

## CHAPTER II

### THE BUREAUCRACY AND THE CONSTITUTION

DURING the last few years Russia has been absorbed in a struggle between bureaucracy and constitutionalism. The struggle is not yet over. Its forms change from year to year. It becomes more complex and more profound. There has been nothing quite like it in all the world's history. Some of its phases may be illustrated from the history of other European countries, but references to the French Revolution, to the Italian Risorgimento, or to the establishment of representative institutions in Germany, will not explain the Russian struggle. The Russian constitutional movement was preceded by similar movements on the Continent of Europe, in Germany and in Austria, though it lagged nearly three-quarters of a century behind these. In its turn it gave an impulse to constitutional movements in the East, first in Persia, then in Turkey, and last of all in China. But, as is well known, the promulgation of constitutions in Eastern countries has not been followed by such striking and indubitable progress as was anticipated; has in fact, in some cases, served only the more clearly to reveal how deeply these countries were sunk in decay. And then again the experience of the last few years has shown that on the European continent, in America, and in England itself, constitutional government, though obviously a tremendous advance on absolutism, is not such a simple and all-sufficing remedy for the ills of the body politic as it seemed fifty years ago. Russia is in the extraordinarily difficult position of having to deal at once with the problems of East and West. She has to make up for lost time in the adoption of European institutions, at a moment when Europe itself is trying to adapt them to more

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Political  
Ideals.

complex social conditions. And she has to tide over that most painful of all periods when constitutional principles have not acquired energy enough to transform the body politic, but serve simply to lay bare the havoc wrought by centuries of despotic government. It is true that the promulgation of the Constitutional Manifesto in 1905 marked the beginning of a new era for Russia. But the early years of the new era have brought even more acute suffering than did the later years of the old, just as a latent disease becomes more violent when it finds its way into the open. The remedy that began by bringing the disease to the surface will gradually effect a recovery. But the process involves shocks, and constant relapses, and intense pain. And the subject of this process is not a tiny Belgium, or an island in the midst of the sea, or a comfortably-sized Germany, but an immense Empire with a population of 160 millions, and watchful enemies on her Eastern and Western frontiers. Revolution and reaction, liberty and repression, all the words with which we are accustomed to express phases of the struggle for representative government have acquired in the vast sweep of the Russian constitutional movement a hundred new connotations and implications. There is nothing simple here, nothing to which justice can be done by familiar and hackneyed phrases.

The main issue, however, is clear. The struggle is being waged between the bureaucracy and constitutionalism. But what is the bureaucracy? Literally, it is rule by means of **bureaux or Government offices**. But there are Government offices in every country, and the distinction between a civil service and a bureaucracy is that the former is subject to control while the latter is not. A bureaucrat may be a perfectly reasonable, capable and hard-working being in so far as he is a civil servant, but in so far as he exercises the power of the State arbitrarily and irresponsibly he can, and human nature being what it is, very likely will do a very great deal of harm. The Russian State has been held together very largely owing to the fact that the highly organised civil service

which carries on the business of administration was by no means wholly incompetent, and did a certain amount of useful work every day of the year. What very nearly ruined the State completely was the fact that the total absence of popular control over the bureaucracy set a premium on incompetence and dishonesty, and encouraged the worst forms of exploitation. It would seem quite simple to remedy matters by putting the bureaucracy under popular control and giving the people, through its elected representatives, a voice in legislation. But the very bigness of Russia makes the application of such a remedy difficult, because nowhere in the world has a highly-centralised bureaucracy had at its uncontrolled disposal such a vast territory and such an enormous extent of political power. It is true that the bureaucracy exercised power in the name of the Monarch. But in practice this delegated dominance was hardly distinguishable from original power, and an *ispravnik* or district Chief of Police in Siberia wrought his will on the population with unchallenged authority. The task of bringing under popular control such an immense and complex organisation with such a tangled variety of personal interests and such a heavy weight of tradition behind it, would have been almost a hopeless one if the bureaucracy had been thoroughly efficient. But a bureaucracy naturally tends to collapse under the burden of its own corruption, and the demonstration of bureaucratic incompetence and corruption given in the Russo-Japanese war facilitated the task of the reformers.

It would be quite wrong to say that the Russian Civil Service is wholly composed of bureaucrats pure and simple. There

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Service.**

are bureaucrats, a great many of them, and there are also a number of Government employees who to-day are more or less tinged with the bureaucratic spirit, but to-morrow would do their duty just as well or even better if a Constitutional regime were in full swing. The Russian Government Service, taken as a whole, includes a large number of interesting types,

from elegant men of the world to that pettifogging Dryasdust familiarly known as a "Chancellery rat," from the rough red-faced police captain to the mild-mannered bespectacled excise clerk, from the dried-up martinet at the head of a St. Petersburg department to the slow-moving, long-haired country postmaster. Governors, senators, clerks of court, tax collectors, school-inspectors, telegraph clerks, customs officials, wardens of the peasantry, heads of consistories, all are engaged in the business of the Empire, all are formally in the service of the Tsar. It is a State in uniform. The very schoolboys wear uniform, and even high-school girls have to wear brown dresses and brown aprons. Ministers wear uniforms, not in the routine of work in St. Petersburg, but on State occasions and when they travel about the country. Judges wear uniforms, and so do Government engineers and land-surveyors, and a host of other people whose salary filters down through many channels from the St. Petersburg Treasury. Brass buttons and peaked caps, peaked caps and brass buttons, uniforms with blue, red, or white facings meet the eye with wearisome monotony from end to end of the Empire, from the Pacific to the Danube. A Russian may wear uniform his whole life long. As a little boy of eight he goes proudly off to a preparatory school in a long grey overcoat, reaching almost to the ground, and in a broad-crowned cap with the peak tilted over his snub nose. When school days are over he dons the uniform of a student, and after a few years at University or Technical College, enters a Ministry and puts on one of the many official uniforms. The years pass, he is gradually promoted, and at fifty he is trudging in uniform with portfolio under his arm to his Ministry, just as with bag on shoulders he tramped to school when he was a little boy of eight.

All the Government officials are *Chinovniks*, that is to say, each of them stands in a definite *chin*, or rank. Peter the Great established an order of promotion called the *Tabel*

*Rangov*, or Table of Ranks, and this order is in force to the present day. Once a man is drawn into the subtle mechanism of the Table of Ranks he may go on from grade to grade with hardly an effort on his part, by the mere fact of existing and growing wrinkled and grey-haired. When he

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is Worked.

enters the Government service he receives a paper called the *formuliarny spisok* or Formular List, in which the events of his life are noted down from year to year—his appointment to a particular table in the Ministry of Justice, his marriage, the birth of his children, his leave, his illnesses, his appointment to a commission or committee, his despatch on special service, and then the long series of decorations and promotions, various degrees of the Order of St. Anne, St. Stanislav, St. Vladimir, and it may be high up on the last rungs of the bureaucratic ladder such coveted decorations as the Order of St. Andrew, or even the White Eagle. The orders are a reward for good service. But the *chins*, or grades, need not necessarily be so. A *chinovnik* may be promoted from grade to grade simply for "having served the due term of years," as the phrase is, but his promotion may be hastened through favour in high places or in recognition of special diligence or ability. The names of grades have no meaning except as indicating the grade. They are the same throughout the civil service, and give no suggestion of the office held by the possessor. They were originally adapted from German titles, and look imposing when re-translated into German. Thus the grade of *nadvorny sovietnik* is not a particularly high one, but when it appears in German as Hofrat, or Court Councillor, the impression is given that the possessor is a personage of considerable importance. But the really important *chins* are that of *Staatsky Sovietnik*, which is perhaps not so important as it looks in its German guise of Staatsrath, or Councillor of State, but seems to secure a man against undue caprices on the part of Fortune, and to invest him with an air of respectability; and then the grades that make

the man who attains to them a noble if he is not one by birth. There is a *chin* that conveys personal nobility, and the *chin* of *dieistvitelny staatsky sovietnik*, or Real State Councillor, conveys hereditary nobility. In this way the ranks of the gentry are constantly recruited from the bureaucracy, and the traditional connection between rank and Government service is maintained in actual practice. The grade of Real State Councillor also conveys the rank of a general in the Civil Service and the title of Excellency. The average *chinovnik* thinks himself happy if he reaches such an exalted *chin* as this. Most professors become Real State Councillors by virtue of length of service, and it sounds odd to hear a stooping, frock-coated gentleman who is distinguished as an able lecturer on mediæval history, spoken of as a general. The grades of Secret Councillor and Real State Councillor are reserved either for very old or for very distinguished members of the Civil Service, for ministers and ambassadors, and the like.

The system of grades is one of the forces that hold the bureaucracy together. It secures a certain uniformity of temper, tendency and aim. Russians are the most democratic people in the world, but this carefully adjusted system of grades, decorations, money premiums and, to close with, pensions, corresponding to the *chin* attained, appeals to an ineradicable human instinct for outward symbols of position, security and distinction, and makes of the bureaucracy a world apart, a world in which the interests of all the members are interwoven. It is curious how mortified even a Radical magistrate will be if his name fails to appear among the Real State Councillors in the annual promotion list, and, on the other hand, with what unalloyed pleasure he receives congratulations if he has been given the coveted grade after all. But there is another very characteristic feature of the bureaucracy, and that is its extraordinary centralisation. From the big dreary-looking yellow or brown buildings in St. Petersburg, in which the Ministries are housed, currents

of authority, of directive energy go forth to all the ends of the great Empire in the form of telegrams or occasional oral messages by special couriers, but above all in the form of endless "papers." Pens scratch, typewriters click, clerks lay blue covers full of papers before the "head of the table"; the "head of the table" sends them to the "head of the department," to the Assistant Minister, if need be, and in the more important cases, the Assistant Minister to the Minister. Then back go the papers again with signatures appended, down through various grades for despatch to a judge, to another department, to a Governor, to a *chinovnik* on special service, or to some petitioner from the world without. Incoming and outgoing papers are the systole and diastole of the Chancelleries. All sorts of documents go under the general name of *bumaga* or "paper," from a warrant for arrest to a report on a projected railway, or a notification of taxes due. There are *doklady* or reports, and *otnoshenia* or communications between officials of equal rank, and *donesenia* or statements made to superiors, *predpisania* instructions or orders, and *proshenia*, applications or petitions. These, and a hundred others besides, are all "Papers," and there is a special style for each of them, and a general dry and formal style for all of them known as the "Chancellery Style," which permeates Russian public life, and creeps into private letters and concert programmes, and newspaper articles, and into the very love-making of telegraph clerks waiting for trains on wayside stations. The "papers," their colour, the stamps upon them, their style, create an immense uniformity of mental content, and tend to level down the striking differences that exist between say, the Tartar policemaster in a town on the Caspian Sea, and the son of a Russian priest who serves as a clerk in the financial department in Tver. It is extraordinary discipline. The lack of variety in the system increases its hold on all its members. There are hardly any of the curious divergencies and inconsistencies of which the English administrative system is so full, hardly any quaint

anachronisms left to linger on because of some wise use they have for the affections. There are certain inevitable modifications in the Caucasus, in Central Asia, in Bessarabia and in Siberia, Poland and the Baltic Provinces. **But, generally speaking,** the system as outlined in mathematical order on smooth white paper, is embodied with surprising accuracy in the network of institutions that cover the great plain from limit to limit. Authority is delegated from the big yellow Ministries in St. Petersburg to the dreary white buildings in the head towns of the governments or territories into which the whole Empire is mapped out, and from the government towns to the head towns of the districts into which each government is divided, and then down to the smallest towns and to the Wardens of the Peasantry. The uniformity of it all is both imposing and depressing, and as wearying as the inevitable red-capped stationmaster and brown-coated gendarme on every one of the scores of railway stations between Wirballen and Harbin.

The integrity and uniformity of the bureaucratic system is maintained, the system is held in its framework, so to speak, by means of the army. The army, in its turn, by means of the conscript system, subjects almost the whole male population to a uniform discipline, levels down, for a time at any rate, the distinctions between various regions and various nationalities, and serves as a most potent means of Russification. Russification, indeed, is not the word, though it is the Russian language that is used in the process, for it is not the interests of the Russian people that are primarily in question but the interests of the State. It is a moulding of all the human material of the Empire upon one State pattern, a persistent elimination of divergencies, a grandiose attempt to subordinate all the wayward impulses of 160 millions of human beings to one common aim unintelligible to the mass. The army supplies the clamps by which the vast mechanism of the bureaucracy is held in position.

But it is through the police that the bureaucracy carries out its function of maintaining order. And the police have of late years assumed an overweening impor-

**The Police.** tance in the State because the bureaucracy has constantly tended more and more to limit its functions to the maintenance of order. It has subordinated **everything to this end.** It has become immensely suspicious. The very success, the very efficiency of the bureaucracy has been its ruin. In so far as it governed well, administered justice, prevented crime, promoted education, built roads and railways, and furthered trade, it encouraged individual initiative, fostered the desire for liberty. And at the same time it opened the eyes of many to its own corruption, to the depredations on the national wealth and welfare carried on under the veil of order, strict uniformity and long-armed discipline. On both occasions when the clamps were loosened, when the army was defeated in the Crimea in 1854-5, and in Manchuria fifty years afterwards, the evils of the bureaucracy were vividly revealed, the system almost fell asunder. Almost, but not quite. For after the Crimean War reforms were effected and the system was modernised, and again after the Japanese war reforms were granted and a further attempt was made at modernisation. But on each occasion concessions were followed by a reassertion of bureaucratic authority by means of the police. The nineteenth century was a century of movement, even in Russia. The emancipation of the serfs meant the freeing of an enormous amount of pent-up energy of economic development, it aroused a hum of fresh and vigorous movement all over the Empire. But for that strange complexity of widely extended, exclusive interests for which the bureaucracy stands, and for that rigid external uniformity which is the aim of its efforts, movement was dangerous. The bureaucracy took fright at the new, high-spirited movement of the sixties and, instead of steadily promoting economic and educational development, set to work to devise a system of checks. It tried to render

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its own reforms innocuous, set bureaucratic safeguards on its own judicial system, and bound and weakened those Zemstvos, or elective County Councils, which impaired the integrity of the bureaucratic system by exerting the functions of local government in thirty-four governments of European Russia. And the maintenance of order interpreted as the prevention of movement became the bureaucracy's prime care.

The population increased rapidly, trade grew, factories arose, a labour movement came into being. The connection with Europe became closer and more vital, and through the connecting tissue the swift beating of the pulse of the West was felt in Russia. The progressive movement gathered strength. Checked overground it went underground, and became revolutionary and terrorist. The terrorist movement, and more particularly the assassination of Alexander II, heightened the fears of the bureaucracy. The whole nation became suspect; sedition was scented everywhere; the police gained influence and authority, and the application of the term "political crime" to almost all forms of denial of the autocracy afforded an extraordinarily wide field for the exercise of repressive measures. That is why the bureaucracy came to be chiefly impersonated in a modernised and highly organised police system. That is why bureaucratic administration came to be so aggressively prohibitive of progress, and why gendarmes and prefects, and policemen and *ispravniks* (heads of district police), and the *Okhrana* or Political Police, and detectives of various kinds came to occupy such a prominent position in the forefront of Russian public life. It was the rigid centralisation, the exclusiveness of the bureaucracy, the extremely wide interpretation of the term "political crime" and the extraordinary powers given to the police that made the bureaucratic system particularly hard to bear at a time when thought was awakening, and the economic and intellectual energies of the nation were straining for free development.

There were alleviating circumstances, of course. If the German conceptions which entered so largely into the bureaucratic system had been put into practice with truly German industry and rigidity, there would simply have been no breathing-space at all. But sheer native indolence and good nature often made officials wink at breaches of the law, and even corruption had its milder aspects, for while bribery gave frequent occasion for extortion and blackmail, it often protected the feeble against unendurable oppression. Then the fact that the members of the bureaucracy were human beings with kith and kin in the world outside counted for a great deal. Revolutionaries and Constitutionals often found it possible to secure through relatives "protection" in high places. Influential persons often "begged" or "bustled about," as the saying is, for those in trouble, and this through all grades of the bureaucracy. It might easily happen that the sister or the son of a Governor or Crown Prosecutor was a revolutionary. There was one other fact that for a time tended to keep the bureaucracy in touch with the general life of the nation. Most of the country gentry were employed in the Government Service, and after the sixties there was a liberal and humane movement amongst the gentry, which affected the bureaucracy. But members of the gentry tended to let their land slip out of their possession, and to become entirely dependent on Government service. And for this reason the bureaucracy became more and more a caste apart, suspicious of the rest of the nation, dry and hard,

It was at the beginning of the twentieth century, under the iron rule of the Minister of the Interior, Plehve, that the bureaucracy most distinctly assumed the form of a system of rigid police control. Plehve displayed consummate art and extraordinarily singleness of aim in the application of all the means of repression. He was determined to crush the opposition movement in all its forms—the Constitutional movement which was centred in an organisation composed chiefly of members of the Zemstvos, or County Councils, and

found expression in the publication of a Liberal organ, called *Osvobozhdenie* (Liberation) in Stuttgart, the labour movement which led to a number of strikes, chiefly in Southern Russia, and was furthered by the Socialist parties having their centre in Switzerland, and the terrorist movement maintained by the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Plehve strengthened the Political Police, developed the detective system, maintained an extremely strict censorship, and created an atmosphere of oppressive stillness in the country. During his term of office the war with Japan broke out, and although Plehve advocated war in the hope that it would divert the growing forces of internal discontent, the war had the reverse effect of fanning the flame of the constitutional agitation. It was at this time that a series of events began which demand here a brief review, for apart from them the present position is wholly unintelligible.

In July, 1904, shortly after the Japanese war began, Plehve was murdered by the bomb of an assassin. The Government for a time relaxed its severity, and the Constitutional agitation among the educated classes had greater scope. In November, with the tacit permission of the Government, a conference of leading Zemstvo, or County Council workers, was held in St. Petersburg, and passed resolutions affirming the necessity of civil liberty and the establishment of representative institutions. Then a strange movement began among the working men of St. Petersburg. A priest named Gapon organised Working-men's Clubs on behalf of the Government, with the object of combating the conspirative Socialist organisations. But he made use of the influence he had gained and of the unrest caused by the war, and by the echoes of the constitutional agitation to place himself at the head of a workmen's movement, the aim of which was directly to petition the Tsar to grant his people liberty. On the morning of January 22nd, 1905, the workmen in the various districts in the outskirts of St. Petersburg formed in procession to march to the Winter

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Palace and present their petition to the Emperor. But the Emperor did not appear.

It was a beautiful winter morning, with a sharp frost and a sun brilliantly shining from a pale-blue sky upon the white expanse of the Neva and the snow-covered roofs and streets of the city. Down the Nevsky Prospect walked unceasingly with set, firm faces, working men, young and old, in black winter overcoats and black lambskin caps. There was something uncanny in their intentness. In the great white square before the Winter Palace a bivouac fire was burning, and around it soldiers were boxing to keep themselves warm. The throng from the Nevsky was held back from the Square by a line of dragoons, who from time to time charged down the sidewalks and sent the throng scattering. On the North side of the Neva, near the Finland Station, rifles were stacked **and soldiers stood waiting. Near the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul**, before the oldest of the St. Petersburg churches, a score of mounted dragoons were drawn up in line, commanding the square. Past the People's Palace, a procession came marching, workmen in black, intent and solemn, a student or two, and two or three women. They sang a little and then moved silently. They entered the square near the fortress. There was a bugle-call from the opposite side, but they marched on. There was a warning volley, and then three volleys of loaded cartridge. With shouts and cries the procession scattered, and the dead and wounded lay upon the snow. So all the processions were met and scattered, that led by Gapon among the rest.

Near the Winter Palace the throng grew and pressed on and on. Then the troops fired, bringing down little boys perched on the trees in a neighbouring public garden and killing and wounding many men **and women.** A little further up the Nevsky Prospect, near the Police Bridge, the troops again fired. Again killed and wounded, again groans and cries, and a terror-stricken scattering crowd spreading indignation throughout

**A Black  
Sunday.**

the city. A sleigh drove swiftly up the Nevsky followed by half-a-dozen workmen running with bare heads and crossing themselves, some weeping. In the sleigh sat a youth holding in his arms a student, dead, his face one gaping wound. Three or four Cossacks came galloping up on horseback, pulled rein, looked at the sleigh, then rode on with a jeering laugh. The sun set in a roseate sky, the evening fell, crowds wandered about the streets with helpless imprecations, the wounded were brought to the hospitals or cared for in private houses. Cossacks and dragoons guarded the Government buildings, and from time to time charged down the Nevsky, driving loiterers before them like chaff before the wind. It is not known to a certainty to this day how many hundreds were killed on that terrible Sunday when the workmen set out to petition the Tsar for liberty.

That day turned trust into bitterness, and the longing for justice into a desperate endeavour. A revolutionary movement leapt from city to city, from town

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Rebellion.**

to town, till all the towns of the Empire were in a ferment, and unrest spread even to remote villages. Workmen went out on strike, police raids and arrests became the order of the day. Streets were patrolled by Cossacks. In Warsaw the troops charged and fired on a procession of working-men. Here and there bombs were thrown at police officials and other representatives of the Government. Manufacturers, members of municipal councils, doctors, lawyers and professors held meetings, conferences and congresses to devise a remedy for the situation. A Congress of lawyers, and later a Congress of literary men, held secretly in St. Petersburg, formulated demands for the establishment of a democratic system of government. In April an important Congress of Zemstvo Representatives, held in Moscow in various private houses in defiance of the prohibition of the police, set to work to give point and detail to the demand of the Liberal gentry for a Constitution. It became a custom to hold Liberal meetings in secret with the

knowledge that Cossacks were waiting around the corner. And somehow people of a sudden found their tongues, lost that fear of open speech which had become habitual under the Plehve regime, and when they spoke openly in trains and public places they spoke much of the Constitution and little of the war that was bringing defeat after defeat. Only the shock of the Tsushima disaster deepened a growing sense of imminent danger to the State, and caused the Zemstvo men to assemble hastily again in July, and to send a deputation to the Emperor, to implore him to put an end to the bureaucratic system and establish representative government. Up till then there had been on the part of the Government only a few faint signs of reluctant yielding, vague promises, the appointment of Commissions to draft reforms. In reply to the Zemstvo deputation (June 19th) the Tsar said definitely: "My will, the will of the Emperor to convene a National Assembly, is unshakable. I am daily watching over this. My will shall be carried out."

Ten days afterwards Odessa was the scene of a naval mutiny. Workmen struck, crowds of wharf-labourers burned down goods-sheds, stores and country houses. There were sanguinary conflicts with the troops. The space around the harbour was covered with a smoking heap of ruins. Then up over the blue sunlit expanse of waters, across which argonauts had once sailed in search of the Golden Fleece, a battleship came swiftly steaming. The battleship, the *Prince Potemkin*, was in charge of a mutinous crew. They cast anchor before the city and warned the authorities to refrain from interfering with the burial of their comrade who had been killed by an officer. Their comrade was buried, and thousands of the inhabitants of Odessa attended the funeral. Three or four of the sailors were arrested. The *Potemkin* fired shots into the city and the sailors were released. The mutiny spread to two other vessels. The mutineers held the authorities paralysed. The Admiral commanding the Black Sea fleet came up with the rest of the squadron, but

did not venture to take strong measures. The *Potemkin*, after taking provisions, left Odessa and put in at Constanza in Roumania. Here she was disarmed, and most of the mutineers, after aimless wanderings in foreign lands, one by one returned to Russia, drawn by invincible home-sickness, and were seized and punished, some by death, and some by exile.

There were mutinies in Libau and Kronstadt and political strikes; bomb-throwing and demonstrations did not cease throughout the land. On August 9th an Imperial Decree was promulgated constituting a National Representative Assembly with Consultative Powers. But this concession did not check the growing agitation. The war came to an end. The Peace of Portsmouth was concluded in August. When M. Witte after signing it returned to Russia he was the man of the hour. He received the title of Count, and united all the Ministers in a Cabinet of which he became the first Premier. The unrest grew, and toward the end of October culminated in a general strike of a character unparalleled. The final impetus was given by the St. Petersburg railway-men, who struck by mistake in consequence of the receipt of false information from Moscow. The strike spread to all the railways of the Empire. On all that network of lines which maintains communication between the ends of the great plain traffic came to a standstill. Trains stopped at wayside stations. Passengers bivouacked or pursued their journey in hired carriages. The busy hum and thunderous rattle of the great city stations, their pride in the conquest of distance yielded suddenly to a chilly, faint-hearted silence. One by one porters, newsboys, book-keepers, ticket-clerks crept away. Cab-drivers deserted their ranks before the stations, disconsolate, to seek chance fares at street corners. At such a moment it was a simple and natural thing that the factory employees should strike once more. Agitation and persuasion were hardly needed. And the strange impulse spread, the impulse to cease from all action, to refrain even

from such support of the old system as was involved in the earning of one's bread, till the word of change should come. Shop assistants put on their coats and went wandering aimlessly up and down the streets in search of liberty. The clerks in city offices laid aside their pens and waited. Teachers ceased to teach, and school children had unexpected holidays. Lawyers ceased to plead, and even unemotional city magistrates were infected by the strange unrest and ceased to judge between landlords and tenants, or to pass sentence on the drunk and disorderly until the word of a new time had been spoken. The provision shops remained open and the people ate and drank. But all the myriad currents of effort and emotion which constitute the daily life of a great city had been suddenly simplified, reduced to one single emotion of silent expectancy, menacing because of its vastness, because of its amazing spontaneity. Organisation played only the most trifling part in the strike. It was the spontaneous expression of a general desire, perhaps possible in such a form only in a country where industry and the business of living generally are loosely organised. There was something awe-inspiring in this strange negative assertion of the general will.

Cossacks uneasily patrolled the streets of St. Petersburg. No one knew how long the strange silence would last or what it portended. The University building was crowded night after night with people eager to hear fitting words for the strange emotions that were oppressing them. The floors of the University groaned under the weight of the packed masses; the students joined hands and formed living barriers to guide the surging stream up staircases and along corridors. Revolutionary songs were sung, but they left perplexity and fear hanging in the air. The police were helpless. Arrests were of no avail. **Who could arrest this vast emotion?**

On the third evening of the strike, that is, on October 30th, news came from Tsarskoe Selo and was telegraphed abroad. The Tsar had granted a Constitution. He had signed a

manifesto declaring that no law should be valid without the consent of the Duma, and affirming the principles of liberty of speech, of the Press, of assembly and

**A Constitution  
Granted.**

association, and also the principle of personal immunity. The news was known abroad before it was generally known in St. Petersburg. In the evening **a few copies of the Manifesto were distributed.** Towards midnight a faint sound of singing broke the brooding silence of the Nevsky. The Cossack patrols reined up their horses **in vague alarm.** A little procession of students came marching down the Prospect, doubting and wondering wayfarers joined them, Cossack patrols formed a cautious and puzzled escort. The procession crossed the bridge and approached the dimly looming mass of the University buildings. Out of the darkness of the University square Cossacks came galloping and checked the march. A police officer appeared and forbade entrance to the University. A student handed him a copy of the Manifesto. In the glimmering light of a street-lamp, vaguely revealing the Cossacks leaning down from their saddles and the thin pale faces of students, both men and women, the police officer read in a hard, dry voice the Manifesto. "Liberty of speech" was one of the phrases he read, and then he opened the door of the University Courtyard, the students entered, somebody made a speech, there was cheering, and the little company dispersed.

Next day the city gave itself over to rejoicing, a strange morbid kind of rejoicing that was full of bitterness and foreboding. There were endless processions with red flags, and the interminable singing of the Russian revolutionary Marseillaise, open-air meetings, fierce ejaculations, speeches bitter and resentful, never simply joyful, sighs of relief that the immediate tension was over, but no powerful controlling voice, no leader to gather up all the vague, diffuse popular emotion of the troubled time, to illuminate it, to direct it, and make it the motive force of the new era just proclaimed in the Imperial Manifesto. In default of a popular leader

there was a disposition on the part of many to look to Count Witte for guidance. But the Zemstvo men, the recognised heads of the Constitutional movement, did not trust him. He had to form a Cabinet of Government officials, he was caught in the toils of bureaucratic tradition, and before he had time to give effect to the principles of the Manifesto found himself plunged into a systematic policy of repression, the agent of which was the Minister of the Interior, Durnovo. There was a period of irresolution, of halting between liberty and oppression. In Kiev, Odessa, and other towns mobs, aided by the soldiery, carried out terrible massacres of Jews and intelligentsia. But in the Capitals, the Press was free, and a Council of Workmen's Deputies, which sat in St. Petersburg, wielded for a time an extraordinary authority. Then the members of this Council were arrested and the Press was checked. In the Baltic Provinces Lettish workmen and peasants killed German landlords, and again and again lit up a whole country-side with the lurid light of burning mansions, bringing down at the end of the year terrible retribution in the form of punitive expeditions. In Moscow revolutionary groups threw up barricades in the streets, and for several days lived in enjoyment of the virtual command over half the city. At midday daily heavy guns were laboriously dragged up to demolish the barricades, and to make ugly holes in houses where revolutionaries were supposed to be lodged. The revolt was quelled by a regiment sent from St. Petersburg, and punitive expeditions did their merciless work along the railway lines in the neighbourhood of Moscow. There were other revolts here and there, provisional so-called republics were established in various towns, to be quickly followed by the terrors of punitive expeditions, improvised from among the troops returning from the war. The winter dragged on wearily and heavily, but preparations were made for the elections to the Duma. Parties were organised. An electoral law giving the peasantry the preponderance of voting powers was issued in March, and on the eve of the

assembling of the Duma, the principles of the October Manifesto were embodied in revised Fundamental Laws. The elections returned a majority of Constitutional Democrats or Cadets (so-called from the first letters of their title K D) members of a party formed by a fusion of the leading group of the Zemstvo Congress with groups of professional men in the towns. There were also a large number of peasants, most of whom joined a Labour Party which was organised in the Duma. The Conservative and the Reactionary elements in the country were almost unrepresented.

On a sunny May morning the Emperor received the members of the first Russian Parliament in the great white hall of the Winter Palace. On one side of the hall were ranged the deputies, stern and sober, a few in frock-coats, many in jackets, and the great majority of the peasants in simple peasant costume. Opposite them were ranged courtiers, generals and admirals, ministers, members of the Senate and the Council of State, all gleaming in scarlet uniforms and gold lace. The Emperor read an address in which he called the deputies "the best men" of the country. The courtiers and dignitaries cheered lustily, and a band played the National Anthem. But the deputies looked on gloomily, and the peasants calculated how much of the people's money had been spent in the purchase of all the splendid uniforms. The first hostile note of the session was struck there in the Winter Palace. The attempt to reconcile the new institution with the traditional order failed from the outset.

The deputies went by steamer up the sunlit river to the Taurida Palace. A cheering crowd welcomed them at the gates. In the hall of session, arranged in the form of an amphitheatre, peasants, professors, landowners, and lawyers noisily and exultingly took their seats, and in the afternoon light, reflected through great windows from a garden jubilant in its spring garment of green, they elected as their Speaker a dignified professor from Moscow named Muromtsev, and

listened to a short speech in which the veteran Zemstvo leader Petrunkevich demanded as the pledge of complete reconciliation between the Government and the nation a full amnesty for all political offenders.

For seventy-two days the First Duma sat and debated in the Taurida Palace. This period was one of open and declared hostility between the Government and the Representative Assembly. There was no moderating element on either side. The Witte Cabinet had retired just before the opening of the Duma, giving place to a Cabinet under the premiership of an elderly and inactive dignitary named Goremykin, who represented bureaucratic tradition pure and simple. In the Parliament the Cadets, who in themselves represented liberal and democratic constructive tendencies, were continually overborne, and if not out-voted, were outvoiced by the more demonstrative violent and aggressive left wing of the Duma, **the Labour and Socialist groups.** **The appearance of Ministers** in the Duma was the signal for fierce attacks on the Government. The peasantry, the nationalities, clamoured for immediate satisfaction of their demands. The fine promenade hall of the Taurida Palace, once a ballroom, now a parliamentary lobby, was continually a hum with disputes between peasants, workmen, journalists and lawyers on land nationalisation, women's franchise, or the claims of the proletariat. And apart from disputes there was a burning desire for mere intercourse, an eagerness to compare notes, exchange experiences, to revel in a new sense of kinship, brotherhood, unity, to interpret the political and geographical unity of the Empire in a passionate expression of national unity in the task of liberation. But there was no real unity after all. The party spirit grew apace, the deputies vented their passion on each other, and the resounding echoes of the Duma's attacks on the bureaucracy confusedly mingled with the sharp tones of bitter **party strife.** The people looked to the Duma for relief. Wild-looking peasants from remote governments came up to the Duma with fantastic schemes for saving the

Empire. But the Duma was helpless. It did not succeed in affirming in Acts of Parliament even the most elementary principles of civil liberty. And yet scores of Socialist organs all over the country violently attacked it for failing at once to bring the millenium. In the end the Government simply dissolved the Duma. The majority of the deputies went to Viborg in Finland, and thence issued an appeal to the people to defend their rights by refusing to pay taxes or give recruits to the army. This act proved to be a deplorable political blunder, from which the Cadets in particular reaped bitter consequences. No response was made by the country to the Viborg appeal, and the new head of the Government, Stolypin, who, having ventured as Minister of the Interior to recommend the dissolution of the Duma, had been appointed Premier with the injunction to carry the dissolution into effect, engaged in a policy of repression even more energetic than that conducted by M. Durnovo.

The name of Stolypin stands for a very distinctly marked and characteristic period of recent Russian history. This period, lasting from July 21st, 1906, when

**M. Stolypin.** Stolypin became Premier till September, 1911, when he was assassinated in Kiev, may be described as the period of the reassertion of the bureaucratic will. M. Stolypin probably did not aim definitely at the complete restoration of the bureaucracy. He was not a thorough bureaucrat by training or conviction. He was a country gentleman and a provincial governor, and had had no experience of the intricate ways of the St. Petersburg Chancelleries until he was summoned from Saratov to be Minister of the Interior in the Goremykin Cabinet. He was not a man of theory; there is no reason to believe that he was an anti-constitutionalist in principle, and he was certainly **not a devotee of bureaucratic tradition.** His main object was to hold the Empire together under particularly trying circumstances. He refused to see perplexities, and tried to cut a Gordian knot. He took a simple view of the strange, **confused** emotion that was agitating the country. He summed

it all up as revolutionary, and proceeded to put it down. Agrarian disturbances, terrorism, those forms of highway robbery or expropriation into which the extreme forms of revolutionary activity had degenerated, he suppressed by the ruthless methods of the Field Court-Martial. Executions became a normal feature of public life in a country in which capital punishment has no place in the Criminal Code.

Stolypin had a second Duma elected, but the Second Duma proved to be as uncompromising as the First, and far less capable. The Premier brought about its dissolution, and in spite of the provisions of the Constitution that no law should be valid without the consent of the Duma, the electoral law was changed by Imperial decree, so as to transfer the preponderance of voting power from the peasantry to the landed gentry. In the Third Duma, elected on the basis of the new law, the Constitutional Democrats numbered less than three score, the Labour and Socialist parties which had been so prominent in the first two Dumas were represented by a mere handful, while the majority consisted of Conservative and Reactionary groups. The Centre was formed by a party of Conservative Constitutionalists known as Octobrists, who hovered dexterously on the borderline between Constitutionalism and Bureaucracy.

For five years the Third Duma contrived to maintain a shadowy existence in virtue of a curious policy of hide-and-seek which the Octobrists, as represented by their leader, the Moscow deputy, Guchkov, amicably played with the Government, as represented by Stolypin. Both Stolypin and Guchkov were men of spirit, but the effect of their co-operation was to make the Duma a byword in the country for spiritless compliance. It was characteristic of the Third Duma that whenever it ventured clearly to assert a constitutional principle it always surrendered it the moment the assertion seemed to involve the danger of serious conflict with the Government. But the cringing of the Third Duma had a certain advantage. By bowing before the vehement

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reassertion of bureaucratic and reactionary principle, it prevented that total abolition of representative institutions which again and again seemed inevitable. It established for the representative assembly a certain tradition, a certain customary right of existence. And that meant a great deal at a moment when the nation, ill-organised, divided against itself and yet eager to abolish the old system, was unable to give effect to its desire. Perhaps the Third Duma was the measure of the nation's actual strength. But while the Duma examined the budget and passed various bills of secondary importance—whatever progressive principles they contained being afterwards almost invariably eliminated by the Upper House, the Council of the Empire—the greater part of the Empire remained under martial law, all the acts of the administration were an ostentatious denial of the principles of civil liberty, the evils of the bureaucratic system made themselves felt with redoubled intensity—in fact the Bureaucracy assumed a new aggressive character largely owing to the force of Stolypin's personality, the strength of his will.

**It was a strange position.** Stolypin placed himself, his energy, his decision of character, his freedom from hampering bureaucratic routine at the service of the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy acquired in him what it most needed, a will. He tried to suppress the popular movement, and at the same time to reinvigorate the bureaucracy by cleansing it of some of its worst abuses, such as the wholesale taking of bribes. He needed the Duma, in fact the Duma was indispensable to him. His prestige was largely based on the fact that in the Representative Assembly he appeared before the public eye. He was a fine, vigorous-looking man, with black beard, square shoulders and a determined glance. And he was an excellent public speaker. He needed the Duma. Yet he constantly discouraged the Duma's constitutional aspirations. And as the years passed he tended to identify himself more and more closely with the bureaucratic tradition, and in so doing he lost his vigour, his initiative, that very energy of

volition which made him so valuable to the supporters of the older system. He was defeated again and again on questions of primary importance by the extreme reactionary elements, but he remained at his post. He had in fact lost his real power before he was assassinated by Bogrov in September, 1911. And the very manner of his death revealed in a striking and tragical form an abuse which had assumed far-reaching dimensions during the period of Stolypin's premiership. The assassin, Bogrov, was an agent of the Secret Police, whose duty it was to protect exalted personages against terrorist attacks. In combating the revolutionary movement the Secret Police had been in the habit of employing *agents provocateurs*, who associated with the revolutionaries, learned their secrets, helped them to organise their plots, and at the same time kept the police informed, so that at the critical moment the conspirators could be arrested. The case of a notorious agent provocateur named Azev, who had for years been a member of the Social Revolutionary Committee and, while serving the Secret Police had aided in the assassination of the Minister of the Interior, Plehve, and the Grand Duke Sergius Alexandrovich, had been the subject of an interpellation in the Duma. Stolypin did not put a stop to this practice even after the Azev exposure, and in the end he himself became its victim. It was a tragic end to a strange career, the most striking political career of recent times in Russia.

The Third Duma drifted peacefully to its appointed term, and was dissolved in August, 1912. The Fourth Duma, which assembled in October, was in most essentials a mere copy of its predecessor, and for the present it is carrying on a passive policy of marking time and waiting for things to turn up. And in a sense it may be said that the whole country is waiting, that the Government itself is waiting and wondering ; nowhere does there seem to be a clear, definite aim. The revolutionary movement has been long since suppressed, there appears to be no object for the bureaucracy to expend its repressive energy on. There is a constant,

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irritating, petty persecution of individuals, groups and institutions, and the inhibition on public initiative has not been relaxed. And, on the other hand, there is an upward movement in commerce and industry. Several years of good harvests have restored the economic balance of the country. Apart from politics, a steady process of Westernisation is going on. A measure introduced by Stolypin, providing for the gradual break-up of the village commune and the acquirement by individual peasants of the proprietary rights over their allotments of the communal land, has led to profound changes in the rural districts, the exact bearing of which it is yet early to determine. Life is going its own ways, changing its forms independently of politics. The years of tumult have affected so far only a slight change in the political system, but they have brought about a tremendous change in the mental attitude of the people. A certain *naïveté*, a patriarchal simplicity of outlook has passed away. The Russian has suffered bitter disappointment and disillusionment, and for better or worse he is becoming a modern man. And yet the Imperial problem is not solved, the period of transition is not yet over. The immense task of transforming into the highly complex unity of a vigorous modern national organism, the outward and simple political unity that has been attained as the result of the gradual conquest of the great plain, is only half accomplished. And those who are interested in the welfare of the Russian people can only earnestly hope that the process may be completed without further catastrophe.

The result of the struggles of the last few years is that Russia now has an Imperial Legislative Assembly, existing side by side with the bureaucracy, but unable to exert a thoroughgoing control. The present system bears a transitional character.

The Duma is tolerated, but frequently ignored. The menace of dissolution hangs over it constantly, but the Duma has weathered seven extremely difficult years,

Survey of  
Recent Political  
Struggles.

and threats of its abolition and the complete restoration of the autocracy are less frequently heard than they used to be. It is hard to find a term to describe the present regime. In official documents the word "Autocrat" is retained. Stolypin avoided the word "Constitution," and spoke of the "reformed" or "renovated system," and sometimes of the "representative system." Perhaps the existing state of affairs might be called a bureaucracy slightly tempered by constitutionalism. At any rate, there is a Duma, a Parliament in Russia, and this fact is in itself immensely important as a symbol of achievement and a pledge of progress. The Duma is enveloped in grey mists of disappointment. It can accomplish little. Its wishes, even its most modest wishes for reform are thwarted. It is deferential, self-effacing. It shrinks from asserting in any pronounced form its privileges and powers. It has cultivated the art of self-protection by mimicry; it has assumed to a large extent the colour of its bureaucratic environment. But even so the Duma represents a principle of government absolutely distinct from that of the bureaucracy, and its mere existence is a gain, an advance. The Duma means that Russia has finally emerged from her isolation, that she has definitely come into Europe, and that whatever happens there can be no return to the past. When even China has adopted a Constitution, the world has clearly grown too small to permit of Russian bureaucratic exclusiveness.

The Duma is composed of 442 members, elected from all parts of the Empire, with the exception of Central Asia. It

**The Duma  
Described.**

is thus much smaller than the British Parliament with its 670 members, although it directly represents a population of 150 millions as compared with the 44 millions represented in the House of Commons. The great majority of the deputies are Russians. By the new electoral law, promulgated in 1907, after the dissolution of the Second Duma, the number of deputies from non-Russian regions was greatly reduced. The result is that

while a central, purely Russian government like Kursk, with a population of two and a half millions returns eleven deputies, and Tambov, with a population of three millions returns twelve, Poland, with its eleven millions sends fourteen, of whom two must be Russians, and Transcaucasia, with its six and a quarter millions, sends seven deputies, of whom one must be a Russian. The Duma is elected for five years, and one Duma, the Third, lived out its full term. The electoral system is complex, and in the large cities the electors are divided into two classes according to property qualification. Thus St. Petersburg returns six members, of whom three are elected by the first class, or curia, and three by the second. In the second class the qualification is occupancy of an apartment or flat which gives a fairly wide and democratic franchise. The first class includes wealthy property owners, and naturally tends to be far more conservative than the second. Moscow returns four members, two from the first and two from the second class. Kiev and Odessa return one member from each class, and in Warsaw the dividing factor is not a property but a national line, the small Russian population being in one class, the Poles and Jews in the other. The electoral system in the cities is fairly simple, but while in St. Petersburg and Moscow the voting is direct, that is to say, voters simply elect their deputies, in Warsaw it is indirect, that is, voters elect electors who in their turn elect the deputy. Outside the big cities the system of indirect voting is developed to such an extent as to make elections resemble walking through a labyrinth. All sorts of groups first meet at different points in a government or province to elect electors, then some of these electors elect other electors in their turn, and finally, the electors who remain after the straining process has been completed assemble in the head town of the government and elect the requisite number of deputies. In the final elections in the government town there are all kinds of rivalries and combinations between the various groups of big landowners and small landowners, priests and townsmen and

peasants, all these group interests being intersected by party and personal interests, and the whole complicated by the administrative pressure which is exercised through all stages of the elections. It is a strange process. The vote of the sturdy peasant, Ivan Ivanov, is reduced to the faintest echo of itself by the time that it has passed through all the stages of its delegated progress, through the cantonal meeting, and right up to the government assembly. After all, the system is so calculated that, in the end, the big landowners are almost certain to secure a majority, and the peasants returned are usually those who seem to the landowners fairly safe. So it happens that while the towns generally return Progressives and the working-class communities Socialists, the provinces return Conservatives of various shades, from the Conservative Constitutionalists, or Octobrists, to the Reactionaries of the Extreme Right. Russia being an agricultural country, with towns few and far between, the Conservatives under such conditions inevitably secure a majority and the Progressives, forming the Opposition, remain in a perpetual minority.

The Duma, being a new institution, is naturally formed on foreign models, and there is nothing particularly Russian about it, except that pretty Taurida Palace on the outskirts of St. Petersburg in which it meets. The German arrangement of parties prevails, the Conservatives sitting to the right of the Speaker, and Liberals and Socialists to the left. Right and Left thus connote political ideas, the Extreme Right being Reactionaries and the Extreme Left Socialists, while any tendency in a conservative or progressive direction is described as a movement from left to right, or from right to left, as the case may be. The parties themselves, Cadets or Octobrists, for instance, may be divided into Right and Left Wings ; thus if the Octobrists are Conservative Constitutionalists, a right Octobrist will be more conservative than constitutionalist, and a left Octobrist more constitutionalist than conservative. To say that a deputy is "righting"

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means that he is getting more conservative in his views : to say that he is "lefting" means that he is growing more radical. Left and Right are the political epithets most frequently applied in Russia, and are very conveniently elastic in their application at a moment when parties are many, and normal conditions of party life have not yet been established.

The business of the Duma is conducted by a body called, as in Germany, the Praesidium, and consisting of a President, or Speaker, two deputy Speakers, and a Secretary with his assistants, who are all elected annually from among the deputies. The apportionment of these offices among the various parties causes a great deal of heartburning and strife. The order of business is arranged by the Praesidium in conjunction with the leaders of the parties grouped in an informal body, known for a long time under the German name of Seniorenenconvent, but now described by a Russian term meaning "Council of Elders." The President sits aloft in a kind of box or tribune, and the Secretaries in smaller boxes just in front of him. Deputies speak, not from their places, but from a tribune in front of and a little lower than that of the President. The Deputies are seated in an amphitheatre, the various sectors of which from right to left are apportioned to various parties. Parliamentary officials called pristavs, distinguished by chains like those of aldermen, attend to technical details such as the admission of visitors, the counting of votes, and the distribution of papers. Ministers and Assistant Ministers, when they come to Parliament, sit in a box to the Speaker's right. The Press has one box in the hall of sitting and another upstairs ; there is a roomy visitors' gallery, an Imperial Box in which one of the Grand Dukes sometimes sits, and a Diplomatic Box. A splendid promenade hall called the Catherine Hall, now serves the purposes of a lobby, various rooms are reserved for committees and party purposes. In the summer months the deputies relieve the tedium of long sittings by wandering about in that part of

the Taurida Park which is fenced off for the Parliament, or row in a little boat on a miniature lake. The Taurida Palace is under the command of a general of gendarmes.

In the appearance of the deputies there is little to strike the eye. The First and Second Dumas, which were more democratic and represented a greater number of national types than their successors, displayed a picturesque variety of costume and feature. Now the monotony of ordinary European frock-coats and jackets is only relieved by the cassocks of the priests, by the kaftans of a few of the peasants, and the skull-caps and long coats of one or two of the Tartar deputies. Most of the faces are of an average Russian cast, but on the left there are Poles and Tartars, and on the extreme left a few swarthy Armenian and Georgian faces, while towards the right there are bulky landowners from the backwoods with thick lips and protruding lower jaw. The deputies receive a salary of 4,000 roubles (£400) a year. Some of the wealthy landowners come down to the House in their own motor-cars or private carriages, but the majority come on foot or in cheap cabs, or in a shabby little horse-car that maintains a limp connection with the centre of the city. Outwardly the Duma is becoming assimilated to bureaucratic St. Petersburg and has, it must be admitted, grown to be rather a dreary and despondent place.

There are a number of parties in the Duma, so many in fact, and so loosely organised, that majorities are perpetually wobbling, and there are constant surprises and catch votes. The Government refuses to legalise the Opposition parties, so that outside the Duma they have no officially recognised standing, though the existence of a Cadet or Constitutional Democratic Party is to a limited extent tolerated. On the extreme right is the Party of the Right, composed of various representatives of reactionary organisations. This party stands theoretically for the repeal of the Constitution and the complete restoration of the Autocracy, but its members have sat for five years in one Duma, and seem likely to sit

for five years in another, so that the pleasant habit of being members of parliament seems to be gaining ground on their anti-constitutionalist theories. Their leaders, the Kursk deputies Purishkevich and Markov, have gained imperial notoriety for their use of vituperative language, and the name Purishkevich is used by peasants even in the Northern Caucasus as an extremely offensive epithet. The Right maintain a reactionary agitation throughout the country, are in league with the police, and represent the most obscure and the most obscurantist side of the bureaucracy. It would be hard to find among the Duma Right idealists of reaction, for the most part it is a singularly crude and materialist type of reactionary that is here represented. Their strength lies solely in the prevalence of reaction in the bureaucracy.

Next to the Right come the Nationalists, who represent Stolypin's attempt to form a Government Party. While the Right is composed chiefly of peasants, priests and country gentlemen, the Nationalist Party is composed chiefly of country gentlemen and Government officials, with a sprinkling of priests to whom the extreme coarseness of the Right is distasteful. The party was influential during Stolypin's lifetime, but is losing its importance and has split into two groups. What the Nationalists stand for politically it is difficult to say, except that they vehemently assert the necessity of maintaining and increasing restrictions on the non-Russian nationalities. But they are a party of moods, and in the main they simply constitute one of the parliamentary outposts of the bureaucracy. One of the Nationalist deputies, M. Shulgin, from the Kiev government, is the ablest and most logical speaker on the Right side of the House.

Then come the Octobrists, who constitute the Centre and **held the balance of power in the Third Duma.** The party takes its name from the October Constitutionalist Manifesto, stands for constitutional government, and has made a long and painful experiment in establishing the foundations of

constitutional government by co-operation with the bureaucracy. The party is composed mainly of country gentlemen of a conservative temperament who are strongly averse from radical and violent measures, but are desirous of seeing constitutional principles put into force. Such a party is clearly unfitted to play a heroic part in a critical epoch; but in the Third Duma it had a vigorous leader in the person of M. Guchkov, who pursued a very intricate and interesting policy. M. Guchkov comes of a Moscow merchant family of Old Believers, and is a keen sportsman with a love of adventure, of fighting for its own sake. He fought with the Boers in the Transvaal War, and worked with the Red Cross in the Manchurian War and in the Balkans. He was one of the founders of the Octobrist Party, and an open supporter of the Government policy of suppressing the revolutionary movement by summary and violent measures. He was among the public men whom Stolypin consulted after the dissolution of the First Duma with the view to their becoming members of the Cabinet, and who refused on learning the conditions. M. Guchkov's political career actually began when he was elected deputy from Moscow in the Third Duma and became leader of the Octobrist party. The position was an exceedingly difficult one, and M. Guchkov thought that the only hope lay in gradually permeating the government with a constitutionalist leaven. Stolypin in those days was disposed to effect certain obviously necessary reforms, and he and Guchkov agreed to work together. Guchkov making heavy concessions on the Duma's part on condition that Stolypin would protect the Duma against the restorationists and gradually introduce reforms. Theoretically the bargain was a sound one, and one result of it was that the Duma did tide over a very difficult and dangerous period, and evaded premature dissolution. But Stolypin was forced back by the extreme reactionaries from point to point, and was unable to carry out the promised reforms. His repressive measures remained in force, and there was not a glimmer

of constitutional liberty. Guchkov, again, was very indifferently backed by the bulk of his own party, which understood the policy of constantly throwing a sop to Cerberus much better than an active policy of permeation and penetration of bureaucratic strongholds. Guchkov was forced to make very heavy concessions, and openly to identify himself with highly unpopular and unconstitutional measures. Then Stolypin went to the Right, broke with the Octobrists, and in the days when his personal energy and political power were fading formed the party of the Nationalists. For a time Guchkov was President of the Third Duma, and in the position tried to pursue his chosen policy more effectively. He spoke rarely in the Duma, but when he did his speeches were always impressive and his words carefully chosen. "We are waiting," was the closing phrase of one of his best-known speeches, and this phrase was characteristic of his party's attitude. Guchkov's policy kept the Third Duma going, or rather kept it from going into the limbo into which its predecessors had gone. But the injury to the Duma's dignity and value was grave—history never fails to demand a heavy price, moral and material, for every achievement in Russia—and M. Guchkov suffered personally for his close identification with the policy of the Government and it cost him his seat in Moscow. He was not elected to the Fourth Duma, and is at present engaged in municipal politics in St. Petersburg. M. Guchkov represents an unusual combination of the business man and the intelligent, and his interest in affairs is constantly interwoven with his interest in ideas, and reinforced by an unflinching spirit of enterprise.

Other prominent members of the Octobrist Party are M. Rodzianko of Ekaterinoslav, a giant of a man with a resonant bass voice, the owner of immense estates, a Court Chamberlain and a persistent defender of the ceremonial rights and privileges of the Duma on public occasions; M. Rodzianko was President of the Third Duma during the last year of its existence, and was elected President of the Fourth Duma;

the former President of the Third Duma, M. Nicholas Homiakov, the son of a famous Slavophil poet, a shrewd and witty country gentleman, who might easily occupy a distinguished position if his energy were proportionate to his talent ; and M. Shidlovsky, a Conservative Constitutionalist of a clear-cut and very conscientious type, and a lucid and able speaker. Baron Meyendorff, of Livland, a scrupulous and unbending opponent of all forms of illegality, and one of the ablest and most conspicuous Octobrists in the Third Duma, has left the party owing to disapproval of its support of the Government's Finnish policy.

To the Left of the Octobrists is the Opposition, composed of four parties and the Mohammedan and Polish groups. The Polish group, composed of conservative deputies from Poland and Lithuania, drags out a melancholy and undistinguished existence in a Duma in which Russian Nationalism is militant. It once had an aggressive and conspicuous leader in the person of M. Roman Dmowski of Warsaw, but since his retirement the group has rarely attracted attention. A handful of Mohammedan deputies represent the Tartars of the Volga, the Urals and the Caucasus, and bear a heavy burden in defence of their confessional and educational interests.

Between the Octobrists and the next large party, the Cadets, sit the Progressists, pacific Constitutionalist who object to Octobrist tactics on the one hand, and to various points in the Cadet programme on the other. Its most prominent members are M. Nicholas Lvov, a Vice-President of the Fourth Duma, a Zemstvo Constitutionalist, a chivalrous and passionate speaker, and a Hamlet in his incapacity for action ; M. Konovalov, a young and active Moscow merchant ; and the party leader, M. Efremov, an ardent Pacifist.

The Cadets, or Constitutional Democrats, are a fairly large group, numbering from fifty to sixty deputies, and now occupy the position of leaders of the Opposition in the Duma and in the country. This is sorry comfort for the loss of the

leadership of the first two Dumas, and the conduct of an Opposition policy under the present conditions is the most trying and thankless task that could be imagined. The Cadets represent Constitutionalism in its undiluted and unmodified form, and maintain a clear and strict line of demarcation between themselves and the bureaucracy. Their speeches are, as a matter of necessity, mainly devoted to criticisms of Government methods and exposures of administrative abuses, and as the party includes the most powerful speakers in the Duma the attacks and exposures of the Cadets are as thoroughly effective as speeches can be which year after year find the same abuses to attack, unmodified and unmitigated. The Cadet Party has had a strange history. Formed at the end of 1905, through the fusion of the Zemstvo Constitutionalists with leaders of the professional classes in the towns, it drafted a programme of democratic and constitutional reform which attracted for it wide sympathy. The party was admirably organised, established branches in all parts of the Empire, had its programme translated into all the languages of the Empire, and secured a large majority in the elections to the First Duma. There was a moment when it seemed possible that Cadets would be summoned to form a Cabinet. But a lack of firmness in resisting the pressure of the more headstrong Labour and Socialist Left in the First Duma proved fatal. After the dissolution of the First Duma the Cadets took the leading part in the drafting of the Viborg Manifesto, which cannot now be justified on any political grounds. Many of the ablest members of the Party signed the Manifesto, and in consequence not only did they suffer three months' imprisonment, but what is much more serious, were permanently deprived of the franchise. This was the case with the veteran Zemstvo Constitutionalist, M. Ivan Petrunkevich of Tver, one of the most attractive figures in Russian public life, a man of profound Liberal principle and ripe experience, and a courageous assertor of constitutional principles during the long period of reaction

in the eighties and nineties. This was the case, too, with M. Nabokov, the son of one of Alexander II's ministers, whose eloquence and business capacity as displayed in the First Duma, seemed to give promise of an exceptionally distinguished political career. And this was the case with scores of others who signed the appeal.

The party became the object of unremitting Government hostilities. It was refused official authorisation. Its meetings were declared illegal, its organisation, as far as possible, broken up. **It has not held a congress for years.** In the Second Duma it again secured a majority, including such able men as MM. Maklakov and Struve, but the change in the Electoral Law in 1907 robbed it of its preponderance of voting power, and it came up to the Third Duma a comparatively small group to face a strong majority which was favourable to the Government. At present the Cadet deputies are returned chiefly by the cities and large towns. Both St. Petersburg and Moscow return Cadets, and there are a few Cadet representatives from the rural districts.

The leader of the Cadets, M. Paul Miliukov, has set the stamp of his personality very strongly upon the party. Born somewhere over fifty years ago, educated in Moscow, he became a lecturer in history in the Moscow University, and published a number of valuable works on Russian History. He was popular as a lecturer, but was frequently harassed by the police on account of his liberal views, and was compelled to give up his post at the University. In the nineties the young Principality of Bulgaria invited him to organise the State College of Sofia on University lines, and in Sofia M. Miliukov spent several years making that thorough study of the Balkans which afterwards made him the most competent authority on Balkan politics amongst Russian public men. Returning to St. Petersburg he for some years led the life of a *littérateur*, took part in the Liberal movement, was a prominent member of the Liberation League, the leaders of which were the Zemstvo Constitutionalists, and on returning

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from Chicago, where in 1905 he gave a series of lectures on the Russian crisis, he threw himself into the work of politically organising the professions in the towns and linking up these new professional unions with the Zemstvo Liberal organisations. He was one of the chief initiators of the Constitutional Democratic Party which was founded in Moscow at the moment of the promulgation of the Constitution. He was not a member of the First or Second Dumas, though he was constantly active behind the scenes. In 1907 he was elected member for St. Petersburg by a heavy vote, and retained his position at the elections to the Fourth Duma. The general tactics of the Cadet Party were largely determined by his influence, and for the last few years he has steadily borne the brunt of the parliamentary conflict as Opposition leader in a time of reaction. M. Miliukov has a capacity for work and a tenacity of purpose exceptional among Russian public men, and therein lies his strength as a leader. He is an *intelligent* with no experience in affairs except what he has gained in recent years, and this explains to a considerable extent both his defects and his qualities. He has a wide knowledge of European politics, and is an able and resourceful speaker. The mistakes he makes—serious ones, sometimes at critical moments—are those that academic men do make when they overreach themselves in trying to be practical. But M. Miliukov's most characteristic and admirable feature is a sort of downright doggedness. Guchkov and Miliukov, the chief rival party leaders of the present period, are much less unlike than differences in tactics and in views on current question make them seem. They both have a large share of that hard bedrock sense which may be distinctly Muscovite, and has at any rate meant a great deal in the process of Russian state-building.

Other leading members of the Cadet Party in the Duma are M. Vasili Maklakov, a Moscow lawyer, brother of the present Minister of the Interior, the most talented, logical and forceful speaker in the House, whose speeches are always

looked forward to as an event ; M. Rodichev, a Zemstvo worker from Tver, and a fiery and passionate orator upon whose talent the years in the heavy atmosphere of the Third Duma have had a depressing effect ; M. Shingarev, a Zemstvo doctor from Voronezh, who in the course of a few years of hard work in the Duma has gained an expert knowledge of Imperial finance ; and the Secretary of the Second Duma, M. Chelnokov of Moscow. The Cadet Party is the best disciplined in the House.

The Labour Party, which was so strongly represented in the First and Second Dumas, has constituted in the Third and Fourth an insignificant group with no leaders to compare with Zhilkin, Aladin and Anikin, who enjoyed such authority in the First Duma.

The Social Democrats number about twenty, of whom several are working men. They deny the legislative value of the Duma as at present constituted, and use its tribune as a medium for protesting against the present regime, but by the mere habit of constantly partaking in its sittings they are imperceptibly drawn into legislative work like their enemies the reactionaries at the opposite end of the Chamber. In spite of their small numbers and their lack of good speakers—M. Chheidze, a Georgian from the Caucasus, is the best—they succeed in maintaining a very consistent protest. In doing so they are aided by the Social Democratic organisations outside the Duma, which, in defiance of police restrictions and repression, carries on a persistent agitation amongst the working-men, and keeps two little papers going in spite of daily fines.

Party lines are sharply drawn in the Duma, and members of different parties rarely associate. The Committees form more or less neutral ground where deputies frequently sink their differences, and where they rub shoulders with the representatives of the bureaucracy who come down to give explanations on budget questions and on various Government bills. In the committees, the deputies study the complex

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technique of administration and learn the workings of the bureaucratic machine. They are frequently enabled in this way effectively to oppose abuses, but often the bureaucratic spirit penetrates the committees and gently subdues those deputies who do not possess great force of character. It is strange to watch the process of the gradual bureaucratisation of the Duma through the committees. With the members of the Right, and even of the Centre, there was no difficulty, because a great many of them were bureaucrats by training and had simply retired from the service to become deputies. And on the left the mere depressing routine of the Duma, the impossibility of maintaining close contact with the country, and the necessity of constantly breathing the atmosphere of bureaucratic St. Petersburg has a devitalising and assimilative effect.

And yet the Duma is a pledge of progress. Its sittings are public, and are reported daily in all the newspapers of the Empire. The constant discussion of administrative questions has a broadly educative value. Every year the budget is discussed in detail, and the public has grown familiar with its main features and with the chief abuses that need remedying. The Duma has the right of questioning ministers on matters that call for protest. All parties frequently avail themselves of this privilege, and ministers are compelled to come down to the House to give explanations, the verdict of the Duma on which has a certain moral effect. An enormous amount of time is wasted on bills of minor importance, on such matters, for instance, as the employment of an additional postal official in Harbin, matters that might be relegated to the competence of some local body. But the Duma tries to promote reforms, to amend Government bills, to embody in law some of the constitutional principles. Only here its efforts are perpetually thwarted. The Upper House, the Council of the Empire, is a stronghold of the bureaucracy, and effectively blocks any measures that are disagreeable to the Government.

The Council of the Empire is an interesting institution, much more interesting in many ways than the Duma. Before the Constitution this Council had existed for nearly a hundred years as a kind of conclave, an advisory assembly of the highest legal authorities of the bureaucracy established for the purpose of drafting laws which the Monarch might, or might not, confirm at his pleasure. All the highest dignitaries of the Empire were there, ministers and ex-ministers, retired ambassadors, generals, admirals, and administrators of various categories. Of the Council of the Empire in its pre-constitutional form the artist Riepin has painted a striking and characteristic picture, which now hangs in the Alexander III Museum in St. Petersburg. With the promulgation of the Constitution and the establishment of the Duma, the Council was **reformed**. Half of the members are appointed by the Emperor as before, and the other half by the clergy and various public institutions, such as provincial assemblies of the gentry, Zemstvos, industrialists' associations, and learned bodies. There are two hundred members in all. The Council meets in the Marie Palace, near St. Isaac's Cathedral, in a lofty, well-like hall, of scarlet and gleaming white, lighted from above. The President is seated high up on a commanding dais, and, looking down from the visitors' gallery one sees, far below, long rows of bald heads reposing in capacious arm-chairs. The party divisions roughly correspond to those in the Duma. There is a reactionary Right, a Conservative Centre, and a numerically inconsiderable Left composed of Cadet and Progressist professors and Zemstvo men. The Bureaucracy is safe here, for, not to speak of the appointed members, the greater proportion of the elected members are connected with the Bureaucracy by the most intimate ties. **There is nothing here of the restlessness and nervousness of the Duma.** There is an impressive dignity of deportment, an atmosphere of grave authority, a scrupulousness in the observance of formalities. Noisy declamation is frowned on.

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All these elderly councillors, with years of experience behind them in the chancelleries and in the provinces, have a fine sense of the gradations of rank and authority, and are prepared at any moment, at the bidding of authority, to abandon their own carefully considered views. There are many able men in the Council, and their judgment on points of law and administration is often singularly valuable. Some of the speeches in the Council attain a high level of oratory. Original views are presented with exceptional cogency, subtlety of argument, and wealth of illustration. Only the net result of these stately debates is that reforms are simply decorously buried. The Council may waver and, on occasion, indulge in a mild flutter of opposition to the Government, but in the end it nearly always does as the Government wishes it to.

There is no better place than the Council of the Empire for studying the psychology of the Bureaucracy and the lingering Byzantine conceptions of authority. Complicated intrigues are carried on here, intrigues against the Cabinet, or between rival members of the Cabinet, intrigues that are played with great resource and a fine calculation of means and ends, and, above all, of the safety of the players. There is close contact between the Council and the Court. The Ministers are members of the Council and vote there. Official connection with the Duma is maintained by a Commission of Agreement, the object of which is to reconcile the different views of the two Houses on bills under debate. A loose, irregular and unofficial connection with the Lower House is maintained by the members of various parties, but the Council's persistent blocking of reform bills has created an antagonism between the Upper House and the majority of the Duma. The Council of the Empire carries on its business so quietly that the general public is almost oblivious of its existence. Two names in the Council of the Empire are widely known to the outside world. These are Count Sergius Witte and the present Premier, M. Kokovstev.

Count Witte, on whose urgent advice the Emperor published the Constitutional Manifesto, has since the opening of the First Duma, ceased to take a prominent

**Count Witte.** part in public life. There was a time when many were disposed to regard him as a very big man indeed, or, at any rate, as a man born under the bright star of power. The son of an official in Tiflis, educated in Tiflis and Odessa, he grew up on the outskirts of the Empire in a kind of colonial atmosphere, where Russian life was new, little hampered by tradition, rough and ready, devoted frankly to money-making. And if the circumstances of Witte's upbringing imbued him with strong business leanings of a very modern type, his years of service in the South Western Railways added to his taste for figures and the rapid movement of commercial enterprise, a keen interest in steel and iron with all their manifold applications, in a word, in modern industry. When he came in the nineties to St. Petersburg, his remarkable business ability attracted attention, and as Minister of Ways and Communications, and afterwards as Minister of Finance, he very energetically, and with little regard for tradition, applied modern business principles to the task of bureaucratic Government. He did his utmost, in fact, to modernise the bureaucracy, to bring it up to date, almost to Americanise it. He did succeed in effecting some very valuable financial reforms. He fixed the gold standard of the currency, and established a gold reserve in the Imperial Bank. He built a number of railways, including the Trans-Siberian, and by forcing on railway construction so that the great metallurgical works should never lack Government orders for railway material, and by maintaining in vigour a high protective tariff he tried to promote the development of industry in Russia. Witte was a man of big plans, big schemes, but the very bigness of Russia, the very vastness of the field before him caused him to forget the distinction between political and industrial enterprise. And when the inflated Manchurian schemes led to

catastrophe abroad and grave internal disturbances, Witte perceived that the process of modernisation had not gone far enough, and he came home from America, the country of big business enterprise, with the conviction that a constitution was necessary. Then, when all the railways he had built stopped running, he succeeded in inducing the Emperor to promulgate a constitutional manifesto. For a time this big, very Russian-looking man, with the masterful manner, tried to apply business principles in the administration of the Constitution—there was a curious scent of business in the air in those early constitutional days—but he missed his way and somehow lost his footing. Probably the years during which, in spite of all his innovations, he had steadily adapted himself to the bureaucratic system, had made him too much of a bureaucrat after all. The glow of his sudden popularity faded during the winter of repression that followed on the constitutional edict, and the First Duma forgot all about him. Witte acted thenceforth quietly as a member of the Council of the Empire, only rarely emerging into prominence. For several years he felt the effects of the revulsion of feeling at Court against the Constitution. The reactionaries for long bitterly attacked him as a traitor to the Monarchical principle on the ground that he had misled the Emperor in inducing him to sign the Constitutional Manifesto. Witte waited, and then, at the first convenient opportunity, subtly affirmed in the Council of the Empire his devotion to the Autocracy, cautiously disavowed Constitutionalism, and little by little made good his position amongst the reactionaries. He was suspected of intriguing against Stolypin in 1909 and 1911, and there were vague rumours of a possibility of his being again called to power. In any case he was restored to favour after his professions of devotion to the Autocracy, and during the last few years, he has several times been received at Court. Perhaps as the wheel of fortune turns around he may again at some critical moment be made Premier. For the present he

remains a problematical figure in the background, an obscure reminder of great possibilities unfulfilled for lack of sheer consistency of purpose, of firmness of political principle, and of the finer forms of perception. His personal ambition was never absorbed in a glowing ardour of national renewal which might of itself have shown the right way and led Witte to real greatness.

The present Premier and Minister of Finances, M. Kokovstev, is a man of a very different type. In appearance he differs strikingly from Witte. Witte's bulky figure would overshadow M. Kokovstev, who is of less than middle height, and while Witte's whole bearing is suggestive of careless enterprise, M. Kokovstev's trim figure and neatly-clipped beard bespeak the methodical and circumspect mind. M. Kokovstev was born in the government of Novgorod, which has lost every vestige of its ancient democratic tradition, and has practically become a suburb of St. Petersburg. He has spent his whole life in the St. Petersburg Chancelleries, has steadily climbed rung after rung of the bureaucratic ladder, and acquired a thorough knowledge of the finances of the Empire, and since 1906 has been a shrewd, economical, and invariably optimistic Minister of Finance. He imperturbably negotiates loans in Paris, and with equal imperturbability defends article after article of his Budgets in the Duma. He speaks quietly, in rounded periods, frames his arguments, as he has for years been accustomed to frame them, in innumerable official reports, never hesitates for a word, never displays excessive emotion, rarely appeals to the emotions of his hearers. Once in a Duma speech he unexpectedly let fall a phrase, "Thank God! we have no Parliament," which aroused great indignation among the deputies, evoked a protest from the speaker, M. Homiakov, and for a time secured for M. Kokovstev the reputation of a reactionary bureaucrat who desired the abolition of Constitutional Government. The phrase was, however, due to a misunderstanding,

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and all that M. Kokovstev intended to say was that the parliamentary system under which ministers were responsible to the Representative Assembly does not prevail in Russia. On the whole M. Kokovstev is believed to be cautiously progressive rather than reactionary in his views. But he is not a strong personality, and secures his ends rather by discreet self-effacement than by vigorous insistence on his own point of view. He certainly does not pursue either the policy of general repression, or the aggressive policy in regard to the non-Russian nationalities with the same energy as his predecessor. Even apart from differences of temperament there is a difference between the position of M. Kokovstev and that of M. Stolypin which largely accounts for certain divergences in their respective policies. While Stolypin as Premier retained the post of Minister of the Interior, M. Kokovstev retains as Premier the post of Minister of Finances and leaves the Ministry of the Interior to others. Under the pre-constitutional regime the Ministry of the Interior, which has under its control governors, police and gendarmerie, that is, the greater part of the machinery of administration, and practically all the machinery of oppression, was the most powerful of all. In a conflict between M. Plehve, the Minister of the Interior, and M. Witte, the Minister of Finances, Plehve easily defeated his opponent, in spite of the latter's greater positive services. With the union of all the Ministers in a Cabinet or Council of Ministers, the chief power was formally placed in the hands of the President or Premier. But the old rivalry between the Ministries continued, and the Ministry of the Interior gradually recovered its influence and power. M. Durnovo, as Minister of the Interior in M. Witte's Cabinet, by his repressive policy succeeded in putting Witte completely in the shade. Stolypin, by retaining in his hands the Ministry of the Interior after he had become Premier, united with the formal authority implied in the Premiership the real power accruing from direct control over the machinery of the administration and repression. And it

was this circumstance that for a time made his position a peculiarly strong one, though in the end it involved him in a network of tragic contradictions. M. Kokovstev as a Premier occupying the post of Minister of Finance is naturally disposed to regard the whole task of Imperial administration from the financial and economic rather than the police point of view, and so to exercise on the whole a moderating and restraining influence. There has been no actual change of policy during his premiership, but perhaps there has been a change of tone.

Outside the Duma and the Council of the Empire there is little political life in the country except at election times. The only parties that had strong political organisations were the Cadets and Social Democrats, but the Social Democratic organisation has been persecuted out of visible existence, while that of the Cadets has been rendered largely ineffective by police repression. Members of the Duma rarely receive police permission to address their constituents, and members of the Centre and the Right hardly ever display a desire to do so. Ministers naturally never dream of stumping the country. It is only through the Press reports of the Duma debates that the country is kept in touch with the political life of the capital.

The political situation created by the curious combination of a bureaucracy with a representative assembly is full of difficulties, but also full of very interesting possibilities. The country is awake, is growing rapidly, has suddenly determined to be modern. The mental awakening and the economic boom have set the Empire definitely in the path of progress. One may hope that the pursuit of this path may be as painless as possible. But the Russian people has learned, during its historical development, deep lessons of patience and suffering. It was not born for facile victories.