The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism

By

Bertrand Russell

PREFACE

The Russian Revolution is one of the great heroic events of the world's history. It is natural to compare it to the French Revolution, but it is in fact something of even more importance. It does more to change daily life and the structure of society: it also does more to change men's beliefs. The difference is exemplified by the difference between Marx and Rousseau: the latter sentimental and soft, appealing to emotion, obliterating sharp outlines; the former systematic like Hegel, full of hard intellectual content, appealing to historic necessity and the technical development of industry, suggesting a view of human beings as puppets in the grip of omnipotent material forces. Bolshevism combines the characteristics of the French Revolution with those of the rise of Islam; and the result is something radically new, which can only be understood by a patient and passionate effort of imagination.

Before entering upon any detail, I wish to state, as clearly and unambiguously as I can, my own attitude towards this new thing.

By far the most important aspect of the Russian Revolution is as an attempt to realize Communism. I believe that Communism is necessary to the world, and I believe that the heroism of Russia has fired men's hopes in a way which was essential to the realization of Communism in the future. Regarded as a splendid attempt, without which ultimate

success would have been very improbable, Bolshevism deserves the gratitude and admiration of all the progressive part of mankind.

But the method by which Moscow aims at establishing Communism is a pioneer method, rough and dangerous, too heroic to count the cost of the opposition it arouses. I do not believe that by this method a stable or desirable form of Communism can be established. Three issues seem to me possible from the present situation. The first is the ultimate defeat of Bolshevism by the forces of capitalism. The second is the victory of the Bolshevists accompanied by a complete loss of their ideals and a régime of Napoleonic imperialism. The third is a prolonged world-war, in which civilization will go under, and all its manifestations (including Communism) will be forgotten.

It is because I do not believe that the methods of the Third International can lead to the desired goal that I have thought it worth while to point out what seem to me undesirable features in the present state of Russia. I think there are lessons to be learnt which must be learnt if the world is ever to achieve what is desired by those in the West who have sympathy with the original aims of the Bolsheviks. I do not think these lessons can be learnt except by facing frankly and fully whatever elements of failure there are in Russia. I think these elements of failure are less attributable to faults of detail than to an impatient philosophy, which aims at creating a new world without sufficient preparation in the opinions and feelings of ordinary men and women.

But although I do not believe that Communism can be realized immediately by the spread of Bolshevism, I do believe that, if Bolshevism falls, it will have contributed a legend and a heroic attempt without which ultimate success might never have come. A fundamental economic reconstruction, bringing with it very far-reaching changes in ways of thinking and feeling, in philosophy and art and private relations, seems absolutely necessary if industrialism is to become the servant of man instead of his master. In all this, I am at one with the Bolsheviks; politically, I criticize them only when their methods seem to involve a departure from their own ideals.

There is, however, another aspect of Bolshevism from which I differ more fundamentally. Bolshevism is not merely a political doctrine; it is also a religion, with elaborate dogmas and inspired scriptures. When Lenin wishes to prove some proposition, he does so, if possible, by quoting texts from Marx and Engels. A full-fledged Communist is not merely a man who believes that land and capital should be held in common, and their produce distributed as nearly equally as possible. He is a man who entertains a number of elaborate and dogmatic beliefs--such as philosophic materialism, for example--which may be true, but are not, to a scientific temper, capable of being known to be true with any certainty. This habit, of militant certainty about objectively doubtful matters, is one from which, since the Renaissance, the world has been gradually emerging, into that temper

of constructive and fruitful scepticism which constitutes the scientific outlook. I believe the scientific outlook to be immeasurably important to the human race. If a more just economic system were only attainable by closing men's minds against free inquiry, and plunging them back into the intellectual prison of the middle ages, I should consider the price too high. It cannot be denied that, over any short period of time, dogmatic belief is a help in fighting. If all Communists become religious fanatics, while supporters of capitalism retain a sceptical temper, it may be assumed that the Communists will win, while in the contrary case the capitalists would win. It seems evident, from the attitude of the capitalist world to Soviet Russia, of the Entente to the Central Empires, and of England to Ireland and India, that there is no depth of cruelty, perfidy or brutality from which the present holders of power will shrink when they feel themselves threatened. If, in order to oust them, nothing short of religious fanaticism will serve, it is they who are the prime sources of the resultant evil. And it is permissible to hope that, when they have been dispossessed, fanaticism will fade, as other fanaticisms have faded in the past.

The present holders of power are evil men, and the present manner of life is doomed. To make the transition with a minimum of bloodshed, with a maximum of preservation of whatever has value in our existing civilization, is a difficult problem. It is this problem which has chiefly occupied my mind in writing the following pages. I wish I could think that its solution would be facilitated by some slight

degree of moderation and humane feeling on the part of those who enjoy unjust privileges in the world as it is.

The present work is the outcome of a visit to Russia, supplemented by much reading and discussion both before and after. I have thought it best to record what I saw separately from theoretical considerations, and I have endeavoured to state my impressions without any bias for or against the Bolsheviks. I received at their hands the greatest kindness and courtesy, and I owe them a debt of gratitude for the perfect freedom which they allowed me in my investigations. I am conscious that I was too short a time in Russia to be able to form really reliable judgments; however, I share this drawback with most other westerners who have written on Russia since the October Revolution. I feel that Bolshevism is a matter of such importance that it is necessary, for almost every political question, to define one's attitude in regard to it; and I have hopes that I may help others to define their attitude, even if only by way of opposition to what I have written.

I have received invaluable assistance from my secretary, Miss D.W. Black, who was in Russia shortly after I had left. The chapter on Art and Education is written by her throughout. Neither is responsible for the other's opinions.

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PART I

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF RUSSIA

I

WHAT IS HOPED FROM BOLSHEVISM

To understand Bolshevism it is not sufficient to know facts; it is necessary also to enter with sympathy or imagination into a new spirit. The chief thing that the Bolsheviks have done is to create a hope, or at any rate to make strong and widespread a hope which was formerly confined to a few. This aspect of the movement is as easy to grasp at a distance as it is in Russia--perhaps even easier, because in Russia present circumstances tend to obscure the view of the distant future. But the actual situation in Russia can only be understood superficially if we forget the hope which is the motive power of the whole. One might as well describe the Thebaid without mentioning that the hermits expected eternal bliss as the reward of their sacrifices here on earth.

I cannot share the hopes of the Bolsheviks any more than those of the

Egyptian anchorites; I regard both as tragic delusions, destined to bring upon the world centuries of darkness and futile violence. The principles of the Sermon on the Mount are admirable, but their effect upon average human nature was very different from what was intended. Those who followed Christ did not learn to love their enemies or to turn the other cheek. They learned instead to use the Inquisition and the stake, to subject the human intellect to the yoke of an ignorant and intolerant priesthood, to degrade art and extinguish science for a thousand years. These were the inevitable results, not of the teaching, but of fanatical belief in the teaching. The hopes which inspire Communism are, in the main, as admirable as those instilled by the Sermon on the Mount, but they are held as fanatically, and are likely to do as much harm. Cruelty lurks in our instincts, and fanaticism is a camouflage for cruelty. Fanatics are seldom genuinely humane, and those who sincerely dread cruelty will be slow to adopt a fanatical creed. I do not know whether Bolshevism can be prevented from acquiring universal power. But even if it cannot, I am persuaded that those who stand out against it, not from love of ancient injustice, but in the name of the free spirit of Man, will be the bearers of the seeds of progress, from which, when the world's gestation is accomplished, new life will be born.

The war has left throughout Europe a mood of disillusionment and despair which calls aloud for a new religion, as the only force capable of giving men the energy to live vigorously. Bolshevism has supplied the new religion. It promises glorious things: an end of the

injustice of rich and poor, an end of economic slavery, an end of war. It promises an end of the disunion of classes which poisons political life and threatens our industrial system with destruction. It promises an end to commercialism, that subtle falsehood that leads men to appraise everything by its money value, and to determine money value often merely by the caprices of idle plutocrats. It promises a world where all men and women shall be kept sane by work, and where all work shall be of value to the community, not only to a few wealthy vampires. It is to sweep away listlessness and pessimism and weariness and all the complicated miseries of those whose circumstances allow idleness and whose energies are not sufficient to force activity. In place of palaces and hovels, futile vice and useless misery, there is to be wholesome work, enough but not too much, all of it useful, performed by men and women who have no time for pessimism and no occasion for despair.

The existing capitalist system is doomed. Its injustice is so glaring that only ignorance and tradition could lead wage-earners to tolerate it. As ignorance diminishes, tradition becomes weakened, and the war destroyed the hold upon men's minds of everything merely traditional. It may be that, through the influence of America, the capitalist system will linger for another fifty years; but it will grow continually weaker, and can never recover the position of easy dominance which it held in the nineteenth century. To attempt to bolster it up is a useless diversion of energies which might be expended upon building something new. Whether the new thing will be

Bolshevism or something else, I do not know; whether it will be better or worse than capitalism, I do not know. But that a radically new order of society will emerge, I feel no doubt. And I also feel no doubt that the new order will be either some form of Socialism or a reversion to barbarism and petty war such as occurred during the barbarian invasion. If Bolshevism remains the only vigorous and effective competitor of capitalism, I believe that no form of Socialism will be realized, but only chaos and destruction. This belief, for which I shall give reasons later, is one of the grounds upon which I oppose Bolshevism. But to oppose it from the point of view of a supporter of capitalism would be, to my mind, utterly futile and against the movement of history in the present age.

The effect of Bolshevism as a revolutionary hope is greater outside Russia than within the Soviet Republic. Grim realities have done much to kill hope among those who are subject to the dictatorship of Moscow. Yet even within Russia, the Communist party, in whose hands all political power is concentrated, still lives by hope, though the pressure of events has made the hope severe and stern and somewhat remote. It is this hope that leads to concentration upon the rising generation. Russian Communists often avow that there is little hope for those who are already adult, and that happiness can only come to the children who have grown up under the new régime and been moulded from the first to the group-mentality that Communism requires. It is only after the lapse of a generation that they hope to create a Russia that shall realize their vision.

In the Western World, the hope inspired by Bolshevism is more immediate, less shot through with tragedy. Western Socialists who have visited Russia have seen fit to suppress the harsher features of the present régime, and have disseminated a belief among their followers that the millennium would be quickly realized there if there were no war and no blockade. Even those Socialists who are not Bolsheviks for their own country have mostly done very little to help men in appraising the merits or demerits of Bolshevik methods. By this lack of courage they have exposed Western Socialism to the danger of becoming Bolshevik through ignorance of the price that has to be paid and of the uncertainty as to whether the desired goal will be reached in the end. I believe that the West is capable of adopting less painful and more certain methods of reaching Socialism than those that have seemed necessary in Russia. And I believe that while some forms of Socialism are immeasurably better than capitalism, others are even worse. Among those that are worse I reckon the form which is being achieved in Russia, not only in itself, but as a more insuperable barrier to further progress.

In judging of Bolshevism from what is to be seen in Russia at present, it is necessary to disentangle various factors which contribute to a single result. To begin with, Russia is one of the nations that were defeated in the war; this has produced a set of circumstances resembling those found in Germany and Austria. The food problem, for example, appears to be essentially similar in all three countries. In

order to arrive at what is specifically Bolshevik, we must first eliminate what is merely characteristic of a country which has suffered military disaster. Next we come to factors which are Russian, which Russian Communists share with other Russians, but not with other Communists. There is, for example, a great deal of disorder and chaos and waste, which shocks Westerners (especially Germans) even when they are in close political sympathy with the Bolsheviks. My own belief is that, although, with the exception of a few very able men, the Russian Government is less efficient in organization than the Germans or the Americans would be in similar circumstances, yet it represents what is most efficient in Russia, and does more to prevent chaos than any possible alternative government would do. Again, the intolerance and lack of liberty which has been inherited from the Tsarist régime is probably to be regarded as Russian rather than Communist. If a Communist Party were to acquire power in England, it would probably be met by a less irresponsible opposition, and would be able to show itself far more tolerant than any government can hope to be in Russia if it is to escape assassination. This, however, is a matter of degree. A great part of the despotism which characterizes the Bolsheviks belongs to the essence of their social philosophy, and would have to be reproduced, even if in a milder form, wherever that philosophy became dominant.

It is customary among the apologists of Bolshevism in the West to excuse its harshness on the ground that it has been produced by the necessity of fighting the Entente and its mercenaries. Undoubtedly it

is true that this necessity has produced many of the worst elements in the present state of affairs. Undoubtedly, also, the Entente has incurred a heavy load of guilt by its peevish and futile opposition. But the expectation of such opposition was always part of Bolshevik theory. A general hostility to the first Communist State was both foreseen and provoked by the doctrine of the class war. Those who adopt the Bolshevik standpoint must reckon with the embittered hostility of capitalist States; it is not worth while to adopt Bolshevik methods unless they can lead to good in spite of this hostility. To say that capitalists are wicked and we have no responsibility for their acts is unscientific; it is, in particular, contrary to the Marxian doctrine of economic determinism. The evils produced in Russia by the enmity of the Entente are therefore to be reckoned as essential in the Bolshevik method of transition to Communism, not as specially Russian. I am not sure that we cannot even go a step further. The exhaustion and misery caused by unsuccessful war were necessary to the success of the Bolsheviks; a prosperous population will not embark by such methods upon a fundamental economic reconstruction. One can imagine England becoming Bolshevik after an unsuccessful war involving the loss of India--no improbable contingency in the next few years. But at present the average wage-earner in England will not risk what he has for the doubtful gain of a revolution. A condition of widespread misery may, therefore, be taken as indispensable to the inauguration of Communism, unless, indeed, it were possible to establish Communism more or less peacefully, by methods which would not, even temporarily, destroy the

economic life of the country. If the hopes which inspired Communism at the start, and which still inspire its Western advocates, are ever to be realized, the problem of minimizing violence in the transition must be faced. Unfortunately, violence is in itself delightful to most really vigorous revolutionaries, and they feel no interest in the problem of avoiding it as far as possible. Hatred of enemies is easier and more intense than love of friends. But from men who are more anxious to injure opponents than to benefit the world at large no great good is to be expected.

II

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

I entered Soviet Russia on May 11th and recrossed the frontier on June 16th. The Russian authorities only admitted me on the express condition that I should travel with the British Labour Delegation, a condition with which I was naturally very willing to comply, and which that Delegation kindly allowed me to fulfil. We were conveyed from the frontier to Petrograd, as well as on subsequent journeys, in a special train de luxe; covered with mottoes about the Social Revolution and the Proletariat of all countries; we were received everywhere by regiments of soldiers, with the Internationale being played on the regimental band while civilians stood bare-headed and soldiers at the salute; congratulatory orations were made by local leaders and answered by prominent Communists who accompanied us; the entrances to the carriages were guarded by magnificent Bashkir cavalry-men in resplendent uniforms; in short, everything was done to make us feel like the Prince of Wales. Innumerable functions were arranged for us: banquets, public meetings, military reviews, etc.

The assumption was that we had come to testify to the solidarity of British Labour with Russian Communism, and on that assumption the utmost possible use was made of us for Bolshevik propaganda. We, on the other hand, desired to ascertain what we could of Russian

conditions and Russian methods of government, which was impossible in the atmosphere of a royal progress. Hence arose an amicable contest, degenerating at times into a game of hide and seek: while they assured us how splendid the banquet or parade was going to be, we tried to explain how much we should prefer a quiet walk in the streets. I, not being a member of the Delegation, felt less obligation than my companions did to attend at propaganda meetings where one knew the speeches by heart beforehand. In this way, I was able, by the help of neutral interpreters, mostly English or American, to have many conversations with casual people whom I met in the streets or on village greens, and to find out how the whole system appears to the ordinary non-political man and woman. The first five days we spent in Petrograd, the next eleven in Moscow. During this time we were living in daily contact with important men in the Government, so that we learned the official point of view without difficulty. I saw also what I could of the intellectuals in both places. We were all allowed complete freedom to see politicians of opposition parties, and we naturally made full use of this freedom. We saw Mensheviks, Social Revolutionaries of different groups, and Anarchists; we saw them without the presence of any Bolsheviks, and they spoke freely after they had overcome their initial fears. I had an hour's talk with Lenin, virtually tête-à-tête; I met Trotsky, though only in company; I spent a night in the country with Kamenev; and I saw a great deal of other men who, though less known outside Russia, are of considerable importance in the Government.

At the end of our time in Moscow we all felt a desire to see something of the country, and to get in touch with the peasants, since they form about 85 per cent, of the population. The Government showed the greatest kindness in meeting our wishes, and it was decided that we should travel down the Volga from Nijni Novgorod to Saratov, stopping at many places, large and small, and talking freely with the inhabitants. I found this part of the time extraordinarily instructive. I learned to know more than I should have thought possible of the life and outlook of peasants, village schoolmasters, small Jew traders, and all kinds of people. Unfortunately, my friend, Clifford Allen, fell ill, and my time was much taken up with him. This had, however, one good result, namely, that I was able to go on with the boat to Astrakhan, as he was too ill to be moved off it. This not only gave me further knowledge of the country, but made me acquainted with Sverdlov, Acting Minister of Transport, who was travelling on the boat to organize the movement of oil from Baku up the Volga, and who was one of the ablest as well as kindest people whom I met in Russia.

One of the first things that I discovered after passing the Red Flag which marks the frontier of Soviet Russia, amid a desolate region of marsh, pine wood, and barbed wire entanglements, was the profound difference between the theories of actual Bolsheviks and the version of those theories current among advanced Socialists in this country. Friends of Russia here think of the dictatorship of the proletariat as merely a new form of representative government, in which only working men and women have votes, and the constituencies are partly

occupational, not geographical. They think that "proletariat" means "proletariat," but "dictatorship" does not quite mean "dictatorship." This is the opposite of the truth. When a Russian Communist speaks of dictatorship, he means the word literally, but when he speaks of the proletariat, he means the word in a Pickwickian sense. He means the "class-conscious" part of the proletariat, i.e., the Communist Party.[1] He includes people by no means proletarian (such as Lenin and Tchicherin) who have the right opinions, and he excludes such wage-earners as have not the right opinions, whom he classifies as lackeys of the bourgeoisie. The Communist who sincerely believes the party creed is convinced that private property is the root of all evil; he is so certain of this that he shrinks from no measures, however harsh, which seem necessary for constructing and preserving the Communist State. He spares himself as little as he spares others. He works sixteen hours a day, and foregoes his Saturday half-holiday. He volunteers for any difficult or dangerous work which needs to be done, such as clearing away piles of infected corpses left by Kolchak or Denikin. In spite of his position of power and his control of supplies, he lives an austere life. He is not pursuing personal ends, but aiming at the creation of a new social order. The same motives, however, which make him austere make him also ruthless. Marx has taught that Communism is fatally predestined to come about; this fits in with the Oriental traits in the Russian character, and produces a state of mind not unlike that of the early successors of Mahomet. Opposition is crushed without mercy, and without shrinking from the methods of the Tsarist police, many of whom are still employed at

their old work. Since all evils are due to private property, the evils of the Bolshevik régime while it has to fight private property will automatically cease as soon as it has succeeded.

These views are the familiar consequences of fanatical belief. To an English mind they reinforce the conviction upon which English life has been based ever since 1688, that kindliness and tolerance are worth all the creeds in the world--a view which, it is true, we do not apply to other nations or to subject races.

In a very novel society it is natural to seek for historical parallels. The baser side of the present Russian Government is most nearly paralleled by the Directoire in France, but on its better side it is closely analogous to the rule of Cromwell. The sincere Communists (and all the older members of the party have proved their sincerity by years of persecution) are not unlike the Puritan soldiers in their stern politico-moral purpose. Cromwell's dealings with Parliament are not unlike Lenin's with the Constituent Assembly. Both, starting from a combination of democracy and religious faith, were driven to sacrifice democracy to religion enforced by military dictatorship. Both tried to compel their countries to live at a higher level of morality and effort than the population found tolerable. Life in modern Russia, as in Puritan England, is in many ways contrary to instinct. And if the Bolsheviks ultimately fall, it will be for the reason for which the Puritans fell: because there comes a point at which men feel that amusement and ease are worth more than all other

goods put together.

Far closer than any actual historical parallel is the parallel of Plato's Republic. The Communist Party corresponds to the guardians; the soldiers have about the same status in both; there is in Russia an attempt to deal with family life more or less as Plato suggested. I suppose it may be assumed that every teacher of Plato throughout the world abhors Bolshevism, and that every Bolshevik regards Plato as an antiquated bourgeois. Nevertheless, the parallel is extraordinarily exact between Plato's Republic and the régime which the better Bolsheviks are endeavouring to create.

Bolshevism is internally aristocratic and externally militant. The Communists in many ways resemble the British public-school type: they have all the good and bad traits of an aristocracy which is young and vital. They are courageous, energetic, capable of command, always ready to serve the State; on the other hand, they are dictatorial, lacking in ordinary consideration for the plebs. They are practically the sole possessors of power, and they enjoy innumerable advantages in consequence. Most of them, though far from luxurious, have better food than other people. Only people of some political importance can obtain motor-cars or telephones. Permits for railway journeys, for making purchases at the Soviet stores (where prices are about one-fiftieth of what they are in the market), for going to the theatre, and so on, are, of course, easier to obtain for the friends of those in power than for ordinary mortals. In a thousand ways, the Communists have a

life which is happier than that of the rest of the community. Above all, they are less exposed to the unwelcome attentions of the police and the extraordinary commission.

The Communist theory of international affairs is exceedingly simple. The revolution foretold by Marx, which is to abolish capitalism throughout the world, happened to begin in Russia, though Marxian theory would seem to demand that it should begin in America. In countries where the revolution has not yet broken out, the sole duty of a Communist is to hasten its advent. Agreements with capitalist States can only be make-shifts, and can never amount on either side to a sincere peace. No real good can come to any country without a bloody revolution: English Labour men may fancy that a peaceful evolution is possible, but they will find their mistake. Lenin told me that he hopes to see a Labour Government in England, and would wish his supporters to work for it, but solely in order that the futility of Parliamentarism may be conclusively demonstrated to the British working man. Nothing will do any real good except the arming of the proletariat and the disarming of the bourgeoisie. Those who preach anything else are social traitors or deluded fools.

For my part, after weighing this theory carefully, and after admitting the whole of its indictment of bourgeois capitalism, I find myself definitely and strongly opposed to it. The Third International is an organization which exists to promote the class-war and to hasten the advent of revolution everywhere. My objection is not that capitalism

is less bad than the Bolsheviks believe, but that Socialism is less good, not in its best form, but in the only form which is likely to be brought about by war. The evils of war, especially of civil war, are certain and very great; the gains to be achieved by victory are problematical. In the course of a desperate struggle, the heritage of civilization is likely to be lost, while hatred, suspicion, and cruelty become normal in the relations of human beings. In order to succeed in war, a concentration of power is necessary, and from concentration of power the very same evils flow as from the capitalist concentration of wealth. For these reasons chiefly, I cannot support any movement which aims at world revolution. The damage to civilization done by revolution in one country may be repaired by the influence of another in which there has been no revolution; but in a universal cataclysm civilization might go under for a thousand years. But while I cannot advocate world revolution, I cannot escape from the conclusion that the Governments of the leading capitalist countries are doing everything to bring it about. Abuse of our power against Germany, Russia, and India (to say nothing of any other countries) may well bring about our downfall, and produce those very evils which the enemies of Bolshevism most dread.

The true Communist is thoroughly international. Lenin, for example, so far as I could judge, is not more concerned with the interests of Russia than with those of other countries; Russia is, at the moment, the protagonist of the social revolution, and, as such, valuable to the world, but Lenin would sacrifice Russia rather than the

revolution, if the alternative should ever arise. This is the orthodox attitude, and is no doubt genuine in many of the leaders. But nationalism is natural and instinctive; through pride in the revolution, it grows again even in the breasts of Communists. Through the Polish war, the Bolsheviks have acquired the support of national feeling, and their position in the country has been immensely strengthened.

The only time I saw Trotsky was at the Opera in Moscow. The British Labour Delegation were occupying what had been the Tsar's box. After speaking with us in the ante-chamber, he stepped to the front of the box and stood with folded arms while the house cheered itself hoarse. Then he spoke a few sentences, short and sharp, with military precision, winding up by calling for "three cheers for our brave fellows at the front," to which the audience responded as a London audience would have responded in the autumn of 1914. Trotsky and the Red Army undoubtedly now have behind them a great body of nationalist sentiment. The reconquest of Asiatic Russia has even revived what is essentially an imperialist way of feeling, though this would be indignantly repudiated by many of those in whom I seemed to detect it. Experience of power is inevitably altering Communist theories, and men who control a vast governmental machine can hardly have quite the same outlook on life as they had when they were hunted fugitives. If the Bolsheviks remain in power, it is much to be feared that their Communism will fade, and that they will increasingly resemble any other Asiatic Government--for example, our own Government in India.

III

LENIN, TROTSKY AND GORKY

Soon after my arrival in Moscow I had an hour's conversation with Lenin in English, which he speaks fairly well. An interpreter was present, but his services were scarcely required. Lenin's room is very bare; it contains a big desk, some maps on the walls, two book-cases, and one comfortable chair for visitors in addition to two or three hard chairs. It is obvious that he has no love of luxury or even comfort. He is very friendly, and apparently simple, entirely without a trace of hauteur. If one met him without knowing who he was, one would not guess that he is possessed of great power or even that he is in any way eminent. I have never met a personage so destitute of self-importance. He looks at his visitors very closely, and screws up one eye, which seems to increase alarmingly the penetrating power of the other. He laughs a great deal; at first his laugh seems merely friendly and jolly, but gradually I came to feel it rather grim. He is dictatorial, calm, incapable of fear, extraordinarily devoid of self-seeking, an embodied theory. The materialist conception of history, one feels, is his life-blood. He resembles a professor in his desire to have the theory understood and in his fury with those who misunderstand or disagree, as also in his love of expounding, I got the impression that he despises a great many people and is an intellectual aristocrat.

The first question I asked him was as to how far he recognized the peculiarity of English economic and political conditions? I was anxious to know whether advocacy of violent revolution is an indispensable condition of joining the Third International, although I did not put this question directly because others were asking it officially. His answer was unsatisfactory to me. He admitted that there is little chance of revolution in England now, and that the working man is not yet disgusted with Parliamentary government. But he hopes that this result may be brought about by a Labour Ministry. He thinks that, if Mr. Henderson, for instance, were to become Prime Minister, nothing of importance would be done; organized Labour would then, so he hopes and believes, turn to revolution. On this ground, he wishes his supporters in this country to do everything in their power to secure a Labour majority in Parliament; he does not advocate abstention from Parliamentary contests, but participation with a view to making Parliament obviously contemptible. The reasons which make attempts at violent revolution seem to most of us both improbable and undesirable in this country carry no weight with him, and seem to him mere bourgeois prejudices. When I suggested that whatever is possible in England can be achieved without bloodshed, he waved aside the suggestion as fantastic. I got little impression of knowledge or psychological imagination as regards Great Britain. Indeed the whole tendency of Marxianism is against psychological imagination, since it attributes everything in politics to purely material causes.

I asked him next whether he thought it possible to establish Communism firmly and fully in a country containing such a large majority of peasants. He admitted that it was difficult, and laughed over the exchange the peasant is compelled to make, of food for paper; the worthlessness of Russian paper struck him as comic. But he said--what is no doubt true--that things will right themselves when there are goods to offer to the peasant. For this he looks partly to electrification in industry, which, he says, is a technical necessity in Russia, but will take ten years to complete.[2] He spoke with enthusiasm, as they all do, of the great scheme for generating electrical power by means of peat. Of course he looks to the raising of the blockade as the only radical cure; but he was not very hopeful of this being achieved thoroughly or permanently except through revolutions in other countries. Peace between Bolshevik Russia and capitalist countries, he said, must always be insecure; the Entente might be led by weariness and mutual dissensions to conclude peace, but he felt convinced that the peace would be of brief duration. I found in him, as in almost all leading Communists, much less eagerness than existed in our delegation for peace and the raising of the blockade. He believes that nothing of real value can be achieved except through world revolution and the abolition of capitalism; I felt that he regarded the resumption of trade with capitalist countries as a mere palliative of doubtful value.

He described the division between rich and poor peasants, and the Government propaganda among the latter against the former, leading to

acts of violence which he seemed to find amusing. He spoke as though the dictatorship over the peasant would have to continue a long time, because of the peasant's desire for free trade. He said he knew from statistics (what I can well believe) that the peasants have had more to eat these last two years than they ever had before, "and yet they are against us," he added a little wistfully. I asked him what to reply to critics who say that in the country he has merely created peasant proprietorship, not Communism; he replied that that is not quite the truth, but he did not say what the truth is.[3]

The last question I asked him was whether resumption of trade with capitalist countries, if it took place, would not create centres of capitalist influence, and make the preservation of Communism more difficult? It had seemed to me that the more ardent Communists might well dread commercial intercourse with the outer world, as leading to an infiltration of heresy, and making the rigidity of the present system almost impossible. I wished to know whether he had such a feeling. He admitted that trade would create difficulties, but said they would be less than those of the war. He said that two years ago neither he nor his colleagues thought they could survive against the hostility of the world. He attributes their survival to the jealousies and divergent interests of the different capitalist nations; also to the power of Bolshevik propaganda. He said the Germans had laughed when the Bolsheviks proposed to combat guns with leaflets, but that the event had proved the leaflets quite as powerful. I do not think he recognizes that the Labour and Socialist parties have had any part in

the matter. He does not seem to know that the attitude of British Labour has done a great deal to make a first-class war against Russia impossible, since it has confined the Government to what could be done in a hole-and-corner way, and denied without a too blatant mendacity.

He thoroughly enjoys the attacks of Lord Northcliffe, to whom he wishes to send a medal for Bolshevik propaganda. Accusations of spoliation, he remarked, may shock the bourgeois, but have an opposite effect upon the proletarian.

I think if I had met him without knowing who he was, I should not have guessed that he was a great man; he struck me as too opinionated and narrowly orthodox. His strength comes, I imagine, from his honesty, courage, and unwavering faith--religious faith in the Marxian gospel, which takes the place of the Christian martyr's hopes of Paradise, except that it is less egotistical. He has as little love of liberty as the Christians who suffered under Diocletian, and retaliated when they acquired power. Perhaps love of liberty is incompatible with whole-hearted belief in a panacea for all human ills. If so, I cannot but rejoice in the sceptical temper of the Western world. I went to Russia a Communist; but contact with those who have no doubts has intensified a thousandfold my own doubts, not as to Communism in itself, but as to the wisdom of holding a creed so firmly that for its sake men are willing to inflict widespread misery.

Trotsky, whom the Communists do not by any means regard as Lenin's

equal, made more impression upon me from the point of view of intelligence and personality, though not of character. I saw too little of him, however, to have more than a very superficial impression. He has bright eyes, military bearing, lightning intelligence and magnetic personality. He is very good-looking, with admirable wavy hair; one feels he would be irresistible to women. I felt in him a vein of gay good humour, so long as he was not crossed in any way. I thought, perhaps wrongly, that his vanity was even greater than his love of power--the sort of vanity that one associates with an artist or actor. The comparison with Napoleon was forced upon one. But I had no means of estimating the strength of his Communist conviction, which may be very sincere and profound.

An extraordinary contrast to both these men was Gorky, with whom I had a brief interview in Petrograd. He was in bed, apparently very ill and obviously heart-broken. He begged me, in anything I might say about Russia, always to emphasize what Russia has suffered. He supports the Government--as I should do, if I were a Russian--not because he thinks it faultless, but because the possible alternatives are worse. One felt in him a love of the Russian people which makes their present martyrdom almost unbearable, and prevents the fanatical faith by which the pure Marxians are upheld. I felt him the most lovable, and to me the most sympathetic, of all the Russians I saw. I wished for more knowledge of his outlook, but he spoke with difficulty and was constantly interrupted by terrible fits of coughing, so that I could not stay. All the intellectuals whom I met--a class who have suffered

terribly--expressed their gratitude to him for what he has done on their behalf. The materialistic conception of history is all very well, but some care for the higher things of civilization is a relief. The Bolsheviks are sometimes said to have done great things for art, but I could not discover that they had done more than preserve something of what existed before. When I questioned one of them on the subject, he grew impatient, and said: "We haven't time for a new art, any more than for a new religion." Unavoidably, although the Government favours art as much as it can, the atmosphere is one in which art cannot flourish, because art is anarchic and resistant to organization. Gorky has done all that one man could to preserve the intellectual and artistic life of Russia. I feared that he was dying, and that, perhaps, it was dying too. But he recovered, and I hope it will recover also.

IV

ART AND EDUCATION

It has often been said that, whatever the inadequacy of Bolshevik organization in other fields, in art and in education at least they have made great progress.

To take first of all art: it is true that they began by recognizing, as perhaps no other revolutionary government would, the importance and spontaneity of the artistic impulse, and therefore while they controlled or destroyed the counter-revolutionary in all other social activities, they allowed the artist, whatever his political creed, complete freedom to continue his work. Moreover, as regards clothing and rations they treated him especially well. This, and the care devoted to the upkeep of churches, public monuments, and museums, are well-known facts, to which there has already been ample testimony.

The preservation of the old artistic community practically intact was the more remarkable in view of the pronounced sympathy of most of them with the old régime. The theory, however, was that art and politics belonged to two separate realms; but great honour would of course be the portion of those artists who would be inspired by the revolution.

Three years' experience, however, have proved the falsity of this

doctrine and led to a divorce between art and popular feeling which a sensitive observer cannot fail to remark. It is glaringly apparent in the hitherto most vital of all Russian arts, the theatre. The artists have continued to perform the old classics in tragedy or comedy, and the old-style operette. The theatre programmes have remained the same for the last two years, and, but for the higher standard of artistic performance, might belong to the theatres of Paris or London. As one sits in the theatre, one is so acutely conscious of the discrepancy between the daily life of the audience and that depicted in the play that the latter seems utterly dead and meaningless. To some of the more fiery Communists it appears that a mistake has been made. They complain that bourgeois art is being preserved long after its time, they accuse the artists of showing contempt for their public, of being as untouched by the revolutionary mood as an elderly bourgeoise bewailing the loss of her personal comfort; they would like to see only the revolutionary mood embodied in art, and to achieve this would make a clean sweep, enforcing the writing and performance of nothing but revolutionary plays and the painting of revolutionary pictures. Nor can it be argued that they are wrong as to the facts: it is plain that the preservation of the old artistic tradition has served very little purpose; but on the other hand it is equally plain that an artist cannot be drilled like a military recruit. There is, fortunately, no sign that these tactics will be directly adopted, but in an indirect fashion they are already being applied. An artist is not to blame if his temperament leads him to draw cartoons of leading Bolsheviks, or satirize the various comical aspects--and they are

many--of the Soviet régime. To force such a man, however, to turn his talent only against Denikin, Yudenitch and Kolchak, or the leaders of the Entente, is momentarily good for Communism, but it is discouraging to the artist, and may prove in the long run bad for art, and possibly for Communism also. It is plain from the religious nature of Communism in Russia, that such controlling of the impulse to artistic creation is inevitable, and that propaganda art alone can flourish in such an atmosphere. For example, no poetry or literature that is not orthodox will reach the printing press. It is so easy to make the excuse of lack of paper and the urgent need for manifestoes. Thus there may well come to be a repetition of the attitude of the mediæval Church to the sagas and legends of the people, except that, in this case, it is the folk tales which will be preserved, and the more sensitive and civilized products banned. The only poet who seems to be much spoken of at present in Russia is one who writes rough popular songs. There are revolutionary odes, but one may hazard a guess that they resemble our patriotic war poetry.

I said that this state of affairs may in the long run be bad for art, but the contrary may equally well prove to be the truth. It is of course discouraging and paralysing to the old-style artist, and it is death to the old individual art which depended on subtlety and oddity of temperament, and arose very largely from the complicated psychology of the idle. There it stands, this old art, the purest monument to the nullity of the art-for-art's-sake doctrine, like a rich exotic plant of exquisite beauty, still apparently in its glory, till one perceives

that the roots are cut, and that leaf by leaf it is gradually fading away.

But, unlike the Puritans in this respect, the Bolsheviks have not sought to dig up the roots, and there are signs that the paralysis is merely temporary. Moreover, individual art is not the only form, and in particular the plastic arts have shown that they can live by mass action, and flourish under an intolerant faith. Communist artists of the future may erect public buildings surpassing in beauty the mediæval churches, they may paint frescoes, organize pageants, make Homeric songs about their heroes. Communist art will begin, and is beginning now, in the propaganda pictures, and stories such as those designed for peasants and children. There is, for instance, a kind of Rake's Progress or "How she became a Communist," in which the Entente leaders make a sorry and grotesque appearance. Lenin and Trotsky already figure in woodcuts as Moses and Aaron, deliverers of their people, while the mother and child who illustrate the statistics of the maternity exhibition have the grace and beauty of mediæval madonnas. Russia is only now emerging from the middle ages, and the Church tradition in painting is passing with incredible smoothness into the service of Communist doctrine. These pictures have, too, an oriental flavour: there are brown Madonnas in the Russian churches, and such an one illustrates the statistics of infant mortality in India, while the Russian mother, broad-footed, in gay petticoat and kerchief, sits in a starry meadow suckling her baby from a very ample white breast. I think that this movement towards the Church tradition

may be unconscious and instinctive, and would perhaps be deplored by many Communists, for whom grandiose bad Rodin statuary and the crudity of cubism better express what they mean by revolution. But this revolution is Russian and not French, and its art, if all goes well, should inevitably bear the popular Russian stamp. It is would-be primitive and popular art that is vulgar. Such at least is the reflection engendered by an inspection of Russian peasant work as compared with the spirit of Children's Tales.

The Russian peasant's artistic impulse is no legend. Besides the carving and embroidery which speak eloquently to peasant skill, one observes many instances in daily life. He will climb down, when his slowly-moving train stops by the wayside, to gather branches and flowers with which he will decorate the railway carriage both inside and out, he will work willingly at any task which has beauty for its object, and was all too prone under the old régime to waste his time and his employer's material in fashioning small metal or wooden objects with his hands.

If the bourgeois tradition then will not serve, there is a popular tradition which is still live and passionate and which may perhaps persist. Unhappily it has a formidable enemy in the organization and development of industry, which is far more dangerous to art than Communist doctrine. Indeed, industry in its early stages seems everywhere doomed to be the enemy of beauty and instinctive life. One might hope that this would not prove to be so in Russia, the first

Socialist State, as yet unindustrial, able to draw on the industrial experience of the whole world, were it not that one discovers with a certain misgiving in the Bolshevik leaders the rasping arid temperament of those to whom the industrial machine is an end in itself, and, in addition, reflects that these industrially minded men have as yet no practical experience, nor do there exist men of goodwill to help them. It does not seem reasonable to hope that Russia can pass through the period of industrialization without a good deal of mismanagement, involving waste resulting in too long hours, child labour and other evils with which the West is all too familiar. What the Bolsheviks would not therefore willingly do to art, the Juggernaut which they are bent on setting in motion may accomplish for them.

The next generation in Russia will have to consist of practical hard-working men, the old-style artists will die off and successors will not readily arise. A State which is struggling with economic difficulties is bound to be slow to admit an artistic vocation, since this involves exemption from practical work. Moreover the majority of minds always turn instinctively to the real need of the moment. A man therefore who is adapted by talent and temperament to becoming an opera singer, will under the pressure of Communist enthusiasm and Government encouragement turn his attention to economics. (I am here quoting an actual instance.) The whole Russian people at this stage in their development strike one as being forced by the logic of their situation to make a similar choice.

It may be all to the good that there should be fewer professional artists, since some of the finest work has been done by men and groups of men to whom artistic expression was only a pastime. They were not hampered by the solemnity and reverence for art which too often destroy the spontaneity of the professional. Indeed a revival of this attitude to art is one of the good results which may be hoped for from a Communist revolution in a more advanced industrial community. There the problem of education will be to stimulate the creative impulses towards art and science so that men may know how to employ their leisure hours. Work in the factory can never be made to provide an adequate outlet. The only hope, if men are to remain human beings under industrialism, is to reduce hours to the minimum. But this is only possible when production and organization are highly efficient, which will not be the case for a long time in Russia. Hence not only does it appear that the number of artists will grow less, but that the number of people undamaged in their artistic impulses and on that account able to create or appreciate as amateurs is likely to be deplorably small. It is in this damaging effect of industry on human instinct that the immediate danger to art in Russia lies.

The effect of industry on the crafts is quite obvious. A craftsman who is accustomed to work with his hands, following the tradition developed by his ancestors, is useless when brought face to face with a machine. And the man who can handle the machine will only be concerned with quantity and utility in the first instance. Only gradually do the claims of beauty come to be recognized. Compare the

modern motor car with the first of its species, or even, since the same law seems to operate in nature, the prehistoric animal with its modern descendant. The same relation exists between them as between man and the ape, or the horse and the hipparion. The movement of life seems to be towards ever greater delicacy and complexity, and man carries it forward in the articles that he makes and the society that he develops. Industry is a new tool, difficult to handle, but it will produce just as beautiful objects as did the mediæval builder and craftsman, though not until it has been in being for a long time and belongs to tradition.

One may expect, therefore, that while the crafts in Russia will lose in artistic value, the drama, sculpture and painting and all those arts which have nothing to do with the machine and depend entirely upon mental and spiritual inspiration will receive an impetus from the Communist faith. Whether the flowering period will be long or short depends partly on the political situation, but chiefly on the rapidity of industrial development. It may be that the machine will ultimately conquer the Communist faith and grind out the human impulses, and Russia become during this transition period as inartistic and soulless as was America until quite recent years. One would like to hope that mechanical progress will be swift and social idealism sufficiently strong to retain control. But the practical difficulties are almost insuperable.

Such signs of the progress of art as it is possible to notice at this

early stage would seem to bear out the above argument. For instance, an attempt is being made to foster the continuation of peasant embroidery, carving, &c., in the towns. It is done by people who have evidently lost the tradition already. They are taught to copy the models which are placed in the Peasant Museum, but there is no comparison between the live little wooden lady who smiles beneath the glass case, and the soulless staring-eyed creature who is offered for sale, nor between the quite ordinary carved fowl one may buy and the amusing life-like figure one may merely gaze at.

But when one comes to art directly inspired by Communism it is a different story. Apart from the propaganda pictures already referred to, there are propaganda plays performed by the Red Army in its spare moments, and there are the mass pageant plays performed on State occasions. I had the good fortune to witness one of each kind.

The play was called Zarevo (The Dawn), and was performed on a Saturday night on a small stage in a small hall in an entirely amateur fashion. It represented Russian life just before the revolution. It was intense and tragic and passionately acted. Dramatic talent is not rare in Russia. Almost the only comic relief was provided by the Tsarist police, who made one appearance towards the end, got up like comic military characters in a musical comedy--just as, in mediæval miracle plays, the comic character was Satan. The play's intention was to show a typical Russian working-class family. There were the old father, constantly drunk on vodka, alternately maudlin and scolding;

the old mother; two sons, the one a Communist and the other an Anarchist; the wife of the Communist, who did dressmaking; her sister, a prostitute; and a young girl of bourgeois family, also a Communist, involved in a plot with the Communist son, who was of course the hero of the play.

The first act revealed the stern and heroic Communist maintaining his views despite the reproaches of father and mother and the nagging of his wife. It showed also the Anarchist brother (as might be expected from the Bolshevik hostility to Anarchism) as an unruly, lazy, ne'er-do-well, with a passionate love for Sonia, the young bourgeoise, which was likely to become dangerous if not returned. She, on the other hand, obviously preferred the Communist. It was clear that he returned her love, but it was not quite clear that he would wish the relation to be anything more than platonic comradeship in the service of their common ideal. An unsuccessful strike, bringing want and danger from the police, together with increasing jealousy on the part of the Anarchist, led up to the tragic dénouement. I was not quite definite as to how this was brought about. All violent action was performed off the stage, and this made the plot at times difficult to follow. But it seemed that the Anarchist in a jealous rage forged a letter from his brother to bring Sonia to a rendezvous, and there murdered her, at the same time betraying his brother to the police. When the latter came to effect his arrest, and accuse him also, as the most likely person, of the murder, the Anarchist was seized with remorse and confessed. Both were therefore led away together. Once the

plot is sketched, the play calls for no comment. It had not great merit, though it is unwise to hazard a judgment on a play whose dialogue was not fully interpreted, but it was certainly real, and the link between audience and performers was established as it never seemed to be in the professional theatre. After the performance, the floor was cleared for dancing, and the audience were in a mood of thorough enjoyment.

The pageant of the "World Commune," which was performed at the opening of the Third International Congress in Petrograd, was a still more important and significant phenomenon. I do not suppose that anything of the kind has been staged since the days of the mediæval mystery plays. It was, in fact, a mystery play designed by the High Priests of the Communist faith to instruct the people. It was played on the steps of an immense white building that was once the Stock Exchange, a building with a classical colonnade on three sides of it, with a vast flight of steps in front, that did not extend the whole width of the building but left at each side a platform that was level with the floor of the colonnade. In front of this building a wide road ran from a bridge over one arm of the river to a bridge over the other, so that the stretches of water and sky on either side seemed to the eye of imagination like the painted wings of a gigantic stage. Two battered red columns of fantastic design, that were once light towers to guide ships, stood on either side midway between the extremities of the building and the water, but on the opposite side of the road. These two towers were beflagged and illuminated and carried the

limelight, and between and behind them was gathered a densely packed audience of forty or fifty thousand people. The play began at sundown, while the sky was still red away to the right and the palaces on the far bank to the left still aglow with the setting sun, and it continued under the magic of the darkening sky. At first the beauty and grandeur of the setting drew the attention away from the performers, but gradually one became aware that on the platform before the columns kings and queens and courtiers in sumptuous conventional robes, and attended by soldiers, were conversing in dumb show with one another. A few climbed the steps of a small wooden platform that was set up in the middle, and one indicated by a lifted hand that here should be built a monument to the power of capitalism over the earth. All gave signs of delight. Sentimental music was heard, and the gay company fell to waltzing away the hours. Meanwhile, from below on the road level, there streamed out of the darkness on either side of the building and up the half-lit steps, their fetters ringing in harmony with the music, the enslaved and toiling masses coming in response to command to build the monument for their masters. It is impossible to describe the exquisite beauty of the slow movement of those dark figures aslant the broad flight of steps; individual expressions were of course indistinguishable, and yet the movement and attitude of the groups conveyed pathos and patient endurance as well as any individual speech or gesture in the ordinary theatre. Some groups carried hammer and anvil, and others staggered under enormous blocks of stone. Love for the ballet has perhaps made the Russians understand the art of moving groups of actors in unison. As I watched these processions

climbing the steps in apparently careless and spontaneous fashion, and yet producing so graceful a result, I remembered the mad leap of the archers down the stage in Prince Igor, which is also apparently careless and spontaneous and full of wild and irregular beauty, yet never varies a hair-breadth from one performance to the next.

For a time the workers toiled in the shadow in their earthly world, and dancing continued in the lighted paradise of the rulers above, until presently, in sign that the monument was complete, a large yellow disc was hoisted amid acclamation above the highest platform between the columns. But at the same moment a banner was uplifted amongst the people, and a small figure was seen gesticulating. Angry fists were shaken and the banner and speaker disappeared, only to reappear almost immediately in another part of the dense crowd. Again hostility, until finally among the French workers away up on the right, the first Communist manifesto found favour. Rallying around their banner the communards ran shouting down the steps, gathering supporters as they came. Above, all is confusion, kings and queens scuttling in unroyal fashion with flying velvet robes to safe citadels right and left, while the army prepares to defend the main citadel of capitalism with its golden disc of power. The communards scale the steps to the fortress which they finally capture, haul down the disc and set their banner in its place. The merry music of the Carmagnole is heard, and the victors are seen expressing their delight by dancing first on one foot and then on the other, like marionettes. Below, the masses dance with them in a frenzy of joy. But a pompous procession of

Prussian legions is seen approaching, and, amid shrieks and wails of despair, the people are driven back, and their leaders set in a row and shot. Thereafter came one of the most moving scenes in the drama. Several dark-clad women appeared carrying a black pall supported on sticks, which they set in front of the bodies of the leaders so that it stood out, an irregular pointed black shape against the white columns behind. But for this melancholy monument the stage was now empty. Thick clouds of black smoke arose from braziers on either side and obscured the steps and the platform. Through the smoke came the distant sound of Chopin's Marche Funèbre, and as the air became clearer white figures could be dimly seen moving around the black pall in a solemn dance of mourning. Behind them the columns shone ghostly and unreal against the glimmering mauve rays of an uncertain and watery dawn.

The second part of the pageant opened in July 1914. Once again the rulers were feasting and the workers at toil, but the scene was enlivened by the presence of the leaders of the Second International, a group of decrepit professorial old men, who waddled in in solemn procession carrying tomes full of international learning. They sat in a row between the rulers and the people, deep in study, spectacles on nose. The call to war was the signal for a dramatic appeal from the workers to these leaders, who refused to accept the Red Flag, but weakly received patriotic flags from their respective governments. Jaurès, elevated to be the symbol of protest, towered above the people, crying in a loud voice, but fell back immediately as the

assassin's shot rang out. Then the people divided into their national groups and the war began. It was at this point that "God Save the King" was played as the English soldiers marched out, in a comic manner which made one think of it as "Gawd save the King." Other national anthems were burlesqued in a similar fashion, but none quite so successfully. A ridiculous effigy of the Tsar with a knout in his hand now occupied the symbolic position and dominated the scene. The incidents of the war which affected Russia were then played. Spectacular cavalry charges on the road, marching soldiers, batteries of artillery, a pathetic procession of cripples and nurses, and other scenes too numerous to describe, made up that part of the pageant devoted to the war.

Then came the Russian Revolution in all its stages. Cars dashed by full of armed men, red flags appeared everywhere, the people stormed the citadel and hauled down the effigy of the Tsar. The Kerensky Government assumed control and drove them forth to war again, but soon they returned to the charge, destroyed the Provisional Government, and hoisted all the emblems of the Russian Soviet Republic. The Entente leaders, however, were seen preparing their troops for battle, and the pageant went on to show the formation of the Red Army under its emblem the Red Star. White figures with golden trumpets appeared foretelling victory for the proletariat. The last scene, the World Commune, is described in the words of the abstract, taken from a Russian newspaper, as follows:--

> Cannon shots announce the breaking of the blockade against Soviet Russia, and the victory of the World Proletariat. The Red Army returns from the front, and passes in triumphant review before the leaders of the Revolution. At their feet lie the crowns of kings and the gold of the bankers. Ships draped with flags are seen carrying workers from the west. The workers of the whole world, with the emblems of labour, gather for the celebration of the World Commune. In the heavens luminous inscriptions in different languages appear, greeting the Congress: "Long live the Third International! Workers of the world, unite! Triumph to the sounds of the hymn of the World Commune, the 'International'."

Even so glowing an account, however, hardly does it justice. It had the pomp and majesty of the Day of Judgment itself. Rockets climbed the skies and peppered them with a thousand stars, fireworks blazed on all sides, garlanded and beflagged ships moved up and down the river, chariots bearing the emblems of prosperity, grapes and corn, travelled slowly along the road. The Eastern peoples came carrying gifts and emblems. The actors, massed upon the steps, waved triumphant hands, trumpets sounded, and the song of the International from ten thousand throats rose like a mighty wave engulfing the whole.

Though the end of this drama may have erred on the side of the grandiose, this may perhaps be forgiven the organizers in view of the occasion for which they prepared it. Nothing, however, could detract

from the beauty and dramatic power of the opening and of many of the scenes. Moreover, the effects obtained by movement in the mass were almost intoxicating. The first entrance of the masses gave a sense of dumb and patient force that was moving in the extreme, and the frenzied delight of the dancing crowd at the victory of the French communards stirred one to ecstasy. The pageant lasted for five hours or more, and was as exhausting emotionally as the Passion Play is said to be. I had the vision of a great period of Communist art, more especially of such open-air spectacles, which should have the grandeur and scope and eternal meaning of the plays of ancient Greece, the mediæval mysteries, or the Shakespearean theatre. In building, writing, acting, even in painting, work would be done, as it once was, by groups, not by one hand or mind, and evolution would proceed slowly until once again the individual emerged from the mass.

In considering Education under the Bolshevik régime, the same two factors which I have already dealt with in discussing art, namely industrial development and the communist doctrine, must be taken into account. Industrial development is in reality one of the tenets of Communism, but as it is one which in Russia is likely to endanger the doctrine as a whole I have thought it better to consider it as a separate item.

As in the matter of art, so in education, those who have given unqualified praise seem to have taken the short and superficial view. It is hardly necessary to launch into descriptions of the crèches,

country homes or palaces for children, where Montessori methods prevail, where the pupils cultivate their little gardens, model in plasticine, draw and sing and act, and dance their Eurythmic dances barefoot on floors once sacred to the tread of the nobility. I saw a reception and distributing house in Petrograd with which no fault could be found from the point of view of scientific organization. The children were bright-eyed and merry, and the rooms airy and clean. I saw, too, a performance by school children in Moscow which included some quite wonderful Eurythmic dancing, in particular an interpretation of Grieg's Tanz in der Halle des Bergkönigs by the Dalcroze method, but with a colour and warmth which were Russian, and in odd contrast to the mathematical precision associated with most Dalcroze performances.

But in spite of the obvious merit of such institutions as exist, misgivings would arise. To begin with, it must be remembered that it is necessary first to admit that children should be delivered up almost entirely to the State. Nominally, the mother still comes to see her child in these schools, but in actual fact, the drafting of children to the country must intervene, and the whole temper of the authorities seemed to be directed towards breaking the link between mother and child. To some this will seem an advantage, and it is a point which admits of lengthy discussion, but as it belongs rather to the question of women and the family under Communism, I can do no more than mention it here.

Then, again, it must be remembered that the tactics of the Bolsheviks towards such schools as existed under the old régime in provincial towns and villages, have not been the same as their tactics towards the theatres. The greater number of these schools are closed, in part, it would seem, from lack of personnel, and in part from fear of counter-revolutionary propaganda. The result is that, though those schools which they have created are good and organized on modern lines, on the whole there would seem to be less diffusion of child education than before. In this, as in most other departments, the Bolsheviks show themselves loath to attempt anything which cannot be done on a large scale and impregnated with Communist doctrine. It goes without saying that Communist doctrine is taught in schools, as Christianity has been taught hitherto, moreover the Communist teachers show bitter hostility to other teachers who do not accept the doctrine. At the children's entertainment alluded to above, the dances and poems performed had nearly all some close relation to Communism, and a teacher addressed the children for something like an hour and a half on the duties of Communists and the errors of Anarchism.

This teaching of Communism, however necessary it may appear for the building of the Communist state of the future, does seem to me to be an evil in that it is done emotionally and fanatically, with an appeal to hate and militant ardour rather than to constructive reason. It binds the free intellect and destroys initiative. An industrial state needs not only obedient and patient workers and artists, it needs also men and women with initiative in scientific research. It is idle to

provide channels for scientific research later if it is to be choked at the source. That source is an enquiring and free intellect unhampered by iron dogma. Beneficial to artistic and emotional development therefore, the teaching of Communism as a faith may well be most pernicious to the scientific and intellectual side of education, and will lead direct to the pragmatist view of knowledge and scientific research which the Church and the capitalist already find it so convenient to adopt.

But to come to the chief and most practical question, the relation of education to industry. Sooner or later education in Russia must become subordinate to the needs of industrial development. That the Bolsheviks already realize this is proved by the articles of Lunacharsky which recently appeared in Le Phare (Geneva). It was the spectre of industry that haunted me throughout the consideration of education as in the consideration of art, and what I have said above of its dangers to the latter seems to me also to apply here. Montessori schools belong, in my view, to that stage in industrial development when education is directed as much towards leisure occupations as towards preparation for professional life. Possibly the fine flower of useless scientific enquiry belongs to this stage also. Nobody in Russia is likely to have much leisure for a good many years to come, if the Bolshevik programme of industrial development is efficiently carried out. And there seemed to me to be something pathetic and almost cruel in this varied and agreeable education of the child, when one reflected on the long hours of grinding toil to

which he was soon to be subject in workshop or factory. For I repeat that I do not believe industrial work in the early days of industry can be made tolerable to the worker. Once again I experienced the dread of seeing the ideals of the Russian revolutionaries go down before the logic of necessity. They are beginning to pride themselves on being hard, practical men, and it seems quite reasonable to fear that they should come to regard this full and humane development of the child as a mere luxury and ultimately neglect it. Worse still, the few of these schools which already exist may perhaps become exclusive to the Communists and their children, or that company of Samurai which is to leaven and govern the mass of the people. If so, they will soon come to resemble our public schools, in that they will prepare, in an artificial play atmosphere, men who will pass straight to the position of leaders, while the portion of the proletariat who serve under them will be reading and writing, just so much technical training as is necessary, and Communist doctrine.

This is a nightmare hypothesis, but the difficulties of the practical problem seem to warrant its entertainment. The number of people in Russia who can even read and write is extremely small, the need to get them employed industrially as rapidly as possible is very great, hence the system of education which develops out of this situation cannot be very ambitious or enlightened. Further it will have to continue over a sufficiently long period of time to allow of the risk of its becoming stable and traditional. In adult education already the pupil comes for a short period, learns Communism, reading and

writing--there is hardly time to give him much more--and returns to leaven the army or his native village. In achieving this the Bolsheviks are already doing a very important and valuable work, but they cannot hope for a long while to become the model of public instruction which they have hitherto been represented to be. And the conditions of their becoming so ultimately are adherence to their ideals through a very long period of stress, and a lessening of fanaticism in their Communist teaching, conditions which, unhappily, seem to be mutually incompatible.

The whole of the argument set out in this chapter may be summed up in the statement of one fact which the mere idealist is prone to overlook, namely that Russia is a country at a stage in economic development not much more advanced than America in the pioneer days. The old civilization was aristocratic and exotic; it could not survive in the modern world. It is true that it produced great men, but its foundations were rotten. The new civilization may, for the moment, be less productive of individual works of genius, but it has a new solidity and gives promise of a new unity. It may be that I have taken too hopeful a view and that the future evolution of Russia will have as little connection with the life and tradition of its present population as modern America with the life of the Red Indian tribes. The fact that there exists in Russia a population at a far higher stage of culture, which will be industrially educated, not exterminated, militates against this hypothesis, but the need for education may make progress slower than it was in the United States.

One would not have looked for the millennium of Communism, nor even for valuable art and educational experiment in the America of early railroading and farming days. Nor must one look for such things from Russia yet. It may be that during the next hundred years there, economic evolution will obscure Communist ideals, until finally, in a country that has reached the stage of present-day America, the battle will be fought out again to a victorious and stable issue. Unless, indeed, the Marxian scripture prove to be not infallible, and faith and heroic devotion show themselves capable of triumphing over economic necessity.

V

COMMUNISM AND THE SOVIET CONSTITUTION

Before I went to Russia I imagined that I was going to see an interesting experiment in a new form of representative government. I did see an interesting experiment, but not in representative government. Every one who is interested in Bolshevism knows the series of elections, from the village meeting to the All-Russian Soviet, by which the people's commissaries are supposed to derive their power. We were told that, by the recall, the occupational constituencies, and so on, a new and far more perfect machinery had been devised for ascertaining and registering the popular will. One of the things we hoped to study was the question whether the Soviet system is really superior to Parliamentarism in this respect.

We were not able to make any such study, because the Soviet system is moribund.[4] No conceivable system of free election would give majorities to the Communists, either in town or country. Various methods are therefore adopted for giving the victory to Government candidates. In the first place, the voting is by show of hands, so that all who vote against the Government are marked men. In the second place, no candidate who is not a Communist can have any printing done, the printing works being all in the hands of the State. In the third place, he cannot address any meetings, because the halls all belong to

the State. The whole of the press is, of course, official; no independent daily is permitted. In spite of all these obstacles, the Mensheviks have succeeded in winning about 40 seats out of 1,500 on the Moscow Soviet, by being known in certain large factories where the electoral campaign could be conducted by word of mouth. They won, in fact, every seat that they contested.

But although the Moscow Soviet is nominally sovereign in Moscow, it is really only a body of electors who choose the executive committee of forty, out of which, in turn, is chosen the Presidium, consisting of nine men who have all the power. The Moscow Soviet, as a whole, meets rarely; the Executive Committee is supposed to meet once a week, but did not meet while we were in Moscow. The Presidium, on the contrary, meets daily. Of course, it is easy for the Government to exercise pressure over the election of the executive committee, and again over the election of the Presidium. It must be remembered that effective protest is impossible, owing to the absolutely complete suppression of free speech and free Press. The result is that the Presidium of the Moscow Soviet consists only of orthodox Communists.

Kamenev, the President of the Moscow Soviet, informed us that the recall is very frequently employed; he said that in Moscow there are, on an average, thirty recalls a month. I asked him what were the principal reasons for the recall, and he mentioned four: drinking, going to the front (and being, therefore, incapable of performing the duties), change of politics on the part of the electors, and failure

to make a report to the electors once a fortnight, which all members of the Soviet are expected to do. It is evident that the recall affords opportunities for governmental pressure, but I had no chance of finding out whether it is used for this purpose.

In country districts the method employed is somewhat different. It is impossible to secure that the village Soviet shall consist of Communists, because, as a rule, at any rate in the villages I saw, there are no Communists. But when I asked in the villages how they were represented on the Volost (the next larger area) or the Gubernia, I was met always with the reply that they were not represented at all. I could not verify this, and it is probably an overstatement, but all concurred in the assertion that if they elected a non-Communist representative he could not obtain a pass on the railway and, therefore, could not attend the Volost or Gubernia Soviet. I saw a meeting of the Gubernia Soviet of Saratov. The representation is so arranged that the town workers have an enormous preponderance over the surrounding peasants; but even allowing for this, the proportion of peasants seemed astonishingly small for the centre of a very important agricultural area.

The All-Russian Soviet, which is constitutionally the supreme body, to which the People's Commissaries are responsible, meets seldom, and has become increasingly formal. Its sole function at present, so far as I could discover, is to ratify, without discussion, previous decisions of the Communist Party on matters (especially concerning foreign

policy) upon which the constitution requires its decision.

All real power is in the hands of the Communist Party, who number about 600,000 in a population of about 120 millions. I never came across a Communist by chance: the people whom I met in the streets or in the villages, when I could get into conversation with them, almost invariably said they were of no party. The only other answer I ever had was from some of the peasants, who openly stated that they were Tsarists. It must be said that the peasants' reasons for disliking the Bolsheviks are very inadequate. It is said--and all I saw confirmed the assertion--that the peasants are better off than they ever were before. I saw no one--man, woman, or child--who looked underfed in the villages. The big landowners are dispossessed, and the peasants have profited. But the towns and the army still need nourishing, and the Government has nothing to give the peasants in return for food except paper, which the peasants resent having to take. It is a singular fact that Tsarist roubles are worth ten times as much as Soviet roubles, and are much commoner in the country. Although they are illegal, pocket-books full of them are openly displayed in the market places. I do not think it should be inferred that the peasants expect a Tsarist restoration: they are merely actuated by custom and dislike of novelty. They have never heard of the blockade; consequently they cannot understand why the Government is unable to give them the clothes and agricultural implements that they need. Having got their land, and being ignorant of affairs outside their own neighbourhood, they wish their own village to be independent, and would resent the

demands of any Government whatever.

Within the Communist Party there are, of course, as always in a bureaucracy, different factions, though hitherto the external pressure has prevented disunion. It seemed to me that the personnel of the bureaucracy could be divided into three classes. There are first the old revolutionists, tested by years of persecution. These men have most of the highest posts. Prison and exile have made them tough and fanatical and rather out of touch with their own country. They are honest men, with a profound belief that Communism will regenerate the world. They think themselves utterly free from sentiment, but, in fact, they are sentimental about Communism and about the régime that they are creating; they cannot face the fact that what they are creating is not complete Communism, and that Communism is anathema to the peasant, who wants his own land and nothing else. They are pitiless in punishing corruption or drunkenness when they find either among officials; but they have built up a system in which the temptations to petty corruption are tremendous, and their own materialistic theory should persuade them that under such a system corruption must be rampant.

The second class in the bureaucracy, among whom are to be found most of the men occupying political posts just below the top, consists of arrivistes, who are enthusiastic Bolsheviks because of the material success of Bolshevism. With them must be reckoned the army of policemen, spies, and secret agents, largely inherited from the

Tsarist times, who make their profit out of the fact that no one can live except by breaking the law. This aspect of Bolshevism is exemplified by the Extraordinary Commission, a body practically independent of the Government, possessing its own regiments, who are better fed than the Red Army. This body has the power of imprisoning any man or woman without trial on such charges as speculation or counter-revolutionary activity. It has shot thousands without proper trial, and though now it has nominally lost the power of inflicting the death penalty, it is by no means certain that it has altogether lost it in fact. It has spies everywhere, and ordinary mortals live in terror of it.

The third class in the bureaucracy consists of men who are not ardent Communists, who have rallied to the Government since it has proved itself stable, and who work for it either out of patriotism or because they enjoy the opportunity of developing their ideas freely without the obstacle of traditional institutions. Among this class are to be found men of the type of the successful business man, men with the same sort of ability as is found in the American self-made Trust magnate, but working for success and power, not for money. There is no doubt that the Bolsheviks are successfully solving the problem of enlisting this kind of ability in the public service, without permitting it to amass wealth as it does in capitalist communities. This is perhaps their greatest success so far, outside the domain of war. It makes it possible to suppose that, if Russia is allowed to have peace, an amazing industrial development may take place, making

Russia a rival of the United States. The Bolsheviks are industrialists in all their aims; they love everything in modern industry except the excessive rewards of the capitalists. And the harsh discipline to which they are subjecting the workers is calculated, if anything can, to give them the habits of industry and honesty which have hitherto been lacking, and the lack of which alone prevents Russia from being one of the foremost industrial countries.

VI

THE FAILURE OF RUSSIAN INDUSTRY

At first sight it is surprising that Russian industry should have collapsed as badly as it has done, and still more surprising that the efforts of the Communists have not been more successful in reviving it. As I believe that the continued efficiency of industry is the main condition for success in the transition to a Communist State, I shall endeavour to analyse the causes of the collapse, with a view to the discovery of ways by which it can be avoided elsewhere.

Of the fact of the collapse there can be no doubt. The Ninth Congress of the Communist Party (March-April, 1920) speaks of "the incredible catastrophes of public economy," and in connection with transport, which is one of the vital elements of the problem, it acknowledges "the terrible collapse of the transport and the railway system," and urges the introduction of "measures which cannot be delayed and which are to obviate the complete paralysis of the railway system and, together with this, the ruin of the Soviet Republic." Almost all those who have visited Russia would confirm this view of the gravity of the situation. In the factories, in great works like those of Putilov and Sornovo, very little except war work is being done; machinery stands idle and plant is becoming unusable. One sees hardly any new manufactured articles in Russia, beyond a certain very inadequate

quantity of clothes and boots--always excepting what is needed for the army. And the difficulty of obtaining food is conclusive evidence of the absence of goods such as are needed by the peasants.

How has this state of affairs arisen? And why does it continue?

A great deal of disorganization occurred before the first revolution and under Kerensky. Russian industry was partly dependent on Poland; the war was conducted by methods of reckless extravagance, especially as regards rolling-stock; under Kerensky there was a tendency to universal holiday, under the impression that freedom had removed the necessity for work. But when all this is admitted to the full, it remains true that the state of industry under the Bolsheviks is much worse than even under Kerensky.

The first and most obvious reason for this is that Russia was quite unusually dependent upon foreign assistance. Not only did the machinery in the factories and the locomotives on the railways come from abroad, but the organizing and technical brains in industry were mainly foreign. When the Entente became hostile to Russia, the foreigners in Russian industry either left the country or assisted counter-revolution. Even those who were in fact loyal naturally became suspect, and could not well be employed in responsible posts, any more than Germans could in England during the war. The native Russians who had technical or business skill were little better; they almost all practised sabotage in the first period of the Bolshevik régime. One

hears amusing stories of common sailors frantically struggling with complicated accounts, because no competent accountant would work for the Bolsheviks.

But those days passed. When the Government was seen to be stable, a great many of those who had formerly sabotaged it became willing to accept posts under it, and are now in fact so employed, often at quite exceptional salaries. Their importance is thoroughly realized. One resolution at the above-mentioned Congress says (I quote verbally the unedited document which was given to us in Moscow):

> Being of opinion that without a scientific organization of industry, even the widest application of compulsory labour service, as the great labour heroism of the working class, will not only fail to secure the establishment of a powerful socialist production, but will also fail to assist the country to free itself from the clutches of poverty--the Congress considers it imperative to register all able specialists of the various departments of public economy and widely to utilize them for the purpose of industrial organization.
>
> The Congress considers the elucidation for the wide masses of the workers of the tremendous character of the economic problems of the country to be one of the chief problems of industrial and general political agitation and propaganda; and of equal importance to this, technical education, and

> administrative and scientific technical experience. The Congress makes it obligatory on all the members of the party mercilessly to fight that particular obnoxious form, the ignorant conceit which deems the working class capable of solving all problems without the assistance in the most responsible cases of specialists of the bourgeois school, the management. Demagogic elements who speculate on this kind of prejudice in the more backward section of our working classes, can have no place in the ranks of the party of Scientific Socialism.

But Russia alone is unable to supply the amount of skill required, and is very deficient in technical instructors, as well as in skilled workmen. One was told, over and over again, that the first step in improvement would be the obtaining of spare parts for locomotives. It seems strange that these could not be manufactured in Russia. To some extent they can be, and we were shown locomotives which had been repaired on Communist Saturdays. But in the main the machinery for making spare parts is lacking and the skill required for its manufacture does not exist. Thus dependence on the outside world persists, and the blockade continues to do its deadly work of spreading hunger, demoralization and despair.

The food question is intimately bound up with the question of industry. There is a vicious circle, for not only does the absence of manufactured goods cause a food shortage in the towns, but the food

shortage, in turn, diminishes the strength of the workers and makes them less able to produce goods. I cannot but think that there has been some mismanagement as regards the food question. For example, in Petrograd many workers have allotments and often work in them for eight hours after an eight hours' day in their regular employment. But the food produced in the allotments is taken for general consumption, not left to each individual producer. This is in accordance with Communist theory, but of course greatly diminishes the incentive to work, and increases the red tape and administrative machinery.

Lack of fuel has been another very grave source of trouble. Before the war coal came mostly from Poland and the Donetz Basin. Poland is lost to Russia, and the Donetz Basin was in the hands of Denikin, who so destroyed the mines before retreating that they are still not in working order. The result is a practically complete absence of coal. Oil, which is equally important in Russia, was also lacking until the recent recovery of Baku. All that I saw on the Volga made me believe that real efficiency has been shown in reorganizing the transport of oil, and doubtless this will do something to revive industry. But the oil used to be worked very largely by Englishmen, and English machinery is much needed for refining it. In the meantime, Russia has had to depend upon wood, which involves immense labour. Most of the houses are not warmed in winter, so that people live in a temperature below freezing-point. Another consequence of lack of fuel was the bursting of water-pipes, so that people in Petrograd, for the most part, have to go down to the Neva to fetch their water--a considerable

addition to the labour of an already overworked day.

I find it difficult to believe that, if greater efficiency had existed in the Government, the food and fuel difficulties could not have been considerably alleviated. In spite of the needs of the army, there are still many horses in Russia; I saw troops of thousands of horses on the Volga, which apparently belonged to Kalmuk tribes. By the help of carts and sledges, it ought to be possible, without more labour than is warranted by the importance of the problem, to bring food and timber into Moscow and Petrograd. It must be remembered that both cities are surrounded by forests, and Moscow at least is surrounded by good agricultural land. The Government has devoted all its best energies hitherto to the two tasks of war and propaganda, while industry and the food problem have been left to a lesser degree of energy and intelligence. It is no doubt probable that, if peace is secured, the economic problems will receive more attention than hitherto. But the Russian character seems less adapted to steady work of an unexciting nature than to heroic efforts on great occasions; it has immense passive endurance, but not much active tenacity. Whether, with the menace of foreign invasion removed, enough day-by-day detailed energy would exist for the reorganization of industry, is a doubtful question, as to which only time can decide.

This leads to the conclusion--which I think is adopted by most of the leading men in Russia--that it will be very difficult indeed to save the revolution without outside economic assistance. Outside assistance

from capitalist countries is dangerous to the principles of Communism, as well as precarious from the likelihood of fresh causes of quarrel. But the need of help is urgent, and if the policy of promoting revolution elsewhere were to succeed, it would probably render the nations concerned temporarily incapable of supplying Russian needs. It is, therefore, necessary for Russia to accept the risks and uncertainties involved in attempting to make peace with the Entente and to trade with America. By continuing war, Russia can do infinite damage to us, especially in Asia, but cannot hope, for many years, to achieve any degree of internal prosperity. The situation, therefore, is one in which, even from the narrowest point of view, peace is to the interest of both parties.

It is difficult for an outsider with only superficial knowledge to judge of the efforts which have been made to reorganize industry without outside help. These efforts have chiefly taken the form of industrial conscription. Workers in towns seek to escape to the country, in order to have enough to eat; but this is illegal and severely punished. The same Communist Report from which I have already quoted speaks on this subject as follows:

> Labour Desertion.--Owing to the fact that a considerable part of the workers either in search of better food conditions or often for the purposes of speculation, voluntarily leave their places of employment or change from place to place, which inevitably harms production and deteriorates the general

> position of the working class, the Congress considers one of the most urgent problems of Soviet Government and of the Trade Union organization to be established as the firm, systematic and insistent struggle with labour desertion, The way to fight this is to publish a list of desertion fines, the creation of a labour Detachment of Deserters under fine, and, finally, internment in concentration camps.

It is hoped to extend the system to the peasantry:

> The defeat of the White Armies and the problems of peaceful construction in connection with the incredible catastrophes of public economy demand an extraordinary effort of all the powers of the proletariat and the drafting into the process of public labour of the wide masses of the peasantry.

On the vital subject of transport, in a passage of which I have already quoted a fragment, the Communist Party declares:

> For the most immediate future transport remains the centre of the attention and the efforts of the Soviet Government. The improvement of transport is the indispensable basis upon which even the most moderate success in all other spheres of production and first of all in the provision question can be gained.

> The chief difficulty with regard to the improvement of transport is the weakness of the Transport Trade Union, which is due in the first case to the heterogeneity of the personnel of the railways, amongst whom there are still a number of those who belong to the period of disorganization, and, secondly, to the fact that the most class-conscious and best elements of the railway proletariat were at the various fronts of the civil war.
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> Considering wide Trade Union assistance to the railway workers to be one of the principal tasks of the Party, and as the only condition under which transport can be raised to its height, the Congress at the same time recognizes the inflexible necessity of employing exclusive and extraordinary measures (martial law, and so forth). Such necessity is the result of the terrible collapse of the transport and the railroad system and is to introduce measures which cannot be delayed and which are to obviate the complete paralysis of the railway system and, together with this, the ruin of the Soviet Republic.

The general attitude to the militarization of labour is stated in the Resolution with which this section of the Proceedings begins:

> The ninth Congress approves of the decision of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party on the mobilization of the industrial proletariat, compulsory labour service,

militarization of production and the application of military detachments to economic needs.

In connection with the above, the Congress decrees that the Party organization should in every way assist the Trade Unions and the Labour Sections in registering all skilled workers with a view of employing them in the various branches of production with the same consistency and strictness as was done, and is being carried out at the present time, in relation to the commanding staff for army needs.

Every skilled worker is to return to his particular trade Exceptions, i.e. the retention of the skilled worker in any other branch of Soviet service, is allowed only with the sanction of the corresponding central and local authorities.

It is, of course, evident that in these measures the Bolsheviks have been compelled to travel a long way from the ideals which originally inspired the revolution. But the situation is so desperate that they could not be blamed if their measures were successful. In a shipwreck all hands must turn to, and it would be ridiculous to prate of individual liberty. The most distressing feature of the situation is that these stern laws seem to have produced so little effect. Perhaps in the course of years Russia might become self-supporting without help from the outside world, but the suffering meantime would be terrible. The early hopes of the revolution would fade more and more.

Every failure of industry, every tyrannous regulation brought about by the desperate situation, is used by the Entente as a justification of its policy. If a man is deprived of food and drink, he will grow weak, lose his reason, and finally die. This is not usually considered a good reason for inflicting death by starvation. But where nations are concerned, the weakness and struggles are regarded as morally culpable, and are held to justify further punishment. So at least it has been in the case of Russia. Nothing produced a doubt in our governing minds as to the rightness of our policy except the strength of the Red Army and the fear of revolution in Asia. Is it surprising that professions of humanitarian feeling on the part of English people are somewhat coldly received in Soviet Russia?

VII

DAILY LIFE IN MOSCOW

Daily life in Moscow, so far as I could discover, has neither the horrors depicted by the Northcliffe Press nor the delights imagined by the more ardent of our younger Socialists.

On the one hand, there is no disorder, very little crime, not much insecurity for those who keep clear of politics. Everybody works hard; the educated people have, by this time, mostly found their way into Government offices or teaching or some other administrative profession in which their education is useful. The theatres, the opera and the ballet continue as before, and are quite admirable; some of the seats are paid for, others are given free to members of trade unions. There is, of course, no drunkenness, or at any rate so little that none of us ever saw a sign of it. There is very little prostitution, infinitely less than in any other capital. Women are safer from molestation than anywhere else in the world. The whole impression is one of virtuous, well-ordered activity.

On the other hand, life is very hard for all except men in good posts. It is hard, first of all, owing to the food shortage. This is familiar to all who have interested themselves in Russia, and it is unnecessary to dwell upon it. What is less realized is that most people work much

longer hours than in this country. The eight-hour day was introduced with a flourish of trumpets; then, owing to the pressure of the war, it was extended to ten hours in certain trades. But no provision exists against extra work at other jobs, and very many people do extra work, because the official rates do not afford a living wage. This is not the fault of the Government, at any rate as regards the major part; it is due chiefly to war and blockade. When the day's work is over, a great deal of time has to be spent in fetching food and water and other necessaries of life. The sight of the workers going to and fro, shabbily clad, with the inevitable bundle in one hand and tin can in the other, through streets almost entirely empty of traffic, produces the effect of life in some vast village, rather than in an important capital city.

Holidays, such as are common throughout all but the very poorest class in this country, are very difficult in Russia. A train journey requires a permit, which is only granted on good reasons being shown; with the present shortage of transport, this regulation is quite unavoidable. Railway queues are a common feature in Moscow; it often takes several days to get a permit. Then, when it has been obtained, it may take several more days to get a seat in a train. The ordinary trains are inconceivably crowded, far more so, though that seems impossible, than London trains at the busiest hour. On the shorter journeys, passengers are even known to ride on the roof and buffers, or cling like flies to the sides of the waggons. People in Moscow travel to the country whenever they can afford the time and get a

permit, because in the country there is enough to eat. They go to stay with relations--most people in Moscow, in all classes, but especially among manual workers, have relations in the country. One cannot, of course, go to an hotel as one would in other countries. Hotels have been taken over by the State, and the rooms in them (when they are still used) are allocated by the police to people whose business is recognized as important by the authorities. Casual travel is therefore impossible even on a holiday.

Journeys have vexations in addition to the slowness and overcrowding of the trains. Police search the travellers for evidences of "speculation," especially for food. The police play, altogether, a much greater part in daily life than they do in other countries--much greater than they did, for example, in Prussia twenty-five years ago, when there was a vigorous campaign against Socialism. Everybody breaks the law almost daily, and no one knows which among his acquaintances is a spy of the Extraordinary Commission. Even in the prisons, among prisoners, there are spies, who are allowed certain privileges but not their liberty.

Newspapers are not taken in, except by very few people, but they are stuck up in public places, where passers-by occasionally glance at them.[5] There is very little to read; owing to paper shortage, books are rare, and money to buy them is still rarer. One does not see people reading, as one does here in the Underground for example. There is practically no social life, partly because of the food shortage,

partly because, when anybody is arrested, the police are apt to arrest everybody whom they find in his company, or who comes to visit him. And once arrested, a man or woman, however innocent, may remain for months in prison without trial. While we were in Moscow, forty social revolutionaries and Anarchists were hunger-striking to enforce their demand to be tried and to be allowed visits. I was told that on the eighth day of the strike the Government consented to try them, and that few could be proved guilty of any crime; but I had no means of verifying this.

Industrial conscription is, of course, rigidly enforced. Every man and woman has to work, and slacking is severely punished, by prison or a penal settlement. Strikes are illegal, though they sometimes occur. By proclaiming itself the friend of the proletarian, the Government has been enabled to establish an iron discipline, beyond the wildest dreams of the most autocratic American magnate. And by the same professions the Government has led Socialists from other countries to abstain from reporting unpleasant features in what they have seen.

The Tolstoyans, of whom I saw the leaders, are obliged by their creed to resist every form of conscription, though some have found ways of compromising. The law concerning conscientious objectors to military service is practically the same as ours, and its working depends upon the temper of the tribunal before which a man comes. Some conscientious objectors have been shot; on the other hand, some have obtained absolute exemption.

Life in Moscow, as compared to life in London, is drab, monotonous, and depressed. I am not, of course, comparing life there with that of the rich here, but with that of the average working-class family. When it is realized that the highest wages are about fifteen shillings a month, this is not surprising. I do not think that life could, under any system, be very cheerful in a country so exhausted by war as Russia, so I am not saying this as a criticism of the Bolsheviks. But I do think there might be less police interference, less vexatious regulation, and more freedom for spontaneous impulses towards harmless enjoyments.

Religion is still very strong. I went into many churches, where I saw obviously famished priests in gorgeous vestments, and a congregation enormously devout. Generally more than half the congregation were men, and among the men many were soldiers. This applies to the towns as well as to the country. In Moscow I constantly saw people in the streets crossing themselves.

There is a theory that the Moscow working man feels himself free from capitalist domination, and therefore bears hardships gladly. This is no doubt true of the minority who are active Communists, but I do not think it has any truth for the others. The average working man, to judge by a rather hasty impression, feels himself the slave of the Government, and has no sense whatever of having been liberated from a tyranny.

I recognize to the full the reasons for the bad state of affairs, in the past history of Russia and the recent policy of the Entente. But I have thought it better to record impressions frankly, trusting the readers to remember that the Bolsheviks have only a very limited share of responsibility for the evils from which Russia is suffering.

VIII

TOWN AND COUNTRY

The problem of inducing the peasants to feed the towns is one which Russia shares with Central Europe, and from what one hears Russia has been less unsuccessful than some other countries in dealing with this problem. For the Soviet Government, the problem is mainly concentrated in Moscow and Petrograd; the other towns are not very large, and are mostly in the centre of rich agricultural districts. It is true that in the North even the rural population normally depends upon food from more southerly districts; but the northern population is small. It is commonly said that the problem of feeding Moscow and Petrograd is a transport problem, but I think this is only partially true. There is, of course, a grave deficiency of rolling-stock, especially of locomotives in good repair. But Moscow is surrounded by very good land. In the course of a day's motoring in the neighbourhood, I saw enough cows to supply milk to the whole child population of Moscow, although what I had come to see was children's sanatoria, not farms. All kinds of food can be bought in the market at high prices. I travelled over a considerable extent of Russian railways, and saw a fair number of goods trains. For all these reasons, I feel convinced that the share of the transport problem in the food difficulties has been exaggerated. Of course transport plays a larger part in the shortage in Petrograd than in Moscow, because food comes mainly from

south of Moscow. In Petrograd, most of the people one sees in the streets show obvious signs of under-feeding. In Moscow, the visible signs are much less frequent, but there is no doubt that under-feeding, though not actual starvation, is nearly universal.

The Government supplies rations to every one who works in the towns at a very low fixed price. The official theory is that the Government has a monopoly of the food and that the rations are sufficient to sustain life. The fact is that the rations are not sufficient, and that they are only a portion of the food supply of Moscow. Moreover, people complain, I do not know how truly, that the rations are delivered irregularly; some say, about every other day. Under these circumstances, almost everybody, rich or poor, buys food in the market, where it costs about fifty times the fixed Government price. A pound of butter costs about a month's wages. In order to be able to afford extra food, people adopt various expedients. Some do additional work, at extra rates, after their official day's work is over. For, though there is supposed to be by law an eight-hours day, extended to ten in certain vital industries, the wage paid for it is not a living wage, and there is nothing to prevent a man from undertaking other work in his spare time. But the usual resource is what is called "speculation," i.e., buying and selling. Some person formerly rich sells clothes or furniture or jewellery in return for food; the buyer sells again at an enhanced price, and so on through perhaps twenty hands, until a final purchaser is found in some well-to-do peasant or nouveau riche speculator. Again, most people have relations in the

country, whom they visit from time to time, bringing back with them great bags of flour. It is illegal for private persons to bring food into Moscow, and the trains are searched; but, by corruption or cunning, experienced people can elude the search. The food market is illegal, and is raided occasionally; but as a rule it is winked at. Thus the attempt to suppress private commerce has resulted in an amount of unprofessional buying and selling which far exceeds what happens in capitalist countries. It takes up a great deal of time that might be more profitably employed; and, being illegal, it places practically the whole population of Moscow at the mercy of the police. Moreover, it depends largely upon the stores of goods belonging to those who were formerly rich, and when these are expended the whole system must collapse, unless industry has meanwhile been re-established on a sound basis.

It is clear that the state of affairs is unsatisfactory, but, from the Government's point of view, it is not easy to see what ought to be done. The urban and industrial population is mainly concerned in carrying on the work of government and supplying munitions to the army. These are very necessary tasks, the cost of which ought to be defrayed out of taxation. A moderate tax in kind on the peasants would easily feed Moscow and Petrograd. But the peasants take no interest in war or government. Russia is so vast that invasion of one part does not touch another part; and the peasants are too ignorant to have any national consciousness, such as one takes for granted in England or France or Germany. The peasants will not willingly part with a portion

of their produce merely for purposes of national defence, but only for the goods they need--clothes, agricultural implements, &c.--which the Government, owing to the war and the blockade, is not in a position to supply.

When the food shortage was at its worst, the Government antagonized the peasants by forced requisitions, carried out with great harshness by the Red Army. This method has been modified, but the peasants still part unwillingly with their food, as is natural in view of the uselessness of paper and the enormously higher prices offered by private buyers.

The food problem is the main cause of popular opposition to the Bolsheviks, yet I cannot see how any popular policy could have been adopted. The Bolsheviks are disliked by the peasants because they take so much food; they are disliked in the towns because they take so little. What the peasants want is what is called free trade, i.e., de-control of agricultural produce. If this policy were adopted, the towns would be faced by utter starvation, not merely by hunger and hardship. It is an entire misconception to suppose that the peasants cherish any hostility to the Entente. The Daily News of July 13th, in an otherwise excellent leading article, speaks of "the growing hatred of the Russian peasant, who is neither a Communist nor a Bolshevik, for the Allies generally and this country in particular." The typical Russian peasant has never heard of the Allies or of this country; he does not know that there is a blockade; all he knows is

that he used to have six cows but the Government reduced him to one for the sake of poorer peasants, and that it takes his corn (except what is needed for his own family) at a very low price. The reasons for these actions do not interest him, since his horizon is bounded by his own village. To a remarkable extent, each village is an independent unit. So long as the Government obtains the food and soldiers that it requires, it does not interfere, and leaves untouched the old village communism, which is extraordinarily unlike Bolshevism and entirely dependent upon a very primitive stage of culture.

The Government represents the interests of the urban and industrial population, and is, as it were, encamped amid a peasant nation, with whom its relations are rather diplomatic and military than governmental in the ordinary sense. The economic situation, as in Central Europe, is favourable to the country and unfavourable to the towns. If Russia were governed democratically, according to the will of the majority, the inhabitants of Moscow and Petrograd would die of starvation. As it is, Moscow and Petrograd just manage to live, by having the whole civil and military power of the State devoted to their needs. Russia affords the curious spectacle of a vast and powerful Empire, prosperous at the periphery, but faced with dire want at the centre. Those who have least prosperity have most power; and it is only through their excess of power that they are enabled to live at all. The situation is due at bottom to two facts: that almost the whole industrial energies of the population have had to be devoted to war, and that the peasants do not appreciate the importance of the war

or the fact of the blockade.

It is futile to blame the Bolsheviks for an unpleasant and difficult situation which it has been impossible for them to avoid. Their problem is only soluble in one of two ways: by the cessation of the war and the blockade, which would enable them to supply the peasants with the goods they need in exchange for food; or by the gradual development of an independent Russian industry. This latter method would be slow, and would involve terrible hardships, but some of the ablest men in the Government believe it to be possible if peace cannot be achieved. If we force this method upon Russia by the refusal of peace and trade, we shall forfeit the only inducement we can hold out for friendly relations; we shall render the Soviet State unassailable and completely free to pursue the policy of promoting revolution everywhere. But the industrial problem is a large subject, which has been already discussed in Chapter VI.

IX

INTERNATIONAL POLICY

In the course of these chapters, I have had occasion to mention disagreeable features of the Bolshevik régime. But it must always be remembered that these are chiefly due to the fact that the industrial life of Russia has been paralysed except as ministering to the wants of the Army, and that the Government has had to wage a bitter and doubtful civil and external war, involving the constant menace of domestic enemies. Harshness, espionage, and a curtailment of liberty result unavoidably from these difficulties. I have no doubt whatever that the sole cure for the evils from which Russia is suffering is peace and trade. Peace and trade would put an end to the hostility of the peasants, and would at once enable the Government to depend upon popularity rather than force. The character of the Government would alter rapidly under such conditions. Industrial conscription, which is now rigidly enforced, would become unnecessary. Those who desire a more liberal spirit would be able to make their voices heard without the feeling that they were assisting reaction and the national enemies. The food difficulties would cease, and with them the need for an autocratic system in the towns.

It must not be assumed, as is common with opponents of Bolshevism, that any other Government could easily be established in Russia. I

think every one who has been in Russia recently is convinced that the existing Government is stable. It may undergo internal developments, and might easily, but for Lenin, become a Bonapartist military autocracy. But this would be a change from within--not perhaps a very great change--and would probably do little to alter the economic system. From what I saw of the Russian character and of the opposition parties, I became persuaded that Russia is not ready for any form of democracy, and needs a strong Government. The Bolsheviks represent themselves as the Allies of Western advanced Socialism, and from this point of view they are open to grave criticism. For their international programme there is, to my mind, nothing to be said. But as a national Government, stripped of their camouflage, regarded as the successors of Peter the Great, they are performing a necessary though unamiable task. They are introducing, as far as they can, American efficiency among a lazy and undisciplined population. They are preparing to develop the natural resources of their country by the methods of State Socialism, for which, in Russia, there is much to be said. In the Army they are abolishing illiteracy, and if they had peace they would do great things for education everywhere.

But if we continue to refuse peace and trade, I do not think the Bolsheviks will go under. Russia will endure great hardships, in the years to come as before. But the Russians are inured to misery as no Western nation is; they can live and work under conditions which we should find intolerable. The Government will be driven more and more, from mere self-preservation, into a policy of imperialism. The Entente

has been doing everything to expose Germany to a Russian invasion of arms and leaflets, by allowing Poland to engage in war and compelling Germany to disarm. All Asia lies open to Bolshevik ambitions. Almost the whole of the former Russian Empire in Asia is quite firmly in their grasp. Trains are running at a reasonable speed to Turkestan, and I saw cotton from there being loaded on to Volga steamers. In Persia and Turkey, revolts are taking place, with Bolshevik support. It is only a question of a few years before India will be in touch with the Red Army. If we continue to antagonize the Bolsheviks, I do not see what force exists that can prevent them from acquiring the whole of Asia within ten years.

The Russian Government is not yet definitely imperialistic in spirit, and would still prefer peace to conquest. The country is weary of war and denuded of goods. But if the Western Powers insist upon war, another spirit, which is already beginning to show itself, will become dominant. Conquest will be the only alternative to submission. Asiatic conquest will not be difficult. But for us, from the imperialist standpoint, it will mean utter ruin. And for the Continent it will mean revolutions, civil wars, economic cataclysms. The policy of crushing Bolshevism by force was always foolish and criminal; it has now become impossible and fraught with disaster. Our own Government, it would seem, have begun to realize the dangers, but apparently they do not realize them sufficiently to enforce their view against opposition.

In the Theses presented to the Second Congress of the Third International (July 1920), there is a very interesting article by Lenin called "First Sketch of the Theses on National and Colonial Questions" (Theses, pp. 40-47). The following passages seemed to me particularly illuminating:--

> The present world-situation in politics places on the order of the day the dictatorship of the proletariat; and all the events of world politics are inevitably concentrated round one centre of gravity: the struggle of the international bourgeoisie against the Soviet Republic, which inevitably groups round it, on the one hand the Sovietist movements of the advanced working men of all countries, on the other hand all the national movements of emancipation of colonies and oppressed nations which have been convinced by a bitter experience that there is no salvation for them except in the victory of the Soviet Government over world-imperialism.
>
> We cannot therefore any longer confine ourselves to recognizing and proclaiming the union of the workers of all countries. It is henceforth necessary to pursue the realization of the strictest union of all the national and colonial movements of emancipation with Soviet Russia, by giving to this union forms corresponding to the degree of evolution of the proletarian movement among the proletariat of each country, or of the democratic-bourgeois movement of

> emancipation among the workers and peasants of backward countries or backward nationalities.
>
> The federal principle appears to us as a transitory form towards the complete unity of the workers of all countries.

This is the formula for co-operation with Sinn Fein or with Egyptian and Indian nationalism. It is further defined later. In regard to backward countries, Lenin says, we must have in view:--

> The necessity of the co-operation of all Communists in the democratic-bourgeois movement of emancipation in those countries.

Again:

> "The Communist International must conclude temporary alliances with the bourgeois democracy of backward countries, but must never fuse with it." The class-conscious proletariat must "show itself particularly circumspect towards the survivals of national sentiment in countries long oppressed," and must "consent to certain useful concessions."

The Asiatic policy of the Russian Government was adopted as a move against the British Empire, and as a method of inducing the British Government to make peace. It plays a larger part in the schemes of the

leading Bolsheviks than is realized by the Labour Party in this country. Its method is not, for the present, to preach Communism, since the Persians and Hindoos are considered scarcely ripe for the doctrines of Marx. It is nationalist movements that are supported by money and agitators from Moscow. The method of quasi-independent states under Bolshevik protection is well understood. It is obvious that this policy affords opportunities for imperialism, under the cover of propaganda, and there is no doubt that some among the Bolsheviks are fascinated by its imperialist aspect. The importance officially attached to the Eastern policy is illustrated by the fact that it was the subject of the concluding portion of Lenin's speech to the recent Congress of the Third International (July 1920).

Bolshevism, like everything Russian, is partly Asiatic in character. One may distinguish two distinct trends, developing into two distinct policies. On the one side are the practical men, who wish to develop Russia industrially, to secure the gains of the Revolution nationally, to trade with the West, and gradually settle down into a more or less ordinary State. These men have on their side the fact of the economic exhaustion of Russia, the danger of ultimate revolt against Bolshevism if life continues to be as painful as it is at present, and the natural sentiment of humanity that wishes to relieve the sufferings of the people; also the fact that, if revolutions elsewhere produce a similar collapse of industry, they will make it impossible for Russia to receive the outside help which is urgently needed. In the early days, when the Government was weak, they had unchallenged control of

policy, but success has made their position less secure.

On the other side there is a blend of two quite different aims: first, the desire to promote revolution in the Western nations, which is in line with Communist theory, and is also thought to be the only way of obtaining a really secure peace; secondly, the desire for Asiatic dominion, which is probably accompanied in the minds of some with dreams of sapphires and rubies and golden thrones and all the glories of their forefather Solomon. This desire produces an unwillingness to abandon the Eastern policy, although it is realized that, until it is abandoned, peace with capitalist England is impossible. I do not know whether there are some to whom the thought occurs that if England were to embark on revolution we should become willing to abandon India to the Russians. But I am certain that the converse thought occurs, namely that, if India could be taken from us, the blow to imperialist feeling might lead us to revolution. In either case, the two policies, of revolution in the West and conquest (disguised as liberation of oppressed peoples) in the East, work in together, and dovetail into a strongly coherent whole.

Bolshevism as a social phenomenon is to be reckoned as a religion, not as an ordinary political movement. The important and effective mental attitudes to the world may be broadly divided into the religious and the scientific. The scientific attitude is tentative and piecemeal, believing what it finds evidence for, and no more. Since Galileo, the scientific attitude has proved itself increasingly capable of

ascertaining important facts and laws, which are acknowledged by all competent people regardless of temperament or self-interest or political pressure. Almost all the progress in the world from the earliest times is attributable to science and the scientific temper; almost all the major ills are attributable to religion.

By a religion I mean a set of beliefs held as dogmas, dominating the conduct of life, going beyond or contrary to evidence, and inculcated by methods which are emotional or authoritarian, not intellectual. By this definition, Bolshevism is a religion: that its dogmas go beyond or contrary to evidence, I shall try to prove in what follows. Those who accept Bolshevism become impervious to scientific evidence, and commit intellectual suicide. Even if all the doctrines of Bolshevism were true, this would still be the case, since no unbiased examination of them is tolerated. One who believes, as I do, that the free intellect is the chief engine of human progress, cannot but be fundamentally opposed to Bolshevism, as much as to the Church of Rome.

Among religions, Bolshevism is to be reckoned with Mohammedanism rather than with Christianity and Buddhism. Christianity and Buddhism are primarily personal religions, with mystical doctrines and a love of contemplation. Mohammedanism and Bolshevism are practical, social, unspiritual, concerned to win the empire of this world. Their founders would not have resisted the third of the temptations in the wilderness. What Mohammedanism did for the Arabs, Bolshevism may do for the Russians. As Ali went down before the politicians who only

rallied to the Prophet after his success, so the genuine Communists may go down before those who are now rallying to the ranks of the Bolsheviks. If so, Asiatic empire with all its pomps and splendours may well be the next stage of development, and Communism may seem, in historical retrospect, as small a part of Bolshevism as abstinence from alcohol is of Mohammedanism. It is true that, as a world force, whether for revolution or for empire, Bolshevism must sooner or later be brought by success into a desperate conflict with America; and America is more solid and strong, as yet, than anything that Mohammed's followers had to face. But the doctrines of Communism are almost certain, in the long run, to make progress among American wage-earners, and the opposition of America is therefore not likely to be eternal. Bolshevism may go under in Russia, but even if it does it will spring up again elsewhere, since it is ideally suited to an industrial population in distress. What is evil in it is mainly due to the fact that it has its origin in distress; the problem is to disentangle the good from the evil, and induce the adoption of the good in countries not goaded into ferocity by despair.

Russia is a backward country, not yet ready for the methods of equal co-operation which the West is seeking to substitute for arbitrary power in politics and industry. In Russia, the methods of the Bolsheviks are probably more or less unavoidable; at any rate, I am not prepared to criticize them in their broad lines. But they are not the methods appropriate to more advanced countries, and our Socialists will be unnecessarily retrograde if they allow the prestige of the

Bolsheviks to lead them into slavish imitation. It will be a far less excusable error in our reactionaries if, by their unteachableness, they compel the adoption of violent methods. We have a heritage of civilization and mutual tolerance which is important to ourselves and to the world. Life in Russia has always been fierce and cruel, to a far greater degree than with us, and out of the war has come a danger that this fierceness and cruelty may become universal. I have hopes that in England this may be avoided through the moderation of both sides. But it is essential to a happy issue that melodrama should no longer determine our views of the Bolsheviks: they are neither angels to be worshipped nor devils to be exterminated, but merely bold and able men attempting with great skill an almost impossible task.