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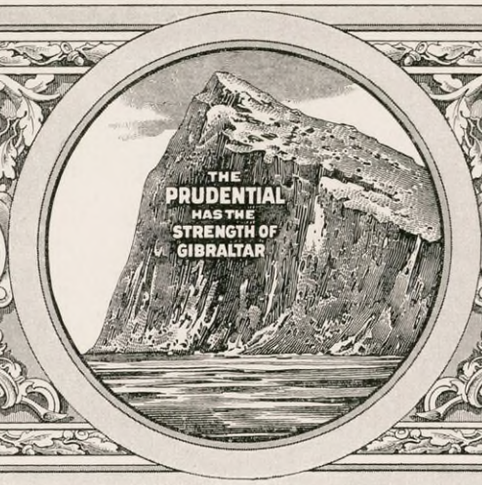

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LENIN the Individual

A BIOGRAPHY

By William C. White

The little-known human being, Lenin, rather than the theoretical Marxist or the statesman, is the subject of Mr. White's biography. Most of his material has been taken from sources unavailable in English.

Philosopher Hegel was right: life progresses in contradictions, and living contradictions are much richer, more varied and profound, than the human mind can at first grasp.

LENIN (from a letter to Gorki).

On a misty night in April, 1917, cheering crowds waited at the railroad station in Petrograd for the arrival of Vladimir Ulyanov, whose *nom du révolution* was Lenin. *Pravda,* the Social Democrat newspaper, had announced his coming. Officious reception committees strutted around the platform. There were honor guards of soldiers and bands, weary of having played the *Marseillaise* over and over again each day for the past two months. Receptions for returning revolutionaries were common in these days. Men long lonely were treading frozen roads in Siberia toward the nearest railroad station, while others, pacing the pavements in Paris, London, and New York, oblivious of passers-by, thought only of Russia and a way back. Their exile was over. The Tsar was overthrown. The heroes, not of action but of patience, could return.

Lenin was returning from ten years' exile in western Europe. Outside of the circle of professional radicals he was unknown. To many members of his own party he was only a name. The great masses of the Russian people had never heard of him.

His arrival on this April night was to be the most important event in the revolution. Had this little-known man not come there would be no Soviet Union today.

Most of the returning exiles and émigrés were more myths than men to the crowds who gathered to cheer their return. Everywhere was the hysteria of the Incredible. From the distance the wind brought the music of marching bands and the shouts of paraders. The city was forever parading in these days of political Mardi Gras. The Tsar had been overthrown; anything, everything seemed possible. There was a temporary government with a half-dozen programs; a bit of confusion was, of course, natural. A group of ambitious factory workers, soldiers, and professional radicals had combined into a Soviet, a "council," divided into a dozen different cliques. Its rôle seemed as vague as its name.

Russia was going somewhere; an orator on every street corner was saying so and another was waiting until he had finished so that he might repeat it. The war, of course, would be fought to a victorious end. Business, having passed through the uncertainty of threatening revolution, was again booming. Chaliapin was singing at the State Opera in better voice than ever. Grain was scarce in the villages but the villages were not the city.

The crowd at the station saw the long-awaited train come through the mists on this April night. Lenin and thirty other people stepped down from the cars. Men separated for more than a decade embraced once more. The unattractive woman, as shapeless as a bag of rye flour, who walked beside Lenin, his wife, was given an armful of red roses. A half-dozen welcoming speeches were begun simultaneously.

Lenin and his group were led to waiting automobiles. He climbed to the roof of the first one, an armored car. The crowd saw a little man, well proportioned, wrapped in a black overcoat with an astrakhan collar. His hands were small and delicate and passed surely from one gesture to another. His face was long, and a short red beard, which would have been comic on a round face, seemed a patrician touch. His brow sloped into the baldness of his long head. The fire in his eyes offset their smallness.

The crowd cheered. It was twelve years since Lenin had heard the roar of a Russian crowd and the crackle

of colloquial Russian speech. He started to speak. The crowd expected platitudes. It mattered little what an orator said in these days. Listeners would cheer from joy of being able to listen to what they chose without having to glance back lest Cossacks be riding round the corner.

On this night they heard no platitudes. "What has happened in Russia is not all that the Proletariat need," he said. "The temporary government is only a bourgeois government, serving as clerks for the capitalists of France and England. We need the victory of the working class! Russian workers, what have you done with the power seized from the Tsar? You have given it to the landlords and capitalists. Long live the International Socialist Revolution!"

What Lenin said, in these simplest of sentences, fell like a knout on most of his own party members who had been hysterically joyful a moment before. These remarks were blatantly out of tune. "The victory of the working class—!" Was not the overthrow of the Tsar enough, far more than had been hoped for? Would Lenin never learn that there is a great gulf between theory and reality?

"He is, as usual, a demagog," one of the Socialist papers reported on the following day. "He has been so long away from Russia that he has forgotten the realities of the Russian people."

II

In 1893 Vladimir Ulyanov came to St. Petersburg to practise law in the office of one Volkenstein. Russia, more than any other land, is a "one city nation." So the young men and women of the provincial cities had only one goal, The Capital.

No young lawyer ever brought with him a more curious equipment. He was twenty-three years of age. He was self-taught and had passed the bar examinations two years before. "He read German, French, and English well," a friend said. "He knew *Capital* and other Marxist literature. He was politically mature." He brought a dubious recommendation for successful practice in Tsarist courts—a small reputation for revolutionary activity in the provincial city of Samara.

He showed little interest in finding clients. He was far more eager to make the acquaintance of various groups of young intellectuals who were conducting night schools for illiterate factory workers. Vladimir Ulyanov (he took the cliché Lenin in these first years in St. Petersburg) had never been inside a factory; he had probably never spoken with a factory worker.

Yet to the young revolutionaries in the capital he said, "The Russian revolution will be successful as a working-class movement or not at all." His listeners knew this was far from the fact: the smallest class in Russia was the factory working class; all previous revolutionary movements had aimed at arousing the peasantry. But he spoke with a seriousness, a determination, and a certainty that none of his new friends had ever known among themselves and he was not laughed at. He argued Marx with a knowledge that none of them possessed. They spoke of revolution "if—". He spoke of revolution "when—". For many in these intellectual circles talk of revolution was an avocation; for this young red-headed provincial lawyer it was, clearly, a profession. And he was not all theory; no one was quicker or more agile in finding ways to outwit the St. Petersburg police.

A meticulous biographer will set forth everything in Lenin's background that might help to explain the maturity of purpose and of ambition which so impressed every one who met him in these first months in St. Petersburg.

Among Anglo-Saxon peoples the revolutionary is a rare and scarcely understood character. Knowing Lenin's background, Anglo-Saxon people are inclined to ask, "What made him revolutionary?" It would be better to ask, considering the spirit of the time in Russia, "How could he have avoided it?" The atmosphere of the years after 1870 was such that for the intellectual whose roots were not grounded deeply in inherited property or tradition, there were only two choices—to accept things as they were and to sink into the blackest pessimism, or to hope and to work for change. If the latter, what change was desirable?

There was something uniquely Russian—the verb could be put into the present tense about the Moscow Communists today—in the Russian revolutionary spirit. It was seldom founded on personal ambition or inspired by personal hurt. Every nation has its examples of selflessness in works of charity and mercy but selflessness in politics is rare; the Russian revolutionaries had it. Their revolutionary spirit was not the result of ill-adjustment to environment. It was not built on emotion but on the coldest logic. It was not an attitude assumed in order "to be different."

These people grew up in a land where individual life is of little value, where millions swarm across the broad plains and a thousand or a hundred thousand are never missed. Setting up as their ideal the betterment of human life, they were willing to wipe out ruthlessly any human life that might be necessary to attain their ends. They considered any other valuation of humanity a sign of immaturity and sentimentality. But they were consistent; they were even willing to wipe out themselves.

The western Europeans and particularly the Anglo-Saxons always assume that any great selfless devotion to an idealistic cause implies a touch of insanity, which they describe by the word "fanatic." To dismiss Lenin

with that adjective is to reveal that smugness which comes from contented ignorance.

Lenin became a revolutionary because of forces within him. The world around him determined the type of revolutionary which he was to be.

He was born April, 1870, in the town of Simbirsk, on the middle Volga. There was no railroad nearer than a hundred miles. The classes in the town, merchants (of whom few were Jewish), various officials, and a few landowners, were as separate as the floors of a building and a hundred years of tradition had solidified that division. There were peasant craftsmen but no factories. The town dozed under the sterile spirit of government service in which each man knows that merely by keeping alive and "respectable" his promotions, his salary, and a place for his son will come in due season. The arrival of a new dress, a travelling "important bird" from some government chancellery, a bit of gossip from "Peter" were the subjects of conversation. There were thirty churches in the town, crowded on the 150 feast days each year. Their altars and their ikons were hung with cloths embroidered by the local housewives. The noblemen of the district were mostly of low rank. Their chief occupation was fretting about their mortgaged lands. The peasant background to the town was as colorful and unreal as an opera chorus. Occasionally there was a rick-burning on some estate, but such fractures of the peace were rare.

The Ulyanov family had recently come from Astrakhan, one of the Russian cities where East and West do meet and mingle on the streets. If family pictures can be trusted, there was an oriental strain somewhere back in the family. The father had known the sensitive poverty of the moneyless intellectual; he had been educated while his elder brother worked. He had entered the school service and advanced to district school inspector, a promotion that brought the award of the St. Vladimir cross and the title of nobleman, without the estate, that could be inherited by his two sons. It meant little to him. More important was the achievement of opening more than 400 new schools, many of them against the wishes of the local nobility who felt that education for the peasant was a greater luxury than soap.

There were five children and a small income. It was a Spartan household. Yet, by the standards of the town, the Ulyanovs were well fixed. They kept much to themselves; the father read aloud to the family, encouraged discussions, and was pleased that the children were all serious-minded. Young Vladimir, taught to read at five, first went to school when he was ten. The principal, the father of Kerensky, said of the boy, "He was especially talented, continually diligent and accurate. But he had a certain awkwardness with his acquaintances, both in school and out, a general sort of unsocialness." The boy showed tremendous will power and a great gift of concentration.

He preferred the company of his elder brother Alexander to any of his school friends. Their days together were interrupted in 1883 when Alexander went to the university in St. Petersburg to study natural science. He studied hard. "More than sixteen hours a day I cannot work," he wrote home. In the summers when he returned, he and Vladimir must have talked of life there, of secret political clubs, the chief extra-curricular activity, and of student heroes, the revolutionaries, many of whom were now in exile. Vladimir was reading everything he could get. Alexander may have spoken to him of Marx, "the appearance of whose first volume made an impression on the youth comparable only to that of the first appearance of Darwin." During one summer Alexander was trying to write an essay on Marx. Whatever effect Alexander may have had on the younger brother, it was he who first took Vladimir's imagination beyond the confines of the orchard valleys and the river banks of the little town. At fifteen Vladimir threw away his orthodox cross and stopped going to church. His father and mother did not comment.

Vladimir's father died in 1886 and his mother received a state pension. In addition she had some pieces of property inherited from a relative. At the beginning of 1887 the boy was looking forward to graduating from the local school and entering a university. It was expected that the gold medal for the best work done in the school would be his. Schoolmaster Kerensky was very proud of him.

On a February day in 1887 a girl handed Vladimir a letter. He read it and blanched. "This may be very bad for my brother," he said. "I've got to go home and prepare mother for it." His brother and four others had been arrested in an attempt to bomb the Tsar and had been sentenced to death.

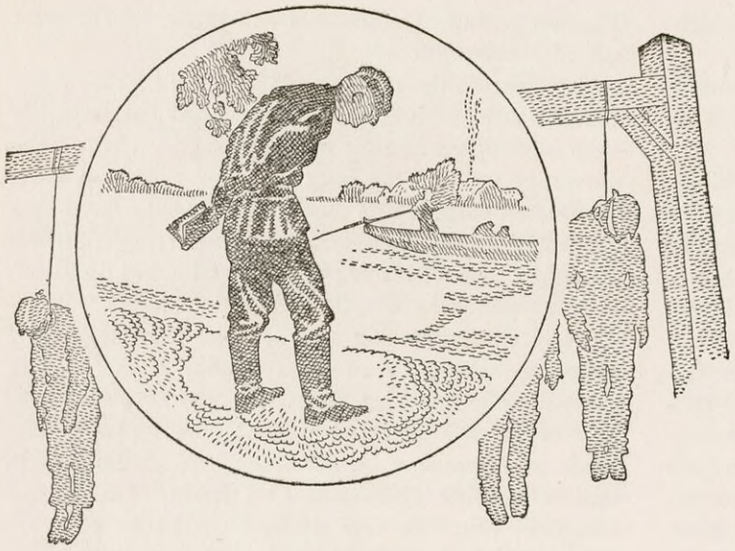
That evening an old man who came nightly for a chess game with the boy stayed away. Neighbors cut the members of his family on the streets. The priests, once glad to come for tea, did not call. This quiet family circle had spawned a would-be regicide. The boy's mother prepared to start for the capital. No one in the town would accompany her on the hundred-mile horseback ride to the railroad. She went alone. In her absence one or two neighbors did come to look after the younger children, but only at night and behind closed shades. They came, too, to Lenin in 1918 to ask for help; they got it.

The mother reached St. Petersburg. She was told that if her son would ask for mercy it would probably be granted.

He refused. "I can't—that would be insincere."

"Is there anything I can do for you?" she asked him.

"Send me Heine's poems!"



She went to the prison on a rainy night in April. Again she asked him in a calm voice, neither pleading nor entreating, whether he would not ask pardon. He refused, for the last time. She understood and she walked away, without a tear. He was hanged at dawn.

Vladimir finished his last months at school shunned by his companions. He turned in a final essay with a sentence, "In order to be useful to society a man must be honest, trained to real labor and, that his labor may bring as great results as possible, a man needs reason and knowledge of his business." There was some doubt about the propriety of giving him the gold medal, but he received it. In the autumn the family moved to Kazan, hoping that, in a larger city, perhaps, their unwitting crime might be overlooked. It was not. They were immediately put under police observation.

The effect of Alexander's execution on Vladimir is easy to overemphasize. Because of it he passed immediately to maturity, without ever knowing adolescence. It gave him a softness toward his mother which he showed to no other person. She had collapsed and, from this time on, he and his elder sister had to "mother" her. He seldom spoke again of his brother. But it was not this experience that made Vladimir a revolutionary as people who seek an emotional background to Lenin's character often say. For, as he told his wife once, "One summer when Alexander came home he was absorbed in writing a paper on earthworms. He studied them day and night. I thought then, 'Any one who gets as absorbed as that in earthworms will make a poor revolutionary.'"

In the autumn of 1887 he entered Kazan University. Three months later student spies reported that he had joined a secret political group and he was expelled, with the whole group, from the university. He was four years younger than any other member. Permission to study in St. Petersburg or to go abroad was refused. He moved to a little village near Kazan, his university days over forever, there to live quietly with his family and to educate himself.

He had known, at seventeen, more of the heavy hand of government than most men know in a lifetime.

III

For three years he, his mother, and his three sisters lived to themselves. There was enough money to live simply and to buy books. There were ice-crusted meadows for skiing in winter and woods where mushrooms might be gathered in summer. The family made no friends, for they were conscious of the brand the police had put upon them. They moved to Samara for a time; then, when his mother was nervous lest the police again interfere, they hurried to another village. These were the years of the education of Lenin; his self-imposed schedule was strict but it enabled him to pass his bar examinations, in St. Petersburg, in 1891.

Law books, however, were not his chief interest during these years. These books were kept ostentatiously on the table or in the bookcase. The books and tracts from which his real education came were hidden beneath mattresses, for discovery of possession of them meant exile to Siberia. These were the works of Karl Marx and the tracts of Plekhanov. And these set the problem which all of Lenin's generation were facing.

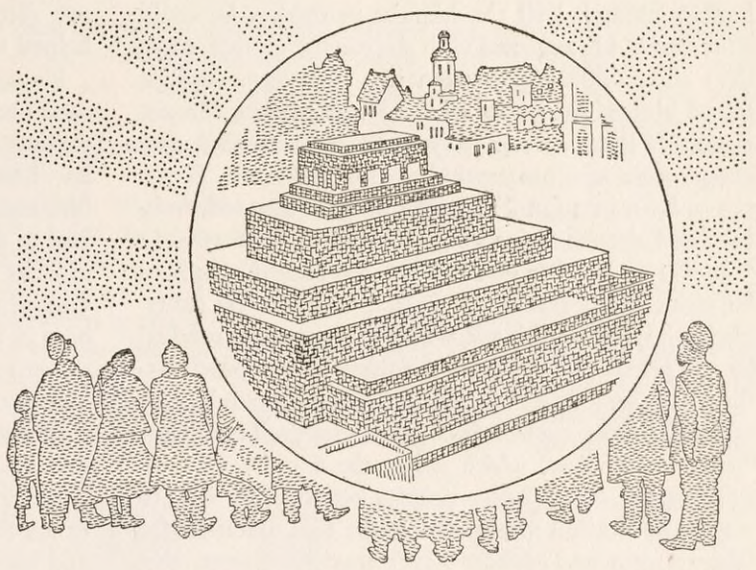
By the end of the eighties a revolutionary cycle, begun twenty years before, had swung full round. Its leaders and followers had been of the intelligentsia, men and women from families like the Ulyanovs, lacking contacts with the masses. Its chief interest had centred in the peasantry, who were the great majority in Russia. The problem was how to lead them.

These revolutionaries aimed at "Russian socialism," at the nationalization of the land for the peasant. They knew a complete change in the political structure was necessary to break the power of the landlords who eagerly supported the system under which the "emancipated" peasantry were forced to make annual payment for their land. The favorite revolutionary weapon was "the terror," assassinations, planned by a few, carried out by individuals such as Alexander Ulyanov. At no time was there any mass movement, any nation-wide party. After the repression, which followed the successful bombing of Alexander II, in 1881, there was only futility.

Typical of the revolutionaries who fled abroad in the eighties was one George Plekhanov. He knew that factories, attracting workers from the villages to the cities, were just beginning to appear in Russia. In Germany factory workers were becoming politically conscious. He, like others of the Russian intelligentsia, knew of the

German Social Democratic Party with Marxism as its final goal.

Abroad, the German labor movement interested him. He read Karl Marx. And he began to think of a Russian labor movement which should have political reform, as well as economic reform, as its object. This was new. His friends had insisted that "History, while putting the factory question in first rank in Western Europe, has not done so here, putting in its place the agrarian question." But Plekhanov began to publish tracts with the imprint, "The Russian Social Democratic Party," even though the entire membership of the party was gathered around one table in a Geneva café.



By 1891 some of these pamphlets had fallen into the hands of Vladimir Ulyanov. He knew the futility of earlier revolutionary movements. He knew that even his brother's gesture had been futile. He felt that their faults had lain in their limited objective and their use of individualistic methods. He read Marx's works and he read them literally. In them he found a philosophy, a philosophical method, and a prophecy. And that prophecy had with it working directions for realizing it. "The working class"—yet he had never been in a factory. Everything in his own experience to date was proof of the correctness of Marx, for he had been made class conscious at an early age. Marx gave him a certainty that nothing could shake, an evangelical assurance which saw no discrepancy or weakness in the Marxian doctrine and which charged malice and selfish ignorance to any one attempting to point them out.

He read government statistics; no man was ever happier studying a column of figures. He saw that foreign capital was pouring into Russia and that Russia was industrializing. Factory workers were increasing at the rate of two hundred thousand annually. They were in many cases being concentrated in large factories; Russia, behind the world in the number of factories, soon had the largest units of all. The Putilov steel mill in St. Petersburg was the largest in the world at the close of the nineteenth century. The factory workers came from the villages; they were illiterate. They had heard in their villages of the need for some revolution if peasant life were to be improved, if payments to landlords were to end. In the factories they soon acquired another grievance, against a working day of twelve to fifteen hours, at miserable wages. The problem was to make them realize that landlord and factory owner and Tsar were all parts of one system.

This was the real problem of the revolutionary, as Lenin saw it; this, and the related problems of making the factory workers class-conscious and of attracting them into a political party or behind a political party.

He went to the capital to take his bar examinations in 1891. He would have preferred to remain there but the death of his younger sister the year before made him loath to leave his mother at this time. He spent one more year with his family, in Samara. Here he gathered a few intellectual radicals together. He wrote essays which were passed from one to another and carefully concealed from the police.

In 1893 Lenin left his family and settled in St. Petersburg. Except for scattered weeks he had left his family forever. There were more active radical circles in the capital, a growing industrial centre. Lenin, on meeting the young fumbling intellectuals here, asked to be taken through factories; the huge Putilov works was the first one he ever visited. He never tired of talking with factory hands, eager to see industrial life through their eyes. Other radicals were a bit amused. They talked ceaselessly about the workers; talking with them was something new. But these three years in St. Petersburg, with the exception of a few months in 1905, gave him all the personal contacts with the masses or with the proletariat that he was to have until 1917.

He was very seldom in his law office. The few clients who sought out the apartment in which he had one room sometimes waited for hours. Then a small figure, wrapped in an overcoat, with a mustache across his reddened face, would dash in. He would not tell them that, by cutting and cross-cutting through apartment courts and side streets, which he knew better than the law courts, he had just outwitted the pursuing police agents who had surprised him while distributing tracts at some factory.

Lenin learned that some of the small group of radicals in the city were in touch with Plekhanov. In 1895 Lenin went to Switzerland to meet the father of Russian Marxism. He returned, with a trunk whose double

bottom concealed all the Marxist pamphlets he could stuff into it. He returned with the conviction that, more than ever, some organization was necessary. And he found himself the leader of the St. Petersburg Marxist circle. Of those around him none survived until 1917 except one quiet-mannered girl, Nadezhda Krupskaya, born in a family like his own, as devoted, reckless, and determined a revolutionary as he was.

It was an exciting life. There were code messages to be written and smuggled abroad; books to be smuggled to imprisoned friends, with secret messages marked by pin pricks under letters; manifestoes and proclamations to be written and pasted on factory bulletin boards, under the drooping beards of police guards. There were "pan cake parties," which, when the doors were carefully barred, turned into debates on the best way to make the Russian workman realize that agitation for labor reform and shorter hours was insufficient, that agitation for political reform must come with it.

Nothing of this crept into his letters home. "My expenses for the month were fifty-four rubles," he wrote. "I do not go to the theatre, for I do not like to go alone. My room is not very satisfactory because of the quarrelsome landlord and a thin partition through which all can be heard, even a balalaika which a neighbor plays to amuse himself."

While the balalaika played, Lenin was busy with the draft of a party program and a party organization. "This struggle of the working class is a struggle against all classes living on labor not their own and against all exploitation. It can finish only by the transition of political power to the hands of the working class and the construction of socialist production." At the same time he drafted an outline for a party organization; it was to include a rank and file of factory workers, no intellectuals, and a group of "professional" radicals at the head, responsible to no one, and exacting strict obedience from their followers. The extent to which Lenin, himself one of the intelligentsia, scorned and mistrusted this group cannot be overstated. This party outline, written in 1895, could stand as a fair description of the Communist party of 1917 and 1933.

He needed a newspaper to publish his point of view. "How can we secure some printers' ink?" he wrote out to Switzerland in 1895. At the end of the year he and the young men and women around him found some ink. The police watched them and saw them carrying heavy suitcases, filled with type, to a little apartment. The type was set, the ink was spread, and the first number of the paper was about to be pulled when the police broke in. They had at last caught up with "the notorious state criminal, Ulyanov."

Lenin was sentenced to three years' exile in eastern Siberia. Before he left he had the satisfaction of knowing that the first strike in Russia to include more than one factory had broken out and that his friends had helped to organize it.

He went, at his own expense, to a little village. Separation and remoteness were the harsh features of exile; there was no police surveillance or any compulsory labor. Lenin had to report occasionally to the local police but, except for that, he lived just as he wished; and he had to pay the expenses for his stay in Siberia. A few months after he had settled down in a neatly whitewashed peasant house, Nadezhda Krupskaya, who had been in his group, and who was arrested later, was sent, at her request, to the same village. They were married here.

Life was simple and not uncomfortable. Lenin's first concern was that books necessary to him, chiefly government statistics on trade, be sent him. In every letter to his elder sister, Anna, he asked for more books. He and his wife began the work of revising his first book, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*. They translated into Russian Sidney Webb's book on trade unions.

Here was hunting in plenty, which Lenin loved. He offered his services as jurist to the peasants in the country roundabout, and he became a local Solomon in peasant disputes. It broadened his knowledge of how the peasantry lived. There were two other political exiles in the village, a Pole, busily catching rabbits to make fur coats to take home to his children "some day" (he died on the way home), and a peasant, dying from consumption. There were other exiles in the district but most of them were of the old "Russian Socialist" movement. Lenin avoided them. He felt their point of view antiquated. And they were forever getting mixed up in scandals of trying to escape.

Lenin was the most docile of prisoners. The only thing that upset him was news from the radical centres in St. Petersburg and Moscow of the appearance of "Marxist heresies." He became impatient for the end of the three years' sentence. Finally, in 1900, he and his wife were bundled into a sled. They started toward the railroad and toward the achievement of a plan worked out during these three Siberian years for the construction of a Russian Social Democratic Party.

IV

Lenin stayed in St. Petersburg only long enough to arrange "contacts," ways to get letters and papers in and out of Russia, and left for Munich. Going abroad was part of the plan.

There were perhaps twenty informal Marxist groups in various Russian cities, trying to collect money, issuing proclamations, distributing literature from abroad, and staying out of the hands of the police with indifferent success. The groups needed some central organi-

Continued on page 230

and made a nursery out of a continent, was too much for him. He rang for the vice-consul—Baby had won.

Dick sat in the sunshine that fell profusely through the guard-room window. Collis was with him and two carabinieri, and they were waiting for something to happen. With the narrowed vision of his one good eye Dick could see the carabinieri; they were Tuscan peasants with short upper lips and he found it difficult to associate them with the brutality of last night. He sent one of them to fetch him a glass of beer.

The beer made him light-headed and the episode was momentarily illumined by a ray of bitter humor. Collis was under the impression that the English girl had something to do with the catastrophe, but Dick was sure she had disappeared long before it happened. Collis was still absorbed by the fact that Miss Warren had found him naked on his bed.

Dick's rage had retreated into him a little and he felt a vast criminal irresponsibility. What had happened to him was so awful that nothing could make any difference unless he could choke it to death, and as this was unlikely he was hopeless. He would be a different person henceforward, and in his raw state he had bizarre feelings of what the new self would be. The matter had about it the impersonal quality of an act of God. No mature Aryan is able to profit by a humiliation; when he forgives it has become part of his life, he has identified himself with the thing which has humiliated him—an upshot that in this case was impossible.

When Collis spoke of retribution, Dick shook his head and was silent. A lieutenant of carabinieri, pressed, burnished, vital, came into the room like three men and the guards jumped to attention. He seized the empty beer bottle and directed a stream of scolding at his men. The new spirit was in him, and the first thing was to get the beer bottle out of the guard-room. Dick looked at Collis and laughed.

The vice-consul, an over-worked young man named Swanson, arrived, and they started to the court; Collis and Swanson on either side of Dick and the two carabinieri close behind. It was a yellow, hazy morning, the squares and arcades were crowded and Dick, pulling his hat low over his head, walked fast, setting the pace, until one of the short-legged carabinieri ran alongside and protested. Swanson arranged matters.

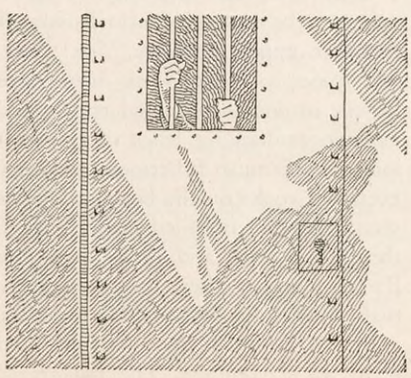
"I've disgraced you, haven't I?" said Dick jovially.

"You're liable to get killed fighting Italians," replied Swanson sheepishly. "They'll probably let you go this time but if you were an Italian you'd get a couple of months in prison."

"Have you ever been in prison?"

Swanson laughed.

"I like him," announced Dick to Clay. "He's a very likable young man



and he gives people excellent advice, but I'll bet he's been to jail himself. Probably spent weeks at a time in jail."

Swanson laughed.

"I mean you want to be careful. You don't know how these people are."

"Oh, I know how they are," broke out Dick, irritably. "They're god damn stinkers." He turned around to the carabinieri: "Did you get that?"

"I'm leaving you here," Swanson said quickly. "I told your sister-in-law I would—our lawyer will meet you upstairs in the court-room. You want to be careful."

"Good-bye." Dick shook hands politely. "Thank you very much. I feel you have a future——"

With another smile Swanson hurried away, resuming his official expression of disapproval. Now they came into a courtyard, on all four sides of which outer stairways mounted to the chambers above. As they crossed the flags a groaning, hissing, booing sound went up from the loiterers in the courtyard, voices full of fury and scorn. Dick stared about.

"What's that?" he demanded, aghast.

One of the carabinieri spoke to a group of men and the sound died away.

They came into the court-room. A shabby Italian lawyer from the Consulate spoke at length to the judge while Dick and Collis waited aside. Some one who knew English turned from the window that gave on the yard and explained the sound that had accompanied their passage through. A native of Frascati had raped and slain a five-year-old child and was to be brought in that morning—the crowd had assumed it was Dick.

In a few minutes the lawyer told Dick that he was freed—the court considered him punished enough.

"Enough!" Dick cried. "Punished for what?"

"Come along," said Collis. "You can't do anything now."

"But what did I do, except get into a fight with some taxi men?"

"They claim you went up to a detective as if you were going to shake hands with him and hit him——"

"That's not true! I told him I was going to hit him—I didn't know he was a detective."

"You better go along," urged the lawyer.

"Come along." Collis took his arm and they descended the steps.

"I want to make a speech," Dick cried. "I want to explain to these people how I raped a five-year-old girl. Maybe I did——"

"Come along."

Baby was waiting with a doctor in a taxi-cab. Dick did not want to look at her and he disliked the doctor, whose stern manner revealed him as one of that least palpable of European types, the Latin moralist. Dick summed up his conception of the disaster, but no one had much to say. In his room in the Quirinal the doctor washed off the rest of the blood and the oily sweat, set his nose, his fractured ribs and fingers, disinfected the smaller wounds and put a hopeful dressing on the eye. Dick asked for a quarter of a grain of morphine, for he was still wide awake and full of nervous energy. With the morphine he fell asleep; the doctor and Collis left and Baby waited with him until a woman could arrive from the English nursing home. It had been a hard night but she had the satisfaction of feeling that, whatever Dick's previous record, they now possessed a moral superiority over him for as long as he proved of any use.

LENIN the Individual

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zation. Only from abroad, Lenin felt, would it be possible to solve two immediate problems: to state once and for all the theoretical basis of the Marxian belief, and to rally and form a party around that platform. The older émigrés from their European hiding places had failed to create a united organization in Russia.

While Lenin had been in Siberia a movement to "reform" Marx had begun. One group could see no need for any struggle other than that for better working conditions. Did not Marx say that a proletarian revolution was inevitable? Then why organize for it? Another group believed in evolution, not revolution. For such viewpoints Lenin used his favorite branding-irons, "opportunistic," "bourgeois," "revisionary."

Unitedly the intelligentsia had come to Marx seeking an explanation of what an industrially developed Russia would mean. Marxism might explain that to them but it could not unite them. Marx said little of the peasantry, and was not Russia chiefly peasant? They quarrelled over how much of Marx to accept. Some refused to accept any of it for the influence of the old "Russian socialists" was still strong.

The intellectual radicals and their ardent individualism Lenin knew. In his party he would have no place for them, unless they fully agreed with him.

In many things, in program and tactics Lenin constantly compromised. "Compromises that are imperative are permissible. Compromises of opportunism are the ones to be avoided. The difficulty comes in defining opportunism," he wrote. In the idea of a proletarian party, rigidly controlled from the top, functioning as a unit, there must be no compromises.

Lenin stayed in Munich, in hiding. The Tsar's police were everywhere, as active outside Russia as within. So well hidden was he that his wife, who came out of Russia after him, went first to Prague, then to Stuttgart, and finally to Munich before she found him. He was in correspondence with the Plekhanov group in Switzerland and with the groups in Russia.

A little later Lenin and his wife joined the Plekhanov group. They resented this young man who had just come from Russia; some of them had been in exile for fifteen years and considered that a testimony to infallibility. Lenin, realizing that they were often out of touch with Russian conditions, looked on that as a weakness. There were frequent quarrels among them. Lenin usually fought alone. They resented his apostolic defense and interpretation of Marx, his schoolmaster manner. But they admired his energy.

They completed plans for a newspaper, to be smuggled into Russia. It began to appear as *Iskra, The Spark,* and 5000 copies a week went into Russia, in double-bottomed trunks and as innocent-looking bales of fish sent inland by Finnish fishermen; and they even had cooks on the boats to Batum wrap bundles in oiled paper, attach them to a float, and drop them into Batum Harbor, where they were eventually fished out by watchful Marxists.

In the spring of 1903 they finished plans for a congress. The makers of false passports in Russia worked overtime. In June forty-four delegates, many of them from the Russian groups, gathered in Brussels. Lenin and Plekhanov assembled them in a dusty old flour mill whose windows were hung with red flannel. The Belgian police became alarmed at the gathering of "dangerous revolutionaries." The neighbors of the hotel where they stayed complained of loud noises long after midnight and of voices singing, at early dawn, "We were wedded out of church." The congress moved to London.

Of the forty-four present only four were factory workers; the majority were Jewish. There were various brands of Marxists among them, but they united on the program which Lenin and Plekhanov had drawn up. The program, which should be compared with that which Lenin demanded in April, 1917, called for a democratic republic; direct suffrage for all over twenty; separation of church from state; the eight-hour day. The agrarian program was the weakest point; Lenin had had difficulty in trying to visualize the way by which the peasants could be attached to the proletarian chariot. No further payments were to be made to the State fund by the peasantry, and past payments were to be returned by confiscating church and crown lands. In the light of 1903 these demands were astounding. Through the years Lenin's demands became more and more radical.

"Have you never heard of the law of reaction?" a friend asked. "As soon as you go in one direction counter forces begin to operate and to bring you back toward the centre."

"Yes, and therefore you must go all the more to the left, and still left, if you would stay left," Lenin replied.

The party had its program. It had its leaders. It had peace and quiet and order at its first sessions. But as soon as the discussion turned to the question of the way by which the party should secure the things for which it stood, epithets began to fly, then desk tops and inkwells. And during the first week of its formal history the party broke into two groups, the Bolsheviki and the Mensheviki of history.

At the basis of this quarrel and division was a dispute over Lenin's conception of party membership. Few of the delegates agreed with him about the worthlessness of the intelligentsia; most of them belonged to that class. He lost the first vote on his resolution; then he managed to force it through, by a clever parliamentary trick. The title "majority," *Bolsheviki,* was his thereafter. The party was to count as members only those who took a personal part in the work of one of the party nuclei. He wanted no periphery of sympathetic intelligentsia around his party, acting like a halo and reflecting a pale pink light.

The congress adjourned. Lenin's group was in control. Abruptly some of his friends deserted him, including Plekhanov, and Lenin was ousted from the newspaper and from other positions. He never forgave the old Plekhanov for this desertion. He had organized a party and now his friends had taken it from him, saying he was too radical, too utopian. They laughed when he spoke about the need for preparing for an armed revolt.

"The difference between the Bolsheviki and the Mensheviki?" he laughed. "There is an apple tree with one apple

hanging on it. The Mensheviki want to wait for it to fall. The Bolsheviki want to take it."

With the majority of his fellow émigrés against him and rather pleased about it, Lenin started to fight. Nominally he should have bowed to party discipline and said nothing. But he did what in others he would have called the foulest sort of insubordination. With a few remaining friends, including a bright young Jew named Litvinov, he formed a new group, within the party, of course. He had no desire to start another party; after all, there could be only one Social Democratic organization. An unending series of petty squabbles began. He and his friends began to publish their own newspaper.

From that time on there were two wings of the party. It was evident that the Congress of 1903 had given birth to twins possessing a common parent, Marx, and common desires. The various Social Democratic groups in Russia knew little of the details of this party fight. They did know that they were supposed to finance it. Local committees wrote to the émigrés to stop fighting among themselves and to form some one centre. But Lenin, convinced of his own correctness, would not stop fighting until he was the Centre.

V

In personal characteristics the Lenin of 1903 was the Lenin of 1917. Of those years between, all but one and a half were spent abroad. There was a monotonous regularity about émigré life that rather embalmed one. One day was like another. He changed little with the years.

Lenin left no autobiography or memoirs. In twenty-four volumes of collected works there is no personal word, nothing but his writings and speeches on economics and politics. It is as if he had had no existence outside them; perhaps he considered it so. Much of his writing was ephemeral journalism. Much of it was written in a dull involved style. He often confounded the simple style of the Russian language with Germanic constructions, and he introduced many foreign abstract words into the language which made it wooden and unnatural. The human Lenin is not here, for, when speaking to a Russian crowd he was simple, colloquial, and used images familiar and amusing to every one.

There remain a few letters which he wrote to friends but most of them deal with questions of party politics. There is a small volume of letters written to his family, the majority from abroad; since they had to pass police censorship they tell little of his daily life and of his reactions to things around him. And many of these were really written by his wife.

There is no complete biography of him, even in Russian; yet more books and pamphlets have been published in recent years on Lenin and Leninism than on any other figure in history except Christ. The Lenin Institute in Moscow is dedicated to the collection and the publication of his works; the Institute's annual publication, *Leniniana,* is a large volume. The Institute preserves every scrap of his handwriting, every sheet from his engagement pads. Occasionally the Institute publishes a "newly found" document or letter; sometimes these coincide amazingly with the viewpoint of Stalin on the problem of the moment and Stalin's enemies are inclined to jeer at the timeliness of the "amazing discovery."

There are a mass of memoirs and reminiscences, written by people who knew him well and by others who knew him slightly. From such writings emerge, haphazardly, various facets and facts about the man.

Abroad, he lived no life outside of his books, his writings, his library work, and long walks with his wife. "I don't think that any other émigrés know the back streets of London as we do," he said with pride. He liked London bus rides, English setters. He disliked most Frenchmen and most Poles. He hated English cooking. He read and spoke English, French, and German. He read the Russian classics and disliked the moderns, especially the "poets of the revolution." He was fond of Jack London's stories, as are so many Russians. He went to the theatre rarely and disliked romantic plays. He criticised Gorki's *The Lower Depths,* for its "romantic treatment of poverty."

He liked chess but, afraid to play too much of it, he gave it up. He was proud of having discovered that milk used as secret ink can be "developed" by dipping the writing into hot tea. He did not smoke. He liked Munich beer and Italian wines. He was drunk only once in his life. He was unattractive to women and unattracted.

To one who knew him slightly he seemed a man without emotions. He was quiet, but it was an alert quietness, not drowsy, smug, or ruminating. He loved children and regretted that he was childless. He had a bubbling humor that laughed loudly at little things, without malice. But when his point of view or his motives were attacked he was a fury, merciless to his opponents. After such a fight he was often white-faced and speechless. He had a long list of epithets, including "political cretin," "idiot," "oakhead," and others untranslatable and he used them freely. Convinced of the correctness of Marx and of his own interpretation of the methods of revolution, he was blind to any other point of view; yet when it became necessary to deviate from Marx he did so, while vilifying any who charged him with it. He did not suffer from the disadvantage of an open mind; never having to weigh the correctness of one of two proposals, he could act more speedily than others.

He was never "nation conscious," and he took no part in the life of the land in which he happened to be living. He was extremely class conscious whether in London slum, Paris café, or Geneva library. The strength of his impersonal hatred of a class was infinite and he could implant it in others. It colored everything. Seeing vaudeville on a London stage he said, apropos of some sketch, "It shows the weakness and behavior of British imperialists." Riding a bicycle in a Geneva street he was knocked down by a passing automobile, driven by some viscount or other. "These foul aristocrats!" he wrote home, and he rejoiced when he won the suit for damages.

He knew hatred, even though he felt that a man's emotions should be pressed and dried like some flower, lest they influence his actions. And he knew pity in all its chords and overtones. Men and women who had escaped from Siberian exile came to him and he saw the scars on their legs from the iron shackles, he heard the coughs that meant tuberculosis, and he knew the flashing eyes and the incoherent speech that meant insanity. He talked with these people and gave them money

when he had it. He sat with them during their last long night. He paled when he heard of the suicides of those who felt that their courage could live no longer on hopes alone. To his wife he said, "If one cannot work any longer for the party one must look truth in the face and die——!"

Yet he thought of people in the abstract, not as individuals but as instruments that could help or hinder his plans. Inured to sacrifice and suffering, he could not understand people who complained of them or regretted them. He was easily approachable, but he held himself in a position of lofty intellectual assurance from which he looked on all other political leaders as amateurs or frauds.

He wanted no physical comforts and he was scornful when others complained of the lack of them. Money meant little to him except something with which to buy food, to pay for lodgings, and to finance party activities. He was never heard to complain of his living conditions, no matter whether in Siberian exile or in a back room in London. He was only waiting there, and who complains of the lack of luxury in a railroad waiting room?

Lenin's income during these years came from party collections; when these failed, particularly after 1905, his family sometimes sent him money. He refused it when he discovered that his mother was pinching it from her small pension. He had some irregular income from his writing but there were long periods when there was no money. When he had it, he was more than generous. An émigré wrote for 500 francs, saying that his wife was about to have a child. "Send him a thousand," Lenin insisted. He was most punctilious about money matters and his letters to his family were filled with instructions to be business-like with his publishers. But he was suspicious of them and of editors.

Through these years his wife was his only close friend. She never complained, even when she had, at the same time, to handle much of Lenin's correspondence, cipher and decipher all the secret communications to Russia, cheer him up when he was despondent, and cook for a half-dozen stranded émigrés. She was often sickly and she aged rapidly. She bicycled with him, climbed mountains with him, went to the cinema and left after a half hour, to walk through the night in silence by some lakeside. She had no life outside of his. She, too, regretted that they were childless. She was angry at the things and the people that angered him. One thing in Lenin made her angry—when she found week-old letters in his pocket which he had forgotten to mail.

She has survived him and she works today in the Commissariat of Education in Moscow, somewhat estranged from the group now in power but saying nothing. She has written two volumes of reminiscences (published in English by the International Publishers) and in them she scarcely mentions herself. Nor is there any mention of the feeling each had for the other; often it seems that she thought herself not so much wife as guardian of something frail, invaluable, and irreplaceable. Whatever each found in the other was less deep, less rich than the things outside themselves which they found and shared together.

In their life day by day they were simple people. A passage in the memoirs of Lenin's wife in which she speaks of the death of her mother, who joined her abroad in 1909, shows best how they met their days: "In March my mother died. The last winter was a very trying one for her. She was yearning to go to Russia but we had no one there to care for her. Not long before her death mother once said to me: 'No, I won't go alone to Russia. I'll wait until I go with you two.' When the warm spring sun began to shine, we sat on a bench in the woods for a half hour, and then she could hardly get back home. We did as she had requested—cremated her at the Berne Crematorium. Vladimir and I waited at the Crematory. In about two hours an attendant brought us a tin can with the ashes still warm and showed us where they were to be buried.

"Our family life became still more student-like . . ."

In his simplicity Lenin had neither personal pride nor material ambitions. "Sign any name you wish to my book," he wrote one publisher. His ambition was not power; immediately after the success in November, 1917, he offered to step aside and to decline the presidency of the Council of Peoples' Commissars. "Just let me work with the party," he suggested.

What he did desire was the achievement of his ideas in reality, the conquest of those things which he believed right. He not only believed in social justice; he believed in the possibility of attaining it, scoffing at the remark, "Men had always been that way and you can't change them." He was an intellectual, in life and in desire; but, rare among intellectuals and almost nonexistent among Russians of his day, he was a man of action. And he was a man of action after spending almost all his years from 1903 until 1917 in rusting and corroding inaction.

VI

Lenin had gone to Geneva in 1904. News reached there in January, 1905, of the march of a group of strikers on the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. They had been greeted by a few rounds of bullets. The émigré colony in Geneva gathered around the local bulletin board, pushing and shoving for a place in the first row. There were little explosive gasps, then excited comment on what it might all mean. Suddenly there was silence. Very solemnly they sang the most wistful of threnodies, the Revolutionary Funeral March. Time thereafter was measured by the coming of each day's newspapers, each new dispatch.

Failure in the Russo-Japanese War had turned the new-born patriotism among the liberals into a desire for political reform. The factory workers joined in. Strikes became common, as means for voicing general discontent. There were hot debates among the émigrés about the advisability and the safety of returning to Russia. Radicals in Russian cities, able to work more or less in the open, began to enjoy something like prosperity. The Bolshevik group in Moscow collected more than $2000 a week from sympathizers; it grew to 4000 members. Many liberals, among them some of the wealthiest men in Russia, began to contribute to them, believing that a prospering radical movement would force the Tsar to concessions.

Lenin saw the embryonic revolution with its slowly increasing heart-beat, but without any centre for its nervous system and without any one intelli-

gence to direct it. He paced the streets of Geneva. "An armed uprising of the proletariat is necessary and we must prepare for it. The liberal movement will never take the revolution to the end," he said to his fellow exiles. A few of them believed it because it was Lenin who said it. Others laughed. Lenin studied military tactics.

The most promising revolutionary situation that the radicals had yet known could not unite the two groups in the party. Unable to impress his views on the Mensheviki, who still controlled the central organs and the funds, Lenin called a congress of his friends in London in May, 1905. There were no factory workers among the delegates but there were new faces, fresh from Russia. The Tsar's police *provocateurs,* who always attended faithfully every congress, made careful note of the delegates' names. They included, for the first time, Rykov, Litvinov, and Krassin. During the meetings the Bolsheviki ran out of funds. They were "bailed out" with £1700 supplied by a London banker, through the intercession of Maxim Gorki, now drawn to Lenin.

The congress passed his pet resolution, possibly with a smile: "We resolve to take the most energetic measures for creating a plan for armed uprising and its management in so far as possible by party workers." The peasant program was broadened although the chief interest was in the factory employees and their needs; they could be more easily organized than the peasants in Russia's 600,000 villages. The congress agreed to support, if not to lead, any movement that sought the confiscation of land, including, for the first time, the property of individual landlords. The Mensheviki were chided for being "individuals inclining from the principle of revolutionary social democracy," "straying from party discipline [!]" Final excommunication was to be delayed until 1912.

By October the divided leadership of the various anti-government movements, liberal and radical, had produced no results. The Tsar's ministers had published a plan for a Duma, a parliament, which promised to be as sterile as an old ladies' home. The insufficiency of their plan aroused a series of strikes. A strike committee was organized. It included some "professional radicals" from the Mensheviki, a few of the Lenin group, some men from the newly organized trade unions, and some Social Revolutionaries, the party that had built itself on the doctrines of "Russian (as opposed to Marxian) Socialism." For once these various groups worked in harmony. Agitators spread among the factories urging the workers to elect one representative to the committee for each 500 workers and to demand freedom of speech, press, political amnesty, and a constituent assembly. All "liberal bourgeoisie" were barred from this committee. Its leaders decided to publish a newspaper. The

paper, and the committee, needed a name. Its president, one Khrystalev-Nosar, a proof-reader, said, "Call it the *Izvestia* (news) *of the Soviet* (council) *of Workers' Deputies.*" Thus, Soviet, a word now in every language, first reached the headlines.

The Soviet had arisen almost spontaneously. All "left" parties were in it and all fought for leadership; no one secured it. The control committee which included Trotsky, at this time half-Bolshevik, quarter-Menshevik, and quarter-confusion, had no arms and did not know how to secure its program. It did call strikes, and the workers of the city responded. The city fathers were helpless to wipe out this usurping organization. But it was difficult to secure any national support although workers in forty other cities likewise formed Soviets. Every attempt of the Bolshevik delegates to urge armed uprising was met with laughter and then the question, "With all the soldiers now mobilized by the Tsar what chance is there for success?"

On his arrival Lenin demanded that the Soviet lead an armed revolt. When it refused he scorned it, sneered at its "non-party-ness," and called it counter-revolutionary. On December 6, without warning, the Tsarist police, who knew the weakness of the Soviet as well as Lenin did, arrested the leaders, and the first Soviet was finished even before it had defined its functions.

Lenin had gone to Finland at that moment to arrange a conference with the Menshevik leaders. The Moscow Soviet, however, was under his inspiration. Its leaders immediately announced "a common political strike, hoping it may turn into armed uprising." Barricades went up in Moscow streets and in three other cities and the industrial sections of the city were in the hands of the workers for several days. During these days Lenin seemed like a man almost possessed with exaltation. But the general strike fell through. The railroad employees refused to trust Bolshevik leadership and would not strike. Their trains carried loyal troops to Moscow where the barricades were surrounded and taken.

As abruptly as the revolutionary wave had come, came the reaction. The government, encouraged by the inability of the anti-government leaders to agree, grew bolder in its steps to put down revolt. A constitution had been granted and a Duma would shortly be elected. That was sufficient. There were those who claimed that it was the "military adventurism" of Lenin that was responsible for the speed of the reaction. Lenin replied that it was the refusal of the petty bourgeois Mensheviki and the Social Revolutionaries to recognize reality. There had been an armed uprising in Moscow. Did this fact not prove that the people were ready for it?

Whatever it may have proved, another cycle was over. One by one the revolutionaries, so hopeful a year before, fled abroad or were sent to Siberia, there to discuss the lessons of 1905 and, once more, to wait. Another time, perhaps, the troops would not remain loyal to the Tsar.

VII

The gray years began for Lenin.

He remained in Finland during 1906, constantly avoiding the police. For six months he talked about the need to prepare for another armed struggle immediately. Then he realized that a period of reaction had begun.

During 1905 the Social Democratic

Party had grown to 40,000, of whom the Mensheviki had the majority. It had had its first real opportunity for propaganda, but both wings felt that their failure to unite had in some way hastened the reaction. Therefore, leaders on both sides drew plans for a united congress, to meet in Stockholm. The spirit of unity at the beginning was only an illusion. The Mensheviki were determined to punish Lenin. His armed revolt, which he had ordered, had failed. Once again the Mensheviki took the majority of places on the governing bodies. Again Lenin was left alone, with his few friends.

By 1907 he felt that he was no longer safe, even in a remote Finnish village. With no eagerness he set out for Switzerland. He could not take the boat at its regular stopping-place because of police spies and he walked across the ice to another little harbor. The ice broke and he almost perished. In telling of the experience later he said, "All that was in my mind was, 'What a silly way to have to die!' "

Once again he and his wife settled down in Geneva. The most unshakeable pessimism, sired not by the loss of faith but by disappointment, hung over him. He paced the streets murmuring, "I feel as though I had come here to be buried."

The next years brought complete suppression of revolutionary activity in Russia. The rare letters from friends there told of the difficulty of maintaining contacts and of the revival of the death sentence. To celebrate its revival more than 5000 revolutionaries were executed in one year. Money contributions to the party were dropping off, but for a short time several wealthy people of Moscow continued to support the émigrés.

Then Lenin and his wife decided to go to Paris, the real centre of Russian émigré life. He hated it. "What the devil made us go to Paris?" he asked after a year there. Here he saw all those revolutionaries who managed to escape from Russia. They recognized him as leader. He knew their first enthusiasm, and he saw it fade into gray despair as they tried to battle for existence.

More discouraging were the continued arguments and splits among his friends. Some of his closest associates, including Lunacharsky and Krassin, went off to Italy, to Gorki's villa on Capri, where they thought a bit of bourgeois luxury might develop a new school of Bolshevism that would take religion into positive account. Lenin swore at them, but he would not compromise on basic principles and the group at Capri were far from them. When Gorki invited him to come to Capri, with guaranteed surcease from money troubles, he replied, "I don't agree with the ideas of your new group. I will not lecture at Capri, but I will gladly lecture at Paris."

It was during these years that Lenin did most of his theoretical writing. He summed up the lessons of 1905. He re-studied the peasant problem in the light of Marxism. He wrote on everything, on questions of philosophy, political economy, religion in the light of Marx, theories on imperialism, and practical questions of leading uprisings. Once and for all he cut the ground out from under radically inclined liberals. If they did not believe in armed revolution as part of Marxism, they were not Marxians, "and who does not understand this understands nothing."

The relation of Lenin to Marx has been discussed in other places. He was constantly being chided for overlooking one seeming contradiction. If, as Marx said, the proletarian revolution was inevitable, then why all the fuss about armed revolt and proletarian tactics? Lenin ignored the attacks. He was more interested in writing "What to do" than "What to expect." He took it as fact, Marx or no Marx, that Marxism needed more than poems to the Proletariat; it needed a staff to direct it. Max Eastman has phrased it best: "Marx states that such a thing will happen in such a way. Lenin states that such is the only way to make it happen. In Marx, the Hegelian metaphysician was dominant over the practical scientific thinker; in Lenin the scientific thinker gained the victory. Bolshevism is the practical science of revolution; Marxism is the revolutionary philosophy of the universe."

At this time, too, Lenin considered the question of governmental organization after a successful revolution. "When the struggle with the Tsar is finished, then we will think immediately of dictatorship and talk more in detail about it," he had said. He had used the phrase, "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat" before 1905 to describe the government which would follow a successful revolution. It was taken from Marx; what it meant to Lenin varied at times. Early in 1905 he had spoken of a "revolutionary democratic dictatorship of peasant and worker," which would set up a "republic." At other times he felt that a bourgeois republic was inevitable and that Russia could only later evolve to a proletarian state. Finally, he foresaw a temporary government followed by a constituent assembly; if the masses would arise, they could secure a majority of workers and peasants in it. Thus it would become a revolutionary "Dictatorship of Proletariat and Peasant." Then there would follow a civil war, as the organization of the proletariat grew. The peasants would take all land into their hands. The civil war would continue. Either the bourgeoisie would crush the dictatorship or the dictatorship would set Europe afire. Writing this in 1908 he asked, "And then——?"

Above everything else, including even the dicta of Marx, the party must get into power. Whatever else Lenin meant by the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat," he always thought of it as a euphemism for his party in power. And that is the government of Russia today, no matter what its name.

Such theorizing was all very well but at the moment it was more important to win back his party or to build some new one. Again, he paced city streets, or bicycled furiously down crowded avenues in the early autumn evenings. Over him now, deeper than darkness, hung the shortage of money. His mood varied with the days. "I do not know whether I will live to see the rise of the tide," he wrote his sister. At other times he said, "But wait; 1905 will come again!"

By 1911 Lenin had decided once again that party discipline was to go by the board because the party was not *his* party. The first thing he did was to order whatever followers he still had to pay no further attention to the orders of the Menshevik officers. Again, as in 1904, personality rather than program was the only magnet he could use. He succeeded in attracting a small group to Prague in January, 1912. The men who came were, for the most part, fresh from Russia, untouched by civil war among the émigrés. A young Georgian, Stalin, was among them.

Lenin persuaded this conference to adopt as preliminary demands a democratic republic, the eight-hour day, the confiscation of landlords' estates. The Mensheviki, who had compromised among themselves almost sufficiently to be a legal party in Russia, had gained attention in the various elections to the Duma Now Lenin, who had opposed this policy, reversed himself. His group was to take part in the elections and to carry on whatever legal activity was permitted. Further, a newspaper, toned down enough to be legal, was to be opened in St. Petersburg. And Lenin, remembering the lonely years through which he had just passed, finally excommunicated the Mensheviki. They were to be among the first fugitives from Russia in 1918.

In this new group of Leninists were names now familiar: Zinoviev, Smirnov, Kalenin, and Troyanovsky (now Soviet ambassador to the United States). Lenin had a unity that he had never known before; these lieutenants, knowing their rank, were loyal to him, and foreshadowed his position after the revolution. He had everything except the proletariat, but his followers, chiefly from the factory class, were men who could attract members. They were sent back into Russia to "steal" rank and file members, wherever possible, from the Mensheviki. The newspaper, *Pravda, The Truth,* appeared. In less than two years it disappeared and reappeared, rebaptized, eleven times. Of 270 numbers the editors were fined 174 times by the Tsarist censors. The Leninists succeeded in electing six members to the Duma in 1912; they shared the name "Social Democrats" with the Menshevik deputies.

In 1912 Lenin and his wife moved to Cracow. They sub-let the place they had had in Paris. "How much do veal and geese cost?" their lessee asked. Mme. Lenin says, "I could not tell him anything about geese and veal, for during our stay in Paris—two years—we had not eaten either the one or the other. Had he interested himself in the price of horse-flesh and lettuce I could have told him."

Cracow was a happy choice. It was close to the Russian border. Russian peasant women, who crossed over to market, would take back letters that could be mailed inside Russia. Members of the Duma could visit Lenin; he wrote many of their speeches for them; for the first time he had a national sounding-board. Further, the French police had co-operated closely with the Russian police; but the Polish police were enemies of all Russian officialdom. Life was quiet. The coming of the postman was the great event of the day. The Zinovievs and other friends joined the Lenins in Cracow. They lived less in family than in student style. Nearby were the Tatra mountains and from the mountains Lenin always drew the strength and the rest that the city denied him. Russia lay nearby. There were dreams at

night of the Russia to which they all hoped to return; but no one ever spoke about these dreams.

These happier days coincided with the reopening of an active labor movement in 1912. Strikes began to be more frequent. The hinges on the lid which the government had clamped down after 1905 were cracking. By June, 1914, there were barricades in St. Petersburg streets, police firing into crowds, and the Cossacks riding. In Cracow or in a village in the Tatras, Lenin continued to read and write. He had turned to problems of nationalism, of culture, and the social aims of revolution. Working by oil lamp, he wrote on the need for electrification, for a seven-hour day, for factory kitchens, for the emancipation of women from the drudgery of housework (while his wife cooked for the many visitors).

At the beginning of the war, which Lenin, along with a thousand others, had felt inevitable, he was in Cracow. The Austrians arrested him immediately and put him in a little jail. He sat there patiently, waiting for the evening and quiet, when he worked on plans by which the World War might be turned into civil war. An Austrian Socialist, hearing of Lenin's arrest, and of the fear that he would have to stay in a concentration camp for the duration of the war, hurried to one of the ministers. "Lenin is a more implacable enemy of the Entente than Your Excellency," he said. "Free him and he will agitate against them."

Lenin was freed and went to Berne. He faced a crisis. The war was breaking the international Socialist movement. The various Socialist parties had talked loudly of internationalism but, as soon as the war broke out, many of them turned national and were soon voting armament funds for their goverments along with the conservatives.

From Berne Lenin issued his point of view on the war. "Use the arms that are given you to clear away the bourgeoisie. The Proletariat has no Fatherland. Do not fear the defeat of Russia . . . that will speed the revolutionary movement." Pacificism and Tolstoian non-resistance were weaknesses; turn the war into civil war! But Lenin could do little against the wave of patriotism sweeping over Russia. Repression of all radical movements had followed as a war measure. The Social-Democratic groups arose again, secretly, in 1915 and 1916. They could do little; but war weariness, famine, and dissatisfaction were working for them.

In Berne Lenin was more completely cut off from Russia than ever. It was most difficult to get letters through. For the first time in his life he felt caged. "No money, no money, and that is our chief misfortune," he wrote. A follower, Mme. Kollontai, went to America trying to find a publisher for some of his pamphlets and to raise funds, but she found few contributors to the support of exiled Russian revolutionaries. For personal funds Lenin and his wife had $1000 which his wife's mother had left them. They lived on it for three years; and there was some left in July, 1917! To his family Lenin wrote, "This diabolical cost of living—it has become devilishly hard to live." They moved to Zurich. They took a one-room apartment which had, amazingly, electric light. So pleased was Mme. Lenin that she turned on the light to show every caller. The landlady complained of such extravagant exhibitionism and forced them to move. They found one small dark room on a side street, furnished with two beds, a

table, a small stove, and one chair. A sausage factory in the courtyard furnished an odor night and day.

During 1916 Lenin was convinced that revolution in Russia was approaching. One afternoon in February, 1917, as Lenin was about to return to the library and his wife was finishing the dishes, a friend rushed in without knocking. "Haven't you heard the news? There is a revolution in Russia!"

There followed what were perhaps the unhappiest days in his life. He was caged in "this cursed Switzerland" and there was no way out. He could and did write definite instructions for action to his friends abroad. But for himself there seemed to be no possible action. Switzerland was ringed about with countries at war with Russia and there was little chance that the Allies would pass him through their frontiers. He did not ask them. Days and nights passed in delirium; he would take an aeroplane; he would get a Swedish passport, even if he had to sit down now, of all times, and learn a little Swedish. Then he quieted; a plan to go through Germany had been proposed. All the émigrés, except Lenin, recoiled at the idea. He began writing, for the newly resurrected *Pravda,* and to German Socialists. Thanks to their intercession he and thirty other émigrés were allowed to pass through German territory in a sealed car, with the face-saving condition that he would try to effect the release of an equal number of German prisoners held in Russia.

There has been argument without end about this deal. Was Lenin in the pay of the Germans? Did he make promises to them? No documents have ever been published on either side. The question is unimportant. The fact is that, to get to Russia, Lenin would gladly have made any bargain asked.

VIII

The years of inaction until 1917 had sharpened Lenin for his part; one who had less faith in his own forecasts would have been dulled by time. His chance had now come. The part that the Bolsheviki had played in bringing on the revolution had been a minor one. There were only 40,000 of them in Russia. They had carried on agitation in the factories and they had helped to stir up strikes, but they were woefully weak in the villages. The Social Revolutionaries, with Kerensky as a prominent member, were more numerous than the Bolsheviki, and their nuclei were spread more widely through the country.

Lenin returned to Russia with certain convictions: that it is easy to stay in power if one can get into power; that the country was war-weary and that the thin veneer of patriotism had worn through; that the peasantry would agree to any program if it included nationalization of land. He returned with only five years of active life before him. In those five years he was to guide a revolution to success, to organize a government and a nation's industry, to set up an institution to sovietize the world, to win a civil war, to defeat indirectly the Allied powers, and to begin to remould a people.

It was all done against tremendous opposition. Yet the most difficult battles that Lenin fought during these five years were not with the enemies of Bolshevism but with members of his own party. They came nearer to defeating him than any outside force ever did. It was his decisions that made the revolution; it was his forcing them through, by ridicule, persuasion, and threatened resignation, that saved it. Without Lenin the party knew the catfight for power and the defeat that would follow inevitably.

The first fight came on the day after his arrival in April, 1917. Until that time the Bolsheviki had been as uncertain in their attitude and policy as all the other groups. They felt that the Provisional Government, then made up of members of the various liberal parties, would have to turn "left" and, in that case, there would be jobs and some power for the Bolsheviki. Others had a different idea. The Soviet was gaining influence; possibly the Bolsheviki, somehow, could win a majority in that.

Then Lenin read to them his "April Theses." They included "No support of the Provisional Government." "The war is a war for plunder and must be stopped." "No parliamentary republic but a republic of Soviets." So he told a meeting of his party lieutenants, including Stalin and others. Only one, Mme. Kollontai, voted with him.

He pointed out to them that the basic question in any revolution is that of State power. "Our revolution is unique because it has established dual power, the Provisional Government and the weak but growing Soviet." His task was to persuade his followers, these men who had been in Russia during all the past months, that the revolution was only partly accomplished. The task was not to secure a Soviet majority in the Provisional Government but to overthrow it. The Soviet was not, as in 1905, an instrument for exerting pressure on the government. It was a government, potentially, and a class government. The slogan must be: "All power to the Soviet."

Eventually his point of view carried. From then on the revolution moved to the "left," and no radical leader could be radical enough to answer the demands of the people. The knowledge of this, a tribute to his political instinct, was Lenin's greatest strength. He had a consciousness of the Russian people that his friends, long resident in Russia, lacked. The people were war-tired; they were hungry; as ever the peasantry wanted land. A man who would promise peace, bread, and land could rule Russia.

The Bolsheviki used as headquarters the palace of a ballet dancer, formerly the Tsar's mistress. From its balcony he spoke to the crowds. His voice, and his pen, writing editorials for his newspaper, were the most serious foes the Provisional Government faced, but they did not realize it immediately. As expected, the liberal members moved to the "left," and took in some of the Mensheviki and the Social Revolutionaries. There were those in Lenin's group who felt that this was a chance to get some of the power. He ridiculed them. Sooner or later any government which did not go as far as the people wished would fail. Seen now in retrospect, the only way the Provisional Government could have saved itself would have been for it to go as far as Lenin was willing to go; but it had made promises to the Allies and to property holders. Only Lenin dared to go to the extreme and he had to pull most of his party with him.

It was not difficult to persuade the Petrograd worker that the Soviet should have all power; and Lenin had the advantage of working in a city which was both the political capital of the nation and one of its largest industrial centres as well. If the Soviet in

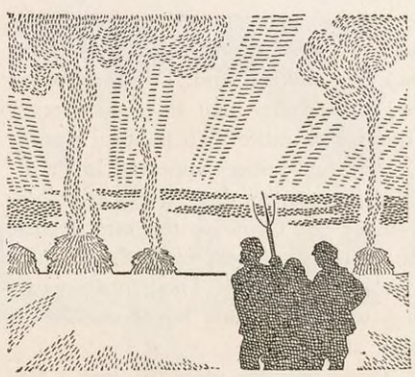
Petrograd and the recently formed one in Moscow took power, they would control the nervous system of the nation. There were plenty of slogans Lenin could use. "While the capitalists are reaping scandalously high profits, the soldier is being cruelly maimed and tortured," he said. His audience knew both these things were true; but they had not connected them before.

Abruptly, the mood of many of his followers changed. They saw larger crowds in their parades and they feared that the moment for decisive action might pass. Lenin looked coldly at the situation and said, "So far we are in a minority; the masses do not trust us yet. We can wait; they will side with us when the government reveals its true nature. Our motto should be 'Caution, caution!' " He knew, too, that a campaign of gossip had been begun against him, charging him with being pro-German. Lenin's wife once overheard housewives saying, "What shall be done with this Lenin who came from Germany? Should he be drowned in a well or what?"

By July the Provisional Government, now led by Kerensky, was conscious of the Menace that was Lenin. He was voicing the things which the masses thought but did not dare to speak. He was known now in Russia. Returning soldiers, homeward bound, passed through Petrograd and Moscow and carried his words back to the villages. Kerensky as a first move decided to raise the cry of "traitor" against him, offering as proof the "fact" that he was a paid agent of the Germans who had passed him over their frontiers. Lenin laughed and was eager to face trial; that only meant another rostrum for his speeches. His party lieutenants, of whom Trotsky was now the leading spirit, warned him not to surrender himself into the hands of the government, as he wanted to do. He fled, instead, to a little Finnish village and the first three months in his life when he was an open and legal leader among the Russian masses were over.

As a second move Kerensky, unable to withdraw from the war and thereby playing into Bolshevik hands, ordered the armies forward. They moved in that direction for a few days only. Then came a retreat, and with that the Kerensky government was finished although it held the symbols of power for three more months. Even the old women who sold sunflower seeds to the soldiers began to talk of Bolshevism to them. And Bolshevik leaders had to disarm a machine-gun squad that was all for taking power immediately.

In the little Finnish village, not far from Petrograd, Lenin remained in touch with his lieutenants. News came to him: Kerensky and one of his leading generals had quarrelled; the party had gained another 50,000 members; Kerensky had promised to call a Constituent Assembly immediately to decide on the future government; Trotsky had been elected head of the Petrograd



Soviet; Soviets all over Russia were now voting the Bolshevik slogans.

All the while Lenin, his beard shaved off, pitched hay on a peasant farm, slept in the fields at night, and, while mosquitoes came in clouds around an oil lantern, wrote a pamphlet on the organization of government in a proletarian state. Here, too, he summed up the Russian situation and pointed its moral: "When a revolutionary party has not the support of a majority either among the vanguard of the revolutionary class or among the rural population, there can be no question of a rising. A rising must not only have the majority but must have: the incoming revolutionary tide over the whole country; the complete moral and political bankruptcy of the old régime, for example, the coalition government; and a deep-seated sense of insecurity among all these irresolute elements."

Such conditions, he decided at the end of September, existed in Russia. The Bolsheviki now had 200,000 members. Every order which the Provisional Government issued was negated by an opposite order from the Soviet. From every quarter of Russia came reports of rick burnings, of estates being seized, of factories attacked. Soldiers were returning home, deserting from the front. They came to their homes with red ribbons and a smattering of big-city talk; one thing they knew—the Bolsheviki, whoever they might be, had promised the village its land. Assemblies meeting in every town and village, in fire houses, barns, and stables, were calling themselves "Soviets" and thumbing a collective nose at the instituted organs of government.

Therefore Lenin demanded, "Set a definite date for taking over the government!"

A second party fight broke out. Some would wait until after the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, called for the 7th of November, had met. Others would wait until the long promised Constituent Assembly had convened. The Bolsheviki, for all their talking, were still a minority party. There was no assurance that even the other radical parties would not combine against a Bolshevik government. Again Lenin forced his decision through. Take the government on the morning of November 7, and face the Soviet Congress with the *fait accompli*. Tell the assembled delegates, "Here is the power—what are you going to do about it?"

Early on the morning of the seventh a man, looking sixty beneath an ill-fitting wig, with a narrow line of mustache across his face, passed through the rear door of Smolny Institute, one of the better girls' schools, which the Bolsheviki were using as headquarters. Within six hours he was the government. Lenin's tactics on that day can serve as a model for those who would take a city by storm. The rank and file of the army were on his side; a Bolshevik guard had been training for several weeks. The officers, sons of the "better people," were opposed. A cruiser moved up the Neva River into the heart of the city, more as a threat than a weapon. The sailors had gone Bolshevik. In the morning the government buildings, the telegraph and the telephone offices, and the State bank were occupied, with very little resistance.

That night Lenin could spring to the platform of the Soviet Congress and announce that the Soviet was in power. He could have announced that, at last, the party which he had built in his mind in 1895 was in power. That night the first "laws" of the new government

were proclaimed—the nationalization of the land, the control of production by labor. Lenin promised an immediate peace. These "laws" were merely proclamations of fact; they said nothing of the way in which they would be worked out. Their legal value, at the moment, was small; their propaganda value was infinite. It was with them that Lenin, having captured a city, won the provinces. They coincided with the wishes of the masses and the masses would see that they were carried out. Asked how he intended to execute the "laws," Lenin said, blandly, "We must give full freedom to the creative spirit of the masses." It was a bold bid for supporters. As anticlimax, incidentally, and probably as another bid for popular support, simple divorce for long-suffering couples was legalized.

The party had seized power with scarcely any bloodshed. That would come when the party tried to stay in power. On this November night there was no certainty that a few days would not find the Bolshevik leaders once more in flight to the huts of Finnish fishermen.

IX

In the following January Lenin said triumphantly, "We have been in power two months and fifteen days, five days longer than the Paris Commune." He said it in a tone that implied that the entire revolution had been arranged to enable the Bolsheviki to do that.

Whether Lenin expected to remain in power for a short time only is unknown; some of his remarks imply it. But he was surprised by the response to the Bolshevik coup throughout the country. The basic "laws" were being put into effect in summary fashion.

Villages everywhere were wiring: "We have formed a Soviet. Please tell us what to do with it." Others reported: "We have taken the land"; "We have seized and burned the factory."

The other parties were waiting around. The Mensheviki felt that it was a good thing that the Bolsheviki had seized power. When they were thrown out, a few weeks later, they would be forever discredited. The Constituent Assembly was to meet in January. Since the majority of the delegates were to come from outside the industrial regions, the Bolsheviki would have a minority in it. Then, various politicians reasoned, the Bolsheviki could be voted out of power. There is nothing as naive as a Russian politician who has lost one chance and awaits another. That Assembly was dismissed by weary night-watchmen after eighteen hours of unbroken oratory.

Lenin made no attempt to sit down and chart out a long-time course. He took things as they came. From the viewpoint of some people he was the great opportunist; from that of others, the great strategist. Everywhere in Russia the Soviets declared themselves the power. No one knew what that meant. But every one, except the bourgeoisie, knew that Soviet power meant permission to seize food supplies, clothing supplies, and the land. The bourgeoisie began to realize that this was a revolution with more than political significance when notices appeared in Petrograd newspapers three weeks after November 7: "Come to the safe deposit boxes to have them opened and their contents examined. Those not appearing will have their boxes opened in their absence."

This is not the place to write a history of the Russian revolution, although Lenin preferred to have his life written therein. But, in the course of the next four years, there were three times when his own personal decision saved the revolution and the party in power.

Immediately after November 7, reports came to the capital that the peasants, after seizing the estates, were dividing them up among themselves and setting themselves up as individual landholders. Many of the party leaders protested to Lenin. This was only changing the individuals holding land. It was not changing the system. Did not Marx say that the communal methods of holding land was best in a Socialist state? They demanded that pressure be put on the villages to hold the seized land collectively and to work it collectively. Lenin refused. He knew, perhaps, so much Marx that he knew when to deviate; and he knew the Russian peasant. "It must be demonstrated to the peasant that collectivization is best," he said calmly. A party fight arose, and died. Had Lenin agreed to put pressure on the villages, the entire peasantry would have been on the side of the White armies in the civil war that was to be.

The second decision came in February, 1918, with the problem of peace with Germany. To keep his promise, Lenin had commenced negotiations in December, hoping to drag them out, while revolutionary propaganda was spread in Germany. Again there were discordant views among the party leaders. There were those, like Trotsky, who favored a policy of "neither peace nor war," but a sort of guerrilla reprisal if the Germans should launch an offensive against Russia. There were others who believed the war should be carried on, as a revolutionary war, in the hope of setting Germany aflame. For Lenin there was but one solution—immediate peace, on any terms including the surrender of the Baltic provinces to Germany, to give Russia a breathing space.

"The peasants will not fight a guerrilla warfare," Lenin insisted. "They have voted against one."

"How?" some one asked. "No vote has been taken."

"They have voted with their legs, by running away."

The decision to sign the Brest-Litovsk treaty was close. Four of the leaders, including Trotsky, abstained from voting. Had they voted, Lenin would have been defeated and would have resigned. "The signature of a treaty in defeat is a means of gathering strength," he said. Seven months later the obnoxious treaty was wiped out, in the general defeat of Germany. Whether Lenin foresaw this is uncertain. In June, 1917, however, he had written, apropos of the entry of America into the war, "Germany's position is quite hopeless."

He faced one other great decision, in March, 1921. The scheme, the adoption of which necessity had forced, of using the peasant to keep the city worker, had not succeeded. The plan had included the idea that the peasantry would hand over their surplus products to the state in exchange for articles which they needed which were to be made in government factories. It was a one-way exchange. There were no such articles.

A peasant revolt flared up in Tambov district, one of the most fertile in Russia. A naval mutiny broke out at Kronstadt, the great naval base. Immediately Lenin, defender of Marx, expositor of the Communal society, decreed the New Economic Policy, per-

mitting private trade. Party leaders were shocked, not because they were better Marxians, but because they were theory-bound. Lenin knew instinctively when he was faced by a condition, not a theory; and he would not hesitate to throw Marx overboard to secure the main objective, to hold the party in power. He drove the new policy through by force. By doing so he kept the oncoming famine out of the cities, and he once again saved the party.

X

The Lenin of 1918 and 1921 was essentially the Lenin of 1903. He did not change his habits with his entrance to power. He lived in two small rooms in the Kremlin, unaffected by his change in circumstance. He protested, in the days of famine, when his stenographer secured a bit of meat and put it on his desk. Contributions of food and grain brought him by delegations he gave to children's homes and hospitals. He worked unsparingly and tried to secure the same kind of work from others.

There was the problem of organization. He had sketched only the vaguest details of what a proletarian state would be like. "Let us first get into power," he said. He proposed no plan to which all events had to fit. Instead, he took the events as they came and fitted the plan accordingly, never once losing sight of the principles of a state-owned economy, a government controlled by a small group at the top, a nationally owned agriculture.

Events often forced him more to the "left" than he had foreseen. He was at first willing to admit other parties to the government; the Soviet constitution as first drawn included the left wing of the Social Revolutionaries. A few days before it was to be promulgated they revolted and for a very short moment seemed to be about to take power. That ended Democracy.

Events forced the closing of the Constituent Assembly, the suppression of the newspapers, even the Terror. None of these things was ordered in the first months; they came as a necessity, if the party was to stay in power. It was in March, 1918, incidentally, that Lenin "threw away the dirty shirt," that he discarded the name "Social Democrat," and the party became the "All-Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik)."

The first six months of Soviet rule were marked by increasing disorder everywhere; worse, there was increasing decentralization. Employers were sabotaging their factories. Peasants were seizing farm equipment and burning it, just because it had belonged to their landlords. Individual villages, with a Soviet established, promptly declared themselves sovereign and independent nations and chased every representative from the central government down the road.

The answer to this need for centralization was the Terror, just as it was the answer to the outbreak of counter-revolutionary activity which was climaxed by the attempted assassination of Lenin in August, 1918. "Let them know that for each one of our heads we shall answer with hundreds of theirs," the Bolshevik newspaper screamed on the following morning.

To picture Lenin as a man thirsting for revenge and planning the Terror as soon as he came to power, is wrong. To picture him as eventually regretting the bloodshed and dying insane, while visions of bloody rivers stormed through his brain, is fantastic. The Terror was a weapon; events made it necessary. He had asked, "Is it possible to act humanely in a struggle of such unprecedented ferocity?" He summed it up best, perhaps, when he said to Gorki, "These children will have happier lives than we had. They will not experience much that we lived through. There will not be so much cruelty in their lives. Yet, I don't envy them. Our generation achieved something of amazing significance for history. The cruelty which the conditions of our life made necessary will be understood and vindicated."

Whether he knew the extent to which the Terror was being carried on is unimportant; any number of human beings could perish if thereby a better system of life for those who remained could be maintained.

He suffered from no sentiment or fantasies; he kept close to reality. He said to one Soviet congress, "The food supply has reached a position that is almost catastrophic." He joked about agricultural experts "who don't even know how to plant potatoes." The mobs that poured into the party in the first months after the Revolution were too often composed of adventurers. He did not deceive himself about their ambitions. "Among a hundred so-called Bolsheviki there is one genuine Bolshevik with thirty-nine criminals and sixty fools," he said. He turned to one eager group of economists with the question not always asked in Soviet Russia today, "Are these figures of yours facts or fantasies?" Of the Red Army he said, "The Red Army shares in common only a readiness to retreat before the enemy."

Yet, somehow, he held the nation together, the only individual who could do it, and he beat down a civil war; allied with Russia's greatest defenses, the climate and the winter, he defeated armies of England, France, United States, and Japan. He wrote most of the decrees and laws. He wrote the editorials for the leading newspapers. Peasant delegations came to him and he said to them, "Do what you want—you are the power." Often he eluded his secretaries and walked out into the waiting room to talk with any one who might happen to be there. Old men came with one request: "Give me proof that I have really talked to Lenin. Back in my village they won't believe me." Letters poured in: "Good Lenin, defender of the poor, some one stole a hundred rubles from me—" Most of them were answered.

The Lenin Institute has published, in good Soviet style, a detailed statistical account of Lenin's activity during one month, February, 1921. It reads appallingly. In conferences during that month he drew up plans on the bread movement, the fuel crisis, the unified economic plan, the preparations for the convention of electrical technicians, the unification of the offices of the various economic commissars, industrial concessions, raw materials, the educational reforms. He presided at forty meetings of commissars and assistants, some of

them ten hours long. He gave sixty-eight interviews, wrote two articles, made four public addresses, read the daily papers, and asked for a selection of the latest books!

In the midst of the turmoil of 1919, he found time to draft the formation of the world Communist organization, Comintern. Accurate as he was in gauging the feelings of the Russian masses, he was over-optimistic in prophesying the reactions of the masses abroad. A revolutionary war seemed possible of success in 1919 and 1920, but, had Lenin lived, he would have shelved the idea faster than did his successors.

Through these years he avoided the gaudy faults that destroy dictators. He remained the little man, in a mussed suit of clothes, wearing a cap. After the attempted assassination he was kept in closely guarded seclusion; it irked him and at times he liked to elude his guards. He protested against changing the name of Petrograd. He laughed at the idea of holding Smolny Institute, from where the Revolution had been directed, with any reverence. "Smolny was sacred only because we occupied it. When we are in the Kremlin, the Kremlin will be quite as sacred." He laughed at all those things which make human beings human, even in himself. The only thing he valued was action based on rational thinking, taken to its end, no matter how ruthless the action which it might require. Action based on emotion was inactivity.

XI

In the winter of 1923 a doctor, famous for his work on paresis, was lecturing to his class in Moscow University. Several uniformed guards from the Secret Police entered the classroom and told him to close his lecture immediately and to come with them.

He turned white. "May I first phone my family?"

"We aren't going to harm you," they laughed. "But you must come with us." He was taken to an airfield and flown to an estate near Moscow.

On a simple narrow bed lay a man, paralyzed except for his hand muscles and unable to speak. Downstairs some of the highest officials were waiting. The doctor made his examination and said bluntly that there was little hope. Every few days thereafter he was brought by plane to the estate, sworn to secrecy never to reveal where he was going or who his patient was.

In the spring of 1922 it had been known that Lenin was sick. After a short time he returned to work and even appeared at the Congress of Soviets in November, 1922. That was his last public appearance.

Lenin lingered on, paralyzed, for more than a year. The mental agony was greater than the physical. He tried to force a pencil across the page and it seemed that there was something torturing him within that would only be relieved by being expressed. He could not communicate with the world in which he still lived. His wife by his side knew the festering ambitions that were waiting to break out after his death; but the couple were for the first time helpless and hopeless together. There was no successor whom they trusted completely, except the Party.

On a day in the coldest January that the vicinity of Moscow had known for many years, his wife read to him a story of Jack London's about the struggle of a lone man against the world of nature in the north. She began another one, but she saw that he was tired and she stopped.

At dusk on the following day a man passing the house, conscious only of the cold, the darkness, and the "fusss" of his felt boots on the snow, suddenly heard a shriek. Lenin had died.

Wreaths of flowers, wreaths of steel hammered out in Soviet factories, wreaths of grain poured into Moscow. His body was carefully preserved and, after a few months, against the wishes and the protest of his widow, it was put on exhibition in its underground mausoleum. It lies there today. It is Lenin and not plaster or wax. Four years ago a group of correspondents were taken into the mausoleum by day. The glass case over the body was removed and they were shown that it is flesh.

His widow might protest but her wishes were of no importance compared to the value which Lenin, now dead, had for the party in power. Alive, he loathed emotionalism; dead, he was to inspire it. Russia, which had never had a popular national hero in all its history, had one at last. And the nation which he created to exalt Class comes nightly to reverence the individual.

After death he is a paradox, as he was alive. He was an intellectual who despised intellectuals; a scholar who was even greater as a man of action; a man of faith with complete cynicism about the motives, the ambitions, and the abilities of men; a man with terrific self-confidence who negated everything including himself. His whole philosophy was the negation of the individual. On the belief of the unimportance of the individual he built a state. His career, the best example of the chance-given rôle of the individual in history, is the negation of his own philosophy. The paradox is almost complete.

As men wonder today about Soviet Russia, so they wonder what Lenin would have become if certain things within him and around him had not led him from his little Volga town into revolution. A schoolmaster, probably, who would slowly have worked his way through the red tape of civil service, damned by the ability to see finer things and the inability to break through a social system to reach them, who would have died and been buried beneath a wooden cross that would crumble in five years.

Yet it was with schoolmaster psychology that he directed Russia. He had learned a lesson and it must be taught to others, no matter what punishment they might have to undergo. All objections were childish, arising from mere stubbornness. The reward of the lesson learned, a classless society, would justify the hardships in learning it; except, as a last paradox, he could see no reason for needing justification.

And the lessons of this head-master on a world scale still go on, and the Soviet Union, good or bad, is both his valedictory and his epitaph.

Next month: The biography of Admiral Mahan, author of "The Influence of Sea Power upon History," by LOUIS M. HACKER.