

the Japanese official searched in vain for him. The frosted windows of the train did not allow him to look inside. At length he rushed into the first-class car and began to search through the compartments. When he came to the one that the official occupied he discovered a sheet of paper fixed to the door, bearing the words, 'Entrance forbidden.' In spite of that he started to enter; but the gold miner barred the way with his huge body and silently pointed to the paper.

Twenty minutes later the train again started. The Russian took the paper from the door, thrust it in his pocket, and entered the compartment as if nothing had happened. The Japanese was furious and berated the Siberian gentleman, calling him names in both Japanese and Russian. The latter feigned unbounded astonishment and absolute ignorance of what had happened. When the poor official explained how 'the beastly cur' had treated him, the owner apologized profusely. The

Russian scolded his dog and offered the Japanese some refreshments from a small lunch bag he carried with him. But the latter refused his hospitality. No doubt the Japanese had already made a shrewd guess that the gold miner was only a new link in the chain over which his other agents in Siberia had tripped. When half an hour later the train stopped at a little way station, and the Russian rose and bade him adieu with more profuse apologies, the Japanese stared at him so furiously that he could not help smiling as he hurried to the door.

So far as I know this was the last attempt of our allies to spy upon our military operations in Siberia. The Foreign Office official's abortive trip, which I have just described, occurred in January 1917. Less than two months later the Revolution broke out, and, being a marked man on account of my work in the Tsar's secret service, I was promptly placed under arrest by the new Government.

RUSSIA AND GERMANY¹

BY ANDRÉ PIERRE

BREST-LITOVSK has been a heavy burden for the Bolsheviks to carry. Certainly, when they signed a separate peace with Imperial Germany, they did great injury to the Allies and compromised hope of an ultimate victory, which was by no means assured in March 1918. Nevertheless, the more we study the memoirs written by different generals, and the diplomatic

archives made public since the Revolution, the readier we are to extenuate in some degree the action of the Bolsheviks and to hold the Imperial Government itself in part responsible for the action of Lenin and his friends.

It is no longer possible to-day to doubt that the Russian aristocracy contemplated the possibility of a separate peace with Germany long before the 1917 revolution. Thinly veiled allusions to such a plan appear in

¹ From the *Gazette de Prague* (Prague French-language information weekly), May 5

the four volumes of correspondence between Nicholas II and Alexandra Feodorovna. Secret correspondence between the Tsaritzza and her brother, the Grand Duke of Hesse, certain negotiations begun by Madame Vasilchikov in Germany, the odd proposal made by Count Eulenburg, Minister of the Court of William II, to his Russian colleague, Baron Frederichs, for 'a personal getting-together of the two Emperors,' all forbid our doubting longer that as the war wore on sentiment in favor of peace between the two countries gained ground rapidly among the ruling classes of Russia and at the Imperial Court.

But here is something more precise. A Russian review, *Golos Minuvshago*, or 'The Voice of the Past,' published in Paris by the historian Melgunov, has just printed for the first time a memoir drawn up in 1918 by the former Minister of the Interior, Protopopov, shortly before he was shot by the Bolsheviki. A preface precedes the document, written by Piotr Ryss, who relates a conversation that he had with Protopopov during the last weeks of his life. It contains this significant passage relative to the secret interviews at Stockholm with the German diplomat, Warburg, at the time when a delegation of the Duma made its trip abroad:—

'Every reasonable man in Russia, including nearly all of the leaders of the Ka-Det Party, was convinced that Russia was in no condition to continue the war. Physically exhausted, without a domestic iron and steel industry to speak of, and with her uneducated masses inclined to anarchy, the country felt itself on the verge of revolution. But such a revolution could not fail to assume the form of a savage revolt, of anarchy disastrous for the nation. Consequently it seemed imperative to ascertain under what conditions the

Germans were willing to conclude a peace with all the Allies. Neither Protopopov nor any of those who agreed with him contemplated a separate peace (between Russia and Germany). That is why Protopopov did not think it expedient to decline a rendezvous with Warburg. Furthermore, (a) all the members of the Duma delegation were informed of this conversation; (b) the question of a separate peace was not raised; and (c) the meeting was, to a certain extent, official.

'The two latter statements are proved by the fact that the conversations between Protopopov and Warburg occurred in the presence of the Russian Ambassador, Nekliudov; in other words, what everybody else was talking about, Protopopov did. "That was the whole sum and substance of my wrongdoing," said the ex-minister in concluding his account.'

If we take this passage at its face value, it simply means that a responsible minister of the Tsar took steps at Stockholm very similar to those that were taken by the Western Allies in Switzerland and elsewhere, but that the only thing contemplated was a possible general peace between the Entente and the Central Powers. But right here, at point (b), which specifically mentions a separate peace, Mr. Ryss adds a footnote containing the following supplementary explanation, which leaves no question as to the ultimate intentions of the Russian autocracy, after it felt itself threatened by a revolution:—

'It had been the opinion of Protopopov since early in the war that Russia ought to inform the Allies several months in advance that, being unable to continue the war longer, the Government proposed to end it at a

specified date. During these few months the Allies and Russia ought to start negotiations with Germany on a basis that could not fail to produce positive results. If the Allies refused to enter into such negotiations, Russia would stop fighting at the date fixed and conclude peace with Germany. In that case Russia would become a neutral Power. Protopopov proposed this plan to the Tsar in December 1916, and he assured me that the Tsar approved it.'

Now Protopopov was either a liar who insufferably slandered his sovereign, or else he told the truth just before his death, at a time when he had nothing to lose. If he told the truth, his testimony proves clearly that Nicholas II contemplated definitely, from 1916 onward, signing a separate peace with his cousin William in case

the Allies refused. We may even go to the extent of saying that the only reason he did not carry out the plan was because the revolution did not leave him time to do so.

The Bolsheviki themselves 'committed the treachery' that the Provisional Government under Kerenskii refused to commit. And it is to be observed that they adopted the same tactics that Protopopov contemplated — first, to try to get the Allies to make a general peace; second, if the Allies refused, to break the pact of 1914 and to treat separately with Berlin. So let me repeat once more that, although we have no desire whatever to whitewash the Bolsheviki, we cannot shut our eyes to the light of such a document as the one from which I have just quoted. The Soviet Government did not stand alone in its policy of betrayal.

DEATH'S HERITAGE

BY HUMBERT WOLFE

[*Spectator*]

ALL men are heirs to riches. They inherit
 A vast estate the day that they draw breath.
 They by the right of Eve, and Adam's merit,
 Assume the feudal policies of death.
 Their actions wear his livery. Their thought
 Is the tradition of his seigneurie.
 Their dreams are heirlooms, and their love is naught
 But whispers and his fleeting memory.
 But some refuse their heritage. These owe
 Dangerous fealty to life the lord
 That lights them home by ways death does not know
 To Eden by the flashes of his sword —
 The poets from the riches of the dead
 Magnificently disinherited.