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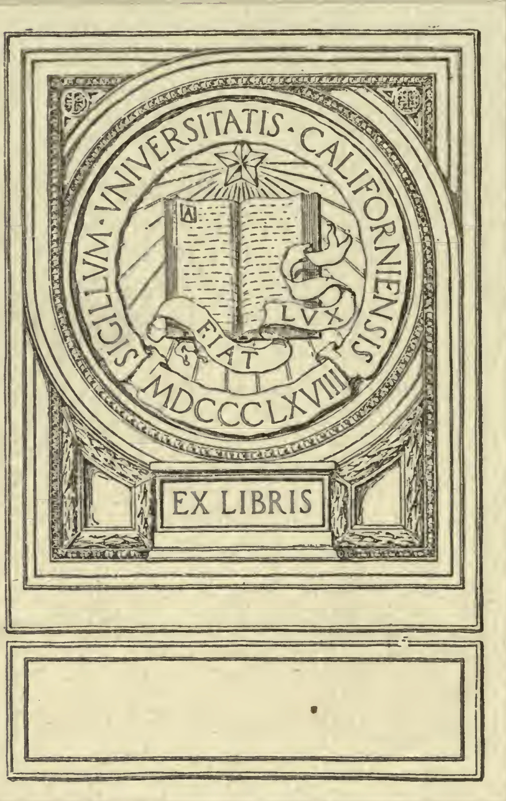
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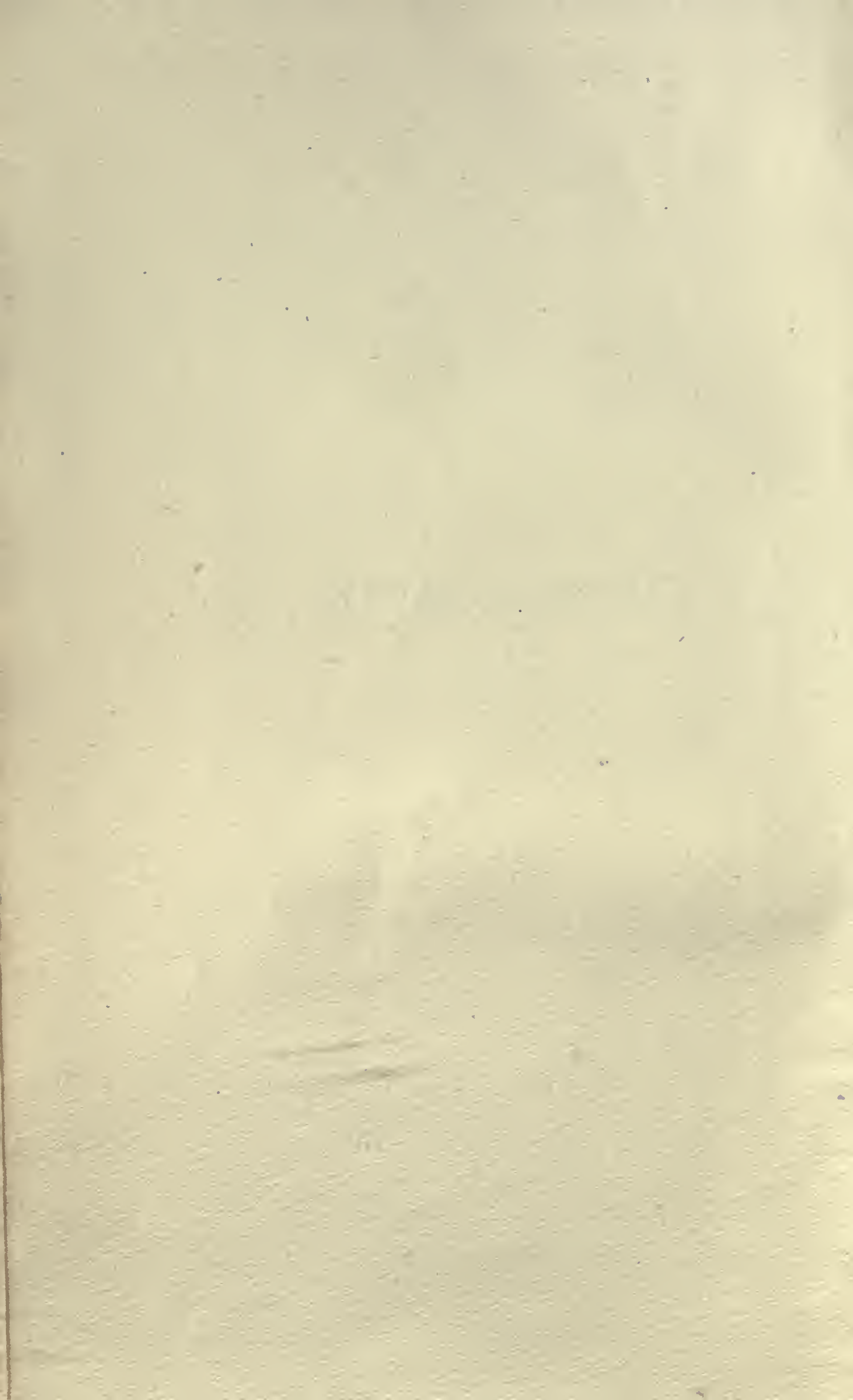
RUSSIA'S RUIN



RUSSIA'S RUIN

BY

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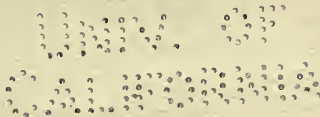

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PREFACE

THIS book is based on articles published in the *Fortnightly Review*. It does not profess to give a complete and connected story of the Russian Revolution. Its object is rather to describe in detail some of the chief factors which caused the Revolution and determined its course.

For the benefit of those without a previous knowledge of Russian history, the chapter " Prelude " sketches the general economic and social conditions which made far-reaching political changes in Russia necessary and inevitable. The chapters " The Success of the Revolution " and " The Failure of the Revolution " may be regarded, each for its own section of the book, as broad outlines, of which the subsequent chapters fill in certain of the details.

The facts set forth here are nearly all derived from documentary sources—most of those in the first section from evidence sworn in courts of law. It is no longer necessary to illustrate the abuses of the Tsarist Government by unverifiable anecdote. The trials of Souhomlinoff and Manasevitch-Manouiloff have shown down to the minutest detail how bad that Government was, and why it was so bad. These two men were typical figures for their respective ranks of the bureaucracy. Their careers tell us more convincingly than volumes of vague generalization how well justified were the attacks on the Old Regime.

After " The Korniloff Affair " was published in its original form, Mr. Kerenski challenged some of its statements. Except where there were good grounds for rejecting his criticisms, the narrative was modified in conformity with them. Mr. Kerenski's *Prelude to Bolshevism* was published after the main text of this book was already in type. It is, however, dealt with in an appendix.

The approximate pronunciation of the principal Russian names occurring in these pages is indicated in a list at the end of the index.

It may be worth while to remind the reader that the normal value of the rouble is about two shillings. Consequently sums in roubles may be roughly converted into pounds sterling by the simple process of dropping the last digit of the amount. Thus 100 roubles becomes £10, 1,000 roubles £100, and so on.

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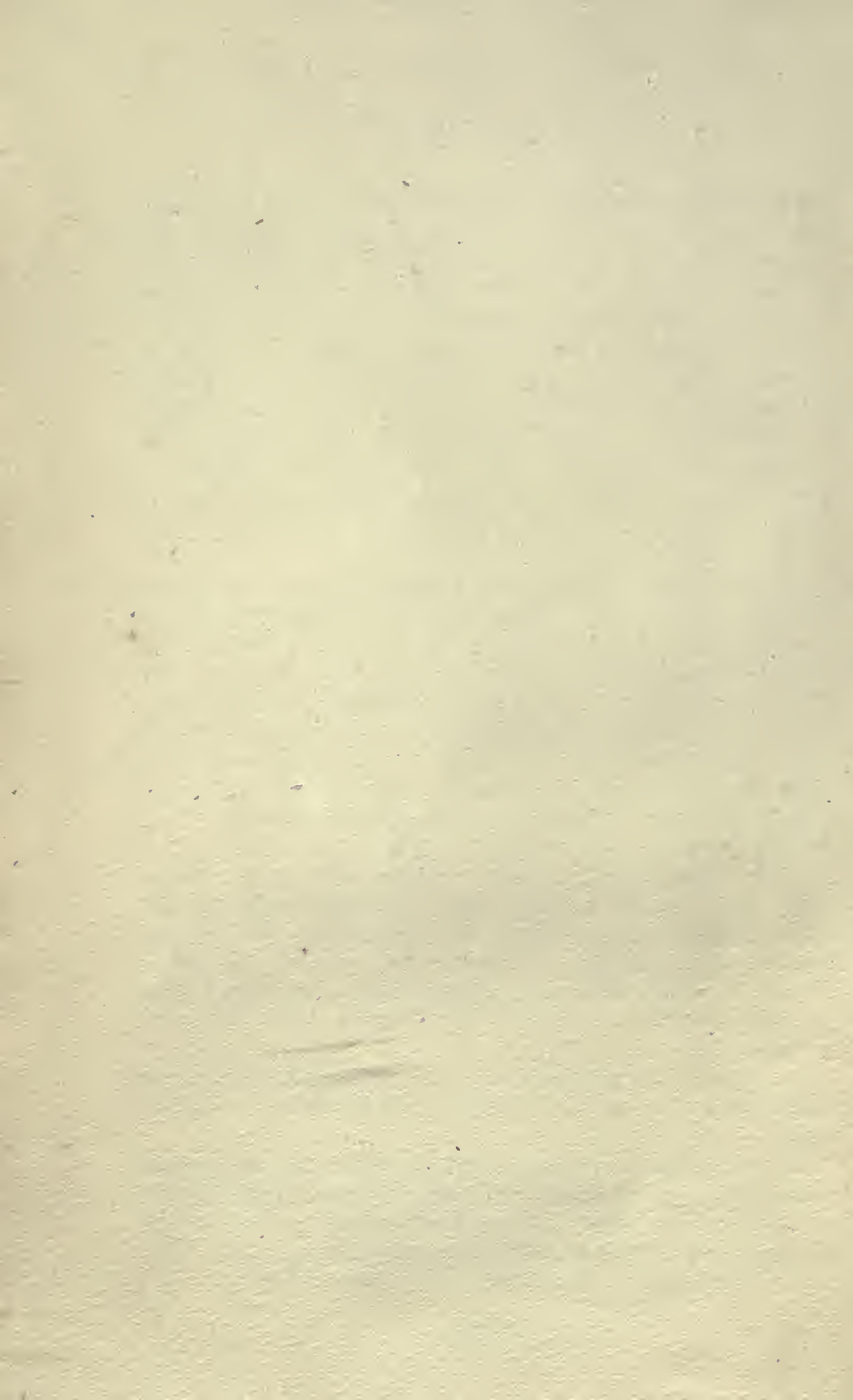

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THE OLD REGIME

CHAPTER I—PRELUDE

DURING the agitated week which preceded the outbreak of the War, the writer of these lines was in Berlin, and, amid the discord of moods and opinions surrounding him, he could not help being struck by one constantly recurring note. This was the conviction that Russia would not fight, and could not if she would. It was repeated everywhere in almost identical wording. "Russia," it was said, "is on the verge of revolution, and her Government will not dare to draw the sword; and even should she go to war with us, her revolutionary forces will at once break loose and paralyse her action." This belief permeated all classes of German society during those days of tension. Government officials, business men, members of the professions, and artisans all agreed at any rate on this one point. Nor can there be any doubt, that the persuasion that Russia was rendered impotent by impending revolution was one of the chief factors in determining Germany's policy. But for its faith in the revolutionary elements in Russia, the German Government would probably never have embarked on its desperate adventure.

This belief in the imminence of a revolution in Russia was no new idea, born of the confused emotions of the crisis. For nearly a year, German travellers to Russia had all brought back the same story, which had, however, gained precision and emphasis as time wore on. Even to-day it may not be quite needless to insist that Germany's knowledge of Russia at that time was much more intimate than ours. It was based on that familiarity with languages which is the only key to the secrets of other nations. Nearly all educated Germans and Russians speak freely one or two other tongues beside their own, which unfortunately cannot be said of educated Englishmen. Germans made a very thorough study of Russian. So much so,

indeed, that Russians were in the habit of saying that, even not excluding themselves, the only people who used their language with a complete mastery of its grammatical refinements were Germans. By their mutual knowledge of one another's languages, Germans and Russians were able to converse with one another freely and fluently; and that is, at bottom, the main reason why the Germans expected the Russian Revolution in 1914, while the great mass of Englishmen were absolutely taken aback by it when it came in 1917.

On one point the Germans were doubtless right. In the summer of 1914, Russia was certainly very near to a revolution. Or perhaps it would be more correct to say, that she was very near to a revival of the revolution of 1905-06, of which Stolypin had smothered merely the flame, leaving the fire to burn and spread beneath the surface with undiminished heat. What he did, in effect, was to aggravate a disease by suppressing its alleviating symptoms. All the primary forces which gave the first Revolution its distinctive character, in the meanwhile gathered rather than lost strength.

The strongest of these forces in the first, as in the second Revolution, was the land hunger of the peasantry, who are more than 80 per cent. of the population. This is the fundamental fact, without a knowledge of which it is impossible to understand what has happened in Russia during the last fifteen years. From time immemorial, the Russian peasants have been possessed by the tradition that the land as a whole belongs by right to them. Even before their emancipation from serfdom in 1861, they were accustomed to say to their lords: "We are yours, but the land is ours." Their enfranchisement by Alexander II was a great disappointment to them. They received, it is true, in addition to their liberty, a certain amount of land; but not so much as they believed themselves entitled to, and not in free gift, for they were compelled to redeem it by annual payments. At that time, the idea became fixed in their minds, that the true intentions of the Tsar had been frustrated by dishonest officials, and that the day would come when he would learn how he had been deceived and insist on his wishes being carried out in full. These wishes, they believed, coincided with their own.

It was in this way that the peasants reconciled the acute sense of grievance under which they lived with their feeling of super-

stitious reverence towards the Tsars. That reconciliation, which was the most serious impediment to the propaganda carried on in the villages by the Social-Revolutionaries, was first undermined by the direct action of the Tsars themselves. On their accessions, both Alexander III and Nicholas II told the deputations which brought them the homage of the peasants, that the popular expectations of the new reign opening with a general land partition were without foundation; and, in order that the lesson might not escape the attention of those for whom it was meant, a picture of the Tsar pronouncing it was officially placarded in every village. In this way it was first brought home to the peasants, that the Tsar himself was opposed to what they regarded as their right; and the Social-Revolutionaries were not slow in working upon their newly-awakening consciousness.

Both here and in subsequent chapters, it will be necessary to speak of the Russian peasants as if they were a homogeneous body with more or less ascertained characteristics common to all of them. Strictly speaking, however, it is at most only a portion of them to whom any generalisation can apply, for just as little as the English working classes can they be all lumped together in one category. There is, to begin with, nothing like uniformity either in the size of their plots of land or in the tenure under which they hold them. No inconsiderable number of them are comparatively wealthy men. Indeed, there are cases of millionaires whose legal status under the old regime was simply that of peasants. Moreover, the educational differences between them are almost as great as the economic differences. In some districts there were efficient schools, and the entire population received a very fair elementary education; in other districts no schools were accessible to the masses, and a man or woman who could read or write was a rarity. Even in districts which were economically on an equality, there were great differences in general intelligence and morality. In some, the peasants were simple, kind-hearted, decent-living folk; in others, they existed in a condition of squalor and moral corruption by the side of which our worst urban slums would make an edifying picture.

It would, too, be a great mistake to suppose that the psychology of the Russian peasant has yet given up its secrets. Generations of serfdom and subjugation have sharpened in him the invariable weapons of oppressed impotence, cunning and

distrust. Apart from the superficial amenities of social intercourse, he is very difficult of approach; and though many educated Russians have, with benevolent intent, tried to get to the bottom of his mind, it may be doubted whether their efforts have had more than a personal, or, at the best, a local success. If any class of people had reason to think that they understood the Russian peasant, it was the apostles of Social-Revolutionary doctrines. These self-denying men and women spent their lives among the peasantry, living as they did, and identifying themselves with them in every way. Classified in their passports as "peasants," they wandered the country as pedlars of cheap wares, or settled down to practise humble handicrafts in the villages. Yet even from their minds the currents of thought and sentiment among the mass of the peasantry remained hidden. This was shown by the events of the beginning of the century. The Social-Revolutionaries had for years based their hopes on a gradual enlightenment of the peasantry, and had worked persistently and with heroic self-sacrifice in this direction; but in 1898, as a result of much bitter discouragement, they came to the conclusion that the forces of ignorance and servility opposed to them were insuperable, and therefore decided to adopt new tactics. Hardly, however, had they formally renounced the policy of systematic propaganda in the villages, when, a couple of years later, the agrarian riots in South Russia, and the unsuspected amenability of the peasants there to revolutionary ideas, made them reconsider their decision and found the Land League. The task set this body was to resume the direct propaganda in the villages; and so successfully was it performed, that in 1903, the Social-Revolutionary organ, *Revolutionary Russia*, was already speaking of the probability of "a sudden elemental mass movement among the peasantry in the immediate future."

Possibly the Social-Revolutionaries had fixed their attention too exclusively on the direct results of their own activity, and had thus overlooked the effects of powerful forces which were working in the same direction as themselves. They were, after all, but few among the hundred millions of the Russian peasantry, and what they did they were obliged to do clandestinely. Open agitation was quite out of the question. Any attempt to hold public meetings would have meant the immediate suppression of

the movement in that particular district, and the imprisonment of those concerned. Oral persuasion of individuals was almost equally dangerous. For the most part, they were obliged by circumstances to conceal their identity, and carry on their propaganda by the surreptitious distribution of leaflets. These they hid in the carts or sledges of the peasants at markets and fairs, or threw in at the windows of the village hovels when the inmates were all absent in the harvest fields. Such methods by themselves might well have failed to produce perceptible results, even with constant reinforcement by the steady, if slow, spread of education. They were, in fact, merely ancillary to much more effective factors of propaganda.

The chief driving force to rouse the peasant from his long lethargy, set his mind at work, and in the end destroy the reverence for the throne which had enabled him to bear his grievances in silent patience, was a progressive impoverishment, that had gradually brought him to the verge of human endurance. The emancipation of 1861 had made of him, not an individual owner of land, but a partner in an area held jointly by all the householders of his village. This communal ownership of the soil, which at one time prevailed over the greater part of Europe, is to-day found as the standard type of land tenure only in Russia, where at the beginning of this century nearly 80 per cent. of the land in the hands of peasants was held in this way, and where it has had an enormous influence both on the economic and the political development of the people. The land allotted at the time of the emancipation gave, on an average, 6.21 acres to each household. But the holding of the commune, or *mir*, as it is called in Russia, was fixed, whereas the population continued to grow. This meant that, at every successive partition of the soil, the individual householder was allotted a smaller quantity; and by the year 1900, according to Prof. Milyoukoff, the average holding had diminished to 3.51 acres. But that was not all. Not only the quantity of the land tilled by the peasant, but also its quality had deteriorated. The enfranchisement had given him land, but it had given him neither the capital wherewith to stock it and to buy the necessary implements, nor the knowledge and intelligence required for efficient agriculture. Not so many years ago, the official newspaper of the Ministry of Agriculture stated that, out of the

18,000,000 ploughs in use in Russia, 12,000,000 were still made of wood, and that of the 22,884,000 harrows, 21,000,000 were either entirely of the same material or furnished only with teeth of iron.

Continual subdivision of the communal holdings into an ever increasing number of individual shares also made cultivation much more difficult. It was the custom of the *mir* to divide its land into shares of equal area; and where the communal holding consisted of a number of patches of soil of different qualities, every householder received an equal quantity of each. The individual holding was usually made up of a number of narrow strips of soil situated at some distance from one another. By process of redistribution among a more numerous membership of the commune, these strips became ever narrower and narrower. Thus, in one of the districts of the Yaroslav Government, the average individual holding was in thirty-six different strips of land, which in 12 per cent. of the communes were only 3½ feet in width. In conditions such as these, it was necessary for all the members of the *mir* to do their sowing and harvesting simultaneously. There were, moreover, cases where some of the land to be thus jointly cultivated was situated twelve miles or more from the peasants' cottages.

Under the primitive three-field system still prevailing in Russia, the average holding did not yield enough produce to feed the peasant and his horse. The crops that came within the cognisance of the official agricultural statistics were not sufficient to supply the whole population according to the standard of the Army ration, while what remained over after deducting exports was inadequate to satisfy the per capita minimum adopted by the Government as the basis of its famine relief operations. The inferences usually drawn from Russia's export of food-stuffs were, in fact, fallacious. At all times, the "surplus" exported was largely a fictitious one. Grain was exported from some provinces when in others thousands were dying of starvation, or only keeping body and soul together with bread made from the bark of trees. Those who had corn beyond their own personal requirements naturally sold it in the highest market; and obviously it was more profitable for them to put it onto the railways and rivers for export, even at the reduced prices resulting from American competition, than to send it hundreds of

miles by road to their starving fellow-countrymen, who had no money to pay for it. In the worst of the famine years, there was no very considerable fall in the amount of grain exported, and Englishmen grew fat on bread made of Russian wheat while the entire population of Russian villages lay through the winter in a kind of hibernation, to which they had trained themselves as the only means of husbanding their physical resources and preventing themselves from dying of hunger.

The general shortage was merely aggravated by a failure of the crops in one part or other of the Empire, and existed in a milder form after the best of harvests. Even where the peasants were not too poor to keep their corn to themselves, they were often compelled to sell it at low prices in the autumn, because they had no storage room, and then to buy seed at high prices in the spring. But the general rule seems to have been, that the necessity of meeting the ever-increasing demands of taxation, which fell principally in the latter part of the year, forced them to realise the bulk of their harvest as soon as it had been got in, and left them the barest possible minimum of subsistence. One careful observer came to the conclusion that "the greater part of the Russian people are in a chronic state of semi-starvation." To complete the picture of peasant conditions in the old Russia, it may be added that in some provinces more than a quarter of the villagers lived in hovels fourteen feet square and seven feet high, which gave shelter not only to all the members of the family, but to all the domestic animals as well.

The "chronic semi-starvation" of the bulk of the peasants was to some extent relieved by a movement which, at the same time, probably did more than anything else to increase their political discontent and to give it an active form. The Emancipation put an end to the *adscriptio glebœ*, which had bound forty-seven million peasants to the place of their birth, and left them free to wander at will in search of a betterment of their position. But for this liberty, their destitution would long ago have become intolerable. As the impoverishment of the land and its sub-division progressed, an ever-increasing number of peasants left their homes for a portion of the year, to work on the large estates or in the town factories. In 1900, more than fourteen million persons of both sexes, or thirty-two per cent. of the adult population, joined in this seasonal migration. In the

industrial areas of Northern Russia, the proportion of the adult peasant population which took part in this movement was as much as fifty per cent. So far as political views are concerned, it would be difficult to exaggerate the educative influence of this annual migration. The raw and ignorant peasant from the village was brought into close contact with the more intelligent and better educated proletariat of the towns. His interests were aroused and his faculties sharpened by all the manifold stimuli of busy urban life. He lived in an atmosphere quivering with advanced political theories and aspirations. Inevitably, he returned to his native village a different man, and spread among his friends the ideas with which he had been inoculated. And in this way, many hundreds of thousands of stay-at-home peasants undoubtedly came to realise, that it was those strange men calling themselves "socialists" from whom they had most reason to hope satisfaction of their land hunger, while it was the Tsar and his "chinovniks" who were the chief impediment to it.

These two factors—the progressive impoverishment of the people and their mass migrations in search of relief—probably did much more than all the leaflets of the Land League to set up that "elemental movement" which the Social-Revolutionaries expected in 1903, and which actually came a couple of years later. It was of a sufficiently startling character, and during the desultory risings of the peasants in the year 1905, more than two thousand country mansions went up in flames. The first Duma, which met in the spring of the following year, was elected on a complex franchise designed to give a preponderance to the conservative elements in the country, and its actual composition afforded further proof of the force of the "elemental movement" among the rural population. The Chamber was dominated by the Cadets (Constitutional Democrats) and the Social-Revolutionaries—the latter in the Parliamentary disguise of "Labourites"—and these parties were at one in placing the peasants' demand for more land in the forefront of their programmes. They differed only as to the degree to which the large estates should be expropriated, and on the question whether any, and, if so, how much compensation should be paid to the dispossessed owners. The Duma was engaged in a violent and confused debate on this very subject

when Stolypin dissolved it in July. The second Duma also had a large majority for far-reaching agrarian reform; but it lived only three months, and had no time to take any effective action in this direction. For the elections for the third Duma, the franchise was changed in such a way that, to quote the words of a French writer, "130,000 nobles were assured a greater number of deputies than 150,000,000 peasants." The balance of power in the new Chamber was held by the Octobrists, who, under the leadership of Alexander Goutchkoff, perhaps the ablest politician Russia has produced, agreed to support Stolypin in his policy of combining severities with palliatives. And that put an end for the time-being to all hopes of land partition. It also removed many other aspirations from the sphere of practical politics.

The palliative element in Stolypin's policy found its chief expression in the Agrarian Law of November, 1906. This measure, which was based on the findings of the Special Commission of 1903, was, in its way, of a very far-reaching character. Its main feature was a scheme to allow the peasant to cut himself loose from the *mir* and to receive in personal title his share of the communal area; but it also made provision for an extensive purchase of large estates and their resale in small plots, as well as for the emigration of the landless rural population to Siberia and Turkestan. That the Law was useful and welcome was shown by its wholesale application. Down to January 1, 1916, in forty of the provinces of European Russia, two and three-quarter million peasant householders had applied for the allotment of land in individual tenure, and more than two million had actually received their title-deeds. Further, under a subsequent Law, over 625,000 had applied for, and nearly 470,000 had received certificates of their right to land in individual tenure. The total area consecrated in these two ways to individual ownership was more than forty-five and a half million acres. Emigration from European to Asiatic Russia also took place on a very large scale, and in some years involved as many as a million souls.

These measures naturally did a good deal to alleviate the rural crisis, and they were reinforced by the statesmanlike administration of the Department of Agriculture under Krivoshein. This wise and far-seeing Minister, who remained in office till the

darkest days of the Rasputin regime, established model and experimental farms, opened exhibitions and depots of machinery and implements, encouraged young farmers to take advantage of the facilities for agricultural education available abroad, especially in the admirable Czech colleges in Bohemia, and in many other ways stimulated peasant productivity. Krivoshein's administration of his department was probably without a parallel in Russian history for efficiency, foresight and honesty. To the influences of the Land Law and of the competent administration of the Department of Agriculture, must also be added those of the zemstvos and of the co-operative movement, which has grown to enormous dimensions in Russia.

Taken together, these things certainly did much to improve the lot of the peasant, which had appeared so desperate at the beginning of the century; but they did not remove his fundamental and traditional grievance, that the land of his native place, which was his by right, was being unjustly withheld from him. The Law with regard to individual tenure merely segregated his already existing share from the communal holding, while any addition to his plot, through the parcelling of the large estates, could be acquired only on what were to him onerous conditions. What he felt was, that the land of the big estates, belonging to him by ancient rights, should be given up to him without any kind of compensation or redemption. Moreover, the proceedings of the first and second Dumas had at last made it quite clear to him, that, while the Tsar and the Ministers were irreconcilably opposed to his ideas, the political groups with the strongest hold on the population as a whole were at worst exceedingly sympathetic to them, in some cases accepted them without reservation, and in one or two promised him larger benefits than he had ever dared to dream of. Thus, in spite of Stolypin's legislation and Krivoshein's benefactions, the peasant's unappeased land-hunger was more strongly than ever the determining force of his political direction. And the strength of this factor was one of the chief causes both of the initial success and of the ultimate failure of the second Russian Revolution.

The other fundamental cause of both Revolutions was the expansion of Russian industry under the stimulation of Count Witte's protectionist policy. As long as the masses of the

Russian people were scattered over the immense area of the Empire, living in small villages, unable to read, and completely isolated from the outside world, they were practically immune to all political ideas except those professed by the parish priest and the local policeman. Crowded together in factories, they became by their very ignorance the best breeding ground for political extravagance. When Witte started his hot-bed system of fostering industry, far-seeing minds at once prophesied that that would be the end of the Tsardom. Witte was, indeed, the father of the Revolution in a much truer sense than any of the direct apostles of socialism. With all its obscurantist refinements, the autocracy had yet to devise a method of censoring the contents of the human brain; and, without any of the apparatus of formal meetings, newspapers, or pamphlets, ideas circulated in the workshops both freely and rapidly. The plausibilities of socialism made a strong appeal to the warm-hearted Russian artisan, and he surrendered to it even more unresistingly than his congener in the Protestant towns of Germany. By 1905, the proletariat of the main Russian centres of population was quite ready for the grand dress rehearsal for the Revolution of 1917.

We have seen since then what both the jacqueries and the soviet movement of 1905-6 would have led to if they had been allowed freely to run their course; and doubtless many of Stolypin's bitterest enemies in Russia have to-day revised their estimates of his policy, if not of the methods by which it was carried out. Stolypin was certainly a man of character, courage and energy; but he was denounced by the great mass of his fellow-countrymen as a ruthless reactionary and, in the end, paid for his policy with his life. The Octobrists also received their share of the anathemas showered upon him, and the distrust with which they came to be regarded was disastrously reflected in the days of the first Revolutionary Government of 1917, for it seriously impaired the authority of Goutchkoff at the War Ministry, an office for which he was in all other respects an ideal occupant. At the same time, it may now more than ever reasonably be doubted, whether the popular attitude towards Stolypin and Goutchkoff was a just one. There are some political problems which are insoluble even to the highest statesmanship, and probably the Russia of those days was one of them. The first

two Dumas were assemblies of excited and impracticable visionaries, without political experience, and imbued with the idea that all the complex wrongs of the old Russia could be put right in a moment by clothing pious intentions in statutory forms. Left to themselves, they would probably have reduced the Empire to chaos in six months. The chief effect of their intemperate debates was to encourage disorder. Anarchy established its reign in many parts of the country, and if the bulk of the troops had not stood firm to the Government, Russia would have experienced in 1905-6 what was her unhappy destiny in 1917-18. There were only two alternatives: either to let disintegration take its course, in the vague hope that something positive would somehow be born of it, or to check it with a strong hand.

Stolypin chose the latter alternative. Unfortunately, only the old machinery and the old methods existed for dealing with a new situation, and the gibbet and the gaol established a record which was only to be broken by the Bolshevist era of liberty, equality and fraternity. All degrees of innocence were confounded with all degrees of guilt, and the severest punishments were inflicted for acts which in all countries but Russia would have been but the unchallenged exercise of fundamental rights of citizenship. After the second Revolution, a well-known author, Alexander Amfiteatroff, drew a curious contrast. "In the thirty years of the epoch of Nero," he wrote, "which has remained for all time the legendary exemplar of tyrannical government, there were condemned to death or banishment for political reasons only 127 free citizens. Yes, yes, do not wonder! It is true—127, only 127. In our country, for the period 1900-1917, it would be necessary to add to this figure at least two ciphers for the hanged and shot, and three for the exiled and imprisoned." Whether, with the instruments at his disposal, Stolypin could have re-established the authority of the Government without this wholesale and indiscriminate terrorism, may be left an open question; but his methods inevitably bequeathed a vast heritage of embitterment and hatred, ready to break out into open hostility at the first favourable opportunity.

The abolition of those liberties of association, public meeting and assembly which had been granted during the height of the first Revolution, was also an aggravation of the disease, though

it temporarily suppressed its symptoms. It is dangerous to withhold political freedom, but infinitely more so to withdraw it. In this case the urban populations had tasted only enough of it to whet their appetite for more. To many of them, the experience had been that of a man born blind who is given full sight for a few days, and then plunged back into darkness. They knew for the first time what light was, and had a longing for more. These influences also acted on the cultured and propertied classes, which, under the growing pressure of reaction, gradually forgot the alarms aroused in them by the excesses and political fevers of the first Revolution.

Another factor in keeping alive popular discontent was the personality of the Tsar. We now know that Nicholas II was perhaps the least fitted of all men to deal with the heavy heritage left him by his father. His diaries, published since his death, are among the most astounding revelations of history. They show that the man whose will was law for 180,000,000 human beings was an amiable nonentity, completely wrapped up in the petty details of his family life. and absolutely blind to the significance of the events that were going on outside it. While the world was still labouring in the throes of the vastest and most awful convulsions it had ever known, the newly-dethroned autocrat of all the Russias filled his notebooks with jejune records of the state of the weather, his morning walks and his novel reading. His interests and his attitude towards them appear to have been those of an unintelligent schoolgirl; and if the accounts which have been given of the letters exchanged by him and the Tsaritsa are accurate, this correspondence will only serve to confirm that impression. Perhaps it may prove to have been the most effective of all the fundamental causes of Russia's tragedy, that that country was ruled by an amiable simpleton, utterly devoid of ideas, compelled by his office to make a public show of the will and wisdom he did not possess, and dominated by a headstrong and capricious woman, who was herself at the mercy of any charlatan with the skill to play upon her morbid religiosity and her equally morbid maternal instinct.

The performances at the Russian Court of the French spiritist Philippe, the monk Iliodore, and other exponents of the esoteric had failed to arouse particular scandal, but the open debaucheries of Gregory Rasputin soon threw a shadow on the throne. It

became notorious that this libertine peasant, who spent his nights drinking with very questionable associates in the pleasure resorts of the capital, was the chief confidant and spiritual father of the Empress; and the knowledge that this was so struck at the very roots of the traditional feeling of loyalty to the Crown.

All these influences combined to accumulate a tremendous mass of explosive matter beneath the surface of Russian national life. So long as the strong and dominating personality of Stolypin was at the head of affairs, the process of repression more than kept pace with the gathering forces of upheaval; but when he was shot at the Tsar's side by a repentant renegade revolutionary, at the Kieff Theatre, in 1911, and the reins of government passed to less virile hands, those whose business it was to foment discontent realised that their opportunity was coming, and redoubled their efforts. By the spring of 1914, the idea that the time was at hand for another trial of strength with the autocracy, which the modified constitution of 1905 had left practically unimpaired, had taken hold of all classes of society, and there can be little doubt that the Germans were right in their opinion, that at the outbreak of the War Russia was on the eve of a second Revolution.

CHAPTER II

THE SUCCESS OF THE REVOLUTION

WHILE the Germans were doubtless right in believing, in the summer of 1914, that Russia was on the eve of another Revolution, they were absolutely mistaken in their inference that a European war would precipitate the outbreak. The War had, in fact, exactly the contrary effect. When the writer reached Petrograd at the end of the first week of the War, he was still under the influence of German ideas with regard to Russia, and expected to find a superficial and artificial patriotism, imperfectly concealing the sullen forces of domestic discontent. One day in Petrograd was, however, enough to convince him of his error. There can be no particle of doubt that in Russia the War with Germany was popular in the broadest and deepest sense. The very air was electrified with patriotism, and one could feel its stimulating infection everywhere.

The fact is, that the social and commercial ties by which Germany kept in touch with, and exercised an influence over, Russia, joined up with the aristocracy and the business world, and left the artisans and peasants untouched. The great mute mass of the Russian nation had prejudices against all foreigners, and a special antipathy to the German, whose whole character is antagonistic to that of the Slav. It would probably be flattery of peasant perceptiveness to suggest that it was conscious of German commercial domination, but it had some notion of German arrogance and aggressiveness, and it resented the prestige which Germans enjoyed at Court and in certain circles of the bureaucracy. So that, when Germany issued her challenge, the spirit of Russia roared up in one great flame of anger and patriotism. All domestic grievances were forgotten in a moment, and the entire people, lowest as well as highest, rallied round Nicholas II as the symbol of the national unity. The strikes which, probably at German instigation, had broken out in many Petrograd factories, and especially in those engaged

on army contracts, were at once suspended, and work resumed at highest pressure.

It was the Tsar's last and greatest opportunity, the one chance that had presented itself during his reign of settling once and for ever, without bloodshed or disorder, all the complex questions of the political future of Russia and the relations of himself to his people. Wide liberties and radical constitutional reforms might have been granted at that moment without any risk. They would merely have increased the prevailing enthusiasm and focussed it more sharply on the urgent task of winning the War. If this enthusiasm had been encouraged, and allowed to work itself off in the direction of its own impulse, it is very unlikely that the War would have lasted more than a couple of years. It would then have been won by the original partnership, and without leaving behind it the ghastly wreckage of human life and property which has accumulated since that time. The sense of victory in the Russian people would have increased the popularity of the monarch under whom success had been won, and created an atmosphere of self-satisfaction and mutual confidence, in which the task of developing the Empire's political institutions along democratic lines might have gone on without any danger of a repetition of the excesses of 1905-6.

Unhappily, nothing was done to take advantage of this unique opportunity. Neither Nicholas II nor the senile bureaucrat Goremykin, who presided over the Ministry, had any appreciation of the realities of the position, and, apart from a few flowery phrases, everything remained as before. It was expected that at least a generous amnesty for political offenders would be granted; but even this was refused, and thousands of the best minds of Russia, which only asked to be allowed to work for their country in the supreme crisis of its history, were left to mortify in the solitudes of Siberia. Millions of men and women were eager to do what they could for the common cause, and organisations existed to utilise and direct their efforts; but the Government decided that the War was a departmental affair, with which the public must not be allowed to meddle, and all this immense treasure of patriotic zeal was allowed to dissipate itself in fruitless protests. It was characteristic of the spirit which animated the Government,

that when the veteran Social-Revolutionary, Vladimir Bourtzeff, returned to Russia, in the hope of being allowed to use his influence in keeping the public mind set steadily on the War, he was promptly seized by the police, tried for some remote political offence, and packed off to Siberia.

So long as all went well at the front, the Russian public accepted the discouragements of the Government with cheerful resignation; but soon news began to leak out which changed this feeling to one of burning indignation. A series of military checks culminated in the great debacle of the spring of 1915, which it soon became known was due solely to the exhaustion of the supply of munitions prepared for the event of war, and to the failure to take any effective steps to replenish them. The uneasiness and suspicion created by these events were immeasurably deepened by the announcement that the Gendarme Colonel, Miasoyedoff, whose intimacy with the War Minister Souhomlinoff had long been notorious, had been hanged as a spy of Germany. The military censorship weighed heavily on the Press, and public discussion of these things was practically impossible; but there was one body which it was impossible to muzzle, and the Imperial Duma became at once the voice and the hope of the nation. At the beginning of the War the composition of the Duma was as under:

Right (Rigid Conservatives)	59
Nationalists (qualified Conservatives)	88
Centre (Moderate Conservatives)	34
Octobrists (half-hearted Liberals)	86
Progressives (Liberals)	42
Cadets (Liberals)	55
Labourites (Social-Revolutionaries)	11
Social-Democrat Mensheviki	7
Social-Democrat Bolsheviki	6
Poles, Mussulmans, &c.	21
Without party	30
Vacant seats	7
Total	446

In order that the import of events to be described later may be rightly understood, it will be as well to devote a few words

to the character of the more important of these parties. The majority with which the Government had ruled down to the beginning of the War had consisted of the Right, the Nationalists, the Centre, and the Octobrists, and of all these it may be said that they represented types of political thought long obsolete in the Western democracies. The Progressives and the Cadets stood for democratic principles which are the commonplaces of all parties in this country. Their separate existence was unintelligible to anyone who had realised that compromise is the basis of all efficient parliamentary action. Perhaps it is to be explained by the old truth that only in the realm of the blind can the one-eyed man hope to become king. In the parliament of Russian autocracy and the Ohrana, the Social-Revolutionaries could sit only by disguising themselves as the representatives of "labour," which, in an almost purely agricultural country, naturally implied the millions of workers in the fields and not the comparatively small numbers in the factories. The latter had their special representation in the two branches of Social-Democrats, who both took their doctrines from Karl Marx, and who differed from one another only on the question of tactics—like the Revisionists and the "Radicals" in the corresponding party in Germany.

It will be time to discuss more fully the differences between the Social-Revolutionaries and the Social-Democrats, and between the various groups in both, when we come to consider the causes of the failure of the Revolution. However, it should be mentioned that the Bolsheviki, who had only recently broken away from the Mensheviki and formed a quite distinct party, soon vanished from the Duma completely. Their leader, Malinovski, threw up his mandate and disappeared rather mysteriously some months before the outbreak of the War—for reasons to be described later—and towards the close of 1914, their remaining five members and several other prominent Bolsheviks, including the journalist Rosenfeld (Kameneff,) were arrested on the double charge of conspiring to establish a democratic republic in the place of the monarchy and of attempting to form revolutionary committees among the soldiers at the front.

The trial of these men throws an interesting light on the attitude of the Bolsheviki towards the War. The case for the

prosecution rested mainly on the draft for a Party resolution, which had been found in the possession of one of the accused. This document expressed the doctrine which the Bolshevist oracle Lenin was preaching in his Geneva paper, the *Social-Democrat*—that a defeat of Russia was the lesser of the two evils possible as the outcome of the War—and it almost certainly emanated from him. The metal turner Petrovski, one of the representatives of the Ekaterinoslav Government, who had succeeded Malinovski as the leader of the group in the Duma, had struck out of the resolution the passage pronouncing a defeat of Russia to be desirable, and had made the recommendation to form revolutionary committees among the soldiers dependent upon the adoption of similar measures by the socialists of the enemy countries. In his diary, which was read out in court, he had written: "Here, only the reactionaries want a German victory." Kameneff was able to prove that he had had a serious difference of opinion with Lenin precisely on the subject of the War. All the accused warmly denied that they hoped for a defeat of Russia, which, they said, was the aspiration only of the small handful of fugitive revolutionaries living abroad Kerenski, who, as nearly always in such cases, was one of the defending advocates, declared that, though his clients seldom had the words "fatherland" and "patriotism" on their lips, the ideas and feelings designated by these terms were ever in their hearts, and that there was nothing that they opposed more strongly than the machinations to bring about "a secret alliance of the German and Russian reactionaries." Though the Court was not satisfied that high treason had been proved, it convicted all the accused of revolutionary agitation and membership of an illegal organisation, and sentenced them to life exile in Siberia, with loss of all civic rights. On the triumph of Bolshevism, Petrovski became Minister of the Interior, and Kameneff, after having played the part of a peace delegate at Brest-Litovsk, was nominated Russian Ambassador at Vienna.

At the beginning of the War, an Army order for the completion of which the contractors required at least a month, had, through the zeal of the workmen, been finished in thirteen days, and the trial of the Duma deputies showed that the prevailing patriotism thus manifested had not been without its effect on

the Bolshevist leaders. The trial also had an important influence on subsequent events. The artisans were naturally irritated at being deprived of half of their parliamentary representation, especially as the conviction of the deputies was regarded as an unjust act, inspired far more by political vengefulness than by any concern for the safety of the State. This was the beginning of the bad blood between the workmen and the Government. As, however, Bolshevism had lost its only organ of open expression, its share in the events which led up to the Revolution was completely hidden from the public. Perhaps the most important consequence of the trial was that, in the absence of their own proper spokesmen, the artisans of Petrograd began more and more to look upon Alexander Kerenski as the particular champion of their cause; for though, as the leader of the Parliamentary Social-Revolutionaries, he belonged to what was to some extent a rival Party, his fiery oratory made a much stronger appeal to them than the prosy utterances of the decorous Georgian "nobleman," Nikolai Cheidze, who presided over the Menshevik Party in the Duma.

The Duma was largely instrumental in bringing about the reforms which followed the catastrophe of the Spring of 1915—the dismissal of General Souhomlinoff and the attempts to mobilise Russia's resources through the great Unions of Zemstvos and Municipalities and through the War Industries Committees. But these measures were long in bearing fruit, and meanwhile the economic stress, under which Russia suffered so painfully before she was finally driven to revolution, was already making itself felt. During the opening months of the War, popular enthusiasm had been kept at boiling point by economic prosperity as well as by military success. The demands for the Army meant brisk work in the industrial centres, and a profitable market for agricultural produce. Through the prohibition of the sale of alcohol, that portion of the country population which was left at home found itself with more money than it knew what to do with. Never before had the Russian peasantry and artizans eaten so well, and never before had such large sums of money accumulated in their hands. Between January 1, 1915, and July 1, 1916, the deposits in Government savings banks increased from 1,835,000,000 roubles to 3,040,000,000 roubles. But this false

appearance of prosperity was only transitory. The railway system had solved the tremendous problem of the mobilisation much more expeditiously than anyone anticipated, but it had broken its back in the effort, and now it was called upon to bear the huge, unexpected burden of distributing the millions of refugees who poured back out of Poland before the invading armies, and of evacuating the essential war industries from the threatened districts in the West. The transport arrangements for the feeding of the big towns in the rear began to give way, and long queues of women were seen daily outside the provision shops of Petrograd and Moscow. The difficulty of feeding the population had been greatly aggravated by the increased consumption of the munition workers and by the demands of the Army. Some millions of men, who at home had been accustomed to eat meat only half a dozen times a year, were now receiving a liberal ration of it every day at the front and in the barracks. During the session of 1915, the Minister of Agriculture startled the Duma with figures proving that if the consumption of meat continued at the then prevailing rate, and nothing were done to stimulate production, within three or four years not a single head of cattle would be left in the country.

In general, the incentives to agricultural production had rather been weakened than strengthened. Altogether, Russia is said to have put nearly twenty million men under arms; and between eighty and ninety per cent. of them must have come from the rural class. The withdrawal of these vast numbers from their usual employment inevitably meant a shortage of labour on the land, and a decline in the area under tillage. The mobilisation of horses for the Army reduced the efficiency of the labour actually available. Moreover, many of the stay-at-home peasants lapsed into idleness as soon as the threat of hunger was removed. For the first time in their lives, they found themselves in the position to loaf with impunity; and this opportunity was widely embraced. Others preferred to keep their wheat rather than change it into money, which would no longer buy them what they needed, for the menace of famine in the towns had its counterpart in a shortage of manufactured articles in the country. Russia had been mainly dependent on the foreigner for such things as agricultural implements, axes, knives, and nails, and now the stocks of these articles were

exhausted, for the channels of import still left open were monopolised by the needs of the army.

All these tendencies, which were maintained with progressive aggravation down to the Revolution, combined with the military reverses and the ambiguous policy of the Government to produce a state of deep uneasiness and distrust in the public mind. This feeling manifested itself, among other ways, in hoarding, and in the consequent rapid disappearance from currency of all metal coins. Silver went first—so suddenly that it was impossible to wait for a substitute till special notes had been prepared, and Romanoff Centenary postage stamps of the proper denominations and printed on thick paper were issued to take its place. When the hoarders could get no more silver, they fell back on copper. For a time, the Mint fought the dearth of coins of this metal by issuing immense reserves of half-kopeck pieces, which for some reason it had accumulated. Then notes of the value of 1, 2, 3, and 5 kopecks were issued. (Measured by the normal exchange a kopeck is rather less than a farthing.) In the course of the autumn of 1915, copper coins vanished completely, and from that date Russia as a whole has seen nothing of metal money. Later, when the feeling of insecurity as to the future became more pronounced, a precautionary hoarding of grain took place in many districts.

These details will give some idea of the background of the sittings of the Duma in 1915. That body had on one side the symptoms of military and economic catastrophe; on the other, an inert and apathetic Government, wasting its energies in futile departmental feuds, and apparently much more anxious to prevent the spread of democratic tendencies at home than to drive out the enemy who was already within the gates. Indeed, in the ordinary sense of co-ordination and unification of all the different branches of the administration, it could hardly be said that there was a government at all. From the outbreak of the War down to that of the Revolution, it was always difficult to say who actually ruled Russia, and what were his motives for ruling it in that particular way. There was never either homogeneity in the Cabinet or consistency in its policy. It was never composed of men whose political convictions and administrative aims were all even approximately identical. Its deliberations never issued in a logical sequence of actions. Honest men like

Sazonoff sat side by side with adventurers like Protopopoff. Statesmanly administrators of the Krivoshein type jogged elbows round the green table with masters of incompetence like the Minister of Railways, Roukhloff. One of the best Procurators of the Holy Synod, Samarin, was followed by one of the worst, Raeff; one of the worst Ministers of Education, Kasso, by one of the best, Count Ignatieff. The members of these ill-assorted Cabinets hated, despised and distrusted one another. Cordial co-operation between them was out of the question; and when, as not infrequently happened, the departments of two or more of them were called upon to work together at some common task on which the fate of armies depended, they wasted their time and energies, and imperilled the national safety, by childish disputes as to jurisdiction or by spiteful mutual obstruction. At times, it seemed that the Government earnestly desired to win the War; at other times, that it as earnestly desired to lose it. The nation and its representative institutions were first flattered and cajoled, then insulted and humiliated, then again flattered and cajoled. The Duma was convoked and assured that its co-operation was indispensable; but hardly had it got to work before it was prorogued, and the Government bills were hurriedly adopted under Clause 87 of the Fundamental Laws, which allowed the Cabinet, "in exceptional circumstances" to pass legislation provisionally without parliamentary sanction. From a Government which acted in this way, the kind of policy necessary to win the War was not to be expected.

And it was precisely on that point that the Duma attempted to apply the leverage of public opinion. When it was convoked in the spring of 1915, to help to find a solution for the military crisis, it at once became the organ of the country's universal demand, that the Government should reorganise itself in the interests of the War. It was this motive, and this motive alone, which brought together in a working union parties formerly bitterly antagonistic to one another, and led, in the course of the year, to the formation of the "Progressive Bloc." The parties which coalesced as a whole were the Centre, the Octobrists, the Progressives, and the Cadets, but Count Vladimir Bobrinski reinforced them with a considerable part of the Nationalists, thus bringing their voting strength up to about 250, out of a total membership of 446. Of the Russian parties, only the

Extreme Right, the remainder of the Nationalists, and the Socialists remained outside the Bloc. It is a testimony at once to the patriotism of the Duma and to the heavy pressure of the circumstances, that this coalition was formed and held together; for the accommodation which it embodied involved large concessions on all sides. The Bloc celebrated its formation by the issue of a demand for the creation of a homogeneous Government, composed of men enjoying the confidence of the country, and in harmony with the legislative Chambers as to the carrying out, as soon as possible, of a definite programme "aiming at the maintenance of the domestic peace and the removal of differences between nationalities and classes." In its programme, the Bloc called for an amnesty for political and religious offenders, autonomy for Poland, the repeal of the restrictions against the Jews, a benevolent policy towards Finland, liberty for the Ukrainian Press, and freedom of association for the artisans.

The Bloc held firmly together until the Revolution, and was the rallying point for the people in the struggle—which grew ever more and more bitter—against an incompetent and divided Government. It was the one possible expression of the national hopes and fears. To it all Russia looked for help and guidance. When the Revolution came, the Bloc took over the leadership of that movement. The Provisional Committee of the Duma, which assumed control over public affairs in the first critical days of the outbreak, was formed from its membership. With one exception, all the Ministers of the first Provisional Government belonged to the parties composing it. And throughout, its persistent watchword was: "all for the War." Milyoukoff was certainly right when he said, in the days of dawning disillusionment: "We persistently declared that the former Government was not in a position to organise the country for war, and precisely that was the immediate reason of our participation in the Revolution." To that extent, at any rate, the Revolution was a war movement and not a peace movement. What went on beneath the surface we do not know, and probably never shall know, for all other expressions of public opinion were effectively smothered. But in so far as the agitation which eventually produced the Revolution was articulate, it demanded a change in the Government primarily in order to

secure greater earnestness and efficiency in the conduct of the War.

During the panic caused by the retreat from Galicia and Poland, the Government had taken certain steps which seemed to indicate a disposition to meet popular wishes. General Souhomlinoff and two or three other obnoxious Ministers had been dismissed; members of the Duma had been admitted to Governmental commissions and committees dealing with various problems raised by the military crisis; public organisations, such as the Unions of Zemstvos and Municipalities, had been invited to extend their work of army supply and allowed more liberty of action; a vast network of War Industries Committees had been established to stimulate and organise the output of munitions, and the workmen had been granted representation on these bodies. And this apparent awakening of the Government to the necessities of the situation had momentarily revived the flagging enthusiasm, and helped the nation over the beginning of the period of economic stress. But before the year was out, political affairs had already taken a decisive and final turn for the worse; and the sinister influences generally associated with the name of Gregory Rasputin had become paramount in Russia.

Here we enter upon a phase of Russian history in which fact and fable are so inextricably intermingled, that, for the most part, it is impossible to say positively what belongs to the one and what to the other category. The following facts may, however, be regarded as definitely established: that Nicholas II. was completely under the domination of his wife; that she, a self-willed, ambitious and superstitious woman, worshipping her son and morbidly jealous of anything that looked like an encroachment on the prerogatives to which he was heir, was, in her turn, dominated by Rasputin, whom she believed to have some esoteric influence over the boy's health; and that Rasputin, a drunken debauchee, with a strange hypnotic fascination almost irresistible to women of a certain temperament, used his power over the Empress to pervert the policy of the State and to secure the appointment of rogues and blockheads to high public offices. Popular rumour, however, went much further than this, and it was stimulated by the prohibition which kept Rasputin's name out of public utterances. Stories

were freely circulated from which it could only be inferred that the Russian Court was a hotbed of vice and treason. If nine-tenths of them were not imaginative, they were the only stories of this kind current in Russia during the War of which that could not be said; but the main thing is that, whether true or not, they were believed, and passed from mouth to mouth with continual additions and embellishments, till they were as well known in the villages of Siberia and in the trenches at the front as they were in Petrograd and Moscow. It is hardly necessary to point out, that their effect necessarily was to shatter that faith which is the most solid pillar of all thrones.

The final triumph of Rasputin, and of those who worked with and through him, may be dated from the assumption of the Chief Command by the Tsar. This step had an immediate negative effect of extreme importance. Whatever may have been the military qualifications of the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievitch—General Rousski, when questioned on this point, replied enigmatically: "I can only say that he passed through the Military Academy"—the people as a whole believed in him profoundly, and their confidence had an enormous influence in stabilising public opinion. All the stories current about him went to show that he was an inveterate enemy of the Germans, both at home and abroad, and that he was absolutely wholehearted and inflexible on the subject of the War. He also had a great reputation for justice and honesty, and it was felt that, so long as he remained Commander-in-Chief, there would be no faltering, in the Army at any rate, until the enemy had been completely overcome. The responsibility for the military disasters was not imputed to him, but to the Court camarilla and the bureaucrats of the Capital. His dismissal consequently came as a rude shock to the nation, and the painful impression which it created was not relieved when the story got about, that it was the result of the action of Rasputin, whom the Grand Duke had threatened to hang if he dared show his face at Headquarters.

But the departure of Nikolai Nikolaievitch to the Caucasus had positive results which were much more mischievous, for it tied the Tsar permanently to Headquarters, and gave the Rasputin gang much greater freedom of action at Tsarskoe Selo. The policy of the Government now became positively crazy in

its inconsequence and disregard of the signs of the times. In spite of its own vigorous protests and those of every audible expression of public opinion, the Duma was prorogued. All the Ministers who had with them any measure of public confidence were dismissed from the Cabinet, and their places filled by men of doubtful reputation and still more doubtful ability. Thus the Ministry of the Interior was given to A. N. Hvostoff, a member of the Right of the Duma and a "Kammerherr" of the Imperial Court, who had gained some notoriety by successfully manipulating elections in the interests of the Government while he was Governor of Nizhni-Novgorod. He is said to have been recommended to the Tsaritsa by Prince M. M. Andronnikoff, one of the most active and, at the same time, one of the most unsavoury members of the Court camarilla. Hvostoff entered on office with many fine phrases, and with a great show of good intentions and determination to carry them out. He described himself as a resolute enemy of Germanism within as well as without the Empire, and declared that the people "must be fed." What he actually did whilst Minister became known only after the Revolution, when he was arrested on the charge of having embezzled nearly a million and a half roubles, issued to him for the purpose of bribing the Press on to the Government side for the general elections anticipated for the summer of 1917.

Though the Duma was not in session, it still remained an active force in politics through its President, Michael Rodzianko. A letter from him appears to have been the immediate cause of the change at the head of the Cabinet at the end of January, 1916. The Duma President wrote to Goremykin, accusing him of being the chief cause of all the ills from which Russia was suffering, and calling upon him, if he had not strength to grapple with the situation, "at least to be man enough" to transfer the reins of government to younger and more vigorous hands. This letter effected its immediate aim; but its ultimate consequences were disastrous, for Goremykin was replaced by Boris Stürmer, an official of Austrian descent, who had all his predecessor's failings and none of his qualities. This appointment is said by Milyoukoff to have been the work of Rasputin. It was obviously quite welcome to the Tsaritsa.

It became the custom, both in Russia and among her Allies,

to speak of Stürmer as a convinced partisan of Germany and a deliberate traitor to his own country. That view is probably a flattering one. It is more likely that he was merely an obsequious and servile functionary, whose deepest conviction was that it was pleasant and profitable to be in favour in high places, and whose main political aim was to get as near to those places as possible. After his death, the leading Russian newspaper, the *Rousskoe-Slovo*, wrote of him: "Stürmer was the most completely typical figure of the last pitiful days of the autocracy. When, step by step, Nicholas II was destroying everything that supported his throne, when Tsarskoe Selo was being transformed into a pest-stricken island in the midst of a Russia that had nothing in common with it, Stürmer was placed at the head of the Government. Even among old bureaucrats, who had seen many strange things, this appointment caused bewilderment. A petty man, devoid of all breadth of outlook, completely incapable of work, without any kind of general view of life, and without any kind of knowledge, he was placed at the head of the Government at the most trying moment of the War. All his life he had striven servilely towards the heights of power, and he attained them at the moment of physical and mental marasmus. An official of ceremonies, who had arranged ladies at receptions and knew to the last refinement the demands of etiquette, he had on his practical record only the fact of the crushing of the Tver Zemstvo. But by the trains of ladies-in-waiting he easily raised himself to the top of the bureaucratic ladder. The esoteric forces of the last days of Nicholas pushed him forward as their own man. And, placed at the head of the administration, Stürmer was a pliable marionette in the hands of the intriguers who surrounded the throne. He feared to take even a single step independently. Rasputin's notes inspired him with panic dread. Anyone from Rasputin's suite could dispose as he wished of the head of the Government. Stürmer's only care was to keep his own position. In administrative affairs, he revealed an astounding incompetence. Officials who had to report to him left his room in a state of stupefaction. He simply understood nothing at all of any question of real seriousness which required his decision. Foreign ambassadors could only shrug their shoulders when they had to do business with this pitiful manager of the foreign policy of a great state.

Stürmer could maintain himself at his post only through the Rasputin clique and its chief inspirer—the Ex-Empress. He was the first of the Premiers to go to her with special reports, and he regarded her as the only one to whom he owed allegiance. During the last weeks of his presence at the head of the Government, he established round Alexandra Feodorovna, as it were, a second and special Government, having nothing in common with his Cabinet. Rasputin and a number of hidden intriguers belonged to it, and that was the real Government of Great Russia."

Stürmer's first contact with the political parties was marked by one of those strange inconsequences which were so characteristic of the closing days of the Old Regime. The Duma was convoked for the second half of February, 1916; and when it met, it found the Tsar in its midst. It was the first time that Nicholas II had been inside the walls of the Tauride Palace, and his appearance there sent a thrill of enthusiasm through the whole nation. For a few days, it was believed that the new era had dawned at last; and had the Tsar's visit to the Duma possessed the symbolic significance then attributed to it, possibly even at that late hour a lasting reconciliation of monarch and people might have been effected. But the visit was only a caprice or a trick; it had no sequel, and disappointed hope intensified the bitterness which the Stürmer regime aroused when once it was seen in its true colours. In the end, Milyoukoff made a speech in the Duma which rendered it impossible for Stürmer to retain his post. The Cadet leader's attack was an ingenious arrangement of circumstantial evidence that the Minister President was betraying Russia and the Allies. It also contained the definite charge that Stürmer had been a sleeping partner in common blackmailing operations. Apparently, Stürmer himself was quite prepared to ignore the attack, and to continue the maladministration of his office as if nothing had happened; but his Cabinet colleagues had a keener sense of what the honour of a Minister President required, and induced him to resign and to enter an action against Milyoukoff.

But though Stürmer was thus got rid of, his methods of government were continued after his departure by the Minister of the Interior, Protopopoff, and were the immediate cause of the Revolution. They were characterised by repression at home

and strong evidence of treachery abroad. Apparently, their aim was to preserve the threatened prerogatives of the throne and to extricate Russia from the War. At the same time, they never suggested inspiration by a definitely fixed and inflexible purpose. On the contrary, all the old vacillations and inconsistencies continued as before, and indicated rather the simultaneous activity of a number of different influences actuated by diverse motives. That some of these influences were pro-German and anti-Ally, there can be no doubt. Both among the Court aristocracy and in the higher ranks of the bureaucracy, there were many people who had never shaken off the old traditional Russian ideas on international politics. They distrusted any intimacy with the Western democracies, and looked upon the Hohenzollerns as the strongest prop of the system to which they owed their position and power. That many of these people did all they could to drive Russia out of the Alliance and back into the arms of Germany, there can also be no doubt. That they nearly succeeded seems very probable, though there is so far no direct evidence of it, in spite of the wholesale revelations after the Revolution. In the famous Duma speech in November, 1916, Milyoukoff hinted that the enemy had attained knowledge of "our most precious secrets" since Stürmer came into power; and the Germans certainly did get hold of the confidential treaties made between the Allies during the first couple of years of the War. Stürmer's death on August 31st, 1917, just saved him from indictment, for the preliminary investigation of the case against him was then on the eve of completion; and the Russian papers of that time said that, in addition to corruption, he was to have been charged with betraying diplomatic secrets to the enemy. In a speech made on May 4, 1917, Milyoukoff, then Foreign Minister, said: "the overthrown Tsardom was ready to make a separate peace with the Germans." A writer in the Berlin *Lokalanzeiger*, a paper which flourished on sops of information flung to it by the German Government, afterwards made a statement to the same effect. There are, in fact, undeniably grounds for believing that, against the word and will of the Tsar, the Old Regime came very near to making a separate peace, which, in its consequences for us, would have been infinitely more disastrous than what actually happened under the Revolution.

Though the Allied Governments had some inkling of the risks that were being run, they kept the knowledge to themselves; but in Russia the feeling that betrayal was in the air was universal. General Broussiloff's brilliant 1916 offensive did a good deal to counteract the increasing forces of political and economic disintegration, but the calamitous results of the ill-advised intervention of Roumania plunged the nation once more into the depths of despair. By this time, the certainty of a Revolution had become a fixed idea with the great bulk of the Russian people. The only differences of opinion were as to when the outbreak should occur and what form it should take. In the clubs and messrooms of Petrograd and Moscow, the question who should succeed Nicholas II was freely discussed. Attempts were actually made to organise a "Palace revolution." The Duma, which kept in close touch with the country, through the Unions of Zemstvos and Municipalities, and also with the commanders at the front, had been the chief agent in expressing the view that the existing system of government could not possibly be allowed to endure; but, with admirable wisdom and self-restraint, it insisted that victory in the War must precede any violent upheaval at home, and concentrated its efforts on securing a minimum of reform to enforce efficiency in the administration and appease popular clamour. Its demands were taken up in the most unexpected quarters. First, the Imperial Council (the Upper Chamber of the Legislature) and then the All-Russian Congress of the Nobility joined in the cry for a Ministry enjoying the confidence of the country. Meanwhile, the idea that victory was impossible with the old Government was gaining ground every day. Among its adherents was General Krymoff, who commanded the troops sent to Petrograd by Korniloff in September, 1917, and who committed suicide on the failure of that expedition. Krymoff, as Tereshchenko has told us, more than once came to Petrograd during the last months of the reign, with the object of organising a military rising; but the cooler heads, which were in favour of waiting till the War was over whatever the provocation might be, always succeeded in dissuading him.

The assassination of Rasputin, at the close of 1916, gave some hopes for the New Year; but, as things turned out, it only aggravated the situation. For it persuaded the Tsaritsa and

Protopopoff of the need of further severities; and one measure of repression or reaction followed another in quick succession. By this time, there had accumulated beneath the surface of Russian public life a tremendous volcanic force of misery and discontent, which was ready to burst forth at any moment, and was only prevented from doing so by the restraining influences of the War. What the economic state of Russia had become was described by Alexander Goutchkoff, with gloomy forebodings, in the Imperial Council, on March 4, 1917. Russia was, he said, " living on her last resources." The general disorganisation of the transport system had been accentuated to the degree of " a national calamity." It had become clear that, " if the business of feeding the Army and the rear remained as it was, it would be impossible to expect favourable results from the final issue." Grain which had been brought to the stations nearest to the areas where it had grown could not be conveyed to the places where it was wanted. The mills were standing idle. Meat killed in Siberia was held up by congestion at the railway junctions, and could not be forwarded before the thaw, when it would at once putrefy. Even the minimum demand for fuel could not be satisfied, and the situation in that respect was growing worse every day. At the beginning of January, the railways had entirely suspended the freighting of private goods, and they had since used their lines exclusively for the replenishment of their stocks of fuel, which had been completely exhausted. Flour mills which had somehow secured consignments of corn were prevented from grinding it by lack of coal or of naphtha. Towns and villages, unable to obtain kerosene, were plunged into darkness between the hours of sunset and sunrise, and the working day of the few artisans still left in the rear was thus considerably shortened. It had been necessary to blow out a number of blast furnaces because the ore and coke required to keep them going had not been supplied. In the Urals, there was the danger that the factories would have to be shut down in consequence of the dearth of fodder and provisions. Many large industrial concerns would be brought to a standstill in the early future through lack of fuel and of raw materials. " All these circumstances," Goutchkoff concluded, " inspire us with a tormenting dread that the disorganisation of the rear has attained such dimensions as to be disastrous to

the vital interests of the Empire, and to destroy the very foundations of its existence."

Almost simultaneously, Kerenski was laying before the Duma an amazing instance of the disorganisation into which Russia had sunk. He said that one of the Ministries had sent a train of coal to its agent in a neighbouring town under an armed guard, because it feared that some other Government department might try to confiscate the consignment in transit.

The street demonstrations in Petrograd, which began the Revolution, appear to have been a spontaneous protest against the threatened failure of the bread supply. No one has claimed to have organised or incited them—and since then revolutionary initiative has been a thing to boast of. The refusal of the troops to fire on the crowd also seems to have been spontaneous. When the insubordinate regiments went to the Tauride Palace for guidance, the Duma was placed in an awkward dilemma. It had earnestly wished to postpone the Revolution till after the War, but here was the Revolution already in being. What was the Duma to do? The alternatives before it, and its reasons for acting as it did, were well stated by the Cadet Deputy, Maklakoff. "If the Duma had not risen against the Government," he said, "the Revolution would not have lived till the evening. The Duma understood that participation in the movement was for it a question of honour. It was conscious that it had been travelling the road which led to revolution, and that if the day were to end with the crushing of the soldiers who had come to the Tauride Palace with faith in their hearts, their blood would be upon our heads. There remained to us only to risk the last stake, and to realise that if the Revolution did not succeed, we must perish with the soldiers, and that if it did succeed, it would be our common affair."

"Remember," said Milyoukoff, a few weeks later, "whither it was that the soldiers turned their steps when they came out into the streets on March 12. If there had been no Imperial Duma, probably they would have scattered over the streets and squares of Petrograd; and if they had done so, I dare not think what would have happened to us. Probably the troops which had not already gone over to the Revolution would have done as they were told, and I don't know what would have happened to the Russian Revolution in that case. But the Russian

Revolution came to the Tauride Palace, and in the Tauride Palace it found the central idea which reconciled it with all Russia. It is said that the Revolution was swift and bloodless. If that was so, it was only because at the head of the Revolution stood persons whose names had become known to Russia, and in whom all Russia—not merely the socialistic part of it—could place trust. At that moment, the Russian Revolution became truly national."

Undoubtedly, the Duma took the only course consistent with both prudence and honour. If it had turned its back on the soldiers who appealed to it for direction, the Revolution might easily have been smothered in sanguinary riots or at once have developed into devastating civil war. It is unlikely that the fire could have been extinguished without seriously injuring Russia, and impairing her power to carry on the War. The Duma knew that it could count on support among the heads of the Army, and that the whole country would accept its leadership unhesitatingly. The course of minimum risk to Russia and the Allies was immediate action to secure control over the Revolution and to make it universal. In that way, the movement might attain its object in a few days, and leave Russia stronger instead of weaker than before. The Duma decided to put itself at the head of the outbreak, and instant success was a complete vindication of its action. And the fact that the Revolution accepted with apparent enthusiasm the leadership of the men who had fought the Old Regime mainly because of its incompetence in the conduct of the War, seemed a sufficient guarantee that Russia's Allies had nothing serious to fear from it.

CHAPTER III

THE WAR MINISTER AND HIS FRIENDS

THE trial of Gen. Souhomlinoff was the great justification of the Revolution. It tore the fine trappings off the Old Regime, and laid bare all its pitiful realities. Without this remorseless exposure, it might still have been possible to defend the autocracy on principles of political philosophy. The Souhomlinoff trial proved irrefutably that the Old Regime no longer had anything whatever to do with principles or philosophy, but was merely a sham and an imposture. After the evidence given here, it stood condemned, not so much because it was an autocracy, as because it was hopelessly corrupt and incompetent.

Souhomlinoff was no ordinary and average servant of the Crown. Outside the Imperial household, he was the special favourite and confidant of Nicholas II, and for six years he had more personal power than any other Minister. "Under Stolypin, Kokovtsoff and Goremykin," said Alexander Goutchkoff, "Souhomlinoff was the most influential member of the Cabinet, for he knew how to work on all the Tsar's weaknesses, and especially on his antipathy to the Duma." Two of the three Ministers-President named fought him in vain. When Stolypin was dying at Kieff, he gave his successor the key to the portfolio containing the reports prepared for immediate presentation to the Tsar. Kokovtsoff found among them a paper marked with his own name and that of Souhomlinoff. He asked what it was about, and Stolypin told him that it had been his intention to try to get rid of Souhomlinoff, making use for this purpose of the chronic conflict between the Ministry of War and the Ministry of Finance. "The national defence," said the dying Minister, "is in the hands of an unworthy man. He is untrustworthy, and cannot inspire the necessary respect. The disorder in his department alarms me. He will bring us to

ruin." They were prophetic words. Kokovtsoff, whose position as Minister of Finance brought him into necessary contact with Army matters, kept up the feud bequeathed to him by Stolypin, but without success. Souhomlinoff, he said at the trial, knew very little about the business of his own department, and consequently readily gave in to the objections of an instructed critic and abandoned the position he had taken up. "The projects which Souhomlinoff brought before the Cabinet had never been properly prepared. There was no system in the War Ministry, and its proposals were characterised by diffuseness, improvisation, and lack of forethought." But, as against these defects, Souhomlinoff had the smooth manner and flattering tongue of an accomplished courtier, and it was not he but Kokovtsoff who disappeared from the scene. The senile Goremykin frankly adopted the attitude that the national defence was not his concern, and the War Minister was left master of the field.

The outbreak of war showed how supreme Souhomlinoff stood in the confidence of Nicholas II. When all hope of maintaining peace had been abandoned, the Tsar told the Cabinet that he had decided to assume the Chief Command himself, and to take with him to the front as his principal adviser the War Minister, who should not, however, definitely leave his office, but temporarily place it in the charge of a substitute. One by one, the Ministers were asked for their opinion on this proposal. They all replied that, for political reasons, it was inadvisable that the Tsar should be permanently tied to Headquarters at the front. Last of all, Souhomlinoff was asked to express his view. His answer was very characteristic of the man. He would, he said, regard it as a great good fortune if the Army should be led in the War by its supreme titular chief; but, since all his colleagues believed that to be impossible, he found it difficult to say which course would be the better for the welfare of the nation. On the following day, when Souhomlinoff appeared with his usual report, the Tsar met him with the words: "I appoint you Commander-in-Chief. You see you understand these things better than all the others." The War Minister had reasons not to welcome the prospect thus opened out to him. He gave some, and there may have been others. He pointed out that his acceptance of the post would create a very unfavourable impression in Society, where his many enemies and rivals would

say: "Ah, he has followed Kouropatkin's example and made himself Commander-in-Chief." Then a change at the head of the War Ministry at that critical juncture could not fail to have a bad effect on the work of the department. Besides, there was the danger of offending Nikolai Nikolaievitch, who undoubtedly was expecting the post, and would never forgive any other man who received it. In the end, these arguments prevailed, and Nikolai Nikolaievitch became Commander-in-Chief.

Nicholas II must have been almost the last man in Russia to lose faith in his favourite Minister, and it is doubtful whether Souhomlinoff would ever have been brought to trial if the autocracy had lasted. He was dismissed in the middle of 1915 with a flattering letter, which commended his deserts to the judgment of history, and a fortnight later a commission was appointed to investigate the failure of the War Ministry to keep the Army properly equipped and supplied. The facts assembled by this body were of so incriminating a character, that it was thought necessary to arrest Souhomlinoff and place him in the Peter and Paul Fortress; but he was soon released on grounds of health. Months passed and nothing was heard of the progress of the proceedings. Meanwhile, public indignation grew stronger and stronger, as the disastrous consequences of his administration gradually revealed themselves in their full dimensions. "Where," the Cabinet was asked in the Duma in February, 1916, "is the scoundrel who deceived us all with lying assurances of our readiness for this terrible struggle, who tore from the brows of our Army its wreaths of laurel, and trampled them in the mire of corruption and treachery, who placed himself between the sword of retribution and the traitor Miasoyedoff? Where do you apply the hangman's noose? There—below. But you must go higher, to the level on which you yourselves stand. There a Minister pledged his head for Miasoyedoff. True, Miasoyedoff has paid the penalty, but where is the head of his guarantor? On shoulders still adorned with the Imperial monogram." And the speaker of these words, Polovtsoff, was not a Socialist, nor even a Liberal, but a Nationalist, that is to say—judged by English standards—a Conservative of extreme type.

This was the feeling of the Duma at the beginning of 1916. At the end of the year it was much more bitter, for the revolu-

tionary spirit had by that time mastered the last strongholds of Conservatism. Yet in November, the Tsar thought the conditions favourable for putting an end to the Souhomlinoff enquiry, and he sent a telegram from Headquarters ordering A. A. Makaroff, then Minister of Justice, to quash the proceedings. It must be put to Makaroff's credit that he realised the danger of this course. He took counsel with the Minister-President Trepoff, who shared his view, and telegraphed to the Tsar strongly recommending that the decision to annul the investigation should be postponed. This telegram was reinforced by a detailed report, and the case was formally left open, but it was not till after the Revolution (August 21, 1917), that Souhomlinoff was actually put on trial.

The case was heard in the assembly hall of the Army and Navy Club, on the Liteinaya. The indictment filled 125 closely printed pages, and the reading of it occupied a whole sitting of the Court from 11 in the morning till 8 in the evening. The most serious of its counts related to the condemned spy, Col. Miasoyedoff. It was charged against Souhomlinoff, that, knowing Miasoyedoff to be a German agent, he had allowed him access to the secret information of the Counter-espionage Department and furnished him with a letter of recommendation for service in the Active Army during the War; that he had falsely denied the former fact in official utterances; and that he had deceived the Tsar, in his reports, as to the traitor's character. He was also charged with having communicated the contents of these confidential reports to the Austrian Jew Alexander Altschiller, knowing him to be a spy, and with having, "in the interests of States at war with Russia," given to Nikolai Goshkevitch and Vasili Doumbadze a synopsis of reforms carried out by the War Ministry. Another series of counts charged him with criminally neglecting to supply the Army with equipment and munitions both before and during the War, and with influencing departmental contracts in the pecuniary interests of himself and his friends. All the questions put to the jury—which for the most part consisted of minor officials—were answered in the affirmative, with the exception of that which asked whether the accused's neglect of his office during the War had been deliberate and had had the object of aiding the enemy.

Souhomlinoff was condemned to penal servitude for life; and, in the circumstances of the time, that was mercy for him. Anything less would in all probability have been equivalent to a death sentence. Public opinion was unanimous in regarding him as the author of all the calamities and sufferings of the Army. The soldiers were particularly bitter against him, and in the first days of the Revolution had with difficulty been restrained from lynching him. But, for these very reasons, his trial was not and could not be an impartial one. The jury was under the constant pressure of popular excitement and popular indignation, which more than once manifested themselves menacingly in the very court itself.

In such circumstances, it is evident that the severest possible sentence—capital punishment was at that date in suspension—was in a way the most merciful one. At the same time, an unbiassed reader of the evidence can hardly fail to come to the conclusion, that the most serious charges against Souhomlinoff were not satisfactorily proved. The charges of negligence and corruption in the administration of the War Ministry were, on the other hand, shown to be only too well founded. But here Souhomlinoff had to suffer for what was not so much his own personal offence, as the abominable spirit and tradition of the old system. Undoubtedly, many a minister who had sinned far more than he had, lived and died in the odour of official sanctity. One might almost say that the trial showed Souhomlinoff to have been a typical bureaucrat of the old school, quite sincere in his devotion to the Tsar, ignorantly intolerant of everything democratic, convinced that the primary purpose of the public exchequer was to reward the fidelity of Court favourites, capable of the perfunctory performance of the minimum of official duties, tolerant of little weaknesses, especially of those of himself and his friends, not over scrupulous in money matters, somewhat predisposed to intrigue, and in the private relationships of life easy-going, good-natured and nonchalant. He gave offices to the relatives of newspaper proprietors because he believed they could influence the Press on his behalf; he procured army contracts for friends, who doubtless shared their profits with him; but he also took a good deal of trouble to save from internment an elderly Austrian married couple, who had no stronger recommendation to his

favour than the fact that they kept a kinematograph which he sometimes attended when he lived at Kieff.

It is possible that Souhomlinoff's career would have had a different ending had he not, at an advanced age and under scandalous circumstances, become the uxorious husband of a woman very much younger than himself and belonging to a lower social milieu. Coming from an old but impoverished family of the Novgorod Government, he commenced his military career in the Body Guard Cavalry. He fought with distinction in the Turkish war of 1878, held in succession several important academic and active commands, and in 1879, with the rank of Lieutenant-General, became Chief of Staff to the well-known tactical authority, General M. F. Dragomiroff, whom in 1904 he succeeded as Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief of the Kieff Military District. He had shown a real and keen interest in his work by a lively activity with his pen; and his essays and stories were regarded as having considerable merits of both a military and a literary character. As Minister he wrote little for the Press; but it may be noted as pertinent that the article headed "We are Ready," which appeared in the Petrograd *Bourse Gazette* not long before the War, and which provoked a sharp discussion in Germany, where the authorship of it was probably known, was dictated by him. Even in the days of his disgrace, when his name was hardly ever mentioned without some abusive epithet, many Russian officers, who were quite in agreement with the public condemnation of his administration of the War Office, still clung to the belief that he was one of the most gifted of their generals, and that if he had been given a command in the field, he would probably have won a great reputation for himself, instead of being made the scapegoat both for his own and everybody else's sins of commission and omission. To this class of his critics, the turning point of his career was the year 1909, when he became War Minister, and married Ekaterina Viktorovna Boutovitch. The extravagance of his young wife, so it was said, involved him in pecuniary embarrassment, from which it was not difficult for a man in his position to escape by a little compromise with his conscience, and the notorious scandal of their union threw him back for companionship upon people who themselves could not afford to be too exacting in their social standards.

These dangerous associates were, moreover, the favourite friends of his wife. Gen. Berezovski, who was one of Souhomlinoff's oldest friends and stuck to him to the end, often urged him to shake off Miasoyedoff and Altschiller; but the War Minister would reply: "My friend, these people are distasteful to me too, but what am I to do when Ekaterina Viktorovna loves them so?"

It was in 1907 that Souhomlinoff met his second wife. She was then living in outward harmony but inward discord with her first husband, Vladimir Boutovitch, a wealthy South Russian nobleman. When the failings and frailties of the Souhomlinoffs became the favourite topic of conversation in Russia, Ekaterina Viktorovna was almost invariably spoken of as a Jewess, or of Jewish descent. Sometimes she was referred to merely as a "foreigner," the suggestion naturally being that she was a German. These imputations were so obviously to her prejudice, that her counsel called her mother to refute them. The mother said that she herself was the daughter of a village priest, and that her husband, Viktor Goshkevitch, was the son of a protoyerei, an ecclesiastic of somewhat higher rank in the hierarchy of the Orthodox Church. Thus the exotic constituent in the blood of Ekaterina Viktorovna was probably not large. Her childhood seems to have been a sad one, as her father was a worthless fellow and eventually abandoned the family; but she was somehow able to complete the course at a girls' high school, and she then got employment as clerk to a "justice of the peace," the lowest rank of the judicature in Russia as in this country. It was while doing this work that she met Boutovitch, whom she married in 1902. He was rich and handsome, but something occurred to upset the relations of husband and wife at the very outset, and on the second or third day after the wedding, Ekaterina Viktorovna left her new home and went back to her mother. She was induced to return to Boutovitch, and, after another brief interlude of refuge with her mother, she settled down with him in what, to the eyes of the outer world, were normal marital relations. She was, however, very unhappy, and, if we can accept her statements, Boutovitch behaved eccentrically—not to say more.

Souhomlinoff was reputed to be a man who paid court to all attractive women. His sympathy drew from Ekaterina

Viktorovna the story of her conjugal grievances, and about a year after they became acquainted he made a formal proposal to her. He was then sixty, she only twenty-five. One evening of July, 1908, returning home after a meeting with Souhomlinoff, she told her husband point blank that he must agree to divorce her, take upon himself the necessary burden of fault, and make over to her one of his estates. To render her proposal more plausible, she pointed to the example of the first husband of Souhomlinoff's first wife, who, she said, had acted in the manner indicated.

Boutovitch was thunderstruck by his wife's demand and went off to the Palace of the Governor-General, where he had a violent altercation with Souhomlinoff. His own account of the scene was dramatic. "Souhomlinoff refused any explanation," he said, "and spoke in such a tone that I challenged him. He refused to fight, saying that a duel would injure his prestige. I struck out at him, but he dodged me. Then I spat in his face and left." Souhomlinoff's version of the affair naturally was somewhat different. According to him, he accepted the challenge; but Boutovitch failed to find officers who were willing to act as seconds to an adversary of the Governor-General.

And now began a long period of squalid intrigue and petty persecution, by which Souhomlinoff sought to compel Boutovitch to give up his wife. The Governor-General tried to persuade the Procurator of the Holy Synod that a divorce could be granted by the exercise of the Imperial prerogative. To this the Procurator replied that here, at any rate, was a limit to the powers of the autocrat, and that the conditions and forms prescribed by the Orthodox Church must be observed. Souhomlinoff insisted on arguing the matter in another letter. This time he was characteristically assured that "the business would be very difficult to put through." Meanwhile, he had many agents at work for him in Kieff, among them the recusant revolutionary Bogroff, who was afterwards to seal his repentance by assassinating Stolypin, and who at that date was working in a lawyer's office. Boutovitch was plied with enticements and menaces. He was threatened with banishment and even worse if he did not consent to do what was asked of him. But he remained obdurate.

Finally the love he still had for his wayward wife was worked upon. One day their little son came running in to his father, and said that his mother had poisoned herself. Boutovitch hurried to Ekaterina Viktorovna's side. He found her in a state of collapse, but with sufficient presence of mind to tell him that she would take an antidote only if he agreed to the divorce, and that "otherwise she preferred to die." In his distress, he yielded at once, and signed, without reading it, the document which she had ready for him. It was only afterwards he discovered that he had signed an undertaking, not only to agree to the divorce, but also to "return" to her 200,000 roubles "which she had brought him as dowry." This agreement was apparently replaced later by another, which was produced at the Souhomlinoff trial, and by which Boutovitch undertook to admit infidelity on his part, though only by "documentary means," as he was in reality quite innocent and "could not consent to provide concrete evidence of his guilt."

By this time Boutovitch was tired out by the struggle with his powerful rival, and he went to Nice to try to forget all his troubles. In his absence, the "concrete evidence" was sought and found elsewhere. Anna Goshkevitch, the wife of Ekaterina Viktorovna's cousin Nikolai, and at that time her bosom friend—though afterwards, like so many of her erstwhile bosom friends, her deadly enemy—supplied a letter, in which she described how Boutovitch, finding her alone one day, had made violent advances towards her. The rough draft of this letter was produced at the trial. It contained many alterations in pencil, which Ekaterina Viktorovna admitted were in the handwriting of her lawyer. A charge was also made against Boutovitch with respect to his boy's governess. With this corroboration, the suit was entered, and two or three days later, with incredible and unparalleled speed, the divorce was issued by the Holy Synod.

Boutovitch was astonished at the rapidity with which his marriage had been dissolved, and still more at the evidence that had been produced against him. He immediately laid a charge of perjury against Anna Goshkevitch, supporting it by letters which he had received from her after leaving Russia. These, he claimed, were not the kind of letters a woman would write to a man who had made a violent attack on her honour. The

governess implicated offered to prove, by submitting to a medical examination, that the charge made against her was unfounded. Boutovitch further indicated the whereabouts of letters in which Souhomlinoff declared his determination to go to any lengths to free Ekaterina Viktorovna from her tyrannical husband, " even to the point of depriving him of life."

This perjury case is a valuable illustration. It shows us how the beautiful laws of the Tsarist Russia worked in practice. The Juge d'Instruction Zaitzeff opened the investigation with zeal, but he soon met check upon check. " For some reason " —so many things that were done in that Russia can only be accounted for by " some reason "—the papers in the case were called for by the Ministry of Justice. When they were returned, the two essential letters of Anna Goshkevitch were missing. Zaitzeff made application for them. He was told that they had been sent to him, and with that answer he had to be satisfied. When he impounded the letters in which Souhomlinoff had threatened Boutovitch's life, he was called to the Procuror of the Petrograd District Court, and advised, in a friendly way, that it would be to his own interest to carry out the investigation " without undermining the authority of the War Minister." In the end, Zaitzeff was obliged by ill-health to hand the case over to another judge, and his successor let it drop completely—" for some reason." Immediately afterwards, the divorce was made absolute by the Holy Synod.

Thwarted in his attempt to secure redress by legal means, Butovitch had recourse to the Press, and published a brochure, in which he set forth his case against Souhomlinoff. The latter retorted by similar means, and it was in the odour of the scandal thus aroused that he entered upon the duties of the War Ministry. The divorce affair made it very difficult for Ekaterina Viktorovna to gratify her social ambitions; and she took refuge in the companionship of people of doubtful reputation and few scruples. The social diversion which she could not find at home, she sought in Paris, on the Riviera, in Egypt, and in other resorts of the idle rich, where she squandered money freely, while her second husband scraped and saved in Petrograd, and took his meals among the typewriters and shop girls at the modest restaurant of the Guards' Stores.

When Souhomlinoff was tried, his wife stood by his side in

the dock. She was accused of having favoured the association of her husband with Miasoyedoff and Altschiller, knowing them to be spies. Before the case opened, the public prejudice against her was exceedingly strong—indeed in the higher grades of society she was regarded as the real culprit and he rather as the pitiable victim of her wiles. Nevertheless, by adroit use of her powers of fascination, which were based not so much upon physical beauty as upon that indefinable quality "charm," and of her acute mental faculties, she soon brought the public of the court completely over to her side, and it came as no surprise when she was acquitted.

After Souhomlinoff's second marriage, his friendship with Alexander Oskarovitch Altschiller, with whom he had become acquainted in the early days of his life at Kieff, ripened into a very close intimacy. Altschiller was the mystery man of the great trial. His shadow flitted about in a tantalising way in the background of the proceedings, and a dozen times it appeared that, if he had been present in the flesh, he would have supplied the key to much that had to remain obscure. Since the days when the Souhomlinoff affair first began to be talked of as a public scandal, he had always been spoken of in Parliament and Press as "the Austrian spy," as if his guilt had already been legally proved, but the trial failed to yield any direct evidence that he deserved this epithet. Grounds of suspicion there certainly were, and a good deal of circumstantial evidence, but nothing more. Probably Gen. Alexeieff gave the real explanation of the public attitude towards this feature of the case, when he said that Souhomlinoff was suspected because of his intimacy with Altschiller, and Altschiller because of his intimacy with Souhomlinoff.

Altschiller was an Austrian Jew, who had come to Russia in the early seventies and had made a considerable fortune as a commission agent. He was also director of a sugar factory at Berdicheff, and chairman of the South Russian Machine Works, an undertaking which lived mainly on contracts for the Ministry of Railways. A man of pronounced social ambitions, he liberally supported the charitable funds of the Kieff Austrian Colony, of which he was the *doyen*. This largesse won him a special position with the Austrian Consulate, and was rewarded with the Franz Josef Order and the right to wear some kind of

military uniform, of both of which distinctions he was inordinately proud. As a wealthy and profuse host, he managed, even in the antisemitic atmosphere of the Ukrainian capital, to attract to his house some of the official magnates of Russia. With Souhomlinoff he was on terms of closest friendship. To the War Minister he was "Papasha" ("Little Papa"), the name he bore generally in the Souhomlinoff circle. When Souhomlinoff wrote to the Austrian, he signed himself "Dandy," a nickname he had earned from his nearest friends by his anxiety as to his personal appearance when travelling abroad in mufti. Not only were Souhomlinoff and Altschiller continually at one another's houses, but they drank the waters together at Karlsbad and elsewhere. When Souhomlinoff was promoted to the War Ministry, Altschiller at once followed him to the capital, where he opened an office. He figured at the official residence of the War Minister as the special family friend, listening with interest when the garrulous and incautious host discoursed to his guests on his reports to the Tsar or the business of his department, wandering from room to room without compunction or restraint, and even slipping into Souhomlinoff's office and turning over the confidential papers carelessly left open on the writing table.

Of Altschiller's services to Souhomlinoff, we only know that he was very useful during the divorce case, employing foreign detective agencies to dog the steps of Ekaterina Viktorovna's discarded husband, and supporting her with money in the interval between her final breach with him and her marriage to Souhomlinoff. On the other hand, Souhomlinoff was of service to his Austrian friend in a thousand ways, both social and commercial. Intimacy with the War Minister was an open-sesame to many doors which would otherwise have been closed to an Austro-Jewish commission agent, and, apart altogether from Souhomlinoff's own department, was an effective means of smoothing the way to remunerative Government contracts. And not only did Altschiller serve his own interests through his connection with the most influential member of the Government; his friends and acquaintances also benefitted from his privileged position. In the end, he came to be regarded as one of those people whose intervention would oil almost any part of the governmental machine and could be had by anyone ready to pay the price.

Altschiller had a family vault at Kieff and had had his second wife's body removed thither from Berlin, where she had died; but in the early spring of 1914 he left Russia and settled in the neighbourhood of Vienna, where he had bought an estate, and, on the eve of the War, he invited the Souhomlinoffs to visit him in his new home. His son and his brother remained in Kieff, and were arrested on August 16, 1914, but, as nothing incriminating was known against them, were soon released. A few days later, orders were issued from Petrograd for the internment of all enemy subjects, and they were again taken into custody. This time, Souhomlinoff intervened on their behalf and they were once more set at liberty. However on September 8 they were arrested for the third time and sent to Siberia, where they remained till they were brought to Petrograd to give evidence at the trial of their patron.

Another of the intimates of the Souhomlinoff family circle, Nikolai Goshkevitch, Ekaterina Viktorovna's cousin, was actually tried and condemned as a spy. This was the husband of the Anna Goshkevitch who played so very unedifying a role in the Boutovitch divorce. By profession he was an engineer. At the Souhomlinoffs' he made friends with Altschiller, who appointed him head of his Petrograd office and agent for the South Russian Machine Works. In this capacity Goshkevitch was brought into contact with the partners of his disgrace and punishment. One of these was Col. Ivanoff, who for a time held a responsible position in the Chief Artillery Administration, or Ordnance Department, and was afterwards connected in some way with the Petrograd Metal Works. As the result of an introduction by Goshkevitch, Ivanoff became Altschiller's "technical adviser." Another fellow-culprit brought into the ring by Goshkevitch was Veller, to whom he gave an introduction to Col. Zotimoff, Souhomlinoff's personal secretary, and who also employed Ivanoff as "technical adviser." Veller was a wealthy man who had an interest in a large metal factory at Kolomna.

All these people were in constant touch with one another on business of a more or less mysterious character. Generally it was a question of Army contracts, from which they all drew their profits or "commissions." The correspondence of the ring was carried on in terms intelligible only to its members.

Souhomlinoff appeared in it as "the Thousandth," because "his ticket for the Guards Stores' at Petrograd was numbered 1,004"; Goshkevitch as "Cousin," because of his relationship to Ekaterina Viktorovna; his wife as "the Lady from Maxim's"; Ivanoff as "Arthur." They sent one another telegrams which asked: "Is it raining?" or "How were the photographs liked?" but which obviously conveyed to the recipients other meanings than such banal enquiries. Their domestic relations were as intimate, and at least as peculiar, as their business relations. Veller's proposal that Ivanoff's wife should become his mistress led to an estrangement, but he was allowed to pay the rent of the handsome flat, in the fashionable Kamenoostrovski Prospect, where Anna Goshkevitch entertained the War Minister, to keep a carriage for her, and to have her society on his mysterious journeys abroad. This was admitted by her husband, from whom by that time she had been divorced.

But the most interesting member of the little circle of adventurers who surrounded the Tsar's favourite Minister was Vasili Doumbadze, whose chief credential in his chequered career was the fact that he was "a nephew of the Prefect of Yalta." In the old Russia, so close a relationship to the chief administrative official at a favourite residence of the Tsar was a ladder that surmounted many obstacles. Doumbadze, as his name suggests, is a Georgian. Shortly before the War, he obtained a concession to exploit the Dnieper cataracts for the generation of electricity, and in this way he was brought into contact with Goshkevitch, who hoped to get from him an order for the South Russian Metal Works. The War put a stop to the carrying out of the electrical scheme, and Doumbadze cast about for a more opportune method of enriching himself. In the end, he hit upon the idea of publishing a series of short biographies of Russia's leaders in the War, and he decided to begin with Souhomlinoff. He accordingly appealed to Goshkevitch, who agreed to ask Souhomlinoff for the necessary biographical material. Souhomlinoff, as always when asked a favour by any trusted friend, proved most obliging. He not only supplied photographs and formal details, but did much more than that. Earlier in the year—this was in 1914—he had instructed Gen. Daniloff, head of the Chancellery at the War Ministry, to

prepare a synopsis of the reforms actually accomplished in the Army and of those in course of fulfilment, giving as his reason that he wished to submit it to the Tsar, as an answer to the attacks made on the department in the Duma. This synopsis he now handed to Goshkevitch, telling him that its contents were strictly secret, and must on no account be published, but that it would help the biographer in his general characterisation of the Souhomlinoff regime at the War Ministry. In surrendering the synopsis, he apparently had no idea who his biographer was to be, Doumbadze having asked that his connection with the work should not be divulged, as he wished to give the War Minister " a pleasant surprise."

The Doumbadze biography of Souhomlinoff—a grotesquely laudatory and in every other way worthless production, which, during the ill-informed enthusiasm of the earlier stages of the War, actually found its way into the English language—was published early in 1915. Its immediate effect was to assure its author a liberal share of the " protektsia " which Souhomlinoff dispensed with so lavish a hand. Soon we find Doumbadze and an American contract-seeker calling at the Artillery Administration with a recommendation from Souhomlinoff, who had also prepared their way by a telephonic request that Gen. Smyslovski would receive them in his private quarters and not in his office. Smyslovski quickly satisfied himself that Doumbadze's American was not a man with whom the Artillery Administration could do business, and his view was confirmed by a telephonic enquiry from the United States Embassy. Doumbadze's protegé, he added in his evidence, was only one of a stream of " adventurers " who came to the Artillery Administration with Souhomlinoff's visiting cards.

Doumbadze's great token of the War Minister's confidence was, however, of a much more romantic and interesting character. One day he came to Souhomlinoff, and told him that he had been at Stockholm with his friend Prince Matchabeli—who appears to have been long known as a Georgian separatist, and was already " under observation " for this reason—and that they had become very friendly with the heads of the German espionage in the Swedish capital. By posing as rebellious Georgians, aiming at the independence of their country, they had so far won the confidence of the Germans,

that the latter had revealed to them a plan of the Central Empires for stirring up an insurrection in the Caucasus. Doumbadze now proposed to Souhomlinoff, that he should be sent to Berlin with the confidential mission of learning the details of this plan and frustrating it at the very seat of its origin—by what means was not disclosed. Souhomlinoff was so favourably impressed by this wild cat project, that he recommended it to the Tsar, who gave his consent to it. Several members of the War Ministry, who knew something of Doumbadze's record, earnestly warned Souhomlinoff against allowing him to undertake so exceedingly delicate a task, but all their protests passed unheeded. In general, Souhomlinoff appears to have been extraordinarily inaccessible to salutary advice.

Meanwhile, though the War Ministry had kept its own counsel about the Berlin mission, and had not even mentioned it to the Headquarters Staff or to the General Staff at Petrograd, Doumbadze himself had been by no means so discreet. Before he could leave the country, it came to the ears of Col. Erandokoff, the head of the Counter-espionage, that he had been boasting of the secret mission on which he was being dispatched to Berlin by "the military authorities." It was Erandokoff's business to know what was being done in this way, and he at once addressed enquiries to the War Ministry, to the General Staff at Petrograd, and to the Headquarters of the Active Army. The Petrograd General Staff answered that they knew nothing of Doumbadze and his mission, Souhomlinoff's department made no reply, and General Yanoushkevitch, who also had no knowledge of the matter, gave orders that Doumbadze should be placed under observation. It was now, however, too late to do anything, for the confidential emissary had already left Russia. In the meanwhile, Erandokoff had set his agents to work, and their information was of so dubious a character, that he again reported on the affair to Field Headquarters. This time, Yanoushkevitch ordered that Doumbadze should be very closely searched when he recrossed the frontier; but once again the instructions of the Chief of the Staff were too late, for by now Doumbadze was already back in Petrograd, "very jolly, self-satisfied and brimming with money," as Erandokoff's agents reported, though he had been notoriously short of funds before his departure to Berlin.

The suspicions against Doumbadze were strengthened by his sudden enrichment, and confirmed by his report on his mission. He stated that, during his stay in Berlin, he had been treated as a predestined Minister of the future independent state of Georgia, and in this capacity had been admitted into the confidence of the heads of the German espionage organisation and of Count Pourtales, the former German Ambassador at Petrograd. From these two sources, he professed to have heard the remarkable story, that the spy, Col. Miasoyedoff, was an innocent man, and that the circumstances indicating his guilt had been deliberately arranged by the Germans, as part of an elaborate intrigue, by which they hoped, "over his body," to strike down Souhomlinoff, "the most active, energetic, enterprising, and talented of the Russian Generals." Doumbadze said that he "was shocked and wept" when he heard that an innocent man had been hanged as a result of these machinations. But while he was telling this strange story to Souhomlinoff, the investigation set on foot against him by Erandokoff was taking its course; his ambiguous business connections were discovered, and presently he and all his associates were placed under lock and key.

It is not clear whether the synopsis of the Souhomlinoff reforms was still in the keeping of Doumbadze during his visit to Berlin; but that is a minor point, for he had had plenty of opportunity to copy it. At the time of his arrest, it was actually in the possession of Goshkevitch, in whose home it was found by the police, and it was one of the principal pieces of evidence in a great spy case heard by court-martial on the South-Western front. The accused were Doumbadze, Goshkevitch, Ivanoff, Veller, and one or two other secondary participants in their affairs. Souhomlinoff made an effort to save his friends, and, while the case was yet in its preliminary stage, wrote to Gen. Savitch, Chief of Staff to the South-Western front, suggesting doubt as to their guilt and the necessity of a particularly scrupulous consideration of the evidence against them. He explained at his own trial that, as he was entirely responsible for the synopsis having got into the defendants' hands, and as it seemed likely to tell heavily against them, there was a danger that innocent men would suffer through his fault; and he therefore felt in honour bound to do what he could to secure them an

absolutely fair hearing. We do not know what other evidence was submitted to the court, but Doumbadze and his friends were sentenced to death. They were, however, recommended to mercy, on the ground that during the War they had rendered "important services" to Russia. There seem also to have been doubts whether they did any espionage for the enemy while the War was actually in progress, and one of the judges dissociated himself from the verdict of his colleagues. The sentence of death was reduced to one of penal servitude, and in the end this was modified to exile in Siberia. Ivanoff's wife was also tried but was acquitted. The chief ground of suspicion against her seems to have been the fact, that, a month before the War broke out, she was staying with Altschiller on his Tyrolean estate, where she was allowed to read the letter in which Souhomlinoff refused the invitation thither. In view of all the circumstances, perhaps it would be prudent not to take a very positive view of the findings of the court; but the whole case certainly did prove that Miasoyedoff—whose story is a long one and deserves a separate chapter to itself—was not the only undesirable and compromising friend of the Russian War Minister.

Souhomlinoff had friends of a class even more mischievous and dangerous than the Miasoyedoffs and the Doumbadzes—of the class so typically represented by Prince Mihail Mihailovitch Andronnikoff. Grand dukes, ministers of state and commanding generals filed through the witness box, but none of them interested the public so much as this sleek little man, with small beady eyes and soft insinuating voice, who was brought from the Fortress of Peter and Paul to give evidence. The attention concentrated upon him was natural, for everyone knew that Andronnikoff was one of those "dark forces" which had been the real rulers of Russia during the nominal autocracy of Nicholas II. Russia was now to hear from his own lips the confession that Gregory Rasputin had often been his guest, and sat with him till midnight. It was also to hear from him many other facts, illuminating with even brighter light the political conditions of the Old Regime.

Andronnikoff held no public charge—though he was for one brief period indefinitely "attached" to the Ministry of the Interior, and for another to the Holy Synod—but he knew

everybody, that is to say everybody who had power in the State or Society. That was his business, a business which, in addition to pecuniary profits, yielded gratification to a morbid appetite for scandal and intrigue. Though only in the early forties, he had been personally acquainted with all the Ministers-President back to Witte—with the significant exception of Stolypin—and with all the Ministers of War back to Kouropatkin. His cult of ministers had, indeed, the fervour and feverishness of a positive mania. Whenever they were leaving the capital on official errands, he was the first to reach the station and lay in their saloon carriage an offering of fruit or flowers. When they returned from their journeys, he was always on the platform to welcome them home. He periodically sent them sturgeons—"much as tradesmen send round circulars," said Ekaterina Viktorovna. On his own travels, he carried with him their photographs, which he set out on the tables in his rooms at hotels. Sometimes when a minister was in a provincial town on ceremonious state business, Mihail Mihailovitch would "accidentally" turn up there also.

His friendship with the great men of the political world Andronnikoff kept up by a caressing correspondence and by a multiplicity of little services. He was the universal go-between and tale-bearer of the highest stratum of the bureaucracy. He kept the Court informed of what ministers were saying, and cautioned ministers of the wishes and intentions of the Court. He was the broker through whose mediation the "protektsia" of one departmental head was exchanged against the "protektsia" of another. If the Minister of Commerce had a friend who sought a favour from the Ministry of Railways, Andronnikoff would see that the friend got what he wanted. If the Minister of Justice had a protegé with ambitions in the Holy Synod, Andronnikoff would arrange that the protegé was appointed to the post he coveted. The ex-Minister of the Interior Makaroff admitted that his own son, an officer in the Army had "benefited greatly" from Andronnikoff's intercession. After their military failure and disgrace, Gen. Rennenkampf and Gen. Epanchin both turned to Andronnikoff with the request that he would espouse their cause, and it was he who sent their apologetic explanations to the Headquarters Staff.

When Souhomlinoff was appointed to the War Ministry, he

received a characteristic letter from Andronnikoff. The Prince warmly congratulated him on his "well-deserved appointment," made many flattering remarks about his past career, and expressed the hope of being allowed to pay respects to him in person, "in view of his own excellent relationships with the new Minister's predecessors." Andronnikoff's advances were supported by Gen. Myshlaevski, the Chief of the General Staff, who said to Souhomlinoff: "You are fresh to Petrograd, but Mihail Mihailovitch has access to the spheres (the Imperial household); he knows everything, and it will be advantageous for you to listen to his advice." Souhomlinoff was nothing loth to cultivate so useful an acquaintance, and he and Andronnikoff at once formed one of those mutual insurance partnerships which explain so many otherwise unaccountable things in the Russia of the Tsars.

How Andronnikoff exploited his new connection is well illustrated by the story told at the trial by Gen. Velitchko, who at the time of the incident was Assistant Chief of the Army Engineering Department. The Prince called on this officer, loaded him with compliments, expressed surprise that he was not at the head of the department, instead of "that blockhead" who actually occupied the post, and insinuated that he himself was "a useful and dangerous man," who could procure appointments to the highest places in the public service. "Do you know Ekaterina Viktorovna?" he suddenly exclaimed.

"Why?" asked Velitchko.

"How why?" rejoined the Prince, as if with astonishment. "Why, because through her you can get into the good graces of the War Minister, and obtain any position you wish. Ah," he continued meditatively, "you don't seem to realise what sort of a man Mihail Mihailovitch is. You must cherish Mihail Mihailovitch, but you must also beware of him. When Kouropatkin failed, I went to him. He received me coldly, even roughly, but he had to pay for it. And what is Kouropatkin now?"

"In a word," said Velitchko, "he talked as if you only had to give him a thousand roubles and you could have any position you wanted. However, my colleagues told me that Andronnikoff would not be content with a thousand roubles, but that when he had got you an appointment, he would play tricks till he had bled you of hundreds of thousands."

Besides this indirect exploitation of his friendship with Souhomlinoff, Andronnikoff also made an extensive direct use of his influence with the War Ministry. In particular, he exerted himself on behalf of young officers who had just passed into the Army. "It was only afterwards," remarked Ekaterina Viktorovna, "that I understood his special interest in these young officers."

But the benefactions which Andronnikoff bestowed were no less than those which he received. Shortly after her marriage to Souhomlinoff, Ekaterina Viktorovna became seriously ill, and an operation was necessary. She wished to be treated by Professor Israel of Berlin, but there was no money to pay the fees of this fashionable surgeon and the expenses of the journey. Count Kokovtsoff obtained Souhomlinoff a special grant of 5,000 roubles, and, as even this did not seem adequate, Andronnikoff made an appeal to Count Frederiks, the Minister of the Imperial Household. This produced a grant of 10,000 roubles from the funds at the personal disposal of the Tsar, and Ekaterina Viktorovna left Russia for her cure. During her ensuing wanderings among the spas and pleasure resorts of western Europe, Andronnikoff corresponded with her voluminously, and in very affectionate terms, keeping her *au courant* with Court and ministerial gossip. In one of her letters to him, she complains of fresh persecutions by her first husband, and asks the Prince to undertake some action against him, "where and with whom you yourself know best." Andronnikoff replies: "I have already talked about your divorce affair with the proper person, and Makaroff (Minister of the Interior) had a long conversation with Shcheglovitoff (Minister of Justice) to your advantage."

While this cordial and confiding correspondence was proceeding with Ekaterina Viktorovna across the frontier, the Prince's relations with her husband in Petrograd were no less close and constant. In his telegraphic communications to the War Minister, Andronnikoff made use of a cipher of his own devising. We find the Prince performing all sorts of services for the War Minister. When the latter felt that his standing at Court was no longer as stable as before, Andronnikoff wrote to Gen. Mosoloff, the head of the Tsar's Special Chancellery, urging him to dissipate any prejudices that might have arisen

against the War Minister "in the spheres." Mosoloff replied, that he would not only use his own modest efforts in the desired direction, but would also take advantage of the great influence wielded by Count Frederiks. When Souhomlinoff's policy of dismantling the Polish fortresses and reducing the peace garrisons on the western frontier began to cause some uneasiness in military circles in France, Andronnikoff set out for Paris, accompanied by a journalist named Sharapoff, with the object of "warming up the Alliance." It is not quite clear at whose initiative this mission was undertaken, but Sharapoff wrote tranquillising articles for the French Press, while Hanotaux and Delcassé shook Andronnikoff "warmly" by the hand and thanked him for "his generous impulse."

The cordial relations between the Souhomlinoffs and Andronnikoff lasted till the spring of 1914, when they suddenly cooled off. What was the cause of the breach between them did not become evident, but Gen. Yanoushkevitch hinted that his warnings had a good deal to do with it. Andronnikoff drew away with him from the Souhomlinoff family circle a woman named Chervinskaya, a relative of Boutovitch, who now, "for some reason," as one of the witnesses put it, shared his flat. Chervinskaya had at one time been a close friend of Ekaterina Viktorovna, and had accompanied her on her foreign travels; but when she was asked to choose between the Souhomlinoffs and Andronnikoff, she unhesitatingly abandoned the former and became their most inveterate enemy. From that time onward, she was the chief centre for the collection and distribution of the many rumours circulating to the prejudice of the War Minister, and she was the inspirer of the remarkable letter which, later in the year, Andronnikoff wrote to the Tsaritsa.

This letter is in many ways one of the most illuminating of the published documents bearing on the reign of Nicholas II. The Prince, who writes in French, begins by begging permission to "lay at the feet" of her Majesty "the melancholy reflections induced by the conduct of a certain high official." He asks the Empress to believe that "these lines are in no way dictated by any kind of malevolence, but solely by love to the Monarch and anxiety as to the welfare of the fatherland." Then he continues :—

The world does not afford joyful impressions to those who

know and understand human worth. The greed of gold and the thirst for pleasure—this has blunted in us all that is most noble; and the psychologist, understanding conscience and the linking together of cause and effect, cannot but exclaim with Paul Bourget: "True feeling is comprehensible only to him who grieves, hiding his heart from the noise of the world, and who lives like a good monk for prayer alone." *Cherchez la femme*, says human wisdom, when a man of merit falls from the height of his station. And that is truth; for how many women have we not already seen who were the cause of the ruin of a man when he had become weak? After Eve, as the causes of a man's fall are named Delila for Samson and Helen for Paris, Cleopatra for Cæsar, Herodias for Herod. Somewhere Fontenelle says that a beautiful woman is for her husband a delight to the eye, poison to the soul and purgatory to the pocket. And what I shall tell you is proof of what I have just said.

Shortly after the appointment of Gen. Souhomlinoff to the War Ministry, I began to enjoy his confidence and we became friends. That confidence was not one moment impaired in the course of five years. I shared his joys and sorrows. At the time of the divorce of his wife, it was I who helped him, who put aside many difficulties. In the period after the betrothal, and during the first years of the marriage, I, together with others who visited the house, could not help being charmed by the modesty and tact of the newly wedded couple. Their life flowed smoothly; their expenses corresponded to their income; complete harmony ruled. Then Madame fell seriously ill and left Russia to undergo an operation abroad.

When Count Kokovtsoff learned of the position of his unhappy colleague, he appealed to His Majesty, and an assignment of 5,000 roubles resulted. The Minister, delighted as a boy, transferred the money to his wife. But as soon as the operation had been performed and the danger was over, Madame Souhomlinoff began to lead a manner of life quite out of harmony with her past. On the pretext that she could not bear the climate here, she moved to Paris, where the joy of life gave her wings. Coquette by nature, she sees only toilets and personal adornments. To the fashionable shops go ever bigger and bigger orders.

At the same time, the position of her husband deteriorates. Tormented by the thought that his wife may die at any moment, he can refuse her nothing, and forces himself to conceal his anxieties. And now he is confronted with the dilemma: no money and enormous expenses. A hero in his soul, a faithful subject of his Emperor and a worthy son of his fatherland, he sells the conscience of an honest man and becomes a slave to satisfy the demands of her whom he loves. His wife squanders

150,000 roubles a year, and he is compelled to think how he can increase his budget. He begins to travel continuously, as travelling expenses under the old system and the existing regulations constitute a considerable sum. But that is not enough to fill up the deficit which his dear second half is causing. The first step to crime has been taken; there remains nothing for it but to go farther. His conscience becomes more elastic, and he has recourse to bribes. His friend Svirski (one of those implicated by the corruption charges against Souhomlinoff) holds out to him the prospect of great gains if he will agree to give him orders for the Army. The War Minister begins to receive all kinds of contractors. How else explain the fact that the Minister, who three years before had not the money for his wife's operation, could invite Mashat to Kissingen from Kieff, and order from him a necklace costing 20,000 roubles?

To all this various persons drew attention, and foremost among them the Chief of the General Staff, Gen. Zhilinski, one of the small number of those who go the straight road without compromise with their consciences. In order to be master of the situation, Souhomlinoff organises the War-Technical Administration. At its head he places Gen. Ropp, whom he has no reason to fear, and General Zhilinski is appointed Governor-General of Warsaw. From that moment the field is clear, and the Minister can receive all contractors.

Last autumn took place the consecration of the Romanovski Canal in Turkestan. Although the Minister had appointed Gen. Zeil to be his representative at the ceremony, nevertheless, counting on the travelling expenses, he decided to go there in person. After the ceremony, Gen. Zeil received from his chief the order to go to Khiva; and, as he told me, he proposed to the Khan that the latter should give a handsome present to the Minister's wife. The Khan agreed. But as it appeared that no fine gems were obtainable in the whole of that district, Zeil said that he could buy the jewels in Petrograd. After various negotiations with this object, the Khan handed him 20,000 roubles. Gen. Zeil decided to buy nothing, and during the reception at which he gave an account of his journey, he begged the Minister to take the money, which had been entrusted to him, and himself buy the present. The Minister accepted the money from his subordinate with gratitude.

It is difficult to imagine anything more degrading than to take money from a subordinate. Only a man who has lost all conscience and sense of decency and tact is capable of doing this, and if a high official does it he is doubly guilty.

As long as Madame Souhomlinoff lived abroad and came but seldom to Russia, her influence on her weak husband could be only limited; but since May she has been here. She orders—

he obeys. Apparently, he is capable of any crime for her sake. He nominates to high posts those whom she wishes. The scandalous appointments of Kourloff and Reinbot took place on her orders. And who does not know the records of these disreputable gentlemen? One of them has hands purpled with the blood of Stolypin; the other is the hero of the *chronique scandaleuse* of Moscow. If this woman were at least grateful to her husband for ruining his soldier's honour for her sake! But no, she is unfaithful to him. The daughter of a midwife and of a father of Jewish origin, she believes in neither God nor devil.

At this point the presiding judge paused, with the remark that, in his opinion, the next few lines of the letter were of too indelicate a character to be read in a public court. By agreement with the counsel, this passage was skipped over, and the judge continued his reading:—

She has lost all shame, has no scruples whatever. Abroad she travelled with lovers, and now she cohabits with them at Petrograd before the eyes of all the world. Her mode of life arouses disapproval in the Winter Palace. How was it that he could not resist, this upright man, so devoted to his duty and so incorruptible? Is not this the sin of the angel who pitied the devil and descended into hell to comfort Satan? In this way only can we explain the cause of his fall; for we know that the poor human heart, which is capable of rising so high, is also capable of sinking very low. But, for the good of our dear Fatherland, we cannot suffer this to be. The individual must yield to society. Personality must give way to the safety of the Empire. Bounds must be set to the unworthy conduct of a high official, who should be an example to others, and my warm patriotism compels me to put aside indulgence, and sketch these lines, exposing facts which I can at any time prove.

"By what authority did you write such letters?" asked the judge.

"I had permission to do so" replied the Prince.

"On what subjects had you permission to write?"

"On any subjects I pleased."

"In other words, you had permission to report every kind of slander and unconfirmed rumour."

To further questions, the Prince replied that most of the statements in his letter had been inspired by Chervinskaya, that when he wrote it he believed them to be true, and that "only quite recently" he had come to see that his informant had told him "many superfluities."

Souhomlinoff's days of grace were already running out when this letter was written, and he was soon to become a fallen and dishonoured man. Andronnikoff, as usual, was the first to welcome the rising sun. It was the Prince who gave General Polivanoff the earliest news of the latter's definite appointment as War Minister, and he accompanied it with the text of the letter by which the Tsar had dismissed Souhomlinoff. This was no doubt intended to give the new Minister a proper respect for Andronnikoff's knowledge and power. But the Prince had by this time made a connection which gave him much more direct and effective access to the throne, and which spared him laborious sycophancies like the letter to the Tsaritsa, for he had contracted a close alliance with Gregory Rasputin. How many of the Government follies of the next two years were excogitated by the one, how many by the other, how many by the Voyekoffs, the Frederiks and the Vyroubovas at Court, we shall probably never know, but Andronnikoff unquestionably remained one of the most potent of the evil geniuses of Russia till the violent death of Rasputin at the close of 1916. After that he was exorcised by a spirit even more maleficent than himself, for Protopopoff, no doubt fearing in him a dangerous rival, had him banished from Petrograd.

CHAPTER IV

HOW RUSSIA WAS BETRAYED

ON the day on which he resigned the post of War Minister in the Lvoff Cabinet, Alexander Goutchkoff gave an account of his stewardship to a meeting of delegates from the front, and, in the course of his speech, he explained how his experiences in the Manchurian War had made the Russian Army the dominating interest of his life. "I was present," he said, "at the grave failures of Liaoyan and Mukden. Before my eyes was consummated that dreadful crime against the Army and the Fatherland. I saw that, however gallant that Army might be—though it should wear out its strength and shed the last drop of its blood—it would still be condemned to failure, and even to defeat. And as I sat there with the soldiers round their bonfires on the plains of Manchuria, I reflected with pain on the causes of that state of things. It then became clear to me that destruction lay ahead of us, and, like Hannibal, I swore to devote the rest of my life to the regeneration of our armed forces, and to the building up of that military power without which a great state cannot exist."

When the Russians retired from Mukden, Goutchkoff remained in the town with the Red Cross, and thus became a prisoner. On his return from Japan, he found Russia in the middle of the first Revolution, and he threw himself into the political struggle with all his energy. But, though he was one of the founders of the Octobrist Party and its first chairman, it was not till 1907 that he secured a seat in the Duma. Then at last he got a chance of doing something effective to fulfil his Manchurian vow, for he was chosen chairman of the Duma Committee on the National Defence. His efforts in this body were warmly supported by the more earnest and intelligent officers of the General Staff, out of whom he formed a small club or association, which had as its object the military regeneration

of Russia. One of the most active members of this circle was Gen. Basil Gourko, who, during the illness of Gen. Alexeieff, was for some time Chief of the Headquarters Staff under the Tsar's supreme command.

The War Minister of that time was Gen. Rödiger, an honest and well-meaning man, who, anxious to work with the Duma, thoroughly sympathised with Goutchkoff's efforts, and assisted him by supplying him with departmental information. Rödiger's enthusiasm for reform soon, however, led to his undoing. Goutchkoff had not been long at work before he convinced himself that nothing could be done till the Grand Dukes, who stood at the head of nearly all the departments of the Army administration, had been removed from their posts and replaced by men appointed for their capacity and nothing else. It was also obvious that changes were necessary in many of the higher commands. Goutchkoff urged these things upon the War Minister, who said that he quite agreed, but added that he himself was powerless to do anything in the direction indicated. For these words, and for his complaisance towards the Duma, Rödiger was dismissed, and his place was given to Gen. Souhomlinoff.

With Souhomlinoff's appearance at the War Ministry, the relations of that department to the Duma, and especially to the Goutchkoff circle underwent a complete change. The old confidence and co-operation vanished, and friction and suspicion took their place. The partisans of the Minister denounced Goutchkoff and his supporters as "Young Turks," and the latter retorted with active hostility. "It became clear," said Goutchkoff at the Souhomlinoff trial, "that so long as that sinister personality stood at the head of the War Ministry, Russia would never be ready for war, and the Russian Army would never be in a condition to fight. I realised that he thought exclusively of his own welfare, that he was a careerist, that his moral character was of the lowest type, and that he was a man without scruples. I resolved, cost what it might, to fight him till I had got him out of the Ministry for War."

It was not, however, till a couple of years later that Goutchkoff found himself in a position to deal Souhomlinoff a really serious blow. While he was in Kieff attending the funeral of Stolypin, one of the generals of that Military District told him several

things, which enormously increased his distrust of Souhomlinoff. Messages passing between Petrograd and Vienna, which had been intercepted by the Counter-espionage of the Kieff Command, had made it quite evident, so he was assured, that "for the Austrian agents Russian military secrets simply did not exist." Positively everything of a confidential nature about the Army, including the contents of the War Minister's reports to the Tsar, had its reflection in the communications of these agents to their principals. Goutchkoff was also informed that a system of political surveillance over officers had been established in the Army by Souhomlinoff's orders, and had been placed by him under the control of a Gendarme Colonel, Miasoyedoff by name. If we cast a glance at the past record of this man, we shall understand Goutchkoff's inferences from what was told him at Kieff.

Sergei Nikolaievitch Miasoyedoff had long been the object of vague but disquieting suspicions. For some years he had been in command of the Gendarmery at the important frontier station of Verzhbolovo (Wirballen), where the main line from East Prussia crosses into Russian territory. This was a very responsible post, as it involved the control of a large part of the traffic passing between Russia and Germany. The "Special Corps of Gendarmes," as it was styled officially, was the executive branch of the political police, of which the informative branch was the Ohrana. Its chief function was to keep a firm hand on the revolutionary movement, and it was at the frontier stations that it had the best opportunities of doing this, for it was here, if anywhere, that a stop could be put to the smuggling of arms and illicit literature, and to the movements of the agents who maintained connections between the conspirators in Russia and the directing brains in London, Paris and Geneva. In the decade which preceded the War, there was close co-operation between the Russian and the German Governments in the struggle against revolution, and the command of the Verzhbolovo Gendarmery necessitated cordial relations with the leading official persons on the other side of the boundary line. Miasoyedoff's intimacy with the Germans, however, went a good deal beyond the exigencies of his official position. In the early days of his Verzhbolovo command, he married the daughter of a local estate-owner, whose shooting parties often included

German officers, and sometimes, so Gen. Alexeieff was told, the Emperor William himself. At any rate, Miasoyedoff was early brought into contact with the Emperor; for in an official report, in October, 1905, he proudly recorded that he had been invited to divine service and dinner at Rominten, and had been received with effusive friendliness by the Imperial host, who had expressed the wish to see him there again. Rominten was the great Hohenzollern hunting domain, not far from Verzhbolovo, where the Emperor William spent a week or two every autumn, and Miasoyedoff seems to have been a guest there on several subsequent occasions. He was also favoured with an autograph portrait of the Emperor, which hung in his quarters at Verzhbolovo. With such illustrious patronage, it goes without saying that he was on the best possible terms with all the higher German officialdom, both military and civilian, of the neighbourhood.

Possibly Miasoyedoff's intimacy with William II, and with the Germans generally, was amongst the grounds for the secret enquiry which was made by the Russian Government on the East Prussian frontier in 1907. The immediate pretext for this step, and the reason publicly given for it, was, that the frontier guard had proved incapable of suppressing the smuggling of arms, which was becoming a serious nuisance. Enquiries made upon the spot showed that, besides being on terms of cordial friendship with German officers and officials, Miasoyedoff had financial connections with German firms strongly suspected of smuggling arms and other goods. The doubts inspired by this information were confirmed by a little incident which occurred about that time. Miasoyedoff's carriage was in the habit of driving backwards and forwards across the frontier two or three times a day. Everyone knew that it belonged to the Gendarme commander, and it generally passed without let or hindrance. One day, however, it was stopped by the customs officials. The coachman was very indignant, and asked if they did not know to whom the carriage belonged. Then Miasoyedoff himself came up, and there was a violent altercation, which almost degenerated into a scuffle. However, protests were of no avail; the carriage was searched and was found to have a double bottom, which was packed with contraband. A report by the Ministry of the Interior called forth from Stolypin the

decision that Miasoyedoff should be transferred to some station "not further west than the meridian of Samara." Not relishing this kind of banishment, the Colonel refused to take the post offered him and was placed on the reserve list.

During the next two years, Miasoyedoff made several attempts to get back to active service in the gendarmes, but the head of the Police Department refused him employment, and he was still without a charge when he met Souhomlinoff. This was in 1909, about the time when Souhomlinoff became War Minister and married his second wife. An intimacy of the closest character at once sprung up between the two families, and in the following summer they spent some time together in the same hotel at Karlsbad. The friendship was as warm between the two wives as it was between the husbands, and Ekaterina Viktorovna's letters to Clara Miasoyedoff contained such exclamations as: "I kiss you passionately."

A new year is usually welcomed by Russians, as by other peoples, in the society of their nearest friends, and the Souhomlinoffs met 1911 at the house of the Miasoyedoffs. The party did not pass off without circumstances suggestively indicating what kind of reputation the host had acquired even at that time. One of Souhomlinoff's aides, Col. Boulatzel, had for some time felt uneasy as to the growing intimacy between the War Minister and Miasoyedoff. At his instance, the Director of the "Special Section" of the Police Department had reported to Souhomlinoff what was known to him as to Miasoyedoff's record and character. When Boulatzel received an invitation to the New Year party, he declined it, and ventured to hint to his chief, that Miasoyedoff was not the kind of man with whom decent people could have close relationship. Another of Souhomlinoff's aides, Col. Botkin, son of the Court physician, was not so fastidious, though he clearly shared the doubts of his colleague. On leaving the Miasoyedoff's, he asked one of his fellow guests whether he had noticed that the waiters who had served the supper were obviously "lackeys from the German Embassy in disguise."

Souhomlinoff and Miasoyedoff had now begun to discuss the question how their cordial relations could be given an official form. The first idea was that Miasoyedoff should transfer to the Army and become one of the War Minister's aides; but it

was eventually dropped, because many Guard officers were aspirants to these positions, and it was thought that the appointment of a gendarme to one of them would excite troublesome jealousies and gossip. At the beginning of 1911, Miasoyedoff wrote to Souhomlinoff, asking for military employment, and suggested that "perhaps you will find it possible to appoint me to the Central Staff of the Intelligence Department." Souhomlinoff replied that this would not be easy to arrange "in consequence of the conditions of your former service," and he suggested that the best plan would be for Miasoyedoff to be reinstated on the active list of the Gendarmery. "I have discussed this," he added, "with General Kourloff, who has promised to give me an answer in a few days." It was Kourloff who had already more than once refused Miasoyedoff reinstatement, but the intervention of the War Minister removed all obstacles, and on May 1 Miasoyedoff was restored to the list of active Gendarme officers. Soon afterwards, he was detached from the Corps for service with the Minister for War "on specially confidential missions."

The missions with which Miasoyedoff was entrusted were certainly of a "specially confidential" character. One of them was the organisation of a system of political espionage on the officers of the Army. Souhomlinoff's explanation of this plan was, that the work was already being done by the Ohrana, and that it would have been less offensive and dangerous for the officers themselves if it had been carried out by a department under the control of the War Minister. Obviously, however, it was not a task that should have been confided to a man known to have pro-German sympathies, and strongly suspected of treachery. What power it would have placed in his hands was shown by a circular actually sent out, which informed the commanders of units that in future they would receive information as to the "political trustworthiness" of their subordinate officers. This information would, however, only be for their own guidance, and they were not to take any steps to test its accuracy, least of all to question the officers concerned. Needless to say, a German agent who could have got the control of an organisation of this kind into his hands would have been practically master of the destinies of a considerable part of the officers of the Russian Army.

Another of the "specially secret missions" of Miasoyedoff was to report to the War Minister on the information collected by the Counter-espionage. Here the suspicions and jealousies of other departments raised serious obstacles. Miasoyedoff made formal application to the military Counter-espionage for the regular communication of the documents received by it from the censorship and from its own agents, on which, he said, he had been instructed to report periodically to the War Minister. Colonel Erandokoff, the Head of the Counter-espionage, referred this application to the Chief of the General Staff, Gen. Zhilinski, who told him that no documents were to be supplied to Miasoyedoff. However, Erandokoff was shortly afterwards called to Souhomlinoff, and, in the presence of Miasoyedoff, ordered to disregard these instructions, and to bring to the War Ministry regularly all documents of interest and importance secured by the Counter-espionage. From that time forward till Souhomlinoff's retirement, Erandokoff two or three times a month took a portfolio of Counter-espionage papers to the War Ministry, and left them there till he came with a fresh consignment.

With the civilian branch of the Counter-espionage, which was under the police, Miasoyedoff was less successful. On making application to the Director of the Police, Zoueff, for the military intelligence collected by that department, he was told that he must address himself to the Minister of the Interior. Zoueff himself then reported to the Minister, with the result that Miasoyedoff was curtly refused any assistance.

Apart from these permanent occupations, Miasoyedoff was entrusted with occasional missions of a very delicate character, for the execution of which, in view of his subsequent history, he must be considered to have been the least suitable of agents. Thus he was once sent to the Chief of the General Staff with an envelope, closed but not sealed, which Souhomlinoff told him contained a copy of a treaty between Russia and France.

It is unlikely that Goutchkoff knew all these facts, but he at any rate knew enough about Miasoyedoff to connect him with the appalling leakage of Russia's military secrets revealed at Stolypin's funeral. The Oktobrist leader returned to Petrograd "convinced that he had to do with a gang of spies who had built a permanent nest in the very heart of our military

institutions.'' As head of the party on which the Government had to rely for support in the Duma, Goutchkoff had considerable authority even in the bureaucracy, and few doors were closed to him. He at once got together all the ascertainable facts as to Miasoyedoff's equivocal past, and laid his case before the new Minister President, whom he implored "to have the pluck to grapple with this evil.'' But Count Kokovtsoff let it be seen that his position was not sufficiently firm to allow him to undertake an open campaign against the Tsar's favourite. From one motive or another, various prominent officials did venture to urge on Souhomlinoff that it was inadvisable to employ in a confidential position at the War Ministry a man whose association with Germans and Austrians suspected of espionage was notorious. Among others, the Minister of the Interior, A. A. Makaroff, more than once made representations to this effect to the War Minister. But the latter always treated the affair lightly, saying that Miasoyedoff was not engaged on intelligence work, had no access to confidential information, and was consequently not in a position to do any harm, even if the suspicions of the police against him were well founded. This, of course, was not true.

Realising that nothing was to be effected through regular official channels, Goutchkoff resolved to take the matter into his own hands, and try a desperate remedy. A few days before the War Office estimates were to come before the Budget Committee of the Duma, in the spring of 1912, he laid all his facts before B. A. Souvorin, the principal proprietor of the *Novoe Vremya*, at that time the most influential paper in Russia, and appealed to him for aid. Souvorin agreed to do what was asked of him, and on the following day, April 26, there was printed in the *Vetchernoye Vremya*, his evening edition, an article which, in transparent terms, hinted that Miasoyedoff was in the War Ministry to serve not Russia but Germany. This article immediately provoked a noisy scandal. Souvorin was warned that his attack would meet with a prompt and vigorous response, and, sure enough, when he reached his office the next morning, he was confronted on the doorstep by Miasoyedoff, who, as if out of bravado, was accompanied by a German, and who demanded the name of the author of the article. Souvorin, who was himself the writer, refused to answer this question,

but said that the article had his approval, and that if Miasoyedoff felt aggrieved, he had the legal right to state his own case in the paper.

On the following day, while Souvorin was at the races, he suddenly came face to face with Miasoyedoff, who accosted him with the usual greeting, and then began to remonstrate with him about the article. Not wishing to have a scene in public, Souvorin proposed that they should talk the matter over in a private room, and turned to ask a racecourse attendant whether one was available. As he did so, Miasoyedoff rushed at him, striking out with his fists. There was a sharp scuffle, in which Miasoyedoff lost his cap and pince-nez. Then he broke away and drew a revolver from his pocket, but he was very short-sighted, and without his glasses could not see which of the figures standing round him was the man he wanted to kill, although Souvorin had seized a chair and was brandishing it above his head in self-defence. The momentary delay caused by the loss of the glasses probably saved Souvorin's life. While Miasoyedoff was still peering about in search of his antagonist, he was taken in charge by bystanders, and, shouting curses behind him, dragged out of the enclosure.

Souvorin decided that the assault made upon him called for a challenge; but the officers whom he asked to act as his seconds came to the conclusion that, as Miasoyedoff had made overtures for a peaceful composition of the affair, and then, without waiting for their issue, had tried to settle it with a revolver, he could not be trusted to keep to the rules in a duel, and was therefore "incapable of affording satisfaction." In order that there should be no doubt as to the correctness of his attitude, Souvorin submitted the case to a "court of honour," which confirmed the view taken by the seconds. These facts were all printed by the *Vremya*, and Miasoyedoff retorted with a libel action, which, however, was decided against him.

While Miasoyedoff was tackling Souvorin outside the offices of the *Novoe Vremya*, two officers called on Goutchkoff and asked if it was he who had inspired the article in that paper. Goutchkoff admitted that it was. They then asked him if he would withdraw his accusations. This he refused to do. Thereupon they informed him that, in that event, they were empowered to present him a challenge from Miasoyedoff. Goutchkoff replied

that he had every right to refuse to fight Miasoyedoff, who, in his opinion, was a man without honour. As, however, the Minister for War considered Miasoyedoff worthy to wear the Imperial epaulettes, he would accept the challenge. The duel took place a few mornings later, in a glade on one of the northern islands of the Neva delta. This was the first time that the antagonists set eyes on one another. Goutchkoff, who was a dead shot and an experienced duellist, fired into the air, and Miasoyedoff missed his aim. When the Octobrist leader returned home from the duelling ground, one of his friends asked him: "why didn't you kill him?" The reply was: "Because I didn't want to save the scoundrel from the gallows, which will certainly be his fate some day." It proved to be a true prophecy, for the story of Miasoyedoff finished with all the consequential symmetry of an old-fashioned melodrama. He died on the gallows, and Goutchkoff lived to be Russian Minister for War, though, unfortunately, too late, and only for a very brief period.

When the War Office estimates came before the Duma Budget Committee, Goutchkoff made the *Vremya* article the pretext for a sharp attack on Souhomlinoff. The Minister at first denied that the circular with regard to political espionage in the Army existed at all, but was afterwards compelled to acknowledge it, and promised that it should be revoked. With regard to Miasoyedoff, both he and the Chief of the General Staff, Zhilinsky gave assurances of the most positive kind. So emphatic and categorical were their denials that Miasoyedoff had anything to do with the Intelligence work, which, they said, was exclusively administered by the General Staff, or had access to secrets of any sort, that, for the moment, Goutchkoff's most ardent supporters were inclined to think that the whole affair was a gigantic mare's nest. Finally to compose the doubts of the public, Souhomlinoff had published in the semi-official military daily *Rousski Invalid*, a note to the effect that "Lieut.-Col. Miasoyedoff, who is at the disposal of the War Minister, is fulfilling missions having no connection with intelligence work."

What Souhomlinoff said in the Committee, and caused to be repeated in this note, was false, and may be held to constitute unanswerable evidence that he was equally guilty with Miasoyedoff. This was, too, the view taken by the court which

tried him. It is, therefore, only fair to state that Goutchkoff, his most implacable enemy, did not believe him to have been a deliberate traitor, or guilty, in this respect, of anything worse than "criminal negligence."

The first victim of Goutchkoff's campaign was not Miasoyedoff or Souhomlinoff but the Assistant War Minister, Gen. Polivanoff. He appears to have been the principal source of Goutchkoff's information, and Souhomlinoff thought it best to get rid of him. The manner in which his successor was elected is worthy of note. Souhomlinoff himself is our authority for the story. He was called to Tsarskoe to be told by Nicolas II that Polivanoff had been appointed to the Imperial Council—the graveyard of high official careers. "And whom would you like for your assistant?" the Tsar asked. Souhomlinoff was unprepared for this question—which was strange but perhaps characteristic—and replied that he really could not say off hand. "Very well," said the Tsar, "We'll see what luck will do for you." And with these words he opened the Army List at the generals' section, and at random laid a finger on the page. "There you are," he added, looking at the name beneath his finger—"Gen. Vernander! How does he suit you?" Souhomlinoff thought he would suit very well, and in this odd way Gen. Vernander found himself Assistant Minister for War.

The debate in the Duma Committee had ended with a triumph for Souhomlinoff, but the failure of the libel action against the *Vremya* revived the doubts as to Miasoyedoff's trustworthiness, and the War Minister decided to part with him. Miasoyedoff did not submit to dismissal meekly. He wrote to the War Minister a letter of complaint, recounting all the responsible tasks that had been allotted to him, including the delivery of the Franco-Russian Treaty, "which you dare not entrust even to a Feldjaeger." Souhomlinoff, who had defended him as an invaluable servant and laid special stress in the Committee on his "tact and industry," replied asking him point blank what he wanted. "You want to know what I want," Miasoyedoff then wrote; "I want to be taken back into the service, and it must be in the Intelligence Department." However nothing came of these importunities, and Miasoyedoff remained on the retired list until the War.

The scandal in the spring of 1912 left behind some misgivings

in the mind of the General Staff, and Col. Erandokoff, the head of the Counter-espionage, was instructed to keep Miasoyedoff under observation. He knew that Miasoyedoff, having himself been engaged on intelligence work, would be familiar with all its tricks, and would very soon be put upon the alert if he was watched by any of the usual methods, so he chose a course which introduces yet another spice of melodrama into this curious story. Being slightly acquainted with Miasoyedoff, he decided to frequent his house in the guise of a friend. It was a singular company that he met there. Among the habitués of Miasoyedoff's salon were many people who were under observation on suspicion of espionage, but there were also well-known generals and admirals, and so exemplary a personage—from an official point of view—as the Chief of the Ohrana. Erandokoff, however, wore his false colours for nothing, for he failed to obtain any evidence against Miasoyedoff which would have justified a prosecution.

Shortly after the War began, Miasoyedoff wrote to Souhomlinoff, stating that he wished to "serve the country," and would like to join the Active Army. Souhomlinoff replied with a curt note, in which he said that, so far as he was concerned, there was no objection to Miasoyedoff entering the military service, but that if he wished to do so, he must make an application in the way prescribed by the Army regulations. Using the War Minister's letter as a testimonial, Miasoyedoff made a formal application for employment to several of the field commands. One or two of them answered with a blunt refusal; but at the Staff of the 10th Army, where little seems to have been known about him, the view was taken that Souhomlinoff's letter amounted to a recommendation, which it would be indiscreet to ignore. The 10th Army was then deployed along the river Angerap and the Masurian lakes in East Prussia, and Miasoyedoff, who had specially asked for intelligence work, had drawn attention to his familiarity with all that country and his mastery of the German language. All the positions as intelligence officers proper were filled, but no limit was set to the number of interpreters on the Staff, and it was decided to engage him nominally in the latter capacity, though really in the former. It was thought better not to retain him at the Army Headquarters at Markgrabovo—mainly, it would

seem, because it was feared that he might bear tales to the Wai Minister—so he was attached to the intelligence staff of the 57th Division at Johannisburg, where his office was to organise the espionage of the Russians and counteract that of the Germans. He had to arrange with the commanders in the fighting line for the passage of spies to and fro across the front; and he also had facilities for doing a good deal of travelling in the rear, where the composition of the Army and the dispositions of the individual corps were known. It was the middle of November, 1914, when he took up his work, at which we may, for the time-being, leave him.

About Christmas time, a stranger came to the Russian Legation at Stockholm, asked to see the Military Attaché, introduced himself as Lieut. Kolokovski, of the 23rd Infantry Regiment, and then told the following remarkable story. He was, he said, taken prisoner during one of the East Prussian battles in the very first stages of the War, and, casting about for a means of escape, had hit upon the idea of posing as a disloyal and Germanophile Russian, who was prepared to act the part of a spy on his own country. To the officer who examined him immediately after he was caught, he so successfully played the part he had assumed, that, a few days later, he was removed to Allenstein, where the nearest corps staff was located. Here he was re-examined by the head of the intelligence department, and he was then sent on to the Army Headquarters. This was at Insterburg, where he was handed over to the charge of a Lieutenant Baumüller, who spoke Russian fluently. It appeared that this officer was one of four brothers, all of whom had lived in Russia for some time prior to the War. The Lieutenant himself had lived in Petrograd with his mother and sister. His third brother had already been killed while fighting in the German Army. Kolokovski continued to play his adopted part, and eventually they got to the discussion of the question how he could best serve Germany in betrayal of his own country. One day Baumüller remarked: "We've already been working for five years with one of your colonels: it's been good business for him and good business for us." On the following day, the Lieutenant let it out that this colonel was none other than Miasoyedoff, who, he said, had rendered great services to the Germans while he was at Verzhbolovo, by passing spies across

the frontier and facilitating the removal of secret documents from Russia. Baumüller added that his own mother had frequently carried Russian military secrets into Germany, and that the whole of his family had co-operated energetically with Miasoyedoff in the work of espionage. Kolokovski was then taken to Berlin, where he was put into touch with another of the Baumüllers, with whom final arrangements were made. At first he was allotted four commissions: to procure the assassination of Nikolai Nikolaievitch; to "buy" the Commander of the fortress of Novogeorgievsk (according to another account Grodno); to blow up an important railway bridge in the rear of the Russian Warsaw position; and to report whatever could be gathered from the talk in Russian military circles as to plans and views with regard to the prosecution of the War. For the life of the Grand Duke and the betrayal of the fortress, the Germans were prepared to pay a million roubles each; for the destruction of the bridge 200,000 roubles. According to Kolokovski, the Germans believed they had most to fear on the Eastern front from Nikolai Nikolaievitch, whom they described as "the soul of the Russian Army," and, after him, considered Generals Rousski, Broussiloff and Ivanoff the most formidable of the Tsar's commanders. Before Kolokovski's departure, he was told that the matters of the fortress and the bridge had been entrusted to other agents, and he was left to deal only with the Grand Duke and the supply of general intelligence. His last instructions were that he was to get into touch with Miasoyedoff, who, he was told, was in the habit of frequenting a particular restaurant in Petrograd, where it would not be difficult to scrape an acquaintance with him "over a glass of wine" without exciting suspicions.

The Russian Military Attaché reported this story to Headquarters, and Kolokovski was ordered to the Staff, where he was searchingly cross-examined. Apparently he found it more difficult to persuade his fellow-countrymen of the truth than it had been to deceive the Germans; but it was only natural that every precaution should be observed before any steps were taken against a special protégé of the War Minister. All Kolokovski's statements were checked in so far as it was possible to check them. A letter of Baumüller's sister was intercepted, in which she mentioned the death of one of her brothers. In another

espionage case it had come to light that a workman named Routzinski had been incited to kill the Grand Duke by the promise of a million roubles, which Germany and Austria were to supply in equal shares. On the very day (December 29th) on which Kolokovski was travelling through Finland on his way to Petrograd, attempts had been made to blow up certain bridges near Warsaw. Through a woman named Stolbina, in whom Miasoyedoff was interested, it was learned that he was, as a matter of fact, a much more constant visitor to the restaurant mentioned by Kolokovski than, for some reason or other, was agreeable to her. And there were a number of minor indications which went to confirm the truth of Kolokovski's story. In the end it was decided to have Miasoyedoff shadowed, and for this purpose he had assigned to him, nominally as his subordinate, a trusted confidential agent named Düsterhof. At the same time, in order that he might not do further serious injury to the Russian Army, he was transferred from the East Prussian frontier to the Kovno district.

Miasoyedoff seems to have suffered from that indiscretion which often comes of long impunity, for he soon admitted Düsterhof much deeper into his confidence than was safe for a man engaged in such perilously criminal work. He made no secret of his Germanophile sympathies or of his insatiable curiosity as to the Russian dispositions, which had nothing to do with the particular task on which he himself was employed. Occasionally he threw out remarks which were evidently intended to test Düsterhof's loyalty, and discover whether he, too, might not be induced to play the part of a traitor. He was also quite frank about actions which, it is true, in comparison with his treachery, were pardonable peccadilloes, but on which a man with the rank of colonel might have been expected to keep silent. Thus he told Düsterhof that, under the pretext of scouting in East Prussia, he had carried out a little looting expedition, and that he had consigned to a friend two old pictures—one of them a man's portrait—and a valuable table which had formed part of his booty. This statement was reported by Düsterhof, and a search in the quarters of Stolbina revealed a letter from Miasoyedoff, in which he stated that he was sending her the objects mentioned, and asked her to ascertain the value of the portrait.

It was not, however, until February 25th that gravely

incriminating evidence against Miasoyedoff began to accumulate. On that day he received a letter which had not passed through the post, and which Düsterhof found an opportunity of reading. It was signed " your devoted Boris," and was written in such a way as to convey little or no meaning to an outsider. In it Miasoyedoff was requested to go to Riga without fail, but not before March 3rd, as " Robert's documents will only be ready on that date, and it would be useless to come sooner." He was further requested to telegraph his assent to Libau with the words, " Hereby confirm," and told that his signature would not be necessary. The writer of the letter was subsequently shown to be a man named Friedberg. Immediately after receiving it, Miasoyedoff told Düsterhof that he had to go, not to Riga, but to Vilna. He also, during the next two or three days, talked repeatedly of the necessity of visiting the village of Dembova-Bouda, where a Divisional Staff was quartered, and " ascertaining our position " from a certain Cossack colonel with whom he was acquainted. On March 1st, giving to his superiors the excuse that he wished to see one of his agents, Miasoyedoff, accompanied by Düsterhof, went to Dembova-Bouda and called at the Divisional Staff. The Cossack colonel was absent, but a captain of the General Staff took him down to the forward positions and gave him certain explanations with the aid of a map.

By this time Düsterhof felt that his chain of evidence was complete. The trip to Dembova-Bouda was, so he argued, undertaken solely with the object of obtaining information as to the Russian dispositions, which was to be made known to " Boris " at Riga, and, together with " Robert's documents," communicated by him to the Germans. When Miasoyedoff returned to Kovno that evening, he was put under arrest, and soon a large number of his fellow-conspirators, all civilians, were also in custody.

When Souhomlinoff was told by the Chief of the Headquarters Staff that there were proofs of treachery against Miasoyedoff, who had been arrested, he professed incredulity, and said there must have been some mistake. Quite possibly his professions were sincere. He could, of course, do nothing for his old friend, who was tried by the field court-martial of the Warsaw fortress on March 31, 1915, and immediately afterwards hanged in the

Alexandrovski citadel. The examination and trial of his accomplices lasted several months, and it was only in the second week of August that the judgments upon them were made known. Four of them—David Friedberg ("Boris"), Robert Falk, Otto Riegert, and Mateouk Mikoulis—had by that time followed Miasoyedoff to the gallows. Two others, Baron Grotthus and Otton Freinat, were sentenced to penal servitude for life and for eight years, respectively. This pair were both officials of the secret police who had gained notoriety in different ways. Their connection with the espionage case appears to have been an indirect one. Among the earliest grounds of suspicion against Miasoyedoff had been his connection with a firm of emigration agents, in which David Friedberg was a partner. This concern had been suspected of spying and the police had given Grotthus and Freinat the secret mission of investigating its operations. They had made a very favourable report on the firm, and it now became known that both of them had been bribed to do so. Miasoyedoff's wife, Clara, who had been Ekaterina Viktorovna's bosom friend, was tried in ignorance that her husband had already been hanged. She pleaded that she had lived in terror of him, and for that reason had done everything he told her. At the first hearing she was acquitted, but on retrial she was sentenced to a term of penal servitude, which, however, was ultimately reduced to exile in Siberia.

CHAPTER V

THE TRAGEDY OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY

RUSSIA'S unpreparedness for a great European struggle is the only essential factor in the War on which we have as yet anything approximating to full and trustworthy evidence, and we owe our knowledge with regard to it to the disclosures of the Souhomlinoff trial. The charges against the General necessitated the investigation of the whole question of Russia's readiness for the War, and of the steps that were taken by her to meet the unforeseen exigencies of the modern battlefield. Among the witnesses were all the men entitled to speak with most authority on the points at issue, namely, the officers who, during the period dealt with, had been at the head of the various branches of the administration of the Russian Army. It is, consequently, very doubtful whether we shall within foreseeable time have a fuller or more authentic record of this vital factor in the War than was presented by the Souhomlinoff trial.

Souhomlinoff was convicted and sentenced to penal servitude for life, but, while there is no reason to doubt his personal culpability for much, the trial proved conclusively that he was not alone responsible for the failures laid to his charge. As one of the defending counsel said, it would have been impossible to punish all the guilty because there was not in Russia sufficient prison space to accommodate them. In fact, it became quite clear that the true explanation of Russia's omission to make the most of her military resources lay in the whole structure and spirit of the Old Regime; in the lack of a unifying and co-ordinating control over the national affairs; in jealous feuds between departments whose cordial co-operation was indispensable to effective action; and in the dilatory, haphazard, easy-going temper of the entire bureaucracy.

Goremykin, who was Minister-President during the first phases of the War, used to tell those who urged him to exert his influence in the interests of the Army, that the national

defence was no concern of his, but exclusively the business of the Crown and the Minister for War. This repudiation of responsibility by the official head of the Tsar's Government had been freely discussed in Russian society as a public scandal long before it was confirmed at the trial. Timasheff, who was Minister for Trade and Industry from 1909 to 1915, told the Court that he did not remember a single case of military or naval matters being discussed at a Cabinet meeting during that period. Neither he nor any of his civilian colleagues had, he said, any idea of the degree of Russia's preparedness for war. Only on the very eve of the rupture with Germany, was this question touched upon at a sitting of the Cabinet, and then it was summarily disposed of by Souhomlinoff's assurance that the Army was quite ready to take the field and that all the arrangements for the national defence were in perfect order.

Count Kokovtsoff cited some remarkable instances of departmental secretiveness and lack of central authority, which occurred when he was Minister-President. He was asked by Gen. Joffre, then on a visit to Petrograd, what progress was being made with Russia's strategic railways; and he was obliged to confess that he knew absolutely nothing about this vital national question. While visiting Berlin, to thank the Emperor William for an order conferred upon him, he was requested to make some representations with respect to the appointment of Gen. Liman von Sanders to the Constantinople command; and here too he had to admit his complete ignorance of a matter most intimately affecting Russian policy. Most astonishing of all was an incident which happened at Tsarskoe Selo on March 23rd, 1913. Count Kokovtsoff had been called by the Tsar to a special conference, and in the train he met one of the Grand Dukes and nearly all the Ministers, who had also received the Imperial summons. No one in the party knew what the object of the gathering was, but all assumed that some question of a general political character was to be discussed. When, however, the Tsar opened the conference, he turned to Count Kokovtsoff and asked him for his views on the measures proposed by the Minister for War with the object of raising the fighting efficiency of the Army. The Count said that he could not express an opinion, as he was ignorant of the nature of the scheme. The Tsar then asked him if he had not received the War Minister's report, and he was obliged to answer in the

negative. It then appeared that the Minister-President was hearing for the first time of a project under which it was proposed to increase the Army by 400,000 men, at a cost of 223,000,000 roubles, and which had already been passed by the Council of National Defence.

As a further illustration of the tension which existed between the Government departments, Count Kokovtsoff told how at one time Souhomlinoff went about complaining that the tardiness of the Ministry for War in carrying out approved reforms was due to the parsimony of the Ministry of Finance. This charge was so widely circulated that the Count found it necessary to carry with him a portfolio of documents to refute it whenever he encountered it. He read to the Court the following figures to prove how baseless it actually was :—

	Additional Votes for Army. Roubles.	Spent by War Ministry. Roubles.
1908	52,000,000	5,000,000
1909	64,000,000	4,000,000
1910	50,000,000	7,000,000
1911	48,000,000	8,000,000
1912	102,000,000	44,000,000
1913	126,000,000	78,000,000
1914	125,000,000	65,000,000

The lack of central control and co-ordination in the Government as a whole had its counterpart in the Army administration itself. In substance, Souhomlinoff's answer to the charge of maladministration was that he had done everything possible with a system under which no one could have obtained absolutely satisfactory results. "Even if I had been a Peter the Great, or a Frederick the Great, or a Napoleon," he exclaimed, "I should not have been able to put everything right. What could I do when there were in my department twelve branches which were not under my jurisdiction?" The chief of these was the Artillery Administration—the "Ministry of Supplies," as Gen. Manikovski called it—which Souhomlinoff declared was "positively fortified" against him. Another witness stated that, to his knowledge, acute friction had existed between the Ministry of War and the Artillery Administration for fifty years at least. But even within the Artillery Administration there was a similar absence of unification and co-ordination. Souhomlinoff said that he went there early one morning, before any of the

chief officials had arrived, and got from one of the clerks the journal of documents which had come in and been booked to be dealt with. Turning to the index, he chose at random a paper which had been received six months earlier, and demanded its subsequent history. But, though his authority as War Minister naturally accelerated the process of search, two and a half hours elapsed before the actual state of the business in question could be discovered. In the course of the investigation, it was necessary to follow the paper through eight or ten departments of the Administration, to some of which it had returned several times, and in all of which the official in charge had added his observations before sending it further. In this way, said Souhomlinoff, before an order for a gun could be placed, the papers relating to it had to pass through all the departments of the Administration. Gen. Manikovski, who succeeded the Grand Duke Sergei Mihailovitch as head of the Administration in 1915, said that when he took over the office he felt like a man wandering in a dense jungle, and that it was a year before he could find his way about in the intricacies of the place.

Bad as the confusion was in the few years immediately preceding the War, Souhomlinoff was evidently right when he protested that it was infinitely worse before he went to the Ministry. The supreme authority on military matters was then a Council on National Defence, which had been formed in response to the general demand for Army reform after the Manchurian War, and which was presided over by the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievitch. This body seems never to have got beyond the stage of good intentions, and Souhomlinoff said that Stolypin had spoken of it as "no better than a Bedlam." The defendant added that it "extinguished itself" because during its entire existence "it had not moved a single matter from the dead point." Almost equally fruitless were the activities of a number of special commissions and committees on individual problems of Army reform.

Some remarkable illustrations of how this system, or lack of system, worked in practice were supplied by the evidence. It was stated by the Grand Duke Sergei Mihailovitch, who was titular head of the Artillery Administration for some years before the War, that work was begun on a programme of heavy artillery in 1906, but that it was only in 1910 that the models were

approved and the Administration asked to sanction orders. A special commission was then appointed to test a set of experimental guns. This body duly drafted a report, which was sent to the General Staff, where it lay unheeded till 1913. The very existence of this document appears to have been forgotten, for Gen. Vernander, who was Assistant Minister for War under Souhomlinoff, stated that when, after the German levy of £50,000,000 for Army purposes in 1913, he was consulted on the question of improving the Russian artillery, it was only necessary for him to point out that a plan had already been approved and merely required putting into execution.

Yet while this report had been lying in oblivion, Russia had repeatedly been warned of the danger that threatened her. Gen. Michelson, who was Russian Military Agent in Berlin from 1906 to 1911, said that he reported German plans to attack Russia in 1909 and 1913. All his forecasts as to Germany's strategic dispositions and the force that she could put into the field had been borne out almost to the letter. He had advocated the emancipation of the Russian Army from its dependence on German industry; the building of the Mourman Railway to allow the importation of war materials during the winter months in the event of a closing of the Baltic; and the abandonment of the scheme for the Lodz narrow-gauge line, the express object of which was the conveyance of munitions of German manufacture. Supplementary evidence on Germany's preparations for war was given by Col. Bazaroff, who succeeded Gen. Michelson at Berlin. This witness said that the handbooks published by the Russian General Staff, on the basis of the information supplied by him, showed that the military power of Germany had by no means been underestimated. On the contrary, they indicated "her ability to raise a number of troops which in reality she has not raised up to this time."

As Gen. Polivanoff admitted, Gen. Michelson's 1909 report for the first time opened the eyes of the Russian military authorities to the probability of a war with Germany. Up to that date, all their plans had been based on the assumption that a renewal of the struggle with Japan was the only serious military contingency for which they need provide. But the perception that there was a closer, more powerful and more menacing potential enemy on the Western frontier did not have the clarifying and

stimulating effect that might have been expected from it. Whatever may have been done in the subsequent five years was, at any rate, utterly inadequate. The Grand Duke Sergei stated that, at the opening of the War, there were brigades without any guns, and parks without any ammunition wagons. General Vernander particularised that eleven of the artillery brigades commenced the War without their armament. Russia was, he said, in proportion to infantry, actually weaker in artillery at that time than when she was challenged by Japan. True, the number of her artillery units had been increased, but there were not enough guns to arm them all. According to Col. Tougan-Baranovski, head of the mobilisation department of the General Staff, it was necessary to supply the mountain artillery with light field guns, as its proper weapons were not yet available. Gen. Velitchko, who was assistant chief of the Engineering Department, said that, when the Russians invested Przemysl, not a single siege gun was available, and it became necessary to strip fortresses in order to obtain the requisite long-range artillery. Gen. Manikovski, who at that time was Commandant of Kronstadt, told how, in spite of his protests, that fortress was gradually divested of its guns and stores of ammunition. This process began as early as the end of 1914. Eventually the Headquarters Staff convinced him that the needs of the armies on the front were paramount, and, reconciling himself to the inevitable, he offered to form, out of the resources at his disposal at Kronstadt, two battalions of heavy artillery for service in the field.

In respect to machine-guns, Russia commenced the war in equally unfavourable circumstances. Gen. Botvinkin, head of the machine-gun department of the Artillery Administration, said that the nominal establishment, which was still based on Manchurian experiences, was 4,000 weapons, but that this figure was only to be reached at the end of 1917, and 833 were still lacking when the War broke out. During the first months of fighting, an entire division was without machine-guns, and, in addition, there were thirty-two machine-gun commands which had not yet received their armament. When the War had been in progress a year, it was realised that 800 new machine-guns were needed every month. By that time, the Government small-arms factory at Toula, which in time of peace had been making only

eight machine-guns a month, had succeeded in increasing its monthly output to 400. As the result of this acceleration and other measures, the " machine-gun famine " was got over by the end of 1915. Col. Tougan-Baranovski stated that many regiments had to wait three months before they received their machine-guns. At the commencement of the War, the regiments of the second line had merely the guns themselves, and were without all the indispensable accessories, including the belts for the cartridges.

The evidence given as to rifles was very similar. Col. Basoff, head of the rifle department of the Artillery Administration, confessed that when the War broke out the State small-arms factories were making only six rifles a day, though their theoretical maximum output was 2,000. They were, in fact, chiefly engaged on other work. When they were called on to supply the anticipated 2,000 rifles, it was found that considerable enlargements of their buildings and additions to their machinery, as well as an increase of their skilled staff, would be necessary. According to Col. Tougan-Baranovski, these factories were embarrassed by a special task no less urgent than that of making new weapons. A year before the War, Russia had adopted a sharp-pointed, nickel-coated bullet, which had necessitated some alteration in her rifle. This work had only been partially carried out when hostilities opened, and the mobilisation department of the General Staff protested to the Artillery Administration against the yet unadapted rifles being served out to the troops, being of opinion that they would burst if used with the new ammunition. The reply received was that this matter was " a trifle," as there was no real danger of bursts. In reality, however, nearly all these unadapted rifles burst in use, and in some units, after a few accidents of this kind, the men refused to go into action with them. In spite of her own need and the limited character of her resources, Russia sent 120,000 rifles to Serbia only a short time before the War.

At an early stage of the trial, Souhomlinoff claimed, as the supreme merit of his administration, that Russia had been able to commence the War with four and a half million soldiers. This statement does not quite square with the evidence given by other witnesses as to the initial deficiency of rifles. Gen. Vernander said that Russia's nominal establishment of rifles was 4,130,000;

and Colonel Tougan-Baranovski that there was a shortage of 300,000 when war broke out. Eloquent facts were cited to show the effect of this shortage on the armies at the front. Gen. Yanoushkevitch stated that the very first reinforcing drafts which left for the front had only one rifle for every two men. Then it became one for every four, six, eight, ten, till at last whole companies arrived without a single rifle among them. In March, 1915, the State factories, then the sole source of supply, were able to turn out only a third of the weapons required of them. He knew cases in which the Russian soldiers had taken off their boots and attacked with them in default of any other weapon. According to Gen. Alexeieff, the lack of rifles entered an acute phase early in September, 1914. During a battle at that time on the Galician front, where he was then Chief of Staff, the anticipated reinforcements failed to reach the Army, and when they came to hand, a couple of weeks later, the men were absolutely unarmed. Gen. Velitchko said that for a long time the soldiers not only were trained exclusively with sticks, but took them into the trenches as their sole weapon, and that at one period 40,000 troops were waiting near Tarnopol "literally with empty hands." Rodzianko was with Gen. Radko-Dmitrieff's advanced army in Galicia when the Russians could fire only three rounds at the attacking enemy, and was told that some units had repulsed Austro-German assaults with sticks or stones. The Duma President added with warmth: "It is impossible to describe what our troops suffered; and yet, naked, barefooted, and unarmed, they fought like lions." Goutchkoff saw soldiers of the 2nd Siberian Corps under fire in the Galician trenches "without even sticks," while seven miles away 16,000 men waited for the rifles of dead or wounded comrades.

But the real crux of the tragedy of the Russian Army was the shortage of shells. Even the standard set seems ludicrously inadequate nowadays. Whereas France—according to Gen. Yanoushkevitch—had adopted a standard of 3,000 rounds per gun, Russia, once more deducing her requirements from the Manchurian War, in which the average expenditure of artillery ammunition was 350, had satisfied herself with a standard of 1,000. There was some conflict of evidence as to whether this was ever actually reached. Gen. Smyslovski, formerly head of the business department of the Artillery Administration, said it

was; Generals Yanoushkevitch and Polivanoff said it was not. It appeared, however, that large numbers of shells provided for by the new programme were on order in Germany and, of course, were not received. The shortage of shells was acutely felt from the very first days of the War, and before many months elapsed it assumed catastrophic proportions. In February, 1915, the armies required fifty ammunition parks each, and only eight could be delivered. Meanwhile entreaties for fresh supplies poured in on the Headquarters Staff from every sector of the front, were duly forwarded to the Ministry of War, and then passed on to the Artillery Administration; but no effective steps were taken to satisfy this urgent need.

Poignant evidence on this point was given by Gen. Yanoushkevitch. He said that the very first trainload of wounded who passed through Headquarters told stories of German successes won by superiority of artillery fire. Ultimately, it became no uncommon thing for the Germans to fire from three to five thousand shells on the front of a couple of batteries, while the Russians were restricted to a hundred or a hundred and fifty. Indeed, there were instances when the Russian artillery was limited to one round a gun per day, though the enemy on the same section of the line was firing shells in thousands. At times, the Germans advanced their guns into the open within two or three thousand paces of the Russian batteries and leisurely shelled them. Such tactics had been regarded as permissible down to the Manchurian War, said Gen. Yanoushkevitch, but now they were impossible in normal conditions, for even at a range of four miles the approach of artillery could be checked if the usual means of counter-action were available. It was, in fact, "an open mockery of the Russian impotence." When Gen. Froloff was in the Caucasus on a tour of inspection, he paid a visit to the front positions, and one of the batteries "permitted itself the luxury" of firing four rounds for his edification. He noticed that the reports caused some stir among the Russian infantry standing near, and, looking round, saw the men throwing up their caps, and heard them shout: "Thank God, at last our guns have begun to talk." When he related this incident to Gen. Yanoushkevitch, there were tears in his eyes, and the latter was so much impressed by it that he gave orders for blank charges to be fired when shells were not to be had, and even moved

obsolete guns to the front specially for this purpose. He hoped in this way to hearten the infantry, who had been much depressed by the continued silence of their own artillery.

Gen. Yanoushkevitch dwelt on the disastrous consequences of this acute and chronic shortage of ammunition. The losses, he said, were "appalling," and they were from the first line regiments, the very pick of the Russian Army. The vast numbers of killed and wounded could be replaced only by hastily and imperfectly trained drafts, many of whom, as we have seen, had never even had a rifle in their hands; and this, in its turn, led to a waste of precious ammunition. In the end, the Russians were compelled to fall back and to accept battle on a series of disadvantageous defensive positions.

The statements of Gen. Yanoushkevitch were borne out by Gen. Alexeieff, who said that the lack of shells was felt from the very first moments of the War, and continued to be a grave embarrassment till October, 1915, when a gradual improvement set in. There were times when the total stock of artillery ammunition on the whole front was reduced to 6,000 shells. Goutchkoff told how, when he visited Ossovietz in the autumn of 1914, on the eve of a German attack, he found that for twenty-four of the howitzers of the fortress not a single shell was available. He declared that in the course of the War there had been several conjunctures when Russia could have dealt Germany a staggering, perhaps even a decisive, blow, had it not been for the shortage of ammunition. As instances of such possibilities, he mentioned the first German retreat from Warsaw, which, owing to lack of shells, the Russians were unable to follow up, and the fighting on the Bzoura and Ravka, where they were opposed by comparatively trifling forces, but were reduced to a limit of two rounds per gun a day.

Only two of the witnesses made any attempt to controvert this portion of the evidence. They were Gen. Smyslovski and the defendant himself. Neither of them, of course, could deny that Russia had suffered from a shortage of ammunition, but they both sought to prove that the picture presented by the other witnesses was exaggerated and over-coloured. Gen. Smyslovski asserted that at no time did the average supply of shells fall below 166 per gun, and that the shortage unquestionably felt on some sectors of the front was largely the result of defective

co-ordination. Sometimes, he said, one area ran completely out of ammunition when its neighbours were supplied in abundance. He had, however, to concede that defects of organisation were not confined to the front, and admitted that, when the War began, the whole question of ammunition contracts was in a state of hopeless confusion, and that his department did not even know where all the "artillery points" were located. They could not even discover "whether in the Kieff Military District there was a surplus of 100,000 shells or a deficit of 200,000." Souhomlinoff, for his part, complained that when he did send ammunition the commanders at the front allowed the enemy to capture it. At one stroke, he said, the Germans took from the Russians ten parks, or 400,000 shells (at the battle of Soldau or Tannenberg). He mentioned that during the Galician advance Gen. Ivanoff's armies received four hundred wagons of shells daily.

A good deal was also said at the trial about the demoralisation which showed itself in the Russian Army as the result of chronic ammunition starvation. In one of his letters to the Chief of the Headquarters Staff, Souhomlinoff wrote that Gen. Kousmin-Karavaeff (at that time the acting head of the Artillery Administration) "is completely panic-stricken and only goes on repeating that we must make peace." Even the stubborn will of the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievitch showed signs of breaking. When the President of the Duma visited Headquarters in March, 1915, the Commander-in-Chief declared that it would soon be impossible for Russia to continue the War, "for one cannot lead to victory troops who are without boots, without rifles, and without shells." Goutchkoff, who spent a great deal of time at the front and possessed the confidence of many officers of the best class, convinced himself that the entire Army, from top to bottom, had completely lost faith in the ability of the bureaucracy to grapple with the question of supplies, and had staked its hopes exclusively on the action of the Duma.

Nevertheless, Rodzianko's second visit to the Grand Duke was the turning point, and if it had come earlier much in the War might have happened differently. Gen. Manikovski expressed the opinion that if Russia had taken in hand promptly the organisation of her industry, she would, by the date of the trial, have been in a position herself to supply all the needs of her

Army. But whereas, he said, the German industry was mobilised within seven or eight days, it was not till the end of 1915 that the private factories of Russia began to render effective help. The dilatoriness shown in this grave emergency was, it appeared, partly due to lack of foresight and preparation, and partly to the ingrained prejudice of the bureaucracy against interference with their traditional routine and public meddling with the machinery of government. No steps had been taken to supply from Russia's own resources those munitions and raw materials of munitions for which she was dependent on foreign countries, and chiefly on her Western neighbour. Her entire supply of toluol, for instance, had been obtained from Germany, and in October, 1914, it was necessary to submit to a special commission the problem of ensuring a sufficiency of this substance. Gen. Vernander admitted that, so far as he knew, the Ministry of War had never even considered the question of agreements with private factories for an emergency such as the War, or of arrangements for the supply of the raw materials of warfare in the eventuality of the Russian frontier being closed. Nor did he know of any list of firms from whom assistance might be obtained if the State arsenals proved unequal to the demands made upon them. He was not even aware of any estimate of the quantities of arms and ammunition which those arsenals could be called upon to supply in case of a prolonged war.

The Government's morbid distrust of everything that savoured of democracy was nakedly revealed in a Ministerial reply given to Rodzianko. The Duma President, returning from the front, where he had seen soldiers with their feet protected only by rags torn from tents, asked permission of the Minister of the Interior to call a conference of zemstvos to organise the supply of boots to the Army. The reply he received was: "I know why you want a conference—you want to spread revolutionary ideas." This fear of allowing the public any participation in the management of the national affairs continued to have a maleficent effect on the conduct of the War down to the fall of the Old Regime. Even when the bulk of the work of supplying the armies, tending the wounded, and caring for the millions of refugees from the lands in the occupation of the enemy was being done—and could only be done—by the vast organisation of the Unions of Zemstvos and Municipalities, these bodies were subjected to constant

interference and obstruction, which merely impeded their operations and increased the popular discontent.

Gen. Yanoushkevitch declared that, at the outset, the attitude of Petrograd towards the War "was not a serious one." Even high officials at the War Ministry then thought that the restoration of peace could, at the outside, only be a question of a few months. "While we wept and fell into hysterics," he added, "Petrograd felt absolutely unconcerned." However, at the end of August, 1914, when the entire stock of ammunition with which Russia had begun the War, and which had been estimated to last 120 days, had been exhausted, Souhomlinoff called together a score of financiers and manufacturers, and asked them what they could do to help. A few half-hearted, tentative orders seem to have been given out as a result of this conference, which met on September 9th, but most of the industrialists consulted declared that they would have to lay down quantities of new machinery before they could adapt their works to the production of munitions, and demanded large advances, which, apparently, at that juncture, there was no disposition to grant them. A Munitioning Commission was also formed under the Grand Duke Sergei Mihailovitch, but, according to Gen. Yanoushkevitch, did nothing. About this time, considerable contracts were placed abroad, but Savitch, who was vice-chairman of the National Defence Committees of the Third and Fourth Dumas, said that not one of them was fulfilled within the term agreed upon, and that in some cases the articles ordered were only beginning to arrive at the time of the trial. This witness stated that the American factories got forward with their contracts only "after colossal delays," and after they had profited from the advice of a Russian technical commission, which was sent to the United States to supervise their work. He explained that some of the American factories were not accustomed to the precision of work required in high-class war materials, and that many of the first rifles and shells supplied by them were defective. Japan offered a million rifles, but these were at that time refused by the Ministry of War out of regard for the principle of "unity of calibre." It afterwards became known that, even as early as that date, the Germans were using rifles of different calibres, and in the summer of 1916 the writer saw special cartridges being made in the Petrograd Arsenal for small arms captured from the Austrians.

During his first visit to the front, at the end of 1914, Rodzianko was begged by the Commander-in-Chief to do what he could to help the Army out of its difficult position; and, on his return to the Capital, he "sounded the alarm," to use his own phrase, and appealed to the great Union of Trade and Industry, of which all the chief manufacturers of Russia were members. Here he found eagerness to assist, and Souhomlinoff himself was "not unsympathetic;" but the Artillery Administration opposed an obstinate resistance to any encroachment on the traditional sphere of its functions, and again nothing tangible was done. When the Budget Committee of the Duma was allowed to meet, in January, 1915, it was told by Souhomlinoff that there had been "mistakes in calculations," but it was refused all details, and the Minister gave the assurance that "measures had been taken" to deal with the emergency. It was after this that Rodzianko went to Headquarters for the second time, and heard from the lips of the Commander-in-Chief the cry of despair: "You see I was right when I told you they give us nothing for victory." The Duma President asked and received the permission of the Grand Duke to report direct to the Tsar, and demand in the name of the Russian Parliament that decisive measures should be taken to rescue the Army from its critical predicament. Then and then only was permission given to form the War Industries Commission, which, under the able chairmanship of Goutchkoff, afterwards did so much to raise the efficiency of the Russian armies. It was, however, discovered that eight months must elapse before the mobilisation of Russia's industry would begin to bear substantial fruits, and that a renewal of the offensive on a large scale was not to be thought of before 1916. Moreover, it was necessary to remove one more serious obstacle before the Commission could get to work with full vigour. This was the Grand Duke Sergei Mihailovitch, who all along had been the backbone of the opposition to change in the methods of the Artillery Administration. Once more it was Rodzianko who took the bull by the horns. He went to the Grand Duke and told him flatly that, unless he agreed to resign, the whole question of the breakdown of his department would be ventilated in an open sitting of the Duma. Sergei Mihailovitch proved obdurate, and replied: "I was appointed by command of his Majesty, and only by his command will I go."

For that command he had not long to wait. An appeal to the Tsar by the new War Minister, Gen. Polivanoff, was effective. The Grand Duke was removed from his office and it was given to Gen. Manikovski, who, by the way, enjoyed among his fellow-countrymen a rare reputation for ability and integrity, and had actually at an earlier date been proposed for the Artillery Administration by Souhomlinoff.

From the moment of Gen. Manikovski's appointment, Russia set seriously about the work of mobilising her resources for the purposes of the War. But much precious time had been wasted; many opportunities had been lost which, in the nature of things, could never recur; and the country had received a shock from which it never fully recovered.

CHAPTER VI

THE SECRET POLICE

DURING the disorders of the first days of the Revolution, a mob broke into the offices of the Ohrana, or secret political police, at Petrograd, and wrecked the contents of the building with great expedition and thoroughness. Though the destruction was general, the rioters paid special attention to the records, large quantities of which were burnt. At the time, this preference was explained by anxiety on the part of the criminal elements in the crowd to obliterate all documentary evidence of their evil past. However, subsequent investigation proved that they were not primarily to blame. There were others more interested than they in the destruction of these papers, namely, the members of the Ohrana itself, to whose instigation the attack on the offices was apparently due. This fact was brought out in rather a curious way. Along with the rest of the building, the dwelling apartments of the Chief of the Ohrana were turned upside down, and when popular passions had cooled a little, he lodged with the Ministry of the Interior a claim for 60,000 roubles, to compensate the damage done to his goods and chattels. Official inquiry showed that his effects had, as a matter of fact, suffered to something like this extent, and the claim was sent on to the Ministry of Justice. Here, however, it was repudiated, on the ground that the sack of the Ohrana had been carried out "with the participation and even under the direction of agents of the department."

The annihilation of the archives of the Petrograd Ohrana was only one of many similar episodes which took place in all parts of Russia. In some cases, the destruction assumed the outward form of an act of popular vengeance against a universally execrated institution. In others, the officials of the Ohrana found it simpler themselves to destroy these compromising records, from the publication of which they had so much more to fear

than anyone else. But though they doubtless succeeded in screening many individuals, they could not save the institution as a whole from exposure. In many places its papers fell into the hands of the servants of the Revolutionary Government, and now all its elaborate mechanism lies naked to the light of day. It was a very happy appointment which allotted to Vladimir Bourtzeff the task of overhauling the records of the secret police and drawing from them the needful conclusions. For years prior to the outbreak of the War, he had fought the Ohrana from his refuge in Paris, and from time to time astounded the world by his revelations as to its methods and crimes. He was, therefore, peculiarly qualified to prepare the case of the Revolution against it, and it is to his work that we owe the full knowledge of the organisation and procedure of the Ohrana which we now possess.

The Ohrana was the real autocrat of the old Russia. It was the body which stood above the law, and disposed at its will of the lives and liberties of all Russian subjects. Like many other of the evil things of this world, it masqueraded under a euphemism. Its official title was *Ohrannoye Otdieleniye*, or "the Protective Section," and the shorter form in general use means simply "protection." Nominally its function was merely to guard the lives of the Monarch, the members of his family, and high officers of State, but its way of doing this made it a vast political secret society directed against all the forces of enlightenment and progress. Its power rested on an elaborate system of espionage, the ramifications of which permeated all classes of society throughout the country. In addition to the large army of its own regular officials, it had in its pay a host of secret agents, who supplemented their incomes from their nominal employments by denouncing the political activities of their colleagues and comrades. Extensive lists published since the Revolution gave the names of these agents, the pseudonyms by which they were known in the Ohrana, the spheres of their delation, and the remuneration they received for it. The people thus proscribed belonged to all sections of the population. They included doctors, lawyers, priests, school teachers, university students, clerks, shopkeepers, cabmen, waiters, railway porters, postmen, and artisans of every category. Their monthly remuneration ranged, according to the type of service they were in a position to render, from four or five roubles to some

hundreds. In special cases it ran into four figures. Many of them had no idea of the meaning and purpose of the work they undertook. All they knew was that they had to keep a close watch on the movements and associations of certain persons, and report the results of their observations to the police. Others were fully initiated into the secrets of their employers, and allowed a wide discretion in the methods by which they fulfilled their functions.

The lists brought many surprises, even to those who were most familiar with the devices of the Ohrana. One of the first names to be published was that of Roman Malinovski, who until 1914 had been the leader of the Bolsheviki in the Fourth Duma, and in that capacity had received regular instructions as to the policy he should follow both from the high priest of the party, Lenin, and from the Assistant Director of the Department of Police at the Ministry of the Interior, General Vissarionoff. A man named Chernomazoff, who had formerly been editor of the *Pravda*, afterwards the chief Press organ of the Leninite propaganda, was also shown to have been in the pay of the police. Many of the spies were holding prominent positions in revolutionary organisations when their masks were torn from them. Quite a number had got themselves elected to the executive committees of soldiers' and workmen's councils. A few actually presided over such bodies. At least one held the office of "commissary" for the investigation of the secret records of the Ohrana in his district. Bourtzeff, moreover, promised a disclosure which would eclipse even the case of Malinovski. He undertook to publish the name of a "provocateur"—as these secret agents are universally called in Russia—who "up till now was highly esteemed by all as a public personage," and whose connection with the Ohrana would cause amazement, not only in Russia, but throughout Europe. After discussing the matter with leading politicians at Petrograd. Bourtzeff, however, came to the conclusion that for the present it would be inopportune to make known the identity of this mysterious individual.

In nearly all cases where the spy played a prominent part in the counsels of the Revolution, he was attached to a Bolshevik organisation. That was not unexpected. There was most to hope as well as most to fear from the extremists. The violence both of their doctrine and their policy weakened the forces of

change internally and externally, causing dissensions among the revolutionaries themselves and damping the ardour for reform among the more moderate sections of the population. Their influence, on the whole, was almost certainly conservative, just as it has been distinctly "counter-revolutionary" since the overthrow of the Old Regime. They were, therefore, to be encouraged up to a certain point, just as they were encouraged by latent adherents of the autocracy after the Revolution. On the other hand, they were the source of those acts of violence which the Ohrana was set up to prevent. Consequently they must be controlled. But the only effective method of control was that which was exercised from within, and the political police accordingly concentrated its efforts on obtaining for its agents leading positions in the extremist revolutionary organisations. Its most startling success in this direction in the past had been Eugene Azeff, who for years directed the operations of the "Fighting Organisation" of the Terrorist group and planned three attempts on the life of Nicholas II, as well as the assassinations of Plehve and the Grand Duke Sergei, which were consummated only in consequence of some slight "miscalculations" in the measures adopted to anticipate them. In Russia, however, the subornation of Malinovski seems to be regarded as an even greater triumph for the Ohrana than Azeff's tenure of the post of Terrorist Commander-in-Chief. It is a remarkable episode of the Revolution, but the whole question of the co-operation of the political police with the Bolsheviki must be reserved for separate treatment.

Members of the revolutionary organisations whose names appeared in the lists of police spies were cited before "party courts," "arbitration tribunals," or "courts of honour," as they were variously called, to give an account of their actions. In some cases, the proceedings resulted in a flattering acquittal for the accused. Espionage is a game at which two can play, and occasionally the Ohrana was caught in its own snares. Thus it was in the case of the chairman of the Syzrana branch of the Bolshevik Party, whose name was found in the police books. The verdict of the court of honour was to the effect that he had entered the service of the Ohrana at the instance of the Party Committee, and had splendidly accomplished the task entrusted to him. He had revealed the identity of the genuine local police

spies; diverted the attention of the Gendarmery from the revolutionary workmen; prevented the discovery of stores of arms and illegal literature and of an office for the fabrication of forged passports; and warned his party colleagues of impending domiciliary searches. Cases of this sort, however, seem to have been exceedingly rare. It is also not often that one finds among the records frank confessions like that of the woman Marosha, who did police work among the students of Moscow University, where she was attending lectures, and as the result of whose denunciations forty-five persons were arrested. Her reply to the charge against her was that she had entered into relations with the Ohrana as a matter of duty, as she was "an adherent of enlightened absolutism." Most of the proscribed told pitiful tales of the moral torture to which they were subjected by the police before they finally consented to do the work of treachery, or attempted to exculpate themselves by minimising their services to their secret employers.

Moral torture was developed by the Ohrana to a fine art. Political suspects who had been arrested were treated with alternations of severity and indulgence. Cajolery and threats were combined with diabolical cunning. Practised tongues painted in vivid colours the contrast between the terrors of exile or imprisonment in Siberia and the profitable ease of the service of the Ohrana. After the prisoners had been restricted for a few days to the extremest rigours of gaol fare, all sorts of delicacies, even wine, would be left in their cells, on the distinct understanding that a single mouthful would be construed as consent. All their personal weaknesses, disclosed in the course of their examination, were ruthlessly exploited. Only those of firm will or deep conviction could withstand this scheme of temptation, and many who had believed themselves inflexible succumbed to it. To such probably belonged the considerable number who preferred death to public exposure, and committed suicide when they read their names on the proscription lists.

One of the most illuminating of the documents unearthed by the revolutionary authorities was a set of instructions for the formation of "internal agencies" of the Ohrana, that is to say, for the placing of spies in the heart of political organisations and other centres of the "evil-disposed." It was drawn up by the Moscow Ohrana. Like most official documents, it has a com-

paratively innocent appearance on the surface, and its true nature will only be appreciated if "political" is substituted for "criminal," in its text, and if it is borne in mind that the Ohrana paid little attention to regulations which hampered its movements, and stuck at nothing when it had once committed itself to a definite course. The instructions open with the enunciation of the principle that "the internal agency is the only absolutely trustworthy means of ensuring that the secret organs shall be well-informed." Such agencies, it continues, must be recruited from persons who either belong to "criminal organisations," are in some way connected with them, or have sources of information as to their internal activity or the lives of their individual members. We are then given the designations by which these different categories of spies were to be distinguished. Those who were actual members of suspect bodies were "agents of internal observation" or "secret collaborators"; those connected with them only indirectly were "auxiliary agents." As a subdivision of the latter class, we have the "piece-workers," who did not receive a regular wage, but were paid separately for every item of information they supplied. A caution was, however, uttered against the extensive employment of spies of this type, "as, not possessing the positive qualities of collaborators, they speedily become an expensive and unnecessary burden to the secret organs." At the same time, the Ohrana warned against neglecting any class of people or the information obtainable from them, "whatever its form or the manner in which it has been procured." Even anonymous communications were to be "duly weighed and subjected to a careful and thorough verification." Unknown informers were, nevertheless, to be treated with great caution, and their statements with regard to themselves tested by reference to the police of the districts in which they had resided before the Ohrana entered into relations with them.

The next section of the instructions deals with the delicate question of the treatment of police spies whose character had been discovered by those whom they were set to watch. For such detected agents, employment was to be provided in other places, and until this had been done they were to be supported "both morally and materially." Especially it was to be remembered that agents who had supplied information and who "had not been affected by the liquidation"—in other words, who had not been

arrested together with their fellow-members denounced by them —were in danger of falling under suspicion and thus becoming quite useless to the Ohrana. They even exposed themselves to acts of vengeance on the part of their betrayed comrades. To avoid these consequences, many of them "would consent to be included in the liquidation," but only on the condition that their pay was continued during the whole period of the judicial investigation against them and of any term of imprisonment or exile to which they might be sentenced. By this method, they not merely escaped detection, but "increased the confidence reposed in them by their party friends," and would thus be in a position, in the sequel, "to render the cause of research important services." If any "collaborator" was dispensed with, nothing unnecessary was to be done to embitter his relations to the Ohrana, and he was not to be placed in a position which would enable him "to exploit the director of the department with various demands."

Particularly interesting is the section of the instructions which laid down rules for the recruiting of "secret collaborators." One of the best methods of acquiring such agents was, it was said, "constant association and conversation with persons arrested for political crimes," especially those who had already been under suspicion or convicted, "revolutionaries of weak character," such as had been "disillusioned or aggrieved by their parties," the pecuniarily embarrassed, and those actually condemned to exile. Selecting those who "tended most strongly to the path of conviction," the officials of the Ohrana were to exert all their energies to win their confidence and transform them into devoted servants. Nor was any opportunity to be missed of conversing with the relatives and acquaintances of prisoners, or, indeed, with any of the people who, for one reason or another, came to the offices of the Ohrana or the Railway Gendarmery. In fact, the director of a branch of the Ohrana must, with the object of recruiting spies, lose no chance of getting into close touch with the working masses or with the employees of any undertaking in which large numbers of men were brought together. The method of placing a disguised police agent in the same cell as a political prisoner was also recommended, as conducive both to frank indiscretions and to the filling of the ranks of the Ohrana. Those not in custody who were thought likely to enter the service were to be stopped

" secretly " in the streets, and brought straight to the director of the Ohrana. This course, it was remarked, was specially fruitful when there was evidence against the persons so approached sufficient to justify their further detention in case they should reject the proposals made to them. Their examination was to proceed by way of " questions and conversation on diverse subjects," without attempts to confuse them, but also without unnecessary promises and confidences. Where evidence existed against them, they were to be " interested materially," or the hope was to be opened out to them of escaping the punishments to which they had rendered themselves liable. Their feelings were to be worked upon by making use of " notorious party discords, quarrels, and the unseemly actions of individual members of the organisations." But until they had finally surrendered, they were not to be initiated into the methods and contrivances by which the Ohrana guarded its spies against detection and provided for the continuity of its " internal agencies." When a prisoner was set at liberty on the condition of serving the Ohrana, he was to be released in such a way as to disarm suspicion, for escapes from custody " aroused distrust in revolutionary circles."

It was prescribed that the Ohrana should have in each of the local revolutionary organisations several of its agents, to act as checks upon one another. A curious point in the instructions, illustrating the relations of the organs of the Old Regime to one another, is the statement that the ordinary police and the prison authorities would assist the Ohrana "if the success of their efforts in this direction was credited to them and served as the basis of commendatory representations to their chiefs." It was also urged that the director of a branch of the Ohrana should cultivate good relationships to the officers of the Corps of Gendarmes. A familiarity with party programmes and the history of the revolutionary movement, as well as a close study of current revolutionary literature, were mentioned as indispensable to the successful prosecution of political espionage.

The following section of the instructions gives us the full measure of both the political and the psychological wisdom of the Ohrana. It opens with the statement that the organisation of " internal agencies " was not to be effected according to a fixed model, but was to change old methods and adopt new ones accord-

ing to the demands of local circumstances. In all cases the heads of the service were to direct the operations of their agents and not blindly follow their suggestions, to say nothing of "subjecting themselves to their authority." Unnecessary frankness with the agents was to be shunned. They, on the other hand, were to be impressed with the absolute necessity of complete openness and veracity to the head of the Ohrana, both on business and on personal questions, and with the equal necessity of concealing their connection with him from all other persons whatsoever. Further, they were to be warned against any change in their standard of life, as even small additions to their expenditure might excite the envy of their colleagues and suspicions as to their new sources of income. When any agent received a commission from the political organisation to which he belonged, he was to obtain the permission of the head of the Ohrana before he carried it out.

It is difficult to repress a smile when we read that "a collaborator who is a member of a revolutionary organisation must in no case incite others to criminal actions and in this way render them punishable for what has been done at his instigation"; that "the role of a collaborator is an exceedingly difficult one morally, and, having regard to this, his relationship to himself should be so regulated that, without feeling qualms of conscience, he should come willingly to his appointments with the head of the agency, and find there spiritual repose, sympathy, and moral support." It has long been notorious that the most trusted agents of the Ohrana hatched many of the plots which it defeated, and some which claimed illustrious victims because its elaborate arrangements for a dramatic *dénouement* were bungled at the last moment. After the moral injunctions, it is a little strange to read that "collaborators in the lower ranks of their organisations may be gradually promoted by the successive arrests of the more prominent workers surrounding them."

Detailed regulations were laid down to govern the meetings and correspondence between the heads of the Ohrana and their agents. The place of rendezvous was to be a "conspirative dwelling," so situated in a part of the town unfrequented by revolutionaries as to be immune from observation. It was to consist of several rooms, with their entrances so arranged that spies who were accidentally present at the same time could be kept isolated from

one another. The permanent tenant was to be a trusted person, whose occupation was such that he was little known in the town. He was not to be in the habit of receiving guests, or, indeed, visitors of any kind, and he was not to allow the spies to meet one another, or hold any manner of converse with them. The door was not to be opened to callers by a servant, and there was to be no concierge in the house. It was advantageous to have a special rendezvous for the most important agents, who were to remain unknown to the others. Written communications from the agency to its spies were to be "strictly conspirative." They were to be in a disguised handwriting, and bear a false signature previously agreed upon. The paper and envelope were to conform to the social atmosphere in which the agent usually moved. The "business portion" of the letter was to be in chemical ink, which became visible only on being heated or moistened. As soon as the addressee had read the letter, he was personally to burn both it and the envelope. His own letters to the Ohrana he was to carry to the post himself. Disguised addresses and "paroles" were to be learnt by heart and not committed to note-books. The names and addresses of the secret agents were to be revealed only to the heads of the Ohrana branches. To the other officials of the branches, the spies were to be known merely by numbers or pseudonyms. The ordinary police and the clerical staff of the Ohrana might not know its secret agents except by their revolutionary nicknames, and then only if themselves engaged on the work of observation.

How these rules could be construed to cover the blackest crimes may be illustrated by the case of the well-known revolutionary, S. Ryss, who passed among his party comrades under the pseudonym "Mortimer." This man was arrested in Kieff in 1906 for an act of "expropriation" (as the euphemism goes), which took the form of an attack on a railway cashier. In return for his liberty, he offered to enter the service of the Ohrana, and at the same time he made statements about the revolutionaries in Petrograd and Moscow, which appeared so interesting to the police authorities that his proposal was accepted. To disguise his liberation, it was arranged that he should "escape" from gaol, and when he disappeared the policeman and the gendarme to whose custody he had been entrusted were charged with having set him free. In the preliminary inquiry preceding their trial, the chief

of the Kieff Gendarmery, Col. Kouliabko (the same who gave the repentant spy Bogroff the theatre-ticket which afforded him the opportunity of assassinating Stolypin), told the true facts of the case, but he refused to repeat them in open court. Consequently the two innocent men were both sentenced to six years penal servitude. And this iniquity was quite in vain, for Mortimer promptly reported to his fellow-revolutionaries what had happened, and continued his connection with the Ohrana by their consent and for their purposes. Before long, the police began to suspect that he was playing them false; in the following year he was arrested; and in 1908 he was placed before a court-martial at Kieff. The trial proved a serious embarrassment for Kouliabko, who, however, escaped exposure by getting himself sent on a foreign mission during the period of its duration. Ryss, who had pleaded guilty to several acts of "expropriation," was hanged in 1911, and that would have been the end of the matter but for the Revolution. However, all the papers relating to the case were found by the Revolutionary Government in the "particularly secret" archives of the Ministry of the Interior, and those responsible for the condemnation of the innocent policeman and gendarme were thus exposed.

How effective an instrument the system of "internal agencies" could be is well illustrated by the case of Matvei Briandinski. This man's remarkable record of delation was found narrated by his own hand in a report addressed to the head of the Police Department, Bieletzki. In the spring of 1908 he was "administratively" (without trial) condemned to banishment from Kazan and to three years' exile in the Tamboff Government, but he managed to evade the vigilance of the police, and a year later, under an assumed name, became a spy of the Moscow Ohrana, who, apparently, but not necessarily, were ignorant of his real identity. As member of the Moscow Revolutionary Committee, he was able to supply the political police with the material on which was based the indictment in the great trial of Socialists in 1912. In this case, as he himself boasts, "out of thirty-three accused not one was acquitted, and the great majority received penal servitude for various terms as members of the Moscow Town and District Committees." He also betrayed "a completely equipped printing plant, with the issue of a contraband paper, and a passport bureau, with a mass of blank forms, seals,

and stamps." Further, he supplied information as to the organisation of the party school for the training of trade union officials, established by Gorki and others in the island of Capri, and named the majority of the students who were attending its courses.

After completing these acts of treachery, Briandinski was appointed "technical agent" to the Central Revolutionary Committee. In this capacity he had charge of the "general party passport bureau." At the same time was laid upon him the work of acting as a connecting link between the members of the Central Committee and keeping them informed as to the times and places of the meetings of that body. Later, he was entrusted with the importation and distribution of illegal literature. While holding these positions, he enabled the police to prevent two general meetings of the Central Committee, which then dropped temporarily out of existence, and to break up the "executive organ" established at Moscow to take its place; he denounced the revolutionaries who were studying at the party school started by Lenin near Paris, and, by warning the police of the dates of their return to Russia, made it possible to nip in the bud the organisations they had been instructed to found; and he caused the arrest of Alexei Rykoff and another prominent revolutionary, who successively arrived in Russia from abroad to prepare the ground for a general party conference. Summing up the results of this second phase of his work for the Ohrana, Briandinski writes: "If during these years all the efforts of the party workers living abroad to revive the interrupted work of the party ended in consistent failure, and if the party in reality did not exist, this was largely the result of my activity."

In the autumn of 1911, Briandinski was "accidentally" arrested—his name had been found by the Kovno police among the papers of a political suspect—and a domiciliary search took place at his abode. Nothing suspicious was found, and he was liberated, but he thought it advisable to leave Russia for a time and made his way to Paris. Here he fell under the suspicions of the Russian revolutionaries, and a "party court," consisting of Bourtzeff and two others, sat in judgment upon him. Bourtzeff tells us that during the inquiry he "wept, swore his innocence, protested, cursed his accusers—in a word, it was as it nearly always is with detected provocateurs." From the same

source we learn that, though no conclusive evidence was forthcoming, it was decided to expel him from the party and to continue the investigation of the charges against him. Briandinski himself slurs over these details in his report to Bieletzki, but admits that he thought it best to disappear temporarily from the scene and " interrupt my illegal existence, which at the present time is no longer called for by necessity." He therefore made a clean breast of everything to Bieletzki, and petitioned for the repeal of the decree of banishment and for permission to return to his native town under his own name. It was in support of his petition that he penned the interesting story of his great services to the Ohrana. His record shows once more how successfully that body was organised, and how stupendous were the obstacles with which the Russian revolutionary movement had to contend.

CHAPTER VII

THE SPY IN THE POST OFFICE

THE elaborate and effective system of espionage evolved by the Ohrana enabled the Old Regime to keep a close and constant watch on the development of political currents and the hatching of political plots among the masses of the Russian population. But this was not enough. The Government of the Tsars was, apparently, based on a belief in the fundamental and universal turpitude of human nature. Absolutely no one was trusted, whatever might be his official position, social station, or political connections. All were kept under secret surveillance —Ministers, governors of provinces, generals in command of military districts, metropolitans of the Orthodox Church, even members of the Imperial family. In the nature of things, it would have been very difficult for the Ohrana to suborn persons in these and similar positions to spy upon their peers, though there are good reasons for supposing that it had its agents in very unlikely quarters. However, for the purposes of "observation" in the higher official and social spheres, the Government had another and not less efficient instrument. This was the *Cabinet Noir*, the "Black Cabinet," as the Russians call it, translating literally the term under which such an institution first became known to history in the France of Louis XIV. The Black Cabinet was an office in which the private correspondence of persons of official, social, or political prominence was examined without the knowledge of either sender or addressee, and such portions of it as seemed likely to interest the authorities photographed, or merely copied, as the exigencies of the case might require.

Naturally, the Ohrana rendered ancillary service to the inquisitions of the Black Cabinet. Thus, among the documents published by the Revolutionary Government are reports which were rendered by the secret police on persons so different in character as Leo Tolstoi and Gregory Rasputin—the great

exemplars, one might say, of the best and the worst that Russia has produced in our day. The document dealing with the sage of Yasnaya Poliana describes in the minutest detail all his visible comings and goings during a visit which he paid to the Capital in February, 1897. Every day his steps were dogged by the Ohrana spies, from the moment when he left the house where he was staying till the moment when he returned to it and so disappeared from observation. All his calls are faithfully recorded, and in many cases the persons on whom they were made are described. We are told at what hour he entered the Public Library and at what he left it; how many minutes he spent in the bookshop, and how many with the tobacconist; that at the barber's he had his hair cut and his beard trimmed. All those in whose society he was seen are either named, or, if they were unknown to the spy, described with careful detail. They, too, were generally followed, and it is apologetically mentioned that one of them "was lost to sight through the breakdown of a cab." The very number of the railway carriage in which the great novelist left the city to return to his rural retreat is conscientiously set down. In slavish subjection to forms and rules, one of the spies thinks it necessary to give the following description of the best-known figure in Russia: "Above average height; sixty-five years of age; long grey beard; eyes grey; face wrinkled; dressed in a plain short tanned overcoat, plain light-brown felt hat, and brown baggy trousers." To only one of the police agents is the most illustrious man of letters Russia has produced "the well-known writer"; to the others he is "Retired Lieutenant Count Lev Nikolaievitch Tolstoi." To minds such as these, any military rank, however humble and remote, took precedence over immortal fame which had not received the stamp of official approbation.

The other of the two reports mentioned covers a four-day visit paid to Moscow by Rasputin in April, 1915. It was drawn up on the instructions of General Globatcheff, the head of the Petrograd Ohrana, who notified Moscow that the "staretz" was on his way thither, and asked that he should be put under "continual and absolutely secret observation." The result is one of the few pieces of authentic documentary evidence which we have as to Rasputin's real character and his manner of passing his time when he was not posing as a saint at the Palace at

Tsarskoe Selo. On the night of his arrival in Moscow, we are told, he drove out to one of the suburban restaurants, where he sat with his friends till far into the morning. During the following afternoon, "evidently under the influence of vinous vapours, he behaved himself very unrestrainedly with the housemaid (of his hostess), whom he persistently asked to kiss him." At nine o'clock that evening, he "was brought out of the house exceedingly drunk, placed in a cab, and driven about various streets of the town, evidently with the object of sobering him." Later on, "unknown women, apparently singers," came to the flat where he was passing the evening, and, "with their assistance, the tipsy company which had gathered there conducted itself so uproariously that the other tenants of the house were compelled to apply to the landlord's representative with a petition that the dancing and noise should be stopped." Most of the succeeding day Rasputin devoted to calls, but at a quarter to ten in the evening "he drove off somewhere with the above-mentioned housemaid, in a hired motor-car, and he did not return till a late hour." A curious detail revealed by this report is that, in the secret nomenclature of the Ohrana, Rasputin passed as "The Dark One." As is now well known, he was, in the days when it was forbidden to mention him by name in Russian public utterances, always referred to in parliamentary speeches and in the Press as "the dark power."

These reports show how diligently the Ohrana followed the doings of prominent people when circumstances rendered them accessible to the eyes and ears of its agents. Naturally, however, such circumstances were of comparatively infrequent occurrence. For regular information as to what was being done and said in the higher social and official circles, the Government was dependent on the Black Cabinet. This institution was absolutely illegal in its very conception, for the Russian Criminal Code forbade the unauthorised opening of other people's correspondence, but the Ministers of the Tsars paid very little heed to the laws which they themselves had made if it suited their purposes to break them. That the Cabinet existed at all was known to very few down to the Revolution, though, of course, suspicions and assumptions were general. Many public servants must have noticed that their indiscreet confidences to trusted correspondents had been immediately followed by their fall from

the favour of their official superiors, but probably few of them had ventured to draw positive inferences from these coincidences. The story went about that, when Minister of the Interior, Count D. A. Tolstoi once rose from his table remarking to his guests: "You stay here—I must go and read other people's private correspondence"; but, on the other hand, another Minister of the Interior had declared in the Duma that the Black Cabinet was nothing but a legend. The vast mass of correspondence found in the archives of the Cabinet shows that innumerable men in the highest Governmental positions either did not know that letters of persons of their class were read by strange eyes during passage through the post, or flattered themselves with the belief that they, at any rate, were too implicitly trusted to be subjected to espionage of this kind. Evidently the Governor of Kiev, Count Ignatieff, who sent all his letters to his brother, the Minister of Education, by the hands of friends who happened to be travelling to Petrograd, was a rare exception. Even so shrewd and well-informed a man as Count Witte is said to have suffered much in his early career through the frank and pungent comments on public matters with which he spiced his private correspondence, and no doubt many Ministers who were suddenly removed from office without assignable cause owed their downfall to a similar lack of caution.

That the Black Cabinet had long been a permanent and highly-valued instrument of government in Russia was made clear by a report which had been submitted to Nicholas II by Durnovo, and which was found among the papers of the Ministry of the Interior. In this report, it was stated that the "perlustration" of letters in the post—the Russians almost invariably call the process "perlioustratsia"—had been carried on unintermittently ever since the days of Catherine the Great. It had always been the duty of the Minister of the Interior to report at regular intervals to the Tsars on the information thus obtained, and Alexander III had specially thanked the department for the fruitful results of this branch of its work, which had disclosed a plot against his life. Under Plehve, it was added, the Black Cabinet had also unmasked a military conspiracy at Kieff.

Branches of the Black Cabinet existed at Petrograd, Moscow, Warsaw, Kieff, Tiflis, Kazan, Nizhni-Novgorod, Odessa, and other large towns. The annual cost of the institution, which was

defrayed out of the secret service funds at the disposal of the Ministry of the Interior, was more than 100,000 roubles. It is said, however, to have risen greatly above this figure under Protopopoff, who considerably extended the activity of the Cabinet, and whose last audience of the Tsar is believed to have had as its object the communication of a number of letters intercepted on their way through the post. Under the Minister of the Interior, the whole organisation was controlled by a senior official of the Censorship of Foreign Newspapers and Magazines, Privy Councillor Mardarieff. His staff consisted of officials whose fidelity and discretion had been thoroughly tested. It included a number of skilled translators and cipher experts. One of the former is said to have been the master of no fewer than twenty languages. The members of the staff were nominally employees of the Post Office, from which they received salaries corresponding to their positions in its service. Their pay for their work in the Black Cabinet came direct from the Ministry of the Interior, and in some cases it exceeded what they received through the ordinary official channels.

In the course of the Souhomlinoff trial, it became known that the practice of perlustration had been adopted by other departments since the outbreak of the War. The fact came out in this way. An Austrian officer, named Müller, who had been spying in Russia, was caught, and, under examination, supplied a good deal of valuable information as to the enemy's espionage service. For instance, he gave the names of several officers of the Russian Counter-espionage service who were in Austrian pay, and thus made it possible to secure their conviction. He also made statements incriminating the Black Cabinet, which is rather significant in view of the general attitude of the Ministry of the Interior towards the War under the Old Regime, and of the discoveries made at Kieff, which will be dealt with presently. In particular, he strengthened the suspicions already existing against an Austrian Serb named Krivosh, who had lived in Russia for thirty years and long ago taken out letters of naturalisation. Müller escaped before he could be punished, but Krivosh, who at that time was serving as interpreter and translator at General Broussiloff's Headquarters, was arrested, and, as no conclusive evidence against him was forthcoming, was banished to Siberia. After the Revolution, he was allowed to return to Petrograd, and

he was among the witnesses at the Souhomlinoff trial. From his evidence, and from that of General Yanoushkevitch and the ex-Chief of the Police Department Bieletzki, it appeared that, after graduating in Oriental languages at the Petrograd University, Krivosh entered the service of the Post Office, and was attached to the Black Cabinet. On the outbreak of War, the Counter-espionage of the General Staff began to make use of perlustration and also sought his assistance. Finally, an intelligence department was started at Court by the head of the Tsar's private chancellery, Gen. Orloff, and here too the skill and experience of Krivosh in perlustration were enlisted. The naturalised Austrian soon became General Orloff's right-hand man, and through his mediation obtained a post on the Staff of the 8th Army. At the front, he was employed to question prisoners, read shorthand diaries found upon them or on the battlefields—he claimed to be familiar with all existing systems of stenography—and also to tap enemy telephonic conversations. A suspicious counsel asked whether he had the opportunity of joining in these conversations, but he hastily assured the Court that the apparatus with which he was provided allowed him only to listen and not to speak.

The rooms of the Black Cabinet were in the Post Office buildings. They were most jealously guarded, and on no consideration whatever was anyone allowed to enter them except those who had business there. The letters destined for perlustration were picked out by a few trusted officials in the sorting department. These subordinates were provided with lists, drawn up by the Police Department at the Ministry of the Interior, of the persons whose correspondence was to be intercepted. In dealing with incoming letters, they were guided by the addresses; to enable them to identify those going out, they were supplied with specimens of handwriting, which it was their duty to study in private till they could recognise them all at a glance.

It is a curious detail that the entire apparatus by which the letters were extracted from and restored to their envelopes was of German manufacture. Letters closed in the usual way were treated to the simple and familiar process of steaming. For this electric kettles of special construction were used. Sealed letters were the real difficulty. The delicate operation of cutting

through the seals with a red-hot wire seems to have been little resorted to. The habitual means of dodging the seal was a thin round stick—apparently something like a knitting needle—which was slit half-way up. The slit end was inserted under the flap at the corner of the envelope, and the letter caught in the slit and rolled round the stick. To restore the letter to the envelope the process was, of course, merely reversed. No little skill must have been required to perform this operation without leaving signs that the letter had been tampered with, but evidently the Black Cabinet had raised manipulations of this kind to the level of a fine art. In special cases, the letters were photographed, but as a general rule only such portions of them were copied as contained something of political interest. Where a signature or a word was illegible, a facsimile of it was taken and carefully pasted into its proper place in the copy. All the copies and negatives were conscientiously docketed and indexed. When a letter was in a foreign language, a precise translation was attached to it.

What seems to be an old story has been revived and adapted in Russia to-day, to illustrate the delicacy and finish with which the Black Cabinet accomplished the operation of perlustration. It is told that a French tutor, who had formerly given lessons at Court, complained to Nicholas II that he had received a letter which bore signs that it had been opened in the post. At the next audience given to the Minister of the Interior—Goremykin is the one named—the Tsar expressed indignation that his Black Cabinet should be so clumsy as to leave behind traces of its work. The Minister took leave to doubt whether the charge was well founded, and suggested a test case. This proposal was accepted by the Tsar, who wrote something on a sheet of paper and enclosed it in an envelope. He then sealed this with the Imperial seal and handed it to the Minister. At the latter's next audience, he handed back to the Tsar the envelope, on which the closest scrutiny failed to reveal any signs that it had been interfered with, together with a photograph of its written contents.

There could be no higher tribute to the secrecy in which the Black Cabinet was shrouded than the fact that a month elapsed after the Revolution before the officials at the Moscow Post Office discovered that perlustration had been practised there. It was, of course, suspected from the first, but a thorough search in the

rooms occupied by the Censorship of the Foreign Periodical Press yielded no results. Ultimately, it turned out that the head of this department, a man of seventy-two years, who had spent fifty-three of them in the public service, was also in control of the Black Cabinet, and had taken prompt and effective steps to destroy the evidence of his illegal activities. Immediately after the outbreak of the Revolution, he had packed all the records and apparatus of the Cabinet in a number of sacks, and had had them placed in a garret above the Post Office. Then, as opportunity permitted, they had been removed to his home, where he had burnt them. He denied that he had destroyed anything but some caricatures of Nicholas II and a collection of cuttings from the foreign papers, but was unable to account for the disappearance of all the customary paraphernalia of perlustration. It appeared that at Moscow the Black Cabinet flourished under the ambiguous title of "the Secret Dispatch Office." It employed eight postal officials of various grades in addition to its chief. He received 150 roubles a month from the Post Office and 350 from the secret funds of the Ministry of the Interior.

In the archives of the Black Cabinet at Odessa were found photographic negatives of letters written by the Commander-in-Chief of the local forces, Count Mousin-Poushkin, to the Dowager Empress Marie. Prints from these had been sent by special messengers to Privy Councillor Fomin at Petrograd, but, as in all cases of communications intercepted by the Black Cabinet, it was impossible to establish definitely for whose edification they were ultimately intended. Copies of correspondence of the late Commander of the Black Sea Fleet, Admiral Chouin, were also found. In recent years, the Odessa Cabinet had paid particular attention to the letters sent and received by the Governor, General Ebieloff, and the Chief of Staff, General Marks. When members of the Imperial family were in Odessa, the allowances of the staff of the Black Cabinet were doubled. It is now believed that the suicide of the Odessa Corps Commander, General Shak, who shot himself some years ago, was due to his having been compromised by a letter which had been opened in the post.

It was, however, at Kieff that the workings of the Black Cabinet were most fully revealed. And here the institution had two noteworthy features, which must be considered in the light of the statements of the Austrian spy, Müller, and also of the

evidence given at the Souhomlinoff trial by General Alexeieff, General Ivanoff, and others, to the effect that for some time before the War all the military secrets of the Kieff Command very rapidly became known at Vienna. These features were that the entire superior staff of the Cabinet was composed of men of German extraction, and that since the outbreak of the War they had concentrated their energies mainly on the interception of letters from the front, copying with particular assiduity such passages as dealt with the disposition of the Russian armies, defects in the arrangements for supplies, and cases of insubordination or disorders among the troops. The head of the establishment was a man named Karl Zievert, who had been engaged in perlustration for forty-nine years. Among his staff was his son Erich, who, some time after the outbreak of hostilities, was called up for military service, and, going to the front with the rank of sub-lieutenant, very quickly became a prisoner of the Germans. The other members of the higher staff were Eduard Hardack, Max Schultz, and Konrad Gusender. As appeared when they came up for examination, there was not one of them who spoke Russian with anything like fluency or accuracy. It would, of course, be a mistake to assume that all Russian subjects of German stock proved faithless to the country of their adoption. As the lists of casualties testified, many of them gave the best possible proof of their loyalty by laying down their lives for Russia. To some of her citizens of Teutonic blood Russia owed a deep debt of gratitude. Take, for instance, the late Admiral Essen, who reorganised the Baltic Fleet after the war with Japan, and made it, what it had never been before, a really efficient fighting force. On the other hand, there are the notorious cases of certain Baltic Province noblemen, who managed to slip away across the frontier at the beginning of the War, and fought in the ranks of our enemies. And the position of men like those on the staff of the Kieff Black Cabinet must have been one which, at the best, put a severe strain on their loyalty. Living in such isolation from the real Russian people that they never even learned to speak its language properly, separated from it by blood and religion as well as by speech, imbued with the idea that they were its racial superiors, they must have found it very difficult to decide in which direction their sympathies actually lay, and beyond any doubt the decision in many cases went in favour of Germany.

Karl Zievert and his assistants protested their patriotism. Perhaps it will be thought that they protested too much, for their own interpretation of their activity was somewhat naïve and lacking in plausibility. They professed to rejoice in the conviction that their work had been beneficial to Russia, which they "loved." And the benefit, according to Karl Zievert, was of a kind which would hardly be suspected. When, he said, they found in the letter of some professor or administrator a shrewd maxim or a felicitous idea, they brought it to the attention of those in authority, and in this way many deserving people had obtained the recognition due to them and had been able to make careers corresponding to their talents. In fact, he would have us believe that, whatever may have been its motives, perlustration as practised at Kieff was chiefly of advantage to its victims.

However, when the staff were asked how it was that, during the War, their work had assumed the unmistakable character of a ferreting-out of Russia's military secrets, not one of them could proffer anything in the way of an explanation, and in general they answered questions very reluctantly. Among their records were large numbers of copies of letters from Commanders at the front, containing intelligence of a highly confidential character, which it was very desirable should not become generally known. There was correspondence addressed to General Alexeieff at the time when he was Chief-of-Staff to the Tsar's Supreme Command, letters written by General Souhomlinoff as Minister for War, and others addressed by General Broussiloff's wife to the wife of the Chief of the Kieff Military District, General Trotski. Other correspondence from the front which had come in for special attention was that emanating from Count George Bobrinski, at the time when he was Governor of the territory in Galicia occupied by the Russians. A good deal of importance had likewise been attached to the letters of judges of the Kieff Military Court who were carrying on their functions with the Active Army.

For the rest, there was no person directly or indirectly connected with public affairs whose correspondence had escaped the inquisitive eyes of the Black Cabinet. Its beautifully arranged and indexed archives contained private letters of all recent Governors of Kieff, of metropolitans, archbishops, archi-

mandrites, and other members of the higher clergy, of all the local deputies to the Imperial Duma, of all the heads of the local branches of the Central Administration (including the Gendarmery, the Ohrana, and the censorships), of all the local political party leaders (including the most prominent members of the reactionary Union of the Russian People, better known both at home and abroad by its opprobrious nickname, "The Black Hundred"). The Kieff Black Cabinet, indeed, seems to have been a model of German industry and *Gründlichkeit*. On an average, it perlustrated about a hundred letters a day. Not a superfluous word was copied. Everything of a purely personal, intimate, or indifferent character was discarded, and only such passages transcribed as had some bearing on public affairs. Thus the extracts taken from the letters of the deputies Savenko (Kieff) and Krinski (Chernigoff) to their wives referred to politics and to nothing else. Apparently it was a standing rule that no references to Gregory Rasputin, scandals at Court, or Ministerial crises were to be missed, for the archives abounded in extracts dealing with these themes. Not without interest in this connection, as illustrating the impartiality of the Black Cabinet to all political camps, was the collection of copies of letters sent to a member of the Kieff Law Courts, Prince Zhevakoff, by his brother in Petrograd. At the time when he wrote the letters, the latter was "Second Procurator of the Holy Synod," and his appointment to this office had been one of the most disgraceful pieces of jobbery of the Rasputin clique. The Prince went to the Synod with a letter of recommendation from some member of the camarilla, and, as there was no appointment in the gift of the Chief Procurator which satisfied his ambitions in respect either to obligations or salary, one was specially created in his favour. The salary attached to it was much higher than that received by the existing Assistant Procurator, and as, for obvious reasons, it could not be included in the estimates, which would have had to go before the Duma and face the ordeal of parliamentary criticism, it was raised by paring down the revenues of a number of charitable institutions under the uncontrolled administration of the Synod. But though the patronage of the Rasputin clique could do this for Prince Zhevakoff, it could not preserve his private correspondence from the scrutiny of the Black Cabinet.

In the course of investigation, it was disclosed that the activity of the Kieff Cabinet had not always been strictly confined to the perlustration of letters. It appeared that during the notorious trial of the Jew Beiliss, who was charged with the murder of a Christian boy for "ritual" purposes, the Cabinet received orders to withhold from delivery all letters addressed to one of the defending counsel, V. A. Maklakoff, the well-known member of the Cadet Party. This order was duly carried out.

It was also discovered that, simultaneously with the Black Cabinet at the Post Office, there existed at Kieff a second institution of the same kind, under the direct control of those closely affiliated organs of government, the Gendarmery and the Ohrana. The special function of this second Cabinet was to keep an eye on the letters which passed between prominent political refugees—Gorki, Plehanoff, and Savinkoff are mentioned as being among their number—and their correspondents in Russia. The two Cabinets worked quite independently, and, with the exception of one man, had no knowledge of one another's existence. This exception was a minor official named Varevoda, who had managed to get himself employed by both of them. He was thus receiving a salary from three separate sources—from the Post Office, from the Ministry of the Interior (through Zievert), and from Colonel Kouliabko, the head of the Kieff Ohrana. His employment in both Cabinets was the cause of an incident of a rather curious kind, which, however, had many parallels in the administration of the Old Regime. On the occasion of the visit of the Tsar to Kieff in 1911, which has become famous because it culminated in the assassination of the Minister-President Stolypin as he was sitting at his Sovereign's side in the theatre, General Kourloff, to whom all the arrangements for the safety of the Imperial party had been entrusted, issued instructions that the correspondence of the Ministers included in it should not be tampered with. Zievert, however, took it upon himself to disregard these instructions, and opened the letters of, among others, the Minister of Education Kasso, the Procurator of the Holy Synod Sabler, and the Minister of Agriculture Krivoshein. This was reported by Varevoda to General Kourloff, who thereupon gave orders that Zievert's correspondence should be opened by the Ohrana Black Cabinet. Few incidents could be more characteristic of the way in which Russia was governed under the Tsars.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MINISTER-PRESIDENT'S RIGHT-HAND MAN

ON March 6, 1917, that is to say only a few days before the outbreak of the Revolution, the London Press printed a short Petrograd telegram, which stated that the blackmailer, Manasevitch-Manouiloff had been sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment. It was added that the case presented so many features of interest, and had so intimate a bearing on the political situation then existing in Russia, that it would be advisable to revert to it in greater detail on a future occasion. That promise was never kept, and could not be. New events of stupendous import were following one another with dizzying speed, and there was no time to pick up threads which had once been dropped. Nevertheless, if we wish to understand all the manifold and diverse causes which contributed to make the Russian Revolution what it was, it will repay us to cast a glance at this singular case, for it occupied a definite place among the events which brought about the overthrow of the Tsardom.

It is a remarkable testimony to the efficiency of the Censorship as an implement of obscuration, that the telegram mentioned above brought the name of Manasevitch-Manouiloff to the notice of the British public for the first time. For months previously the whole of Russia had been ringing with it. And for this very good reason, that Manouiloff was the pretext for the first blow struck by the Imperial Duma against the old Government in open conflict. The clear breach between the Russian Parliament and the Tsardom was opened by the speech which the Cadet leader, Milyoukoff, made in the Duma on November 14, 1917. That speech was a very bold and damaging attack on the character of Boris Stürmer. It contained many statements and insinuations casting doubts on the patriotism of the Minister President and on his loyalty to the Alliance; but its one definite and categorical accusation was of a different nature. Manouiloff had been

arrested at the beginning of September on a charge of blackmailing the Union Bank of Moscow, and had subsequently been released on bail. At the time of his offence, he had been secretary and general factotum to Stürmer. His arrest had soon been followed by the resignation of the Minister of the Interior, Alexei Alexeievitch Hvostoff (the second member of this family to hold the office within the year). Milyoukoff now referred to the report in a German paper that Manouiloff had been arrested at the instance of Stürmer, and pointed out that, far from that being the case, the Minister who had been responsible for the arrest had been dismissed in consequence of it. "No," continued the Cadet leader, "it was not Stürmer who had him arrested, but Stürmer who had him released. And why? Because, as Manouiloff admitted to the *juge d'instruction*, he shared the proceeds of his blackmailing operations with the Minister President." That speech flung Stürmer out of office, and though it was not printed in the papers, the great majority of the Russian people knew within a few days that their Minister President had been openly accused of being the sleeping partner in a firm of blackmailers. Interest in Manouiloff was kept up by the course followed by the proceedings against him. He was actually put on trial not long subsequent to the fall of Stürmer, but after the first day's hearing it was announced that the case would not be continued. No explanation was given at the time, but after the Revolution it became known that the Tsar had ordered the suspension of the proceedings, in response to a peremptory telegram from the Tsaritsa.

However the trial was eventually carried through to a finish, with the result that Manouiloff received the maximum penalty for the particular offence with which he was charged. But though it was this miserable parasite who stood in the dock, the real accused was something far greater and far more guilty, namely, the whole system of the Russian Government. Indefinite rumours and vague suspicions here took a concrete and precise form, and the unspoken judgment of the Court was a moral conviction of the methods and practices of the Tsardom. And this result was attained in spite of the most careful precautions to avoid it. The presiding judge refused to allow the public hearing of any evidence which was "calculated to shake the authority of the Government," and repeatedly intervened to check the

utterance of a witness who seemed to be on the point of impairing the reputation of a Minister, either past or present. But all these efforts were in vain, and though, as one of the prosecuting counsel said, only a corner of the curtain was raised, the glimpse at what was behind it thus afforded was enough to justify very definite political conclusions. It is for this reason that it is worth our while to devote a little study to the blackmailer Manouiloff and the evidence which was advanced against him.

Since the day when he was turned loose upon the world, Manouiloff derived his income from three separate sources. Two of these were legitimate in themselves, but they both became criminal through the manner in which he combined them to constitute the third. His one permanent and steady source of revenue was journalism. From the year 1900, he was a contributor to the leading Petrograd newspaper, the *Novoye Vremya* and to its evening edition the *Vetchernoye Vremya.* At the trial, it was put in as evidence that from the former of these papers he had in the course of twenty-six years, received about 75,000 roubles (£7,500), and that his receipts from the latter in salary and lineage had amounted to as much as 20,000 roubles a year. But journalism was not always his primary occupation. From time to time, he cropped up in some rather indefinite official capacity as " attached " to the Ministry of the Interior or to this or that occupant of high office. In his last plea for himself before the Court, he stated, as if in extenuation, that " as a youth of twenty, fate had thrown him into the society of persons in high government positions." It was through these connections that he obtained occasional employment as an " official for special commissions." These two branches of his occupation he played off against one another with great ingenuity. To his official friends he was the man who had the entire Press at his beck and call; to his journalistic friends, the man who could influence ministerial decisions. Quite early in his career, he began to exploit this double reputation for another lucrative purpose, and became a dealer in "protection." In the old Russia "protektsia" was an all-pervading magic force. It could obtain for you anything to which you were not entitled, from a generalship or a divorce to exemption from military service or impunity for a breach of some bye-law. When Manouiloff was in Petrograd, the waiting room of his expensive and luxuriously

furnished flat in the Zhoukovskaya Oulitza was the meeting place of a motley crowd of petitioners. There you could find, eyeing one another uneasily, officials seeking promotion, offenders against the law appealing for the remission of their punishments, small burghers wanting to open a druggist's shop or to restart a printing press closed by the police, merchants covetous of the title of "Councillor of Commerce," Jews in search of rights of domicile outside "the pale." A large business was also carried on by correspondence. Letters revealing all kinds of aspirations and ambitions were found in Manouiloff's "cabinet," when he was arrested. One petitioner wished to be able to advertise himself as "purveyor to the Imperial Court." Another sought permission to export a consignment of sugar from Odessa to Persia. A certain Hermann Herbst hoped to avoid the embarrassing conclusions drawn from his name by obtaining some sort of official certificate that he was "an authentic Russian citizen." Agents of Manouiloff in all classes of life were ever on the look-out for fresh clients, and received commission on the business they introduced. Callers at the Zhoukovskaya were listened to politely, and at once assured that their desires could be gratified if they were willing to pay the sum which Manouiloff, after measuring them up, thought he could squeeze out of them. To impress them with his influence in high places, he was accustomed to ring up, or pretend to ring up, in their presence, Ministers and other luminaries of the official world, and to converse with them in terms of apparent familiarity. In those cases —probably the great majority—in which he did nothing at all to satisfy his clients, or in which his efforts were unavailing, his reputation as a man with influence on the Secret Police was enough to shield him from reprisals. One witness described him as "a dark force on whom people's lives and deaths depended."

A typical story of Manouiloff's tactics was told in Court by Col. A. K. Mesaksoudi. In 1907, this witness's brother had the misfortune to take part in the organisation of an anti-Jewish pogrom at Kertch at a moment when such political manifestations were unwelcome to the Government, and, much to his surprise, was sentenced to two and a half years' imprisonment. His wife took the usual course of sending in a petition for the remission of his sentence, and one day told the Colonel that she had heard of a man who could help her in attaining her end.

This was Manasevitch-Manouiloff. and as Col. Mesaksoudi had met him once or twice, he applied to him for assistance. Manouiloff gave the assurance that the thing could be done for 15,000 roubles, part of which would go in "expenses," and asked for an advance of 3,000. He mentioned that Imperial Councillor B. V. Stürmer and Senator Mamontoff would see the business through for him. The 3,000 roubles were paid, but soon there came a "friendly request" for 1,500 roubles "on account of my fee." Shortly afterwards, Manouiloff wrote again. This time it was: "Let me have a further 2,000 roubles. We will settle up at the end of the business. To-morrow a large sum is due against me." Then came a letter stating: "It is necessary to felicitate yet one more person in the department to the extent of 500 roubles; otherwise I fear he will play us a dirty trick. Send at once. This 500 cannot be included in my fee." Another demand for 500 roubles was justified by "losses at the gaming table," and backed up by the assurance: "Have arranged with M. to see him at 4 o'clock, and your affair will be crowned with success—of that I am fully convinced." Again it was: "Help me out of a difficulty. A misfortune has befallen me, and I have no money." Finally the inevitable phase of naked threats was reached, and Manouiloff wrote: "Without me and apart from me no one will do anything for you. I cannot accept a refusal, and I have means of fighting." These means were soon revealed. One day the Colonel was shown the proof of a newspaper article, the gist of which was that his sister-in-law had come to the capital and was attempting to buy her husband out of his imprisonment. Manouiloff said that if this article appeared in the papers, it would undoubtedly wreck all hopes of the petition, and that the price of its suppression would be 5,000 or 6,000 roubles. It was precisely the fear of a newspaper campaign which had made Col. Mesaksoudi submit so long to this process of extortion, for he had soon convinced himself that Manouiloff either would not or could not do anything for him. He therefore paid 5,000 roubles, which was an addition to the 15,000 agreed upon and already disbursed. Shortly afterwards, his brother was released without Manouiloff having contributed in any way to secure the pardon.

At the same time, there can be no doubt that Manouiloff had connections which normally would have given him the control of

a considerable amount of that "protection" in which he traded. Among the documents read at the trial, were letters from Count Witte to the accused, which indicated a certain degree of intimacy between them. According to Manouiloff's own statements, he had been sent to Egypt by Prince Sviatopolk-Mirski to make arrangements for the safe passage of Admiral Nebogatoff's squadron through the Suez Canal, at the time of the Russo-Japanese war, and had been rewarded with the 4th grade of the order of St. Vladimir for the success with which he had discharged the task. When Stolypin came into office, he found Manouiloff attached to the Ministry of the Interior by those indefinite and undefinable ties which seem always to have characterised his connections with Government departments. For some reason, to the bottom of which the Court did not succeed in getting, Stolypin dismissed him in a very summary and uncomplimentary manner. Shortly afterwards, Manouiloff became a bankrupt and, as was made evident at his trial, a fraudulent one. Moreover, on the information of a man who had acted as his secretary, the political police made a preliminary investigation of a large number of his blackmailing operations. The matter was actually handed over to the department of the Public Prosecutor, but there, like the cases of many other offenders enjoying the prerogatives of "protection," it was quietly allowed to drop.

But neither Stolypin's repudiation nor the revelations of the secretary seriously impaired Manouiloff's relations with the Ministry of the Interior and the Secret Police. The "special missions" with which he was charged now took him to Paris and Rome. No evidence was given at the trial as to his activity in those two capitals, but current reports eventually crystallised out into quite definite charges in the Press. His task in France and Italy was to co-operate with the agents of the Imperial Secret Police in watching the development of the Russian revolutionary movement, and the newspaper articles referred to accused him of having played the part of an *agent provocateur* according to the most approved models. He was said to have sent circular letters, purporting to come from revolutionary organisations, to Poles and Russians who were politically suspect, with the object of betraying them into indiscretions; and the names of several persons who had fallen victims to these

manœuvres were mentioned. This secret service work was profitably combined with journalism, and Manouiloff's articles, in the two editions of the *Vremya*, on the subterranean activity of the Russian revolutionists in France and Italy attracted a good deal of attention.

Such, in brief, was the record of Manasevitch-Manouiloff up to the end of January, 1916, when Boris Stürmer was appointed Minister President. The transformation which this event meant for Manouiloff can be best illustrated by a letter which he received a couple of weeks later. His first wife, from whom he had been divorced, had married an engineer, named Toloubeieff, and was living with him in the Syr Daria district of Turkestan. Her husband now wrote: "Highly-esteemed dear Ivan Feodorovitch, I congratulate you heartily on the majestic change in your affairs. Sophia Petrovna and I were much affected by this change when, from the agency telegram as to the appointment of B. V. Stürmer to the post of Premier, we clearly represented to ourselves all that this new situation means for you—telephones, couriers, expectant suitors." The writer finished by asking Manouiloff to secure him an appointment as assistant to the chief engineer of one of the big railways.

The assumptions of this letter were perfectly sound. A week or two later, Manouiloff was appointed personal secretary and confidential factotum to the new Minister President, and, from sources legitimate and illegitimate, his income began to mount up by leaps and bounds. His particular province was the execution of those "special commissions" which he had already so often carried out for the Ministry of the Interior. The first work of this kind entrusted to him by the Minister President was the investigation of the "Rzhevski affair," which for some weeks engrossed the attention of political Petrograd. Rzhevski was another "special agent" of the Ministry of the Interior, and had been sent by the head of that department, A. N. Hvostoff, to Copenhagen, on a mission to the unfrocked monk Iliodore, who at one time had played the part of chief Court hierophant, but had fallen into disgrace when Gregory Rasputin appeared upon the scene. There can be no doubt that Rzhevski's mission was in some way aimed at Rasputin, for immediately after it Iliodore telegraphed to the latter warning him that his life was in danger; but as to the details of the plot there is a good deal of

uncertainty. Two versions have been published in Russia. According to one, Iliodore was invited to co-operate in the killing of his triumphant rival; according to the other, he was merely to be brought in to replace Rasputin, after the latter had been got rid of either by assassination or abduction. As has been seen, the plan was thwarted by Iliodore himself. It was also given away by an engineer named Heine, to whom Rzhevski's wife had imparted it after a quarrel with her husband. The Tsar ordered Stürmer to investigate the whole affair, and he passed the commission on to Manouiloff. As a result of the enquiry, A. N. Hvostoff was retired from the Ministry of the Interior and this department was taken over by Stürmer.

When Manouiloff had satisfactorily disposed of the Rzhevski affair, other confidential work of a peculiar kind was found for him. In the early spring, the Intelligence Department of the Russian Army received information which raised the suspicion that the Jewish banker, D. L. Rubinstein, who had close associations both with the Court and with the higher official world, had been engaged in financial transactions with enemy firms, and Gen. Alexeieff gave orders that all his recent business dealings should be investigated. For this purpose, Gen. N. S. Batioushin, who for twelve years had been doing intelligence work, and who had prepared the case against the traitor, Miasoyedoff, was sent to Petrograd from the front with instructions to form a commission of enquiry. Among the officers chosen by him to sit on the board were Col. A. S. Rezanoff, who for many years had worked in the department of the Public Prosecutor at Petrograd, and Lieut. Logvinski, who up to the outbreak of war had been a Moscow lawyer. It is not quite clear how Manouiloff came to be connected with the Commission, or what his standing upon it was. General Batioushin told the Court that when he got to work, he found himself much hampered by his ignorance of the Petrograd conditions, and, especially, of Rubinstein's "connections with administrative spheres." Every step that was taken in the preliminary investigation of the affair at once became known to Rubinstein, and this seriously hampered the Commission's work. (It was stated by Rezanoff at the trial that this information was conveyed to Rubinstein by an official of the Minister of the Interior, Gourland by name.) In his perplexity, Batioushin turned to

Rezanoff, who, of course, was familiar with official society, and the latter recommended Manouiloff, whom, he said, he knew as a fellow-contributor to the *Vremya*. This was a very singular selection, because, as was shown at the trial, Rubinstein, during the year 1915, had paid various sums of from 200 to 700 roubles to the credit of Manouiloff's account with the Russo-French Bank. Manouiloff explained these payments as being the results of speculation on the Stock Exchange, but, on being pressed, admitted that they also included additions made by Rubinstein, who had become a shareholder in the *Vremya*, to his salary as a member of the staff of that journal. No member of the Commission was told of this previous strange link between Rubinstein and Manouiloff.

The arrest of Rubinstein and the search of his premises was carried out by Rezanoff in the presence of Manouiloff. Batioushin, however, knew nothing about Manouiloff's participation in these proceedings till some time afterwards. Rezanoff disclaimed all responsibility for it, and appealed to Manouiloff's own explanation. This was that he was ordered to be present at the search by Minister President Stürmer who, "in view of the press attacks upon him in consequence of his German origin, wished all to see that he was not shielding Rubinstein." According to Rezanoff, Rubinstein made the following curious and significant remarks to the search party when it arrived at his house: "I have long been expecting you. A month and a half ago, I knew that we should meet. That I knew that you were watching me is not surprising, but that you didn't know that I was watching you is very surprising."

Another of Manouiloff's "special commissions" was not mentioned at the trial, or, indeed, suspected outside the very small circle of those immediately concerned till it was revealed at the general tearing off of disguises by the Revolution. In June, 1917, the Comptroller General of the Provisional Government, Ivan Godnieff, reported that in the early summer of 1916, the foreign section of the Ministry of Finance had granted a loan of 800,000 roubles to one of the principal proprietors of the *Novoye Vremya*, M. A. Souvorin, with the object of "subjecting" this paper "to Government influence, while at the same time preserving its appearance of independence." There can be no doubt, in view of all the circumstances, that Manouiloff acted

as intermediary in this curious transaction. And it is interesting in this connection to recall that Milyoukoff stated, in the Duma speech already referred to, that some years previously Manouiloff had made an attempt to buy the *Novoye Vremya* on behalf of the German Ambassador, Count Pourtales.

Shortly after the Batioushin Commission was formed, its jurisdiction was extended from the single case of Rubinstein to include all the factories and workshops engaged on contracts in connection with the national defence. The first of these undertakings to which it turned its attention was the Treougolnik Rubber Company, one of the largest industrial concerns in Petrograd, and probably one of the largest of its kind in the world. The Treougolnik had had a diversified history, and at one time had been a German undertaking. At the time of the formation of the Batioushin Commission, many members of its directorial and managerial staffs were Russian subjects of German stock, and this fact naturally made it the subject of a good deal of suspicious gossip. The Commission decided to begin its investigation with a search at the private residence of one of the principal shareholders and directors, F. F. Utemann, who was of German origin and whose father-in-law was a German subject. The search was supervised by Logvinski, who was accompanied by Manouiloff, this time in the capacity of "translator." Utemann's writing table was ransacked, but the only papers which excited any suspicion were some letters exchanged by him and his wife twenty years earlier. These were taken and nothing else. By way of admiration for Utemann's collection of antiquities, the conversation was then brought into friendly channels, and he was strongly urged, in view of his German connections, to get rid of his shares in the Treougolnik, of which he held 30,000. Manouiloff's last words on leaving were: "All the same, I should advise you to part with those shares." The next day, all the papers printed a paragraph which falsely stated that Utemann had been arrested. On the following day, Manouiloff accidentally met in the street an antiquarian, named Roudomovski, with whom he knew that Utemann had had dealings. He stopped him, and told him that he could easily earn a large sum by inducing Utemann to sell his shares in the Treougolnik. Roudomovski expressed doubts as to whether this was possible. Manouiloff replied that

Utemann had already been frightened by the search, and that, if necessary, pressure could be put upon him by banishing him from Petrograd. Roudomovski then mentioned the paragraph in the papers about Utemann's arrest, and Manouiloff at once said: "Oh, you saw that? It was I who rubbed that into him." Roudomovski did not act upon Manouiloff's suggestion, but told Utemann what had passed between them. A few days later, a man, who said he was acting on behalf of a certain banker, called on Utemann and offered to buy his Treougolnik shares at 500 roubles each. They were then quoted in the market at more than 700 roubles, and the proffered transaction would have meant a profit to the buyer of some £600,000. Utemann declined this offer, and reported the whole matter to the Director of the Police Department, General Klimovitch, who advised him to lay a criminal information. This, however, Utemann declined to do, saying: "Manouiloff has such power that by taking proceedings I should only destroy myself."

About the end of July, the Assistant Manager of the Union Bank of Moscow, I. S. Hvostoff—cousin of A. N. Hvostoff, who had tripped up over the Rzhevski affair and nephew of A. A. Hvostoff, who had just exchanged the Ministry of Justice for the Ministry of the Interior—called upon Manouiloff, whom he knew slightly. His object was to secure the insertion in a Paris paper of an article, couched in the form of an interview with his father-in-law, Count V. S. Tatishcheff, who was Manager of the Bank, urging the Government to make more use of men of business in the mobilisation of Russian industry for the objects of the War. Manouiloff asked that the manuscript might be brought to him, and promised that he would send it to the editor of a Paris paper, with whom he was acquainted. On August 13, Hvostoff returned to Petrograd with the manuscript. Manouiloff then said that it would be better to delay the publication of the article, because the question of the illicit speculation of certain banks, and among others the Union Bank, had been raised in the Batioushin Commission. He added that Hvostoff might regard him as "his man," and that he would make it his business to learn all the details of the charges against the Union Bank. During that visit to the Capital, Hvostoff saw nothing more of Manouiloff, but he called on him again on August 24. Manouiloff now said that the affair of the Union Bank was

"very serious." He stated further that the dealings of many banks were under investigation, and that a former member of the board of the Private Commercial Bank, Shkaff by name, had already been examined by the Commission, arrested and banished from Petrograd. "Next," he said, "it will be the turn of the Union Bank, and the authorities think no more now-a-days of searches and arrests than they do of smoking a cigarette." He added that, though he could not now put a stop to the investigation, he could at any rate give it this or that direction, and promised by the same evening to obtain the details of Shkaff's deposition from the Commission. They could then, he said, discuss the question of his own reward for interesting himself in the matter.

An hour or two later, Hvostoff, to his great surprise, met Shkaff, who informed him that the whole story which had just been told by Manouiloff was a fabrication. What was true was that, shortly after the arrest of Rubinstein, a stranger, who described himself as a "well-wisher," had called on Shkaff, and told him that the Batioushin Commission was investigating the affairs of the banks. The work, he said, was being principally done by a certain colonel, and the "well-wisher" proposed to introduce Shkaff to a person "of very prominent position and with wide connections with the Press" who was on an intimate footing with this officer. The cost of the introduction would be 25,000 roubles, and it would be as well to pay at once, as for Shkaff delay might mean arrest. Shkaff declined this offer, and immediately afterwards attacks were made upon him in two minor financial papers, one published in Petrograd and the other in Moscow.

Hvostoff now thought his best plan was to report the affair to General Klimovitch, with whom he was well acquainted, and who advised him to let Manouiloff's imposture run its course so as to ensure a conviction. Accordingly, he returned to Manouiloff, who met him with the words: "It can all be arranged," and told him that the price of the arrangement would be 25,000 roubles. On this occasion, Manouiloff also said that he took part in all the sittings of the Commission, and could carry through in it anything he wished. Hvostoff replied that he could not dispose of so large a sum as 25,000 roubles without consulting the directors of the Bank, and asked that the final

agreement might be postponed till he returned once more from Moscow.

General Klimovitch reported what had taken place to the Assistant Minister of the Interior, Stepanoff, and then to the Minister, A. A. Hvostoff. Both agreed that the matter must be investigated. I. S. Hvostoff also communicated with his cousin, A. N. Hvostoff; but though the latter was a prominent member of the Duma and had the closest connections with the higher official world, he had not even heard of the existence of the Batioushin Commission. Klimovitch, in an official application to the Commission, asked what was Manouiloff's status upon it. He was told that this information could not be given, as it was confidential. Next he applied to the Chief Command of the Petrograd Military District, but with a like result. In the end, it was necessary to send Stepanoff specially to the Headquarters Staff of the Active Army to obtain information on this point. It was then at last discovered that Manouiloff had no recognised relationship to the Commission, and the Staff, hearing what had been going on, issued orders that the fullest possible scope should be given to the investigation of the charge against him. It had been arranged between Klimovitch and I. S. Hvostoff that the latter should induce the Union Bank to carry the thing through, so as to provide conclusive evidence against Manouiloff. Any doubts the directors may have had as to the desirability of doing this were dissipated by something which occurred while the matter was still under their consideration. A man named Shik presented himself at the Bank, and sent up to Count Tatishcheff as introduction one of Manouiloff's cards, on which the hope was expressed that the bearer's "reasonable request" would be gratified. The "reasonable request" was that the Bank should buy a certain afforested estate at a price which would have given Shik "commission" to the extent of 140,000 roubles. When the Count refused to do this, Shik replied with astonishment: "But it is Manouiloff who asks!" Shik, as was shown at the trial, had managed the affairs of Manouiloff's sister, and had also actively touted for clients for him.

On August 31, I. S. Hvostoff arrived once more in Petrograd, and, on the instructions of General Klimovitch, laid a criminal information against Manouiloff before the Chief of the Petrograd

Military District. On the following day, by telephonic agreement with Manouiloff, he went to the latter's flat, taking with him fifty 500-rouble notes, the numbers of which had previously been recorded by Klimovitch. When he had received the money, Manouiloff said : "The affair of the Union Bank was brought up yesterday in the Commission, and, thanks to my efforts, was liquidated. They decided to confine themselves to a reprimand. and I succeeded in arranging it so that the reprimand will be presented not to Count Tatishcheff but to you. You will receive a telegram and present yourself before the Commission, where you will be officially reprimanded by two members, myself and another." Hvostoff then left. He was followed at a short interval by Manouiloff, who found the staircase in the occupation of a large party of gendarmes and was conducted back to his flat. When he was told the reason of the visit, he assumed a very confident tone and said : "This is a trap of Hvostoff, but all who try to eat me will break their teeth. I shall soon be set at liberty."

The events which followed were very significant. Gen. Batioushin knew nothing of the affair till Manouiloff was arrested, but shortly afterwards he was summoned to the Headquarters Staff to report upon it. His judgment was that Manouiloff could not possibly have taken a bribe, "as he could have obtained a much larger sum from Rubinstein, in whose case his conduct was superlatively correct." He also expressed the opinion that the campaign against Manouiloff had been started by the banks with the object of discrediting the Commission. At the trial, Batioushin "presumed" that his report had been handed on by the Chief of the Staff to the latter's "superior," in other words to the Tsar. At any rate, he said, as the result of the report, the competency of the Commission was enlarged to include the operations of the banks, and Gen. Bontch-Brouevitch was sent to Petrograd to investigate the circumstances of the arrest of Manouiloff. This investigation resulted in conclusions very similar to those arrived at by Batioushin. In fact, Bontch-Brouevitch described the way in which Manouiloff had been treated as "provocation." Here the workings of the "hidden hand" are quite obvious. It is evident that Gen. Alexeieff wanted to have Manouiloff prosecuted, and that some influential persons at Court did not. It was

probably a reflection of the struggle between these opposing forces that the trial was opened, quashed, and then reopened and carried to its conclusion; and that, in the meanwhile, the Batioushin Commission did actually search the premises of the Union Bank at Moscow. This search had a very curious prelude. In the first days of the year, Count Tatishcheff was rung up by an unknown man who described himself as a "commission agent," and said he wished to see him on "very important business." The Count refused the interview, and his interlocutor then said: "Very well, then we shall meet on the 18th." That was the very day on which the Bank was searched.

It was shown at the trial that, at the beginning of the year, the credit balance of Manouiloff's current account with the Crédit Lyonnais was 61,000 roubles. Six months later it had increased to 160,000 roubles, and at the time of his arrest it was 260,000 roubles. Manouiloff stated that this rapid enrichment, which coincided with the premiership of Boris Stürmer, was the result of stock speculation. The defence he put forward was that the charge against him was a plot hatched by the Hvostoffs, to avenge his action in the Rzhevski affair. He said that the 25,000 roubles, the receipt of which he could not deny, was given to him to pay the French paper for the insertion of the Tatishcheff interview, and that the purpose of the article was to promote the candidature of the Count for the position of Minister of Finance. When the objection was raised that an article in a French paper was not likely to attain the end suggested, he retorted that Count Witte, who was "a shrewd man," always had recourse to the foreign Press when he wished to give currency to some new idea. It was objected that 25,000 roubles was a large price for the publication of an article, and to this Manouiloff replied that he had had to pay more than that to secure the insertion in a foreign journal of a Government communiqué of only forty lines.

The above is a bare recital of the story of Manouiloff's depredations, as revealed by the evidence given at the trial, and the reader is left to draw his own conclusions. In consequence of the ruling of the Court, the question of Stürmer's complicity in Manouiloff's blackmailings was not directly touched upon.

CHAPTER IX

PROTOPOPOFF'S FOLLY

THE last official act of the Old Regime at Petrograd was an order issued on Monday, March 12, 1917, above the signature "President of the Council of Ministers, Prince Golitzyn." It announced that, "in consequence of the illness of the Minister of the Interior, Actual Councillor of State Protopopoff, his assistants enter upon the temporary fulfilment of his duties in their respective departments." By that time, practically the entire garrison of Petrograd had gone over to the popular side, and the triumph of the Revolution was complete.

When this order was signed, Protopopoff was still at his Petrograd home, but on being warned by telephone that a party of revolutionaries was coming that way, he left the house by the back door, and for two days he was sought in vain. However, at a quarter past 11 on the evening of March 14, a man muffled in a heavy fur coat approached one of the students standing on guard outside the Tauride Palace, the home of the Imperial Duma and the intellectual centre of the Revolution, and addressed him as follows: "Kindly conduct me to the members of the Executive Committee of the Imperial Duma. I am the former Minister of the Interior, Protopopoff. I too desire the welfare of our fatherland, and therefore have come here voluntarily. Take me to whomever it is necessary that I should see."

As he was conducted through the halls in which Prince Poteomkin once entertained Catherine the Great with oriental splendour, Protopopoff was recognised by the soldiers and civilians who even at that late hour roamed about the Palace, and for the first time he heard at close quarters what Russia thought of him. If he still valued his life, it was lucky for him that the recognition took place where it did. Had he been identified outside those walls, it is very doubtful whether any power in the country could have saved him. Several months earlier, Count Bobrinski had told him to his face in the Duma

that " no man in Russia could in two months have brought upon himself such distrust and such hatred as are concentrated on the Minister of the Interior"; and in the interval those feelings had been immeasurably strengthened. But inside the Tauride Palace, he was protected by the authority of the Provisional Government, and he was led—" pale and trembling," as we are told—to the offices of the Provisional Committee of the Duma, the body which, in agreement with the newly-formed Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates, had just constituted Prince Lvoff's first Cabinet. Here an escort was called, and the order was given that he was to be delivered into what had been the Ministers' " pavilion," but had now become their gaol. Meanwhile, the news that Protopopoff had been found had spread through every part of the building. Soldiers left their bivouacs on the parquet floors, and officials and clerks started up from their desks to satisfy themselves with their own eyes that the news was true. A large crowd thronged round the door of the Provisional Committee's office, and followed the man who had a few days ago been the virtual ruler of Russia to the place where the majority of his former colleagues were already in custody .

Then occurred one of the strangest of the many intensely dramatic incidents of the Revolution. Messengers were sent to look for Alexander Kerenski. Presently he entered the room where Protopopoff was sitting, and the two protagonists in that great conflict came face to face. The words they exchanged said little in themselves. The defeated champion of the old order rose from his seat, and, walking up to the victorious champion of the new, addressed him with the words: " Your Excellency, I surrender to your discretion." Kerenski replied: " Former Minister of the Interior Protopopoff, I declare you under arrest." Protopopoff bowed with resignation, and murmured something which was inaudible to the bystanders. Kerenski then turned and said: " Officer of the guard, the former Minister of the Interior wishes to make me some kind of confidential communication. Be so good as to conduct him to a separate room." That was all that was said on the open stage of the Tauride Palace, but it hid volumes of meaning. A more sudden and complete reversal of the relations of two men it would be difficult to imagine.

This episode put an end once and for all to what may be called the "heroic theory" of the strange case of Alexander

Dmitrievitch Protopopoff. There were many, especially among those personally unacquainted with him, who believed that he was really a strong man, somewhat of the Stolypin type, who read deep into the realities of the situation, had carefully weighed all its manifold contingencies, and, whatever might come, would play out his part with determination, dignity and courage to the end. Instead of that, we find him slinking off like a coward at the first note of danger, and, so far as has been ascertained, making no personal effort to dam back the deluge he had let loose. What he did in the two days between his flight and his surrender has yet to be cleared up. According to one story, he made his way to Tsarskoe Selo, only to find that the trust placed in him at Court had been changed to a feeling of indignant resentment. Another version of his wanderings was given by one of the Petrograd papers. It was said that, on leaving his residence, he got into a motor car, and told the chauffeur to drive him to Shouvalovo, one of those summer settlements which stretch out for miles to the north of Petrograd along the Viborg highroad. On the way, however, he changed his mind, and made his destination Ozerki, which is somewhat nearer to Petrograd. There he sought a refuge in the house of a doctor, with whom he was on terms of friendship, till his brother persuaded him to surrender. The name of the doctor was not mentioned by the paper which gave these details, but the report was current in Petrograd that Protopopoff had been hidden by the notorious Thibetan herb-healer, Badmaeff.

The surrender at the Tauride Palace brought to its close a career which would hardly have been possible in any other country but Russia. Alexander Protopopoff first rose into public prominence at the beginning of the War, when the Imperial Duma acquired a fresh importance as the only articulate expression of the feelings and wishes of the Russian nation. He was Vice-President of the Chamber, but he owed this position as much to accident as to personal qualification, for his selection for the post had been due mainly to a temporary parliamentary conjuncture. At that time, and, indeed, until a few weeks before his acceptance of the Ministry of the Interior, he was decidedly popular, both among his party colleagues and in the House generally. But with reservations. He was one of those men whose society is liked but who are never completely trusted.

By birth, training, and business or political activity, he had points of contact with nearly all the groups in the Chamber. He had opened his career as an officer in the Guard cavalry. In the Government of Simbirsk, one of the divisions of which he represented in the Duma, he owned 20,000 acres, and was also the "Marshal of the Nobility." He was the proprietor of one of the largest cloth mills in Russia and had considerable interests in the metal industry and in finance. He had taken an active part in the zemstvo movement and in various industrial and commercial corporations. In the Duma, he presided over the Committee for Industry and Commerce, and sat on those for Finance and for the Army and Navy. Like most educated Russians, he spoke two or three languages besides his own with ease and fluency, and when he visited this country in the spring of 1916, with the parliamentary delegation, he delivered speeches in English. In Russia, he spoke comparatively little in public; but when he did say anything it was usually sound and to the point, and left on the minds of his audience the impression that he was a shrewd, well-informed man, who took a broad and enlightened view of life, and might be trusted in cases of doubt to strike the happy, common-sense mean. He belonged to the left wing of the Octobrists, who in those days were reckoned moderate Liberals. Several of his rather felicitous phrases were treasured up as defining a political programme. "Russia," he said on one occasion, "is not a state but a world, and cannot be fettered by rigid forms." He was one of the first to sign the Duma petition for full rights of Russian citizenship for the Jews, and he declared that the racial problems of the Empire could only be solved on the lines of equity. While admitting that trade unions were a necessity "dictated by the very conditions of life," he expressed the opinion that they should confine themselves to the economic needs of the workmen and not trespass on the sphere of politics. One of his favourite maxims was "*Gouverner c'est prévoir.*"

Socially Protopopoff was a great success. He was a glib and persuasive talker, with a wide range of conversational matter, a large fund of anecdote and apposite quotation, and a considerable gift of humour. It was said at one time by people in close touch with the Court that his ministerial appointment was entirely due to his entertaining conversation at the Tsar's table.

Possibly his plausible tongue helped to secure him his office and to maintain him in it, but we know now that he would never have had the chance of becoming the dictator of Russia had it not been for the protection of Gregory Rasputin.

In England Protopopoff became well-known during his visit as a member of the delegation from the two Houses of the Russian Legislature, and he seems to have left behind him both a very favourable personal impression and a feeling of confidence as to his country's persistence in the War. There was, however, soon good ground for reconsidering his enthusiasms for the "solidarity of the Allies" and the "necessity of maintaining their close relationship after the War." Very shortly after his return to Petrograd, it became known that, on his way back, he had had an interview at Stockholm with a member of the German Legation, Warburg by name. The incident has yet to be fully cleared up. When the fact of the meeting could no longer be concealed, Protopopoff was asked for explanations before a committee of the Duma. He gave a comparatively innocent account of the affair. The meeting, he said, was a private one at the house of a mutual Swedish friend, and the only part he played in the discussion was to listen to what the German diplomat had to say, without himself putting forward any views on the subject of the War. He gave his own version of what was said on both sides. This was not made public, but a report signed by the Duma President, Rodzianko, pronounced the explanations to be satisfactory.

All the same, the episode left an unpleasant after-taste. It was pointed out that, in any circumstances, it was a grave impropriety for the Vice-President of the Duma and one of the delegates of that body to the Allied Parliaments to consent to have a meeting with an official representative of the German Government. And very soon the after-taste, instead of becoming fainter, grew more and more unpleasant. It was believed by responsible officers, whose business it was to be informed on such matters, that the acknowledged interview with Warburg had been followed, at another rendezvous, by a carefully concealed meeting with the German Minister at Stockholm, von Lucius. A little later, another member of the parliamentary delegation, who had also been present at the Warburg interview, came forward with a version of that episode which differed substantially from that given by Protopopoff. He denied emphatically that

Protopopoff had played the passive part of a mere listener, and suggested, that, on the contrary, he had taken an active part in the conversation, and shown a very lively interest in the German apologia propounded by Warburg. But this development took place when Protopopoff was already all-powerful as Minister of the Interior, and discussion of it was promptly nipped in the bud.

It was also shortly after his participation in the parliamentary mission to the Allies that Protopopoff's name came prominently before the public in another connection—the foundation of the newspaper *Rousskaya Volya* (*The Will of Russia*). The main facts of this enterprise were reviewed in the Duma by the Conservative deputy Vladimir Pourishkevitch in November, 1916. He said that at the end of June in that year, Protopopoff called together the directors of the principal Russian banks, and proposed to them that they should subsidise a paper, for which he had secured the services of a number of eminent liberal and radical writers. The prospects of the paper were painted by him in the most glowing colours, and ten of the banks consulted agreed to club together and subscribe a sum of 5,000,000 roubles to set it on its feet. When, however, " the true nature of the business " became known, seven out of the ten immediately withdrew from the undertaking. What " the true nature of the business " was, Pourishkevitch did not say; but it was significant that the capital for the paper was ultimately provided " by the three principal banks working in Russia with German money."

The subsequent history of this enterprise was a very curious one. Protopopoff continued his interest in the paper during his first months in office, and, as Pourishkevitch said, often received its editor-elect before hearing the daily reports of the departmental heads of the Ministry. The *Rousskaya Volya* eventually made its appearance a few days before the end of the year, and as, in consequence of its connection with Protopopoff, it had been damned in advance by the rest of the Russian Press, it met with a very cool reception. When, however, the death of Gregory Rasputin became the one topic in Russia, it threw off its allegiance to the Minister of the Interior, and, defying the orders of the Censor, printed many details of the career of that egregious impostor. For that, it was subjected to the full measure of preliminary censorship—that is to say, the entire

paper had to be submitted for approval before being printed—and under these onerous conditions it continued its publication till the Revolution. It was then the first of the big papers to pronounce openly for a republic, and it daily recommended itself to the new masters of the country by the salutation, "Hail Republican Russia!" which was printed in huge letters right across its opening page. Little did Protopopoff guess for what eventual purposes he was founding the *Rousskaya Volya.*

Concurrently with the reports as to the new paper, rumours got about that Protopopoff was a candidate for high office in the Government, and on October 1, it was announced that he had been appointed to the Ministry of the Interior. If his appointment had taken place six months earlier, it would have been greeted as the dawn of a new era, for, as an Octobrist and Vice-President of the Duma, he had been a conspicuous figure in the "Progressive Bloc," in which parliamentary liberalism had concentrated for the attack on the Old Regime. But parliamentary, if not public, confidence in Protopopoff was already shattered. Disquieting stories were current as to his goings and comings, and as to the new connections which he had formed. Nevertheless, even in well-informed political circles, there was little against him at that time beyond vague doubts and formless suspicions, which seem to have arisen mainly from his own unguarded utterances. It was only some weeks later that his name began to be mentioned in the same breath as that of Gregory Rasputin. How well justified this mention was we have learnt since the Revolution, and it has now been established beyond any doubt that Protopopoff's elevation was the direct work of the Court hierophant.

The first meeting of Protopopoff and Rasputin took place at the house of Badmaeff. This man is certainly one of the most picturesque figures in the drama of blunder and crime which made the Revolution an imperative necessity, though the role he played in it has not yet been clearly defined. He is said to be a Buriat by race and to have a Thibetan medical qualification. The specifics which he prescribed were decoctions of herbs, and he dealt with the great bulk of his patients by correspondence alone. Russia is a lucrative field for charlatans of this kind. The peasants are, of course, profoundly superstitious, and they have a great faith in the healing power of "tea" made from

herbs and grasses. The educated classes have reached that illogical but almost invariable stage in the development of scepticism, in which faith has gone but credulity is intensified. Spiritualism and occultism of every kind have a very strong hold in Russia, especially among the aristocracy; and, as in other belligerent countries, they extended their sway enormously during the War. The name of Thibet is, too, a word to conjure with in Russia. It has all the charm of distance and mystery, and, as a "Thibetan herb doctor," Badmaeff was assured of a considerable success in Petrograd. In reality, his vogue was an enormous one. The great mass of his patients were simple ignorant folk—whom, it must be said in his favour, he treated gratuitously if they had no money to pay his fees—but he also had a very large connection among people of the Protopopoff type. Undoubtedly, the Court circle also had great confidence in his powers. Prince Yousoupoff, in whose Palace Rasputin was killed, stated positively to a newspaper interviewer that the Thibetan quack played an "enormous role" at Court and supplied nostrums with which the Tsaritsa dosed her husband. In the early days of the Revolution, Badmaeff's house was searched, and, according to the Russian press, a large quantity of correspondence with members of the Imperial family, as well as many papers dealing with the intimate affairs of the Court, were brought to light. Badmaeff himself has stated that "exalted personages who visited him, including the Grand Duke Mihail Alexandrovitch (the late Tsar's brother), often expressed fears as to the stability of the throne." These facts show that the herb-healer was on a familiar footing with the inner circle at Court, though his activity there was apparently "medical" rather than political. The profits of his practice must have been very substantial. He occupied a mansion of fifty rooms, luxuriously equipped with oriental furniture, where he lived with a large family of children and grandchildren. It was in this house that Rasputin and Protopopoff met for the first time.

Our witness to this meeting is Badmaeff himself. He spoke out after the Revolution, and though his evidence should, no doubt, be suspect on the negative side, we may place a good deal of confidence in his actual admissions. He implied, though he did not state positively, that he had had no personal dealings with Rasputin till the latter came to his house to make the acquaint-

ance of Protopopoff, who had just undergone an operation there. We are justified in having our doubts as to this statement. All the more so because, in the positions and public characters of the two men, there was no particular reason why Rasputin should spontaneously have sought the acquaintance of Protopopoff. According to Badmaeff, they were strongly attracted to one another from the outset, but he did not tell us much about the immediate sequel of their first meeting. The continuation of his story can best be told in his own words :—

When Protopopoff returned from abroad, he again came to me. Rasputin, hearing of this, rang me up one day on the telephone.

"Are you at home?"

"I am."

"And is your Kalenin at home?"

"What Kalenin?"

"Why, the same Kalenin, the Duma man, whom I met at your house."

"That was not Kalenin, but Protopopoff."

"The devil take him! It's all the same to me, Protopopoff or Kalenin. The main thing is that his head is screwed on the right way. Well, tell him that he has made a great impression down here, and that I'm doing my best for him about the Ministry."

From this it seems clear that the appointment of Protopopoff to the Russian Ministry which at that moment was of greater importance than all the others taken together, was the work of Rasputin. We have, however, confirmation from a very different source. The Grand Duke Nikolai Mihailovitch has told the world the story of that extraordinary interview in which he cautioned the Tsar against the Tsaritsa's influence in political affairs. He stated that he put to the Tsar the point-blank question: "Are you aware that they foisted Protopopoff upon you?" The Tsar replied: "I know it." Then the Grand Duke asked: "And you consider that a normal state of affairs?" To this the Tsar made no reply.

It was stated in the Russian Press that, a few days after his first visit from Rasputin, Protopopoff received from him a telephonic invitation to call at the quarters of Anna Alexandrovna Vyroubova, in Tsarskoe Selo. Here we come upon another of the chief characters in the fantastic tragedy which put an end to the rule of the Holstein-Gottorps in Russia. It is the general belief in that country that it was Anna Alexandrovna who first intro-

duced Rasputin into the Court circle, and there is no doubt whatever that she was very largely instrumental in maintaining him there. Her whole attitude towards him suggests that she fully believed in his supernatural powers, and in his esoteric influence over the little prince who was the hope of the dynasty. After his burial in the grounds of Tsarskoe Selo, she paid almost daily visits to his grave, and when his body was disinterred by the orders of the Provisional Government, there was found upon it an ikon inscribed with her signature, as well as with those of the Tsaritsa and her daughters.

Anna Alexandrovna was the favourite "Fräulein," as ladies-in-waiting were called at the Russian Court, and she had a suite of rooms in the Palace. She was also the nominal head of one of the Red Cross hospitals at Tsarskoe, and it is said to have been here that most of Rasputin's political plots were hatched. Protopopoff is further stated to have been presented to the Empress for the first time in Anna Alexandrovna's rooms, and it was either there or at the hospital that he generally reported himself on his subsequent visits to Tsarskoe. Beyond the narrow circle of the Rasputin clique, he is said to have made no progress in the Court set. Old-fashioned ceremonial functionaries had too long regarded him as a pestilential Duma man to take kindly to his intrusion, and the social leaders of the little town also treated him as an outsider. Anna Alexandrovna escaped arrest for some weeks after the outbreak of the Revolution. She was still suffering from the effects of a railway accident, in which both her legs had been broken, and was unable to walk without crutches, and this circumstance obtained for her a brief respite. In the end, she was imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress, and she was one of a little band of prominent personalities of the Old Regime whom the Provisional Government decided to banish abroad. Her companions on the journey to exile included Badmaeff and Manasevitch-Manouiloff. However, they got no further than Helsingfors, where the indiscretion of Badmaeff resulted in their return to Petrograd. A crowd gathered round the train containing the banished members of the Rasputin clique, and the Thibetan quack thought the occasion a suitable one for making a speech in favour of a restoration of the autocracy. But he over-estimated his powers of persuasion, and he and his fellow-travellers were quickly dragged out of their carriages and

lodged in the Helsingfors gaol. Meanwhile the triumph of the Bolsheviks had completely changed the whole political situation, and when the prisoners were sent back to Petrograd, they were delivered up at the Smolny Institute, then Lenin's headquarters. Here they seem to have been treated with unexpected kindness, and Anna Alexandrovna made public acknowledgment of the generosity of Bolshevik hospitality. Like Protopopoff and Badmaeff, she has since appeared on the lists of "hostages" executed by order of the Soviet Government; but fortunately many of the people whose deaths in this way have been reported are known to be still alive.

One of Protopopoff's first acts as Minister of the Interior was to get into touch with Gen. Kourloff. This was very significant. Kourloff had the reputation of being one of the most unscrupulous and ruthless instruments of the Old Regime. At the time of the assassination of Stolypin, in 1911, he was in charge of the Ohrana at Kieff, which had been taken out of the jurisdiction of the Governor-General and entrusted to him for the duration of the Tsar's visit to the town. Count Bobrinski, Protopopoff's successor as Vice-President of the Duma, said in that Chamber in November, 1916: "At the Hotel de l'Europe, where Kourloff was staying, champagne flowed in streams throughout the night and the orchestra played continuously, with the result that Stolypin was struck down by the bullet of Bogroff. An enquiry was held, and Kourloff was not made answerable before the courts, but all honest men in Russia to this day regard him as responsible for the sacrifice of this life so precious to Russia." Kourloff was, however, left in retirement, and nothing more was heard of him till the spring of 1915 when he was charged with the evacuation of the industry of Riga, then seriously threatened by the Germans. His method of carrying out this work, was, to say the least of it, remarkable. The plant of the jam-makers and food-canners was removed first, while the machinery working directly for the national defence was left exposed to danger till the last. When Gen. Polivanoff replaced Souhomlinoff at the Ministry of War, he lost no time in restoring Kourloff to the unemployed list, on which he remained till Protopopoff needed a suitable tool for the execution of his strange and crazy policy.

The immediate aim of this policy was the suppression of every symptom of public discontent. Its ultimate aim is still a

mystery. A few weeks after Protopopoff's appointment, the Duma reassembled, and the struggle against the Government began in real earnest. Up to that point, the Progressive Bloc had done everything in its power to postpone sharp domestic conflict till the War was ended; but it had at last realised that, without some change in the system by which Russia was governed, victory was almost impossible. As throughout the crisis, it played its cards with great skill and judgment. A concentrated attack was made upon the weakest point in the enemy's line, the personality of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and President of the Cabinet. Paul Milyoukoff was sent forward to open the fight. He categorically accused the Minister President of having shared in the plunder of the blackmailing police spy, Manasevitch-Manouiloff, and, by an ingenious chain of argument, also laid to his charge that he had betrayed the secrets of the Allies to the enemy. After that, there was nothing for Stürmer to do but to disappear from public life till he had cleared his name. He resigned, and the Duma was adjourned for a few days to allow his successor as Minister President, Alexander Trepoff, to draw up a programme.

Trepoff was known to have voted consistently on the wrong side in all the vital decisions that had been taken by the Cabinet since he had been a member of it, but he faced the Duma with a conciliatory statement, and with the welcome announcement that Constantinople and the Straits were to be the reward of Russia's efforts in the War. But both the promises and the sop passed almost unheeded. The Duma had made up its mind that Protopopoff must go, and that there could be no co-operation with a Government in which he was included. Two members of the former Government majority opened the attack on the obnoxious Minister. The former arch-reactionary Vladimir Pourishkevitch, after a pitiless review of Protopopoff's public record, declared that a blow must be struck at the "esoteric influences" by which such "petty men" were elevated to positions of high authority. Then, turning to the ministers, who sat in full strength behind him, he exorted them, in a passionate peroration, to "throw themselves at the feet of the Tsar," and "implore him to banish Gregory Rasputin from the Court." Count Vladimir Bobrinski, a Nationalist, looked Protopopoff straight in the eyes, and exclaimed: "I wonder that you have the

impudence to sit here and listen to the things that are being said about you."

Whether Trepoff acted on the promptings of Pourishkevitch we do not know, but at any rate he realised the impossibility of retaining Protopopoff in the Cabinet if he wished to carry out his own programme. A couple of days later, he went to the Army Headquarters, and induced the Tsar to agree to the removal of the obstacle in his path. But his triumph was very short-lived. On his return from the Staff, his train passed that in which Protopopoff was journeying thither, and the united efforts of the Rasputin gang soon secured the reversal of the decision just taken. Trepoff did not at once submit, and the struggle between these two men was kept up till the beginning of January, 1917. Then Protopopoff, who so far had only been in the probationary stage of "Administrator" of his department, was confirmed in full ministerial rank, and Trepoff sent in his resignation.

Protopopoff was now supreme in Russia, for the new Minister President, Prince Golitzyn, was a mediocrity without a will or a policy of his own. It had been expected that the death of Rasputin, which had taken place ten days earlier, would prove fatal to Protopopoff; for, as head of the police, he was responsible for the personal safety of the Imperial family and its protegés; but it only increased his influence and power. There is no reason to doubt that the "spirit" of the dead impostor was called up to strengthen the Minister of the Interior's position, and to remove any misgivings that may have existed as to the wisdom of the policy he recommended.

From the time of Trepoff's retirement, there can be no doubt that Protopopoff was responsible for every one of the lunatic and fatal measures adopted in Russia's domestic affairs. Nominated members of the Imperial Council who had voted for a resolution in favour of a Cabinet "enjoying the confidence of the public" were deprived of their seats, in defiance of precedent, and, apparently, in contravention of the law, and their places filled by men of trustworthy subservience. The President of the Council was dismissed, and his post given to a notorious reactionary, the ex-Minister of Justice Shcheglovitoff, whose resignation had been one of the concessions to popular wishes early in the War, and who, according to the Grand Duke Nikolai Mihailovitch, was one of the most influential supporters of the

policy of defying the nation. Political arrests became more numerous every day, and on February 11 Protopopoff took the extreme and desperate step of imprisoning eleven of the workmen's representatives on the Central War-Industries Committee. This body was one of many organisations which had been formed at the time of Russia's great awakening to her peril and need in the spring of 1915. As its name suggests, its object was to organise the industry of the country for the purposes of the War. To do this, it was necessary to come to an understanding with the workmen on questions of the hours and the distribution of labour. At that time, however, trade unions as we understand them were prohibited by law, and there were no organisations qualified to negotiate on behalf of the workmen. After considerable difficulty and delay, arrangements were made for their representation on the Commission. Here their delegates proved exceedingly useful, and showed a high level of patriotic endeavour. Their arrest was condemned on all sides. Alexander Goutchkoff, the President of the Commission, and its Vice-President, A. I. Konovaloff, who was afterwards Minister for Trade and Commerce in the Provisional Government, both came forward in stalwart defence of their working-class colleagues, who, it was shown, had in the main occupied themselves with the formation of "chambers of conciliation" to prevent stoppages of work in the munition factories. It also became known that the arrested men had displayed such moderation in pressing the interests of their class, that they had lost a good deal of their authority among the workmen. Among the Mensheviks, the more temperate section of the Social-Democrats, a movement had actually been set on foot in favour of cancelling their mandates and sending to the Committee men of a more aggressive spirit.

By ordinary human intelligence, the arrest of these men at that juncture can only be ascribed to a desire to provoke excesses; and, indeed, the popular theory in Russia was and is that Protopopoff deliberately worked for revolution. According to this hypothesis, his object was either to provide Russia with a plausible pretext for withdrawing from the War, or to lay a solid foundation for concessions by demonstrating that a revolutionary rising could achieve nothing. The shortage of food was explained as another of his provocations. It has frequently been said that he deliberately withheld provisions from Petrograd, Moscow and

other large towns, with the object of goading their populations into revolt. This charge may be true, but it is only fair to say that no concrete evidence has been brought forward in support of it. The difficulty of supplying the two capitals regularly with food had made itself felt ever since the middle of 1915, and had been steadily aggravated as transport and agriculture became more and more disorganised. The snowstorms of January had put a further heavy strain on the railway system. Moreover the shortage was at that time almost as acute at the front as it was in the big towns, and it could not have been part of the plan attributed to Protopopoff to breed discontent in the Army. The first revolutionary Minister of Agriculture, Andrei Shingareoff, stated that when he came into office there were sections of the front, involving hundreds of thousands of men, where the stocks of food in hand had fallen to a single day's supply. The idea that Protopopoff deliberately withheld food from Petrograd and Moscow may, therefore, be dismissed as improbable.

Moreover, the theory that Protopopoff deliberately worked for revolution must meet the objections that he was by no means a stupid man, and, even before he had at his disposal the vast and efficient espionage system of the Ministry of the Interior, by no means an ill-informed one. He must have been perfectly aware that any such plan as that attributed to him meant the gravest risks both to the dynasty and to himself. As a leading member of the Progressive Bloc in the Duma, he must have known that the whole country had been more or less organised for revolution, and that most of the leading generals in the field were in cordial sympathy with the movement. And if he had any doubts as to the state of feeling in the masses, they must have been instantly dispelled when he came to read the reports of the police secret service. It is incredible that he should not have realised that it would be infinitely harder to stop a revolutionary movement than to start it.

Some time after the Revolution, Protopopoff was pronounced to be insane, but it is doubtful whether he could justly have been regarded as irresponsible for his actions at the time when he was still Minister of the Interior. A more probable theory is that his head, never a very stable one, was turned by his sudden elevation. Always a vain man, he no doubt felt that he had at last got his deserts, when he found himself the trusted confidante

of the woman who had it in her power to assert her will over all Russia. His one chance of retaining that position was to take her views, where those views were rigid and unalterable. Her dominant idea was that the prerogatives of the throne must be preserved, and Protopopoff apparently thought, in his self-love and self-delusion, that he was a big enough and a strong enough man to preserve them. That would explain his enormous increase in the outlay on the police, and the placing of machine guns on the roofs of all the public buildings in Petrograd. It was not that he wished to provoke the Revolution, but that he believed it to be at hand, and imagined himself to be strong enough to crush it, and so earn the lasting gratitude of the dynasty. No doubt, it was the mental instability which made such ambitions possible that afterwards degenerated into madness; but until he had brought the Russian Empire crashing down about his head, Protopopoff's actions may be judged by the ordinary standards of human weakness and folly.

THE NEW REGIME

CHAPTER X

THE FAILURE OF THE REVOLUTION

THE Revolution took over a very difficult heritage. The whole country had been discouraged and depressed by two and a half years of military failure, relieved, it is true, by short intervals of brilliant success, but nevertheless not substantially modified by them. The railway system had sunk into a state of hopeless disorganisation, which was paralysing industry and threatening both the Army and the urban populations with starvation, and which had recently been seriously aggravated by a series of heavy snowstorms. Already the pinch of hunger was being felt in the big industrial centres. Moreover, the interruption of foreign trade had reduced the supplies of imported manufactures far below the needs of the nation, and the prices of such articles of this class as were still procurable had been driven up to a prohibitive level by the fall in the exchange. We can never know whether the Old Regime would have been able to cope with this situation, which it had been powerless to prevent; but all the signs indicated an early breakdown of the vital machinery of the country. That would have meant defeat at the front and starvation everywhere.

On the other hand, there were many reasons for expecting the new Government to do much better than their predecessors. It would be difficult to name any body of administrators in which ability, energy, zeal and disinterestedness were so happily combined as they were in Prince Lvoff's first Cabinet. The chief departments were under men with unexceptionable qualifications. As head of the All-Russian Union of Zemstvos, the Minister President had gained an experience and authority which seemed to make him the ideal revolutionary Minister of the Interior.

Milyoukoff brought to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs not only a historian's and a journalist's knowledge of Europe, but a direct and intimate acquaintance with England, France, Germany, Bulgaria and the United States, and a familiarity with their languages which enabled him to make an after-dinner speech in any of them. Shingareoff, the Minister of Agriculture, came closer than any other man in public life to being the embodiment of all the best Russian characteristics; and although the technicalities of his post were perhaps fresh to him, he had been intimate with the peasants and their needs since his days as a zemstvo doctor, and he had grappled with the financial side of his task during his active and useful work on the Budget Committee of the Imperial Duma. Goutchkoff was undoubtedly the best qualified War Minister Russia had ever had.

Moreover the task with which the Government had to deal seemed to have been greatly simplified by the Revolution. Instead of sharp conflict between rulers and ruled, there was apparently perfect harmony. Apart from those who had most deeply committed themselves in the sins of the bureaucracy, practically the entire nation welcomed the Revolution and the new Government with transports of joy. All those thousands of Russians who had so long complained that their co-operation in the task of winning the War was rejected, now found their aid cordially invited. It seemed quite reasonable to expect that the liberation of all this pent-up energy would so enhance the national momentum that all the obstacles left by the Old Regime would be surmounted. And, indeed, there can be little doubt that if the national solidarity which showed itself in the first days of the Revolution had been maintained; if the members of the Provisional Government had been vigorously supported in their honest efforts to grapple with the inevitable difficulties of the transition period between the collapse of the Tsardom and the meeting of the Constituent Assembly; if the leaders of the Left had been content to urge on their followers patience and forbearance till the Revolution was firmly consolidated and the War finished—then the present outlook in Russia, in Europe, in the world, would be fundamentally different from what it is. The peace the Russians desired so earnestly, and with such good reasons—of which we in England had next to no personal experience—might well have been secured a year earlier than

was actually the case, and their country might have entered upon the phase of reconstruction instead of being plunged into an unprecedented welter of anarchy and civil war.

Many reasons have been advanced to account for the deplorable degeneracy of the Russian Revolution after the glad days of its birth. Most of them, no doubt, have been contributing causes, but from the very outset there was one feature in the situation which is in itself enough to explain everything. No government can be successful, even in the most favourable circumstances, unless it has both absolute freedom to take decisions on urgent matters, and also the power to compel the execution of those decisions in case they should be disregarded or opposed. And these faculties become all the more necessary in proportion as the safety of the State is endangered by foreign war or by the relaxation of the bonds of civic discipline. But though, after the outbreak of the Revolution, Russia had to face both these perils in their extremest form, her Government had neither complete freedom of decision nor undivided control over the executive forces of the nation. It was, in fact, a Government only in name, and the real power was in the hands of the soviets. The only attribute of Government with which the Cabinet was fully invested was responsibility. This it had to bear both for its own measures and for acts of others with which it had nothing whatever to do. In essence the situation was this, that all the power was with the soviets and all the responsibility with the Cabinet. It is to this duplicity of government that the chaos in the domestic administration of Russia and the debacle on her front are mainly to be ascribed.

The idea has got about that "soviet" is a specific term for something peculiarly Russian, which does not exist in other countries. That is not so. "Soviet" simply means "council," and corresponds in its use almost exactly with the German word "Rath." Almost any deliberative body is a soviet; the committee of a football club, for example, or the board of a public company. The Cabinet of the Tsardom was the "Soviet Ministroff." Formerly the Soviet *par excellence*—what was understood by the word when it was used without qualification—was the Imperial Council, or Council of Empire, as it was variously called. It is, therefore, a mistake to suppose that the word necessarily indicates anything specifically Russian or

revolutionary. There is, however, an adequate justification for its adoption into our language. Some abbreviation was necessary for so cumbrous a title as "council of peasants', workmen's and soldiers' deputies," and "soviet" had to the foreigner the merits of distinctness and brevity.

Nor was the soviet as we know it a quite new feature introduced into Russian national life by the events of 1917. It had its prototype in the Council of Workmen's Delegates which played a prominent part in the Revolution of 1905. That body was a necessary extemporisation. To the artizans of the old Russia, organisation in trade unions was forbidden by law; consequently, when the first Revolution broke out, they had no collective means of making their wishes known. It was primarily to remedy this deficiency that the first of the soviets was called into existence. Its founders also had another object: they wished to have an organisation which would unite the whole proletariat under the banner of its common needs, and prevent it from splitting up amongst rival socialist parties, and wasting its strength in factional quarrels. That is why Lenin, whose "Marxian orthodoxy" at that time was still identical with the prevailing German type, used his influence against the formation of the 1905 Soviet. What he aimed at then was the union of the proletariat under the Social-Democratic extremists, and the extinction of all forms of tepid and "opportunist" socialism. By a quaint irony of fate, he lived to be raised to power by the principle which he had opposed, and to extol it as the very foundation of the ideal and perfect form of democratic government.

The first President of the 1905 Soviet was the lawyer Nosar, who, in order to take an effective part in the labour movement, had assumed the name Hroustaloff, and gone through the apprenticeship of a compositor. In an unguarded moment of boastfulness, he revealed his identity to the Petrograd Police Prefect, and was arrested for passing under a false name. (He was heard of again during the first weeks of the 1917 Revolution, when he played a conspicuous, though very local, part as "dictator" of Pereyaslavl, in the Poltava Government.) After his arrest, his place as head of the 1905 Soviet was taken by Leon Braunstein, whom all the world to-day knows as Trotski. The latter was, however, not long in joining his predecessor in prison, and

the presidency of the Soviet fell to the chameleon-like Parvus (Dr. Helphand), who began life as a Russian, then took on Turkish citizenship, and finally, during the War, became naturalised in Germany, where he managed to reconcile professions of advanced socialism with the accumulation of considerable wealth and with subservience to an imperialistic regime. His name figures prominently in the documents by which it has been sought to implicate Bolshevism in the designs of the Wilhelmian Government.

The first Soviet lasted from October, 1905, to January, 1906, when the triumph of reaction forced its dissolution. Though it called itself merely the "Council of Workmen's Delegates," it included an element of soldiers' representation. Like the Soviet formed in March, 1917, it had its official organ, which bore the now-familiar name *Izviestia* (*News*), but had to be printed and distributed clandestinely. It also had its "Red Guard," who, in close ranks, surrounded the members of the Executive Committee whenever they appeared in the streets, in order to protect them from sudden attack and seizure by the police.

Attempts were made as long ago as the summer of 1915 to revive the soviet idea in the factories of Petrograd, but they seem to have met with but little success, for the popular movement which began in that city on March 8, 1917, expressing itself in spontaneous strikes and demonstrations, was without any organisation to supply it with a rallying point and direction. The initiative in co-ordination of aim and effort was supplied by a co-operative association, the Petrograd League of Working-class Consumers, at that time almost the only legal artizan corporation in the Capital. In agreement with the Social-Democratic Menshevik Party in the Duma—the Bolshevik deputies had all been sent to Siberia—the League called a meeting at its offices in the Nevski Prospect on March 10. Some thirty or forty persons were present, among them Nikolai Cheidze, who was to be President of the new Soviet. The discussion naturally resulted in the decision to form a council of workmen's delegates on the 1905 model, and a plan of organisation was drawn up. It was decided to utilise the branches of the League as district centres of the movement, and its chief office as headquarters. Those present were charged to make known to the factories of their respective districts what was being done. It was intended to

hold the first meeting of the Soviet on the following day, but this plan was upset by the arrest of some of the artizans engaged in the movement. However, the arrests brought the irritation of the populace up to boiling point, and on March 12 the Revolution broke out spontaneously. On the morning of that day, five regiments passed over to the popular side, and there was no longer any going back. At 2 o'clock that afternoon, the Social-Democratic and Social-Revolutionary parties of the Duma, together with a few labour leaders who were not members of that body, met in Committee Room No. 12 of the Tauride Palace, and decided to call the first meeting of the Soviet for the same evening. Messengers were forthwith despatched to all the factories and barracks, with the summons to choose delegates. The workmen were told to elect one for every thousand, the soldiers one for every company. At 9 o'clock that evening, some 125 to 150 workmen and soldiers gathered in the Duma Hall of Session for the first sitting of the new Petrograd Soviet.

Simultaneously with the meeting in No. 12 Committee Room, the Provisional Committee of the Duma had been constituting itself in another part of the building, and Prince Lvoff's Cabinet was the result of negotiations between this body and the Executive Committee of the Soviet. Of the course of these negotiations very little has been revealed. It is known, however, that the Soviet leaders were urged to join the Cabinet, but refused. The acceptance of the portfolio of Justice by Kerenski was a purely personal affair, which obscured the principle of his colleagues' refusal but did not alter it. It is impossible to doubt that, before assuming his gravely responsible task, Prince Lvoff insisted on receiving the plenitude of authority without which no government can exist. This rudimentary principle cannot have been overlooked by men with the historical knowledge and parliamentary experience which most of his colleagues possessed. The news telegraphed to the outside world at that time allowed no other inference than that the Lvoff Government had full and unchallenged powers; and this was one of the main reasons why Russia's Allies regarded the opening of the Revolution with calm and confidence. It was, however, soon shown, by the May crisis, that if the Soviet, in agreeing to support the Provisional Government, accepted this essential condition, it was not very long in going back on its undertaking.

But before its devious policy can be intelligible, we must know something of the character and composition of the Soviet. Above all, it is necessary to remember that the soviets from the very outset were purely socialistic bodies. All the men who formed the Petrograd Soviet, and determined the character, not only of this parent body, but of all its innumerable offspring, belonged to some branch of the two Russian socialist parties—the Socialist- or Social-Revolutionaries, as they are indifferently called, and the Social-Democrats. Both these parties are purely socialistic, in the sense that they aim at a state of society in which private property, at any rate in the means of production, would cease to exist, and its place be taken by national or communal ownership. Where they differed at the outbreak of the War was on the questions, when, how and by whom this change was to be brought about. Each also had its own particular history and tradition, which, though meaning very little in theory, meant a great deal in practice. It is necessary to speak of their differences thus in the past tense, for the War and the Revolution have been accompanied by processes of change and intermixture, which have left very little of the former dividing lines between the two parties.

The Social-Revolutionaries are an indigenous body, and represent a specifically Russian type of socialism. Though the seed of their doctrine was taken from the philosophic anarchism of Proudhon—which in essence does not differ much from that of Herbert Spencer—it grew and developed under purely Russian influences. Some of these influences were the personal ones of men like Herzen and Bakounin; others were the results of the political and social conditions formerly existing in Russia. It was not very long before the Social-Revolutionaries noticed that the principle of socialism was already in force in the *mir*, or village commune, which held its land in joint ownership; and this discovery determined their whole future development. They evolved the idea that the *mir* might become a kind of cell or unit in the process of socialisation, and, at the same time, an effective instrument for educating the peasantry in their ideas. The peasants, it was argued, would have little difficulty in understanding a theory which sought only to extend the conditions under which they themselves lived to the whole productive apparatus of the country. In this way, it was thought—rather

vaguely, it is true—that a kind of socialistic crystallisation might commence at the periphery and gradually spread to the centre. Simultaneously, a complementary movement was to begin at the centre and work outwards. This was to take the form of a conversion of the educated classes to socialism. In the end, the millennium was to be brought about by the willing and harmonious co-operation of these two classes—the thin layer of cultured people at the top and the dense masses of the peasantry beneath. It was one of the essential features of Social-Revolutionism, distinguishing it from Social-Democracy, that it hoped to attain its aims by class co-operation and not by "class warfare."

When the Social-Revolutionaries began their work, Russia had but little industry, and an urban proletariat practically did not exist in the country. Thus they became, in consequence both of their theories and of the medium with which they had to deal, primarily a peasant party, making appeal to the rural population, championing its needs, and striving to enlighten its mind. That is why the peasants were almost solid on their side during the first months of the Revolution. Its indigenous character, and its limitation to conditions which existed only in Russia, helped to make Social-Revolutionism "national," or patriotic. It was not easy to form close international connections on the basis of a doctrine which was quite inapplicable to other countries. This accounts for the stalwart fidelity of all the Social-Revolutionaries of the old school to the cause of the Allies in the War.

Another of the distinguishing characteristics of the Social-Revolutionaries was that they deliberately adopted and practised political terrorism, and it was they who carried out those assassinations of members of the reigning family, Cabinet Ministers and high officials, which from time to time startled and shocked the world. This is not the place to discuss the morality and justifiability of murder as a political weapon. It is a complicated question, which cannot be settled by English standards. The standpoint of the Social-Revolutionaries was that the system by which Russia was governed was an iniquitous one, involving untold injustice and misery to innocent people, that those in high office were responsible for it, and that menace to their lives was the only means of exercising pressure on them. On the

whole, terrorism seems to have had effects exactly contrary to those anticipated from it, and to have aggravated the evils it was intended to cure. It should not be forgotten, however, that a very large proportion of those who practised it were members of aristocratic and wealthy families, who voluntarily surrendered positions of privilege and ease, and sacrificed their lives or liberty for a cause from which they personally had everything to lose and nothing to gain.

The term "Social-Democrat" is said to have been coined by Bakounin, but has since then been monopolised by the Marxian type of socialist. In the case of the Russian Social-Democrats, it was not the seed only, but the fully developed plant which came from abroad. The Party was founded in 1883 as a deliberate attempt to acclimatize Marxian socialism on Russian soil, and its doctrines were taken over wholesale in the form to which they had been brought by the German Social-Democrats. Their fundamental economic idea was that the development of industry would result in the division of all human societies into two classes, one a comparatively small number of "capitalists," owning all the means of production, the other the vast mass of the population, existing in a state of "wage slavery." When this division was sufficiently far advanced, the masses were to seize the means of production, and utilise them for their own benefit. The struggle was, therefore, to take the form of "class warfare," in which the interests of the proletariat of all countries would be identically opposed to those of the "capitalists" of all countries. Consequently, Social-Democracy was essentially non-national, non-patriotic. Moreover, as it had been in the country of its origin purely a movement of the urban proletariat, it tended to follow the same lines in Russia, and found some difficulty in accommodating itself to the immense peasant class, living in conditions of communistic land ownership, and thus lying almost outside the scope of Marx's theories. Though the capitalistic division of society had hardly commenced in Russia, Social-Democracy continued to insist that the socialistic state must be accomplished by a "war" of the proletariat against the "bourgeoisie." In one of his earlier works, Lenin argued that the Russian peasants could only be socialised after they had passed through the stage of individual ownership to that of agricultural labourers, working for hire on large estates. Indeed,

it is not so long ago that the Social-Democratic agrarian programme was based entirely on this idea. At that time, its cardinal demand was that the restrictions which prevented peasants from selling their land should be removed. It was assumed that, when they received freedom in this respect, it would not be long before they would part with their holdings, and the land become concentrated in the hands of a comparatively few large owners, just as Marx believed would be the case with the means of industrial production. The peasants would then have become a class of pure wage-earners—the " proletariat " of Marx. Only then, it was thought, would they be ripe for appreciation of the " truths " of Social-Democratic doctrine.

There was a further fundamental difference between the Social-Revolutionaries and the Social-Democrats on the subject of " the Terror," which the latter rejected on principle as an ineffective weapon of political struggle. That Terror was, of course, the one which expressed itself in individual assassinations, and not the organised wholesale butchery which has been the most infamous feature of the Leninite regime.

Neither the Social-Revolutionaries nor the Social-Democrats were homogeneous bodies at the outbreak of the Revolution. Each was divided into several sections, differing from one another on points of tactics and methods. The Social-Revolutionaries had a fairly well-defined right wing, centre and left wing. The Social-Democrats had become two quite separate parties—the Mensheviks, who corresponded roughly to the German " Revisionists," and the Bolsheviks, who had their German counterpart in the " Radicals." Through the idiosyncrasies of these sections, the two main parties imperceptibly shaded off into one another. This favoured a process of assimilation which had begun much earlier. The Social-Democrats had to modify their views before they could hope to make much progress among the peasant class, and the Social-Revolutionaries could not help being affected by the ingeniously-worked-out and symmetrical theories of Marx. In fact, some writers on either side argued that, as both parties were identical in aim, they must in course of time agree upon the same tactical procedure, and therefore unite.

To non-socialists, there was, in the old days, very little to choose between Social-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats. If

any preference was felt, it was probably given to the Social-Democrats, whose record was not stained with terrorism, and who, consequently, might be regarded as harmless doctrinaires so long as the realisation of their theories lay outside the sphere of practical politics. However, the War, which upset so many old-established conceptions, wrought a great change here. By all their traditions, the Social-Revolutionaries were inclined to be national and patriotic. By their fundamental principles, the Social-Democrats were essentially international, that is to say unpatriotic. The "harmless doctrinaires" thus became the most dangerous of men; the "dastardly" terrorists the main hope of the Allies. These cross-currents were not, however, uniform in their action, and two of the stoutest champions of the Allied cause were Plehanoff, the founder of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, and Savinkoff, the author of a score of terrorist outrages. The two parties split up at the Revolution into innumerable small sections or groups, and it is almost impossible to follow the changes which they have gone through since that time. It would, however, appear that Bolshevism, as put into practice in Russia, resembles much more closely the "communism" of the Social-Revolutionaries than it does the Marxian socialism of which Lenin used to proclaim himself the only true champion. Moreover, the agrarian law actually decreed by him was substantially the programme which had just been worked out by the Social-Revolutionaries, and which had been left in the Ministry of Agriculture by the former head of that department, Viktor Chernoff.

At the outset of its career, the Petrograd Soviet was dominated by men of comparatively moderate tendency. The chief leaders of the Bolsheviks were living abroad as political refugees, and their Duma delegates were in Siberia. It therefore fell to the Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries to found the Soviet, and to constitute its first Executive Committee. The president Cheidze, and one of the vice-presidents, Skobeleff, were taken from the Mensheviks, and the other vice-president, Kerenski, from the Social-Revolutionaries. Most of the members of the first Executive Committee were educated men. Many of them had university degrees. The Social-Democratic members were, however, mostly Jews or Georgians; and this predominance of the foreign element was greatly strengthened when the Bolshevik

leaders returned to Russia. Both Social-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats had the same object in refusing to enter the Lvoff Cabinet—they wished to organise themselves for the elections for the Constituent Assembly. It was that body which would decide what the future political structure of Russia was to be, and, by renouncing the sweets of power for a time, they hoped to ensure a permanent enjoyment of them later on. The Government had taken over a very difficult task. It was faced with inflated anticipations, which it could not possibly fulfil. The Socialists realised that if they were included in it, they would have to share the burden of blame which disappointed hopes would heap on its back, and in this way their prospects for the elections would be prejudiced. That was the negative side of the argument, but there was also a positive side to it. None of the socialist parties possessed an efficient organisation. In the past they had been compelled to carry on their agitation almost exclusively by surreptitious means, and the great mass of the population was hardly aware of their existence. An enormous labour was necessary if anything like an effective organisation was to be built up in time for the election, and this labour could hardly be accomplished if their chief leaders were preoccupied with the administration of government departments. Therefore they refused to enter the Cabinet till they were compelled to do so by the menace of anarchy raised by the May crisis.

The Soviet leaders must have been at any rate dimly aware of the dangers of the situation, which were so obvious to outsiders. They must have realised that the War could not be arbitrarily stopped except on conditions eventually, if not immediately, disastrous to Russia. The first Russian Revolution should have taught them the lesson that anarchy is the path to reaction. It must have been plain to them that no country can serve two masters, and that a duplicity of authority would soon lead to confusion, which was bound to degenerate into chaos. Their plain and patent duty was to strengthen the Government by all possible means till the Constituent Assembly could be convened. On this body the whole nation set its hopes, and there was no ground for supposing that any serious attempt would be made to prevent it from meeting. Nevertheless the Soviet could not resist the temptation to exercise the power which it actually

possessed, and in this way it compassed the ruin of the Revolution.

From the very outset, the Petrograd Soviet was the only body the authority of which was fully acknowledged by those who had supplied the element of physical force in bringing about the Revolution, that is to say the garrison and factory hands of the Capital. The Duma, which had been elected on a very limited franchise, and which, until its temper had been changed by Russia's military failures, had been generally regarded as a distinctly reactionary force, was not accepted by the masses as an authentic expression of the popular will. From the centre at Petrograd, the soviet movement was rapidly spread all over the country. Soon every town had its soviet, every company, battalion, regiment, division, army corps its "executive committee." The task of organising the peasants in the villages, a considerable proportion of which were hundreds of miles from a railway, was not so easy a matter; but it was also taken in hand with vigour and success. In due time Petrograd saw an All-Russian Congress of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates, and then an All-Russian Congress of Peasants' Delegates. If these two representations could have been convoked at an earlier date and merged, they might conceivably have saved the situation; for, in spite of all the imperfections and irregularities in the methods by which they would necessarily have been elected, they would probably have been accepted by the great bulk of the population as a true expression of the national will. By the time that the All-Russian Congresses had met and said their say, however, many of the local organisations had so firmly established their authority that it was difficult to shake it.

The All-Russian Soviets were not elected by direct voting, but by the local soviets. In this way there was a delegation of authority from the smallest units of popular representation to the centre. The battalion, the factory and the "skhod" (the assembly in which the *mir* settled its local affairs) each elected its deputy to a district soviet. This soviet chose one of its members to represent it on a provincial or municipal soviet. The latter, in its turn, sent a delegate to the All-Russian Soviet. This system of representation was more or less universal in Russia at the time of the Bolshevik *coup d'état*, and Lenin gave it permanence as the best possible form of democratic government.

The All-Russian Workmen's and Soldiers' Soviet and the All-Russian Peasants' Soviet left behind them in the Capital permanent executive committees. Neither of these committees, however, was able seriously to impair the authority of the Petrograd Soviet, which, as master of the local garrison, was able at any moment to seize the central nexus of threads connecting the metropolis with the provinces. Moreover, the chief socialist leaders sat on the executive committees both of the All-Russian and of the Petrograd Soviets, so that these two bodies were largely under the same influences. Any order sent out from Petrograd in the name of "the Soviet" had much more force than the decrees of the Government. If there was a conflict of view between the Cabinet and the Soviet, it was the latter which had the masses at its back. Any recommendation by the central Soviet was listened to and generally followed by all kindred organisations. It was only when the Bolsheviks had secured a majority in the Petrograd Soviet that that body decided to take the work of government into its own hands, but it might have done so almost at any time after the first few weeks of the Revolution. Its decision to do so would have meant that it had the local troops on its side, for it was itself the representation of the Petrograd garrison. With the help of the troops, the government offices and the telegraph wires would have been seized. Then messages would have been sent out to the provincial soviets, and to the front, informing them that a soviet Government had been set up, with such and such objects and plans, and that they were expected to support it. That would have been quite enough in the days of Cheidze, as it was in those of Trotski. Possibly it would have been better if the Soviet had taken this course at the very beginning. Instead, it nominally acquiesced in the fiction that Prince Lvoff's Cabinet was a government in the ordinary sense, and at the same time undermined its authority by all manner of encroachments and interferences.

Even before the Cabinet was formed, the Petrograd Soviet, entirely on its own responsibility, issued the notorious "Prikaz" (order) No. 1, which defined "the rights of soldiers" under the New Regime. The immediate effect of this pronouncement was so disastrous that the Soviet soon isued a supplementary order, explaining that the first applied only to the Petrograd garrison.

But irretrievable harm had already been done before the first order was, in its devastating course, caught up by the second. Besides, what was sauce for the goose at Petrograd was obviously sauce for the gander at the front. The soldiers in the trenches naturally asked why they, who were bearing the burden and heat of the day, should be denied privileges which had been extended to the men of the reserve battalions skulking in the Capital and enjoying all the sights and emotions of the political centre of the Revolution. All the most authoritative military leaders of Russia who have spoken on the subject have agreed in ascribing to this Order the maximum responsibility for the ruin of the Army. It was at once a legislative and an executive act on a matter of the most vital moment, adopted and applied by a body with no nominal legislative or executive functions.

This order was only the first of a long series of encroachments by the Petrograd Soviet, direct or indirect, overt or covert, upon the jurisdiction of the Cabinet. Each one left the authority of the Soviet stronger and that of the Cabinet weaker. Finally, in the crisis of July, things reached such a pass that the Cabinet as a whole had practically ceased to be regarded by the masses as a serious factor in the situation.

That crisis arose out of a bold and ingenious plan on the part of the Leninites to get the reins of government into their own hands. Their propaganda had made very rapid progress in the country, and especially in the Capital. They had already gained the upper hand in the workmen's section of the Petrograd Soviet, and they had important elements of the garrison, as well as practically all the soldiers and sailors of Kronstadt, among their supporters. Evidently they believed that if the All-Russian Soviets were proclaimed the sole source of authority in the State, it would not be long before these bodies too would be under their control. Accordingly they flung on to the streets the Reserve Battalion of the 1st Machine Gun Regiment, which numbered anything up to 8,000 men, several thousand sailors from Kronstadt, and an immense armed civilian rabble, to shout for the overthrow of the Government and the transfer of its power to the soviets. However in the expressions of public opinion on this crisis, the Cabinet was hardly ever mentioned. The masses saw in the crisis a conflict between the Leninites on the one hand, and the Soviets—who did not want power at that

particular moment—on the other, and ranged themselves on the side of the latter. This comes out very clearly in the resolutions adopted during and immediately after the crisis by many of the army committees. Take, for instance, the following motion passed by representatives of sixteen of the units of the Petrograd garrison, including the most famous Guard regiments, such as the Preobrazhenski, the Semeonovski, the Izmailovski, and the Volynski, at a moment when the streets were still echoing with the rattle of machine-gun fire :

(1) Neither armed demonstrations nor the appearance of individual military units in the streets can be allowed in any circumstances except by order of the Russian revolutionary democracy as represented by its executive organs, the Executive Committees of the Councils of Workmen, Soldiers and Peasants of Petrograd.

(2) We demand in the name of subordination to the majority of the Russian revolutionary democracy, that all military units and workmen of Petrograd who have appeared in the streets armed should return to the quarters of their detachments, and in future not come out armed except on the summons of the Executive Committees of the Councils of Workmen's, Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies.

(3) It is necessary that it should be once more precisely and finally acknowledged, that all military detachments, workmen of Petrograd, and their organisations are under the obligation to remember that they should carry out with all determination and thoroughness all the decisions and appeals of the Executive Committees of the Councils of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies for the defence of the interests of the Revolution and freedom.

Few of the documents of the Revolution are so illuminating as this one. It throws into bold relief the true character of the impossible system, or absence of system, by which it was sought to govern Russia after the abdication of Nicholas II. An elaborate and really very dangerous attempt was being made to upset the Government, and those who passed the resolution were opposed to that attempt and were seeking to defeat it. But they made no mention whatever of the Cabinet. For them it simply did not exist. The only authority they recognised was that of the Soviets, and it was to these bodies that they ascribed the exclusive right to bring the garrison of Petrograd into the streets as an armed force.

The first Leninite conspiracy failed because, for one reason or

another, the Soviets did not desire the responsibility which it was sought to thrust upon them. If they had desired it, no conspiracy would have been needed, for they could have had it at any moment for the asking. Whatever may have been the motives and methods of the Leninites, and however disastrous their subsequent success may have been, their watchword had at any rate this much justification, that power and responsibility in Russia were completely divorced from one another, and that the triumph of Bolshevism reunited them.

The paralysis of the machinery of government by the pretensions and encroachments of the soviets was the fundamental condition which made all the other forces of disintegration effective. It was impossible for the Lvoff and Kerenski Cabinets to be firm and vigorous either in construction or in opposition to destruction. In whatever direction they turned, they found in their path obstacles placed there by the soviets. Whether they were attempting to restore the railway system, to revive the fighting spirit on the front, to check the spread of the jacquerie in the country districts, or to suppress anarchical tendencies in the towns, their action was always impeded by soviet interference or the fear of it. When, therefore, it is asked why the Russian Revolution failed, we should not be far wrong in answering with the single word—"Soviet."

CHAPTER XI

THE SOVIET SHOWS ITS HAND

DURING the first two months of the Revolution, the domination of the Petrograd Soviet over the Provisional Government was exercised without open scandal. The Soviet made known its wishes through its "Control Commission," which discussed them with the Cabinet in private, and public controversy was thus avoided. For its own part, the Cabinet meekly shut its eyes to the ever-increasing encroachments of the Soviet upon its rights. To have acted otherwise would have been suicidal, for, as we have already seen, the whole local supply of that physical force, on which, in the last resort, all governments must rest, was vested in the Soviet and not in the Cabinet. Besides, Prince Lvoff and his colleagues had deliberately adopted it as one of the fundamental principles of their administration, that Russia must henceforth be ruled not, as in the past, by violence, but by reason and persuasions.

Meanwhile, however, the first enthusiasm of the Revolution was evaporating, and ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity were yielding to those considerations of material personal self-interest which throughout the ages have been the only permanent motives of large bodies of men and women. Without giving the Government and the parties very long to fulfil their promises to make over the land to the "labouring populace," the peasants began to divide among themselves the properties of the big estate-holders. Every fresh day brought a longer list of chateaux sacked, of herds of breeding stock slaughtered, of forests hewed or burnt down to clear the soil for tilling, of distilleries plundered of their stores of spirits and set on fire by drunken revellers. Every fresh day the lawless elements in the towns, reinforced by the habitual criminals, who had been liberated in thousands during the ecstasies and confusion of the first days of the Revolution, grew more daring in their outrages and more contemptuous in their disregard for the inexperienced

"militia." Minor robberies were universal; bands of armed men in stolen motor cars impudently ransacked palaces and rifled the safes of business offices in the main thoroughfares of the two Capitals during the hours of daylight; and murders multiplied with horrifying rapidity. Even more threatening were the exploits of political anarchy, which justified the common criminals by its theories and stimulated them by its example. The factors of disorder and disintegration in town and country were also being swollen by hordes of deserters from the front, whose rush to secure their share of the spoil and join in the bacchanalia of freedom still further disorganised the already grievously crippled railway system, on which depended both the supply of the armies and the feeding of the civilian population. Worst of all, Lenin and Zinovieff (Apfelbaum), with a couple of dozen faithful adherents, had returned to Russia in the first week of April, and given a tremendous impetus to the propaganda—already actively commenced by their fellow-partizans—which taught the ignorant peasants and soldiers that all the belligerent Governments were predatory organisations, whose sole object in the War was to fill the pockets of "capitalists" and to gratify the senseless instincts of "imperialists" at the cost of the masses of their people.

On March 27, the Petrograd Soviet published its appeal to "the Peoples of the World," in which it called on the proletarians of all the belligerent States "to commence the decisive struggle with the grasping ambitions" of their Governments, and take into their own hands the decision of questions of war and peace. At the same time, pressure was put upon the Provisional Government, which was thus compelled to issue its manifesto of April 9. This document, which bore the signature of the Minister President, Prince Lvoff, had a double character. It was both a statement of policy and an appeal. After pointing to the disorganisation and disorder which the Revolution had inherited from the Old Regime, and the threatening situation on the front, it continued: "The defence, cost what it may, of our national patrimony, and the deliverance of the country from the enemy who has invaded our borders, constitute the capital and vital problem before our soldiers, who are defending the liberty of the people in close union with our Allies. The Provisional Government regards it as its right and duty to

declare without delay that the aim of free Russia is not dominion over other peoples, not the taking from them of their national possessions, not the forcible seizure of the territory of others, but the establishment of enduring peace on the basis of the self-determination of nations. The Russian nation is not seeking the enhancement of its power abroad at the cost of other nations. It aims at no sort of subjugation or humiliation of others. In the name of the highest principles of justice, it has removed the fetters from the limbs of the Polish people. But the Russian people will not suffer that their country should issue from the great struggle humiliated or with its vital forces undermined. These principles will constitute the basis of the foreign policy of the Provisional Government, which will carry out unfalteringly the popular will and safeguard the rights of our fatherland, while observing the engagements entered into with the Allies." The manifesto then declared categorically: "The State is in danger," and called on the nation to rally round the Government and make every effort to save it.

The text of this declaration was agreed to only after long and painful debate, both among the Ministers themselves and between the Cabinet and the Control Commission of the Soviet. An influential element in the Government wished to give way unresistingly before the rising wind of popular clamour, and to accept without reservation or qualification of any kind the current formula: "Peace without annexations or indemnities on the basis of the self-determination of nations." Kerenski, whose influence was still undiminished in the Soviet, of which he was Vice-President, was the natural leader in the Cabinet of the advocates of the clear formula of renunciation. He had publicly professed its principles even prior to the Revolution. On the other hand, Milyoukoff had always been an enthusiastic supporter of Sazonoff, whose political estate he had inherited substantially unchanged, though it had passed through the hands of Stürmer and Pokrovski, and he had, in addition, long come to the conclusion that the possession of Constantinople and the gates of the Black Sea must be Russia's main aim in continuing the War. As Foreign Minister, he was bound to resist the adoption of a principle which broke up the very foundations of his past policy. He denied absolutely the contention of his opponents that the Revolution necessarily implied a complete change in foreign as in

domestic politics, maintaining that, in the conditions created by the War, the only diplomacy possible was one which the Allies had in common. In the end, it was found possible to bring the parties together only on a compromise pronouncement. The majority rejected the naked phrase "no annexations or indemnities," in favour of the more elastic wording given above, while it agreed to accept Milyoukoff's *conditio sine qua non*, that fidelity to the Allies should be reaffirmed, and the "rights" of Russia reserved. By this reservation, it was sought to indicate, as Milyoukoff put it, that "till others abandon their rights we will not abandon ours." Before the declaration was published, it was submitted to the Control Commission of the Soviet, and passed by that body. It also received the formal blessing of the Soviet as a whole, which, at a sitting on April 14, resolved, "that this programme contains the fundamental political demands of the Russian democracy, and that up to the present the Provisional Government in general and on the whole has taken the path of fulfilling the obligations assumed by it." At the same time, the Soviet reaffirmed the principle of "general peace without annexations or indemnities on the basis of the self-determination of nations."

Milyoukoff believed that the wording of the Government declaration had left him free to direct Russia's foreign policy along the old lines, but it was generally interpreted among the public as an expression of the principle of "no annexations or indemnities" and became the subject of jubilation by socialist papers which had understood it in that sense. The Foreign Minister did not think it necessary to correct this misapprehension, as that would have meant a painful controversy, with the hostility of a large section of the public to the Government declaration as its final issue.

The respite afforded by the declaration and the false interpretation of it did not, however, last long. Before many days had passed, Milyoukoff found himself confronted by the demand that the declaration, which he had succeeded in getting clothed in the form of a manifesto to the Russian people, should be transformed into a diplomatic note, and sent to the Allies, with the request that they would consent to a revision of the treaties between themselves and Russia in the spirit of "no annexations or indemnities." In particular, the Soviet made this a condition

of its support to the Freedom Loan, the success of which was a vital necessity to the Government. A Cabinet debate on the question in its new form produced only another compromise. Milyoukoff consented to despatch the declaration to the Allies, not as a note, but merely as the enclosure to a note, which, to use his own words, " guaranteed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs against the misuse of false interpretations of the compromise."

Milyoukoff's Note was sent out on May 1. It instructed the Russian diplomatic representatives in the Allied States to submit to the Governments to which they were accredited a copy of the declaration of April 9, but, at the same time, to affirm that, in consequence of the Revolution, " the efforts of the whole nation to bring the War to a decisive victory had only been increased," and that the Provisional Government, " safeguarding the rights of our country, will fully observe the obligations assumed in relation to our Allies." The Note closed with these words: " Continuing to cherish complete confidence in a victorious termination of the present War in full agreement with the Allies, it (the Russian Government) is absolutely confident that the questions raised by this War will be settled in the spirit of the creation of enduring foundations for a long peace, and that the leading democracies, imbued with the same aspirations, will find means to attain such guarantees and sanctions as are necessary for the prevention of fresh sanguinary collisions in the future."

In view of what followed, it is of importance to know that, in the form actually sent out, the Note was adopted by the Cabinet with unanimity. Moreover, it took that final form only after a long and somewhat arduous process. The meeting at which it was considered was held on the evening of April 30 in the dwelling of the War Minister, Goutchkoff, who was ill and could not safely leave the house. All the members of the Government were present. Three of the Ministers, including Kerenski and N. V. Nekrasoff, pronounced the draft text submitted by Milyoukoff, " not quite satisfactory," and proposed amendments. In particular, they argued that the Note should, as far as possible, be purged of diplomatic subtleties and couched in terms intelligible to the populace as a whole. Discussion of the Note continued until " deep in the night," and the Cabinet finally requested Milyoukoff to redraft it, embodying in it the proposed

amendments. The Foreign Minister went into another room to do as he had been asked, and dawn was already breaking when he returned to his colleagues, and read to them the revised text. This time, no objections were raised, and the Note was therefore regarded as adopted with unanimity. These facts dispose of the charge that Milyoukoff, in sending the Note, was following an individual policy not approved by the other members of the Government.

The Note was published on May 2, and late the same evening the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviet was hurriedly called together to consider it. The debate lasted till half past three in the morning and was severely critical towards the latest exposition of the Government's policy, which was pronounced to be inconsistent with the construction generally put upon the declaration of April 9. The Soviet leaders had expected from the Cabinet a simple repetition of the "No annexations or indemnities" formula, and instead they had vague talk about "decisive victory" and "guarantees and sanctions," which might, they feared, be made to cover all sorts of "imperialistic" and "capitalistic" designs, and which, in fact, as we have seen, actually were meant to cover Milyoukoff's still unshaken determination to secure Constantinople and the Straits for Russia. The discussion was continued at a further sitting later in the day of May 3, when it was decided to ask for a joint meeting of the Cabinet and the Executive Committee for an exchange of views. Prince Lvoff and his colleagues readily agreed, but before the meeting could be held, intervention from an unexpected quarter brought things to an exceedingly tense and dangerous crisis.

Among the members of the first Executive Committee of the Soviet had been a soldier called Theodore Linde. His birthplace was Riga and his name was a German one, which raises presumptions as to the nature of his blood and justifies close scrutiny of his antecedents, but does not necessarily stamp him as a hireling of Berlin. Indeed he himself seems to have claimed Lettish origin, and the closing incident of his career went far to clear him of any suspicions that may have existed as to the disinterestedness of his political actions. Before the War he had been a student of mathematics, and it is said that socialism had brought him a term of exile as a political refugee. However

the outbreak of the Revolution found him at Petrograd as a ranker in the Reserve Battalion of the Finland Guard Regiment, which, it may be added, to prevent misunderstanding, was not recruited in the Grand Duchy, but bore its name for other reasons. As an educated man and an avowed Social-Democrat, he had already won a good deal of influence over his comrades, and he took the lead in bringing his battalion over on to the side of the new dispensation. His election to represent his comrades in the Soviet followed as a matter of course, and he also became a member of the Executive Committee.

Linde took advantage of Easter to spend a few days with his parents in Finland. Returning to the Capital on the eve of the publication of Milyoukoff's Note, he found that an ambitious colleague had profited by his absence to hold fresh elections in the Battalion and to get himself appointed to the Soviet as its representative. Linde challenged the new choice on the ground of "irregularities"—the absence of which from any Soviet election either then or since would have been little short of a miracle—and proceeded to act as if his mandate was still in force. Possibly it was with the object of reasserting his ascendency in the Battalion that he came forward in its Committee with a violent denunciation of Milyoukoff's Note, and proposed that the Regiment, in order to show its disapproval, should march through the streets in full strength beneath banners displaying its opinion of the Cabinet's foreign policy. This proposal was greeted with acclamation, and the Finland Regiment unanimously resolved both itself to demonstrate and to send Linde to the neighbouring barracks to invite other units to join in the procession.

It has been suggested that Linde acted in this episode at the instigation of the Soviet or of some party in it, but not a shred of evidence has been brought forward to support this charge. On the contrary, as soon as it heard what he was about, the Executive Committee hastily intervened to repudiate him and to prevent the harm already done from spreading. At the same time, it was, no doubt, influenced in its own subsequent action by the surprising success which attended his exploit.

About three o'clock on the afternoon of May 3, the public in the central areas of Petrograd were astonished to see columns of armed troops moving through the streets, with banners and

placards bearing such inscriptions as "Away with Milyoukoff," "Down with Provisional Government," "We want no Imperialistic Policy." The exciting news spread quickly over the city, and soon brought into the streets all those whose interest it was to make trouble and stimulate discontent. Meanwhile, the demonstrating soldiers, whose main body consisted of the Finland Regiment, the 180th Reserve Infantry Regiment, and the 2nd Baltic Naval Division, moved onwards to the Marie Square, the most dignified and picturesque of Petrograd's open spaces. Here the Marie Palace, which Nicholas I built for his eldest daughter, the Duchess of Leuchtenberg, looks out in sombre grandeur across the Moika Canal on to the dome-crowned mass of the Cathedral of St. Isaac of Dalmatia. The Palace had been the home of the Imperial Council, the Upper House of the Russian Legislature; and since the extinction of that body by the Revolution, had become the headquarters of the Provisional Government. It was to that building that the demonstrators turned their faces and the inscriptions on their flags and placards. Their force was steadily increased, and soon they numbered some 15,000 men.

At that moment none of the Ministers was in the Marie Palace, but permanent officials were there, and their immediate thought was that the garrison had come to arrest the members of the Cabinet and that a fresh revolution had began. Agitated appeals for help were at once telephoned to the Ministries, to the heads of the civil and military administration, and to the Executive Committee of the Soviet. It was from the last of these that the most effective succour came; and just as we can absolve the Soviet of those days from all direct responsibility for the military demonstration, so we can acknowledge that its prompt action in all probability prevented very serious bloodshed. The Vice-President of the Soviet, M. I. Skobeleff, who now was Cheidze's chief lieutenant, as he had been in the Menshevik Party of the fourth Duma, hurried to the Marie Square with other members of the Executive Committee. Gen. Korniloff, whose enormous popularity with the masses was still a factor in the political situation at Petrograd, hastened in the same direction. Messages entreating the troops to keep to their quarters and on no account to appear in the streets in military formation, or with arms in their hands, were telephoned by the Executive Committee to all the barracks of Petrograd. These

exhortations were very opportune, for the ferment which Linde had set up in the Finland Regiment was rapidly infecting the other troops in the city. All the agencies of the three forces hostile to the Revolution—the adherents of the Old Regime, the Bolsheviks and the Germans—were already feverishly at work to increase dissension and confusion. Mysterious men were telephoning to the barracks, calling on the troops to turn out with armoured cars and machine guns to arrest the Provisional Government and fight the "capitalists." Gen. Korniloff subsequently admitted that altogether nearly a quarter of the total garrison, which numbered about 160,000 men, took part in the demonstration.

Arrived at the Marie Square, Skobeleff and his colleagues from the Soviet first tried to discover the true meaning of the demonstration, and at whose instance it had been organised. They addressed themselves to the soldiers, and asked them why they had joined in the movement, and what they wanted. The replies were those usually received under similar circumstances throughout the Revolution. Some of the men said that the "old soldiers" had called them into the streets; others that they were carrying out a decree of the Soviet; others merely that the demonstration "had been ordered"—by whom they did not know; while the great majority were in complete ignorance of the authorship as of the object of the manifestation, and knew only that they had blindly followed in the steps of their comrades. From an improvised platform the Soviet leaders and the local Commander-in-Chief then harangued the excited and perplexed troops. Skobeleff assured them that the Soviet was devoting all its attention to Milyoukoff's Note, and implored them to keep quiet till its decision was known. In the end, the soldiers agreed to disperse and quietly left the Square. Some of them returned direct to their barracks, but others paraded the neighbouring streets, and increased the agitation which by this time had seized the whole population of Petrograd. It was now about six o'clock.

In their departure, the troops drew away a large part of the crowd which had assembled in the Square, but presently the Reserve Battalion of the Pavlovski (Paul) Guard Regiment arrived there with placards denouncing Milyoukoff's "imperialistic policy" and demanding "peace without annexa-

tions or indemnities," and the publication of the "secret treaties." The Battalion was ranged up close to the Marie Palace and became the focus of popular emotion. After listening for an hour to passionate speeches both for and against the Government, it marched off again, but its place was quickly taken by a long procession of workmen from the factories on the other side of the Neva, whose displayed sentiments were also hostile to the Lvoff Cabinet. The throng had gradually swollen to enormous proportions.

Between eight and nine o'clock, members of the Cabinet and of the two bodies by whose agreement it had been constituted, namely, the Provisional Committee of the Duma and the Executive Committee of the Soviet, began to arrive at the Marie Palace for the joint sitting that had been fixed for the consideration of the Milyoukoff Note, and momentarily engrossed the attention of the multitude. All the prominent personalities on either side—the Minister-President, Prince Lvoff, the burly President of the Duma, Rodzianko. the President of the Soviet, Cheidze, and Milyoukoff himself—were made the objects of friendly or hostile demonstrations as they drove up to the portico of the Palace, but it was becoming clear that the friends of the Cabinet were in the majority. No attempt was made to keep the doors closed to unauthorised entrants, and a portion of the crowd swarmed into the building and inundated its wide corridors. The Council Chamber and public galleries were, however, kept inviolate, both the War Minister, Goutchkoff, who had military secrets to disclose, and the Soviet delegates insisting on the meeting being held in camera.

Meanwhile, agents of the Cadets (Milyoukoff's party) had been busy organising an imposing demonstration in favour of the Cabinet, and shortly after ten o'clock, a vast procession, numbering, so it is said, 100,000 persons, and liberally supplied with appropriate placards, began to move into the Square. The shouts for speeches from members of the Cabinet, and especially from Milyoukoff, now grew so vociferous that they could no longer be disregarded. The appearance of the Foreign Minister was the signal for a boisterous ovation, which was redoubled as he closed his short speech with the declaration : "No one shall ever accuse Russia of treachery. Russia will never agree to a separate peace." The Foreign Minister hurried back to the Council Chamber.

Here the debate had assumed a stormy and threatening character. The Cabinet had acted on the principle that attack is the best form of defence, and had carried the war boldly into the enemy's camp. Prince Lvoff complained that, though the Government had at first been conscientiously supported by the Soviet, during the preceding fortnight it had been "taken under suspicion," and that in such circumstances it was impossible to administer the country. Goutchkoff, who was still weak with illness and should have been in his bed, painted a gloomy picture of the situation at the front, and, having closed his peroration with the words: "Soldiers who are always talking of peace cannot fight," staggered out into the corridor pressing a hand to his heart, and sank on to a settee in a state of collapse. The Minister of Agriculture, Shingareoff, the Minister of Finance, Tereshchenko, and the Minister of Railways, Nekrasoff, showed the dangers with which the increasing disorganisation and disorder threatened the very foundations of the national life. Milyoukoff protested that the Note to the Allies was nothing more than a repetition and development of the ideas contained in the declaration of April 9.

These warnings and asseverations did not satisfy the Soviet leaders. "The imperialistic position of the Provisional Government," Cheidze declared, "is absolutely inacceptable. Neither the people nor the troops want war. The Note of the Provisional Government contains demands which are not to be found in the declaration—for example the watch-word 'War to the end.' The Note of the Provisional Government obscures the aims of the War. Moreover in this Note there is not a word about the renunciation of annexations and indemnities, and it may give the Allies an absolutely inaccurate idea of the position taken up by the democratic masses of Russia. If the Provisional Government does not want to conceal our fundamental watch-word 'Peace without annexations or indemnities,' it should make that clear." Another Member of the Soviet put forward the demand that the Cabinet should send a fresh corrective note to the Allies.

To this proposal the Cabinet replied with an emphatic negative. Milyoukoff pointed out that such a procedure was impossible in the dealings of one State with another; hinted delicately that Russia had obligations to her Allies as well as calls upon them, and that abrupt demands for a change in their policy might

lead to very unpleasant consequences; and declared that he would not consent to the sending of such a note as was desired by the Soviet. To enforce his words, he read out a confidential despatch which he had received only the previous day. Prince Lvoff was just as emphatic. Rather than send another note to the Allies, he said, the Cabinet would resign.

This threat had the immediate effect of sobering the Soviet leaders. Cheidze and his friends hastily urged that a resignation of the Government was not to be thought of, declaring that they would be satisfied if the desired interpretation of the Milyoukoff Note was addressed to the Russian people instead of to the Allied Governments. Taking prompt advantage of the weakening of the opposition, the members of the Cabinet resumed their attack, and pressed the point that events such as the armed demonstration which had just taken place could not be tolerated. To this Cheidze and his followers were fain to agree. They wished to have the explanatory declaration drawn up there and then, but Prince Lvoff pointed out that it was nearly four o'clock in the morning, and that documents of such importance are best drafted with cool heads. With the understanding that the new declaration would be available for consideration by the Soviet at its special meeting on the following evening, the assembly broke up.

The episode had apparently closed with a triumph for Milyoukoff, who was almost carried bodily to his motor car by the large crowd which still remained outside the Palace when he left it. But this appearance was entirely deceptive, as the later hours of the day were to show.

As has been seen, the Government and the Soviet had, by implication, concluded a compact. The Government was to expound the Milyoukoff Note to the Russian people in the sense of the declaration of April 9, and the Soviet was to use its influence to keep potential Theodore Lindes under restraint. But as in nearly every other case where an agreement was made by these two bodies, the Soviet failed to keep its obligations.

May 4 was for Petrograd an occasion of even stronger emotions than the preceding day. From an early hour, the centre of the city seethed with political agitation, and improvised meetings followed one another in almost unbroken succession in every open space and at all the chief street corners. The Soviet Executive Committee had urged the soldiers and workmen to

leave their weapons in the barracks and factories, and Korniloff had reinforced its appeal by a positive prohibition so far as the troops were concerned. But Lenin and his followers deliberately defied both the Cabinet and the Soviet, and turned loose many bands of the "Red Guards" which were already being formed out of "bolshevised" artizans. Moreover work was suspended at some of the factories in response to forged orders purporting to come from the Soviet. Possibly the Bolsheviks thought that the time had already come for the great trial of strength, for their representatives on the Soviet took up a much more decided attitude than on the previous day, and Kameneff urged "immediate action for the seizure of power." It is, however, more likely that this was intended to be merely the first dress rehearsal for the assertion by the proletariat of its supremacy.

Of the hundreds of thousands of demonstrators, the vast majority were obviously on the side of the Government. The armed "Red Guards" were everywhere received with cries of "Shame." In some cases their rifles were taken out of their hands by indignant soldiers, themselves without weapons of any kind. These and similar incidents resulted in a good deal of desultory shooting. Before mid-day, blood had been spilt on the Nevski Prospect; and early in the afternoon news was received at the military headquarters that large masses of armed men were moving towards the centre of the city from the working-class suburbs. Realising the danger thus threatened, Gen. Korniloff ordered certain detachments of troops to occupy the great square in front of the Winter Palace, a good central point from which to direct operations for the defence of the heart of Petrograd. Hearing of this, the Soviet telephoned to the General that, in its opinion, his measures were likely only to add to the bloodshed. It was invited to send a deputation to the Staff. The delegates assured the General that the Soviet would answer for the suppression of disorder and the calming of the populace; and Korniloff, no doubt making a very just estimate of the actual factors of the situation, consented to countermand his orders.

A proclamation issued by the Soviet had the desired result, but at the same time it embodied an encroachment on the administrative authority which not only was a clear breach of the agreement entered into the night before, but condemned the Cabinet to virtual impotence in the future. For it told the

garrison : " To the Executive Committee alone belongs the right to dispose of you. Every order for units of troops to enter the streets (apart from the usual routine detachments) must be issued on a form of the Executive Committee, confirmed by its seal, and signed by not fewer than two of its members." This usurpation was formally accepted on the following day by delegates from all units of the garrison, who passed a resolution that " the only organisation which expresses the political will of the meeting, and to which it subordinates the armed force represented by it, is the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates and its organ the Executive Committee." In a proclamation issued on May 8, the Cabinet entered an apologetic protest against this serious blow at its position, " explaining " that " the authority of the Commander-in-Chief of the Petrograd Military District remains in full force, and the right to dispose of military units may be exercised only by him." But that did not alter the cardinal fact that from May 4 the Government was impotent and the Petrograd Soviet all-powerful. All the Bolsheviks needed was to control the latter, and the former was in the hollow of their hand.

Moreover, this was not the Soviet's only act of duplicity towards the Government on May 4. Early in the evening, the Executive Committee received the explanatory declaration which was to be the Government's fulfilment of the compact of the previous night. This document proved that the Government—under the influence of Soviet pressure and the alarming incidents in the Petrograd streets—had gone a good deal farther than its promises. Not only did it declare that the expression " decisive victory " in the Milyoukoff Note " had in view the attainment of the aims set in the declaration of April 9," and explain that by " sanctions and guarantees " of enduring peace the Government understood " the restriction of armaments, international tribunals and so on," but it contained the announcement that this interpretation would be handed by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Ambassadors of the Allied States. Nevertheless, it was by a vote of only 34 to 19 that the Executive Committee decided to commend this declaration to the plenary Soviet, Menshevik Internationalists supporting the Bolsheviki in the minority. But the worst breach of faith with the Cabinet lay in this, that the resolution in which the Executive Committee advised its parent body to endorse the Cabinet declaration contained the

following direct encouragement to the populace to repeat its provocations of May 3: "The Executive Committee of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates cordially greets the revolutionary democracy of Petrograd, which by its meetings, resolutions, and demonstrations has testified its sustained attention to questions of our foreign policy, and its alarm at the possibility of a deviation of that policy into the old channel of acquisitive imperialism." This was nothing more nor less than a benediction of that very phenomenon, which, only a few hours previously, Cheidze had joined with Prince Lvoff in denouncing as incompatible with government. Altogether, during these days of crisis, the Soviet was concerned solely to enhance its own authority; and in this way it finally undermined that of the Cabinet.

Each party to the controversy hastened to proclaim that its views had prevailed. In reality, neither had any reason for satisfaction, for the eventual issue of the conflict of May 3 and 4 was that both were ultimately swept away by their common enemy, Lenin. The Menshevik Social-Democrats and the Social-Revolutionaries, who at that time dominated the Soviet, could, it is true, make out something of a case for their claims, for they had confirmed their sway over the Petrograd garrison, which was like a Damocles' sword hung above the head of the Cabinet. But that sway was theirs only so long as they retained the majority in the Petrograd Soviet, and the moment that majority passed to the Bolsheviks they were as dust before the wind.

Meanwhile, the crisis continued to develop in a less turbulent and alarming form. It had become clear to the shrewdest heads both in the Cabinet and in the Soviet that the existing arrangement between these two bodies involved dangers of the most serious kind, and that unless the Government were strengthened, irreparable disaster might occur before the Constituent Assembly could be brought together. The only practicable method of strengthening the Government was to endow it with some of the local armed power then concentrated in the hands of the Soviet, and to transfer to the Soviet a share of the responsibility then borne exclusively by the Cabinet. The idea of a "Coalition Government" was by no means new. It had been mooted in the first days of the Revolution, when the Soviet President, Cheidze, was asked to become Minister of Labour; and subsequently

several attempts had been made to coax prominent socialists into the Cabinet. The Soviet leaders, however, were fully aware of the advantages of the position they occupied. While the Cabinet was blamed for everything that went wrong, they assumed the credit for everything that went right. On this basis, they were busily consolidating their power and organising themselves throughout the country. Consequently they had refused to enter the Cabinet.

A reconstruction of the Government on a Coalition basis had been urged from various quarters during the crisis of May 3 and 4. It was strongly supported within the Cabinet; and outside opinion, in so far as it was not under the influence of the socialistic organisations, seems to have tended generally in the same direction. Apparently, the chief opposition came from the Executive Committee of the Soviet: but this body had been somewhat sobered by the disclosures submitted by Ministers at the meeting of May 3, and by Prince Lvoff's repeated threats of resignation. During the two or three days of public calm which followed the sanguinary scenes in the Petrograd streets on May 4, the Cabinet evidently came to the conclusion that the only chance of salvation was to be found in coalition, for on May 9 Prince Lvoff sent the Provisional Committee of the Duma and the Executive Committee of the Soviet a formal invitation to take part in a reconstruction of the Government on that basis. At the same time, he sought to interest public opinion in the plan by a manifesto, in which he stated: "The phantom of anarchy and civil war, threatening liberty, arises before Russia."

At first the Soviet refused to budge from the position it had taken up, though only by a majority of one vote. But signs of impending catastrophe were rapidly multiplying. The first prominent public man to draw the correct inferences from the events of May 3 and 4 was Korniloff, who gave up the military command at Petrograd, and returned to the more congenial atmosphere of the front. He was immediately followed into retirement by Goutchkoff. In his letter of resignation, the War Minister referred to "conditions which I have not the power to change, and which threaten fatal consequences to the front, as also to the freedom and the very existence of Russia"; and he declared himself unable any longer "to share responsibility for the grievous sin that is being committed against our fatherland."

The immediate cause of his retirement was a declaration of "soldiers' rights," which was presented to him for signature, but which he could not bring himself to accept. At a conference of delegates from the Government, Kerenski made a speech full of dismal foreboding. "If we are to save the country," he said, "things cannot continue on their present course. May be the time is near when we must tell you that we cannot give you bread in the quantity you expect, or maintain the supplies of ammunition on which you have a right to count. My strength is failing, because I no longer have my old confidence that we have before us, not riotous slaves, but conscious citizens, creating a new state with an enthusiasm worthy of the Russian nation. Alas that I did not die two months ago, for then I should have died in the splendid dream that once and for all a new life had dawned for Russia. If the tragedy and disorder of the situation are not at once recognised, if it is not understood that now responsibility lies on all, if our state organism cannot be made to act as smoothly as a well-oiled machine, then all our dreams, all our aspirations, will be thrown back for years, and perhaps will be drowned in blood."

With a similar appeal, Kerenski addressed himself directly to the Soviet Executive Committee; and this speech seems to have turned the scale. The Executive Committee reversed its recent decision, agreed to join in the reconstitution of the Government, and appointed a deputation to negotiate with the Cabinet on the subject. As the first and indispensable condition for participating in the Government, the deputation demanded a change at the Foreign Ministry. This demand met with little opposition, and at a sitting of the Cabinet on May 15, Milyoukoff was pressed by seven of his colleagues to take another portfolio, which would not bring him into conflict with Soviet opinion. Even his fellow Cadets joined in urging him to adopt this course. His reply was to resign on the spot and to leave the council chamber, so that the second half of the meeting took place without him. The Central Committee of the Cadet party tried to persuade him to return to the Cabinet in another capacity, but he resolutely stuck to his guns. And he was more than ever convinced that he had done the right thing when he learned the terms of the declaration of policy which represented the compromise between the Cabinet and the Soviet. This document,

he said, he could not have signed, for he regarded the new policy which it embodied as "harmful and dangerous," since it abandoned the aims which he believed to be necessary to Russia, and would disturb her relations with her Allies.

The personal question of Milyoukoff was, of course, only part of the larger question of principle which now had to be settled. The real parties to the negotiations were the Executive Committee of the Soviet and the Provisional Committee of the Duma—the latter largely inspired by the Central Committee of the Cadet Party. Between them stood the Cabinet, like a mediator whose business it was to reconcile their views. With regard to domestic questions no stipulations were made. The only point in dispute was war policy, or, as the Soviet would doubtless have put it, peace policy. Here the Soviet demanded "a vigorous foreign policy aiming at the speediest possible attainment of a general peace, on the principle of the self-determination of nationalities, without annexations or indemnities; and, in particular, the preparation of negotiations with the Allies, with the object of securing a revision of treaties on the basis of the Provisional Government's declaration of April 9." As presently was made clear by oral exchange of views, what the Soviet meant by this demand was, that the Cabinet should exercise pressure on the Allied Governments with the object of inducing them to change their war policy, and should even appeal to their peoples to overthrow them and put in their places men more in sympathy with Russian socialistic ideals. After taking counsel with the Duma Committee, the Lvoff Ministry pronounced the Soviet condition to be "absolutely inacceptable," and asserted that any departure from the declaration of April 9 as the basis of Russia's relations with the Allies was out of the question. As an alternative, they proposed the formula "without acquisitive policy or punitive indemnities." They also pointed out the impossibility of appealing to the other nations of the Entente to upset the Governments through which alone Russia's relations with the Allies were maintained. For their own part, Prince Lvoff and his colleagues declined to continue in office except on condition that the legislative and executive powers should be vested in the Government alone; that the conduct of the War should be regulated exclusively by military considerations; that the eventual necessity of aggressive opera-

tions should be admitted; that the Soviet should give whole-hearted support in the work of restoring the discipline and fighting value of the troops; that close union with the Allies should be maintained; and that energetic measures, not stopping short, in case of need, at armed force, should be taken to repress the increasing disorder in the country. The Central Committee of the Cadets insisted further that the published programme, with which the Coalition Government would commence its career, should contain an express repudiation of the idea of a separate peace. Yet again, the issue was an insincere ambiguity, which both sides could interpret in the sense of their own mutually antagonistic principles. The crucial clause of the declaration published by the Government on May 17, when agreement had finally been reached, was as follows: "In foreign policy, the Provisional Government, rejecting, in agreement with the entire nation, all thought of a separate peace, openly sets itself as its aim the speediest possible attainment of a general peace, having as its object neither the taking from others of their national possessions, nor the forcible seizure of foreign territories—a peace without annexations or indemnities on the principle of the self-determination of nationalities. In the firm confidence that, by the fall of the regime of the Tsars of Russia, and by the confirmation of democratic principles in her domestic and foreign policy, there has been created for the Allied democracies a new factor of aspiration to lasting peace and the brotherhood of nations, the Provisional Government will undertake steps preparatory to an agreement with the Allies on the basis of the Provisional Government's declaration of April 9."

The kindest thing that can be said of this document is that it was diplomatic. Each of the two parties which combined in formulating it knew that the other attributed to it a meaning radically different from its own. Both believed that it expressed, would justify, and might be used to promote, its own policy. Both must have been aware that, to the considerable extent to which it was addressed not to Russia but to the Allies, it was thus a fraud and an imposture. To those who knew the history of its evolution, it was a contradiction in terms. The compromise had been arrived at not by finding a mean between the two conflicting policies, but by setting them down side by side as intrinsic components of one organic whole.

Another question of almost equal importance, which had to be settled before the Coalition Government could be constituted, was that of the status of its socialist members in relation to the Soviet. Kerenski's acceptance of office was a purely personal act, but the new socialist Ministers were to join the Cabinet as representatives of the Soviet. In these circumstances, the Soviet was neither illogical nor unreasonable in requiring that they should be responsible to it and render it periodical accounts of their stewardship. When it was objected by Prince Lvoff and his colleagues that this would be to make the Government as a whole responsible to and dependent on the Soviet, the perfectly true retort was returned, that that would imply no alteration in actual facts. "The Provisional Government," said the socialist delegation, "has always depended solely on the authority and moral support of the Soviet." That was unfortunately a fact. It would have been absurd for the Cabinet to raise serious difficulties over the open and public recognition of a state of things which had existed in actuality ever since the beginning of the Revolution, and which the events of May 3 and 4 had made irremediable; and the proclamation of the responsibility of the socialist Ministers to the Soviet was allowed to pass after a few feeble protests.

It must be admitted that the Soviet made some show of observing the letter of its compact with the Cabinet. While the negotiations were still in progress, it issued a stirring proclamation, in which the troops were called upon to maintain a rigid discipline and to combat all forms of fraternisation with the enemy, till the appeal to the democracies of the belligerent States had done its work and prepared the way for a general peace, on the basis of the Russian socialist formula. As soon as it had been agreed that the socialist parties would be officially represented in the Cabinet, the Soviet issued another proclamation, expressing "full confidence" in the Government, and calling on the nation to give it an active support, which would ensure to it a complete plenitude of authority. But though the composition of the new Coalition Cabinet, which contained ten liberals to six socialists, presented a surface appearance that the prevalence of moderate views was guaranteed, the essential features of the issue of the crisis were of a decidedly alarming character. They were, that the Cabinet had lost its two most

capable Ministers and its two most vigorous supporters of the Alliance policy, who had been compelled to resign simply because of their adherence to that policy; that the domination of the Soviet, hitherto disputed in principle and accepted only under protest, had been openly proclaimed as the only basis on which government was possible; and that the Soviet had finally established its control over the Petrograd garrison, in whose hands lay the ultimate decision of every political dispute. The Bolsheviki were notoriously gaining ground every day, and everything depended on whether they would secure a majority in the Petrograd Soviet before the Constituent Assembly could be convened. As the sequel was to show, only the personal popularity of Kerenski lay between Russia and the abyss.

This chapter would be incomplete without some mention of the subsequent career of Theodore Linde, whose headstrong interference played so important a part in the May crisis. A couple of weeks after the events just described, he was made Assistant Commissary of the "Special" Army, and went to the front. On September 6, that is to say on the eve of the Korniloff affair, one of the divisions of this Army, which had just been subjected to a gas attack, refused to go to the trenches. It was Linde's duty to deal with insubordination of this kind, and on the following day he appeared at the headquarters of the Division, and, addressing the troops company by company, tried to bring home to them the possible consequences of their action. In some cases, his words were effective, and a number of the ringleaders of the mutiny were surrendered. Two battalions, however, refused to attend the general muster, and, establishing themselves under arms in a neighbouring wood, sent a deputation to ask the Commissary to visit them there. Linde agreed to do this, and set out in a motor car, accompanied by the Commander of the Division, Gen. Hirschfeld, and with a small escort of Cossacks. When, however, the car entered the wood, several hundred excited soldiers swarmed out from beneath the trees and surrounded it, with the evident intention of doing violence to its occupants. The escort was dispersed, and Linde and the General, jumping out, tried to reach a neighbouring mud hut, where they would have had a better chance of defending themselves. Blows rained down on them from every side, and before they could get far they were struck to the ground. As nearly always happened

in similar cases, of which there were not a few, the frenzied soldiers riddled the lifeless bodies of their victims with bullets and bayonets. Thus Linde was destroyed by the forces which he himself had let loose, and in vain efforts to redress mistakes for which he had no small share of responsibility.

CHAPTER XII

KERENSKI

WE often say that a man's career has been meteoric, but seldom has the epithet been so applicable as it is to the brief glory of Alexander Feodorovitch Kerenski. Almost in a day he sprang out of obscurity, and almost in a day he fell back into obscurity again; but in the interval he filled the whole political horizon of the world with his light. For a few weeks he was the real ruler of a hundred and seventy million souls, the accepted master of a larger number of human beings than had ever before gladly submitted to the will of a single man. During that period, he seemed to embody in his own person all that was best in the Russian Revolution and to give it a multiplied force. His own fellow-countrymen idolised him; through half the world Press and platform rang with his praises; the leading statesmen of the Allies welcomed him to their midst with eager flattery. No one was more talked about; on no one were higher hopes set. But when his great attempt failed, he was flung aside like an old glove. In Russia he was an outlaw and dare not show his face. To the Allies he was a burst windbag. In the same countries where a few months before no words had been fine enough to laud his qualities, none were forcible enough to condemn his faults. When he wished to tour the Allied states on behalf of the cause which he had so lately personified as no one else before or since, all kinds of obstacles were raised against him. His appeals to the public fell on deaf ears, and his very name aroused instant irritation or impatience.

Though it is unlikely that Kerenski will ever again play a leading part in Russian national life, the very vicissitudes of his short career will always make him one of the most singular human phenomena of this epoch of war and political upheaval. When contemporary events are seen in more sober perspective, he will probably appear neither so great as he looked in the summer of 1917, nor so little as he looks to most of us to-day.

In any case, it will be impossible for the historian to pass him by in silence, or with mere mention of his name, for the episode with which he was identified was undoubtedly the most noble and edifying phase of the Russian Revolution. Only during the period of his leadership was the movement really actuated by high ideals and the self-sacrifice inspired by them.

Kerenski was born in 1881 at Simbirsk, where his father was Director of the Gymnasium in which the two Oulianoffs, Lenin and his elder brother, had been pupils. By social status he belongs, like so many of the early Social-Revolutionaries, to the "Dvorianstvo," or nobility. He was educated at Tashkent and at St. Petersburg University, where he graduated in the legal faculty. After taking his degree, he became a lawyer. But meanwhile he had joined the Social-Revolutionary Party, and his professional work was mainly confined to political cases, in connection with which he travelled to all parts of Russia. It was not a remunerative practice, and down to the Revolution Kerenski lived in very modest circumstances. However, his success in the courts opened the path to a political career, and at the early age of thirty-two he was elected to the fourth Duma by one of the Saratoff constituencies.

The Troudoviki, or "Labourites," as the Social-Revolutionaries called themselves in the Duma, numbered but eleven, and Kerenski is the only one of them whose name has since become known to the world. His ability soon brought him to the head of his colleagues, and for the second session of the Duma he was chosen chairman of the group. In this capacity, he always spoke in important general debates. His oratory was not of the type which usually impresses parliaments, but it had the distinction of individuality. The level of eloquence in the Duma was not a high one. Those of the deputies whose names are most familiar outside Russia were speakers rather than orators. What they said was more effective to the eye than to the ear, and was unimpressive in delivery, though it made convincing reading in parliamentary reports. Into the humdrum monotony of their utterances Kerenski introduced a shrill and discordant note. He was always at the white heat of passion, and poured out a torrent of fierce words at the top of his voice, to the accompaniment of a storm of furious and uncontrolled gestures. His speeches seemed to leave him quite exhausted, and he used

to descend from the tribune with his whole body trembling and with perspiration pouring down his pale cheeks. Volcanic oratory does not generally tell on an assembly of educated men, and Kerenski was listened to mainly because there was no knowing what he might not say next. The majority of his colleagues heard him with a half-contemptuous curiosity, and heaved a sigh of relief when he finished without having provoked open scandal. In the fellowship of the smoking room and the lobby he was not popular. He was regarded as a man of exaggerated ambition and too susceptible vanity. When the Liberals joined him in his onslaughts on the old Government, it was felt that he half resented their co-operation as an encroachment on his own special preserves. The feeling of aloofness towards him was in strong contrast to the amiable indulgence shown by the House to Nikolai Cheidze, the leader of the Menshevik Social-Democrats, whose more extreme doctrine was tempered by a flat, mumbling delivery and a strong Georgian accent which made his words unintelligible to many members of the House.

In the sitting of the Duma at the outbreak of the War, Kerenski gave a faithful reflection of the feelings which then animated the masses in Russia. "Firm as a rock," he declared, "is our faith that the mighty democracy of Russia, in harmony with the other forces of the Empire, will repel the assailant, and defend the soil that bore it and the culture won by the sweat and blood of generations. We hope that the fraternal feeling which unites all the peoples of Russia will further deepen in the common sufferings of the battlefield, and will create an iron determination that, in the end, will also free our land from its internal fetters. Steel your hearts, peasants, workmen, and all who burn for Russia's prosperity and progress. Steel them for days of adversity and trial. Muster the strength which is in you, that you may be the liberators of the land you have defended."

As has already been seen, Kerenski was one of the legal defenders of the Bolshevik members of the Duma when they were tried and sent to Siberia. He followed up his work in this case by a step which gave significance to his name far beyond the party circles in which alone it had so far had a serious weight. In an open letter to the Duma President Rodzianko, he called

for vigorous action to secure the removal of the Ministers whose records made it impossible for them to share the popular idea that the War was one of enfranchisement. "The Russian public," he said, "knows quite well in which Ministries sit the patrons of the hope, still lively here, of coming to an understanding with the Berlin Government as quickly as possible, and thus of restoring the firmest and indispensable support of internal reaction. The officials of these Ministries will certainly not pursue with zeal the traces of the treasonable organisation accidentally discovered by the military authorities. The Imperial Duma must strain every nerve to protect the nation from the blows in the back by which it is threatened." This letter was aimed at the Minister of the Interior, Maklakoff, and the Minister of Justice, Shcheglovitoff, and it expressed the sentiments with which they were regarded by all the democratic elements in Russia. By his bold attack Kerenski made himself the mouthpiece of a very large section of public opinion.

The mysterious disappearance of the Ohrana spy, Malinovski, who had been the leader of the Bolsheviks in the Duma, removed the only man who could rival Kerenski in appeal to the masses. The arrest and sentence of the rest of the Bolshevik group in the Duma left him the spokesman of the urban proletariat. The natural political heirs of the Bolsheviki would have been the Mensheviki; but there was no one in that party who could stir the artizans in the public galleries of the Tauride Palace as Kerenski did, and his word soon became law to the masses of Petrograd. In the industrial quarters on "the Viborg side," and in the ship yards and iron works at the mouth of the Neva, "What has Alexander Feodorovitch said?" or "What will Alexander Feodorovitch say?" were the final standards on all political questions. The strength of his grip on the labouring population became manifest only during the Revolution; but for a year or more before the storm actually burst, it was clear to those who looked below the smooth surface maintained by martial law and the censorship, that he had only to lift a finger to fill the streets of Petrograd with men and women ready for almost anything.

One of the most obscure questions of the Russian Revolution is, how the movement was prepared and organized among the working classes and in the rank and file of the Army. Much of

the work of the Duma and of the Unions of Zemstvos and Municipalities, which paved the way among the commercial and professional classes and among the officers of the Army and Navy, was done in the open, and it is not difficult to guess how it was supplemented by private and confidential activity. But under the conditions then existing in Russia, anything like a general organization of the masses for "illegal" purposes was out of the question. Something, however, was attempted, and Kerenski seems to have taken the chief part in it. Among the papers of the Ohrana published after the Revolution, was a report addressed by the head of its Petrograd branch to the Minister of the Interior in August, 1915, that is to say, during a period of acute disillusionment as to the results and prospects of the War. "The strikes with a political background which are at present occurring among the workmen, and also the ferment among them, are," says the document, "the result of the revolutionary activity of members of the Social-Democratic and Labour Parties in the Duma, and especially of the leader of the latter, the lawyer Kerenski. The revolutionary propaganda of Kerenski has expressed itself in the watchword 'Struggle for power and for a Constituent Assembly,' and has led to a systematic discrediting of the Government in the eyes of the masses. To ensure the success of their demands, Kerenski has recommended the workmen to improvise factory groups for the formation of councils of workmen's and soldiers' delegates on the model of 1905, with the object of impelling the movement in a definite direction, at the given moment, with the cry for a Constituent Assembly, which should take into its hands the defence of the country. To promote this agitation, Kerenski is circulating among the workmen rumours that he is receiving from the provinces numerous letters demanding that he should overthrow the Romanoff dynasty and take its power into his own hands."

This passage tells us a good deal. It shows that a definite organization of the proletariat for revolution was attempted as early as the summer of 1915, and that even at that time Kerenski looked upon himself as the destined heir to the authority of Nicholas II. It also appears to indicate, however, that the movement had not yet acquired a pacifist character, as the task assigned to the Constituent Assembly is not the conclusion of peace, but "the defence of the country." Evidently the belief

of the masses in the righteousness and the necessity of the War had not yet been seriously shaken.

The Ohrana report concludes with the words: "As I propose, with the object of checking further revolutionary propaganda, to effect the arrest of the most active of the revolutionary agitators, I beg for instructions how I should act in respect to the chief ringleader of the present revolutionary movement, the member of the Imperial Duma Kerenski." The reply of the Minister of the Interior to the proposal of the Ohrana has not been brought to light; but Kerenski was left at liberty, and it was only after his threatening speech in the Duma on the very eve of the Revolution that Protopopoff gave orders for his arrest. It was, however, then too late, and in a few days Protopopoff was Kerenski's prisoner and not Kerenski Protopopoff's.

It would appear from the Ohrana report that Kerenski in 1915 defined in advance the form of the Revolution. The character of it he predicted in the Duma speech on February 28, 1918. "We must acknowledge," he said (speaking for his Party), "that now, after three years of war, when the stores of the country's human and material wealth are exhausted, the time has come to prepare the public conscience for the liquidation of the European conflict. And it is our idea that this conflict should be liquidated on the principle of the self-determination of all nationalities. All Governments must equally renounce imperialistic aims of conquest." Here we have, in somewhat less concise phrasing, the seductive watchword "Peace without annexations or indemnities on the basis of the self-determinaion of nationalities," which was to be so grave an embarrassment to the makers of the Revolution, and not least to Kerenski himself.

When the Revolution came, it took Kerenski, like everyone else, by surprise. He had, as has been seen, contemplated its occurrence before the War was ended, and made some preparations to bring it about under that condition; but there is no reason to suppose that he either intended or anticipated that it would break out when it actually did. The very first developments of the rising gave him a unique but untenable position. As a member of the first Provisional Government, he shared in the authority—such as it was—and the responsibility of Prince Lvoff's Cabinet, and was closely associated with those members of the "bourgeois" parties who had led the parliamentary

attack upon the Old Regime. As Vice-President of the Petrograd Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates, he was also responsible for the policy by which that body paralysed the action of the Cabinet. It was a case of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds, and only his immense popularity allowed him, for a time, to share in the prestige of the one function while evading the odium of the other. His own interpretation of his position was that he was the bridge which connected qualified with unqualified democracy; but a man cannot act as the mediator between two antagonistic institutions to both of which he belongs and owes absolute allegiance. At the same time, it cannot be denied that his personal popularity smoothed the relations between the Cabinet and the Soviet, and thus enabled the first Provisional Government to prolong its always very precarious existence for a couple of months.

As the Minister for Justice in the first Lvoff Cabinet, Kerenski preached a lofty idealism which undoubtedly had a very salutary influence. His most memorable phrase dates from that period: "The Revolution will astound the world by its magnanimity." So far as lay with him, this prophecy was fulfilled. He resolutely opposed the tendency to vengeful outrage, which is inseparable from revolution, and undoubtedly saved many lives. In every thing he stood for strict and regular observance of the law. The members of the deposed dynasty had much to thank him for; and in one of the most difficult of situations, he managed to gain their confidence, and even their esteem. At one of the meetings of delegates from the front—the most imperious and dictatorial assemblies of those days—he was asked whether the soldiers might go to Tsarskoe Selo and the Peter and Paul Fortress to see under what conditions the Tsar and the Ministers of the Old Regime were confined. "Out of the question," Kerenski replied with emphasis. "If we give permission to one we must give it to all, and we cannot turn the Peter and Paul Fortress into a menagerie."

The appointment of Kerenski to the Ministry of War was absolutely unintelligible to those outside Russia who knew something about that country, and came to them as a severe shock. The sequel proved it to have been an inspiration. To such a degree do the turbulent and disordered conditions of revolution upset all established standards. Goutchkoff had every qualifica-

tion for the post of Russian War Minister in normal times, and during his two months of office he carried out a number of invaluable reforms. In particular, he weeded out the old unteachable officers, who had ensconced themselves in responsible positions by intrigue or corruption, and replaced them by energetic men with modern ideas, of whom the Russian Army had no scarcity. But he was himself handicapped by his political past. Kerenski, on the other hand, knew absolutely nothing about military matters; he had even escaped the usual obligatory term of service in the Army. But the position of Minister for War enabled him to bring his popularity and the intoxicating power of his peculiar type of eloquence directly to bear on those masses of perplexed men at the front in whose hands the issue now lay. His success among them was so great that, if he had been given access to them at the very beginning of the Revolution, it is conceivable that he might have changed the course of history. But he was alone in his powers of bewitching the multitude, and there are limits to what one man can do when his task is with thousands of miles and millions of people.

When Kerenski took over the War Ministry, he shut himself up in his room, having given instructions that he was on no account to be disturbed, and for twenty-four hours at a stretch tore the essential details from a mass of military manuals. Emerging from his seclusion on the following day, he remarked to one of the members of his family: "Now I think I know a little about it and can leave for the front." It was much the biggest brief of his legal career that he had tried to master in this way; and though it cannot be pretended that he acquired much knowledge of the Army, he at any rate learnt enough to be able to comport himself with dignity and aplomb in his unfamiliar office. That in itself was no mean achievement. And whatever he knew about army administration, he learnt in those twenty-four hours, for he never afterwards had time or opportunity to study departmental affairs.

For we have now reached what was the sublimest height both of Kerenski's personal career and of the Revolution itself. Amid much that was interested, and sordid, and utterly base, bright fires of generous idealism and self-sacrificing patriotism were burning in many places. The scattered warmth of these fires

was now all drawn together in his person and concentrated in a focus of intense heat. He became the personification of every thing that was good and noble in Russia. He was no longer the leader of a political party, but the prophet of a new faith, the high priest of a new doctrine, which were to embrace all Russia, all mankind. Whatever he may have been before or after, during this dazzling and intoxicating interlude he had in him true elements of greatness. He ceased to be what he had been, and became different, not only in degree, but also in kind. What a man is and does depends on the medium in which he works and the motive that actuates him, as well as upon his inherent powers. Kerenski may have been by nature little more than a mediocrity, but he had been fired by the revolutionary enthusiasm which surrounded him and inspired by a fervent and profound belief in the religion of freedom. Russia had a new and great message of hope for the world, and he was to be its bearer. Under the sense of his high mission, his physical and mental powers were purified and enhanced. He knew exactly what he believed in, and what he wanted to be at. The path lay straight ahead, and there was no need for vacillation or temporising. His decisions were instant, peremptory, irrevocable, and nearly always right. His very oratory participated in his rebirth. It lost its artificiality and diffusiveness, and became the spontaneous expression of intense feeling passing through a well-trained mind. In brief and pungent phrases, it spoke the hearts of his deliriously enthusiastic audiences.

"Triumphal progress" seems a weak term to describe Kerenski's tour to the front. In the violence of the agitation by which it was accompanied it resembled the passage of a cyclone. Crowds waited for hours to catch a glimpse of him. His path was everywhere strewn with flowers. Soldiers ran for miles after his motor-car, trying to shake his hand or kiss the hem of his garment. At his meetings in the great halls of Moscow the audiences worked themselves up into paroxysms of enthusiasm and adoration. The platforms from which he had spoken were littered with watches, rings, bracelets, military medals, and bank notes, sacrificed by his admirers for the common cause. At one of his Moscow meetings, two of his photographs, which he had signed, were put up to auction. The first was sold for five thousand roubles, and the other for three times that amount.

It was a time of extreme emotions, in which the high-pitch of Kerenski's earlier oratory would have harmonized with the popular mood, but he had now acquired, in addition, the power of sweeping off their feet the class least of all susceptible to the appeal of the platform. Nemirovitch-Danchenko (who visited this country with the delegates from the Russian Press during the War) is an old and hardened journalist, but when he wrote about Kerenski's speeches he became rhapsodical. "Listening to him," he said, "you feel that all your nerves are drawn towards him and bound together with his nerves in one nexus. It seems that you yourself are speaking; that on the platform it is not Kerenski but you who are facing the crowd, and dominating its thoughts and feelings; that it and you have only one heart, wide as the world and as beautiful. Kerenski has spoken and gone. You ask yourself how long he has spoken—an hour or three minutes? On your honour you cannot say, for time and space had vanished. They had ceased to be; only now have they returned." In another passage the same writer says: "All impediments between himself and his audience are intolerable to him. He wants to be all before you, from head to foot, so that the only thing between you and him is the air, completely impregnated by his and your mutual radiations of invisible but mighty currents. For that reason he will hear nothing of rostra, pulpits, tables. He leaves the rostrum, jumps on the table; and when he stretches out his hands to you—nervous, supple, fiery, all quivering with the enthusiasm of prayer which seizes him—you feel that he touches you, grasps you with those hands, and irresistibly draws you to himself."

To Danchenko, Kerenski was "a volcano hurling forth sheaves of all-consuming fire"; a man actuated by "an impulse of such headlong, centrifugal feeling as could be compared only with lightning if lightning had the thought and consciousness where it must strike and what destroy." For this trained observer, although his past associations had been in circles with little sympathy for socialistic views, there could be no doubt as to the abandoned fervour of Kerenski's conviction. Kerenski "loves nobility, and, seeking it, finds it in every soul, which becomes purer in responding to his appeal." The driving power behind him is "the indestructible and insatiable faith in the eternal and omnipotent truth of freedom"; and "you follow him because

you never for a moment doubt that if he calls you to a feat of daring, he will himself be in front, taking on his sunken chest, his weak and narrow shoulders, all the blows of the yet unvanquished monster of the evil past."

Nor was it merely the public and the Press which hailed Kerenski as the saviour of Russia. When the new War Minister, continuing his tour, arrived at Headquarters on the front, the Commander-in-Chief, Gen. Broussiloff, exclaimed enthusiastically: "Kerenski is the very man the Russian Army needs." A little later, a man from whom of all others Kerenski had perhaps least reason to expect appreciation, was to give him an equally laudatory testimonial. For Nicholas II, then a prisoner at Tsarskoe Selo, wrote in his diary on July 8: "Prince Lvoff has retired. Kerenski becomes President of the Council of Ministers, at the same time remaining Minister of War and Marine, and takes over in addition the Ministry for Trade and Industry. In the present situation, this man is decidedly in the right place. The more power he has the better." Before these words were made known to the world, Kerenski had long joined the Tsar in the ranks of the fallen monarchs.

When Kerenski got to the front, it did indeed seem that he was the one man, the one thing, that Russia and her Army needed. In all material respects, the Army was better equipped than ever for resuming the War. Thanks largely to the help of the Allies, it had for the first time as many arms and as much ammunition as it needed. All the leading generals were in agreement on that. One of them went so far as to say that Russia had enough shells to keep all her guns firing day and night without interruption for several months. The only thing she needed was the fighting spirit, and that Kerenski was able to supply. Unfortunately he alone was able to supply it, and the moral rot of Bolshevism had already wrought great havoc in the Army. Still what it was possible for one man to do he did. During those few feverish weeks, he was ceaselessly on the move from one part of the front to another, addressing hundreds of meetings, hectoring here, coaxing there, arguing somewhere else. How his feeble frame supported the Herculean work of those days none could imagine who had seen him step down from the Duma tribune limp and shaking after a single speech. It has been said that he kept himself together by drugs, but a more probable explanation

is that he was borne up by his burning faith in the cause for which he stood—and, no doubt, to some extent also, by faith in himself as the destined leader of that cause. Unquestionably he was ambitious and believed in himself, but what of that? The practice of the world is to blame a man for not having ambition if he does not try, and for having it if he fails; if he succeeds, it matters very little whether he has it or not. We need not go so far as Russia to find men in the seats of the mighty whose belief in their cause is not nearly so sincere as Kerenski's was at that time, and whose belief in themselves is at least as thorough as his was then.

While Kerenski had a mighty force of popularity and national aspiration behind him, he had to overcome tremendous obstacles, which, by a cruel irony of fate, had been largely of his own raising. In many cases his mere word was enough instantly to bring order and discipline into disorganized and demoralized troops. An incident which occurred at Nizhni-Novgorod is illustrative not only of this, but also of the morbid fears from which so many of the difficulties of the Revolution arose. A soldier, who was helping in some surveying work on the banks of the Volga, gave a signal by waving a flag. The suggestion was dropped in a group of soldiers standing near that he was giving the sign for the commencement of a "counter revolutionary" rising, and he was at once set upon, and murdered with circumstances of hideous atrocity. Two men were arrested in connection with this outrage, but their release was secured by the threats of their comrades. When, however, the regiment was told that it was Kerenski's will that they should be given up, the Regiment unanimously passed a resolution in favour of submission, and the two culprits at once stepped out of the ranks and surrendered. This is typical of a whole class of similar incidents.

When he was in personal contact with the troops, Kerenski's way seemed irresistible. True, some units had sunk into a state of disaffection so hopeless that it was thought inadvisable for him to show himself in their midst; but with others, where the rot had not gone quite so far, his appearance was the signal for an immediate and amazing change for the better. Thus it was at the headquarters of the 113th Division, which had only recently refused to man the trenches, and which had been withdrawn from the front as useless. There he was faced by a crowd

of 40,000 soldiers. "Is it then true," he asked them, "as the German thinks, that the Russian troops cannot fight without a Tsar; that what the Russian soldier needs is not freedom but a whip, because without this he stands idle, while Wilhelm takes his best troops from our front and hurls them against the freest of all nations—France?" "It is false, it is false," shouted the soldiers in response; "lead us against the enemy"; and raising Kerenski and General Broussiloff shoulder high they carried them back in triumph to their motor car.

Perhaps the most remarkable of the many intensely dramatic incidents of Kerenski's tour was that which occurred in one of the "sick" regiments on the Dvina front. It is best described in the words of the correspondent of the Petrograd *Retch*, Arzoubieff, who reports what he saw with his own eyes and heard with his own ears.

The soldiers gave a friendly enough answer to Kerenski's greeting. He shook hands with the officers and the members of the Regimental Committee, and ordered individual soldiers to come nearer. They formed round him in a wide, close circle. And he began to speak.

All the time he talked of the same thing: how we had gained our precious and long-awaited freedom, and how we must guard, strengthen, and defend it, voluntarily submitting to a reasonable discipline, dictated not by fear but by a sense of duty.

When he had finished, some soldier standing in the front row asked: "But will you tell us what we must do to strengthen this same freedom? Do you mean that we should attack?"

The question was asked in a calm and peaceable, not at all in a provocative tone. Yet, all the same, one's heart trembled with some ominous presentiment. Not mine alone—of that I am sure. Hundreds of eyes were fixed upon the questioner.

Kerenski explained, that to strengthen freedom means, in the first place, to organize. Committees must be elected—by companies, regiments, divisions. These committees will decide matters together with the command staff. And if it proves that an advance is indispensable, then an advance must be made.

"If we attack," remarked the soldier calmly, quietly, and with conviction, "we shall all perish. And what good will it be, this freedom, to a dead man? The dead need neither land nor freedom."

Kerenski started back as if he had been struck in the face. A shiver ran through those present.

It was, indeed, an awkward moment. Here was the Commander-in-Chief, here was the Commander of the Army. Some

hundred days back none would have dared blink in their presence. A soldier who had presumed to utter words like those just spoken would have been struck, not only off the roll of the regiment, but off the roll of the living. And mark, that not only here, in the Army of the Tsar, was it so, but it was so in all the armies of the world, in those of our Allies as in those of our enemies.

Moreover, what are generals, and who thinks of generals now? Here was Kerenski—the living incarnation of the victorious revolution; the supreme wielder of revolutionary power in the Army. If he departs hence humiliated and shamed, the whole Russian Revolution is a brag, a piece of tomfoolery, an absurdity. It means that our Revolution is good for nothing, a rotten rag; and the first peasant you meet has the right to spit on it at his pleasure.

Kerenski and the soldier stood face to face. The representative of the spirit and the representative of the body, they measured one another with their eyes as if before a duel.

"Comrades," Kerenski began.

"What is the use of talking?" cried the soldier, sharply and roughly, not at all as he had spoken hitherto; "we must make peace quickly, that's all."

Someone's sympathetic voice murmured in the back ranks. Another moment and the peasant would have won a victory over the Russian Revolution.

"Silence when the War Minister is speaking!"

There was a hush. All were on the alert—as still as death. It seemed that one could hear the quickened beat of hearts.

"Colonel," said Kerenski in a choking voice, "take this man——"

"And have him shot?" the mind involuntarily asked itself. The emotion of the moment was such that no one would have been surprised to hear such words. But no.

"——and to-morrow issue an order that he has been flung out of the ranks of the Russian Army. He is a coward. He is unworthy to defend the soil of Russia. He may go home."

A stream of phrases, trenchant and merciless as the blows of a whip. "Coward, coward, coward!" Kerenski repeated this word with the fury of one possessed. The face of the soldier took on the hue of death, became as gray as the earth. He began to sway to one side, ever farther to one side, and finally fell heavily to the ground.

"He is putting it on," someone shouted.

But it was not so. The soldier was in a deep swoon.

This time mind had triumphed over body. The Revolution had humbled the recalcitrant peasant in the dust.

Less than two months after he had taken over the War Office, Kerenski had so far infected the demoralized army with his own spirit that it was thought possible to attack on a wide front in Galicia. The attack opened with brilliant success, rapid progress was made, and many thousands of prisoners were taken. Witnesses from both sides of the line testified that the Russian soldiers fought as they had never fought before. The German correspondents were particularly emphatic in their praises of the reckless and self-sacrificing courage which their opponents displayed on this occasion. "In the Red Brigades of Death," wrote Wilhelm Gomoll in the *Kölnische Zeitung*, "are the idealists of the front, fanatically fierce and indomitable in attack, who, with red cockades and red flags, bare-breasted, with no other arms than a knife in their hands, rush forward and spare no hostile man, not even the wounded. For them Kerenski's cry 'the fatherland in danger' has become a formula of prayer demanding self-sacrifice. With blind impetuosity they dash into the raging fire of our machine guns. Fanatics, and deluded, if you like, but still not the worst sons of their fatherland." And the same correspondent, like all his colleagues, acknowledges that the real driving force behind the attack was the personality and the eloquence of Kerenski. Writing some time after the glorious attack had come to its inglorious end, and after talking to many Russian prisoners, he says: "In what we hear, Kerenski is always in the foreground. His oratorical gift must give him a stupendous power. This frail and delicate man is a magician in words. . . . . Soldiers have told me again to-day, but I had heard of it often enough before. I heard it from the people of the occupied Galician territory, who had seen Kerenski and listened to him when he flung his fiery speeches into the masses of soldiers in the towns. In Tarnopol, in Kalusz and in Stanislau I was told about it. The statements of the front soldiers, who saw him among themselves close behind the positions, nay, in the front trenches, confirm it: he was the impulse to the new attack, the tireless inciter, working with the power and sweep of his word. His appeals inundated Russia and the Army on all fronts; and by his convincing power he harnessed in other men whose names have weight and influence in Russia. By the power of this one man, ... and by comprehensive and indefatigable propaganda, the fighting spirit was generated;

and thus were formed the 'regiments of July 1st' and the 'Brigades of Death,' which were willing to stake their lives for the mess of phrases of the Entente." Here the evidence of the enemy is valuable, for it was less subject to those influences on our side which made Kerenski everything so long as he appeared to be succeeding and nothing at all when he had failed.

The Kerenski offensive opened with success and with deeds of heroism unsurpassed in the War, but it closed with utter failure and unspeakable infamy. A regiment, which had orders to support a threatened point, deliberately turned its back upon the enemy and marched to the rear. The neighbouring sectors of the front were compelled to give way; retirement degenerated into panic flight; mobs of soldiers, brutalized by fear and the snapping of all inward and outward restraints, abandoned themselves to hideous orgies of outrage and drunkenness. Not even nurses and children were spared. Only the prompt and ruthless measures of Korniloff, adopted in defiance of the abolition of the death penalty, prevented this savage debauchery from spreading in all directions. The catastrophe is usually explained by "treachery" and "cowardice"; but its causes were not quite so simple as that. No doubt, treachery was at work too; but the chief agent in bringing about the debacle seems to have been a young Guards officer who had an exemplary record, but had been converted to Bolshevism, or something like it, during a short leave in Petrograd. Like the majority of those who destroyed Russia, he appears to have been perfectly sincere and well-intentioned; and probably that is why he was able to infect first his Company, then the Battalion, then the Regiment, and finally all the troops in the neighbourhood. He was a conscious actor in the tragedy, and could be held responsible for what he did, but his misguided followers were as little to blame as a flock of sheep which is driven this way and that. They had been robbed of the beliefs that made them soldiers—the belief in what they were fighting for and the belief in those who ordered them to fight—and their heads were confused with new ideas, the essence of which they certainly did not understand, but which made a strong appeal to the universal instincts of self-preservation and self-interest.

Kerenski's great effort had failed, and with it disappeared the forces which had made it possible. It was like the pricking of

an iridescent bubble, and nothing was left behind. All the bright hopes of himself and others vanished, and their place was taken by disillusionment, depression, and despair. The medium of popular enthusiasm which had reacted on him, and on which he, in his turn, had reacted, was no more. The burning faith in the cause which he had personified was extinct. All that remained was the old Kerenski, gifted and sincere no doubt, but without the inward inspiration and the outward stimulus that had made him for a few weeks the great champion of a great idea. The road in front of him was no longer a broad and straight one, along which he could march boldly, looking neither to right nor left, in the consciousness that everything good in Russia was following in his footsteps. Public opinion now divided sharply into two parties, and it was his impossible task to find a fresh course which would be acceptable to both of them. The advocates of discipline pulled him in one direction, the advocates of "democratisation" in the other. In the search for a reconciliation of their demands, heroic gestures, fine sentiments and resonant appeals were of little avail. It was now a question of delicate negotiation and what the other side always calls "intrigue." Kerenski ceased to be a prophet and priest, and once more became a mere politician.

Everyone at the Moscow Conference—the last serious effort to restore national unity—noticed the change that had come over Kerenski. He was now playing a part for which he was not suited, and he did not play it well. Instead of the storm of passionate words which had shaken vast audiences like a hurricane, there was a forced and stilted speech, with no ring of sincerity or fervour, and jarring by its continued insistence on the speaker's own power, authority and determination. Meanwhile, in his attempts to pick his way between two conflicting extremes, he had become involved in the meshes of the Korniloff affair, which was soon to bring him down. It would, however, be a mistake to attribute his eclipse entirely, or even mainly, to that incident. The radiant Kerenski, who had dazzled the world with his brilliance, came to an end with the disaster and disgrace of Tarnopol, and in all probability could never have been again.

At the same time, one is tempted to speculate what Kerenski would have now been had he succeeded. He was not so far from success as to make the hypothesis ridiculous. If he had been

able to work upon the Army with his intoxicating eloquence a few weeks earlier, if the demoralisation of the troops had not gone quite so far—nay, one might almost say, if that one Guards officer had not spent his leave in Petrograd—it is possible that the brilliance of the opening of the Galician advance might have been maintained. In that case, the momentum of victory would probably have carried forward the armies on all the other Russian fronts, the triumph of the Allies would have come much sooner, and Kerenski would have stood out as the most potent statesman of the War, for his individual contribution to victory would then have appeared greater than that of any other civilian.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MURDER OF GEN. POURGASOFF.

THE murder of Gen. Pourgasoff illustrates better than any other single episode within our knowledge the processes by which the Russian Army was destroyed. We see here what the chief forces of disintegration were and how they did their work. We see the mistakes by which the leaders of the old Army unwittingly precipitated what they were trying to avert. We see, finally, the desperate efforts made by a small band of devoted men to correct those mistakes and to counteract the ferment of dissolution. For the facts of this remarkable case we are indebted to the graphic narrative of A. Srednieff, published in the Petrograd *Retch*.

Major-General Pourgasoff was reckoned one of the most promising officers of his rank in the old Russian Army. A keen soldier, he had devoted himself heart and soul to the task of raising the military efficiency of the Doubno Regiment, which he had commanded almost from the beginning of the War. The rigour of his discipline had been tempered by frankness and fairness in his relations to all ranks, and he had been able to bring the Regiment to a high pitch of proficiency without losing either the confidence of the officers or the devotion of the men. Thus the outbreak of the Revolution passed over the "Doubentsy," as they were called, without leaving any of those unpleasant memories which marked its course in so many regiments. Prevision and tact brought the General safely through the next critical phase of the spread of "revolutionary" ideas in the Russian Army. The inevitable formation of committees in the Regiment, and the reorganisation of its routine life according to "democratic principles," were carried out with his active and cheerful co-operation, and, accordingly, without the generation of any bad blood. By such timely concessions to the prescriptions and the spirit of the time, he increased his popularity among the men, and so managed to retain a good deal of that authority which had originally reposed on a quite different basis.

Things remained like this till the Doubno Regiment was called on to admit to its ranks a quota of men from other units which had already succumbed to the Bolshevist agitation and broken out in flagrant insubordination. We are here brought up against one of the great psychological mistakes which precipitated the fiasco of the Revolution and the collapse of Russia. The mischief was begun by the distribution of the gendarmes among the Army. This measure was adopted in response to a spontaneous and almost universal demand, which there was no gainsaying; but it was carried out without discretion. The theory was that the gendarmes, who had formed the overt branch of the political police, and were consequently more interested than almost any other class in the restoration of the Old Regime, would be powerless for evil if they were thoroughly shuffled into the Army, and so deprived of the possibility of taking counsel together and concerting joint action. Such a calculation would, no doubt, have been justified in normal conditions, when public feeling was more or less stable. In the state of mental ferment which then actually existed throughout the country, the enrolment of the gendarmes was like the dispersal of the inmates of a small-pox hospital among the most crowded centres of an unvaccinated population. The gendarmes found at the front the very atmosphere which they needed for the fruition of their plans. With their superior education and their long training in political intrigue, they could mould the simple, unlettered Russian soldier like putty to their wishes. Moreover, they had the assistance of two bodies of zealous co-operators, whose immediate aim, the destruction of the Russian Army, though from very different motives, was identical with their own. These were the agents of Germany and the fanatical prophets of international socialism. Working in such a medium, each member of the Corps of Gendarmes became a plague-spot from which infection spread in all directions. The disbandment of the disaffected regiments and the segregation of their members among the troops on the untainted sectors of the front merely hastened and completed the work begun in this way. The virus was deliberately carried to precisely those parts of the Army from which it had hitherto been kept aloof, and which it might never have reached at all but for this inopportune and ill-considered procedure.

Thus it was with the Doubno Regiment. Among its drafts it

received a certain number of men from disbanded units; and from that moment the ferment of disintegration began to work in its midst. It was about this time that Kerenski made his really great effort and rallied portions of the Army for the Galician attack, which began with so much promise but ended so disastrously. The attempts to stiffen the Army's discipline and raise its fighting spirit were, in one way, a welcome opportunity for the plotters and agitators, and the term "counter-revolutionary" was brought into vogue. Probably there never has been a more striking example than the Russian Revolution of the intoxicating power of misunderstood and often meaningless catch-words. The cry "counter-revolution" turned the heads of the Russian soldiery like strong drink. There is a case on record where a company resisted inoculation against typhus on the ground that this precaution was "counter-revolutionary." A refusal to supply pens from a Government stationery store for the use of a soldiers' committee was branded with the same epithet. In the Doubno Regiment, every order issued by the Command with the object of enhancing efficiency was dubbed "counter-revolutionary" by secret agitators, and the word, once spoken, flew like wildfire through the ranks. Signs of serious insubordination showed themselves. The Russians are past-masters in the arts of conspiracy and intrigue—the whole of their past history has imposed this capacity upon them—and in the present case the promoters of discord and demoralisation acted with so much caution and cunning that it was impossible to bring home guilt to any individual member of the Regiment. Gradually, however, it became clear that the 12th Company was the main centre of the agitation, and that its commander, Lieutenant Loginoff, was conniving at what was going on—if he was not, indeed, primarily responsible for it.

In the hope of stamping out the fire at its seat of origin, Gen. Pourgasoff removed this officer from his position, and gave the command of the Company to another. Loginoff refused to submit to the General's decision, and called a meeting of the 3rd Battalion of the Regiment, to which he propounded the question whether or not it was desired that there should be a change in the command of the 12th Company. By a unanimous vote the gathering decided in his favour. These developments at least showed the dimensions which the danger had by this time

assumed. Gen. Pourgasoff realised not only that the entire Regiment was imperilled, but that the spirit of disaffection was already spreading to other parts of the Division. It seemed that only prompt and trenchant action could save the situation. The General decided to disband the 12th Company and afterwards arrest the members of its committee, who would then be merely groups of individual soldiers and could raise no claim to inviolability as "democratic representatives" of their comrades. This decision was put into execution, but it came too late. In a tumult of excitement, the Regiment met and resolved to "settle with" its commander, and then to set about the liberation of the prisoners. The "settlement" took a form which, unhappily, was almost normal, even in those early days. On that same evening, Gen. Pourgasoff was pierced through and through by the bayonets of his men. An attempt to rescue him was made by the regimental mounted scouts, who were under the command of one of his nephews, but they arrived only in time to save his body from unspeakable mutilation; and it was not without a scuffle in which blood was shed that the brutalised murderers consented to abandon their lifeless prey.

As the Regiment refused to give up the inspirers and perpetrators of the crime, the matter was reported to General Headquarters, which ordered the disbandment of the Doubentsy and their distribution among the units of another front. Before this order was received, however, the Government Commissary with the Army to which the Regiment belonged, K. M. Grodski, had already set in motion a different plan of action, and he telegraphed to the Supreme Command urgently recommending that he should be allowed to carry out his own ideas to the end. His petition was supported by practically the entire officers' corps of that Army, from the General in command to the regimental chiefs. He backed up his scheme by a closely reasoned argument. In it he pointed out that those seeking to destroy the Russian Army were deliberately working for the disbandment of regiments, as the swiftest and most efficacious method of spreading their propaganda. The Doubno Regiment was, he said, a striking example of the success of this method. It had undoubtedly been one of the best regiments in the whole Army till it received the disaffected elements from other fronts, and these had, from the first moment of their presence in it,

systematically set to work to procure its disbandment. Simultaneously, an agitation with similar objects was going on in other units of the same Army, and there were good reasons for believing that all these efforts were being directed from a common centre. The agitators had rightly calculated on the existing spirit of the troops, who were averse from fighting and welcomed any change which removed them from the firing line, were it only for the brief period of transport to other sectors of the front. Moreover, disbandment had almost entirely lost its former penal significance, since the soldiers no longer respected the traditions of their regiments, or had any feeling of devotion to their colours. For these reasons, Grodski strongly urged that the Doubentsy should be compelled to give up the instigators and murderers, or themselves pay the penalty for the crime, even to the point of being shot down wholesale. With such an issue in view, he had, in agreement with the Army Command, ordered up a force of six regiments and two batteries, which would be assembled in the course of a few days. In the meanwhile, he was endeavouring to create in that Army an atmosphere unfavourable to the Doubentsy. For this purpose, more than a hundred members of the Army, Corps, divisional, and regimental committees, who had been won over to his side, were holding meetings at various points on that sector of the front, and trying to persuade the soldiers that the Doubentsy deserved drastic punishment. He hoped that, before the punitive force was concentrated, all the units adjacent to the insubordinate Regiment would be ready to support the measures which he proposed. In conclusion, he appealed to the success which similar procedure had met with in two other regiments, the Kostroma and the Vologda—at the cost of only eleven victims in the latter.

Grodski's arguments prevailed at Headquarters, and he received permission to continue the application of his plan. Six days after the murder of Gen. Pourgasoff, the punitive force, consisting of one dragoon, one grenadier, and four Cossack regiments, had taken up positions commanding the quarters of the Doubentsy, and all was in readiness for the Commissary's experiment. In the meantime, the committee members who had been co-operating with him had done their work zealously and effectively, though at no inconsiderable risk to their own lives. At their meetings, they had frequently been confronted by emis-

saries from the Doubno Regiment, who had exhausted themselves in fervent apologies for the murder of Gen. Pourgasoff. In some cases, there had been long and violent disputes between the two parties as to the legitimacy of this kind of lynch law. In the end, however, the committeemen had invariably carried the day, and all the units visited had passed resolutions approving the action which it was proposed to take. Only in the Doubno Regiment itself had all arguments and inducements proved quite unavailing. The recalcitrant soldiers remained adamant in their determination not to surrender the authors of the murder.

It was 11 o'clock one morning when Commissary Grodski arrived at a station not far from the quarters of the Doubentsy, to put into execution the final phase of his plan. He was met by the Commander of the Division, the principal officers of the Corps, and the committee members concerned, all mounted, who escorted his car to the woods where the punitive force was drawn up to receive him with band playing. The Commissary addressed a few words to the troops, impressing upon them how important a part in deciding the destinies of Russia was being played by them and the other punitive detachments which were helping the Government to restore order and discipline in the disorganised Army. Having heard the report of the committeemen on the failure of their efforts to bring the Doubentsy to reason, Grodski held a joint meeting of delegates from all the units of the punitive force. At this meeting it was decided, in case of need, to shoot down the entire 12th Company of the Doubentsy, preliminary investigations having established with practical certainty that the murderers were to be sought almost exclusively in that section of the regiment.

But at this point the real difficulties of the Commissary began. Among the Doubentsy were some 500 Tartars, and for that reason a mullah and a Moslem soldier had been included in the delegation sent to argue the Regiment into submission. As soon as the decision to fusillade the whole 12th Company was taken, these delegates came forward and, assuring the Commissary of their conviction that Mohammedan principles would prevent anyone professing them from participating in a crime like the murder of Gen. Pourgasoff, begged in the name of justice that before the supreme expiation was exacted all the Tartars should be

removed from the Regiment. Grodski's refusal was prompt and emphatic. "On no account," he replied. "There can be no division of the Regiment into nationalities. If it is necessary to shoot the whole 12th Company, the innocent will, of course, perish with the guilty, and I can make no exception in favour of Mussulmans, least of all in the name of justice. Let the blood of the innocent fall on the heads of those who are shielding the murderers."

Up to this point the Commissary had not the slightest inkling as to the responsibility of individuals for the murder, and he felt that he could not hope for a bloodless issue of the affair unless he could confront the Regiment with at least some show of evidence against those actually guilty. He therefore asked the Commander of the Division to call together all the officers and company committees of the Doubentsy, at a village near the spot where the Regiment was drawn up awaiting its fate; and, this having been done, he put them through a cross-examination. Taking officers and men together in groups, to avert the possibility of individuals from among the former subsequently coming under unjust suspicion of delation, he explained to them once more the real nature of the situation, and asked them if they could throw any light on the problem he was trying to solve. In all cases this first question was absolutely fruitless. Not an officer nor a committee member would admit any knowledge of the authorship of the crime. Some said they had not noticed disaffected elements in the Regiment, some that a systematic agitation had simply not existed in it, while others confined themselves to the assurance that they had no idea as to the personality of the instigators of the outrage. Grodski, however, did not satisfy himself with these negative results. He pointed out to each group that, if it was found necessary to have recourse to wholesale slaughter, the death of the innocent would for ever lie on the consciences of those who had known the guilty but refused to tell their names. This appeal was more effective, and, by degrees, first soldiers and then officers began to mention the names of men who had made themselves conspicuous by agitation among their comrades. Ultimately, a list of some twenty-five or thirty suspects was drawn up. An orderly then galloped off to the punitive force, with instructions that it should take up positions closely surrounding the Doubno Regiment, and the cars with the

Commissary and the staffs of the Corps and Division drove off to the last scene of this strange drama.

The Doubno Regiment, three thousand strong, was drawn up in line alongside a road. The men had been mustered at 11 o'clock that morning, and the long suspense of waiting for their crucial ordeal had already begun to tell on their *morale*. Their heads hung and their faces were set and sullen. Grodski's car was brought to a standstill opposite the centre of the front. The mounted committeemen drew themselves up in orderly alignment on either side of it. The cars of the Corps and divisional staffs took up stations somewhat in the background. Grodski rose from his seat and addressed the Regiment. "Doubentsy," he began, "I cannot give you the usual greeting, for among you are murderers, whom you are shielding, and thus you are making yourselves deliberate accomplices in a foul and bestial crime." The speech was long and earnest, and couched in those simple phrases which alone find a ready entrance to the hearts of a body of Russian soldiers. It was listened to in almost complete silence. The men in the front lines stood like figures of stone. Not a whisper broke from their lips; not a ripple of feeling crossed their hard-set faces. In the hinder ranks there were faint signs of restlessness, in reaction to the Commissary's words—now and then an embarrassed cough, now and then a half-suppressed sigh. When the Commissary had finished his speech, he waited for an answer. There was none. The Regiment stiffened again into absolute silence, and it was evident that Grodski's eloquence had made no effective impression on its stubborn will.

The Commissary's car moved to the right wing of the line, and he gave the sharp order: "First Company, advance!" A couple of hundred soldiers automatically took a few steps forward. "Company Committee, advance!" said Grodski, and half-a-dozen men hesitatingly shuffled up to the car and stood before it restlessly, casting uneasy sidelong glances at one another. The narrower concentration of responsibility was disconcerting to them.

A short address from the Commissary closed with the exhortation that the ringleaders of the conspiracy should be given up, but the only reply he received was a blank refusal. "In that case," retorted Grodski, "I must myself arrest the agitators who egged you on to the murder, for I have already discovered who they

are," and he read out a name from the list in his hand. One of the grey figures reluctantly detached itself from the line of the Company. "Arrest him!" shouted the Commissary, and with outstretched arm pointed at the faltering suspect.

"I am not guilty, I am not guilty," protested the man in pleading tones. "I swear that I am not guilty."

"Who then is guilty?" Grodski broke in upon him.

"I don't know. Before God, I don't know," asseverated the soldier, crossing himself repeatedly.

"You can explain to the Court what you know and what you don't know," said Grodski, signalling with his hand that the man should be led away.

Another name was read out, a second soldier joined the first in custody, and the Commissary moved further down the line. Company by company the procedure was repeated, and in each case, after the soldiers had refused to give up the ringleaders, names were read from the list and their owners placed under arrest. In some instances officers came forward in defence of the suspects. "I venture to urge, Mr. Commissary," said one company commander, "that this man is the victim of a mistake. I can testify that he is a good and obedient soldier, and that no charge of inciting to insubordination has ever been made against him."

"Will you answer for him?" asked Grodski.

"Absolutely," was the reply.

"Liberate him!" said Grodski: and, addressing himself to the exonerated soldier, he continued: "I apologise to you deeply, citizen. You were arrested in error, and I offer you an apology for having deprived you of your freedom. But in the purging of the criminal element from the Regiment, such mistakes on the part of the Governmental authorities are inevitable, so long as your comrades deliberately place obstacles in their way. Thank your company commander for having saved you, it may be, from death, and take care that he does not suffer through the guarantee he has given for you." Standing to attention, the man cordially thanked his officer for the service rendered to him.

By this time the evening was far advanced and darkness had fallen. After consultation with the officers and, of course, with the all-powerful committees, the Commissary had decided not to interrupt the execution of his plan, but to carry on to the end without a break, however long the process might last. It

was, no doubt, both a wise and a merciful decision, for the obstinacy of the regiment was visibly bending under the united forces of moral strain, physical exhaustion, and hunger, and the sooner the end came the better for all concerned. Under extemporised illumination, the scene had become weird and fantastic. Huge bonfires, covering at intervals the whole space occupied by the Doubno Regiment and the punitive force, flared and flickered and smouldered, throwing out a fitful and ever-changing light, and tracing kaleidoscopic patterns on the groups of horsemen, foot soldiers, and motor cars. From the points of many of the cavalry lances hung carriage lanterns, steady but ineffectual beacons in the shifting chiaroscuro. The motor-cars were arranged so that their powerful headlights could be concentrated on the central figure of the Commissary, and on that section of the Doubno Regiment to which he happened for the moment to be devoting his attention.

It was 2 o'clock in the morning before the turn came to the 12th Company, which everyone was convinced harboured the real culprits. The Regiment had now been standing in line for upwards of ten hours without an interval and without breaking its fast. Grodski himself had gone through an ordeal hardly less severe, for he had delivered, with a great expenditure of physical and mental energy, no fewer than thirty-five speeches, in every one of which he had felt that he was pleading for hundreds of lives. But the sense that the drama had reached its grand culmination had a stimulating effect on all present. Drooping eyelids were raised and drowsy ears became alert once more. It could be felt that the air was charged with the electricity of acute moral tension.

Grodski's voice rang out sharply: "12th Company, advance!" Some two hundred men on the extreme left of the line stepped out from the region of dim and ghostly illumination into the space brilliantly lit up by the head-lamps of the motor-cars. Their faces were still set and sullen, but bore evident traces of the exhausting vigil which the Company had been compelled to keep. As the men came forward, subdued sounds of movement—the faint clank of arms and the whispered urging on of horses—were heard among the troops of the punitive force. Masses of infantry loomed up from the gloom in the rear of the cars. By the nodding lanterns on the lances of the cavalry, it could be seen

that the ring round the mutineers was being drawn closer. Gradually these sounds of movement died away, and there supervened a tense hush, which was broken only by the hissing of the carbide burners in the head lamps. The nervous and mobile face of the Commissary was clearly lit up by lanterns placed in the car beneath him. For a minute his keen eyes wandered from face to face of the men confronting him, as if seeking for signs of guilt. Then, in clear and penetrating tones, he began his final appeal.

"Twelfth Company," he said, "I know positively that the murderers are hidden in your midst. For the last time I ask you, in the name of the revolutionary Russian nation— Will you surrender the murderers of your regimental commander? I warn you that, in the event of your refusal, the entire Company will be treated as guilty of the crime. I will not shrink even from having the whole Company shot."

A stir of hasty whispered consultation was heard among the Committee of the punitive force. The Commander of the Grenadier Regiment left the group, hurried to Grodski's car, and, in an agitated voice, said: "Mr. Commissary, I am empowered by the Joint Committee of the units of the punitive force to state that we have all given our word to perform execution on the 12th Company, not stopping short at shooting down every man in it. But we must now declare that we refuse to shoot them so long as they are unarmed, and beg, in the event of your deciding to apply this measure, that weapons may be given to them, and that they may be allowed to fight the matter out on fair terms. If the whole Doubno Regiment wishes to take their part, then let weapons be given to the other companies, too, and we will fight them like any other enemies of our country, just as we should fight the Germans themselves."

Once more a critical moment had come for Grodski. The Colonel's words evidently made a deep and disturbing impression upon him. A minute passed in the silence of the grave. Then the Commissary straightened himself out, and replied with all his old firmness and emphasis: "No! It cannot be! I appreciate your high-minded and chivalrous impulse, but, as representative of the Provisional Government, I cannot allow even one superfluous drop of innocent blood to be shed on account of a handful of scoundrels. I will not permit the 12th Company to be armed,

and if you, in spite of your pledged word, refuse to fulfil the deserved sentence upon them, I will, with my own hand, shoot down the whole Company one by one. Twelfth Company," he continued, "I ask you for the last time—who are the murderers of General Pourgasoff?"

A momentary pause, and a faltering voice came back from the ranks: "We are all to blame. We don't know who——"

"So? All?" roared the Commissary. "Then surround these outcasts! Form a chain round the whole Company!"

Hardly were the words out of his mouth before the troops of the punitive force set themselves in rapid motion. The infantry at the double, the cavalry at a gallop, all the units took up their appointed stations, and the 12th Company was closely fenced in by a bristling hedge—bayonets in front, lances in the rear.

"Advance to the woods!" shouted the Commissary, and the wretched mutineers, whimpering, cursing, uttering pitiful appeals, articulate and inarticulate, were hustled off in the direction indicated. Above the lamentable hubbub, individual cries could be distinctly heard: "We are lost! We are done for! We are not guilty—before God we are not guilty! Why must we die? We will give them up! They must be given up! Commissary! Commissary! Commissary!"

"To the woods! To the woods!" repeated Grodski's unrelenting voice.

"Commissary! Commissary!" still the cries were heard as the condemned and their executioners moved away to the place of death.

And now the chorus of appeal was swollen by the protests of the staff officers and committeemen. "Mr. Commissary, Mr. Commissary," they urged in distraught and eager tones, "for the love of God stop the execution. You hear they are calling that they will surrender the murderers. Do not destroy innocent men!"

"To the woods! To the woods!" Grodski relentlessly reiterated; but, turning to the little group of excited mediators who surrounded him, he added, in subdued and softer tones: "Be easy, gentlemen; I am not a wild beast, and I am not a hangman. But let me push my method of moral and psychological effect to the culmination which I believe to be necessary if we are to have the best results."

The frantic voices of the 12th Company were now indistinguishably mingled in one long-drawn and heart-breaking cry. The terror-stricken Doubentsy had by this time lost all the outward signs of a military unit, and were being shepherded towards the fatal woods in a confused and struggling mass. Urged on by thrusts from the butt-ends of rifles, they stumbled and fell. As they scrambled to their feet again, they seized the hands that had struck them and kissed them entreatingly. And the wild and harrowing cry rose ever louder and louder.

Grodski had remained outwardly unmoved through this ghastly scene. He had followed the retreating Company with fixed eyes and a stern and rigid expression. Suddenly he leapt from the car and, almost at a run, hurried after the disappearing throng. Thrusting his way through the escort, he burst into the midst of the agonised Doubentsy. "Who called the Commissary?" he cried. "I am here. Who called me?"

Hatless, wild-eyed, a Tartar soldier wriggled his way through the crowd and flung himself at the Commissary's feet. "I called," he stammered. "I little badly speak Russian. Me said who hit General."

"What are you?" asked Grodski. "A Tartar?"

"A Tartar, a Tartar," replied the man.

A Tartar interpreter was called, and with his aid the confession was soon complete. The organisers of the murder of Gen. Pourgasoff had been an ex-watchman, an ex-policeman, and the informer himself.

"You see, Doubentsy," said the Commissary in taking leave of the Regiment after the ringleaders and actual murderers had been placed under arrest, "what sort of men carried your revolutionary banner. You thought that the Regiment was revolutionary and the officers counter-revolutionary, but now you see that your revolutionary banner was borne by a policeman and a watchman, both faithful props of the overthrown Tsardom."

A few days later, a telegram from Mohileff announced that the death sentence pronounced on the murderers of Gen. Pourgasoff by a revolutionary court-martial had been put into effect.

CHAPTER XIV

LENIN'S POLITICAL GENESIS

ON March 14, 1887, three students of the Petrograd University were arrested on the Nevski Prospect by officers of the secret police. They carried under their arms what appeared to be books, but were really disguised bombs. Their object was to kill Alexander III, who was expected to drive along the Nevski that day, and it was the third time that they had wandered the streets with this purpose. An accomplice, whose task had been to keep a lookout, and who was caught with them, betrayed all the details of the plot. A number of other arrests were made, and altogether fifteen persons were put on trial for connection with the affair. Five of them were condemned to death, and on May 20th were hanged in the courtyard of the gloomy fortress-prison of Schlüsselburg. They included Alexander Ilyitch Oulianoff, one of the two chief organisers of the conspiracy, who had not, however, been among those arrested with bombs in their possession. It is only with him that we are concerned at present.

Oulianoff's elder sister, Anna, and some of his friends subsequently published details of his short and tragic life. He was born at Nizhni-Novgorod in 1866. His father, who belonged to the "dvorianstvo" or nobility, was at that time master in a gymnasium, but he was afterwards transferred to Simbirsk as inspector of elementary schools. Here the sons of the numerous family attended the town Gymnasium, which, during the latter part of their school days, had at its head Feodor Kerenski, the father of the revolutionary Minister President. Alexander Oulianoff was a dreamy but gifted and studious boy, with a strong disposition to romanticism, and a generosity of temperament which made him a general favourite. He was always at the top of his class, and passed out of the Gymnasium at the exceptionally early age of seventeen, with the distinction of a gold medal. The atmosphere of his home is described by his sister as having been impregnated with intellectual ideals. The father

was an enthusiast for education, and did all he could to encourage his children to develop their minds. They responded keenly, and the "family feeling" was quickened by the sense of community of effort in this direction. All the brothers and sisters were much attached to one another and to their parents. Alexander was completely wrapped up in books, music and nature. He devoured Tourgenieff, Tolstoi and Pisarieff, but his favourite author was the most typically Russian of all poets, Nekrasoff. Chemistry also attracted him, and he fitted up a laboratory in an outhouse. In the summer, he spent long days in a boat on the Volga, or wandering through the woods with a gun over his shoulder. Altogether, not at all an appropriate prelude to the tragedy in the Schlüsselburg Bastille.

When Alexander Oulianoff went up to the Petrograd University, he was accompanied by his sister and biographer. In those student days he told her once, quite seriously, that "unfortunately" he could not work more than sixteen hours a day. For the first two years, he devoted himself exclusively to natural science, and in that phase of his studies he won a gold medal by a prize essay on some zoological subject. Then he turned to social science, and in that way became acquainted with the socialists' Bible, Marx's *Das Kapital.* In 1886, he founded a students' association, which in itself, in those days, ranked under the Russian law as a conspiracy; and at the end of the year, this organisation decided to celebrate publicly the anniversary of Dobroliouboff's death. However, the procession which was on its way to the author's grave was broken up by Cossacks on the Nevski, and many of those marching with it were arrested. This rough treatment rankled in Oulianoff's mind, and drove him into the Terrorist association "Narodnaya Volya" ("the People's Will"). During the few months which elapsed between his adhesion to the Terror and the frustration of his plot against the life of Alexander III, he laboured with extraordinary intensity. He attended lectures at the University, worked in the laboratory there, and started a prize essay on the visual organs of some kind of worms. At the same time, he read many books on social subjects, drew up the programme of his Party, translated and prepared for publication a work on the philosophy of Marx, agitated among labourers in the docks, and made attempts to get into touch with the soldiers of the guard of the Peter and Paul

Fortress. A week before his arrest, he pawned his gold medal to provide means for the flight of one of his comrades, who was being searched for by the police.

At his trial, Oulianoff refused legal aid, and denied nothing that was said against him. Indeed, his chief desire seemed to be to shield those implicated with him. The Crown counsel said of him: "Oulianoff admits himself guilty of everything, probably of what he did not do as well as of what he did." It is said that, by thus taking the blame of others on himself, he saved the life of one of his fellow-conspirators. In his speech to the Court, he declared his conviction that, in the conditions then existing in Russia, the Terror was the only possible method of political struggle. While he was awaiting execution, his mother was allowed to visit him. The first time she came to see him, he flung himself at her feet in tears, and implored her to forgive him for the sorrow he had caused her. But he tried to prove to her that a man had higher duties than those which he owed to his parents, and that in Russia one of these duties was to fight for the political emancipation of the whole people. When she objected that his methods were terrible, he replied: "But what is one to do if there are no others?" His mother entreated him to petition for mercy; but this he steadfastly refused to do, saying that it would be insincere. "I have tried to kill a human being," he said, "and therefore they must kill me." He showed great anxiety that all his outstanding obligations, even the most trifling ones, should be wiped out before he parted from life. Remembering that he owed an acquaintance thirty roubles, he asked his mother to redeem his gold medal and sell it to satisfy this debt. He also asked her to return to their owners certain borrowed books which were in his keeping. In his efforts to console her, he reminded her that she would still have her other children, and especially the boy and girl who came after him, and who had both just finished their school courses with as much distinction as he himself. And in this spirit, he died on the Schlüsselburg gallows.

Even in the bald detail in which it has been told here, it is a remarkable and significant story. It will appear even more remarkable when it is realised that the brother whom Alexander Oulianoff designated as his mother's comforter is now Nicolai Lenin. At that time, Vladimir Ilyitch Oulianoff was sixteen

years of age, and had probably already been infected by his brother's political views. Undoubtedly, the tragedy which blotted out the happy family life and cast a gloom over the whole town of Simbirsk had a very strong influence on his career; and this early experience may to some extent explain both the extravagance of his doctrines and the ruthlessness of his political practice. Shortly after his brother's execution, he joined the Legal Faculty at the Kazan University. At the same time, he became a member of the Terrorist group, taking the revolutionary pseudonym by which he is now generally known; and it was not long before he was expelled from the University for preaching socialism to his fellow-students. Thus barred from the legal career, he devoted himself entirely to revolutionary propaganda, and moved to the Capital. Here, in 1895, he became the leading spirit in the League for the Emancipation of Labour, an organisation which had been founded in 1883 by Plehanoff, Leo Deutsch, Axelrod, and Vera Zassoulitch, as a deliberate attempt to transplant German Marxian socialism on to Russian soil, but which, up to that time, had not made very substantial progress. His chief collaborator in those days was the Jew Zederbaum (Martoff), with whom he has frequently been confused, though they fell out when the Russian Social-Democratic Party, into which the League afterwards developed, split into the rival factions of Bolsheviki and Mensheviki. Even at that date, Lenin inclined to the extremist form of Marxian exegesis, and, in his contributions to the periodical press, was already vigorously combating the conciliatory and "bourgeois" tendencies which had appeared in current socialistic literature.

At the close of 1895 he paid the inevitable penalty of his activity. He was arrested, together with his chief collaborators in the League, at a meeting, the object of which was to combine all the Russian Social-Democrats in one organisation. When, in 1898, this object was realised, and the League was transformed into the Russian Social-Democratic Workmen's Party, he was living in an isolated village in the depths of Eastern Siberia, whither he had been banished after spending two years in prison. Even in that remote detachment from the life of the Russian proletariat, he was able to retain the intellectual leadership of the workmen's socialistic movement. News reached him of the proceedings at the first sitting of delegates of the new Party,

and he managed to smuggle through to his friends in Russia a memorandum prescribing to them the tactics which they should follow. On the expiration of his term of exile, he left Russia, as it had become clear that he could direct the activity of his Party much more effectively from abroad. In conjunction with Martoff he then founded the paper *Iskra* (*The Spark*) and the magazine *Zaria* (*The Dawn*), in which he continued his attacks on the school of compromise. From this period, too, date most of his more solid literary works, the books *The Development of Capitalism in Russia, The Agrarian Question, Materialism and Empirocracy, Imperialism*, and *During Twelve Years.*

At the conference of the Russian Social-Democrats held in London 1903, Lenin took the lead in the movement which resulted in the division of the Party. It was he who moved the decisive resolution; and, as he brought the majority of those present on to his side, his wing of the Party was henceforth known as the Bolsheviki. This word is derived from the Russian *bolshe,* which means "more," and it may be literally translated by "majorityites." Similarly, the right wing members of the Party became known as the "minorityites," or Mensheviki, from the Russian word for "less" or "fewer," which is *menshe.* In course of time, the derivations and original meanings of these terms were forgotten, and to-day, even in Russia, the names of the two branches of the Social-Democratic Party are generally understood as indicating, respectively, "those who insist on more" and "those who will be content with less." They are also frequently confused with the terms "Maximalists" and "Minimalists" which, however, properly belong to the two wings of the Social-Revolutionary Party.

On the outbreak of the first Russian Revolution, in 1905, Lenin returned from his voluntary exile, as the relaxation of the censorship and of the laws with regard to association and public meetings had made it possible for him to continue his work of propaganda much more effectively on the spot. He was, of course, one of the most active promoters of the revolutionary movement of that time. Living first in St. Petersburg and afterwards at Kuokkalo, just across the Finnish frontier, he controlled the Bolshevik Press and directed the tactics of the Party in the second Imperial Duma. By the beginning of 1907, the Stolypin regime of repression had made it exceedingly

dangerous for him to remain on Russian soil, and he once more fled abroad; but he nevertheless maintained his almost autocratic sway over the Party and its Press. He would hardly have been able to do this, however, if the political police had not, for their own purposes, given systematic support to his agitation. This phase of the development of Russian socialism forms one of the most amazing chapters of political history.

Not the least of the sins of the Old Regime was the help it gave to Lenin in the building-up of his organisation and the spreading of his ideas. This was no mere indulgent toleration or passive connivance. Far from it; the Tsar's political police took a very active and enterprising part in the Bolshevik propaganda, clearing obstacles from its path, assisting in the importation and circulation of its illegal literature, and even supporting it financially. At almost any time subsequent to the crushing of the revolutionary movement of 1905-6, the Ohrana had it in its power completely to destroy the machinery by which the extreme form of Marxian socialism was gradually gaining an ascendancy over the urban masses in Russia, to place the most effective agitators actually in the country under lock and key, and to cut the connections by which the propaganda was directed from beyond the frontier. For its own reasons, it preferred to take Bolshevism under its protection, and if Lenin, on his return to Russia after the second Revolution, found the ground well prepared for his devastating campaign, it was in no small measure due to the work which the Ohrana had done on his behalf.

An autocracy deliberately fostering a conspiracy to upset itself is one of those paradoxes of Oriental politics which the Western mind at first finds it hard to take seriously. As will, however, presently be seen, there can be no doubt whatever as to the facts. In this case, they have been established by a semi-judicial procedure, to the findings of which no objection can be taken. Nor is it so difficult to understand the action of the Ohrana—when once the necessary allowance has been made for the difference between the political practices of East and West—if we consider the motives by which it was actuated. As has already been said, at any time down to the Revolution it could have extinguished organised Bolshevism as one snuffs out a candle. So long as it was in a position to do this, no grave

danger threatened from that particular direction at any rate, and it naturally could not foresee a time when Lenin's emissaries would be able to preach his doctrines openly in every factory and every barrack-yard in Russia. But it was only by itself becoming a partner in Bolshevism, by filling the chief executive of the Party with its own agents, that it was enabled to secure this absolute control over the destinies of the extreme Social-Democratic propaganda. Another reason for the peculiar attitude of the Ohrana towards the revolutionary movement in general was of a less legitimate character. This was the desire to maintain and enhance the prestige and power which made the political police the real autocrat of all the Russians. The Ohrana would never have been able to usurp this position unless it had been able to argue with some degree of plausibility that it was the only solid foundation on which the Old Regime rested. Dangers to the State were necessary to justify its existence, and for this reason it preferred to encourage them up to a certain point rather than put an end to them altogether. Probably it was also influenced to some extent by the calculation that violent political theories would have a sedative effect on the propertied classes, and so check the spread of revolutionary sympathies in those quarters where they were most likely to be really dangerous. With the same idea the old German police showed an otherwise unintelligible leniency in its dealings with the more extreme forms of socialism.

Whatever the Ohrana's motives may have been, it seems to have overreached itself. It probably did not reckon sufficiently with the human element in its own service. Gradually it began to lose sight of its own original objects and to associate itself in a half-conscious enthusiasm with the cause of Bolshevism. Such a process was not only natural, but inevitable. Ulterior motives can never be an effective driving force for the many. The mass of the officials and agents of the Ohrana limited their vision to their immediate purpose, which was the promotion of Bolshevism, and acted as if that was something desirable in itself. Otherwise, it is not easy to explain the tone of benevolence, and even tenderness, with which Bolshevism was treated in official correspondence. No doubt Lenin was right when he said that this phase of their mutual relationships was of much more advantage to Bolshevism than it was to the Ohrana and its employers.

This statement Lenin made in his evidence on the case of Roman Malinovski, the leader of the Bolsheviki in the fourth Duma, who, at the very beginning of the Revolution, was shown to have been an agent of the political police, and to have owed his parliamentary seat largely to the official support given to him at the election. Malinovski figured here not as the defendant, actual or eventual, but as the *pièce de conviction.* The remarkable story of his duplicity formed the gravamen of the charge against the former Minister of the Interior, A. A. Makaroff, and those of his immediate subordinates concerned with the administration of the political police. It was investigated in the fullest detail by the Special Commission appointed by the first Provisional Government to inquire into the official conduct of the chief servants of the Old Regime. All the available witnesses were examined, including, on one side, the Bolshevik leaders, and, on the other, the former heads of the Ohrana; and, in addition, every pertinent document from the secret archives of the Ministry of the Interior was produced. In its report, which pronounced for the criminal prosecution of Makaroff and those implicated with him, the Commission set forth all the ascertained facts as to the unnatural partnership between Lenin and the Ohrana.

From this report, it appears that in 1911 the Russian Social-Democratic organisation had completely broken down. Of the Russian section of the Central Committee, only one member remained at liberty, and the "Bureau" abroad was split up into a number of mutually hostile groups. The whereabouts and the activities of the heads of the Party were perfectly well known to the Ohrana, and were even recorded by it in "synoptic tables." In the spring of that year, Lenin called a conclave in Paris, with the object of reviving the Central Committee. At this gathering, which consisted exclusively of adherents of Lenin, it was decided to destroy the "Foreign Bureau," by recalling from it all the Bolshevik members, and to take the initiative in the calling of an all-Russian conference. Emissaries were, accordingly, sent to Russia to contrive the election of delegates. Here was an opportunity for the Ohrana, which had been kept fully advised by its spies of all that was being done, to nip in the bud a menacing revolutionary development. What it actually did was not quite that. There seem to have existed at that time five distinct groups

within the Russian Social-Democratic Party. On the right were the Mensheviki, the Jewish " Bund," and the " Liquidators," whatever they may have been. All these were opposed to " illegal " agitation and to the extremist programme put forward by Lenin. On the other wing were the "Conciliators," a branch of the Bolsheviki who favoured a reunion of the Social-Democratic Party, and the neck-or-nothing Leninites, of whose views and tactics we are now only too painfully aware. Among these five groups the Ohrana showed a very significant discrimination. Whereas the emissaries sent by Lenin to arrange for the election of delegates to the conference were allowed to travel at their pleasure through Russia, and to hold their meetings undisturbed, the agents of the other groups were nearly all arrested the moment they crossed the frontier, and were, consequently, unable to carry out their missions. Only when they tried to get into touch with the masses of the workmen in the towns were the Leninites in any way interfered with. So long as they confined themselves to convening small meetings of people notoriously in sympathy with their views, they were left unmolested. In this way, one of them was able to procure the election of delegates to the conference from five different towns.

All this while, the Ohrana knew perfectly well what was being done. By its agents inside the Party, it was kept closely informed of every step taken by the Leninite emissaries. Its attitude towards them was clearly defined in a report sent by its Moscow branch to the Department of Police, in which it was said that " the arrest at Moscow in August, 1911, of the Bolshevik ' Conciliator ' Rykoff, and the consequent liquidation of the facts thus revealed, had an influence of exceptional significance on the work of the Party," for " the representatives of the Leninite tendency who remained in freedom were left masters of the situation."

The Party conference was eventually held at Prague on January 19th, 1912. It was attended by thirteen delegates, of whom three were in the pay of the Moscow Ohrana. These were Malinovski, Briandinski, and Romanoff. Lenin, of course, dominated the proceedings, and he insisted on the adoption of a resolution ostracising from the Party all Social-Democrats who confined themselves to purely " legal " methods of propaganda. It was decided to take part in the forthcoming elections for the

Imperial Duma, and the police-spy Malinovski was chosen as candidate for the Moscow Government. He was solemnly instructed to abstain from subterranean agitation till the elections were over, so as to deprive the police of all pretext for arresting him. A special committee was formed to arrange for the smuggling of illegal literature into Russia, and another of the police spies, Briandinski, was appointed head of this body. The task of receiving the imported pamphlets and fly-sheets in Moscow and diffusing them throughout the country was laid upon the third member of the Moscow Ohrana triumvirate, Romanoff.

While the conference was still sitting, two of the Social-Democrat members of the third Duma arrived at Prague to discuss future tactics with the delegates. One of this pair was also in the pay of the police. Three of the conference delegates were charged to negotiate with them, Lenin and Malinovski being among the number. Thus, out of the five participants in these subsidiary discussions two were agents of the Ohrana, which had a representative on both sides. Needless to say, the police were very fully informed of everything that was said and done. In his reports to them, Malinovski even went into not immediately relevant, but, at the same time, rather illuminating details, such as that "the Austrian police, usually suspicious and disobliging to Russian travellers, adopted towards Lenin and the Social-Democrats who had come to meet him an attitude of exceptional indulgence and even benevolence." Had the Austrian Government already a prevision of the services which Lenin was before long to render it, or was it merely acting on the principle that the infection of Russia with Bolshevism was a good thing for that country's neighbours?

Malinovski had no occasion to follow the instructions of the Prague conference in order to avoid arrest. Evidently there never was a time during his political career when he had less to fear from the authorities than he had in the interval between the conference and the general elections for the Duma. The Moscow Ohrana, which had no fewer than fifteen agents in the local Social-Democratic organisations, decided that he must be elected, and watched over him with the solicitude of a guardian angel. Twice serious obstacles to his election cropped up. In both cases he himself was powerless. But the Ohrana, on the other hand, was omnipotent in Russia, and was bound by no

restrictions, legal or otherwise. It promptly intervened and swept the obstructions from his path. The first of these obstacles arose indirectly out of the strange complications of the old Russian electoral law. In order to qualify for election by the workmen's "curia," as it was called, of the Moscow Government, Malinovski had to be employed in one of the factories of the district for six consecutive months preceding the pollings. He was a metal worker, and had no difficulty in obtaining employment in a factory; but here he had the misfortune to excite the personal antipathy of his foreman, a man named Krivoff, who apparently made up his mind to have him dismissed. The Moscow Ohrana became seriously alarmed, and reported to its head, the Vice-director of the Police Department, Vissarionoff, that Krivoff must be arrested, "in order that Malinovski may not be deprived of his full rights, which are exceedingly important at the present moment, as without them we should have an undesirable fiasco at a time when it is urgently necessary to facilitate the attainment of his wishes." This appeal was laid before the Minister of the Interior, who issued instructions for the arrest of Krivoff.

Moreover, the Ministry regarded the election of Malinovski as so vital a matter that it sent Vissarionoff specially to Moscow, to deal promptly, on the spot, with any further difficulties that might arise. Immediately after his arrival, he demanded the dossier of Malinovski, and, on looking it through, was horrified to find that the Ohrana-Bolshevik candidate had four convictions for house-breaking standing against him. He duly reported this painful discovery to his chief, the Director of the Police Department, Bieletzki, and his letter was among the documents submitted to the Special Commission. It bore the endorsement, in Bieletzki's writing: "Reported to the Minister of the Interior. The matter of the election is to be left to take its natural course." When this decision was communicated to the head of the Ohrana at Moscow, he could not restrain his delight, and telegraphed to Petrograd: "Matter has been left to take its natural course. Success assured." A few days later, his confidence was justified, and he was able to telegraph: "Successfully fulfilled." Malinovski had been elected. But this result had been obtained only by two grossly illegal acts on the part of an organ of the Government. An innocent man had been arrested, and the

election of a candidate disqualified by a criminal past from sitting in the Duma had been not merely connived at, but actively promoted.

On his election to the Duma, Malinovski's secret employers raised his salary from fifty to five hundred roubles a month. In the interval which elapsed before the meeting of the Duma, he was commissioned by Lenin to seek out the other five Bolshevik deputies and persuade them to make a pilgrimage to Cracow for inspiration. By that time Lenin had moved from Paris to the Galician capital, so that he might the more easily control the tactics of his Party in the Chamber and contribute regularly to the *Pravda*, which had recently been started as the official organ of Bolshevism. To facilitate Malinovski's mission, the Ohrana supplied him with a forged passport made out in the name of "Gregory Eiwald." Only one incident of this tour need trouble us. The Governor of Vladimir, hearing on what errand Malinovski had arrived in the capital of that province, telegraphed to the Police Department, asking whether a foreign passport was to be issued to the local Bolshevist member. The reply received from Bieletzki was: "Passport must be granted." As things turned out, Malinovski was the only one of the six who made the pilgrimage to Cracow on that occasion, though his colleagues paid frequent visits to the high priest of Bolshevism at subsequent dates.

When Malinovski arrived in St. Petersburg for the parliamentary session, he was put into immediate touch with the head of the Ohrana, Vissarionoff, who found him "an interesting and enlightened coadjutor, devoted both to his work and to the institution which employs him." Together they discussed the instructions which Malinovski at various dates received from Lenin, and no objection to the carrying out of these seems to have been raised by the police. They also talked over the speeches which Malinovski was to deliver in the Duma, and of which he submitted the texts for correction. In some cases these speeches were in Malinovski's own wording, but in many they were the work of Lenin, Zinovieff, or other prominent revolutionary refugees. Among the papers laid before the Special Commission was a copy of a declaration made in the Duma by the Social-Democrats on December 20th, 1912, which was communicated to the police by Malinovski more than a

week before that date. The copy showed an emendation in Vissarionoff's writing; and though Malinovski did not read to the Duma what the head of the Ohrana wished him to say, he at any rate withheld the passage which had been struck out. An endorsement on the copy in the writing of the Minister of the Interior, Makaroff, showed that it had also been read by him. Yet though the declaration had thus been "passed" by the Ministry of the Interior, the newspapers *Pravda* and *Loutch* (*The Ray*) were prosecuted for printing it.

This was not the only time that Malinovski got the *Pravda* into trouble. He was a frequent contributor to this paper, and one of his articles cost the editor a fine of five hundred roubles. There was, however, an item to set off against this, for a note of expenses in Vissarionoff's writing contained the following: "November 17th, 1912, three hundred roubles paid to X to cover outlay on a soirée for the benefit of the *Pravda*." At that time Malinovski was treasurer of the funds of the paper, and he discussed his accounts, like everything else which concerned the Party, with Vissarionoff. The latter kept a diary of Malinovski's communications, and this provided the Special Commission with much illuminating information.

Malinovski's Duma speeches (censored by Vissarionoff, it must be remembered) were subversive in substance and furious in form. He demanded the abolition of "capitalism," the replacement of the autocracy by a republic, and the confiscation of the estates of the gentry. When he was speaking, the deputy presidents fled from the chair and left to the broad shoulders of Rodzianko a responsibility which was too heavy for them to bear. The Minister President more than once hinted that the Duma would be dissolved if the orators of the left were not checked in the expression of their views. One of the most fiery of Malinovski's speeches was a denunciation of others for having done what he was at that very moment doing himself—serving the two masters whose services were the most incompatible of all in Russia.

At the opening of the Duma, the Social-Democrats were still nominally one Party, though but little cohesion existed between their two wings; and Malinovski, as the leading Bolshevik, naturally became their Vice-president. However, carrying out the instructions received from Lenin, and approved by Vissarionoff,

he set himself to bring about the final breach which would give the extremists the liberty of action desired by their intellectual chief. In this he was cordially supported by the Ohrana, which circularised its branches with instructions to do all in their power to exacerbate the differences between the two sections of the Party. At the end of December, 1912, Vissarionoff noted in his diary as the substance of a communication from Malinovski: "The position of the Party is such that the six Bolsheviki might be instigated to split the whole Party by their action into Bolsheviki and Mensheviki." It was not, however, till the autumn of the following year that this aim was attained, and that the Bolsheviki broke away from the other Social-Democrats and formed a quite distinct parliamentary unit, with Malinovski as its President. This was the will of Lenin, and also that of the political police, who issued orders that a coalescence of the parted factions must be prevented if possible.

In addition to his parliamentary and journalistic work, Malinovski continued to act as the link between the Ohrana and Lenin. His visits to Cracow were much more frequent than those of any other of the Bolshevist leaders actually resident in Russia, and at the beginning of 1914 he made a "European tour" with Lenin for the purposes of propaganda. Their mission took them to Switzerland, Brussels, and Paris; and at the last-mentioned place Vladimir Bourtzeff was present at a gathering of four hundred Russians, to whom Malinovski boasted of the rupture he had brought about in the Duma Party, and recommended the adoption of similar tactics by the Bolshevists living abroad. The spy also talked to a smaller private circle of the initiated on the question of tactics, and it is evident that his authority at that time was beginning seriously to rival that of Lenin himself.

Malinovski's final exit from the parliamentary scene was very dramatic, and formed a fitting climax to his strange career. On May 5th, 1914, the left of the Duma attempted to howl down the Minister President Goremykin, and twenty-one deputies were suspended for fifteen sittings. They included Malinovski, who, in the course of their consultations as to their next steps, urged that it was "impossible to fight this battle with parliamentary weapons," and that "more revolutionary action in the way of street demonstrations of workmen" should be adopted.

However, he failed to carry the majority of the suspended with him, and it was eventually decided to be satisfied with a sharply-worded protest. A couple of members, one of whom was Kerenski, attempted to read this protest from the tribune of the Duma, but were pulled up by the President. Then Malinovski took over the task, and he continued to read in spite of all the prohibitions of the chair. In the end, an attendant was sent to tell him that if he persisted in ignoring the rulings of the President, it would be necessary to remove him by force, and he then at last returned to his seat. That was his final appearance in the Duma. On the following day, he bluntly told his Party colleagues that he had resigned his mandate. He gave no reasons for this action, and almost immediately disappeared from view altogether.

His resignation, in the absence of other and more satisfactory explanation, was naturally brought into connection with the stormy scenes with which his parliamentary course had closed. As a matter of fact, they had nothing whatever to do with it. By a curious coincidence, on the very day on which he came into such violent conflict with the chair of the Duma, the President of that assembly was let into the secret of his real status as a publicist and a legislator. The disclosure was made by the new director of the Ohrana, Gen. Dzhounkovski, who prior to his appointment had learnt the truth about Malinovski, and had firmly determined to "put a stop to this abomination" as soon as he was in a position to do so, but in such a way as "to avoid a scandal either for the Duma or for the Ministers." The method he actually adopted was to make a bargain with Malinovski, who, for the payment in advance of a year's salary of 6,000 roubles, undertook to retire from the Duma and to go abroad. On leaving Russia, Malinovski went to Cracow, where he seems to have had no difficulty in satisfying Lenin as to the causes of his sudden withdrawal from the Duma. Though the secret was still well kept, ugly rumours got about, and Lenin used all his authority to discredit them. Ultimately, however, the charges against Malinovski took so definite a shape that it was thought advisable to submit them to a Party "court of honour." This tribunal consisted of Lenin, Zinovieff (Apfelbaum), and Ganetzki (Fürstenberg). Its finding was that there were "absolutely no grounds for doubting the political honesty of Malinovski."

All that the Special Commission could discover as to Malinovski's subsequent movements was that, after the outbreak of the War, he turned up in one of the prisoners' camps in Germany, where he started a Bolshevist propaganda among his fellow-captives. His particular theme was the Erfurt programme, the charter of the German Socialists. Several of the Russian prisoners who had listened to his lectures wrote of his propaganda work in terms of great enthusiasm. Lenin received a number of letters written by him from the camp, and seems to have gone on trusting him till the Revolution finally laid bare his true character. After the report of the Special Commission was published, Malinovski wrote to the Russian Minister of Justice, demanding that steps should be taken to obtain his release, so that he might have a chance of facing his accusers. He declared proudly: "A sentence pronounced in my absence I cannot admit to be just, whatever it may be." At the same time he expressed his confidence that the Germans would not raise special obstacles to his release. In this he was probably right.

CHAPTER XV

BOLSHEVISM AND THE WAR

THE outbreak of the War found Lenin and Zinovieff (Apfelbaum) in a little village in the environs of Cracow, whence they had been directing the action of the Social-Democratic Party in Russia. Like other Russian subjects living in Austro-Hungary, they were arrested. It is said that the police found special grounds for suspicion against them in some statistical diagrams on the agrarian question, which were in their possession and which at first were believed to be plans of fortifications. The circumstances of their release have never been satisfactorily explained. G. A. Alexinski, a well-known Russian politician and a member of one of the earlier Dumas, has stated that, at a meeting in Paris with Ganetzki (Fürstenberg), the latter said to him: "As soon as I heard of the arrest, I dashed off to Cracow, and I succeeded in obtaining both for Lenin and Zinovieff the right of free passage to Switzerland." When Ganetzki was asked in what capacity he was allowed to meddle with Austrian official proceedings. he was silent, and his boast did a good deal to strengthen the suspicion, which subsequently arose, that he was one of the principal intermediaries between Lenin and the German Government. The Austrian Socialist leaders Victor and Friedrich Adler are also said to have had a hand in the liberation of the two Bolsheviks. However the finally decisive factor seems to have been the direct intervention of the Minister President Stürgkh, who considered that Lenin's activity on the other side of the frontier would be in the highest degree advantageous for the Central Empires, as its ultimate result would be confusion in the political life of Russia.

Subsequent events justified the Austrian Minister's view, for no sooner had Lenin entered Switzerland than he started a violent defeatist propaganda. In his Geneva organ, the *Social-*

Democrat, he preached that, though it might be a matter of indifference to the international proletariat as a whole, which side won the War, "we Russians are for the defeat of Russia, since that would facilitate her internal enfranchisement, her liberation from the fetters of Tsarism." This view was, apparently, at that time, confined to a very small minority of the Russian exiles, who had escaped the infection of the patriotic enthusiasm prevalent in their own country at the beginning of the War. Even Trotski wrote in October, 1914: "Decisive defeats of Russia might accelerate the Revolution, but must weaken it to the depths of its being; and in Germany the transformation which began with the capitulation of the proletarian party to militarist nationalism would be hastened, the working class there would fatten on the crumbs which fell from the table of triumphant imperialism, and social revolution would be struck to the heart. That in such circumstances even an apparently successful Russian revolution could only be an abortion, needs no demonstration." For that reason, Trotski indignantly rejected "the emancipating aid which German Imperialism is sending us in Krupp's shell-cases, with the blessing of its Social-Democracy."

Lenin seems also to have been an occasional contributor to the German paper *Die Glocke* (*The Bell*), which was revived by the migratory Parvus (Helphand) for the exposition of a curious mixture of Socialism and Imperialism. It was strange company for the Bolshevik leader to be in, for on one of Hindenburg's birthdays, this paper printed an article eulogising the Field-Marshal as an "embodiment of the German genius," and declaring that, as his work was facilitating the conclusion of peace, his name should be "sacred to socialists."

Of more far-reaching import than Lenin's Press work, was his share in the efforts to resuscitate the Internationale and make it an effective instrument for the restoration of peace. He had for some time been a member of the old Internationale, and had thus been brought into close touch with the leaders in all countries of those socialists who rejected the principle of nationality, and saw in patriotism nothing more than a combination of superstition, delusion, prejudice, and imposture. These cosmopolitan connections he made use of to call the Zimmerwald and Kiental conferences, which seem both to have been dominated by the

Russian Social-Democrat refugees. The ideas which it was proposed to bring into operation by these conferences were set forth in a manifesto published by the Bolshevik refugees in Switzerland at the beginning of 1915. In this document it was declared that the " opportunists " of socialism had paved the way for the fiasco of the Internationale by rejecting socialism in favour of " bourgeois reformism "; that they had repudiated the idea of transforming the " class struggle " at a favourable opportunity into civil war; that they had been false to the principle enunciated in the Communist Manifesto, that " the socialist has no Fatherland "; and that they had satisfied themselves with the sentimental views of the *petite bourgeoisie* as to the possibility of destroying militarism, instead of recognising the necessity of a revolutionary struggle of the proletariat of all countries against the bourgeoisie of all countries. It was, therefore, proposed, that " revolutionary " Social-Democrats should prepare for the moment of crisis " illegal " forms of action, in order to unite the working classes of all countries, not with their own bourgeoisie, but with the working classes of all other countries. In this way, the " imperialistic " War could, it was urged, everywhere be changed into civil war.

This was the basis on which the International Socialist Conference was convened at Zimmerwald, in Switzerland, on September 5, 1915. Lenin was vigorously supported at the meeting by the Polish Jew, Sobelsohn (Radek), who had been expelled from the Polish Socialist Party for equivocal conduct, but who afterwards became one of the leading lights of Bolshevism at Moscow. The discussions lasted four days, but produced no tangible result, as the representatives of the socialistic majorities in all the belligerent countries refused to abandon their nationalistic standpoints. Hardly more successful was the conference held at Kiental, in the Bernese Oberland, from April 24 to April 26, 1916. In fact, the chief characteristic of this gathering seems to have been shrill discord, for which the violence of Lenin and Radek was largely responsible. Thus Lenin failed to persuade the Socialists of all the belligerent countries to do what he himself eventually did in Russia alone. He was not, however, at that time quite singular in his aims. There were Germans at Zimmerwald and Kiental who thought just as he; and very likely they misled him as to their influence and the prevalence of

their ideas in their country. It may be mentioned in passing, that the Mensheviks Martoff and Axelrod also had some share in bringing about the Zimmerwald and Kiental conferences.

When the Revolution broke out in Russia, Lenin felt that the chance of his life had come, and he fretted to get back to Petrograd. He applied for leave to travel through France and England, but the Allied Governments regarded him with only too well-founded suspicion, and placed obstacles in his way. As things turned out, this was unfortunate, though Lenin was probably not a man to be biassed by personal chagrins, as Trotski appears to have been by his detention at Halifax while on his way back to Russia from the United States. Lenin was in a hurry, for he had started with a heavy handicap, and it was essential for his purposes that he should be in Russia before the process of reconstruction could begin in earnest. He appealed to the Swiss Socialist Robert Grimm, the Editor of the *Berner Tagwacht*, who had presided over the Kiental Conference, and together they concocted the plan of travelling back through Germany. Some say the idea originated with the one, some with the other, but the point is negligible. For Lenin there were no conscientious objections to it: there were only tactical objections. To him, international frontiers, whether in peace or war, were artificial and conventional barriers, with no realities to correspond to them in the nature of things. In his eyes, there were no nations, but only two classes, into which all mankind was divided; the "bourgeoisie" in all countries formed the one class, and the proletariat of all countries the other. These two classes, so he argued, were natural and eternal enemies to one another, and the War was merely a predatory feud, in which the bourgeoisie of one group of countries was making use of its "enslaved proletarians" to raid the ill-gotten possessions of the bourgeoisie of another group. In Russia a state of things had arisen, in which it might be possible for the proletariat to throw off its yoke; and if that could be done in one country, the example would soon be followed in others, perhaps in all others. If the German Government, in the mistaken idea that it was promoting its own ends, was foolish enough to help him to carry out his plan, why should he refuse its assistance? The "Imperialists" in Berlin would soon learn that they had been mistaken, and had, in reality, forged a weapon for use against

themselves. On the other hand, Lenin doubtless recognised, that if he travelled through Germany, he would excite against himself a prejudice which would seriously hamper his agitation in Russia. But, after weighing the pros and cons., he decided that a prompt arrival in Russia would more than counter-balance the drawbacks which would result from "traffic with the enemy." Unhappily, the sequel proved that he was right.

Naturally, the Berlin Government welcomed the proposal that the most potent agent of dissolution should be let loose on the already deliquescent mass of Russian society, and on April 9, 1917, Lenin, Zinovieff, and thirty other political refugees crossed the Swiss frontier on to German territory in "sealed" railway carriages. The party was not exclusively composed of Bolsheviks, as it had been stipulated by the Russians that political refugees of all shades should be allowed to take advantage of the opportunity. It was accompanied by the Swiss pacifist Fritz Platten, who had acted as intermediary between the refugees and the German authorities; and it was under the surveillance of three German officers. The travellers seem to have pledged themselves to do their utmost to secure the release of the civilian German and Austrian prisoners of war in Russia. Any other obligations which they may have entered into have been kept secret. They were not allowed to leave the train during the three days of their passage across German soil.

When Lenin reached Petrograd, he found the conditions anything but favourable for his agitation. The archives of the Ohrana had been opened, and prominent Bolsheviks had been exposed as police spies in nearly every big town in Russia. Among these "Provokatory," as has been seen, were the leader of the Bolshevik Party in the Duma, and a prominent member of the editorial staff of the Bolshevik paper, *Pravda*. To a plain mind, it might well have seemed that the whole Bolshevik Party was so tainted with treachery that no confidence could be placed in it. The circumstances of Lenin's journey also produced a very unfavourable impression when they became known. At the beginning of the Revolution, at any rate, the popular feeling was still bitterly anti-German, and for many months the "sealed carriages" haunted the Russian newspapers. Moreover, Lenin had to suffer under a further handicap. When the Revolution came, nearly all his ablest lieutenants were either in Siberia

or abroad; and before they could be assembled in Petrograd from all the ends of the earth, the Social-Revolutionaries and Mensheviks had had time to consolidate their power over the masses. As a set-off to this was the icy fanaticism, the inexhaustible energy, and the indomitable will of the Bolshevik leader, who in force of character towers above all the other men brought to the surface by the Revolution.

In an atmosphere which was certainly rather hostile than friendly, Lenin set vigorously to work. The handsome villa of the ballerina Kshesinskaya, on the fashionable Kameno-ostrovski Prospect, opposite the Peter and Paul Fortress, and within view of the windows of the British Embassy, had been abandoned by its owner in the first days of the revolutionary tumult, and was now "requisitioned" as the Bolshevik headquarters. From a kiosk in the garden, inflammatory harangues were delivered daily to open-mouthed crowds of workmen and soldiers in the street on the other side of the palings. Money Lenin had in abundance, and the smartest motor-cars in Petrograd carried his army of orators into the remote working-class districts on the rim of the city. Where the funds came from, it is as easy to guess as it is difficult to prove. "From a rich lady in Zurich, who is interested in the cause," said the Bolsheviks themselves; but there were many others "interested in the cause," from ulterior motives, who were both able and willing to lend it substantial financial aid—on one side all those who had to gain from a restoration of the Old Regime, on the other, the Germans, so far the chief beneficiaries from Lenin's labours. The aims of the Russian reactionaries and the German Imperialists were, up to a point, identical with those of Lenin. Like him, they desired the failure of the Revolution in its existing form, and, as a feature of that failure, the destruction of the Russian Army. It was only when the first Revolution had collapsed, that their roads parted; and from that point, the wishes of no two of the three were coincident.

The Bolsheviks have always been cynically frank as to their readiness to accept assistance from any source whatsoever. When they were taxed with taking money from the Germans, they replied that they would take it willingly from anyone who chose to give it, and whatever his motive in giving it might be. To them there was only one standard and one sanction—the cause,

Whatever helped the cause was good, whatever hindered it was bad. Bolshevism was not only their political platform, but also their religious creed and the basis of their moral code. It is this which has made it so difficult for people with other religious creeds and moral codes to understand their actions.

In the direct appeal to the masses, Lenin himself had a comparatively small share. He has always been the veiled oracle rather than the popular demagogue of the movement. His strength is not the fiery oratory which moves mobs, but the conviction, will and knowledge that control counsels. In this he is the very antithesis of Kerenski, who needs the inspiration of the crowd in order to inspire it in his turn. Critical auditors often found it hard to explain the enthusiasm which Lenin's speeches aroused in uneducated audiences. Neither his physical nor his mental equipment is of a sort to appeal to the crowd. He is a little man of commonplace figure, with no other outward mark of distinction than the high bald dome of his forehead. His slovenliness is merely that of indifference, and has none of the calculated picturesqueness which excites curiosity and rivets attention. His gesture as he speaks is casual and spasmodic. His speech is swift and fluent, simple in its form and free from ornament, but crowded with facts. He frequently introduces political and economic conceptions which can hardly be intelligible to untrained minds. What he says is, in fact, better suited to the lecture-room than to the party platform—his opponents have often said of him that his whole being is academic rather than political, and that both his mistakes and his atrocities would have been fewer, if he had spent more of his time with men and less with books. That, in spite of the aridity and abstraction of his thought, he should have his almost unexampled sway over the multitude, is probably due to his authority as undisputed head of the movement. To the masses, he is what the Tsar once was—the source of all power and authority, the man from whom the Trotskis, Zinovieffs, and Lunacharskis hold their commissions, and of whose ideas and orders they are but the executive agents. The monarchical principle has been rejected by the minds of the Russian proletariat, but it still lingers in their souls. In their eyes, every big movement must be incorporated in a single man, and to them Lenin is the embodiment of Bolshevism.

In identifying Lenin with Bolshevism, the masses are undoubtedly right. As one of the "bourgeois" Petrograd papers put it, he has better grounds to boast "I am Bolshevism" than had Louis XIV. to declare "*L'état c'est moi.*" Fourteen years ago, Rosa Luxemburg, the German Spartacus leader, flung at him the reproach that he really despised the rights and power of the labouring classes, and that what he aimed at was to rule alone. She was justified by subsequent developments, for Lenin had been the autocrat of Bolshevism long before he became "Nicholas III," and ruled all that was left of Russia with a much more absolute sway than Nicholas II had ever actually exercised. Her taunt was published shortly after the split at the 1903 Conference, in the *Iskra*, which had then become the organ of the Mensheviki. To them, Lenin was already "the iron fist," and ever since his chief characteristics have always been defined by the same metallic term. Both friends and foes speak of his "iron will" and his "iron nerve"; and it is these qualities, coupled with the rather mechanical smoothness and precision of his mental processes, which have made him the unchallenged chief over the associates of his work. At the same time, with all his ruthlessness and determination in what he regarded as essentials, he retained in intimate relationships a great deal of the amenity and "sweet reasonableness" for which the Russians are famous. P. Orlovski, a Bolshevik writer, says of him: "No one is so ready as he to follow the advice of others, if the advice is good; no one so amiably suffers his manuscripts to be revised and modified; no one so gladly submits to the opinion of the majority. True, only when he is not convinced that in that way the interests of the Party and of the labouring class would come to harm. Then he is firm in his demands, even if they may mean a breach with his best friends." An English merchant who, in order to extricate his family from a critical situation, had to seek Lenin's personal aid, was astonished to find the "blood-thirsty tyrant" a mild-mannered man, courteous and sympathetic in bearing, and almost eager to afford all the assistance in his power. Many Entente officials, both military and civilian, who have been brought into personal contact with Lenin have been greatly impressed by the force of his personality and his intellectual powers.

The principles of the agitation by which Lenin destroyed

Russia's military power, and thus probably postponed the day of reckoning with Germany for a full year, were peculiar neither to himself nor to Bolshevism. They had long formed an intrinsic part of Marxian doctrine. Experience, so it was taught, had shown that the fruits of revolutions were reaped at once or not at all. It had also shown that political revolutions merely transferred authority from one section of the bourgeoisie to another, and left the position of the proletariat substantially unchanged. Therefore, if the Russian Revolution was to be of real benefit to the labouring classes, it must upset the social and economic as well as the political structure of the country. That, however, could be effected only by a "dictatorship of the proletariat." But before that dictatorship could be firmly established, all organs of the old order which contained in themselves forces of resistance and possibilities of reaction must be abolished. The chief of these organs was the Army, which had been recruited on a monarchical basis, sworn in to a monarch, and imbued with monarchical traditions. As long as the old Army existed, it might at any time become a reactionary instrument in the hands of a popular royalist general. Therefore the Army must be destroyed. If peace could be secured before the destruction of the Army was complete, so much the better. If not, the process of world regeneration would only be postponed—for Lenin was convinced, as Marx and Engels had been in 1848, that Europe was ripe for universal revolution, and that if one country would but set the example, the others would hasten to follow it. He did not ignore the risks to Russia involved in this experiment, but what did Russia matter? His province was the world. He thought in continents, not in parishes. After the very first speech which he made in the Petrograd Soviet, he was asked whether the trial of his ideas might not be dangerous for a backward agricultural country like Russia, and he replied: "Let it be so. Let her perish; but we will kindle social revolution throughout the world, and, if necessary, hand on its banner to other nations."

The Bolshevik propaganda in the Russian Army was greatly aided by the ambiguity of the Allies as to their war aims. If they had been in a position to state clearly and categorically that they were fighting solely for the rights of the smaller nationalities, and were determined not to retain for themselves one square

inch of enemy soil, it is possible that the Russian Army would have continued to fight, and that the War would have been finished a year sooner and in a much more satisfactory manner than was actually the case. The Russians are a generous-hearted people, and respond very warmly to disinterested ideals. The proposal to fight for the restoration of Poland, the independence of the Czecho-Slovaks, and the union of the Southern Slavs, would have made a strong appeal to them. Till they went to pieces, they were quite sound on the questions of Belgium, Serbia, Montenegro, Roumania and even Alsace-Lorraine.

The Allies were not, however, in a position to give the assurances mentioned, and by their silence they remained burdened with all the evil inheritance of their connection with the former Russian Government. The proposition that the Tsardom was fighting for the freedom of anyone or anything, was a contradiction in terms. The Tsarist "liberation of Poland" merely meant the reunion of all that country under the sceptre of the Romanoffs. To the Russians, Slav ideals in the Balkans really did mean something, but to their Government these ideals were merely a political weapon. At the time of the Revolution, Russia had dropped virtuous pretences everywhere except in official documents, and was frankly fighting for Constantinople. Even so liberal and enlightened a politician as Milyoukoff admitted that for him this was the only "war aim" that really mattered. The Russians knew these facts about their own country, and not unnaturally inferred that the professions of the Allies were as hollow as those of their own dethroned Government had been. They themselves disclaimed all desire for "annexations," and they expected a like disclaimer from their partners.

The Bolshevik argument to the Russian soldiers took the following form: "Why should you go on fighting? You have renounced all annexations, and the enemy is willing to make peace with you to-morrow on the condition of the *status quo*, which is all you ask. And yet you are told that you must further risk life and limb. Why? We will tell you. It is because the English want the German Colonies, Mesopotamia, and Palestine. You must shed your blood and give your lives in order that the English Imperialists and capitalists may increase their already excessive colonial empire. And the reason why you must do this is that Russia is bound by secret treaties to continue the War till those aims have been attained."

This argument was all the more seductive because it contained elements of truth. It is almost certain that, at the beginning of the Revolution, Germany would have been very glad to make peace with Russia on the basis of the *status quo*, in order to have her hands free in the West. We have learnt from Count Czernin that, in April, 1917, Austria was already anxious to throw up the sponge, and was only prevented from doing so by German threats. It was also true that there were secret treaties of a rather compromising character between the Allies though they did not include the stipulations attributed to them by Lenin, who actually asserted that Great Britain, France and Russia had contracted to divide up China among themselves. Of course, it was also true that the War had originally been Russia's special affair; that the Revolution had begun and was being continued behind the shield of her Allies; that if Germany had not been held by the throat in the West, Russia would have had either to stop talking and fight, or to submit to conditions beside which the Brest Litovsk treaties would have been positive benevolence; that, in short, all the bombastic rhetoric about "revolutionary achievements" and the "rights and power of free men," whether it came from Kerenski or from Lenin, was only possible because Great Britain and France were fighting, though Russia, to succour whom they had entered the conflict, was not. The airy dialectics of Trotski at Brest Litovsk were, indeed, only the conduct of the street urchin who has been murderously attacked, and, seeing a policeman engaged in a death-grapple with his assailant, hurls abuse at both of them indifferently. All this was true, but as it apparently did not strike the men who were at the head of revolutionary Russia, it could hardly be expected to occur to the ignorant soldier, artisan and peasant.

While the Army was learning that it was being called upon to sacrifice itself for the "imperialistic" purposes of Great Britain and France, the masses as a whole were being plied with another seduction just as persuasive. The other parties emulated one another in the prodigality of their promises, but at the same time they counselled patience till peace could be concluded, and the Constituent Assembly convened. The peasants were assured that their traditional claim to the land should be duly satisfied, in one way or another, if they would but wait a little longer; and all sorts of dazzling prospects in an indefinite future were opened

up to the artisan. But the Bolsheviks not only promised much more than anyone else—they promised it immediately. "If you will but trust us," they said, "you shall have peace at once and food at once; while as for the land and the means of production in the factories, you must seize them for yourselves without a moment's hesitation, for if you don't, you will probably never get them at all."

Unhappily, this seductive agitation was never understood by the Allies, and consequently was not met in the right way. Quite naturally, the man in the street could only interpret Bolshevism as a particularly insidious form of German machination. Lenin had travelled through Germany on his way back to Russia. He had almost certainly received money, directly or indirectly, from Germany. The Germans had given him every possible assistance, and they alone had received any material benefit from his activities. Indeed, Lenin accomplished a work which had been too much for all the Hindenburgs, Ludendorffs, and Mackensens, for he destroyed the Russian Army. What other explanation of such a man could there be than that he was a hireling of William II? But those whose business it is to instruct and guide the public should have known better. Seventy years had passed since the publication of the Communist Manifesto by Marx and Engels, and the whole Bolshevik policy was summed up in the culminating passage of that document: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains: they have a world to win. Proletarians of all lands, unite!" The Internationale was not a secret society, and its theories and objects were accessible to all. The purpose of the Zimmerwald and Kiental conferences was perfectly well known. Lenin had for years before the War preached in the Press the doctrines which he promulgated on his return to Russia, and he has done nothing grossly inconsistent with his previous thirty years' political work.

If you wish to beat an opponent, whether in sport, politics, or war, the first thing is to understand his game. Instead of doing this in their struggle against Lenin, the Allies jumped to hasty conclusions. Any stick was good enough to beat him with, except the only one which could really hurt him. It was said that he was a Jew, and that his name was Zederbaum. Actually, he is almost the only prominent Bolshevik leader who is not

racially a Jew, and Zederbaum is the real family name of his most immediate opponent, the Menshevik leader, Martoff. It was even sought to discredit the Bolshevik leader by the wild assertion that the real Lenin was no more, and that the man who passed under his name was an impostor, who had got hold of his identification papers. But the ultimate general line of attack against him was that he was a "German agent," that is to say, a hired instrument, whose activity deliberately aimed at the advantage of the Imperialists of the Central Empires.

Everything is possible to human nature, and Lenin may be a second Faust who has sold himself to the devil for the selfish pleasures of life. Men do sometimes undergo a process of complete conversion or perversion. But when such a change is very sudden and very complete, we rightly demand convincing evidence that it has actually taken place. Lenin is unquestionably a man of no average ability, who could have made a comfortable position for himself in any human society. Nevertheless, he devoted the earlier years of his adult career to a vocation which, at that time, involved greater risks and smaller chances of personal advantage than almost any other—the vocation of a Russian revolutionary. What it actually brought him was what it brought most of those who adopted it with energy and fervour—gaol, Siberia and exile. The ponderous works which he has published could have been produced only after laborious pouring over what most people regard as one of the most arid of all subjects. Like the original prophet whose mantle he aspired to wear, Karl Marx, he was never happier than when exploring the treasures of the British Museum. This institution, one of his friends has told us, he regarded with enthusiastic admiration. "His eyes always shone," when he spoke of it, and "it was his fondest dream to live near it." It was here that he found his "favourite recreation." Clearly, evidence of a very convincing nature is required to prove that a man with such a record and such pursuits has sold himself to a cause like that of which William II was the representative figure.

Evidence was demanded, and naturally it was forthcoming. Some of it was produced at the time of the unsuccessful Leninite *coup-de-main*, in July, 1917, and it contributed to the failure of that first Bolshevik clutch at power. It was not particularly plausible and has since been generally repudiated as forged. But

the great effort to prove Lenin's complicity with the Governments of the Central Empires was the series of documents collected by the American Committee on Public Information, and published by that body as a pamphlet with the title "The German-Bolshevik Conspiracy." This pamphlet will always remain a monument of that paralysis of the critical faculties which seems inseparable from a state of war. In the introduction, the documents are said to show "that the present Bolshevik Government is not a Russian Government at all, but a German Government, acting solely in the interests of Germany and betraying the Russian people, as it betrays Russia's natural Allies, for the benefit of the Imperial Government alone." Unfortunately, they show nothing of the kind. Indeed, the only thing they show quite plainly is the incapacity of those who collected them for the mission with which they were entrusted. The detailed examination of these documents is impossible here, but one illustration will suffice to characterise them. The pamphlet includes some fifteen or sixteen facsimiles by way of corroboration. One of these facsimiles purports to be a circular sent out on November 28, 1914, by the "General Staff" of the German High Sea Fleet. Now, such a body as a "General Staff" does not exist in the German Navy. What corresponds in the Navy to the General Staff of the Army is the "Admiral Staff." The circular itself consists of eighteen lines. In these eighteen lines are two mistakes in grammar, seven mistakes in spelling and seven mistakes in phrasing. An expert on the German language has given the following opinion: "This circular was most certainly not written by a German. It would appear to be a very poor attempt to copy German official language." That, it is true, is only one of the documents; but its inclusion in the pamphlet undoubtedly shows a failure so gross to apply the most rudimentary tests, that in itself it throws grave doubts on the authenticity of the whole collection.

It has been left to Russian anti-Bolsheviks to speak manly common sense on this pamphlet. The new school of refugees from Russia in London—those who have fled from Bolshevik tyranny—have banded themselves together in an association which issues a little paper called *The Russian Commonwealth*. In the opinion of this paper, "the documents in question say nothing, because they produce an uneasy impression of forgery."

The most important of them " appear too 'proving,' too 'conclusive' to be authentic. They leave a comic impression that the German General Staff was very anxious to divulge, in every trivial order, the most important State secrets. On the other hand, all these people, Lenin, Trotski, Chicherin, and others, are too anxious to supply us in every document with an ineffaceable trace of their treachery in the form of annotations, signatures, and so on. . . . . By such evidence, open to sound criticism, we only help these men to pose as the victims of calumny. We give them the opportunity to say: 'Our enemies must have resort to forgery in order to denounce us.' Let us hate, despise and fight the Bolsheviks without mercy, but let us keep our hands clean Our reckoning with them is a blood feud—not a mud feud."

The fact is that, if we start from the standards of right and wrong universally acknowledged by all white men who are not Bolsheviks, complicity in the designs of William II and Ludendorff is about the only form of wickedness with which Lenin and his chief assistants cannot fairly be charged. It would not be difficult to convict them, under common human laws, of every kind of murder, atrocity, robbery, fraud and forgery. In duplicity and mendacity they have probably surpassed all political parties in history. At the same time, it is a mistake to attribute to all of them the ordinary motives of crime. Lenin himself is reported to have said, that for every genuine, convinced Bolshevik, there are thirty-nine scoundrels and sixty fools. That is probably a very fair estimate. Bolshevism has drawn to itself every kind of folly and rascality, because its doctrines are alluring to empty minds and its tactics are profitable to rogues. But the real danger of the thing lies in "the one just man." To him, Bolshevism is a religion, for which he is prepared to die himself and to make others die—in thousands, in hundreds of thousands, if need be. It is his sincere and self-sacrificing fanaticism which gives Bolshevism its firmest grip on the masses and holds them in the belief that all the blood and tears, that so far have been its most noticeable results, will some day be redeemed by the Millennium. No man is so dangerous as the fanatic of a false idea, and the only way to disarm him is to treat him as what he is. The Allies hastily jumped to the conclusion that the fanatic Lenin was what he was not—" a German agent "—and by doing so they lost their opportunity of meeting his agitation with the only weapon to which it was vulnerable.

CHAPTER XVI

THE KORNILOFF AFFAIR

KERENSKI'S conflict with Korniloff was the final turning-point of the Russian Revolution. After that episode the triumph of Bolshevism and the dissolution of Russia into primeval chaos were inevitable. The Brest treaties, with all they meant for the Allies, followed as a matter of course, and, for that reason, possibly no other single event had so decisive an influence on the course of the War as the Kerenski-Korniloff imbroglio. It is, therefore, of considerable importance that we should understand the true meaning of this incident, and thus be able justly to apportion the responsibility for the disastrous consequences that ensued from it. The following attempt to collate in an ordered narrative such of its details as have become known is based mainly on the written statements of Korniloff himself, of Boris Savinkoff, who was Acting Minister for War at that time, of the Government Commissary Maximilian Filonenko, and of General Alexeieff, to whom was entrusted the task of finding a peaceable and bloodless solution of the conflict.

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The appointment of Lavr Georgievitch Korniloff to the command of the Petrograd Military District at the outbreak of the Revolution was one of the shrewdest measures of the first Provisional Government. If any man could have cured the Petrograd garrison of its delirium of enfranchisement, he would have done it, for he was pre-eminently the popular hero of the Russian Army. But, as he states in his apologia, he had no sooner taken over the duties than he felt his task to be an impossible one, "in view of the interference of the Petrograd Soviet, which continually tried to take a part in the command of the troops, with the object of securing in them an instrument for the attainment of its own political aims." Not wishing to be "a helpless witness of and participator in the destruction of the

Army," he resigned in the middle of May and was given the command of the 8th Army.

A month after his new appointment, took place his first meeting with Filonenko, who had just been appointed Government Commissary with the 8th Army. Filonenko has put it on record that their meeting at Czernowitz on June 21st, "had a very reserved character." That is not surprising. The function of the Commissaries was to exercise over the military commanders a control which was quite foreign to all the traditions of the Russian Army. It soon appeared, however, that there was much common ground between Korniloff and Filonenko, and before their first interview had come to an end they had already found a basis for close friendship. It was Filonenko who recommended Korniloff to Boris Savinkoff, then Commissary of the South-Western front, as the best man to command that group of armies, and Savinkoff, fully sharing his colleague's enthusiasm, urged Korniloff's merits upon Kerenski. In all probability it was in consequence of their joint advocacy that Korniloff was eventually appointed to the Chief Command.

The amicable relationship of Korniloff to Filonenko and their joint efforts to revive the fighting spirit of the troops were reflected in the short-lived Galician offensive which the Russians launched on July 1st, 1917. The 8th Army did brilliantly, and was compelled to retire only because its right flank was exposed by Bolshevism, treachery, and consequent gross insubordination in the adjoining 7th and 11th Armies. After the collapse, Savinkoff and Filonenko went together to Kamenetz-Podolsk, to see Korniloff, now Commander of the South-Western front. The meeting of the three was a curious and dramatic one. The failure of the offensive and the horrors which had accompanied the *débâcle* of the 7th and 11th Armies had left the air highly charged with depression and suspicion. Wild rumours were in circulation, and no one knew whom he could trust. At the Staff, Savinkoff and Filonenko heard from Zavoiko, Korniloff's secretary, of a report that the Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievitch was to be proclaimed dictator, and were asked by him how far they would go with the General in resisting such a plan. They replied that it was surely unnecessary to put such a question to old and tried revolutionaries, who would naturally resist any military dictatorship to the uttermost. The conversation, however, left doubts in their

minds whether Korniloff himself was not dreaming of a dictatorship, and they decided to force his hand by a point-blank question. With this object, they asked for a private interview with him. The consequences of this innocent request show how strained were the relationships of the South-Western Headquarters at that unhappy moment in Russia's history. It was whispered to the two Commissaries that if they ventured into Korniloff's room alone they would probably never leave it alive, and before they went to keep the appointment they actually made arrangements for certain steps to be taken in case violence was offered to them. Korniloff was also put on his guard by the suggestion that the real object of the Commissaries was assassination, and though he took no precautions for his own personal safety, he thought it as well to have his family removed from the house an hour before the time fixed for the reception of his visitors.

The Commissaries found Korniloff, according to Filonenko's account, "tranquil and amiable as usual, though excitement was noticeable in the tightly-compressed lips and the brightly-sparkling eyes." Having passed the compliments of the day, Savinkoff went straight to the point, and asked Korniloff if he was thinking of proclaiming a dictatorship. "If you are," he added, "you will, of course, want to have me shot, but that wish I should reciprocate with regard not only to you, but to any man with similar aspirations." The blunt question naturally took Korniloff by surprise; but after a momentary pause he answered with decision and emphasis that he was not thinking of a dictatorship, and the reply was given with such obvious sincerity, that the reserve which had marked the opening of the conversation at once disappeared. Korniloff then admitted that, though averse from a dictatorship, he was in favour of such changes as would make the Government strong, vigorous and independent of the soviets, for, in his opinion, only such a transformation could save the country. This view was heartily echoed by the two Commissaries, and on the following day, in the same room, the trio drafted their appeal for the restoration of the death penalty at the front.

On July 29th Kerenski attended a conference held at Headquarters to consider the situation created by the Tarnopol *débâcle*, and he instructed Savinkoff and Filonenko to meet him

at Mohileff. At the close of the conference, he told them that he wanted them to go back to Petrograd with him, and on the journey it appeared that his object was to discuss with them the question of a reconstruction of the Cabinet. Savinkoff and Filonenko welcomed the opportunity of pressing the necessity of a strong and vigorous Government, and pleaded for the formation of a small inner Cabinet, on the English model, to deal with all matters immediately concerning the War. Their arguments were warmly supported by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Tereshchenko, who incidentally suggested that it might be expedient to transfer the Government to Moscow and fix the seat of the inner Cabinet at Headquarters. All these proposals seemed to meet with the full approval of Kerenski, who then and there decided to replace Broussiloff in the chief command by Korniloff.

The programme sketched out in the train was not realised in full, but Korniloff was appointed Commander-in-Chief, Savinkoff Acting Minister for War, and Filonenko Chief Government Commissary at Headquarters. Unhappily, friction between Korniloff and Kerenski began with the former's very first day at his new post. He had consented to take over the thankless task on the conditions that he should be "responsible only to his conscience and the nation"; that the Government should not interfere with his purely military dispositions, and, in particular, with appointments to the higher commands; that the disciplinary powers of officers should be at once restored; and that the penal measures, including the death penalty, which had been revived at the front, should be extended to the rear. These conditions seem to have aroused some misgivings in Kerenski's mind, but in his reply he at any rate agreed that Korniloff should be left absolutely free to choose his immediate subordinates. Nevertheless, before Korniloff had time to leave Berdicheff, the South-Western Headquarters, for Mohileff, he learnt from an agency telegram that Cheremisoff had been appointed to succeed him in the vacant command. Seeing in this a breach of the agreement entered into by Kerenski, he telegraphed to Petrograd that he could not leave Berdicheff till Cheremisoff's appointment had been cancelled. To allay this conflict was Filonenko's first important task as Headquarters Commissary, and he fulfilled it with complete success. The harmonious co-operation of Korniloff and Filonenko continued till the crash. It was Filonenko who

drafted Korniloff's order limiting the rights of the soldiers' committees, and it was at Filonenko's instance that Korniloff issued the order requiring that death sentences should be confirmed by a Commissary before they were carried out.

From the outset, however, Filonenko formed the opinion that there was a strong reactionary party at Headquarters, and that concerted efforts were being made to win Korniloff over to its side. Among others whom the Commissary suspected in this connection was the Chief of Staff, Loukomski. No tangible reasons for his suspicions have been put forward. Apparently he opposed Loukomski on principle, because the latter had been at Headquarters under the Old Regime and made no secret of his disapproval of the "democratic" practices which had been introduced into the Army. Acute friction existed between them from the very beginning of their relationship. However, the chief object of Filonenko's suspicions was Gen. Tikhmeneff, the President of the Headquarters branch of the Officers' League, the organisation which was afterwards accused of having made itself the main instrument of Korniloff's "conspiracy." On or about August 12th, the Commissary telegraphed to Savinkoff that Tikhmeneff was plotting against Korniloff's life, and recommended that he should be called to Petrograd on the pretext that he was needed there in connection with some question of railway transport.

Savinkoff acted on Filonenko's advice, but before Tikhmeneff could leave Mohileff, the call to Petrograd was revoked. What had happened was that Kerenski's *chef de cabinet*, Col. Baranovski, had pledged himself for Tikhmeneff's trustworthiness, and completely satisfied the Minister-President that Filonenko was in the wrong. Kerenski's confidence on this point was strengthened by Tereshchenko, who had just returned from Headquarters, and reported that the friction between Filonenko and certain members of the Staff was due entirely to the Commissary's tactlessness. Thus, when Savinkoff went to report on the Tikhmeneff affair, he found Kerenski decided on the dismissal of Filonenko. It would appear further, from Filonenko's statements, that Kerenski was already considering the advisability of another change in the Chief Command, and mentioned that he himself might find it necessary to take over that post. A few days later, Baranovski paid a mysterious visit to Headquarters,

and the Chief Commissary was told that his object was to discover what the feeling of the Staff would be towards an assumption by Kerenski of the office of Commander-in-Chief.

In consequence of Savinkoff's protests, Kerenski did not insist on the resignation of Filonenko, but the Chief Commissary was called to Petrograd to give an account of his actions. On his arrival, he was told by Savinkoff that persons closely connected with Headquarters were trying, through the intermediation of Baranovski, to discredit Korniloff in Kerenski's eyes, and that they had already succeeded in shaking his position seriously. The Minister-President used very sharp words to Filonenko, telling him that he had been meddling with matters which did not concern him, and insisting on the necessity of smooth co-operation with Loukomski, who "had borne all the burden of the work at Headquarters," and "was not only a splendid general, but also a devoted servant of the Provisional Government."

It was in an atmosphere characterised by these events that, on August 16th, Korniloff for the first and last time presented himself at a plenary meeting of the Cabinet. His object in coming to Petrograd was to lay before the Government his views on the military situation, and his proposals for improving it. On his arrival, however, he was told by Savinkoff that the latter was collecting materials for specific proposals, and asked to confine himself for the present to a sketch of the strategic position, and to refrain from drawing concrete conclusions. Savinkoff at the same time promised to embody in his own report those portions of Korniloff's which dealt with the same matters. To this Korniloff agreed. He then had an interview with Kerenski, who complained that from the time of the Commander-in-Chief's appointment his representations to the Government "had had too much the character of ultimatums," but afterwards unbent, and asked whether, in Korniloff's opinion, it was advisable for him to remain at the head of the Government. To this Korniloff replied that, in his belief, Kerenski had lost much of his former influence, but, nevertheless, as the acknowledged leader of the democratic parties, must naturally remain Minister-President. At any rate, Korniloff added, no other possibility presented itself to him.

That same afternoon, Korniloff laid before the Cabinet his estimate of the military situation. His report contained refer-

ences to those sectors of the front on which, certain conditions being satisfied, the Russian aggressive might be resumed with prospects of success. But when he came to this passage, Kerenski leaned over to him and, in a whisper, advised that that question should be treated with caution. Simultaneously, Savinkoff passed across to Kerenski a slip of paper on which was written: "Is the Minister-President sure that our State secrets and those of the Allies communicated by Korniloff will not become known to the enemy by way of 'comradeship'?" The effect which this incident had on Korniloff may be given in his own words: "I was astounded and horrified that, at a sitting of the Council of Ministers of Russia, the Commander-in-Chief could not without danger touch on questions of which, in the interests of the national defence, he thought it necessary to place the Government in cognisance."

Before leaving Petrograd, Korniloff told Kerenski that he would return as soon as his proposals had been put into the form of projects of law. Filonenko remained in Petrograd to draft the Bills under the supervision of Savinkoff. These Bills, which were to be embodied in a report signed by the War Minister, the Acting War Minister, the Commander-in-Chief, and the Chief Commissary, regulated the rights and duties of commissaries and soldiers' committees, established courts-martial for the rear, restored the disciplinary powers of officers, and placed under military control both the railways and the factories working for the Army. The report also recommended the formation of a small War Cabinet. By August 20th the report was ready, and Korniloff telegraphed to Kerenski that he would be in Petrograd on the 23rd to sign it and present it to the Government. Savinkoff kept Kerenski regularly informed of what was being done, but the latter expressed no opinion about it till August 21st, when he "declared categorically" that in no circumstances would he sign such a report. Savinkoff replied that in this event Korniloff would present the report independently, and gave in his resignation. The resignation was not accepted; but, though Savinkoff continued the work of administering the War Office, he temporarily suspended his routine reports to Kerenski, and their relations evidently became extremely strained.

In consequence of the difficult situation on the front, Korniloff, who wished to be free to attend the great National Congress which

was to begin at Moscow on August 25th, came to the conclusion that he would not be able to keep his engagement at Petrograd, and accordingly gave instructions that it should be cancelled. But on the following day both Savinkoff and Filonenko, hearing of this, implored him by telephone to abide by his original arrangements. They pointed out to him that his report took first place as a matter of national importance, and that, in his absence, they would probably have much difficulty in inducing the Cabinet to accept it. In the end, Korniloff yielded to their arguments; but when he arrived in Petrograd on the 23rd, he was much astonished to be handed a telegram, sent on after him from Headquarters, in which Kerenski told him that his presence in the capital was unnecessary, and that the Government must repudiate all responsibility for the military consequences of his absence from Mohileff. This telegram was, of course, sent without the knowledge of Savinkoff, and came as all the greater surprise to him, because he had told Kerenski on the 21st that Korniloff was coming to Petrograd on the 23rd, and had met with no objection.

From the station Korniloff drove to the Winter Palace. Here he had an interview with Kerenski, who denied all knowledge of the report drawn up by Filonenko on Savinkoff's instructions, and stated that it was impossible for him to submit such a report to the Cabinet. He further denied that he had empowered Savinkoff to invite Korniloff to Petrograd. The Commander-in-Chief thus found himself confronted by an altogether unexpected situation, and he sought enlightenment from Savinkoff. The latter admitted that Kerenski had not seen the report in its complete form, but said that he had been acquainted with its contents step by step as it had been drawn up. Savinkoff also maintained that Korniloff had been summoned to Petrograd with the knowledge and approval of the Government.

These contradictions did not augur well for the success of the business on which Korniloff had made the journey from Headquarters, but he signed the report. and Savinkoff telephoned to Kerenski and Tereshchenko asking that the Cabinet might be convoked for 9 o'clock that evening to consider it. At the hour named, the Acting War Minister went to the Winter Palace expecting to find the Cabinet assembled there in full strength. Instead, he was told that Korniloff was closeted with Kerenski,

Tereshchenko, and Nekrasoff. Savinkoff sent up his name to the meeting, but was not admitted to it. Nettled by this rebuff he went away and wrote out his resignation.

We have it on the authority of Korniloff that, at the meeting with the three members of the Cabinet on August 23rd, he was told that the Government agreed to all the measures proposed by him, and that only the dates on which they should be put into force remained to be decided. But he got the impression that his presence in Petrograd was unwelcome to Kerenski, and that the latter was unwilling to lay the report before a full meeting of the Cabinet.

During his return journey to Mohileff, Korniloff heard that Kerenski had accepted Savinkoff's resignation, and he telegraphed to Petrograd expressing the view that this step was very inopportune. Possibly it was in consequence of his remonstrance that Kerenski refrained from signing the ukase necessary to render the resignation effective, and on the evening of the 25th, being himself then in Moscow, sent two officers to ask Savinkoff to remain in office, though only on the condition that Filonenko resigned. Savinkoff, who had already come to an understanding with Filonenko that they would stand or fall together, replied that he could not accept this condition, as the Chief Commissary was a trusted, esteemed, and invaluable subordinate, against whom no specific charge had been raised. With this answer one of the officers went to Moscow to get Kerenski's further instructions, and he returned twenty-four hours later with the intimation that the Minister-President insisted on Filonenko's retirement. From that day till Kerenski's return from Moscow on August 30th, Savinkoff regarded his connection with the Government as at an end.

On the evening of his arrival at Moscow for the Congress, Korniloff was visited by the Minister for Commerce, Yourenieff, who told him that the Government wished him to confine himself in his speech to an exposition of the strategic situation, and not to dwell on the inferences to be drawn from it. This was so far from the Commander-in-Chief's ideas of his rights and duties, that he thought it necessary to ring up the Minister-President and discuss the matter with him. Kerenski told him that, as the Ministers would deal with the condition of the Army, it was not thought desirable that he should touch on that theme, and that,

in particular, any expression of differences of opinion between the Government and the Chief Command should be avoided. Korniloff replied that, in his opinion, it was absolutely necessary for the Commander-in-Chief to acquaint the country with the true condition of its armed forces, and with the measures which he considered indispensable for restoring their fighting efficiency. At the same time, he promised to avoid all asperities, and to abstain from anything that might sound like an attack on the Government. On the basis of this undertaking, he asked that he might be left free in the choice of his themes. Kerenski made no definite reply to this appeal. At any rate, that is Korniloff's version.

Korniloff's speech was the outstanding feature of the Congress, and for the first time it put plainly and publicly the question on which the fate of Russia depended. In direct, soldier-like words, it revealed the grim truth of the state into which the Russian Army had sunk, and indicated the remedies in which lay the only hope of a recovery. It is a curious and not unimportant fact, that this speech was, in the main, the work of Filonenko, who, on the eve of its delivery, dictated its essential passages to the Commander-in-Chief's secretary, Zavoiko. Filonenko says that, in doing this, he was actuated both by a friendly desire to afford Korniloff any possible assistance, and by his sense of his responsibility for all steps of a political nature taken by the Commander-in-Chief.

Korniloff returned to Mohileff the evening after he had made his speech, but he had two interesting interviews before leaving Moscow. One of them was with Alexeieff, who said he had been sounded as to his willingness to resume the Chief Command. This seems to prove that, in spite of the semi-official denials of the time, Kerenski was seriously considering the advisability of dismissing Korniloff. The other interview was with A. F. Aladyin, who was one of the most picturesque figures of the first Duma. This meeting has a special interest, because the presence of Aladyin at Headquarters during the crisis a week later gave rise to the charge that the British Government was actively implicated in the Korniloff movement. His first connection with the Korniloff circle seems to have been on August 17th, when he introduced himself to Filonenko by telephone in Petrograd, and invited him to lunch. At the lunch, he expressed

a wish to pay a visit to Headquarters, and apparently his meeting with Korniloff at Moscow was a result of this. During his subsequent stay at Mohileff, Aladyin is believed to have exercised a strong influence on Korniloff. The story that he was acting for the British Government seems to have arisen from the fact that, as correspondent of a Russian paper, he had had dealings with the London War Office and paid visits to the front in France.

When Kerenski returned to Petrograd on August 30th from the Moscow Congress, he asked Savinkoff to continue in office as Acting Minister for War, and withdrew his demand for the resignation of the Headquarters Commissary Filonenko. He also acknowledged that in principle he was in agreement with Korniloff's recommendations, and instructed Savinkoff to have the Bills embodying them finally revised and prepared for submission to the Cabinet. Two days later, he ordered Savinkoff to go to Headquarters as soon as possible with a series of important missions. Savinkoff states that four separate tasks were allotted to him. Two of these referred to the Officers' League and the Political Department of the Staff, both of which were believed to be implicated in a conspiracy against the Government. Another of his commissions requires some explanation. In consequence of the fall of Riga and the German advance across the Dvina, Korniloff had insisted that the extensive military district which included and took its name from the Capital should, for strategic reasons, be directly subordinated to the Chief Command. Savinkoff was now to "convince" Korniloff of the necessity of excluding from this district Petrograd and its immediate environs, which it was proposed to declare in a state of war. That was Savinkoff's third instruction. His fourth was: "To ask from Gen. Korniloff a cavalry corps for the effectual realisation of a state of war in Petrograd, and for the defence of the Provisional Government against any kind of attempts upon it, and in particular against attempts by the Bolsheviks, action by whom had already taken place during the three days July 16 to 18, and, according to the information of the agents of the Counter-espionage abroad, was being prepared anew in connection with a German landing and a rising in Finland." Savinkoff is very positive that, though he strongly supported the last two of these measures, he took the initiative in proposing neither of them. With regard to the first two he

at once concerted a line of action with Filonenko by telephone, and he left for Headquarters on September 4th, taking with him the Bills by which it was purposed to put the Korniloff programme into execution.

He arrived at Mohileff on the following day, and drove straight to the house of Korniloff, with whom he requested a private interview. As soon as they were alone together, he stated that the main object of his visit was to find ground for joint action by the Commander-in-Chief and Kerenski, each of whom was the leader of a large and powerful party in the country, so that their co-operation was indispensable if Russia was to be saved. Korniloff replied that he made no claim to influence the constitution of the Government, but that, since his opinion had been asked, he considered that the situation might be grappled with by a Cabinet which did not include Kerenski, against whom he had nothing personally, but whom he regarded as a weak man, too liable to fall under the sway of others, and who, of course, was ignorant of the business of his own departments, the Ministries of War and Marine. Thus began a long discussion, in which Savinkoff argued that, the balance of parties being what it was, it was necessary that Kerenski, as the acknowledged leader of the largest group, should remain a member of the Government. In the end, Korniloff admitted himself convinced, and agreed without reservation that no Cabinet could hope for success unless Kerenski was included in it. He added that he was ready to support Kerenski to the full extent of his powers if that was necessary for the welfare of the country. Savinkoff rejoined that he was happy to hear these words, and apparently thought that a firm foundation for co-operation by Korniloff and Kerenski had been definitely laid.

The same evening, the other urgent matters on which the Acting Minister for War had come to Headquarters were debated in Korniloff's room. In addition to the Commander-in-Chief, there were present Loukomski, Savinkoff, Filonenko, and Col. Baranovski. After the boundaries of the new Petrograd Military District had been settled, in accordance with the recommendations of Baranovski, who evidently had come to Headquarters in connection with this special point, Savinkoff, turning to Korniloff, said:—

"Thus, you see, Lavr Georgievitch, that your proposals will

be carried out by the Provisional Government in the immediate future. But the Government fears that this may give rise to serious complications. It is, of course, known to you that a formidable rising of the Bolsheviki is expected about September 10th or 11th. The adoption of your proposals by the Government will naturally serve as a stimulus to this rising, should it be delayed for any reason. Although we have enough troops at our disposal, we cannot absolutely count on them, and all the less because it is still uncertain what will be the attitude of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates to the new laws. Therefore, I beg you to order the 3rd Cavalry Corps up to Petrograd, and to place it at the disposal of the Provisional Government. Should members of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates join with the Bolsheviki, it will be necessary for us to take action against them too. Only, I beg that you will not send General Krymoff at the head of the Corps. He is a very good military general, but hardly suitable for such operations."

While these proposals were under consideration, Gen. Romanovski joined the company. Savinkoff then said that if it proved necessary to use arms for the suppression of disorders in Petrograd, the action taken must be of a most decisive and ruthless character. Korniloff replied that he did not understand any other kind of action in such cases, and that the troops would be instructed accordingly. Baranovski, who, as we have seen, was the special confidant of Kerenski, here interpolated: "Of course, the action must be of the most decisive character, and the blow must be struck in such a way that all Russia will feel it."

Savinkoff then said that, in order that there might be no misunderstanding, and that the anticipated rising of the Bolsheviki might not be prematurely precipitated, it would be advisable to concentrate the Cavalry Corps on Petrograd in advance, and only when it was in readiness for action to declare the city in a state of war and promulgate the new restrictive laws. He therefore asked Korniloff to wire him as soon as the force had taken up its appointed stations. This Korniloff undertook to do, and on September 9th—apparently before he had received Kerenski's despatch removing him from the Chief Command—he telegraphed to Savinkoff: "Corps will be concentrated in the environs of Petrograd by evening of September 10th. Beg you to declare Petrograd in state of war on September 11th."

The above details of this conversation are on record over the signatures of Generals Korniloff, Loukomski, and Romanovski, and Savinkoff has admitted their substantial accuracy.

In the utterance quoted textually above, Savinkoff asks Korniloff to place some other general than Krymoff at the head of the cavalry corps which was to be sent to Petrograd. As we know from Savinkoff's other statements, he also asked that the "Wild," or "Savage," Division, which was composed of Caucasian tribesmen, should not be included in the corps. Korniloff, he states, undertook to fulfil these two requests. But if Korniloff made these promises, he failed to keep them, for the cavalry corps sent to Petrograd was under the command of Krymoff, and included the "Savage" Division. These circumstances may not at first sight appear of very great moment, but apparently they play a prominent part in Kerenski's case against Korniloff, and it is therefore necessary to examine them a little more closely. Kerenski states that the ban on Krymoff and the "Savage" Division was an integral and essential point in the instructions with which he sent Savinkoff to Headquarters. On the other hand, the *Rousskoe Slovo* of September 23, 1917, printed the following as a "Narration of B. V. Savinkoff":

The Provisional Government decided to declare Petrograd in a state of war, in order to be armed at all points in case of the expected excesses, from whatever side they might come. Accordingly the War Minister instructed me, as Administrator of the War Ministry, to call up a cavalry corps to the Capital through the intermediation of Gen. Korniloff. It was not my initiative in the question of the introduction of a state of war (although I sympathised with this), and it was not at my own initiative that I called up the cavalry corps to Petrograd. I acted in the capacity of a person immediately subordinate to the War Minister. I was instructed to call up the cavalry. I will say more: I was ordered to act precisely as I did act.

However, I did show a share of my own initiative. The thing was this, that, as Administrator of the War Ministry, I had unfavourable information as to the reputation of the commander of the cavalry corps, Gen. Krymoff, and, on my own initiative, I addressed myself to Gen. Korniloff with the request (*prosba*) to entrust to some other person the command of the cavalry to be sent to Petrograd. Gen. Korniloff questioned me as to the motives of my demand (*trebovania*). I then replied to the ex-Commander-in-Chief what I have just said about Gen. Krymoff.

The political reputation of Gen. Krymoff was such, that, if he had to be at the head of a detachment on which was laid the duty of suppressing action against the Government, it might lead to undesirable complications.

Gen. Korniloff agreed with me, and promised to fulfil my request (*prosba*). Exactly so he gave his consent to my other request (*prosba*). I demanded (*treboval*) that the Tousemnaya (the so-called "Savage") Division should not be sent to Petrograd, but that instead of it there should be despatched a division of regular cavalry.

Savinkoff returned to Petrograd on September 6th. Hardly had he left Mohileff when Vladimir Lvoff, who had been Procurator of the Holy Synod in the first Provisional Government, arrived at Headquarters, and asked to be received by Korniloff. Lvoff is a man of eminently mediocre talents, and the *rôle* into which he thrust himself here was merely that of a mediator; but the effects of his intervention shook the political world like an earthquake, and it is, therefore, important to follow out, as far as possible, the whole course of his action. Of its earlier stages we have the testimony of Aladyin and of Dobrinski, who was then a member of the Committee of the League of Knights of St. George. These two became acquainted on August 30th, while travelling down to Headquarters from the Moscow Congress. On September 3rd they were back again in Moscow, where Dobrinski introduced Lvoff to Aladyin. As the result of their conversation, Lvoff left for Petrograd to persuade Kerenski to form a Ministry "enjoying the confidence of the country and all sections of the Army." On September 5th, he returned to Moscow "in a triumphant mood," and informed Aladyin and Dobrinski that he had been empowered by Kerenski to negotiate with Headquarters for the formation of such a Government. At Lvoff's request, Dobrinski accompanied him to Headquarters on this mission.

Korniloff states that Lvoff's first words on entering his room were: "I have come to you with a mission from Kerenski." Lvoff then proceeded to state that Kerenski was prepared to leave the Cabinet if, in Korniloff's opinion, his presence in it impaired its authority. If, however, Kerenski could count on Korniloff's support, he was prepared to continue his past work. In reply, Korniloff drew a picture of the state of the country and the Army as it appeared to him, and expressed the conviction that only

some form of dictatorship, coupled with martial law throughout the country, could save the situation. He added that he was not personally aiming at political power, and would at once subordinate himself to any man who was invested by the Government with dictatorial authority, whether it should be Kerenski, Alexeieff, Kaledin, or another. Lvoff then said that the Government itself had come to the conclusion that some form of dictatorship was necessary, and very possibly would propose to Korniloff to take upon himself the office of dictator. Korniloff's answer to this was that he would not refuse the dictatorship if it was offered to him by the Government, as he was convinced that only a firm authority could save the country. At the same time, he made it quite plain that he himself was thinking, not of a one-man but of a collective dictatorship, in which he insisted that Kerenski and Savinkoff must be included. He asked Lvoff to transmit this view to the Minister-President and the Acting War Minister, and to beg them to leave for Headquarters at once, as he considered their continued presence in Petrograd very dangerous for both of them. He pledged himself by his word of honour to guarantee their complete liberty and safety while they were at Mohileff.

Lvoff's account of this, as of every other scene of the drama in which he appeared on the stage, is confused and fragmentary. According to the reports published in the Russian Press, he said that he received from Kerenski "the categorical commission" to ascertain from Headquarters and the "public organisations" (something other than the soviets is evidently meant here) what were their wishes as to a reconstruction of the Government on the lines of enhanced authority. Korniloff submitted to him "no kind of ultimatum," and what passed between them was "a simple conversation, in the course of which various desires in the sense of strengthening the Government were discussed." Lvoff was so assured of the success of his mission, and so convinced that Kerenski would at once leave for Mohileff, that, before his departure for Petrograd, he asked Dobrinski to invite to Headquarters certain public men then in Moscow, in order that they might discuss the situation with the Minister-President and the Commander-in-Chief.

After Lvoff's departure, and possibly at the very time when he was closeted with Kerenski in the fatal interview, the political

maladies of Russia and the possible remedies for them were once more thoroughly talked over by Korniloff, Filonenko, Aladyin, and Zavoiko. A good deal of what was said has been preserved for us by the Chief Commissary, but the only words reported by him which it is necessary to introduce here are the final judgment of Korniloff: "You are right—a dictatorship (one-man) is impossible. The only thing is a Directory." The final issue of the discussion was a general consensus of opinion that the only way out of Russia's difficulties was to be found in a small War Cabinet, or Directory, on the British model, in which it was agreed that Korniloff, Kerenski, Savinkoff, and Filonenko must be included. The idea of a one-man dictatorship was definitively rejected. This, be it noted, was on the evening of September 8th.

We must now turn our attention for a moment to events at Petrograd. Savinkoff reached the Capital on September 7th, fully satisfied that he had faithfully carried out the instructions given to him. He at once reported on the results of his journey both to Kerenski personally and to the Cabinet as a whole. Later in the day, he laid the Bills which had been drafted to meet Korniloff's requirements before Kerenski, who, however, twice refused to sign them. On the following day he submitted them again. Kerenski at first "twice pushed them aside"; but, after he had been reminded, in a private interview with the Acting War Minister, that they had been drawn up on his own instructions, and implored to accept them as "the only means of saving the country," he at last reluctantly consented to recommend them to the Cabinet.

That same evening, Savinkoff went to the Winter Palace, fully expecting that the Bills would be considered at the meeting of the Cabinet which was to take place there. On his arrival, however, he was told that there was some kind of trouble with Korniloff, with whom Kerenski was conversing by telegraph. Soon afterwards, he was called into the Minister-President's room and informed of the "ultimatum" which had been delivered by Lvoff. This came as a complete surprise to him, as he had no knowledge of the mission entrusted to Lvoff, with whom, moreover, he was personally unacquainted.

What had happened prior to Savinkoff's arrival was this: Lvoff had obtained an interview with Kerenski, and had made

some kind of communication to him with regard to his visit to Headquarters. Kerenski had asked him to put his statement into writing, and this he had done in the following form :

Gen. Korniloff proposes : (1) The declaration of martial law in Petrograd ; (2) the giving of all military and civil power into the hands of the Commander-in-Chief ; (3) the resignation of all Ministers, including the Premier himself, and the transfer temporarily of control from the Ministers to their assistants until the formation of the Commander-in-Chief's Cabinet.

After his talk with Lvoff, Kerenski had gone to the telegraph and rung up Korniloff. The exact text of their conversation has fortunately been preserved by the ribbon on the Hughes apparatus, and it is of such vital importance that it is appended in full :—

KERENSKI. Here is the Minister-President Kerenski. He awaits General Korniloff.

KORNILOFF. General Korniloff is at the apparatus.

KERENSKI. Greeting General ! At the telephone are Vladimir Nikolaievitch Lvoff and Kerenski. We beg you to confirm that Kerenski may act in conformity with the communication transmitted by Vladimir Nikolaievitch.

KORNILOFF. Greeting Alexander Feodorovitch ! Greeting Vladimir Nikolaievitch ! Once more confirming my sketch of the position of the country and the Army as it appears to me—a sketch made by me to Vladimir Nikolaievitch, with the request that he would report it to you—I again declare that the events of the past few days, and those which are becoming apparent, imperatively demand an absolutely definite decision within the shortest possible term.

KERENSKI. I, Vladimir Nikolaievitch, ask you : Is it necessary to carry out that definite decision as to which you requested me to inform Alexander Feodorovitch only quite privately ? Without this confirmation personally from you, Alexander Feodorovitch hesitates to trust me fully.

KORNILOFF. I confirm that I begged you to transmit to Alexander Feodorovitch my urgent request to come to Mohileff.

KERENSKI. I, Alexander Feodorovitch, understand your answer as a confirmation of the words communicated to me by Vladimir Nikolaievitch. To-day it is impossible to do that and leave. I hope to leave to-morrow. Is Savinkoff needed ?

KORNILOFF. I urgently beg that Boris Victorovitch (Savinkoff) should come with you. What I said to Vladimir Nikolaievitch applies in like measure to Boris Victorovitch. I fervently beg you not to postpone your departure beyond to-morrow. I beg you to believe that only my sense of the responsibility of the moment compels me to importune you.

KERENSKI. Should we come only in the event of the rising, of which rumours are in circulation, or in any case?

KORNILOFF. In any case.

KERENSKI. Au revoir! We shall soon see one another.

KORNILOFF. Au revoir!

That is every word that passed between the two. It will be noticed that part of the conversation was carried on in the name of Lvoff. He was not, however, present.

The conversation between Kerenski and Korniloff, as has just been seen, was carried on in the most friendly tones, and closed with apparent agreement between the interlocutors. It was, however, couched in terms so veiled that its essential meaning depended entirely upon what Lvoff had said to Kerenski. The Minister-President asked for and received a confirmation of Lvoff's message, but neither of the two speakers indicated what the message was, except so far as the single point of the journey to Headquarters was concerned.

When Savinkoff was called to Kerenski's room, he was shown the ribbon of the above conversation, as well as Lvoff's note, and asked his opinion about them. He replied that the Government must, of course, make every effort to settle the matter by conciliatory means and without publicity, as otherwise the consequences might be exceedingly grave. In this view he was backed up by others in the room, but Kerenski was of another opinion. However, with the Minister-President's consent, Savinkoff rang up Filonenko at Headquarters to see if any further enlightenment was to be obtained from that source. The authentic record of his conversation with the Chief Commissary has also been preserved. For more than one reason, it makes very curious reading. In the first place, it was carried on in an emblematical code, used by these two friends for their confidential communications to one another, which was intended only to be unintelligible to outsiders, but, as the sequel showed in the present case, was not always intelligible to themselves. Moreover, Savinkoff had been instructed by Kerenski to leave Filonenko under the impression that the two of them were going to Headquarters on the morrow, and he was also anxious to avoid saying anything which might convey the facts of the situation to anyone who might obtain access to the record of the conversation; while, at the same time, he wished to have Filonenko in Petrograd as soon as possible, to explain what had happened at

Mohileff and to be out of danger in the event of an open breach between the Government and Korniloff. Consequently, he repeatedly entreated Filonenko to come to the capital without delay, but he could explain his importunity only by the vaguest possible hints. Filonenko, having no notion what was in the wind, continually interjected reasons why he should not leave Mohileff, but, in the end, though with obvious reluctance, promised to do what his chief had asked of him. For his own part, Filonenko was evidently elated by the results of the discussion in Korniloff's room that evening, and he was inclined to be garrulous. In figurative terms, he tried to give Savinkoff some idea of the agreement which had issued from that discussion. He said that, in his opinion, "the heights passing from hand to hand have to-day remained with us." As he afterwards explained, he thus meant to indicate that Korniloff had been finally won over to the side of conciliation and cooperation with Kerenski. Another of his remarks was: "In any case I can confirm that by this evening there clearly floated up the buoy on which are written the names of the two favourite women, with neither of whom, as you know, is it possible to dispense if the child is to recover." When the reader is told that "the two favourite women" were Korniloff and Kerenski, and "the child" Russia, he may be able to obtain some meaning from this strange jargon. It did not, however, convey to Savinkoff's mind a clear idea of how the situation at Headquarters presented itself to Filonenko. On the other hand, it did convince him that Filonenko had no knowledge of anything in the nature of the "ultimatum" which Lvoff was said to have delivered.

The meeting of the Cabinet, which had been postponed in consequence of Lvoff's appearance, was held in the small hours of September 9th, and the Ministers present were acquainted with the new situation that had arisen. After an agitated debate, Kerenski received from his colleagues full powers to take what steps he thought fit to deal with the crisis, and until Korniloff was arrested no further meeting of the Cabinet as a whole was held, though there were informal gatherings of certain of its members with the Minister-President.

During September 9th, Kerenski took no absolutely irretrievable step. True, he issued the proclamation removing

Korniloff from the Chief Command, accusing him of having demanded the surrender to himself by the Cabinet of " plenary civil and military powers in order that a new Government may be constituted in accordance with his own personal view," and interpreting this alleged action by " the wish of certain circles of Russian society to exploit the arduous position of the country for the establishment of a State order irreconcileable with the attainments of the Revolution." But apparently he himself did not regard this as an insuperable bar to an amicable settlement with Korniloff, for late that night he agreed to the request of the League of Cossack Troops that a deputation from that body should be permitted to go to Mohileff, with the object of mediating between the Government and Headquarters.

The morning papers of September 10 published a proclamation of the Central Executive Committee of the All-Russian Soviet, which declared that Korniloff had " betrayed the country and the Revolution," demanded that he should " bear the full rigour of the penalties for treason and treachery," and called upon all army committees and soviets to resist any orders issued by him or Loukomski. This document did no doubt render the situation irreparable, for the Army as a whole had long ago come to regard the soviets as the authority to which its allegiance was really due. It is noteworthy that this soviet appeal was published in the Press a day before the proclamation, bearing the signatures of Kerenski and the Minister of the Interior Avksentieff, in which the harsh word " treason " was for the first time officially applied to Korniloff.

In the course of September 10th, many further attempts were made to avert the catastrophe which had now become inevitable. In particular, Alexeieff and Milyoukoff pleaded with Kerenski that they should be allowed to mediate between the Government and Korniloff. Kerenski, however, replied that it was impossible for him to negotiate with a man who had refused to obey the orders of the Government, and whose only course was unconditional surrender. He also withdrew the permission to visit Headquarters given to the delegation of the Cossack League. On the other hand, powerful forces were at work to aggravate the crisis. The Central Committees of the All-Russian Soviets issued a manifesto to " all the Army," in which it was stated that Korniloff was " trying to restore the Old Regime and

deprive the people of land and freedom," and that "for the sake of his criminal aims" he was "ready to open the front to the enemy and betray the Fatherland." The same bodies circulated among the railwaymen a second manifesto, in which it was said that Korniloff was "thirsting to drown the Revolution in blood." Subsequently, Bogdanoff, one of the chief soviet officials, boasted at a meeting that the Political Department of the Petrograd Soviet, hearing of the mediation of Alexeieff and Milyoukoff, "acted with all energy and prevented any kind of agreement between Korniloff and the Government." At the same time, the soviets usurped to themselves many of the functions of government, suppressing newspapers, making arrests of persons suspected of sympathy with Korniloff, and even transferring troops to Petrograd. It has been stated in the Russian Press that, during those critical days, none of the Government orders for the movement of troops was carried out without soviet counter-signature.

We must now cast a glance at Headquarters, to see what was passing there during the Petrograd events just described. The conversation with Kerenski about the Lvoff message so absolutely satisfied Korniloff of the existence of a definitive agreement with the Minister-President, that he spent the rest of the evening drafting a project for the reconstitution of the Government, so that he might be ready with a concrete scheme when Kerenski and Savinkoff arrived at Mohileff on the 10th. He also sent telegrams to the Duma President, Rodzianko, ex-Minister-President Prince Lvoff, Milyoukoff, and other leading public men, asking them to come to Headquarters for a conference. Consequently, as Prince G. H. Troubetskoi, head of the Diplomatic Chancery at Headquarters, puts it, Kerenski's orders, received on the following morning, that Korniloff should hand over the Chief Command to Loukomski and leave for Petrograd immediately caused in Mohileff "the impression of a bursting bomb," and left in the minds of the members of the Staff the idea that either Kerenski's consent to Korniloff's proposal and the whole action of Lvoff had been merely moves in a plot against the Commander-in-Chief, or that the Government had suddenly gone over body and soul to Bolshevism. So persuaded was Troubetskoi that some misunderstanding must lie at the bottom of the whole business, that he at once sent a telegram in

this sense to Tereshchenko, and he backed it up with a second on the following day.

When Korniloff received the order to surrender the Chief Command, he showed it to Filonenko, and the Commissary promptly pointed out that it utterly disregarded all the official forms needed in so momentous a communication. It was addressed simply to "General Korniloff" by "Kerenski," that is to say, to one private person by another; it was neither numbered nor timed; it was not countersigned; and it contained no mention of a decision of the Government. As the Government as a whole had appointed Korniloff, only the Government as a whole, so the Commissary argued, could dismiss him. Filonenko accordingly came to the conclusion, to which he adhered, that the telegram was not a legal and valid act of government, and that Korniloff was justified in disregarding it. Only in the subsequent actions of Korniloff did the Commissary find breaches of the law—for example, in his own "arrest."

As we have seen, Filonenko had received instructions to return to Petrograd that day, and he now announced to Korniloff his intention of doing so. Korniloff, noticing a sudden change in his manner, replied that he must detain him at Headquarters till the 10th. This was the "arrest" of which so much was made at Petrograd. It seems to have been while he was already under "arrest" that Filonenko sent a telegram adjuring the Government to revoke its decision with regard to Korniloff. With considerable prophetic accuracy the Commissary wrote:—

Consider it my duty to state that the decision taken by the Government to replace General Korniloff will, in the circumstances of the present political moment, cause such injury and agitation in the Army that the front will be opened; and, whatever may be the outcome of the civil war that will inevitably begin, its consequence will be a separate peace with the Germans, and, in my profound conviction, a re-establishment of the autocracy on the fragments of the vassal State which will be all that will remain of the great Russia. Victors in this civil war there will be none, as he who appears to be such will to-morrow be the slave of the Germans. At the last moment I insist on the necessity of the Government revoking the dismissal of General Korniloff. Also indispensable is a meeting of the Minister-President with General Korniloff. If this should only

delay civil war and the ruin of Russia for one day no harm will be done. Full security of the arrival and departure of the Minister-President is guaranteed by the word of honour of Generals Korniloff and Loukomski.

This telegram was opened by Kerenski and shown by him to Savinkoff.

In the army orders which he posted in Mohileff on September 10th and 11th, but which he was prevented by the Government prohibition from circulating further, and in the statement prepared by him for the Judicial Commission, Korniloff gave a very full exposition of his motives for refusing to surrender the Chief Command and for attempting to compel the Government by force of arms to carry out his programme. He appealed to the events set forth above, to the acceptance by the Government in principle of the measures proposed by him, to the request made to him by Savinkoff in Kerenski's name that the 3rd Cavalry Corps should be concentrated in the environs of Petrograd, to the overtures of Lvoff. He set out his reasons for regarding the situation as a desperate one, as one of those situations in which "men do not stop to think, but act." He claimed to have had trustworthy information that the Germans had been responsible for the explosion at Kazan, by which more than a million shells and 12,000 machine-guns were destroyed; that they were scattering money broadcast to secure the destruction of the mines and factories in the Donetz basin and in the south of Russia generally; that they had projected a simultaneous blow against the whole of the Russian front, in conjunction with a disembarcation on the coast, a rebellion in Finland, a rising of the Bolsheviki in Petrograd, and the blowing up of the bridges over the Neva and Volga. Further, he mentioned that he had grounds "gravely to suspect treason and espionage among various irresponsible organisations (the soviets) working for German money and exercising influence on the actions of the Government." There were, he said, definite indications that the Bolsheviki "intended to seize power, if only for a few days, and declare an armistice—take the decisive and irretrievable step towards the conclusion of a shameful peace, and consequently destroy Russia." With regard to his confirmation of Lvoff's message he said: "The idea never occurred to me that the emissary of the Provisional Government could have distorted the sense of my

conversation with him," and he added that he had no grounds for supposing that the Minister-President and the Acting War Minister were "playing a double game." As he knew that the Bills to realise the measures proposed by him were to have been considered by the Cabinet on the evening of September 8th, he concluded that "the Government had again fallen under the influence of irresponsible organisations, and, renouncing the execution of my programme, had decided to remove me as its chief author." Feeling that "further hesitation would be fatal," Korniloff, having assured himself of the support of most of the other commanding generals, decided to use the 3rd Cavalry Corps to compel the Government "to exclude from its body those Ministers who, according to information in my possession, were traitors to their country," and "to reconstruct itself in such a way that the country would be guaranteed a strong and firm authority." Korniloff most emphatically repudiated the suggestion that he was actuated by motives of personal ambition, that he aimed at a one-man dictatorship, that his hope was to restore the monarchy. He wrote :—

I neither was nor am involved in any kind of conspiracy. In all my talks with members of various political parties, I have consistently declared that I had never belonged, and would never belong, to any of them, but had always supported, and always would support, those of them which devoted themselves single-mindedly to the rescue of the country from ruin and the saving of the Army from dissolution. I always declared it to be my standpoint that the form of the administration of the country must be settled by the Constituent Assembly, which alone can express the will of the Russian people. I declared that I would never support any political combination which had as its object the restoration of the House of Romanoff, for, in my opinion, this dynasty, in the persons of its last representatives, has played a fatal *rôle* in the history of the country.

That Korniloff judged the situation wrongly was shown by the pitiful evaporation of the 3rd Cavalry Corps. He himself explained his failure by his inability to communicate with Krymoff. "Special measures," he said, "were not taken to keep up communications with him, because the Corps was sent to Petrograd at the demand of the Provisional Government, and I could not foresee a state of affairs in which the connection of the Corps with Headquarters would be interrupted by order of that same Government." It is a rather melancholy fact that

Filonenko played no small part in seducing the "Savage" Division, with which he had considerable influence, from its allegiance to Korniloff. This action, like the acceptance by Savinkoff of the Military Governorship of Petrograd, with the obligation to defend the city against Korniloff, will form a profitable theme for moralists and casuists. Filonenko defined his attitude towards the affair in the following words: "I love and esteem Gen. Korniloff—I love him still. But to prevent rivers of officers' blood from being shed, he must be shot; and I will take off my hat before his grave. Gen. Korniloff should undergo the penalty which any ordinary soldier would have suffered for his crime; and I am convinced that he himself would share this view."

On September 12th, Kerenski assumed the Chief Command, and Alexeieff, patriotically putting his personal convictions and feelings to one side, consented to become Chief of Staff. The position was then, indeed, a desperate one. The Germans were advancing, but the execution of all Korniloff's strategic dispositions had been stopped by order of the Government, and the commanders of the fronts were telegraphing to Petrograd, asking in alarm whose instructions they were to fulfil. It was then that Kerenski took the remarkable step of issuing orders that, until further notice, all Korniloff's instructions with respect to operations on the front were to be faithfully carried out. In other words, he temporarily reinstated in the Chief Command the man whom he had just denounced to the world as a traitor and enemy to his country. Korniloff continued to direct the operations on the front till the evening of September 14th.

As soon as Korniloff realised that Krymoff's expedition had failed, he did everything in his power to prevent that civil war which he was accused of trying to foment. In a telephonic conversation with Alexeieff in the small hours of September 13th, he said that if it was publicly declared that a strong Government, quite independent of the soviets, would be formed, he would take all possible measures to restrain the activity of his adherents. Apparently, he made no attempt to secure any sort of terms for himself. But he did ask that the prosecution of the Commander-in-Chief of the South-Western Front, Gen. Denikin, and his staff—they were then in imminent danger of the worst excesses of lynch law—should be suspended, and that the

wholesale arrests of officers should come to an end. He handed over the command of the armies to Alexeieff without so much as a protest against his arrest. As the result of his inquiries, Alexeieff became convinced that Korniloff "did not raise his hand against the State, but only aimed at the establishment of a strong, energetic, and efficient Government"; that "he desired nothing for himself, but was ready to work with anyone capable of saving the country and extricating it from the abyss into which it had fallen." It was for this reason, says Alexeieff, that the sympathies of many were on the side of Korniloff.

Coups d'état, like revolutions, are justified by success and condemned by failure. Korniloff failed, but his action was certainly not a *coup d'état* in the ordinary sense of the term, either in form or substance. He wanted to strengthen the Government, not to weaken it. He did not want to encroach upon its authority, but to prevent others from doing so. He wanted to compel it to be what it had always professed to be but never really been—the single and unchallenged depositary of administrative power. He wanted to emancipate it from the illicit and paralysing influence of the soviets. In the end, that influence destroyed Russia, and Korniloff's defiance of the Government was a last desperate effort to arrest the process of destruction.

CHAPTER XVII

THE VIOLATION OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

BY the part he played in the Korniloff affair, Kerenski destroyed the last barrier between Russia and anarchy—his own personal hold on the masses. The Bolsheviks, who throughout the Revolution had been the only party to make for a definite goal with unfaltering energy and determination—for the simple reason that they alone had no interest in the War, and consequently were not hampered by the necessity for compromise—lost no time in exploiting the advantage Kerenski had given them, and the "counter-revolutionary" action of the Minister-President became the chief weapon of their agitation. It proved a most effective one, and a fortnight after the Korniloff affair was first made known to the world, the Bolsheviks secured a majority in the Petrograd Soviet for a resolution embodying their party cry "All power to the Soviets." The immediate consequence was that the Menshevik Chairman, Cheidze, and the other members of the "Presidium"—who were all either his fellow-partisans or Social-Revolutionaries—resigned in a body, and their places were taken by Bolsheviks and other supporters of the All-power-to-the-Soviets policy. Kerenski, who had been one of the Vice-Presidents of the Petrograd Soviet, had resigned that position somewhat earlier. The full significance of the change was clearly expressed by one fact: Cheidze was replaced by Trotski. Lenin, for whose arrest a warrant had been out since his unsuccessful attempt against the Government in July, had not yet ventured from his hiding place, where he was preparing to convert the world by pamphlets, one of which has since been translated into English. Naturally, he continued to be the chief driving and directing force of his Party. He had controlled it from Paris and Cracow under the

Old Regime, and it was not difficult for him to do so now from Kronstadt or some small village across the Finnish frontier.

At first sight, the appearance of a Bolshevik majority in the Petrograd Soviet suggests an exceedingly sudden and violent swing of the electorate in consequence of the Korniloff affair. Municipal elections—on the basis of universal suffrage for both sexes—had taken place during the first week of September; and though the Bolsheviks had nearly doubled their number of seats, they nevertheless obtained only sixty-seven out of a total of two hundred. It must be remembered, however, that it was the artisans and soldiers alone who elected the Soviet, and that the large classes outside these two categories had nothing whatever to do with it. Moreover, as the Soviet elections were carried out in whatever way any particular group of constituents preferred—the general rule seems to have been a simple show of hands—they naturally lent themselves admirably to the employment of impudence and intimidation, in both of which the Bolsheviks were infinitely superior to any of their opponents. There were, further, no fixed terms of election. If the inmates of a workshop or a company of soldiers took it into their heads that their delegate was not representing them properly, they simply cancelled his mandate out of hand, and chose someone else in his place. Thus the rank and file of the Soviet was a constantly fluctuating body, and the transformation of a majority into a minority was effected not so much by the conversion of members as by their replacement.

Amid the welter of more dramatic and exciting doings, the capture of the Petrograd Soviet by the Bolsheviks passed almost unnoticed at the time, but it was probably the most decisive event that had occurred since the March outbreak, for it really sealed the fate of what we may call the "Coalition Revolution." Control over the Soviet meant control over the Petrograd garrison; control over the Petrograd garrison meant control over the Government; and control over the Government, when that Government was entirely identified with the Soviets, meant control over the greater part of the country and over the front. If Lenin had cared to run any risks, he could, in all likelihood, have had the whole game in his hands three days after his followers came to the top in the Petrograd Soviet. But he was wise enough to wait till all danger of serious opposition had

passed; and when he did strike his blow, on November 7, he gained an immediate, complete and almost bloodless victory. Among the whole of the Petrograd garrison, Kerenski had no firm supporters but the Women's Battalion, and the gallant youths of the officers' training schools, who had to pay a heavy price for their loyalty to the Government.

After the Bolsheviks got the machinery of government into their hands, only one faint hope was left. That hope lay in the Constituent Assembly. Ever since there had been a revolutionary organisation in Russia, the convocation of this body had been its chief immediate demand. The necessity of convening a Constituent Assembly had been the one point on which all parties had been absolutely agreed at the time of the March Revolution, and none of them had insisted on it more emphatically than the Bolsheviks. From that time forward, there had never been on the surface of Russian public life any indication of an organised movement to prevent the Constituent Assembly from meeting or to give it other than a thoroughly democratic character. It was precisely because the entire nation looked to the Constituent Assembly to solve all outstanding problems and clear away all difficulties, that the Bolsheviks systematically accused their opponents of opposition to it. Lenin's main justification of his *coup de main* was the contention that only Bolshevik control could ensure the safety of the Assembly; and the issue of a decree to that effect was one of his first acts as President of the Council of People's Commissaries. There seemed, therefore, reason to hope that, before he and his disciples could have time to destroy the Russian Army and do irreparable damage, the Constituent Assembly would meet, and impose its veto with an authority recognised by the whole of Russia.

The elections had been timed to take place on November 25, and the Assembly was to meet on December 13. These dates had been finally decided on in the middle of October, after several postponements. The delay had been in the nature of things, and there is no ground whatever for supposing that either the Lvoff or the Kerenski Government in any way retarded the preparations. On the contrary, they must have realised at a very early date that until the Assembly met there could be no political stability in Russia. But the circumstances were

difficult at the best. Equal, direct and secret suffrage (on the proportional system) had been given to all persons of both sexes above the age of twenty. This necessitated an enormous work in the compiling of registers and the preparation of the necessary materials. Even in one of the western European states, with its efficient administrative machinery and complete system of communications, the task would have been a laborious one, and in Russia a considerable proportion of the population live more than a hundred miles from a railway. Moreover the machinery of administration had been thrown out of gear by the Revolution, and in some places actually destroyed. All means of communication and transport were in a state of paralysing disorganisation. Large areas of country were in various stages of revolt, and others were occupied by the enemy. With the best will and the greatest energy in the world, some time would have been required to register the ninety million electors, and to make all the other necessary preparations. The mere provision of a hundred million sets of electoral stationery was no light task for Russia as she was then situated.

There must have been a serious error somewhere in Lenin's calculation, or he would not have committed himself so deeply to the Constituent Assembly. His soviet-federation form of government was an afterthought, an improvisation. It was a sudden, empirical discovery, made just in time to deal with a very unpleasant situation—the situation of a Constituent Assembly opposed to Lenin. But until it became clear that the Assembly would present a majority hostile to himself, Lenin, like everyone else, treated it as the only authentic and final authority on all Russia's political questions. It was not only in the inaugural apologia of his usurpation that he, so to speak, took the oath to the Constituent. In his agrarian decree, issued immediately afterwards, it was distinctly laid down that the measures proposed had merely a provisional force, pending a definite settlement of the question by the Constituent. What he undoubtedly counted upon was that, by the manipulation of all the levers which the mastery of Petrograd put into his hands, he would be able so to influence the voters as to bring a majority over to his side by the date of the elections.

If Lenin failed to get a majority in the Constituent, it was certainly not for want of trying. Among an electorate the

greater part of which could not read, and practically the whole of which was completely in the dark as to the relations of the various parties to the issues at stake, honesty was probably the worst of all policies; and that is no doubt one of the reasons why the Cadets, who had always prided themselves on the purity of their tactics, secured only fifteen seats out of a total of 800. The Bolsheviks, on the other hand, carried to its logical extreme the principle that the end justifies the means, and were absolutely unembarrassed by any scruples. To them their cause meant a heaven upon earth for the "toilers," the "oppressed" and the "exploited," and was consequently the only standard of morality. Whatever stood in their way was wrong, and whatever helped them forward was right. That, at any rate, seems to have been the standpoint of the few convinced leaders of the Party. The rank and file naturally troubled themselves very little with philosophic justifications; they had been given to understand that they were to get their candidates in by hook or by crook, and that was enough for them.

The work of hocussing the electors was rendered easier by the complexity of the proportional system and the multiplicity of the programmes placed before the country. In Petrograd no fewer than nineteen different lists of candidates were put forward. Most of them came from parties which never had played, and never will play, any perceptible part in Russian politics—the Christian Democrats, the Universalist-Socialists, the Bloc of Ukraine and Hebrew Socialists, the League for the Development of the Nation, the Orthodox Parishioners, the Women's League of Help for the Fatherland, the Federation of Workmen, Soldiers and Peasants, and so on. In the provinces, the bewildered peasant was not as a rule called upon to decide between so many claimants to his confidence; but cases were numerous in which ten or twelve lists were put into his hands. His ignorance of the fundamental principle of democratic franchise was shown by entire villages deciding at public meetings in favour of one particular party, and then appointing committees to see that all the electors voted accordingly.

Such conditions presented boundless possibilities to Bolshevik tactics, and little was left undone to exploit them. Of commonplace intimidation, trickery, cajolery, and bribery, it is

unnecessary to speak; we may confine ourselves to separate mention of a few features less familiar to political history. On the western front, it was necessary to postpone the polling, because the Bolsheviks at Minsk had confiscated all the paper provided for the official purposes of the elections, and had used it for their own electioneering literature. Newspapers in the service of other parties were simply suppressed, or seized and published in the Bolshevik interest. The distribution of the lists of candidates was entrusted to "Militia" (police) or soldiers, and where these had gone over solid to the Bolsheviks, the papers of the other parties were destroyed wholesale, and the electors left with the alternative of voting Leninite or not at all. In one town, the Bolsheviks haled their chief opponents before a "revolutionary tribunal," and demanded that they should be put under an injunction not to appear in "public places" till the elections were over. A great deal was effected through the commissions which managed the elections. Where the Bolsheviks had control over these bodies, they needed merely to tell the illiterate voters which list to put into the urn. At Rostoff-on-Don, one of the Bolshevik election commissioners was shown to be a war prisoner, who had got possession of somebody else's legitimation papers. Perhaps the most remarkable and significant of all the recorded Bolshevik manœuvres was that reported from Mozhaisk. In this neighbourhood, Lenin's supporters spread the rumour that Mihail Alexandrovitch, the brother of Nicholas II, was on their list of candidates, and that it was their intention to restore the monarchy and place him on the throne. It is said that many of the older men and women of the district were heard bitterly lamenting that they had been told of this too late, and, in ignorance of the true nature of the Bolsheviks, had given their votes to other parties. Bolshevik terrorism was blamed for the high proportion of abstention at the elections—at large towns like Samara, Penza and Rostoff-on-Don, only between 30 and 40 per cent. of the electorate went to the poll, and 50 or 60 per cent. of participation was considered quite a high rate. Probably, however, the true explanation for the indifference of the population is to be found in the remark overheard in a tram at Nizhni-Novgorod: "What's the use of voting? Last summer we voted for the Municipal Council, and what is the result? Did they give us

bread? Let them give us bread, and then we'll vote for anyone they like."

Thus what Lenin and his disciples could do, by fair means or foul, to bring a majority of the electorate over to their side, they did with all their might; but, in the time at their disposal, they could not uproot the tradition established among the peasantry by the Social-Revolutionaries, and the first election returns made it practically certain that this Party would have an absolute majority in the Assembly. Even in their own particular stronghold, Petrograd, the town that had made the "November Revolution," the Bolsheviks were in an absolute minority, though their list received a much larger number of votes than that of any other party—424,000, as compared with 246,000 given for the Cadets, and 152,000 for the Social-Revolutionaries. And it may be noted in passing, that the Mensheviks, whose leaders, Cheidze, Skobeleff, and Tseretelli, had been so prominent and influential in the early stages of the Revolution, now practically disappeared from the scene, in Petrograd at any rate, while the veteran Plehanoff, the founder of the Social-Democratic Party, induced only 1,823 electors to vote for that "unity" or "concord" aimed at by the very designation of his new group. One thing was certain, that if the Constituent Assembly was to assume the role in national affairs which everyone, including the Bolsheviks themselves, had attributed to it, there would be a speedy end to the supremacy of Lenin and his particular type of "proletarian dictatorship."

It was in this dilemma that Lenin invented the soviet form of government, or rather decided that the system by which the soviets had asserted their domination should be perpetuated as the permanent sovereignty of Russia. This was another example of the unhesitating opportunism which has marked every step of Lenin's progress. He had already stolen the Social-Revolutionaries' agrarian programme; he now stole an idea which, in the past, had been another of the distinguishing features of their doctrine. For the soviet system undoubtedly has the same theoretical basis as anarcho-communism, which was one of the evolutionary steps of Social-Revolutionary Socialism. Marxian socialism, which Lenin had all along professed, had, on the other hand, always been understood as a highly-centralised system, that could only be put into force after the control of

industry had been concentrated in a comparatively small number of hands.

The only real case against the Constituent Assembly was that it meant an end to the power of Lenin, but some presentable justification for his change of view was necessary. It was found in the principle of the " dictatorship of the proletariat," which was one of the fundamental ideas of Marx. Lenin's interpretation of this principle against the Constituent was not original. In his analysis of socialism, which was first published many years ago, Professor Werner Sombart speaks of " the dictatorship of the proletariat, that is the idea that the transition from the capitalistic to the socialistic state must be effected by the proletariat seizing political power and decreeing the laws and administrative measures necessary to found the new social state." And the same writer traces back the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat to Robespierre's words in the report of 17 Pluv., Année II. : " It is said that the Terror is the weapon of despotism. Yes, as the axe which shines in the hands of the heroes of freedom resembles that which was wielded by the myrmidons of the tyrant. The revolutionary Government is the despotism of freedom over tyranny."

In one of his speeches at that time, Lenin explicitly advocated a dictatorship of the proletariat of this kind. " All socialists," he said, " recognise that a transition stage between capitalism and socialism is necessary. That stage is a dictatorship." The Constituent obviously could not be the instrument of such a dictatorship, for it represented all classes of the people, and not merely the " toiling and oppressed masses." On the other hand, the soviets were chosen by these masses only, and the other classes had no voice in their election. Clearly then, the soviets were a suitable organ for putting into force that dictatorship of the proletariat which " all socialists " recognised to be a necessary stage of transition between the old and the new order of society. Eventually, Lenin went still further, and evolved the theory that the soviet system was the highest form, indeed the very perfection, of democratic government, because it gave prompt and most authentic expression to the changing will of the people. By this system, he argued, any change of view in the mind of the proletariat would instantaneously be reflected in the composition of the central authority. In short, he declared

a constitution to be good exactly in proportion as it eliminated all safeguards and left the legislature entirely at the mercy of the shifting winds of popular prejudice and passion.

The elections to the Constituent were all to have taken place on November 25; but, owing to local difficulties of various kinds, there were many postponements, and, of course, in the great majority of the constituencies, considerable time was required to collect the voting papers and work out the results. In the first days of December, however, the newly-elected members began to trickle into Petrograd by twos and threes, and the impending opening of the Assembly became the chief object of public interest. The feeling of the population was evidently on the side of the Constituent, and the Bolsheviks began to take precautionary measures to safeguard their interests. All arrangements for the convocation of the Constituent had been placed in the hands of a Special Commission, appointed by the Provisional Government. The members of this Commission were now arrested, and Moses Solomonovitch Ouritski, one of the many leading Bolsheviks of Hebrew race, was installed in its place as "Commissary for the Constituent Assembly," with practically autocratic powers of control over its membership. He began by issuing an order that no deputies would be allowed to take part in the sittings till they had satisfied him of the authenticity of their mandates and received from him a ticket of authorisation. At the same time, Lenin decreed that the Assembly would be allowed to meet only when 400 deputies, that is to say half the total membership, had arrived in Petrograd. A merciless campaign was also set on foot against the Cadets. Three prominent members of the Party, Kokoshkin, Shingareoff, and Prince Dolgoroukoff, were imprisoned, and, a couple of days later, orders were given that all the Cadet leaders without exception should be arrested.

The decisive act in the tragedy of the Constituent Assembly opened on December 11, in the Tauride Palace, which had been the home of the Imperial Duma. From an early hour, the Commissary Ouritski sat in his office in a posture of expectancy, waiting for deputies to present themselves for authorisation; but no one came. All the members with the exception of the Bolsheviks had agreed to ignore Ouritski and the Government he represented. About 1 o'clock, the members of the Commission

of the Constituent, who had now been released, gathered in one of the committee rooms to transact their business; but hardly had they commenced their deliberations when Ouritski appeared on the scene, with the announcement that the Commission could sit only in his presence. The Commission, however, refused either to do this or to leave the building till it had finished its day's business. Ouritski then gave orders that the commissioners should be removed from the Palace; and a detachment of armed soldiers entered the room. However, no attempt at expulsion was made. The soldiers merely stood on guard at the doors for two or three hours, while the commissioners completed their business, and then sheepishly followed them out of the room.

Meanwhile, after a preliminary "private meeting" in another committee room, some fifty or sixty delegates gathered in the Session Hall of the Palace. In spite of their disregard for the claims of Ouritski, they were left to say their say without molestation. The practical business of the sitting was summed up in a resolution to the effect that those present did not yet constitute a quorum, but that they would meet every day till they considered themselves qualified in that respect, and, in the meantime, would do all in their power to expedite the arrival of further delegates in Petrograd.

The most stirring events of the day, however, took place not inside but outside the Tauride Palace. Here throughout the afternoon, endless processions trudged along, bearing banners with inscriptions in honour of the Constituent Assembly. The manifestants included people from all classes and callings. There were deputations from the Municipal Council, the State Bank, and the Ministries. Large contingents were supplied by the political parties. The great Obouhoff Ordnance Factory, where the heavy naval guns were made, and other big industrial concerns sent many thousands of workmen. University students, soldiers, railway servants, employees of the postal and telegraphic services came in organised bodies. A friendly estimate, which no doubt would not minimise, put the total of the manifestants at 200,000. They were nearly all of one mind, for the Bolshevik leaders had mercifully ordered their followers to hold aloof from the manifestations. But for this decree, the opening of the Constituent Assembly would undoubtedly have been the

cause of another day of bloodshed in the streets of Petrograd. Each procession made a halt outside the Palace, and one or other of the members of the Assembly came out and spoke a few words to the demonstrators.

The opening day of the Assembly had been marked by many discouraging omens, but it still left some room for hope. There had been ambiguities and hesitancies, which seemed to indicate that Lenin was still a little uncertain as to the course to pursue. On the morrow, however, all hopes were dispersed, and the iron grip of Bolshevism closed firmly on the Assembly. When the deputies arrived at the Tauride Palace, they found the building and its environment crowded with soldiers, like an armed camp. Pickets had been posted at intervals along the neighbouring streets. The courtyard of the Palace was filled with armed men, and the ramp leading up to the main entrance bristled with machine guns. Inside the Palace, soldiers and sailors were everywhere. In the Session Hall and all the adjoining rooms, they lay about on the floor, and even on the tables. It was characteristic that half of them were from the Lettish and Lithuanian regiments, which were to remain the Pretorian Guard of Bolshevism. The Machine-gun Regiment, which had distinguished itself by insubordination and debauchery from the very beginning of the Revolution, had also furnished a detachment. Many of the "guards" had been brought in from Helsingfors, Abo, and other places outside Petrograd; for the feeling in the metropolitan garrison towards the Constituent was still rather uncertain.

After vain attempts to secure admittance to the committee rooms, the doors of which were all strictly guarded, a few deputies at last found an accessible refuge in the library, where they decided to open a sitting in the Session Hall, for the purpose of ascertaining formally that a quorum of the Assembly was not yet in attendance. Sentries stood before all the entrances to the Session Hall, but a soldier deputy, elected on the front, accosted one of them, a sailor, with the challenge: "I am a member of the Constituent Assembly. You dare not use violence to me." "We have no intention of using violence," replied the sailor awkwardly. "In that case," said the deputy, "you must let me in"; and without meeting opposition, he slipped past the sentry into the hall. A dozen or more of his

colleagues succeeded in following in his footsteps. By similar persuasions, some fifty deputies eventually sécured admission, and, after hurriedly passing a resolution to the effect that they did not constitute a quorum, they adjourned till the following day.

December 13 saw the end of the attempts to convene the Assembly as a free and independent body. This time, even the library was barred by armed soldiers; but through that amenability to persuasion, which is at once a strength and a weakness of the Russian character, the deputies present at last succeeded in arguing their way past the guard. A few minutes later, a young officer presented himself, and proceeded to cross-examine them as to who they were, and what they were doing there. He stated that his instructions were to prevent all meetings within the walls of the building except such as were held by persons provided with the red ticket issued by Ouritski. Told that the deputies would not yield except to armed force, he left the room. He was absent about a quarter of an hour, during which he harangued the soldiers and sailors who filled the corridor outside, telling them that those in the room were persons of unknown identity, falsely pretending to be members of the Constituent Assembly. During his absence, the deputies decided to adjourn till a quorum of the Assembly had arrived in Petrograd, and formally closed their meeting. Those of them who were not occupied in drafting the minutes then wished to leave the room, but found the door locked from the outside. A few minutes later, it was opened by the officer, who entered with an armed detachment. After a protest that they were submitting "only to physical force," the deputies filed from the room, and along the corridors between close ranks of soldiers and sailors, who barred every passage except that leading to the exit from the Palace. One of the members, a venerable peasant, was heard to remark: "For the people's sake, the Social-Revolutionaries perished in dungeons and languished in the wastes of Siberia, dreaming of the day when an authoritative Constituent Assembly would meet; and now that it is here, our children, soldiers and sailors, seize us by the arms and drag us out of it by force."

When the Assembly was finally allowed to meet, on January 18, it was only to hear its own death sentence. A force of 2,000

soldiers and sailors filled the Palace, and warships had been brought up to the Neva quays as a warning against any attempt at a popular rising. The fatal sitting was opened by Sverdloff, the chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets, who demanded that the supremacy of these bodies should be recognised, and all the actions of the Leninite Government approved. As the Assembly declined to agree to this, the Bolsheviks and their temporary allies, the left Social-Revolutionaries, marched out of the Hall in a body. The debate was continued in their absence till 5 o'clock in the morning, when the Assembly hurriedly passed the resolutions which had been laid before it by the Social-Revolutionaries. On the following day, Lenin issued a decree abolishing the Assembly, and the Bolsheviks threw off their last pretences of respect for their old "democratic ideals."

The final suppression of the Assembly was probably without very much influence on the course of the War. By that time, the Brest-Litovsk negotiations were in full swing, the Army was impotent, and the whole nation was so permeated with the idea of peace that there was no longer any possibility of going back. In fact, one of the resolutions or "laws" actually passed by the Assembly recognised the situation to be as indicated, and while "expressing regret that the negotiations with Germany—begun without previous agreement with the Allied democracies—have assumed the character of negotiations for a separate peace," at the same time announced the intention to "accept the armistice which has been entered into," and "to take over the further conduct of the negotiations with the powers at war with us," with the object of attaining "a general democratic peace." The Constituent Assembly might have saved Russia a great deal of suffering: but it was in any case too late to afford much assistance to the Allies.

On the Bolshevik regime it is too early to pass a conclusive judgment. It claims vindication only by final results, and until these are apparent, one cannot say definitely that its theory is either right or wrong. But meanwhile it must be judged by what it has accomplished so far. Of those who have seen its work at close quarters, a few are its enthusiastic admirers, and the rest its bitter foes. The former are those who believe in its promises, the latter those who do not. Its friends point to the

benevolence of its aim, which is to make life brighter for the most hapless class of the human family, and to the disinterested earnestness of some of its leaders. They say that the horrors with which its name is generally associated are at bottom the fault of the Old Regime, which kept the Russian people in ignorance and degradation; that the Terror was not adopted by the Bolsheviks till it had been used against them by the Social-Revolutionaries; that the whole economic fabric of the country had been shaken to its very foundations before Lenin came into power. In short, they urge that what is generally understood to be Bolshevism is not really Bolshevism at all, but the results of extraneous and accidental circumstances which have no necessary connection with its principles.

To the sceptics—those who do not believe in the promises of Bolshevism—it can only appear as one of the greatest scourges that have ever afflicted humanity. To everything that was bad in the Tsardom, it has paid the tribute of imitation; and the wrongs of the new tyranny have been infinitely worse than those of the old. No Tsar of modern times ruled so autocratically as Lenin, and none was more ruthless. The Tsars restricted freedom of speech—Lenin has absolutely abolished it. The Tsars suppressed this or that newspaper—Lenin allows none which opposes his views. The Tsars put people to death for offences which existed only in Russia—Lenin has massacred thousands against whom no charge at all was brought. No more damning judgment could be passed upon Lenin than the words he used against the Tsars for doing what he has now done himself. And, by a strange irony of fate, he attempted to justify his actions by exactly the same pleas as have always been put forward by tyrants when they have deigned to put forward any at all. The people, he said, were not yet capable of distinguishing between truth and falsehood, so that authority had to decide what they might hear and what they might read.

To the writer of these lines, socialism is the most dangerous of all the delusions under which masses of men and women have suffered, and Bolshevism, as its most extreme, is also its worst form. His judgment may, therefore, appear biassed, so let us hear a less impeachable witness. Bolshevism is an offshoot of German socialism, and professes to be the true interpretation of Marx. It might be expected that, if anyone, the German

Socialists would do it justice. What, then, do they say about it? On the eve of their own revolution, the *Sozialistische Korrespondenz* issued the following statement:—

We demand democracy based on the principle of the equality of all men. Bolshevism sets up a dictatorship resting on the inequality and absolute rightlessness of those who do not belong to it.

We demand the right of free opinion. In Bolshevik Russia, every non-Bolshevik, even a democrat or socialist, is outlawed as a "counter-revolutionary."

We demand a justice resting on humane sentiments. Bolshevism perpetrates mass-executions, and has even reintroduced torture.

We demand the inviolability of the individual, and of his rights of property in objects of daily use, which belong to him even in a socialistic state. In Bolshevist Russia, there are no legal guarantees against the arbitrary acts of a ruling clique; and not only are land, factories, mines, &c., expropriated, but even the coat, the bed, the armchair of the individual.

We want to transform the capitalistic economic order into a socialistic one. Bolshevism has made out of the economic life of Russia a desert in which nothing grows.

We demand the right of everyone to work and to just pay. Bolshevism has to a large degree "sabotaged" the factories, so that there is neither work nor wages.

We demand bread for the masses, but Bolshevism cannot even guarantee them the exiguous ration of the days of capitalism.

We demand the education of the people to a higher intellectual culture. This, however, can only be realised on the basis of material welfare. Nothing is effected by merely putting up a statute to Marx, as the Bolsheviks have done.

That is the picture of the Bolshevik performance as it appears to a neutral socialist observer. But perhaps we are still only in the preliminary stages. Lenin has prophesied that all the nations will rise in revolution; and time alone can test the accuracy of his prediction. In the meantime, those who do not relish the prospect which he holds out may comfort themselves by a glance back over seventy years. The revolutionary leaders of 1848 also thought that the time had come for the triumph of their ideas and the "dictatorship of the proletariat" throughout Europe; but Engels, in a retrospect of the events of that agitated year, was compelled to confess: "History has proved that we, and all who thought like us, were wrong."

APPENDIX

MR. KERENSKI'S VERSION OF THE KORNILOFF AFFAIR

MR. KERENSKI'S *The Prelude to Bolshevism: the Korniloff Rising*, which was published after the main text of this book was already in type, does not affect the main substance of my Chapter XVI. In fairness to Mr. Kerenski, however, notice must be taken of those of his statements which conflict with the evidence on which that chapter was based.

To disentangle Mr. Kerenski's case is by no means a simple matter. As the foundation of his book, he has taken the shorthand transcript of his deposition before the Commission of Enquiry, which investigated the Korniloff affair. Into this deposition he has sandwiched a large number of supplementary, explanatory and argumentative notes, which vary in length from a few lines to many pages. As members of the Commission were constantly reverting to points which had already been dealt with, Mr. Kerenski's evidence on certain phases of the affair is scattered about all over his book, and there is no index to help the reader to reassemble it.

The conversation in the train on the way back to Petrograd from Headquarters (page 253 of this book) is of importance, because, according to Filonenko, on that occasion, he and Savinkoff "several times made representations to the Minister President on the necessity of forming a strong authority, and in particular raised the question of a small War Cabinet within the body of the Provisional Government for the prompt administration of everything connected with the War." This idea, Filonenko says, "found the full sympathy of Kerenski."

Two passages of Mr. Kerenski's evidence deal with this incident. At first he said: "After the conference of July 29, conversations did take place in the railway car. I do not remember whether Filonenko was present or not." To a

further question he replied: "I do not at all remember what happened in the train." At a later stage of the enquiry, he was asked with reference to July 29: "Did not Filonenko propose the formation of a special War Cabinet within the Provisional Government?" To this he replied: "Not to my recollection. I had no conversation whatever with him."

With regard to the circumstances of Korniloff's appointment to the Chief Command, Mr. Kerenski denies that the General received absolute freedom in the choice of his immediate subordinates. All he received, Mr. Kerenski says, was "the right of appointment to commanding posts, subject to the presentation of candidates for confirmation by the Supreme Authority." Korniloff's schedule of conditions, Mr. Kerenski treated as "mere literature," and could not deal with "otherwise than by locking it up in my desk." The appointments of Korniloff as Commander-in-Chief and of Cheremisoff as his successor on the South-west Front were made simultaneously on July 31. Therefore Mr. Kerenski saw in Korniloff's refusal to take up his post till the appointment of Cheremisoff had been revoked "a serious breach of military duty," and proposed the immediate dismissal of the new Commander-in-Chief, without, however, securing a majority for this step in the Cabinet. Mr. Kerenski adds: "I plead guilty for not having finally insisted on Korniloff's immediate dismissal, but . . . . . those were such terrible times, there was such sore need of a strong personality at the front."

In his introduction, Mr. Kerenski says that during his private conversation with Korniloff on August 16 (page 255), the latter "spoke about a dictatorship as about a possibility which might become a necessity." Mr. Kerenski's actual evidence on this incident contains no mention of a "dictatorship," but he admitted having said to Korniloff: "Well, suppose I retire, what would be the outcome?" In an added note, he says: "I remember how, following my question about the dictatorship, Korniloff answered thoughtfully: 'Well, maybe we shall have to make up our minds even to that.' 'Well,' I remarked, 'and that will lead eventually to a fresh massacre of officers.' 'I foresee that possibility, but at least those who are left alive will have the soldiers in hand,' Korniloff replied with decision." These are the only indications as to the nature of this conversa-

tion to be found in Mr. Kerenski's book. The version given in Chapter XVI is taken from Korniloff's statement.

Mr. Kerenski denies that at the Cabinet meeting held after their private conversation (page 256) he cautioned Korniloff in a whisper against discussing military secrets. In his evidence, he said: "He (Korniloff) reported at great length on the question of the proposed offensive operation on the South-western Front, and on a whole series of other measures, and afterwards he began to talk of various technical matters in detail. Then I turned to him and said: 'General, these details are not at all necessary here.' That is all." Commenting in an interpolated note on Korniloff's and Savinkoff's statements he says: "From these two depositions, it would appear that Korniloff did not receive a note from Savinkoff, and that I did receive such a note from the latter, which note I immediately tore up (I remember so much)."

In one of his supplementary notes, Mr. Kerenski says that the only point in the report submitted by Korniloff on August 23 (page 257) of which he had previous knowledge was that relating to "the introduction of military courts-martial at the rear." The report contained "two entirely new clauses," namely, those proposing that the factories working for the national defence and the railways should be placed under military control. In his evidence, Mr. Kerenski said: "On that day (August 23), we—that is to say Nekrasoff, Tereshchenko and myself—insistently asked Korniloff not to touch upon these clauses at the Moscow Conference At the same time, we said that if he made these clauses public, there would simply be a great scandal." However, at a later stage of his examination, being asked whether he expressed his opinion on the report at the meeting of Korniloff with the three Ministers, Mr. Kerenski said: "No; I believe only two people spoke, one of them being Nekrasoff; I kept silent." Asked whether he had said what he thought of the report during the day, Mr. Kerenski replied: "All of us said the same thing; on the military section most of the projected clauses were just and acceptable, but the form was impossible." Mr. Kerenski added that on August 24, Korniloff's first report (*i.e.*, without the clauses dealing with the factories and the railways) was submitted to the Cabinet, and "it was found possible to put the question as to the

measures in the Army thus: That the Provisional Government accepted the substance of Korniloff's first report in my exposition of it."

There are considerable discrepancies in the evidence as to the purpose for which Mr. Kerenski wished to have a cavalry corps sent to Petrograd (page 260). Savinkoff distinctly states that the corps was required "for the effectual realisation of a state of war in Petrograd, and for the defence of the Provisional Government against any kind of attempts upon it, and in particular against attempts by the Bolshevists." Mr. Kerenski said in his evidence: "It had never been definitely laid down for what purpose these troops might be needed. Generally, in case of any emergency. For the Government needed support. It was not even known against which side they would have to be used. I did not even think there would arise a necessity for using them." Replying to a question he said: "Here, the question of calling up troops against the Bolshevists had never been so concretely formulated by the Provisional Government. No such great importance was attached here to the Bolshevists as at the Stavka (Headquarters); they were a mere incident." Later, asked whether Savinkoff did not speak to him as to "the necessity of bringing up troops in connection with the possible or expected Bolshevist rising," Mr. Kerenski answered: "Possibly. The subject was discussed."

Before the Commission, Mr. Kerenski gave the following account of the first visit paid to him by V. N. Lvoff (page 264):—

He did not talk much about his "schemes" or the changes in the Provisional Government, but tried to persuade me that my "song was sung," that I had no support anywhere, because I was now "hated by the Right," and that I had "lost my influence" with the democracy owing to my resolute repressive measures against and persecutions of the Bolsheviks, that I and my Provisional Government had "lost our footing," that support must be found, that he could help, that Cabinet changes were necessary, and that elements even more moderate than the Cadets ought to be included. As this happened soon after the Moscow Conference, I considered it natural for a man to come and express such opinions. I answered in general terms that I was a convinced adherent of coalition Government, &c. I do not now remember the details of the conversation, but the gist of it was that V. Lvoff tried to show that I "had no support," whereas he had something or somebody

behind his back. He kept on repeating: "We can do this. We can do that." I asked him who "we" were, what he could do, in whose name he was speaking. To these questions he replied: "I have no right to tell you. I am only authorised to ask you whether you are willing to enter into discussion." I could see from what he said that he came on behalf of a *distinct group*. There was no doubt about it. More than once he hinted that he had just come from somewhere, and that he must return the same day, but "before leaving I must have your answer." He emphasized the following: "I am instructed to ask you whether you are willing or not to include new elements in the Provisional Government, and to discuss the question with you." I replied: "Before I give you an answer, I must know with whom I am dealing, who are those you represent, and what they want." "They are public men." "There are various kinds of public men," said I. At last I said: "Well, supposing I have no support, what can you offer, what are the actual forces you rely upon? I can imagine of whom your group consists, and who those public men are." He then hinted that I was mistaken, that "they" were backed by a *considerable force* which nobody could afford to ignore.

To the question of the Chairman: "How did he end the conversation?" Mr. Kerenski replied: "He did not. He asked: 'Will you negotiate if I tell you?' I replied: 'Tell me more definitely what you want to learn from me and why.' He said good-bye and departed, and that was the end of it. Headquarters were never even mentioned." Replying to a further question, Mr. Kerenski said:—

When he first came we talked about the inclusion of new elements to widen the range of influence of the Provisional Government, and when I asked: "Who can raise the authority of the Government; what is the use of appointing two or three more Ministers?" he answered with a smile: "Oh well, you may be mistaken; *there are forces behind us*." "What forces?" "You don't know, but there are." This was what particularly impressed me. Lvoff seemed to know something. He was not talking for himself.

In a long interpolation to his evidence, Mr. Kerenski writes: "V. Lvoff himself, after a series of his muddled semi-truthful or not entirely mendacious statements, although he affirmed in his last deposition (which was entirely directed against myself) that I gave him a commission, admitted, however, that it was not to make any offers or proposals on my behalf, but to find out the *desires* of others—the desires of certain political groups, including that of Headquarters."

Evidently, Mr. Kerenski is of opinion that Lvoff was merely the tool of Aladyin and Dobrinski, who were in collusion with Zavoiko. Mr. Kerenski says: "What was Lvoff's position in that crowd, and to what extent he was initiated into their plans, I have not yet succeeded in ascertaining. It seems, however, fairly certain that he was not one of the chief conspirators, but was one of the men whom the principals used for such services as they were supposed to be fit for."

According to Mr. Kerenski's version of the events, Dobrinski came to Moscow from Mohileff on August 30 with the news that "Headquarters have decided to insist on reforms." Dobrinski and Aladyin then "to some extent initiated Lvoff into their plans," and persuaded him to undertake the mission to Petrograd. "At that time," writes Mr. Kerenski, "feverish preparations went on, and a man was urgently required for a special task: to contrive to see me otherwise than through the usual channels of our communications with Headquarters (through Savinkoff or Baranovski). Aladyin knew by his own experience that men of his kind have no chance of being admitted to me personally. An attempt of the same Aladyin to obtain an interview with me through an intermediary fell through: Prince G. E. Lvoff, to whom Aladyin applied a short time before V. N. Lvoff's arrival, asking the Prince to obtain my consent to see him (Aladyin) on a matter of exceptional importance, refused Aladyin's request."

Of his crucial second interview with V. N. Lvoff on September 8 (pages 266 and 267), Mr. Kerenski prints both the version which he gave to the Commission and a very much amplified account written later. We may confine ourselves to the latter, of which the essential points are:—

About six o'clock on September 8, V. N. Lvoff came to me in my official study, and after a long conversation about my "doom," and about his anxiety to "save" me and so forth, said in so many words that—General Korniloff declared to me (Kerenski) through him (Lvoff) that no assistance whatever would be given to the Provisional Government in its struggle with the Bolsheviks, and that in particular Korniloff would not answer for my life anywhere but at Headquarters; that the continuance of the Provisional Government in power could no longer be permitted; that Gen. Korniloff invited me to urge the Provisional Government to transfer its powers that very day

to the Generalissimo, and, pending the formation by him of its new Cabinet, to hand over the direction of current affairs to the Assistant Ministers and to proclaim martial law throughout Russia. As to myself and Savinkoff, we were urged to go away that night to Headquarters, where ministerial portfolios awaited us—for Savinkoff the position of War Minister, for me that of Minister of Justice.

To this V. N. Lvoff added that this last condition—that is to say, our going to Headquarters and the rest—was put to me privately, and was not to be disclosed at the session of the Provisional Government.

This communication was an absolute surprise to me, and especially the fact that it came from the lips of V. N. Lvoff, because his name had never before been mentioned in any of the reports or statements concerning the plot which I had in my possession.

At first I burst out laughing. "Don't joke, V. N.," I said.

"There is no time to joke; the situation is very serious," Lvoff answered; and, with extreme excitement and evident sincerity, he began to urge me to save my life. For that there was "only one way, to yield to Korniloff's demands." He was beside himself.

. . . . As soon as I had got over my first surprise, or rather shock, I decided to test Lvoff once more, to verify his statements and then to act.

Calming myself a little, I deliberately pretended that I had no longer any doubt or hesitation, and that personally I had decided to agree.

I began to explain to Lvoff that I could not convey such a communication to the Provisional Government without proofs. He reassured me, saying that every word that he had uttered was true. At last I asked him to put into writing all Korniloff's points.

. . . Lvoff finished writing, and, giving me the document, said: "That is very good; now everything will end peacefully. People *there* think it very important that the powers of the Provisional Government should be transferred legally. Well, and as for you," he concluded, "will you go to Headquarters?"

I do not know why, but this question stabbed me, put me on my guard, and almost involuntarily I replied: "Certainly not. Do you really think that I can be Minister of Justice under Korniloff?"

Here something strange happened. Lvoff sprang up; his face brightened as he exclaimed: "You are right! You are right! Don't go there. A trap is set for you; he will arrest you. Go away—somewhere far away; but get out of Petrograd you must. They hate you." Lvoff said this excitedly.

We then "decided" that Korniloff should learn by telegraph of my resignation, and that I should not go to Headquarters.

"And what will happen, V. N.," I said, "if you are mistaken or if they have played a practical joke on you? What position will you be in then? You know what you have written is very serious." Lvoff began energetically to prove that it was not a mistake, that it could not be a joke, that it was indeed a very serious matter, and that "Gen. Korniloff would never take back his words."

Later that evening, Lvoff repeated his statements in the hearing of a third person, who was hidden in the War Minister's study and of whose presence he had no knowledge. Mr. Kerenski prints the evidence of this hidden auditor, which in all essentials corroborates his own.

In the course of examination, Mr. Kerenski repeatedly affirmed that what Lvoff delivered to him was an "ultimatum." A member of the Commission asked: "So Lvoff set out these points not as an opinion of Korniloff, not as an advice, but as a demand, an ultimatum?" To this Mr. Kerenski replied: "There was no question of any opinions; it was a demand, an ultimatum." Attention was then drawn to the fact that Lvoff's written statement began with the words: "Gen. Korniloff proposes." To this Mr. Kerenski remarked: "If I had noticed it, I should have said to him: 'Write it down just as you said it.' But I merely folded the paper and put it in my pocket."

With respect to the attempts on September 9 and 10 to settle the Korniloff affair by mediation (pages 269-271), Mr. Kerenski is not quite clear. In an interpolation, he admits that on the evening of September 9, after the telegraphic conversation with Korniloff, Savinkoff insisted on the necessity "of attempting to clear up the misunderstanding and of entering into negotiations with Gen. Korniloff." But he says in the same interpolation: "I myself was of opinion that it was not a 'conflict' between two equal parties, but a crime; it ought emphatically to be settled by peaceful means; not, however, by negotiations with the guilty General, but by the will of the Provisional Government, to which the Commander-in-Chief, who had failed in his trust, should submit immediately. From the moment when my conversation with Korniloff satisfied me as to his plans, *nobody and nothing* could make me abandon this point of view." Nevertheless, he suggested to the "mediators,"

that "they should themselves 'negotiate' with Gen. Korniloff; that is to say, I asked them to use all their influence with him to induce him to submit to the Provisional Government before it was too late, before his action had led to serious consequences for himself personally and above all for the State. But it was impossible for me to allow any *pourparlers* between Korniloff and the Provisional Government."

In his actual evidence, Mr. Kerenski made the following statement with regard to the request of the Cossack leaders, that they should be allowed to go to Headquarters to mediate: "They came with an intimation that they should like to go to Headquarters with a view to mediation, in order to try to arrange the relations with Korniloff. I repeated that I would grant the permission required, but when on the next day, September 10, there followed on the part of Korniloff not only an open act of disobedience, but also a declaration that we, the Provisional Government, were German agents, I refused permission for the Cossacks to start for Headquarters, saying that after the conditions now created any mediations or journeyings for arranging the affair had become impossible, since the matter had now passed into quite a different stage." Mr. Kerenski hints that his change of attitude towards the Cossack delegation was due to his perception that they had definitely taken Korniloff's side, and "were simply anxious to reach Headquarters *in time*." He admits that even as late as September 11, "part of the Government expressed itself for the necessity of a solution by compromise, in view of 'the correlation of forces' and of the necessity to avoid commotions." Further he stated in his evidence: "As for Tereshchenko, he was at one time really in favour of an agreement. Indeed, he even said at one of the meetings of the Provisional Government that the business ought to be settled in such a way that both Kerenski and Korniloff should be set aside, thus satisfying both parties by a mutual sacrifice."

Of the existence of a "conspiracy," Mr. Kerenski is absolutely convinced, though he admits the difficulty of proving it. Thus he replied to the question of one of the members of the Commission: "I think it will prove very difficult and perhaps impossible for the Commission of Enquiry to establish the actual trend of the events, and the very persons who took part in organising the Korniloff movement. . . But personally I

have no doubt whatever that behind Korniloff there was at work a quite definite group of persons, not only united together for the preparation of the planned conspiracy, but also in possession of large financial means and in a position to draw amounts from the banks. For me there is no doubt whatever about this."

The grounds of Mr. Kerenski's assurance are not obvious to his readers. He says much about "information" which he received, but in most cases specifies neither its source nor its nature. Thus he tells us: "Information about conspiracies began to reach the Provisional Government as early as July, 1917 (old style)." And again: "About the end of July, I received precise information of a plot which was being prepared among the officers and had its centres in Petrograd and at Headquarters." In reply to a question from the Commission, he said: "There was not merely information that something was being hatched, but concrete data . . . a whole pile of information was amassed, and even before the Moscow Conference I expected that some developments were inevitable." Further we read: "With regard to a conspiracy being organized by a group of military men, of officers, we had very exact information, and we were watching its participators as far as we could do so." But the nearest approach to such "information" with which Mr. Kerenski provides us is this: "We received a communication from the Moscow cadets to the effect that an officer had warned them that during the Moscow Conference a dictatorship would be proclaimed." Moreover, Mr. Kerenski admits that the only arrests made in consequence of this "information" were unjustified, for he says: "At this time" (that is, just prior to the trouble with Korniloff) "occurred the arrests of the Grand Dukes, but it appeared that we were purposely put on the wrong track."

As to the nature of the "conspiracy," Mr. Kerenski also has no doubts. Before the Commission he said: "I cannot, naturally, furnish at this moment proofs satisfactory for enquiry purposes, but to me the whole plan is clear." There was to be "not a mass movement but a *coup d'etat*," the object of which was "to seize power and arrest the Provisional Government." In fact, "the aim of the movement was a military dictatorship." And "later, it became the special aim of certain groups to 'remove' me by some means, however drastic." At the same

time, "one thing stood out clearly: the aim of the counter-revolution was not the re-establishment of the fallen dynasty."

Mr. Kerenski's indications as to the personality of the conspirators are rather vague. Thus he says: "Personally, I am convinced (under the conditions of our detective system it will perhaps be impossible to prove it) that a portion of the Officers' League, and especially of its Main Committee, was very closely connected with all the attempts, including this one." In particular, he suspects the Chairman of the Main Committee of the League, Novosiltseff, as to whose "participation in the Korniloff movement" he has "no doubt." In another passage he says: "A portion of the Council of the Union of the Cossack Armies possessed moreover a great deal of 'information' as well. I have no doubt whatever about that, too; but there again the thing cannot be proved formally." Then we read: "According to trustworthy information, de Semitter (a colonel of the General Staff at the Capital) was one of the chief agents of the conspiracy at Petrograd. There 'passed' through his hands those persons who were sent from Headquarters and from the front to the Capital 'for purposes of co-operation.' He kept one of the secret rendezvous where the conspirators 'reported,' and so on. The moment before the competent authorities arrived at his flat to search it and arrest him he started for Finland."

While admitting that "it is difficult to determine exactly when Korniloff became a conscious participant in the conspiracy," and that his name cropped up in the "information" only "later, not long before the events actually took place," Mr. Kerenski nevertheless says: "On the strength of the materials known to me, the most active adherent at Headquarters, if not the initiator, of the idea of the individual dictatorship must be recognised to be Korniloff himself."

Mr. Kerenski absolutely acquits Savinkoff of all complicity in the plot. "I am convinced," he says, "that the events of September 9 and 10 had been prepared behind Savinkoff's back." In his opinion, what Savinkoff wanted was "at all costs to unite Korniloff and me in spite of ourselves." At the same time, Mr. Kerenski writes of Savinkoff's action: "Being *utterly unconscious* of the character and real intentions of Korniloff, he unwittingly assisted him in his struggle for power by putting forward Korniloff as a political force with rights equal

to those of the Government. He is also guilty of having, while at Headquarters, exceeded the powers granted to him, and of having, besides acting in the capacity of my nearest assistant, also undertaken special political tasks on his own account."

With regard to his Chief Commissary, Mr. Kerenski is not so certain. He writes: "As for the degree of participation of Filonenko himself in the conspiracy, I am rather inclined to think that he, as well as Loukomski, for instance, was dragged into the affair at the last moment, being placed before the fact and bound by his boastful loquacity. It is not impossible, however, that a careful judicial enquiry would have revealed that Filonenko had been more deeply concerned in the case. At any rate it is very difficult to clear up Filonenko's part at Headquarters."

Mr. Kerenski quotes as "very exact" the following report of a conversation which he had with Savinkoff and Filonenko after the latter's return from Headquarters on September 10:

M. Filonenko then related that, after the arrival of V. N. Lvoff, he had discussed with Korniloff a plan of a dictatorship in the form of a "Council of Defence," composed of the following persons: Gen. Korniloff, A. F. Kerenski, Savinkoff, and himself. He had been discussing that plan in order to counteract the contingency of the sole dictatorship of Korniloff, which would otherwise become *inevitable*.

The Premier was quite astounded at this confession, and said: "How could you, the Supreme Commissary of the Provisional Government, carry on such a conversation with Korniloff! Who authorised you to do so? Gen. Korniloff might now, indeed say that he had been led indirectly into error."

Filonenko endeavoured to prove that he had put forward this plan as a counterpoise to the schemes of the conspirators; that there was no time to be lost; and, lastly, that this conversation had been carried on in the spirit of private relations and personal friendship.

Kerenski replied: "For Gen. Korniloff you were the Supreme Commissary, and this conversation of yours was a conversation between the Supreme Commissary and the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. You appeared to Gen. Korniloff as representative of the Provisional Government, which, however, had never authorised you to make any such declarations."

When Savinkoff and Filonenko pointed out that an essentially similar plan of a Council of Defence had been brought forward by the Provisional Government, A. F. Kerenski replied: "Never, never! A question was raised and a decision

reached as to the formation of a 'Council of Defence' *from the midst* of the Provisional Government itself, for concentrating in its hands the defence of the whole country, after the example of England. But it never occurred to anyone that Gen. Korniloff, a subordinate of the Provisional Government, could ever enter such a Council. You, however, who are a Commissary of the Provisional Government, discussed with Gen. Korniloff, without the Government's knowledge, plans for a Directorate, into which there should enter three persons who are not members of the Provisional Government—yourself, B. V. Savinkoff and Gen. Korniloff—and one person who does form part of the Government, namely, myself, who knew nothing about it."

There are few pieces of evidence which will tell the careful reader more about the Korniloff affair than the above conversation.

Mr. Kerenski's most positive incrimination is this: "After all, the pith of the affair lies, no doubt, in Zavoiko, Aladyin & Co." But he once more gives absolutely no evidence in support of his charge. Unless, indeed, it can be regarded as such evidence that, when at Moscow for the Conference, Aladyin called on Prince Lvoff and said "quite seriously": "Let Kerenski bear in mind that henceforward there must be no changes in the Government without the consent of Headquarters." Aladyin, it should be noted, returned to Russia from England only a few weeks before the Korniloff case arose. Zavoiko Mr. Kerenski speaks of as "one of the shadiest and most repulsive figures among the conspirators." It is not obvious why. Zavoiko was an ex-"Marshal of the Nobility" in one of the districts of Podolia, and had had connections with the naphtha and mineral industries. He met Korniloff in April, and in the following month, at Czernowitz, joined the Daghestan Cavalry Regiment as a volunteer. Shortly afterwards, he was taken on to Korniloff's staff as personal secretary. He had a facile pen, and seems to have been the author of many of Korniloff's army orders and other public utterances.

The despatch of Krymoff and the "Savage" Division to Petrograd (page 263) plays a very large part in Mr. Kerenski's theory of the conspiracy. He says that he made it a "strict condition" that "Krymoff should not be at the head of the detachment, and that the native Caucasian Division should not be sent with it." As has been seen in Chapter XVI, Savinkoff is reported to have stated very positively that the ban on

Krymoff and the "Savage" Division was the result of his independant initiative. Mr. Kerenski himself says: "I recollect Savinkoff telling me, after his return from the Stavka (Headquarters), that he had succeeded in dissuading Korniloff from sending here the 'Savage' Division and appointing Krymoff." Now, if Mr. Kerenski had, as he says, made this a "strict condition," it is hardly likely that Savinkoff would have spoken of "dissuading" Korniloff from disregarding it.

Mr. Kerenski states that Krymoff was given the following commission on leaving Headquarters to join his troops: "On hearing from me (Gen. Korniloff), or from local sources, of the commencement of a Bolshevik rising, advance on Petrograd immediately, occupy the city, disarm those divisions of the Petrograd garrison which join the rising, disarm the population, and *disperse the soviets*." Mr. Kerenski italicises the last three words, and seems to think that an intention to disperse the soviets implies the existence of a conspiracy against the Government. That is, however, certainly a matter on which there is room for a good deal of legitimate difference of opinion. Indeed, exactly the opposite of Mr. Kerenski's apparent view might be argued with considerable plausibility. Mr. Kerenski admits that, at their interview in Petrograd, after the collapse of the Korniloff movement, Krymoff "began by saying that they had no special aims in marching here; that they had been sent at the disposal of the Provisional Government; that they had received orders to aid the Provisional Government; that no one ever dreamed of acting against the Government; that, as soon as the misunderstanding had been cleared, he had given orders to halt." As a set-off to this, Mr. Kerenski gives one of Krymoff's orders to his troops, but this was not issued till September 11, and proves nothing as to intentions prior to that date.

Asked in the Commission whether he was "in possession of any information to the effect that Gen. Korniloff had precisely charged the 3rd Corps with an attack against the Provisional Government," Mr. Kerenski replied: "No, I discerned it in the position that was occupied by Krymoff, and also in the fact that, contrary to the decision arrived at, the 'Savage' Division was on its way to Petrograd. All their calculations were generally based on the 'Savage' Division." It is, in fact,

"only the episode with Krymoff that lifts a little the curtain from the technical side of the case."

Summing up, one may say, with a complete sense of fairness, that, while Mr. Kerenski's book goes far to destroy the theory of his betrayal of Korniloff—which is not advanced in these pages and has never been held by their author—it does very little to support the theory of Korniloff's conspiracy against him. It does, it is true, prove that, after the Tarnopol collapse, there were many Russians, and especially in the higher ranks of the Army, who believed that the country could be saved only by something in the nature of a dictatorship. That opinion had no necessary connection with reaction, counter-revolution or conspiracy. It was legitimate then, and has received further considerable support from subsequent events. Obviously, it was shared by Korniloff, as it was by Savinkoff and Filonenko; and obviously they all three did their utmost to get the Provisional Government round to their way of thinking. But it is a wide step from that to seditious "conspiracy," which Mr. Kerenski most positively alleges, but which he has assuredly failed to prove.

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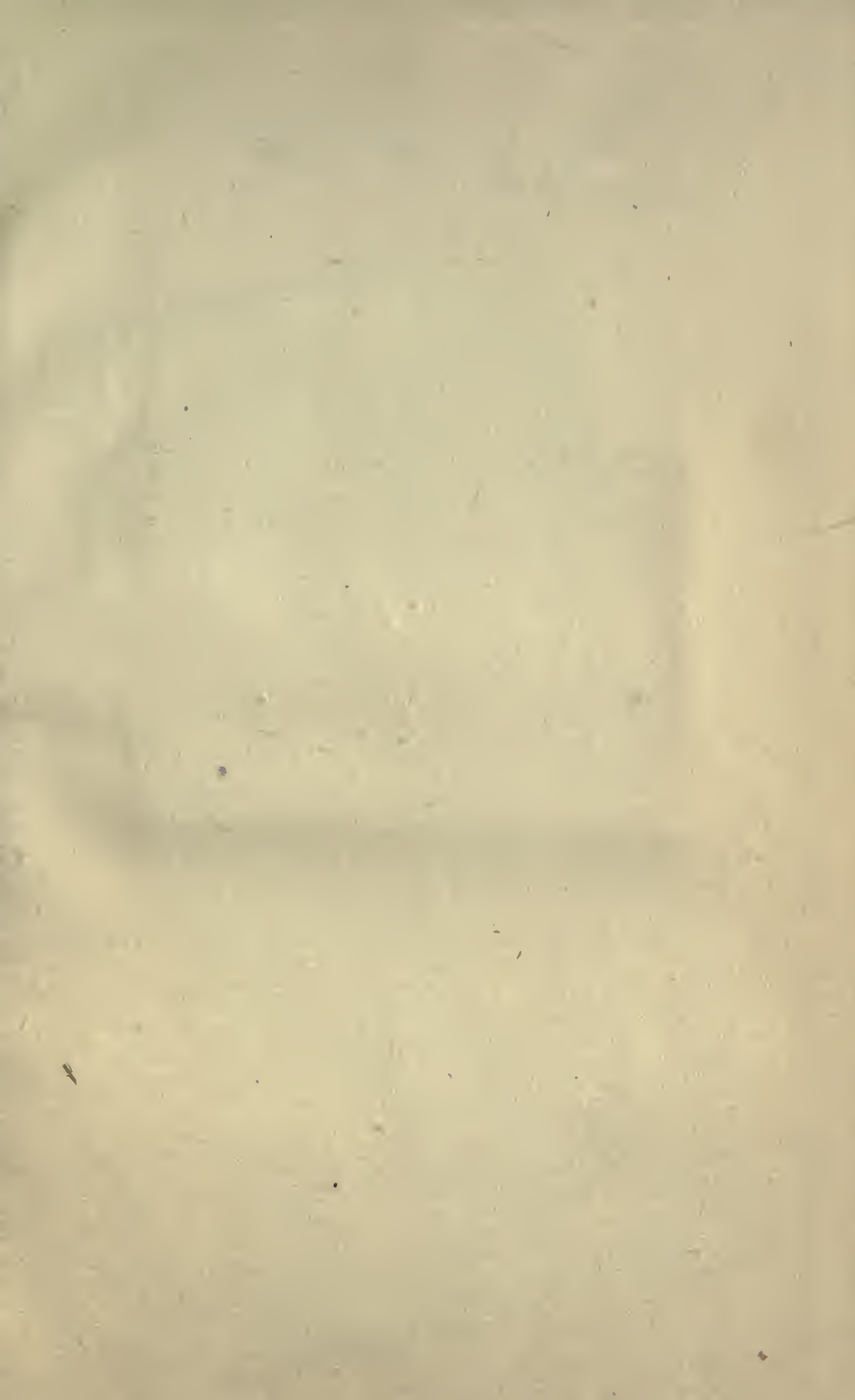
APPROXIMATE PRONUNCIATION OF THE PRINCIPAL RUSSIAN NAMES OCCURRING IN THIS BOOK

THE main secret of the pronunciation of Russian lies in accentuation. In Russian words and names only one syllable is accentuated, but that one distinctly. In the subjoined list the accent is placed after the syllable to be accentuated. From the fact that the syllables are separated by hyphens, it must not be inferred that they are to be pronounced in detachment from one another. The pronunciations given are only approximate, and the system adopted for them lays no claim to scientific consistency. Any attempt to give exact pronunciations would involve difficulties which would more than counterbalance what might be gained in precision.

Name	Pronunciation
Aladyin	Al-ahd′-yin
Alexeieff	Al-eks-eh′-eff
Alexinski	Al-eks-een′-skee
Andronnikoff	An-dron′-ee-koff
Badmaeff	Bad-mah′-eff
Bakounin	Bah-koon′-in
Baranovski	Bah-ran-ov′-skee
Batioushkin	Baht′-yoosh-kin
Bobrinski	Bob′-rin-skee
Bolshevik	Bol-shev-eek′
Bolsheviki	Bol-shev-ee-kee′
Bourtzeff	Boort′-zeff
Boutovitch	Boot-oh′-vitch
Broussiloff	Broos-eel′-off
Cheremisoff	Tcher-ee-mees′-off
Chernoff	Tcher-noff′
Chicherin	Tchee-tcher′-in
Denekin	Den-eek′-in
Dobrinski	Dob-reen′-skee
Dolgoroukoff	Dol-go-roo′-koff
Doubno	Doob′-nah
Doumbadze	Doom-bahd′-zeh
Dournovo	Door-nah-voh′
Dragomiroff	Drag-o-meer′-off
Duma	Doom′-ah
Erandokoff	Er-an-doh′-koff
Filonenko	Fil-on-yen′-ko
Golitzyn	Gal-eet′-zin
Goremykin	Gor-em-wui′-kin
Goshkevitch	Gosh-keh′-vitch
Gourko	Goor′-ko
Goutchkoff	Gootch-koff′
Grodski	Grod′-skee
Hvostoff	Hvos-toff′
Ignatieff	Ig-naht′-yeff
Ivanoff	Ee-vahn′-off
Kaledin	Kah-leh′-din
Kameneff	Kah′-men-eff
Kerenski	Ker-en′-skee
Klimovitch	Klim-oh′-vitch
Kokovtsoff	Kok-ovt′-soff
Konovaloff	Kon-o-vahl′-off
Korniloff	Korn-eel′-off
Kourloff	Koor-loff′
Kouropatkin	Koor-ah-paht′-kin
Krivoshein	Kriv-ah-sheyn′
Krymoff	Kruim′-off
Lenin	Leh′-nin
Loukomski	Loo-kom′-skee
Lvoff	Lvoff
Makaroff	Mak-ahr′-off
Maklakoff	Mak-lah-koff′
Malinovski	Mal-in-ov′-skee
Manasevitch	Man-ah-seh′-vitch
Manikovski	Man-ee-kov′-skee
Manouiloff	Man-oo-eel′-off
Menshevik	Men-shev-eek′
Mensheviki	Men-shev-ee-kee′
Miasoyedoff	Myas-oh-yeh′-doff
Milyoukoff	Mil-yoo-koff′
Nebogatoff	Neb-o-gaht′-off
Nekrasoff	Nek-rah′-soff
Ohrana	Oh-hrah′-nah
Orloff	Or-loff′
Oulianoff	Ool-yahn′-off
Plehanoff	Pleh-hahn′-off
Polivanoff	Pol-ee-vahn′-off
Pourgasoff	Poor-gah′-soff

Pourishkevitch	Poor-ish-keh′-vitch	Soviet	Sov-yet′
Protopopoff	Pro-to-poh′-poff	Stolypin	Stol-ee′-pin
Rasputin	Ras-poot′-in	Sverdloff	Sve[illegible]d-loff′
Rodzianko	Rodz-yahn′-ko	Tatishcheff	Tat-eesh′-tcheff
Romanoff	Rom-ahn′-off	Tereshchenko	Ter-esh′-tchen-ko
Romanovski	Rom-an-ov′-skee	Tolstoi	Tol-stoy′
Rousski	Roos′-kee	Trepoff	Trep′-off
Samarin	Sam-ah′-rin	Tsarevitch	Tsar-yeh′-vitch
Savinkoff	Sah′-vin-koff	Velitchko	Vel-eetch′-ko
Savitch	Sah′-vitch	Vissarionoff	Vis-ar-ee-yohn′-off
Sazonoff	Saz-oh′-noff	Vyroubova	Vwui′-roo-boh-vah
Shcheglovitoff	Shtcheg-lo-veet′-off	Yanoushkevitch	Yan-oosh-keh′-vitch
Shingareoff	Shin-gar-yoff′	Yousoupoff	Yoo-soo′-poff
Skobeleff	Sko′-bel-eff	Zassoulitch	Zas-ool′-itch
Smyslovski	Smwuis-lov′-skee	Zavoiko	Zah-voy′-ko
Souhomlinoff	Soo-hom-leen′-off	Zhilinski	Zhil-een′-skee
Souvorin	Soo-vor′-een	Zinovieff	Zin-ohv′-yeff



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