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I had finished this writing when news came of the destruction of six hundred innocent lives opposite Port Arthur. It would seem that the useless suffering and death of these unfortunate deluded men who have needlessly and so dreadfully perished ought to disabuse those who were the cause of this destruction. I am not alluding to Makaroff and other officers--all these men knew what they were doing, and wherefore, and they voluntarily, for personal advantage, for ambition, did as they did, disguising themselves in pretended patriotism, a pretence not condemned merely because it is universal. I allude rather to those unfortunate men drawn from all parts of Russia, who, by the help of religious fraud, and under fear of punishment, have been torn from an honest, reasonable, useful, laborious family life, driven to the other end of the world, placed on a cruel, senseless machine for slaughter, and torn to bits, drowned along with this stupid machine in a distant sea, without any need or any possibility of advantage from all their privations, efforts, and sufferings, or from the death which overtook them.

In 1830, during the Polish war, the adjutant Vilijinsky sent to St. Petersburg by Klopitsky, in a conversation held in French with Dibitch, in answer to the latter's demand that the Russian troops should enter Poland, said to him:--

"Monsieur le Maréchal, I think that in that case it will be quite

impossible for the Polish nation to accept this manifesto...."

"Believe me, the Emperor will make no further concessions."

"Then I foresee that, unhappily, there will be war, that much blood will be shed, there will be many unfortunate victims."

"Do not think so; at most there will be ten thousand who will perish on both sides, and that is all,"[1] said Dibitch in his German accent, quite confident that he, together with another man as cruel and foreign to Russian and Polish life as he was himself,--Nicholas I,--had the right to condemn or not to condemn to death ten or a hundred thousand Russians and Poles.

[1] Vilijinsky adds on his own behalf, "The Field-Marshal did not then think that more than sixty thousand Russians alone would perish in this war, not so much from the enemy's fire as from disease--nor that he would himself be amongst their number."

One hardly believes that this could have been, so senseless and dreadful is it,--and yet it was; sixty thousand maintainers of their families lost their lives owing to the will of those men. And now the same thing is taking place.

In order not to let the Japanese into Manchuria, and to expel them from

Korea, not ten thousand, but fifty and more thousands will, according to all probability, be necessary. I do not know whether Nicholas II and Kuropatkin say like Dibitch in so many words that not more than fifty thousand lives will be necessary for this on the Russian side alone, only and only that; but they think it--they cannot but think it, because the work they are doing speaks for itself; that ceaseless stream of unfortunate, deluded Russian peasants now being transported by thousands to the Far East--these are those same not more than fifty thousand live Russian men whom Nicholas Romanoff and Alexis Kuropatkin have decided they may get killed, and who will be killed, in support of those stupidities, robberies, and every kind of abomination which were accomplished in China and Korea by immoral ambitious men now sitting peacefully in their palaces and expecting new glory and new advantage and profit from the slaughter of these fifty thousand unfortunate, defrauded Russian workingmen guilty of nothing and gaining nothing by their sufferings and death. For other people's land, to which the Russians have no right, which has been criminally seized from its legitimate owners, and which, in reality, is not even necessary to the Russians--and also for certain dark dealings by speculators, who in Korea wished to gain money out of other people's forests--many millions of money are spent, i.e. a great part of the labor of the whole of the Russian people, while the future generations of this people are bound by debts, its best workmen are withdrawn from labor, and scores of thousands of its sons are mercilessly doomed to death; and the destruction of these unfortunate men is already begun. More than this: the war is being managed by those who have hatched it so badly, so negligently, all is so unexpected, so

unprepared, that, as one paper admits, Russia's chief chance of success lies in the fact that it possesses inexhaustible human material. It is upon this that those rely who send to death scores of thousands of Russian men!

It is frankly said that the regrettable reverses of our fleet must be compensated on the land. In plain language this means that if the authorities have badly directed things on sea, and by their negligence have destroyed not only the nation's millions, but thousands of lives, we can make it up by condemning to death on land several more scores of thousands!

When crawling locusts cross rivers, it happens that the lower layers are drowned until from the bodies of the drowned is formed a bridge over which the upper ranks can pass. In the same way are the Russian people being disposed of. Thus the first lower layer is already beginning to drown, indicating the way to other thousands, who will all likewise perish.

And are the originators, directors, and supporters of this dreadful work beginning to understand their sin, their crime? Not in the least. They are quite persuaded that they have fulfilled, and are fulfilling, their duty, and they are proud of their activity. People speak of the loss of the brave Makaroff, who, as all agree, was able to kill men very cleverly; they deplore the loss of a drowned excellent machine of slaughter which had cost so many millions of roubles; they discuss the

question of how to find another murderer as capable as the poor benighted Makaroff; they invent new, still more efficacious, tools of slaughter; and all the guilty men engaged in this dreadful work, from the Tsar to the humblest journalist, all with one voice call for new insanities, new cruelties, for the increase of brutality and hatred of one's fellow-men.

"Makaroff is not the only man in Russia, and every admiral placed in his position will follow in his steps and will continue the plan and the idea of Makaroff, who has nobly perished in the strife," writes the *Novoe Vremya*.

"Let us earnestly pray God for those who have laid down their lives for the sacred Fatherland, without doubting for one moment that the Fatherland will give us new sons, equally virtuous, for the further struggle, and will find in them an inexhaustible store of strength for a worthy completion of the work," writes the *St. Petersburg Viedomosti*.

"A ripe nation will draw no other conclusion from the defeat, however unprecedented, than that we should continue, develop, and conclude the strife; therefore let us find in ourselves new strength; new heroes of the spirit will arise," writes the *Russ*,--and so forth.

So murder and every kind of crime go on with greater fury. People enthusiastically admire the martial spirit of the volunteers who, having come unexpectedly upon fifty of their fellow-men, slay all of them, or take possession of a village and slaughter all its population, or hang or

shoot those accused of being spies--i.e. of doing the very same thing which is regarded as indispensable and is constantly done on our side. News about these crimes is reported in pompous telegrams to their chief director, the Tsar, who, in return, sends to his virtuous troops his blessing on the continuation of such deeds.

Is it not evident that, if there be a salvation from this position, it is only one: that one which Jesus teaches?--"Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (that which is within you), and all the rest--i.e. all that practical welfare toward which man is striving--will of itself be realized."

Such is the law of life: practical welfare is attained not when man strives toward this practical welfare--such striving, on the contrary, for the most part removes man from the attainment of what he seeks; but only when man, without thinking of the attainment of practical welfare, strives toward the most perfect fulfilment of that which before God, before the Source and Law of his life, he regards as right. Then only, incidentally, is practical welfare also attained.

So that the true salvation of men is only one thing: the fulfilment of the will of God by each individual man within himself--i.e. in that portion of the universe which alone is subject to his power. In this is the chief, the only, destiny and duty of every individual man, and at the same time this is the only means by which every individual man can influence others; and, therefore, to this, and to this only, should all

the efforts of every man be directed.

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