

How the Scale Was Turned

An Incident of the Russian Revolution

By F. A. MITCHEL

I.

Stephan Mikhailof left the duma, where he had been working hard for days to bring about a change in the government which had endured without break for many centuries. Calling a drosky, he entered it, telling the coachman to drive him to his home, and throwing himself back on the cushion behind him, closed his eyes and remained in a position denoting exhaustion till the vehicle drew up before his house on a broad avenue lining the Neva. Descending from the drosky, he paid the driver his fare and entered his home.

He was met in the hall by his daughter Marya, a girl not long turned seventeen. Marya was a typical Russian. Her eyes were a pale blue, her complexion soft white with a faint tinge of rose, her hair so light that had it not been for her youthful face it might have almost been mistaken for the whiteness of age.

"Oh, father," she said, "I am so glad that you have come. Sergius Ivanovitch is in Petrograd, his regiment having arrived last night. He has been to see me and begs me to intercede with you to gain your consent to our betrothal."

"Why do you trouble me about this matter," replied the father angrily, "at such a time? Do you not know that we are on the eve of a consummation of efforts that have been working for half a century to throw off the despotism which sucks the lifeblood of our people? Besides, it is impossible that you, the descendant of a long line of nobles, should unite with a commoner."

"But, papa, are you not working for the cause of the people?"

"Yes, but that is no reason why I should take one of the people into my family."

"Sergius is an officer, the youngest captain in his regiment."

"He was a common soldier in the ranks."

"And was promoted on account of his having more influence over his comrades than all the other officers of the regiment together."

"Enough, I have neither time nor inclination to argue with you on this point while engaged in the great work of pulling down the tottering bureaucracy. You know that the czar, aware of our efforts to free Russia, dissolved the representative assembly which we wrung from him in the last revolution. You know that we refused to be dissolved. This from the government's point of view is revolution, treason. Had the czar the power his predecessors had every member of the duma would either be sent to Siberia or executed. Even as it is, remember that your father is in jeopardy. If we succeed we will free our country; if we fail we will be proscribed. Our chains will be so riveted that the sledge of a Titan cannot break them."

"But surely you will win."

"Not if the czar continues to pour troops into the capital. All autocratic governments are supported by bayonets. The officers are usually chosen from the aristocratic classes, and the officers control the men. When the war began the bureaucracy controlled the appointment of officers and took care to appoint those upon whom they could rely to support the throne. Many of these officers have gone down in the struggle with the central powers, and their places have been filled by men from the people.

"It is to be supposed that the czar has concentrated such regiments in Petrograd as are offered by a superfluity of men upon whom he can rely. We are secretly arranging for a coup d'etat. Tomorrow morning the people will turn out in the streets and demand food. Their clamor will increase till the troops are called upon to quell the disturbance. That will be the critical moment. The revolution will commence, and its success depends upon whether the troops can be relied upon to shoot down the revolutionists. Now, my child, I must get some rest. I have not slept for two nights. Do not mention again the name of Captain Ivanovitch. I will never consent to a union between you and any man who is not your equal in social rank."

The father was about to turn away when the daughter stopped him.

"But, papa," she said anxiously, "is not this a too dangerous move in which you are engaged? What course will your generals at the front take? Will they not protect the czarina and her children with their lives?"

"The czarina!" cried Mikhailof angrily. "It is this German woman who has brought about this grave crisis. She has been furnishing our enemies with information of our movements and our necessities. Through her influence trains laden with our stores have been sent from west to east instead of from east to west. In league with the detestable Rasputin she has baffled the efforts of those very generals at the front who you are thinking may protect her."

"It is they who have called upon us here to bring about this revolution. They have arranged that the czar shall be arrested and forced to abdicate for himself and for his son. The members of the imperial family are to be

held prisoners in the palace. The best men in Russia are watching and waiting to form a new government."

While Mikhailof had been talking Marya had been listening intently, at the same time thinking of her lover, who on the morrow would take part in this great movement, anxious both for him and her father.

Stephan Mikhailof staggered upstairs to his room and without removing his clothes threw himself on the bed and was asleep the moment he touched it.

A few minutes later there was a summons at the street door, and Captain Ivanovitch entered the house. Marya joined him immediately.

"Have you seen your father?" the captain asked anxiously.

"Yes," replied Marya in a voice that trembled. "He has refused his consent."

Marya ran over what her father had told her as to that which was expected to occur the next day. When she had finished she asked her lover whether, when the revolution occurred, the troops would fire on the people.

"That is a matter of uncertainty. The men are in sympathy with the crowds they will be ordered to shoot down. Some of the officers are revolutionists, and some are loyal to the czar. This is the case in my regiment, and I believe it is true of the others unless it may be some of the more aristocratic commanders, where the officers all support the bureaucracy. Success or failure depends upon whether the people or the bureaucracy can win over the troops to their side."

II.

The next morning there was a feeling in Petrograd that momentous events were to be enacted. For a long while speculators had tied up food or the railroads had been overburdened transporting munitions of war, or the bureaucracy, which must receive its sop from the sale of everything the people needed, had been working its game. At any rate, while Russia was surfeited in provisions there was a dearth of staples in Petrograd. Crowds began to collect in the streets, and such places as were intended for the sale of food were surrounded. It seemed that every one living in the capital was interested in what was going on. Then regiments of soldiers were marched through the thoroughfares to positions to which they had been assigned. As they passed the crowds they were cheered, and they answered the salutes good naturedly. But their commanders remained rigid.

The troops of the 4th regiment, of which Sergius Ivanovitch was a captain, were ordered to attack a number of laborers who had revolted. Their colonel, having drawn them up in line, gave the order to aim and was about to follow it with the word "Fire!" when Captain Ivanovitch stepped out before the soldiers and said:

"Soldiers, if you fire on these men, who are simply demanding bread that is denied them by the bureaucracy, you shall first kill me."

There were sounds of the dropping of the butts of rifles along the line, first a few, then an increase, followed by hundreds together. Then the workmen advanced and shook hands with the soldiers, and the crisis had passed.

The events of that memorable day followed in rapid succession, and the next day it was announced that the long line of Russian rulers, including so many despots—Ivan the Terrible, Catherine, whose immoral character had so stained the imperial ermine—had for the first time been broken if not ended.

Stephan Mikhailof, who went to sleep at his home the night before the revolution, did not awaken till the next afternoon. He was aroused by shouts and cheers without. Going to a window, he saw a large concourse of people standing in the street looking up at his house. Raising the sash, he bent forward and, looking down, saw that the center of the crowd's attraction was an officer in uniform standing on the landing of the steps leading up to the front door. While the crowd waved hats and handkerchiefs the officer was bowing his acknowledgments.

Mikhailof, having been clothed, was sufficiently presentable to go downstairs to learn what all this meant. He was met by his daughter.

"Who is the officer without?" he asked.

"Sergius Ivanovitch."

"And why is the crowd cheering him?"

"Because, papa, while you have been asleep there has been a revolution. The turning point came when Sergius' regiment was ordered to fire on some workmen. It was at an aim, ready to mow down the rebels, when Sergius stood between the regiment and the workmen and told the soldiers that if they fired on men who were simply demanding bread denied them by the bureaucracy they must first kill him. That turned the scale. The workmen and the soldiers fraternized, and from that moment regiment after regiment took the part of the people."

Marya's last words were drowned by a prolonged cheer without. Captain Ivanovitch turned and entered the house. The crowd dispersed.

Ivanovitch, seeing Mikhailof, paused.

"He came to see me, papa," said Marya, "and the crowd followed him here."

"It appears," said Mikhailof to the captain, "that while I have been sleeping the revolution has taken place and you have performed no small part of it."

"He stepped in at the crisis," said Marya, "and brought the soldiers to espouse the cause of the people."

"You mean I turned my regiment to the cause of the people," said Sergius modestly.

Mikhailof advanced to Ivanovitch and, putting both arms about him, kissed him, according to the Russian custom, first on one cheek, then on the other.

REPUBLICS IN RUSSIA.

They Existed in Cities and Tribes There in Ancient Times.

The republican idea is neither new nor modern in Russia, and the elective monarchy was one of its earliest governmental institutions.

Novgorod, prior to A. D. 1100 and for many years thereafter, maintained a sort of republic. The people were warlike and compelled neighboring cities to pay tribute and invited princes to act as the head of their government and military forces. When any prince displeased the majority of the people he was invited to abdicate.

"She could impose conditions on him whom she chose to reign over her," says the historian Rambaud, speaking of the semirepublic of Novgorod. "If discontented with his management she expelled the prince and his band. According to the accustomed formula, 'she made a reverence and showed him the way' to leave Novgorod. Sometimes to hinder his evil designs she kept him prisoner, and it was left to his successor to set him at liberty. Often a revolution was accompanied by a general pillage of the partisans of the fallen prince.

"The power of a prince of Novgorod rested not only on his droujina, which always followed his fortunes, and on his family relations with this or that powerful principality, but also on a party formed for him in the heart of the republic. It was when the opposing party grew too strong that he was de-throned and popular vengeance exercised on his adherents. Novgorod being above all a great commercial city, her divisions were frequently caused by diverging economic interests."

It was Novgorod which brought the Varangians, Rurik, Oleg and Igor to Russia and thus gave power to the men who were to found autocracy and crush the crude republicanism of the cities and tribes. From oligarchy grew autocracy. Wars weakened the little republics. Gradually they were consolidated, and the power of the people extinguished.—Exchange.

Spared the Culprit.

Alfonso, king of Aragon, attended by several of his courtiers, called on a jeweler to inspect some of his wares. No sooner had he left the shop than the proprietor came running after him and complained that he had been robbed of a diamond of great value. The king returned to the shop and ordered a large vessel filled with bran to be brought and placed on the counter. He then commanded each of his courtiers to insert his hand closed and then withdraw it open. He was the first to begin, and after all had had their turn he asked the jeweler to empty the vessel on the counter. By this means the diamond was recovered and nobody was disgraced.

Peanuts as Food.

The peanut is a mine of riches, containing more protein, or lean meat value, than any other nut known and an immense store of fat, so that as a food it is a rich treasure, but it should be recognized and used as a solid food and not as a between meal tidbit, for it is anything but a delicate or light food. This, however, may be said of all nuts, and one should avoid overloading the system with them, for by this is indigestion formed and undeserved reproach to nuts as foods.

Fur Bearing.

"Alaska is noted for its fur bearing animals, such as seals and Eskimos."

This was the answer given at an examination held in Columbus for applicants for teachers' licenses. The examination was conducted by the county school superintendent, and he vouches for the truth of the story. The question was to discuss Alaska and to tell some of the things for which the territory is noted. Fur dealers are somewhat surprised at the answer.—Exchange.

Gargle for a Sore Throat.

The discomfort and pain of a sore throat are greatly relieved by using a gargle. One of the most efficacious remedies for the purpose is boric acid. It disinfects the throat as well as mitigates the distress. The gargle should be a solution prepared from the powdered boric acid—using four heaping teaspoonfuls to a pint of boiling water. When the mixture has cooled it is ready for use. Use the gargle every three or four hours.

Wholesale Coupling.

There is a clergyman in an Ohio city who is very proud of his record as a marrying parson.

"Why, sir," said he to a Cincinnati man who was visiting him, "I marry about fifty couples a week, right here in this parsonage."

"Parsonage!" returned the Cincinnati man, "I should call it the 'Union Depot.'"—New York Times.

The Falls City Dramatic Club PRESENTS The Thrilling Melodrama "THE NIGHT RIDERS"

CAST

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|-----------------------|------------------|
| Jack Willis..... | Harry Taylor |
| Edgar Harbeck..... | George March |
| George Flim Flam..... | Neal Christy |
| Ikey Bloomingall..... | Dr. G. E. Prime |
| Judge Harbeck..... | Joe Hudson |
| Col. Shelby..... | Loyd Miller |
| Silas Stickney..... | Hallott McMurphy |
| Clem..... | Harold Wagner |
| Sparks..... | Emerson Murphy |
| Mosby..... | Vernon Murphy |
| Mabel Shelby..... | Louise Taylor |
| Louise Clarville..... | Blanch March |
| Susie Sparks..... | Velma Prime |
| Becky Shelby..... | Clara Sampson |
| Cissie..... | Eva Chappel |

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Col Shelby's Home. Halbeck demands that Mabel marry him. Flim Flam starts a show. Louise arrives. The Night Riders visit Shelby "Give him the lash and torch."

ACT II.—In the mountains. The duel. Mabel captured. Edgar attempts to poison Louise. The veiled bride. The exchange. The fight. The Night Riders escape.

ACT III.—The moonshiners' hut. Flim Flam in disguise. Jack captive of the Night Riders. "Hang them both." Mabel buys her father's life. The U. S. officers arrive. The surrender.

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An Ibsen Theory.

In one of the published letters of Ibsen he says that while he was writing one of his plays he had on his desk an empty ale glass with a scorpion in it. Now and then the reptile would grow sick, and the author would throw a piece of soft fruit to it, whereupon the scorpion would fall upon the food furiously, empty its poison into it and then get well again. "Is it not a good deal like this with us poets?" Ibsen continues. "Nature's laws apply in the domain of the spirit also."

How We Breathe.

Men and women do not breathe alike. In a woman the breathing is from the thorax or chest, while in a man it is mainly from the diaphragm, which is lower down. This peculiar difference is so marked that it is possible to recognize by it a woman disguised as a man, although the disguise may be faultless in other respects. Most physiologists say this difference is not due to sex, but owing to artificial conditions, such as the wearing of corsets.

An Extremist.

They were discussing love and the extraordinary things which that powerful emotion compels otherwise sensible people to do. Mr. Simpkins was mentioned as an instance. "An extreme case, his is," said Robbins. "He is so much in love that he has become a postman so he can get the girl's letters an hour or two earlier."—Chicago Herald.

The Rev. Irl R. Hicks 1917 Almanac

The Rev. Irl R. Hicks Almanac for 1917 comes out bright and better than ever. His splendid portrait in four color work, taken from life in May, 1916, proves that this old friend of the millions is very far from being "a dead man." Every home, office and business in America owe it to this faithful, old friend of the people to send for his Almanac and Magazine for 1917. This Almanac is 35c by mail. His monthly Magazine with Almanac, one dollar a

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