of the Old Believers. The fact was that the Old Believers, after long efforts and probably not without monetary sacrifice, had obtained permission from the provincial administration to strengthen their walls by brick supports. They carried out the building plan so successfully that the building walls were soon completely surrounded by a solid brick outer wall one *sazhen* (about seven feet) thick; whereupon it became possible to take out a part of the inner church walls. In the recesses thus formed there was made room for a hundred more of the congregation. This deceit outraged the Orthodox clergy, who begged me to make no further concessions to their rival.

I had had ever since childhood a strong sympathy for the *Raskolniks* (Dissenters), who in our vicinity were distinguished from the rest of the population by sobriety, industry, and a certain sense of personal dignity. Consequently, I was convinced that among the Russian Christian population (which, as a matter of fact, so far as ritualistic forms and in part also the confession of faith are concerned, came near to idolatry) the Raskolniks and Sectarians must be considered the most active, and, in religious respects, the least indifferent element, since they

hold to their belief and to their ritual, although sometimes they seek new paths for their religious ideals. I had come to have an unconquerable prejudice against the great mass of the Greek Orthodox clergy, who can hardly find a defender outside of their own number. Hence, I used every opportunity presented to me and did everything I could to accede to the modest requests which the Old Believers in Ismail laid before me.

The Moscow Old Believers of the Rogozha burying-ground had donated a bell to their fellow-believers in Ismail in memory of the coronation of Czar Nicholas II. The imperial permission to accept this gift had been obtained, but the Bessarabian provincial administration refused to grant permission to build a bell-tower on account of the representations of the clerical authorities. I at once allowed the Old Believers to begin the building, and later, on my return from Kishinev, sent a memorandum to the provincial administration, in which I deduced the necessity of granting this permission from the fact of the imperial permission already mentioned.

Then I visited a church of Old Believers in which a prayer for the health of the imperial family was spoken in my presence, and I was also able to grant a few unimportant requests of the dissenting clergy—such as for permission to repair the eaves and rain-pipes of the church. The police had not hitherto granted permission for this, and demanded as an indispensable condition a special dispensation of the government building department. Finally a more serious request was brought to me. It concerned the rebuilding of a wooden church, in which, owing to the ruined condition of the building, service had been discontinued soon after 1878.

I wished personally to inspect the church as well as the plan according to which they wished to rebuild it. From the plan I saw that the Old Believers intended to make the projected building out of wood, not of brick, and this fact at the very outset, according to the wording of the law, made it not only impossible for me to grant the desired permission, but even to promise that the provincial administration would take the request of the Old Believers under consideration. When, however, after some excuses, they conducted me to the place where I expected to see the old church, I found only a deserted spot overgrown with nettles, upon which a building had undoubtedly

stood, but had since been removed, leaving so few traces that it seemed impossible merely from the outlines on the grounds to decide what sort of a building it had really once been. I could not be angry at the poor Old Believers at their attempt to deceive me, and showed them how to send to the highest place of appeal a petition, the meaning and political importance of which, as was shown later, could be fathomed and properly valued only by the understanding of St. Petersburg statesmen.

Of the fortress of Ismail which Suworow captured there were no traces left beyond the unevennesses in the ground, which gave no idea of that which had once been a Turkish bulwark. There are no special sights in Ismail, but the city is very attractive, comparatively well arranged, and fairly lively. It is well protected by the Danube, the broad and full arm of which, together with a part of the Black Sea, forms the southern boundary of Bessarabia.

On a little steamer which the chief of the frontier guard placed at my disposal I went from Reni to Wilkowo—that is, along the whole Cilician branch of the Danube which flows through Russian territory. This trip was exceedingly pleasant. Among the stations we stopped at on the way mention should be made of the village of Wilkowo, which is occupied by old emigrants from middle Russia.

I had been warned that in Wilkowo I should see something "special," as they say in Bessarabia. The prefect informed us that the inhabitants of Wilkowo were a noisy people and inclined to drink; others again told of the peculiar situation of the village; a third set went into raptures over the celebrated Wilkowo caviar; finally a doctor on the boat with us said that the heads of the Wilkowoites were so constructed that the severest scalp wounds received in oar-fights healed in fourteen days, whereas with other people such wounds resulted in death.

The village of Wilkowo is situated not far from the mouth of the river, where it enters the Black Sea; it is close by the water, and is divided into several parts by the delta of the Danube. The result is that the people go about in the village just as much by boat as on land. Water is for the Wilkowoites a native element, and a boat is their second home. At the beginning of the week the whole working population of the village go out to sea, cast their nets for the large catch of different kinds of sturgeon,

sail gradually around in a circle, bring the catch to safety, and then return home on Saturday with the fish.

The Wilkowoites fish in companies, and are always in dispute with each other and with the neighboring Roumanians, both regarding places and the frequent appropriation of property by some foreign party if the fish have been caught in a foreign net; then the angry fishermen try to board the boats of their opponents on the open sea, and there begins a general abusing of one another which not infrequently ends in a fight with oars. The result is that usually a couple of fishermen are brought home severely wounded with broken heads, the rapid healing of which had amazed the physician of the place. He detected in this phenomenon a proof of the inherited adaptability of Wilkowoite heads to such wounds. As our steamer neared the shore on a holiday, we saw the, for Bessarabia, original sight of a festively adorned, gay, rather noisy and tipsy, purely Russian crowd. The men in red shirts, the women in light-colored scarfs and half-shawls sent specially from Moscow for the occasion, with wax pearls around their necks and sunflowers in their bosoms, crowded around the harbor and watched the arrival of the Governor, happy and pert, with something of that showy, critical, bantering attitude which I had already begun to forget among the phlegmatic, lazy, humble, and apparently servile population of Bessarabia. To the Wilkowoites the arrival of the Governor appeared an accidental Sunday diversion, in which the people, who reminded one of a dressed-up crowd in a Russian comedy, gladly took part. They behaved politely and were kindly, but they were rather boisterous in their noise, while they exchanged pleasantries, cracked jokes, and laughed aloud at the successful sallies of their cleverest wits. I must mention that the men were almost all a little tipsy, thanks to the successful business of the monopolized government rum-shop of the place, which took up to eighty thousand rubles annually from the Wilkowoites.

Fish in boats, fish cut in two on drying-frames around the harbor, fish in ice-cellars, conversations about the fish business, complaints regarding the restrictions of the fish trade, were almost all that I saw and heard in Wilkowo. From ten to fifteen fish-dealers provide the Wilkowoites with tackle on credit, give them money in advance, and take from them on Saturday all

their catch at a fixed price per pound, which is determined for a certain length of time, partly by the influence of supply and demand, but partly, also, as the result of an agreement between the buyers.

From the price of every pud of fish and caviar the buyer keeps back a certain sum (I believe ten to fifteen per cent.) which he gives to the authorities for the expenses of the village government.

In this way the fish pay the taxes of Wilkowo both for the working population and for the non-workers.

The rest of the money is reckoned out on the basis of the advance payment already made, but not all, because it is advantageous for the buyers always to keep their clients in a state of dependency so that they shall not sell their fish to rivals. The large buyers in Wilkowo pay the fishers enormous sums as earnest-money and advance payments, which in some cases amount to fifty thousand rubles, as I convinced myself from the books of a business man in Wilkowo, who was in touch commercially with Berlin and Vienna.

This whole sum is counted by the firm as dead and unrecoverable capital. Debts which are gradually being decreased are at the same time contracted anew, and the result is that year in and year out an enormous sum goes through the account-books which is gradually increasing, and which is a means for the buyer of holding the fishermen in his power, so that the latter can indulge in no caprices, and cannot even dispose freely of the results of their catch. I noticed signs, however, in Wilkowo which betrayed the effort of the Wilkowoites to free themselves from the yoke which capital lays on their industry, and I think that the time is not far distant when the buyers must yield to their demands with great loss. The keen insight, the independent character, and the desperate bravery of the Wilkowo fishers are kept under only by the rum, which, during the comparatively few days that they spend on shore in their native village, holds them in the bonds of a light intoxication.

I listened to the complaints of the fishers regarding the oppression of the buyers, and to the complaints of the buyers as to the lack of conscience on the part of the fishers, inspected the village and its communal institutions; after which the biggest fish-dealer of Wilkowo treated my escort and myself to a meal.

We were served with a couple of loaves of white bread, an enormous carafe of cold wine, and a tureen filled with large-grained caviar prepared the day before, which looked like coarse groats. We ate this caviar with wooden spoons out of deep plates, and could not empty the tureen, although we filled our plates several times.

From Wilkowo I went to Odessa by the steamer which makes regular trips on the Danube and the Black Sea. I did not wish to stay in Odessa, in spite of the attractions offered by this beautiful city. I wished to avoid the visits which I should have been obliged to pay the authorities in case of a longer sojourn, and hence spent the night in a hotel by the sea, went in the evening to the populous Odessa boulevard, in the morning to the harbor, and then to Akerman.

Not far from Akerman is the village of Schabo, inhabited by Swiss, and celebrated for its vineyards. Schabo has the usual Russian rural district division, according to which the village, on account of its size, forms at the same time a whole district by itself. When I drove up to the administrative bureau I was met on the steps by a gentleman in a black coat, who introduced himself as the district elder. I regarded with astonishment this, to me, new type of elder, who spoke French and German as fluently as he did Russian. The hall for the sittings of the administrative board corresponded to the elder. Besides rows of benches for the members of the communal assembly, there was a speaker's desk and a president's table, with a chair and a desk for the district clerk. On the wall hung plans of the village, on which was shown the land owned by the village. These plans formed a veritable model of a practical division of land as regards class of soil, characteristics and value of the soil, and ease in cultivating the soil.

The communal assembly of Schabo did not need, as did our farmers, to go wandering out in a body over fields and meadows, with measuring-rods in their hands, in order to measure off the portion of land allotted to each house-owner. Here, without leaving the administrative bureau, they could determine from the map the number of every owner, make new divisions and separations, and make any land measurement they pleased without going to a "place inspection," as our farmers say.

We also visited the schools—among others the Franco-German,

in which the children of Swiss emigrants are compelled to learn the one of the two languages which was their mother-tongue.

On my journey through the government district I visited a couple of dozen district administrations, stopped in the villages, talked with the farmers, and tried to become acquainted with their life and customs. The many impressions I received flowed together into a composite picture that gave me a clear conception of the needs of the rural population; at present I cannot present any prominent facts of general interest. Consequently I shall close my account of the inspection of the district of Bessarabia by naming the results which my inspection furnished me. Of importance, and more importance than everything else, is public education, then more self-activity and less care on the part of the authorities; these probably constitute everywhere the needs of Russian rural life.

XI

Journey to Roumania by imperial order—Jassy—The royal family of Roumania—The King's views on Russia—Carmen Sylva—The banquet in the City Hall.

I RECALL with pleasure my five days' stay in Roumania, whither I was sent by imperial order on the arrival at Jassy of the royal family of Roumania.

September 28, 1904, I received a telegram from Prince Svyatopolk-Mirski, Minister of the Interior, that "The King of Roumania is to arrive at Jassy on October 1, and following the recommendation of the Minister of the Interior, approved by his Majesty, your Excellency will proceed to Jassy to welcome the King on behalf of the Emperor." The message reached me late at night, I had to leave on the 30th, so that only one day remained for preparations.

Baron Stuart and other men of experience whom I consulted about this unexpected trip suggested, in anticipation, that the Roumanians would highly appreciate the courtesy of the Russian government extended to their King, and in their fondness for pomp and splendor would do all they could to render my arrival a matter of great importance and solemnity. I thus had to make my mission a matter of more brilliant display than I personally desired, and was therefore accompanied by A. R——o, Perpetual Member of the Provincial Zemstvo, who knew the Roumanian language, and also by Von R——n, First Councillor of the Provincial Bureau, who spoke German fluently.

September 30, at 3 P.M., we crossed the line at Ungeni, the last Russian station, and boarded a private car sent for me from Jassy. At the frontier we were met by the local Russian Consul and a Roumanian captain of artillery with a civil official expressly delegated to escort me through Roumania.

In thirty or forty minutes we arrived at Jassy. At the depot

I caught sight of a good-sized crowd of eager spectators and a few officials, who came to welcome the Russian "Governor-General." This was the title given me by the Roumanian press, which published the day before a fantastic biography "of one of the first dignitaries of the empire, an intimate of the Russian Czar."

The Prefect of Police at Jassy and the commander of a brigade, whose acquaintance I made on alighting from the car, informed me in fluent French that apartments were assigned me by the municipality at the Hotel Trajan, and that, by the King's orders, I was to have at my service the court carriage waiting for me at the entrance.

Our Consul, with the help of cabmen—who were most of them Russian emigrants of the sect known as "White Pigeons"—secured for my use a two-horse calash at forty francs per day. Hearing of the arrival of a Russian governor, these Russian emigrants tried their best to do their compatriot a good turn in getting me a vehicle at this figure, otherwise horses, during the first day's stay of the royal family at Jassy, could not have been had even at one hundred francs per day.

I went to the hotel, where I installed myself in the spacious chamber set apart for me, leaving my companions to their smaller rooms. The Prefect was much disturbed over the congested state of the city, and kept apologizing for my imperfect accommodation, which seemed to me quite comfortable. In the company of the captain of artillery attached to my person during my stay at Jassy, an amiable, clever, cultured gentleman, I made about thirty calls. I paid a long visit to Premier Sturdza, a man of seventy-five, a hard-working, subtle diplomat of great experience, who, though without military antecedents, was Minister of War.

He expressed to me his deep regret at the millions expended by Roumania in fortifying the Russian boundary under the false alarm, stirred up by a certain neighboring power, which he did not name, of Russia's aspirations for conquest. The Premier also spoke much of King Charles, his loyalty, freedom from party bias, and the conscientious industry with which he entered into all the details of the administration, working long with every one of his ministers. "Our King does not want to have among us either personal friends or enemies, and is never guided in matters of administration by personal preferences," said

Sturdza, citing what seemed to me a curious fact in support of his statement.

Seven years ago, during King Charles's last visit at Jassy, the Roumanian cabinet was composed of Conservatives, unpopular with the country, but indorsed by Parliament. The King was accused of failing to grasp the country's frame of mind, of reactionary bias against reforms, and his popularity waned. The opposition press dubbed him a foreigner, a German fortune-seeker, thriving at the expense of the Roumanian people. Cartoons, picturing the King as a donkey with money-bags on his back, were sold even as postal cards. The citizens of Jassy, swept by the general tide of feeling, gave their King an extremely cold reception. A part of the public, led by one of the prominent members of the opposition, vigorously hissed him on his entrance to Jassy. In a few years the Liberals gained the ascendency and the cabinet changed. The King appointed as Prefect of Jassy, when the office became vacant, one R——, the very man who had once organized against him. "Just look," Sturdza said to me, "how they will welcome the King to-morrow. A peculiar sight it will be to see R——, in the capacity of Prefect of the city police, maintaining order at the head of the royal procession!"

On the next day, at about 4 P.M., I was to meet the royal family. Long before the train arrived the depot was thronged with smartly dressed ladies, higher officers of the army, the ministers who had arrived at Jassy, a city delegation, deputies, and residents who had secured admission. The rest of the public stood on a platform in front of the terminal, and along the sidewalks of the streets through which the royal visitors were to pass.

The Austrian general who had been sent to Jassy on the same mission as myself was stationed with me at the head of the central aisle, formed from the tracks to the entrance of the depot, with Sturdza facing us. At the sound of the Roumanian national air the train slowly approached. An elderly lady, with a rosy face framed in thick black hair, stood at the lowered car window, affably bowing and smiling in response to the saluting bows addressed to her while the train was still in motion.

I recognized her by the portraits I had seen as the authoress, Carmen Sylva, the Queen of Roumania. The train stopped, and the royal family, with King Charles at its head, stepped down

on the rug between me and Sturdza. The King, accompanied by the Premier, passed in front of the guard of honor, and, returning, approached me. I delivered in French the address of welcome I had prepared, to which the King responded in a few affable words, while his attendants viewed me with some curiosity as the only civilian in uniform, and an official of a foreign power besides.

After the Austrian general and some of the local officials had been introduced to the King, we entered the spacious waiting-room, where the Queen, the Crown-Prince and his wife—the granddaughter of Alexander II.—were engaged in conversation with the ladies of the city. I was approached by the King's Chamberlain, who, on behalf of the King, tendered me an invitation to dinner.

We then proceeded to the palace in the following order: The King and Queen in an open carriage, with Sturdza seated in front; the Crown-Prince with his wife and son, a boy of ten, came next; my carriage followed this, with a like carriage for the Austrian envoy at the rear.

Our party advanced very slowly, hemmed in by a dense crowd, enthusiastically cheering, above all, the royal couple and the little Prince Charles, born in Roumania and baptized in the Orthodox Church. The Crown-Prince—who, I believe, is a nephew of King Charles—and his wife did not arouse any special enthusiasm in the people. The cheering meant for the royal couple, however, was really genuine and hearty, betokening the people's affection for the King, and their gratitude for his thirty years' conscientious effort for the welfare of the Roumanians, foreign to him by race.

This reception presented a picture triumphant and even touching. The local evening papers painted the royal procession in glowing colors, and even cited me as a "witness of the unification" of the Roumanian King with his people. "We saw tears in the eyes of the Russian Governor-General," wrote the reckless correspondent, "and heard him whisper, 'Oh, why is it not my lot to see my Czar surrounded by the confidence and affection of his people!'"

Having registered at the palace and the apartments of the Crown-Prince, I returned to the hotel. As indicated by the invitation handed me a few minutes before I had left the palace,

dinner was to be served at seven. I went there accompanied by the same Captain K——, who had never left me, and I was ushered into the salon, where sixty guests were assembled.

The palace steward showed me the plan of the table and the seats assigned to each of us. I was to sit near the King, immediately next to the wife of the Crown-Prince. This last circumstance embarrassed me, as I was entirely ignorant of etiquette with regard to royal ladies, and had no idea of the conventional way of speaking to them—whether it was good manners to reply to their questions only, or whether one may freely take the initiative with them. My anticipations were unpleasantly realized. At the very beginning of the dinner I disgraced myself by a piece of tactless impropriety, which, a few days afterwards I confessed to Carmen Sylva herself, when we, forgetting the Crown, plunged into a discussion of literature, the stage, and other questions of universal interest. While we were seated at the table, after the appearance of the royal couple and the introductions to the members of the royal family, I began to speak to my neighbor of how I was impressed by her son. The boy was really very charming, unassuming, and sweet, and I saw that my praise delighted his mother. Then, as is often the case, I began to enlarge on the same topic, until I reached the climax by expressing my wish that Prince Charles might become the great national King of Roumania, and that his mother might witness his great deeds of statesmanship. Such a wish, implying, as it did, the necessary death not only of the reigning King, but also of his heir, the husband of my august neighbor, was not exactly felicitous. Fortunately, royalty, accustomed to all sorts of blunders on the part of their guests, are very indulgent and self-contained. My words passed unnoticed, causing nothing but a bland smile. I was glad, however, to turn to the King in answer to his questions. The conversation of the King, resumed from time to time, was of great interest to me.

For six days I had breakfast and dinner at the palace, with the exception of one dinner, of which I shall tell presently, and at each meal I was placed beside either the King or Queen.

King Charles showed a keen interest in Russia, and questioned me at length concerning our people—their wishes and needs, and the extent of their development.

Once, in speaking of our new commercial treaty with Germany,

he referred to the unity characterizing our government, and to the fact that important legislative measures could be carried through in Russia without preliminary deliberation in Parliament, remarking that frequent changes in the latter caused at times a want of coherence and consistency in the administration of a country. I tried to make clear to the constitutional King that in our absolute monarchy there were as many governments as there were ministries, and that changes in the home policy with us were just as frequent as the changes of separate ministers. Every Russian Minister, I said, reports to the Emperor on his own account, and directs his line of work irrespective of what is going on in the other ministries. What Russia lacks is just this unity in the administration of the country, as the Emperor cannot, of course, by his personal direction alone, establish that cohesion of the ministries which springs from the solidarity of the members of a cabinet. In answer to the King's objection that we had a council of ministers whose function it is to unify all the ministries, I tried to bring home the fact that this council of ministers is an institution of a purely nominal character, as it never meets and plays no part in the government of the country. The King then inquired about our local government, the Zemstvo, and village boards, and expressed himself strongly in favor of decentralization in government and the extension of home rule along the lines laid down by the reforms of Alexander II., of whom he spoke in terms of profound respect. Developing the idea that Russia was in imperative need of government decentralization on a large scale, the King thought that our country should be divided into several large districts, the basis of division to be the predominance of a given nationality. The institutions of each region should be allowed to develop their local organization in conformity with historical peculiarities. The King further maintained that in time Russia would have to accept autonomy for the separate territories composing the Russian Empire, with territorial governors as representatives of the Emperor, unifying the separate territories in matters affecting the whole Empire. Such a reform was inevitable, in the opinion of the King, in view of the facts that the efforts of the Russian government, tending towards the uprooting of racial peculiarities to a uniform level and a centralization of government, are a source of weakness in the government itself,

and destroy rather than support the theory of the Russian state.

I deemed it inconvenient, in my official position, to commit myself on the question of the change in the form of government in Russia, and so I did not state my doubts as to the feasibility of establishing territorial representative institutions without creating at the same time an imperial parliament. But the ideas expressed by the King seemed to me full of interest. I recall them with especial interest now—two years later—when the Russian Parliament is being convoked a second time, and the problem of territorial autonomy faces us in a way to compel discussion, in spite of the unpopularity with which this idea is viewed in Central Russia and in government circles.

Speaking of the local police, the King referred with pleasure and a modicum of pride to his recent success in carrying through the chamber a bill providing that police officers of the grade of district inspectors in the cities of Roumania must have a legal education. My attention had been attracted, even before, to these police commissaries, in black dress-coats, with rosette badges on their breasts, and their glossy silk hats. I appreciated their quiet, affable manner in acting promptly when the streets of Jassy were blocked.

The King was optimistic in regard to the outcome of our war with Japan, in view of the fact that the Russians were often unsuccessful at the beginning of a campaign, but came out victorious in the end. Pointing to the Cross of St. George, given him by the Emperor Alexander II. during the Russian-Turkish War, King Charles related to me his experiences in that war, and how the attack that he undertook at the very beginning miscarried, owing to his immaturity, impetuosity, and impatience to distinguish himself. I had in this case also to keep my thoughts to myself, as I did not share his rosy hopes of the triumphs awaiting Russian arms in the Japanese War.

The Queen of Roumania, next to whom I was seated at the court breakfast and dinners some three or four times, laid aside all etiquette and royal grandeur with great ease and readiness. She was evidently glad to find in the Russian envoy a tyro in diplomacy, frankly acknowledging to her the defects of his training as far as court life and society were concerned. I was somewhat familiar with Carmen Sylva's works in their Russian

versions, and besides had been present the day before at court theatricals, when a very strong drama dealing with the life of the ancient Germans and penned by the Queen was played on the local stage. The Queen told me the substance of her new comedy which we were to see that evening, and spoke of the art of the actors and of the flush of emotion she felt every time she was present at a performance in the double capacity of Queen and author of the play. Touching upon Russian literature, she spoke in terms of unstinted praise of the creative power manifested in Gorki's works, with which she was quite familiar. Commenting in detail upon *Malva*, one of his stories, she maintained that Gorki introduced entirely new methods in the treatment of literary themes.

The following schedule will show how I passed my time, after the arrival of the royal family at Jassy, from 9 A.M. until 12 M.:

Every morning we had church service in honor of the consecrations of the ancient Orthodox churches in the Roumanian capital, restored at the King's expense. I had to meet the royal family at the church entrance and be present at the service. My duties as representative of the most Orthodox country did not stop there. I had to participate directly in all the church ceremonies: I vigorously poured the consecrated water upon the communion tables at the altars, sponged their tops, triturated cement with a spatula, and, guided by the Metropolitan and the Archbishop, went through, in the wake of the royal family, all the ritual details of consecration. King Charles saw to it that I should not miss my turn, having me step forward for performing my part close upon little Prince Charles.

The Roumanian clergy, on their part, were especially considerate towards me. Once, during liturgy, the archdeacon, as a peculiar piece of courtesy he thought due the Russian envoy, stepped up to the pulpit and, with a side glance in my direction, read off from a slip the royal prayer in the Slavonic language, while the eyes of all present rested upon me.

After church all of us would visit some institution (the military school, university, or hospital) and then take breakfast at the palace. After breakfast we resumed our inspection, and, dinner over, we went to the gala performance at the theatre, where the Austrian general and myself would occupy a gala box.

Before one of the dinners, when the King was to pledge the

health of the Russian Emperor, I received from the King's Adjutant the Crown Order of Roumania of the First Degree, with a ribbon and star. Etiquette forbids a response to the royal toast, and so I had, in this case, to content myself with a profound bow. But the next day, at the City Hall dinner, I had a crucial time, as I had unexpectedly to respond to the Premier's toast of welcome. Having been invited by Sturdza, I thought that the royal family would be present at the municipal dinner, and so I was prepared for my usual part—that of silent, honorary guest. It turned out, however, that the dinner was tendered by the city to the Ministry, or vice versa. All the ministers, all the deputies who were at Jassy, and a number of others, one hundred and fifty in all, were present at the dinner. Sturdza sat at the centre of the tables, arranged like a horseshoe, in the immense hall of the Municipal House, while the Austrian general and myself were seated on either side of the Premier.

After the toast to the royal family, very warmly applauded, Sturdza rose and delivered a long political address in French. In this he dwelt on the political activity of the cabinet, the results achieved in the last years of parliamentary work by Roumania, and her foreign relations. Then, passing to the question of neighboring powers, he pointed out the courtesy of the Russian and Austrian emperors in sending their envoys to participate in the national celebration of the Roumanians. He concluded by proposing to drink the health of the Russian and Austrian honorary guests.

In the course of a few seconds, while my nearest neighbors were extending towards me their champagne glasses, it became evident that we would have to respond to the address of welcome. The imploring gesture of my Austrian colleague was a sure sign that this duty irrevocably devolved upon me. I realized the necessity of responding at once before sitting down, but could not bring to my mind a single coherent thought or a single introductory phrase. I recall just now the chill down my back and the pulsation at my temples when I uttered the first words, "Mr. President of the Council of Ministers." I had not the least idea of how I was going to continue amid this perfectly silent company who, with eyes riveted upon me, were prepared to listen to my postprandial address. Nevertheless, a strong effort of the will not only helped me along, but even suggested such expressions as

called forth repeated exclamations of approval on the part of the audience and a volley of applause at the end.

The Roumanian press, being well disposed towards me, added to my words all sorts of embellished fiction. On the next day all the local papers had a long speech by the Russian envoy, phrased in great elegance and coherence, and containing, among others, some of my own expressions.

The five days I spent at Jassy passed like a strange and pleasant dream. At the private reception the King gave me at our parting he spoke with me a long time. Presenting me with a few souvenir medals of artistic workmanship, he expressed his wish that I pay a visit to Bucharest and see the sights there. I cannot conceal the fact that I felt highly flattered at the attention shown me by the King, of whose worth and character I have formed a very high opinion.

On October 5th I left Jassy, after distributing, according to the schedule made up by our Consul, twelve hundred francs in tips at the palace and the hotel. This amount can partly serve as an index of the importance the people of Jassy attached to the person of the Russian Governor.

XII

The Jewish question in Bessarabia—The Ministry asks me for a report on the same—My memorial—The legal and economic position of the Jews in Bessarabia—On the question of equal rights for Jews.

IN the fall of 1903 I was invited by the Minister of the Interior to state my views relative to the condition of the Jews in Bessarabia, and to submit my opinion as to what changes were advisable in the legislation then in force concerning the Jews. The digest of such opinions, submitted by the governors on the questions raised by the Minister, was to be considered by a special commission, not as yet constituted, and with its sole object and trend yet vague and undefined.

To carry out the task intrusted to me by V. K. Plehve, I had to formulate and systematize my observations and the scraps of information I possessed about the Jews in Bessarabia. The conclusions I reached were at that time very daring on the surface, as they practically amounted to a condemnation of the Temporary Regulations of May 3, 1882, worked out, as it is known, with the active participation of Plehve as director of the department of public police. Now, after the Duma has declared itself in favor of granting the Jews full rights of civil equality as a necessity, it is strange to recall the modest hopes entertained by our Jews in 1903 of the possibility of obtaining some extension of their rights in particular cases and some "privileges," as the Jews then termed the occasional non-enforcement of special restrictive and punitive legislation. Moreover, as the Council of Ministers, in answer to the address of the Duma, has not offered any objection on the subject of granting equal rights to Jews, it is equally strange to recall the impression produced in St. Petersburg bureaus by my modest and moderate memorial, in which no mention was made either

of abolishing the Pale of Settlement, of granting to the Jews the right to acquire estates, or the right to hold office.

If the question of granting equal rights to Jews were with us not only upon the tapis but solved as well, the following chapter would be superfluous. As things are at present, however, when this question is yet in the balance, it may prove of some value in reference to present legislation and local observation.

Inscrutable are the ways in which the Russian government has led the Russian Jews the last hundred and fifty years. If, on the one hand, as early as the eighteenth century a Russian Empress did not expect any interesting profits from the "enemies of Christ," her successor in the same century, on the other hand, saw in the Jews the sort of middle-class people from whom the state expects "much good," directing them to turn to "commerce and industry."

Special Jewish legislation in the nineteenth century was an eddy created by the confluence of different currents in which Russian Jewry was whirled, now unexpectedly gaining various rights and now losing them without cause. Thus, for example, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, Jews residing in the Pale of Settlement were allowed to engage in the business of distilling brandy and to lease from the government the sale of liquor—at first everywhere, then in the cities only, then again in the villages. In the middle of the century the liquor industries were again prohibited to Jews of all classes, in villages, but subsequently an exception was made in favor of those Jews holding a liquor monopoly in certain provinces. After the lapse of fifteen years the Jews received the right to engage in the sale of liquor under the general law and to lease distilleries. Eleven years later this right was restricted, and fifteen years later followed a prohibition practically shutting out the Jews entirely from the liquor trade.

It is also of interest that the Jews were first considered desirable as merchants and manufacturers, and, some time afterwards, as farmers and land-owners. At the beginning of the nineteenth century they were authorized to buy land. In the thirties they were spurred on by great inducements to buy land—as, for instance, by exemption from military service, the poll-tax, and so forth. But afterwards these lands were taken from them. The right granted the Jews, since 1862, to buy land and other properties belonging to manorial estates was followed by a

ukase enjoining them from buying such lands in nine provinces. In 1882 the execution of deeds of sale in lands within the Pale of Settlement was discontinued, and in 1903 Jews forfeited the right of buying lands outside of the Pale as well.

Here is another example. At the beginning of the nineteenth century a "special committee" guarding the people against Jews demanded their expulsion from villages. Five years later another committee came to the conclusion that Jews in rural localities, far from being injurious, were, on the contrary, useful, and declared itself strongly in favor of leaving the Jews where they were. In the twenties, however, Jews were expelled from villages in four provinces, and, though discontinued in the thirties, the expulsions were resumed in the forties for "military" reasons. Then Jews residing in rural localities were no longer molested until the issue of the Regulations of 1882, prohibiting Jews from settling outside of cities and towns. The then Minister of the Interior, the famous bearer of the nickname "Mentir Pacha" (Liar Pacha), justified his prohibition on the ground of his desiring to guard the Jews against the Christians.

Passing to the time I am now describing, I will confine myself to the facts and observations that formed the materials for my memorial. I shall mention first that, in 1903 the Jewish population of Bessarabia was about two hundred and fifty thousand, or approximately eleven per cent. of the total population of the province. Fifty years ago the Jews in Bessarabia numbered about seventy-eight thousand, but the total population of the province did not exceed seven hundred and ten thousand. Thus the increase of the Jews in this case at least is proportionate to the total increase. Bessarabia forms a part of the so-called Pale of Jewish Settlement, embracing, besides Poland, about fifteen provinces in which the Jews are permitted to live. It is therefore commonly claimed that the complaints on the part of the Jews against their being congested in the Pale are groundless, in view of the vast stretch of rich land in southwestern Russia at their disposal.

This claim is untenable. Our Jews, in reality, are not only debarred from land valuable for agricultural and industrial purposes, but are confined within very narrow limits in utilizing land for purposes of residence and migration.

The Regulations of May 3, 1882, prohibit Jews from settling

outside of cities and towns. After this date the Jews of Bessarabia particularly received the opportunity to choose for residential purposes only ten to twelve cities and about thirty towns. It would, then, be more correct to say that not the whole province with its four million desyatins, but an exceedingly small area of homestead land, limited strictly by city and town areas, forms the actual Pale of Settlement of the Bessarabian Jews.

But the process of forcing the Jews out of rural localities, and the tendency to make them "stew in their own gravy," did not stop with the new rural residents. The government set to work, in a systematic and persistent manner, to herd into the cities and towns those of the Jews whom the Regulations found in the villages. For this purpose a number of towns, one after the other, were renamed "villages," and the areas of the remaining cities and towns were subjected to artificial shrinkage. The natural increase in the population of the cities did not affect the Jews, as the new city line beyond the previously incorporated plan was considered a rural locality. The Senate once had to decide a case where a Jew had been evicted from a house, one corner of which projected beyond the incorporated city line.

The authorities of one province doubted the right of deceased Jews to be interred in rural localities. The Regulations of May 3, as construed by the above, did not grant the right of interment to deceased Jews outside of the city limits, As cemeteries were not allowed in cities, the only alternative left in this case was to enlarge, by way of exception, the rights of Jews. A lively guerilla warfare was at the same time conducted by the provincial authorities against the Jews living in villages. Police officers scattered all over the province were coached in the aims of this campaign. As many as possible of the Jews previously living in villages were to be made new settlers, and then deported to their places of registration in accordance with the May laws. It was in Bessarabia especially that the most ingenious devices to carry out the above aims were resorted to. I shall therefore cite instances of Bessarabian practice during Ustrugov's time.

A soldier who had completed his term returned to his parents living in a village. As an alleged new settler he was deported from the village where he had been born and had passed his

childhood and boyhood, and where his parents still lived without having left their place, and was sent to the city or town where he was registered. His brother, engaged to a girl in a Jewish family living in a neighboring village, stayed for some time after the wedding with his father-in-law. In view of this he was supposed to have forfeited his right to return home. Moreover, as at that time he had no right to live at the village with his new kin, the young couple were deported to the town. Then came the turn of his father. If the latter left the village on business so that his absence was noticed and the fact of his staying in town established by police records, he was debarred from returning to his village. He was allowed to return and take with him his household effects, on condition of immediately removing to the town where he was registered.

The above case, cited here as a striking illustration of how Jewish families were eradicated from the villages and country places, reflects the systematic and constant practice of the Bessarabian authorities as regards Jews. A reference to the digest of Senate decisions will bear out this view of the matter. If such reference discloses the fact that the Senate sometimes disagrees with the local authorities, and annuls their rulings in favor of the petitioners, it must not be assumed that this fact in any way puts a check on our local interpreters of the law. These Senate decisions, relatively very few in number, were handed down years after the Jews in question had lived in the places of their registration, and, besides, were rarely carried out. The evasion of these decisions was effected by a special stratagem devised by our provincial officials at the initiative, it seems, of Ustrugov. A decision of the Senate, according to which the deportation of a Jew was illegal, was construed as establishing the error of the provincial administration But the fact that the Jews had lived outside of the village during the time between this unlawful deportation and the receipt of the Senate's decree was taken as a new case, depriving the complainant, in the long run, of the right to return to his former position.

The province of Bessarabia is pear-shaped, with its oblong side skirting the river Pruth, which separates Russia from Austria and Roumania. The whole border tract, fifty versts wide, was for a long time past forbidden ground for Jewish settlement. As early as 1846 the Jews were ordered out of this tract into the

interior of the province, and were allowed two years within which to sell their real estate. Although this measure did not answer its purpose and the Ministry of Finance demanded its recall, nevertheless, the fifty-verst tract continued to be tabooed for Jewish settlers even in my time in Bessarabia. This restricted the Jews' rights of residence still more.

This policy of the government with regard to the settlement of Jews, so promptly carried out and with such consistency and success, met, of course, with many an obstacle. Jews dodged deportation in every sort of way, and even managed sometimes to reappear in the villages and country places whence they had been deported. This illegal sojourn of the Jews was partly aided by the village people themselves, who willingly gave transient Jews shelter against the authorities; the police saw in this a constant, never-failing source of income; and, lastly, a certain amount of tolerance, from which even the powers that be are not free, sometimes forcibly brought to mind the fact that the persecuted Jews were human beings for all that, and not a sort of noxious weed of which the countryside must rid itself. Nevertheless, the aims of the government were, to a large extent, realized, and the congestion of Jews in cities and towns greatly increased.

The observer is struck by the number of Jewish signs in Bessarabian towns. The houses along second-rate and even back streets are occupied in unbroken succession by stores, big and small, shops of watch-makers, shoe-makers, locksmiths, tinsmiths, tailors, carpenters, and so on. All these workers are huddled together in nooks and lanes amid shocking poverty. They toil hard for a living so scanty that a rusty herring and a slice of onion is considered the tip-top of luxury and prosperity. There are scores of watch-makers in small towns where the townsfolk, as a rule, have no watches. It is hard to understand where all these artisans, frequently making up seventy-five per cent. of the total population of a city or town, get their orders and patrons. Competition cuts down their earnings to the limit of bare subsistence on so minute a scale as to call in question the theory of wages. The struggle for mere bread breeds mutual hatred and informers, and compels many Jews to resort to the vilest methods to kill off competitors and, as much as possible, to reduce the artificial overcrowding in the trades.

It is self-evident that trades and commerce on anything like a paying basis, leaving a margin above the point of mere subsistence, are unthinkable in the cities and towns where Jewish destitution reigns supreme. The result is that in such communities there is a wholesale exodus of the artisans and small merchants of other nationalities from their occupations, and along with this comes the usual complaint against the invasion of the Jews into all branches of industry and commerce, to the exclusion of everybody else. Anti-Jewish discontent grows in proportion to the increasing number of Jews, preparing in this way the ground on which pogroms have of late so richly bloomed. The idea forces itself upon the mind that the government's anxiety for the safety of the Jews as reflected in the May laws must, to say the least, be declared a failure.

Bessarabia is one of the six provinces where the Jews, after the emancipation of the peasants, were allowed the right to buy and lease land. The May laws did not invalidate this right, nor was it limited until the passage of the enactments of 1903 in Volume LX. of the Code. These laws suspended for a time the execution by Jews of sale deeds and mortgages, as well as the certification of land leases entered into by Jews. The inference would seem to be that the above prohibition referred only to the validation of deeds and the certification of agreements by the courts, but did not affect the right of the Jews themselves to acquire land (for example, by ten years' uncontested and undisturbed use), as also their right to lease land by private agreement. But the Æsopian language of the law-giver was not in this case construed completely in accordance with his implied intentions. The provincial authorities, therefore, even before the publication of the supplementary regulations explaining the true intent of the May laws, prosecuted bogus land transactions, including the lease of land by proxy on the part of the Jews. At any rate, the law prohibiting Jews from purchasing and leasing land was in force "temporarily" during the twenty-one years preceding the period I am now describing, and still continues in force. But besides those I mentioned, there are many other ways in which the rights of Jews are restricted, and these I shall briefly cite in order to present a complete picture of the condition of the Bessarabian Jews in which the Ministry is interested.

In the fourth chapter of my reminiscences of Bessarabia, I

described the special form adopted by the Kishinev military board of enrolling Jewish recruits in the army, with the view of illustrating the flagrant violation of the law by the authorities. Now I wish to touch upon the general legal form of drafting Jews for military service.

Jews have discharged military duty directly since 1827. At first they had to furnish twenty recruits for every two thousand of the population, while Christians furnished only seven recruits. Then Jews were compelled to furnish supplementary recruits as an extra contingent, to pay off arrears in taxes, and the famous "Cantonist" schools (where Jewish boys twelve years old were trained for the army) came into being. It was only with the accession of Alexander II. that the enrolment of Jews was established on the general plan. However, the Jews did not very long enjoy this equality with regard to military duty. First, a set of restrictions debarred the Jews from holding military appointments and from enrolling in the privileged branches of the army; then the Jews were subjected to a whole array of restrictive regulations as regards exemptions due to the situation of the family, as regards examination on account of physical immaturity, and in respect to the form of verifying the family registration lists; last came the provision still further restricting the Jews, according to which a Jewish family was to be held responsible to the extent of paying a fine of three hundred rubles in case any of its members subject to military duty failed to report at the military board for enrolment. This responsibility held, even though the rest of the family proved that they could not in any way be instrumental in compelling the members in question to be present for military duty.

As a result, the Jews in Russia are required to give a greater quota of men for the army than are the other Russian subjects. A comparison of the government's report with the data of the census of 1897 shows that in the enrolment lists of 1900 the number of Jewish recruits was 5.49 per cent. of the total Jewish population of the Empire, while the rate for other recruits was 4.13 per cent.

All are familiar with the trite plea about the "systematic evasion of military duty on the part of the Jews" advanced every time the Jews and the army are in question. Indeed, the Jewish recruits unnerve their military examiners to the point of despair

by the cunning devices to which they resort to secure exemption from military service. The Colonel in command of the Volyhnia regiment stationed at Kishinev, my fellow-member at the military board, once expressed to me his authoritative opinion on the subject. "No wonder," said the Colonel, "that the Jews dodge military duty. Their position in the army is very hard. Imagine a Jew from an Orthodox family of small means suddenly transported to our barracks. His manners, his dialect, his abashed awkwardness make him a laughing-stock. Everything about him is dreadfully strange, wild, and terrible. He is the object of strenuous efforts to 'break him in'; his habits and religious mode of life are unintentionally rubbed up against and unhinged. Sometimes on the very first day of his soldier life he is compelled to gulp down cabbage soup with pork and be at drill on Saturday. His kin and friends think him polluted, and begin to shun him. He is forsaken and lonely, his spirits are dejected. We, on our part, to tell the truth, pay little attention to the condition of Jews in our army."

The Colonel might have added that the Jewish soldiers could not become sergeant-majors, serve in the guards, in the frontier troops, and only a percentage of them may serve on the musical staff of a regiment. Standing in line in defence of his country, the Jew continues to be among his companions in arms a man divested of full civil rights.

Away in the thirties of the last century the military authorities were very solicitous about the sacredness of the religious convictions of Jewish soldiers. The authorities recommended that their religious rites be not disturbed, and were even willing to keep a rabbi for them. At present the ranks in the Russian army are offered new guides on the Jewish question in the shape of General Bogdanovich's tracts and of proclamations urging the necessity of beating the Jews—the enemies of the Russian people.

Speaking of restrictions placed upon Jews in general, I shall briefly enumerate those which affect particular occupations, and among others the right to military appointments.

In Russia, as is well known, Jews, excepting physicians, are practically not admitted to government positions. But they are especially barred from the Zemstvo assemblies and electoral conventions, from the mayoralty, from membership on different boards elected by the Zemstvo or the cities. A Jew cannot be

presiding officer of the artisan boards, even where, as in Bessarabia, almost all the artisans are Jews. The number of Jewish members on boards of aldermen must not exceed one-tenth of the whole board, and these Jewish aldermen are appointed by the city council from a special list made up by the city executive board. The admission of Jews to committees of boards of trade, to merchants', burghers', and artisans' guilds is subject to rigid restrictions.

At the beginning of the twentieth century we have entirely forgotten the dictum of the great Empress, enunciated at the close of the eighteenth century, that "if society sees fit to elect Jews to office, they cannot be hindered from entering upon the duties imposed upon them by these offices." But this is not all. Since about the middle of the eighties of the nineteenth century the Ministry of the Interior, when incorporating private associations and stock companies, has required them to insert in their by-laws a section restricting or altogether prohibiting the participation of Jews in the direction of such corporations. It is worthy of mention that the tendency of the Ministry indicated in the above order, counter to common-sense, became especially pronounced in the case of just such corporate undertakings where the shareholders were Jews.

The last fact, a curious example of the government's petty captiousness, is otherwise not very essential, as every association can easily secure a figure-head directorate consisting of Russians.

The Jews are far more handicapped in educational opportunities. The government long ago closed the official Jewish governmental schools of the first and second class, and replaced them by the Jewish elementary schools, grudgingly opened and meagrely equipped. This latter type affords an education only to a trifling percentage of the Jewish children of school age. The majority of such children get their elementary education in the traditional Jewish *kheders* (Hebrew schools) from *melameds* (Hebrew teachers). Owing to the lack of Jewish normal schools to turn out an educational staff, the teaching in such kheders is of a very low grade. Besides, Jewish teachers are forbidden to teach Russian to their pupils, so that reading and writing Russian is almost out of reach of most Jewish children of the lower classes. An investigation conducted in 1900 by a special commission appointed by the Odessa city board disclosed the

fact that in Southern Russia only eleven per cent. of the Jewish population could read and write Russian. What our government is after in this case is a standing puzzle, but it must be admitted, at any rate, that the above tendency to keep the Jews away from learning to read and write Russian can only help to deepen the sin of exclusiveness usually charged against the Russian Jew.

Sections 787 and 788 of Volume IX. of the Code allow the Jews to have their children taught in the general government educational institutions and private schools of the city where they reside. Such teaching is even obligatory for the children of Jewish merchants and honorary citizens, and their parents are authorized to organize for this purpose special boarding-schools attached to the high schools. But, of course, this remains a dead letter, the mention of which seems a cruel irony on the Jews.

Indeed, many educational institutions, intermediate as well as higher, are entirely inaccessible to Jews. Jews are not admitted to teachers' seminaries, theatrical schools in the capitals, the two St. Petersburg institutes, the Electrotechnic and the Institute of Ways and Communications, the Moscow Agricultural College, the Moscow College for Civil Engineers, the Medical Academy, the Kharkov Veterinary Institute, and other schools that need not be enumerated here. The admission of Jews to all the high schools and universities is limited to from two to ten per cent. In connection with this it must be kept in mind that the percentage is not the only obstacle to education with which the Jews have to contend; there are other difficulties, as will be seen from the case within my recollection that arose in Bessarabia in 1904. The son of a Kishinev Jew of small means, a very bright, industrious boy eleven years old, excellently prepared for admission to the second class of the Kishinev Technical High School, was not admitted on account of the percentage limitation. His father, not sparing labor or expense in order to give his son an education, thought of sending him to the Technical High School located in the village of Kamrat. After strenuous intercession with the district board of education and the local school council, his boy was granted admission provided there was no opposition on the part of the administrative authorities to allow him to reside at Kamrat. Armed with this

certificate, given by the director of the school, the father applied to the provincial authorities for permission to place his son at Kamrat, to room and board with one of the teachers, who agreed to take charge of him. The authorities refused to grant the permission asked for by the petitioner, on the ground that Kamrat was a rural locality situated at a distance less than fifty versts from the Roumanian frontier.

The method of warfare ratified by Emperor Nicholas I. in 1843, waged against Jewish smuggling, was in this case applied by the provincial authorities of Bessarabia quite correctly in a technical sense. But I was sorry for the boy brought to me by his weeping father during the morning reception hours. Besides, I saw in the little high-school pupil's stay at Kamrat no menace either to the finances of the state or the good morals and welfare of the Kamratians. I therefore decided to strike out this order from our records, and wrote a new one in which, after a chain of sophistical reasoning, I came to the conclusion that the stay of the petitioner's son at Kamrat was not inconsistent with the law.

The Jews are outside of the range of the government's activity directed towards the spreading of popular education.

Jewish paupers, invalids, and cripples are denied state care and aid. All this, taken in connection with the general civil and political disability of the Jews, would be intelligible if they did not bear the burden of state and public taxation and duties in the same way as the rest of the Russian people. But far from enjoying any privilege in the matter of taxation, the Jews on the contrary have borne and do bear now the burden of special taxes. As early as a century ago the Jews paid in the per cent. and poll taxes twice as much as did the Christians. The whole Jewish community was held accountable for arrears of Jewish taxpayers, and later the Jewish merchants were made collectively responsible for the arrears of Jewish burghers. When, in 1863, the poll-tax was abolished, and the Jews were put on an equal basis with the Christians in relation to state taxes, they still continued to pay special dues—the box tax and the candle tax—preserved up to the present time. The first tax is collected from every "kosher"-slaughtered beast or fowl, and from every pound of "kosher" meat; the second from the candles lighted in the synagogue. The proceeds are intended principally to

help promptly meet other taxes, to pay off public debts, the maintenance of schools, and for Jewish charities. The estimate of expenditures to which these taxes are to be applied is made up by the city government, together with the rate at which these taxes are collected, to be ratified by the provincial administration. The reserve fund accumulating from the appropriations made out of the farmed revenue and likewise the surplus from these two taxes are held on safe deposit and in trust by government institutions, and are often applied in ways provided by law. For instance, they are expended for paving streets, road repair, help to the Red Cross and subsidies to the police, subventions to the secretaryships of various institutions, and even for the establishment of high schools to which Jewish children are not admitted. It is true such expenditures must be authorized by the resolutions of the respective communities. But such resolutions hardly express the good-will of the contributors, and, moreover, any such unlawful expenditure made from the basket-tax would certainly be turned down by the government in such cases if it were not itself an interested party. No reports are published of the amounts accumulated from the basket-tax, running into several million rubles, which are managed by the Ministry of the Interior. There is every warrant for the assumption that should an opportunity ever present itself of looking into the matter in which the Ministry expended these Jewish moneys, a picture would be presented rich in surprises.

I state here, in the briefest manner possible, the most essential features of our Jewish legislation, and touch only lightly upon the question of how the law in general is applied to Jews in places of their constant sojourn. I seem to hear familiar voices usually asserting that for Jews the above restrictions are even insufficient. I am loath, as far as possible, to mar the impartiality of my memoirs by forcing my own views upon the reader. And in this case I shall refrain from deciding the question whether little or great injustice is done the Jews by our laws. But I do maintain that the above pages will satisfactorily account for the "systematic circumvention of the law by Jews."

The second charge brought against the Jews—indeed, the principal and most prevalent one—is the so-called "exploitation of the people." It is regarded as an axiom that the Jews, by fair and foul means drain the vitality of the people around them;

that all the Jews do is to get rich in violation of the law and at the expense of others; that they do not produce things of economic value, do not increase the national wealth, but only pocket the product of the toil of others. Jewish money bothers a great many people. This money is the object of many hands stretched out both at home and in the capital, in an attempt to divert, so far as possible, through Christian channels, at least a part of the national wealth that found its way to the Jews back into circulation among the Russian people. As far as this fact is concerned, they are not mistaken who attribute to the Jews a corrupting influence upon their surroundings; most of the officials, especially the police, whose function it is to enforce the laws against Jews, are doubtless in close touch with the Jewish purse.

I should like to approach timidly the question of exploitation by Jews. I say timidly, not because I am afraid to advance an opinion not coinciding with the one in vogue, but because of the limited range of my observation along the lines in question, and because my acquaintance with the doings of the Jewish masses was of short duration. I cannot undertake to solve the question at issue in its full extent; but I shall endeavor to describe conscientiously what I saw and heard in this connection in Bessarabia for a year and a half.

The laws restricting the rights of Jews had, for over a century, alternated with legislation tending to advance the Jews to the same legal status with the Russian population. If the application of the May laws had not opened loop-holes for Jewish ingenuity, the range of observation of the economic activity of the Jews within the Pale would have been limited to the trade and industry carried on by Jews in cities and towns. But owing partly to periodic laxity displayed by the legislator in granting Jews certain exemptions, and partly in spite of the law, owing to its circumvention, a state of things was brought about in Bessarabia allowing a much wider field of observation. Bessarabia is the home of the following classes of Jews: land-owners, land tenants, and stewards; village residents, village traders, forestallers, and middlemen; finally, village usurers and frontier smugglers.

The Jews in Bessarabia did not show any tendency to acquire extensive landholdings. In spite of the fact that they have

enjoyed the right to acquire property in land for some decades past and its price has been very low, their total holdings in Bessarabia aggregate only sixty thousand desyatins out of the four million and sixty thousand desyatins making up the area of the province. About three thousand desyatins of this land are owned by Jewish colonies, giving homes to five hundred and forty families. The rest is distributed among a few individual owners.

The estates of Bessarabian Jews are not in any way peculiar enough to make them stand out from the general run of land-owners' estates. None of the Jewish estates seem to be especially noted for their methods of farming, nor, on the other hand, did I hear any complaints against the owners of such estates made by their peasant neighbors. Nothing in my time disturbed the peaceful, neighborly relations between Jewish land-owners and the working-class. Nor were any agrarian misunderstandings on that score reported to me in regard to the past. One could rather notice the efforts of the Jewish land-owners to shield themselves from the reproach of exerting pressure on the peasants and workers. At any rate, it must be admitted that the Jewish land-owners did not furnish material to bear out the charge of exploitation and extortion of exceptional incomes. Land-ownership on a large scale is of late the object of general warfare. On a line with this, there is a general tendency to break up large farming estates. Add to this the fact that farming on a large scale with the owner's stock and hired labor is a difficult and poorly paying business, and you may safely assume in general that Jewish capital cannot but fight shy of large estates.

The Jewish colonists have squatted on their land in Bessarabia since the thirties of the last century. Their holdings average five and a half desyatins per farm, while the average size of a separate peasant farm in Bessarabia is about eight desyatins. These colonists cannot be given credit for any special service to the cause of the country's farming. Their preference, however, for crops requiring intensive soil culture, tobacco-growing, vineyards, and orchards completely tallies with the local conditions of small holdings. In this line of farming, calling for punctual, constant labor, a certain grade of mental development and enterprise, the Jews can hardly be considered harmful. There would be no ground for apprehension even if Jews should receive the opportunity to own, for the same

purpose, a greater amount of land in small allotments. Intensive cultivation of high-priced plants and fruits in Bessarabia is so far developing slowly, and needs, therefore, to be encouraged rather than restricted from fear of possible excessive competition.

Jewish landholding in Bessarabia is of so trifling and innocent a character that it does not give rise to censure even among the sworn enemies of Jews in general and of the Bessarabian Jews in particular. Far more grave and acute is the question of the leasing of large landed estates by Jews.

The conditions of Russian agriculture did not create in our country a class of stable land tenants engaged in farming by right of succession or by bequest. Our frequently changing chance tenant avoids investing his capital for making improvements on the land of another. He carries on his farming in a rapaciously wasteful manner, and at the expiration of his lease he returns the estate to its owner in an exceedingly ruined condition. Bessarabian land-owners very often lease their land for long terms without incommoding the tenant by making his tenure conditioned on his cultivating the land with his own stock, on the use of fertilizers, or, in general, on the adoption of any definite agricultural system. The Bessarabian tenant is therefore not so much a farmer as he is middleman and a responsible agent for subletting separate sections of the estate to the neighbors in need of land. His object is to get, during his lease-term, a maximum amount of differential rent from his peasant sublessees.

Such use of land on lease cannot deserve encouragement in any respect. The estates in such cases deteriorate, the relations with the neighbors become still worse, and, therefore, most cases of agrarian friction usually centre around lands held on long-term leases by separate persons.

A Jew wishing to go into the business of leasing estates has to stand a lot of trouble and spend a great deal of money. First, he has to find, for a consideration of costs, a fictitious tenant to make for him the agreement with the land-owner, after which the actual tenant behind this straw man enters his service as a clerk. But such a comparatively simple method of getting hold of an estate is not always feasible, as the Jew usually has no right to live at the place where the estate leased by him is located. In such a case the Jew is compelled, in addition to

the bogus tenant, to keep at his own expense a bona-fide agent who is to act for him under his control and instructions. This the tenant manages to do by frequently coming down to the estate as a "transient staying on business."

The above succession of manœuvres does not, of course, remain a secret, as the countryside does not brook concealment of any kind, and the Jew is therefore bound to become a tributary at the same time both of the local police and of the other powers—namely, the township and the village authorities. At stated times he pays in his tribute, sanctioned by custom and order, to ward off judicial prying into his illegal agreement, and to be secure against a chain of prosecutions that may embarrass and totally destroy all his farming ventures.

However, in spite of legal obstacles and additional onerous outlays, amounting to two rubles per desyatin for small estates, most of the estates leased in Bessarabia get into Jewish hands. There are persons who are convinced of the detrimental influence exerted by the Jews upon the rural population, and entertain no doubt as to the constant success achieved by Jews through their rapacious methods. To these persons the cause of the above anomaly is very clear, and it runs like this: "The Jews evidently know how to 'work' the neighboring population with such success, wring out the life-blood of their victims with such force, that the income they get is more than enough to cover all sorts of extra outlays." Such an explanation is very taking on account of its simplicity, and completely tallies with the current notion of Jewish exploitation; but impartial and attentive investigations do not bear out such a hasty conclusion.

The question of the Jewish practice of leasing land by proxy attracted my attention at the very beginning of my career as Governor. I could not clearly account to myself in what way the Jew succeeded in inducing land-owners to agree to a practice absolutely forbidden by the law. I therefore used every opportunity to learn in detail the stipulations of such secret agreements. My information grew in proportion as the range of my acquaintance among land-owners widened, and I found that the majority of the local land-owners, including the most biassed anti-Semites, always preferred a Jewish tenant to a Greek, Armenian, or Russian. Thus the K——s, a family well known to us in Kishinev, consisting of many separate and independent members,

heartily abhor "those Jews in general." Their estates, however, they lease exclusively to Jews at fourteen rubles a desyatin, although tenants of other nationalities offered them sixteen rubles. I have known cases where land-owners, tempted by a high price, refused to lease to their old Jewish tenants, but afterwards regretting this seized the first opportunity to restore their former tenants.

If it were possible to start something like an investigation in St. Petersburg among the owners of estates located in the southwest the results obtained would prove still more curious. Members of the State Council, Senators, even Ministers, who have been instrumental in introducing restrictive Jewish legislation, stoop to leasehold by proxy. I say this not to their disparagement, as experience along this line had long ago proved the viciousness of the May laws. According to this view there can be nothing reprehensible in the fact that one person desires to lease his property to another ready to take it. It is conceded by most that Jewish tenants are remarkable for their faithful, exact payment of rent, and generally for their conscientious fulfilment of all the terms of the agreement. But what is considered still more valuable is their business methods. A Jewish tenant runs his farm business in such a way as to avoid any friction with neighbors, and affords no ground for litigation and disputes, endeavoring to settle every difficulty in a peaceful way, without resort to the courts or the authorities. A Jew will not collect his debts by such methods as seizing the grain in the stacks, selling his neighbor's property, and the like. He bides his time, jogs the debtor's memory, chooses the right occasion, and gets his bill without the aid of the police or the sheriff. He does not mar the mutual relations of owner and neighbor, and creates no basis for disputes and hostility. On account of all this, I have, for example, never received or heard any complaints from the people of the province against Jewish tenants, while we had some litigation in connection with difficulties in which either land-owners themselves, or especially non-Jewish tenants, were principals. I think it entirely correct to say that Jewish land lease in Bessarabia is an evil in so far as it is land lease and not because it is Jewish. At any rate, this conclusion will not be questioned either by the land-owners or by the peasants of Bessarabia.

With all the strictness of the law prohibiting Jews from living

in villages, every land-owner, every large vine-dresser and vine-grower, has some Jews on his premises whose personal inviolability he secures by a ceaseless round of solicitation of the police boards and the higher provincial officers. Wine-growers and cellar-keepers in Bessarabia are Jews almost to a man. The Wolfensons, father and son, have laid out and equipped the best vineyards in the province by choosing the French and German varieties of grape suitable to the local climate and soil. It is they, again, who prepared the first local nurseries of the phylloxera-proof American vine. The famous vineyards of Kristi and Kasso were brought up to date by the labors of Wolfenson.

The nurseries of the I. C. A., the Jewish Colonization Association, and its rôle in developing local fruit culture and vine-growing I have mentioned in Chapter XI. I will add that Ettinger, the agriculturist at the head of this nursery, created quite a school of practical gardeners, and doubtless had a great deal to do with improving local fruit culture and vine-growing. It is a secret to none that the vineyards of the Bessarabian peasants are slowly but surely perishing, and that the indolent, sluggish, and ignorant Moldavians, in spite of the efforts of the Zemstvo, have not as yet prepared to fight in the proper way the curse of the phylloxera and mildew. Jews, with their unmistakable inclination and fitness for vine-dressing, could, by leasing orchards and vineyards, excite the emulation of the people by their own labor and example, showing them the new methods, and thus performing a useful function in the rural districts.

The yearly export of Bessarabian dried prunes to the value of two million rubles is carried on by Jews. They were the first to go into the business of improved prune-drying, opened up markets for prunes, and raised the prices of plum growths. It is also Jews who export poultry, eggs, feathers, down, and all other subsidiary products of local farming.

Tobacco-growing has of late fallen off all over Bessarabia, partly owing to excise regulations favoring large planters exclusively. I found in the province altogether about ten thousand desyatins occupied by the tobacco plant, but up to 1882, when Jews freely leased land unmolested, the tobacco plantations of Bessarabia occupied about twenty-five thousand desyatins, and almost all this acreage was leased and cultivated by Jews. In January and February they laid out their hot-beds· in summer

they weeded the plants, slipped off the blossoms, and removed the withered leaves; the operations of harvesting and curing were carried on in autumn, while the beginning of winter was the time for sorting and packing the product. Thus whole families of Jews were earning right through the year, while the local landowners, who had no spare time for the highly intensive tobacco culture, derived good incomes from their land parcels.

Early in the spring of every year Bulgarians come to Bessarabia to lease kitchen-gardens, which the people here do not cultivate. In the autumn, after selling off their truck, they leave the country and carry off our money abroad. It is hard to imagine what harm or loss would occur to the local population if, instead of the foreign Bulgarians, Jews, who are Russian subjects, would engage in kitchen-gardening in the country places, an occupation for which they are fit and to which they are inclined.

I had many occasions to observe at Kishinev the easy-going Moldavian hauling to market a wagon load of hay or grain, and then stretching out in the shade to smoke his pipe. The bustling, nimble Jew, fussy and fidgety, button-holed prospective customers praising the farm produce, ran the round of the stores with the samples, and finally, having found a customer and having agreed with him about the price, fairly dragged up his principal to have his accounts settled. Pocketing his money, the Moldavian, with an air of good-natured gravity, handed his agent a silver coin of fifteen or twenty kopecks and went home.

Many people are ready to call—and, indeed, do call—such acts of Jews outrageous exploitation; but I fail to see where, in this case, the detrimental influence of the agent entered, so long as he did not pool his interest with the buyer and did not swindle the seller out of his price. It is impossible to watch over the country people to such an extreme degree as if they were feeble-minded children, and there is no ground for generalizing separate cases of deceit and fraud, and identifying them with hypothetical traits supposed to be specifically Jewish.

On my visits to the villages I tried to ascertain the part that Jews play in buying up the farm products on the spot, and spoke a good deal on this subject with the peasants. In such cases, I gathered from their repeated declarations, to debar such buyers from free access to the country places was of no advan-

tage to the peasants; indeed, the seller derives more advantage from a sale made at home than under market conditions. In the first case, he has his grain in his granary or cellar, and is free to sell or bide his time; he is thus master of the situation. In the market he finds himself dependent upon a variety of conditions: fluctuations in price, accidental variations in shipment, weather and road conditions, and, finally, pooling of buyers. The persecutions, then, to which Jewish buyers driving around the country districts are subjected, on the plea of protecting the country people, seemed to me just as little intelligible as are a good many other things in the ill-fated Jewish question.

Stopping at hamlets and villages in my trips through the province, I never missed an opportunity to question the people about their relations to the Jews, who, though few in number, have preserved their right to live in these villages. The answers always showed that there no animosity was felt by the Christians towards the Jews. I noticed often that those who answered did not understand what interested me, and it was only after repeated and more detailed explanations that I would get an answer like the following: "Well, why on earth animosity? Let them live; they make us fur cloaks. Would you have us, then, do without them, and buy every trifle in the store?"

I would sometimes notice among the Moldavians a certain shade of pride in relation to their Jewish agents—something like the attitude of a superior to his inferior, of a master to his servant. But this feeling did not develop any further into dislike and animosity. I could not, in fact, detect in Bessarabian country places even a shadow of rancor towards Jews—the feeling which, unexpectedly and apparently without cause, sometimes breaks out in fashionable drawing-rooms and in other places remote from real life.

Jewish traders in Bessarabia, as everywhere, showed their usual traits—knowledge of the market, clever use of credit, quick floating of capital in connection with small margin of profits. Their weak point was also manifest—the offering of a glut of goods that were cheap but of poor quality. I was little interested in the subject of Jewish commerce as lying outside of my task, but I am in a position to give some very curious information about one Kishinev merchant. Placing his orders for factory

goods with prominent Moscow houses, this merchant, P——, kept a jobbing-house at Kishinev, from which he managed to sell Moscow fabrics to wholesalers at one per cent. below the factory price, that is, with six per cent. off, while the factory allowed only five per cent. off. For this reason all southern dealers ordered their Moscow goods through him. His secret proved to be simple. P—— invested the whole of his large capital in the business, and as he paid for his orders in cash was allowed by the manufacturers ten per cent. off. Allowing his customers six per cent. off, he had a four-per-cent. excess, by means of which, at a double or treble yearly turn-over, he realized a sure and sufficient income.

In the above enumerated special lines of Jewish activity in Bessarabia I failed to find any facts that would invite the charge against the Jews of systematically robbing the people. With all my efforts to connect individual cases within my knowledge of abuse on the part of Jews, to reduce them to a system, to detect in them planned-out methods—so to speak, the " national mission " of the Jews—I was forced to the conclusion that the Bessarabian Jews, be they land-owners or tenants, merchants or forestallers, middlemen or agents, may eat their hard-earned bread with as unruffled a conscience as the rest of the people of our land. Besides, I convinced myself that the most fiery denunciation of Jewish exploiters is to be traced in Bessarabia to the ranks of those who had not taken the trouble to find out how the exploited themselves feel on the subject. Indeed, the alleged sufferers do not, in most cases, understand those who plead for them, and before the invariably negative answer as to the weight of Jewish oppression can be drawn from the peasants, it has to be made plain to them in what this traditional oppression is supposed to consist.

However, there are in Bessarabia lines of occupations that, being in themselves objectionable, constitute, as it were, a Jewish specialty. It must be conceded that the cases arising in connection with the smuggling business and complaints against usury are checkered with Jewish names.

I intentionally set these two questions apart from the whole number of occupations where Jews come under our observation, as they deal with acts that constitute crimes punishable by law. Besides, the activity of Jewish smugglers is detrimental to the

state treasury, and not to the surrounding population, to whom such smuggling of goods is even profitable. At any rate, it is a difficult matter, in connection with the question of contraband, to plead the expediency of the laws restricting the rights of residence and travelling for Jews. Let it be recalled that the fifty-verst tract along the frontier is the only section of Bessarabia from which the Jews have been debarred by law, without a break, during the period of 1812–1904. If, then, in spite of such prohibition, they not only entered this tract, but also organized this illicit industry at the frontier, then the inference would seem to be that in each case they ought to be held responsible to the full extent of the law, but not on this account would it seem right to forbid some Jew of Bendery to raise watermelons at the line of the province of Kherson.

Usury in Bessarabia is not, in my opinion, more extended than elsewhere in the Empire. I have not heard at Kishinev stories of fabulous exploits, of discounting loan shops and notorious pawnbrokers, who, as in Moscow, furnished themes for novels and tales conserving the memories of their characters as of the founders of millionaire families known to all Moscow. But still the practice of loaning money at extortionate rates flourishes in Bessarabian towns and villages, and it must be admitted that the majority of the local usurers are, to judge by the opinion of the Bessarabian judiciary, of Jewish descent.

I was especially interested in illicit credit transactions carried on in the villages. I knew, from my experiences in the central provinces, that rural Russia, deprived of the facilities for obtaining small credit, is working out a special type of usurers who manage to get on short loans, in cash payments and in service, a yearly profit of over one hundred per cent. I have known many cases where a Kaluga peasant, for a loan of ten rubles to run three months, engaged beyond the payment of his debt to give his creditor the use of his team to take him to town two or three times, and besides to come out on his farm to do some "harvesting and mowing" during the rush of harvest-time. Essentially the same phenomenon I observed in Bessarabia, with the only difference that here the loan rates were more definitely fixed and the transactions were reduced to writing in the form of notes and bills. Jewish money-lenders are in the habit of taking duplicate notes, one of which bears the character of forfeit for breach of

contract. The latter, in case of prompt payment of the debt, is returned to the debtor, and the interest is in this instance quite moderate. But the debt often becomes overdue, and the debtor fails to pay his creditor. It is, however, necessary to add that the local courts have long ago discounted this Jewish practice of taking double notes, and very willingly and easily nonsuit such claims when testimonial evidence or the court's opinion warrants it. I must notice in this connection that cases of collecting a debt on the duplicate note in case of accurate payment are extremely rare. As a rule, the forfeit note is returned without any objection in this regard. Jewish money-lenders, as admitted by all, strive to preserve the honor of the profession intact.

As a result the following may be said about money-lending in Bessarabia: Admitting that competition in this field has left the Jews to a great extent as conquerors, it is a matter of great regret that usury in general is so wide-spread and that the war against this evil is confined to court fines without passing into constructive effort to organize cheap rural credit. What the people would gain, however, in case the majority of money-lenders of Bessarabia were Greeks or Armenians remains unknown.

The information and impressions contained in this chapter served as material for J. L. Block (since deceased) and myself in answering the above-mentioned question of the Ministry of the Interior.

After consulting together we decided to give a perfectly frank expression of opinion to the author of the Regulations of May 3, 1882. This opinion was not only that those regulations deceived the expectations of their author, since they did not succeed in checking the agitations and demands of the expelled Jews, but also that the principle underlying the May laws was not in harmony with the interests of the people; for by legislative enactment these laws sought to protect the people in questions that were everywhere held to be exempt from legislative interference. Block wrote the memorial with his own hand, and I still keep his autograph as a remembrance of the good colleague and conscientious worker with whom I shared the cares and labors of our not too easy office.

In the memorandum on the Jewish question submitted to the

Ministry of the Interior, as well as in the preceding introduction, I avoided every evidence of sentimental philo-Judaism, against which W. K. Plehve had warned me upon my departure for Bessarabia. I also alluded to none of the general considerations regarding the rôle of the Jews in world history, nor did I mention their national characteristics, the emphasis of which gives to the question an aggressive tone. But after a sojourn of a year and a half in Kishinev, I naturally could not remain indifferent to the Jewish question in literature and in life, and afterwards, when I took part in the deliberations of the first Duma, I was obliged to take a position in regard to the different methods of a practical solution of the Jewish question in our legislation.

Jacob, the Old Testament Jew, in whom, according to popular conviction, the talents and faults of his race are most clearly mirrored, wrestled with God until the break of day and obtained His aid and blessing. He was finally victorious, although at the cost of a lameness, and received not only the name of Israel, which has become the tribal name of his offspring, but also the promise of innumerable progeny, lands, and riches.

In this biblical narrative people acquainted with the Holy Scriptures detect the first revelation and the parent stock of the inherent Jewish qualities—heedless courage and boundless aspiration. But at the same time the story suggests the destiny of the Jews—through long struggles and heavy sacrifices to attain goods of every description. One can really not help thinking, in reading the Book of Deuteronomy, that the fate of the Jews is truly prophesied in the Old Testament. In the ever-changing relation of the head of the Jews to His chosen people we get at the same time a foresight of the wavering position held by the Jews as regards the laws of the foreign country in which they found themselves. "The Lord hath chosen thee out of His love for thee and to keep His covenant," it says in one chapter of Deuteronomy; but with this promise it is stated that no one of his "evil generation" shall see the good land which the Lord had promised to their forefathers. Only in the case of Caleb and his descendants is an exception made. (Deut. i: 35, 36).

The advocates of a limitation of the rights of the Jews will learn with a shock that the people of Israel are destined to have "cities they have not built, with houses filled with goods they have not earned, with vineyards they have not planted." On

the other hand, there are not a few persons even among us who breathe more freely when they learn that their innermost desires have been expressed in the following verses:

"And the Lord shall scatter thee among all peoples. . . .

"And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, . . . but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes and sorrow of mind.

"And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear night and day, and shalt have none assurance of thy life.

"In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning!" (Deut. xxviii:64–67.)

One can find no sure guide for a decision concerning the Jews even in the opinions expressed in this regard by explorers of the Orient, historians of civilization, scholars and philosophers. The opponents of Judaism often quote the words of Herder, who pointed out that the Jews in Europe have always been and always will be an Asiatic race, foreign to our part of the globe. They are appalled at the vigor of Jewish blood, at the strength of the Jewish idea of conquest; they compare these dangerous characteristics with our European decadence, and in the willingness of European peoples to approach the Jewish question from the stand-point of a higher plane of justice they see weakness and a sad misconception of ideals. In the opinion of H. D. Chamberlain, one of the latest investigators of the influence which the Jews have exercised on European peoples, "equal rights" appears "an empty phrase of a people inclined to idle gossip." But many share the opinion of the Orientalist Lassen, who states that the Indo-European peoples, among whom he reckons the Jews, are higher and more gifted than others, and this fact at the same time somewhat soothes our fear of coming under Jewish dominion. Not a few leading spirits advocate protecting the Jews, from the stand-point of Christian morality and tolerance, on the theory that in the Christian teaching there is no room for religious exclusiveness or for dark thoughts of exile and persecution, and that resistance to a people foreign to the Christian mode of thought is sufficiently guaranteed by the triumphant development of the Christian spirit. But even here one meets with answers dictated by a hysterical fear of Jewish influence.

One of the most modern German philosophers, Dühring, has decided that Judaism is no religion, but a race, a tribe inimical to all civilized nations of the present day. Dühring finds that there is no possibility of abandoning Judaism and at the same time of preserving Christian traditions. He is of the opinion that "Christianity originated with the prophets of the Old Testament," and finds that a Christian cannot seriously be an anti-Semite. Hence he proposes abandoning the Christian religion in order to get rid of Judaism.

This last view will hardly meet with approval among the masses of the people in Russia. The ancient reproach of our people against the Jews, that they "crucified Christ," indicates the condemnation of this historical fact in Russian religious consciousness, but it does not justify the conclusion that the Russian people are religiously intolerant. On the other hand, we find in the mass of Russian Orthodox believers an instinctive fear of Judaism and that unaccountable hatred which comes from the realization of an ever-progressing, irrepressible victory on the part of a foreign and hostile force. The agitation against the Jews, which has grown stronger of late, and which travels from above to beneath, from the centre to the periphery, from the palaces to the cottages, is firmly seized upon by the cottage population, who, filled with hatred, listen questioningly to the threatening warnings of their official protectors and worthy advocates. It can well be said that our people are not inclined to "idle gossip," that the thought of equal rights is as foreign to them, as, for example, the equal rights of women, the suggestion of which in the Duma evoked despairing cries from the peasants. It may even be admitted that the agrarian reform, which now holds the attention of the peasants, causes here and there a man to pay some attention to the voices of those who are taking pains to impress on the agricultural population the idea that the Jews are striving for a general distribution of land, so that they may gain possession of the best pieces for themselves. But this impression is only temporary, and I incline to the opinion that it is not a salient cause of the national opposition to projects of general political equality that provide, among other things, for the liberation of the Jews from the restrictions now laid upon them by the law.

For myself personally the Jewish question has become clear,

since I have taken the trouble to study it from the stand-point of the interests and the moral needs of the Russian people.

One of my nearest collaborators in Bessarabia, von R——n, the oldest councillor of the provincial administration and a very kindly man, liked to tell sometimes of his presence of mind and his police ability as demonstrated on one occasion at his former post. Twenty years before he had been transferred from a regiment of dragoons to the post of a police chief in Ismail, and one day, as chief executive official, he was called upon to be present at the execution of a Jewish criminal. The condemned man hung the required number of minutes and was taken down from the gallows, when the physician was supposed to confirm his death. But it appeared that they had forgotten to cut off the Jew's long, thick beard, thanks to which, although the noose had deprived the man of consciousness, it had not killed him.

"Imagine yourself in my position," said R——n. "The doctor told me the Jew would come back to life in five minutes. What was I to do? To hang him a second time I held to be impossible, and yet I had to execute the death sentence."

"But what did you do, then?" I asked, and received the memorable answer:

"I had him buried quickly before he regained consciousness."

Von R——n admitted that he would never have buried a live Christian; the case of the buried Jew, however, caused him no embarrassment. He was convinced that he had shown great sagacity and presence of mind.

Another characteristic incident occurred not long ago in Moscow. A young Jewess wished to take some sort of a course of lessons—in stenography, I believe; the police, however, kept sending her out of the city because she had no right of abode there. The young girl, discouraged in her efforts to secure a legal permit, resorted to a deception, and obtained a certificate for the profession that young Jewesses are allowed to practice everywhere. She did not succeed, however, in lulling to sleep the watchful eye of the police. She was subjected to a medical examination, was shown not to have pursued her calling, and was definitively sent back to her home.

In the two cases just described, which are absolutely authentic, I am not so much appalled at the fate of the victims of some particular attitude of Russian officialdom towards the

Jews as at the process of thought which has brought our average officials half-unconsciously to employ a special moral code against Jews, who are without legal rights. Less harmful for the Jews than for Russia is, in my opinion, this dulling of the moral sense which appears in the case of men appointed as guardians of the law, and which is regarded as a sure sign of a hopeful career and of proper qualities of subordination.

Is the dignity of the Russian army increased by the anti-Semitic propaganda favored by the military officials, and carried on by aid of the well-known brochures and appeals to safeguard the military reputation, and is the attitude of officers and soldiers during the Jewish pogroms in keeping with that military dignity?

Is it not more just to call those hate-envenomed sermons against the Jews, which the clerical authorities allow from the pulpits only because the civil authorities have likewise placed the Jews without the pale of the law, a decomposition of the Christian spirit?

Therefore the legal recognition of equal rights of the Jews does not shock me in the least. I see in it the possibility of freeing ourselves from the struggle against the Jews which is ruining us. If we must struggle against the influence of the Jews, let the fight be on the road of peaceable competition and natural development. I am convinced that the Russian people will lose hereby neither its material possessions nor its intellectual property.

XIII

St. Petersburg in January, 1904—Declaration of war—The Czar and his view on the war—Plehve—Council for the consideration of the Jewish question—Deliberation of the governors on a project of reforms of rural administration — My transference to Kharkov — Prince Svyatopolk-Mirski—My call to Tver—Departure from Kishinev.

IN the middle of January, 1904, I went to St. Petersburg to take part in the duties performed by the commission appointed to consider the Jewish question. Prince I. M. Obolenski, ex-Governor of Kherson and Kharkov, was appointed its president, and among the members whom I remember were Vatatzi, the Governor of Kovno; Count Pahlen, Governor of Wilna; Martynov, of Warsaw; Klingenberg, the Governor of Moghilev; and the Moscow Chief of Police, Trepov. Besides, there were also the Director of the Police Department, Lopukhin, and two communal workers from Kherson, called later through the recommendation of Count Obolenski; these were the City Mayor, Sokovnin, and the Marshal of the Nobility, Malayev.

I dimly recollect a few more members of the commission, which consisted of fifteen to twenty persons, but in order to avoid possible confusion I shall not mention them at all.

My arrival at the capital coincided with an important fact which at that time was of no personal concern to me, but which caused me much trouble afterwards. When I called on Lopukhin I found him very much excited over the news published in the *Government Messenger:* that by his Majesty's command the provincial Zemstvo of Tver and the district Zemstvo of Novotorzhek were deprived of their electoral rights, and were to be governed by government appointees. Such a violent encroachment upon the rights of the Zemstvo regulations in one of the foremost zemstvos in Russia had greatly stirred Lopukhin, and the fact that the Minister had prepared this revolutionary change against his opinion and advice was very puzzling to him.

From Arbuzov, the Vice-Director of the Department of General Affairs, who impressed me always as a very honest and sympathetic man, I learned on my visit to him on that day that my memorial on the Jewish question caused amazement in the Ministry, and that I was invited to take part in the commission only by the express wish of the president, who desired to have among its members representatives of various opinions.

Arbuzov spoke of my memorial with a feeling akin to reverence for the "audacity" of its contents. From further conversation I ascertained that I could hardly expect the Minister of the Interior to approve my views. And, indeed, Plehve's manner towards me at our first meeting after my return from Kishinev was, to say the least, strange. It was certainly to be expected that he would have something to ask me, and would wish to ascertain something from me; but, in fact, he greeted me very coolly, uttered not a word, and only looked askance with an expression of fatigue and indifference. I reminded the Minister that I had come to St. Petersburg at his command. I received the reply that topics of the commission's business routine would be determined by the president. I arose and left with the thought of how uncomfortable must be the position of those officials directly under such an unamiable Minister.

The first session of the commission took place two days after. We there became acquainted with one another, conversed about different side issues, and went home. On the next day a gala dinner was given by the Minister of the Interior, to which all the members of the commission were invited. The amiable host received the guests very cordially, and tried to put aside all constraint in his bearing with them. He was gay and animated. But the unfortunate Bessarabian Governor was all the time on the so-called "blind spot" of Plehve's visual sphere. Me the Minister seemed not to perceive. He greeted me coldly, and literally did not address a single word to me during the whole evening. After dinner he mingled with his guests, who stood about with cups of coffee in their hands. He was exceedingly amiable with my neighbor, whom he asked, among other things, "Well, are you ready to fight the Jews?" and then giving me the cut direct, he started not less amiably to converse with the guest on the other side of me.

Plehve's pointed attitude annoyed me, and the next day I

told two or three persons close to him that I should not again be the Minister's guest, and if again invited should simply decline. Some days later the Minister and I had an understanding. This occurred during the recess of a well-attended session, about which I must speak more in detail. The Zemstvo department suggested a large number of changes affecting the peasantry and the village courts. It was intended, in the spring of 1904, to summon in every province councils of local workers for the preliminary consideration of this extensive scheme.

I do not exactly remember the limits of the task set us, but it was clear that the Ministry, having proposed some half-way changes in regulating the land question, wished at the same time to restrict the application of those principles that had been so energetically defended during the two former reigns, and wished particularly to preserve inviolate the institution of Zemstvo chiefs.

Plehve decided to summon to St. Petersburg, in January, half the governors, the future chairmen of the conferences, and with them to reach an understanding of a desirable mode of action. The second half of the governors were to meet in February. Plehve, Stishinski, and Gurko, with a few other members of the Council of Ministers, ex-governors, and ourselves, who came from our provinces as their "masters" and competent persons, formed a solemn assembly. The Minister made an introductory speech full of ambiguities, but well recited. Stishinski and Gurko, in their reports, explained more minutely the problem facing us.

An intelligent and careful selection of the members of the province conferences was deemed desirable; attention was called to the danger of widening the limits of the programme, of digressing too far from it; it was recommended that only questions on the programme be answered; freedom of opinion certainly was not to be hindered, but efforts should be made to restrict the discussion to definite limits. After that the chairman asked the governors to express their opinions on the reports presented them.

I unconsciously recalled my school-days, when the pupils, awaiting the black-board summons, hid themselves behind the boys up front, their eyes cast down to escape the teacher's attention. Alas! among my new comrades there was missing the head scholar, always ready to answer every question. All maintained a strained silence, and vain were the encouraging

and kindly looks of Plehve. Not hearing aught from us, he for a little while conversed with his neighbor Stishinski, and afterwards—having seemingly lost his patience, called—I am sure purposely, the name of one of the present governors, without looking at him, asking him to express his opinion.

The man called was deaf. Through long experience he had learned to understand the words addressed to him by watching the speaker's lips.

Unfortunately this time he was innocently drawing something, and did not hear the repeated invitation of Plehve. A few jostles from his neighbor awakened him, but quite some time lapsed before he understood what the matter was, and, assuming a serious expression, he said that first of all attention was to be given to the shaft-horse. The shaft-horse is the middle horse of a Russian troika; upon him devolves much more work than upon his two fellows. We all knew that X. X. is the owner of an ancient horse-stud, but nevertheless we were amazed at his ill-timed utterance. In his further talk he explained that he had in mind the chairman of the future advisory committees, upon the proper selection of whom the success of the work depends. We did not go into our project any further this time, and Plehve hurriedly invited us to tea in the adjoining room.

The entire half-hour recess Plehve devoted to conversation with me. He seemingly wanted to efface the unpleasant impression he had made upon me at our previous meetings. He spoke about Kishinev, and about his complete non-interference with my activity. When I asked him whether he did not regret it, he admitted most frankly, with the animated expression of a whole-hearted man, that he disapproved of my conduct towards the Bessarabian Jews. From our conversation it appeared that Plehve received information from somebody in Kishinev, and of this he remembered two things that he brought against me: the burial of the Torah, and the visits I paid to some Kishinev Jews. But suddenly, for some reason, these two facts seemed to have lost their significance in his eyes; he spoke about them half-jokingly, half-questioningly to me, and I became convinced that his previous coldness towards me was due to our attack on the laws of May 3d. My conjecture seemed to be quite probable, as Plehve did not mention a single word either about my memorial or about the Jewish commission.

The recess and the tea did not make our thoughts any clearer, and when it came to the interchange of opinions it appeared that we had none to interchange. The Minister became tired of us, and he closed the session by announcing that the next meeting would be conducted by his assistant Stishinski. The next session took place in a few days, and some of the members, having rid themselves of the hypnotic influence that Plehve undoubtedly exercised over many, participated in the debate on the ministerial plan.

Not many could congratulate themselves upon their success; at least such was the opinion of Stishinski, who at the close of the session said to one of his intimate friends, "*C'est a pleurer.*" "Enough to make one shed tears," was the impression the Assistant Minister had of the session of the governors in 1904. Now, in the beginning of 1907, when the personnel of governors has been changed almost entirely, every competent person must admit that the change was greatly for the worse.

The hundred and first, or perhaps the thousand and first, St. Petersburg commission convoked for the consideration of the legislation affecting the Jews did not last long and accomplished but little. It must be noticed that the specific feature of the government commissions of mixed composition is the complete ignoring of the preceding work of the same kind. Each problem is treated anew, everything is discussed over again, with no trace of any consistency or any consecutive deliberation. The only persons among us versed in the history of the question were Count Obolenski, Lopukhin, and Vatatzi; the rest were floundering in darkness without any definite idea and plan. Perhaps only Trepov was free from the reproach of lack of consistency and determination, although he kept silent all the time. He only watched us constantly with his round, slightly protruding eyes. If, instead of him, only the Trepov cossack cap had been placed there, its owner would still have ready on all the questions one and the same answer: "Each measure is good and acceptable that is directed against the Jews."

Our chairman, Prince Ivan Mikhaylovich Obolenski is, on account of the Kharkov and Poltava agrarian disorders of 1902, commonly known to newspaper readers as the first and most cruel suppressor of the peasant uprisings. But the odious fame of the governors and the governor-generals, based upon their

stupidly repressive measures against the peasants in 1905–1906, is unjustly associated with the beginning of the agrarian disorders in the province of Kharkov. Prince Obolenski was not justified at that time in regarding the spontaneous outbursts of violence in the villages as a part of the general protest of the people against the government. He directed the whole of his energies towards the suppression of robbers and incendiaries, not entering into any deep consideration of the causes of crime. I do not intend to apologize for him for the measures he permitted in certain cases, measures such as corporal punishment which are repugnant to the feeling of self-respect, and to his own views which are highly esteemed in government circles. But it should be remembered that he spared not himself, and, risking health and life, with a handful of soldiers managed to divert a pogrom, and did not become demoralized by the repressions exercised, as many of our civil and military authorities did.

Those who accuse Prince Obolenski do not take into consideration his behavior in Finland, where he, regardless of the furious attacks of the nationalistic press and the obviously friendly attitude of the court towards the Bobrinski policy, insisted upon the obliteration of the traditions and methods of his predecessor. For that he was rewarded with the Emperor's coldness, broken health, and the reputation of a traitor to Russian interests.

Towards the Jews, Prince Obolenski was tolerant and well disposed, though some of the features of their national character he considered unsympathetic. In frequent talks about them, he had many funny and witty anecdotes, but during the sessions of the commission he was impartial and tactful, mitigating the ardor of the anti-Semites, and showing a thorough understanding of the problem.

Soon two currents developed in the membership of the commission. In the first were the minority, which consisted of such uncompromising opponents of the May laws as Lopukhin, Vatatzi, Count Pahlen, and myself; in the second were all the rest, whose feelings towards the Jews were less friendly. After the preliminary discussion and the arrangement of the different law chapters by sections, the minority proposed the discussion of the expediency of the abolition of the laws of May 3, 1902. The laws were but temporary, made with the purpose of settling

the Jewish question, not through the revision of separate restrictory regulations sanctioned by law, but through the enforcing of such restrictions, the necessity for which remained to be proved.

It was proposed to start by granting equal rights and to discuss the exceptions, the vital necessity of which was thought to be proved in each case by the personal convictions and experience of the commission.

Such an order, which freed us from the tiresome work of investigation, of petty rules accumulated in the legislation of a long period, seemed to be very convenient, and I thought it would be accepted. But our work was not to endure. On January 27th St. Petersburg was aroused by the news of the night attack of the Japanese upon our fleet. The war had begun, and in a few days the commission delegates returned to their respective provinces.

By a previous arrangement, just before my departure I was to present myself to the Emperor at the Winter Palace. Before that I met the Marshal of the Bessarabian Nobility, who had just been honored with a reception by his Majesty. M. N. Krupenski told me that he was much perturbed by the import of the Japanese attack, by the fear of its consequences, and by the indignation aroused by the enemy's unscrupulous manner of declaring war. But he was met with the quiet and indifferent remark by a person (meaning the Czar) that at the palace the assault of the enemy was regarded as but the "bite of a flea." The serene and even joyful spirit of the Czar amazed me as well on entering his cabinet. His Majesty wore a white *litevka* similar to that in which I saw him in June. Greeting me courteously, he gave vent to his satisfaction that all was quiet and tranquil in Bessarabia, and expressed his wish that the governors return to their respective provinces. I informed his Majesty that I should return that very day to Kishinev, and incidentally spoke of the misfortune which had befallen Russia in the form of an unexpected war. The actual words which the Czar then addressed me I have exactly retained in memory, and present them thus word for word: "I feel quite at ease as to the issue of the war," he said, "and it will be now much easier for you." At first I was not able to grasp the Czar's meaning, but he declared that war would inspire patriotic sentiments, as a result of which there would be a cessation of the anti-monarchial

agitation, and thus the local authorities would find it easier to maintain peace and order. "I can give you pleasant news from Kishinev," added the Czar—"demonstrations with divine service and processions with my picture have taken place there. Yesterday I received a patriotic despatch!"

The same evening I left for Kishinev without calling at the Ministry. The number of persons foretelling our defeats in the war was at that time not very large in St. Petersburg. "Boss Plehve" (the Minister of the Interior was ordinarily so called) once became enraged against Lopukhin for his scepticism expressed in a talk with the Minister. "Is the following arithmetical problem not clear to you: Which is the greater—fifty or a hundred and fifty millions?" demanded the irritated Minister.

On my return to Kishinev I found our ladies quarrelling with the Vice-Governor as to the organization of the work of the Red Cross. Block wanted to subordinate them to the local branch of the society; the ladies wanted to organize their own committee. It was finally settled in some way, and my house began to be filled from morning to night with things prepared for the battle-fields.

A patriotic demonstration and parade through the streets with a portrait of the Czar occurred only once during my presence in the city, and was a dismal fizzle.

About thirty lads, chiefly Jews, fled into my yard with the flag and the Czar's portrait, five policemen running after them, and stopping before my house. I went down the staircase, took the portrait in one hand, the flag in the other, put them into my drawing-room, expressed my satisfaction to the participants, and advised them to go home. This was the end of it.

The winter passed; the disquieting Easter week which I described in the fifth chapter passed too. In June I was present at the requiem in Ackerman, and then a telegram with the news of Plehve's death reached me. In the beginning of October I was at Jassy, and on my return I did not think that dear Bessarabia would soon be strange to me.

I received from the Minister of the Interior a cipher despatch as follows:

"Do you agree to a transfer to Kharkov? Very desirable.

"Count Svyatopolk-Mirski."

Notwithstanding that the Kharkov province is considered in Russia almost the first administratively, and that the circumstances which brought about the suggestion of my transfer were rather flattering to me, I was very much grieved at the idea of leaving Bessarabia. Besides that, Kharkov is an expensive and tumultuous city, disagreeable on account of police matters, very inconvenient on account of local official relations, and presenting great difficulties socially. Its higher educational institutions, an appellate court, and a multiplicity of higher military officials would cause the Governor so much bother and fuss that, in comparison, the Kishinev troubles became, in my eyes, an agreeable diversion. But, following my rule not to carve out my own fortune, I decided not to refuse categorically, and answered as follows: "I consider myself bound to submit to the wish of your Excellency, although I would prefer to stay in Bessarabia; knowing the conditions, I could serve to her advantage. Besides that, I doubt whether the joint service with the Kharkov Vice-Governor, A——, would bring about the desired harmony among the representatives of the administration."

Nevertheless, October 12th I received a telegram from the director of the department announcing that the "imperial order had been given" and the ukase would issue in a few days. So I left immediately for St. Petersburg.

Of the Kharkov Vice-Governor, A——, I had formed an opinion as far back as our student days. Even at the university he enjoyed an unenviable reputation. And as it often happens with persons of not very good reputation, for self-preservation and the sake of his career he was constantly heralding his absolute devotion to the throne, and his strong faith in the "firm power" and in the "Russian spirit."

He was also well known, it seems, to the Minister, a Kharkov land-owner, because the latter, after having received my telegram, ordered his transfer to another province. But fortune seemed to smile on this type of official, beloved by the courtiers, thanks to an event which became known to the Czar.

It happened that when the troops were leaving Kharkov for the battle-field, A—— ordered straw to be put in the soldiers' cars. This led to a conflict with the railroad officials, and the victory was on the Vice-Governor's side. He was raised to the rank of

chamberlain, and afterwards made Governor of Tomsk, notwithstanding the protests of the Minister, who tried to show that this nomination was an undesirable one. The answer, which I have taken from a reliable source, followed, expressing the hope that A——, after having become Governor, would change for the better. The accident with the straw bedding was mentioned as a decisive factor in his nomination.

The well-known Tomsk massacre, accompanied by the burning down of the theatre and the loss of many lives, soon determined his dismissal; and some facts which became known after his departure have obviously stopped his further career—at least for as long as public opinion will be respected in Russia.

Reaching St. Petersburg, I found the Minister in great embarrassment over the question of filling the immediate vacancy in the governorship of Tver. This position has been considered as a very difficult one, on account of the relations of the government to the "seditious Tver Zemstvo," which has been in an exceptional position, as I mentioned before.

The "confidence" promulgated in September was inconsistent with the appointment of officials to conduct Zemstvo matters, nor did it harmonize with the prohibition from mingling in administrative matters directed against the prominent leaders of the Tver Zemstvo and nobility. It was necessary to find suitable motives for the recalling of the imperial order of January, which disturbed the normal course of the provincial Zemstvo life. Count Mirski, after the conversation with me, thought it advisable to give up the idea of transferring me to Kharkov, and to impose upon me the task of administering the Tver province. I was to investigate the conditions on the spot, and find a way out of the difficult situation in which both the central government and the Zemstvo were involved. For myself, I had nothing against this change. I was glad to get rid of Kharkov, and the relations with Zemstvo workers did not frighten me. But as I learned from the correspondence between the Czar and the Minister of the Interior, obstacles made their appearance on the part of the Czar.

To the first memorial of Prince Mirski, asking his Majesty to sanction changing my nomination to Kharkov, was received a negative from the Czar. The enumeration of such of my qualifications, given by the Minister of the Interior for the neces-

sity of my transfer to Tver, received the logical reply: "The qualifications are equally wanted at Kharkov." The second insistent note of Prince Mirski brought from the Czar a letter to the Minister, in which he expressed as his wish that Zasyadko, who some months ago had been appointed chairman of the Tver Zemstvo by the government, should be nominated Governor of Tver.

Only the third categorical declaration of the impossibility of such a nomination, together with the question as to his personal confidence in the Minister, forced from the Czar the necessary consent. I was to go to Tver straight from Bessarabia, examine the conditions there, and return to St. Petersburg with a ready-made plan of dealing with the Zemstvo. The decree of my nomination was not soon published, and I, after having come back to Kishinev, had time enough to prepare myself for the trip. Never before had I felt as happy as during the week preceding my departure, when I turned over all affairs to the Vice-Governor, and for the first time during my official career had the chance of passing my time free from all troubles, official relations, conventionalities, and administrative diplomacies. The loss of my official position was only pleasant to me, and I never noticed, in the relation of the officials towards me, any of the changes that often appear when a chief retires. All those who served with me, the whole of Kishinev society, evinced towards me and my family signs of the tenderest sympathy. The fine and warm address I received, which I still keep, the hearty hospitality I enjoyed, will be always memorable to me. And the friendly relations I have still preserved with some of the Bessarabian families prompt me to conclude my memoirs about Bessarabia by sending greetings to them all.

THE END