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Title Tale of Ten Cities

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A TALE OF TEN CITIES

by

GEORGE SAVA

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CONTENTS

PROLOGUE *page* 7

1. PETROGRAD-THE DISEASE THAT KILLED AN EMPIRE 11
2. ANKARA—MISS SMITH OF ENGLAND 44
3. ROME—THE AXIS 70
4. SOFIA—BETWEEN HEAVEN AND HELL 100
5. PARIS—THE REPERCUSSION OF. A CRISIS 131
6. BERLIN—GENESIS 167
7. BUCHAREST—ESTHER 195
8. GENEVA—THE MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION. 225
9. MADRID—Y NO HAY REMEDIO 249
10. LONDON—CAVALCADE TO CALVARY 282

PROLOGUE

Each city and each people is unique. I have been to many countries and stayed long in them, and when I left I felt I was parting from a dear friend. This Tale of Ten Cities is dedicated to all the beautiful, wonderful, strange things that I saw.

The years that have come upon us make the last two decades before this war seem so distant. But time hallows its memories, though tastes and language change. Many governments have come and gone; many new ideals and horrors have held sway, and the mind of the European man has been sadly mutilated, but the people themselves have changed little. Their capitals may have been handed over to the invader; they may have found their liberty at last. It makes no difference. Two decades are nothing—two drops in the ocean of time. The particular genius of any race cannot be obliterated in so short a period. Conqueror and conquered merge, though all the familiar signs pass. Humanity does not give up.

Yesterday it was a holiday in France, business in Spain, or love in Italy. I travelled the seething Continent of Europe in search of fame and fortune, and I have already told my personal tale. Sometimes I found fame and not fortune, or fortune and not fame, but rarely both at once. But I am not the hero of this book—if indeed there are any heroes in it. If there is unrest in my narrative, I can only plead that I reflect my times. Something is going to happen one of these days, I said, and when it happens, the old world is going to seem far away. Live and suffer and enjoy life and carry away with you a full baggage of stupidities, quarrels, useless sacrifices, rivalries, the hates and loves of yesterday. Of such stuff is your century made.

But when you recall the past, remember the brave days and the good; the remarkable men who survived in the European jungle and who enriched life. Remember also the villains and buffoons who walked life's stage and mimicked greatness and brought ruin and destruction on their lands. Remember the fools and the traitors of humanity. Their weft is closely knit with all the beauty and the exquisiteness of life. Give them a suitable memorial in your pages. It shall be so.

And in remembering, do not forget the beautiful cities and the lovely women, and with them, the ugly alleys and sea-quays, and the crippled and the maimed you saw. Forget not the starving and the poor and the outcasts who went hopeless before your eyes.

See how the old world lived and worshipped, throwing away an idol to-day, and taking it back to-morrow. That is what astonished you, if you remember—this changing of the gods. You saw old ideals come back refurbished and made bright with paint, but old and bitter underneath. Kings came and went with their baggage and their mistresses in expensive cars. Russia threw off an old age of which you were a small part, and went to the new, whilst you wondered where it would all lead to. You were young and unsure then, and the burden of exile was heavy as you went out into an overpopulated world to make yourself a name.

There were times when the heart was bursting with sorrow. It held the sorrows of the world. You were young then, and they said that when you grew older you would not feel things so deeply. They said that, but when France fell you remembered those words, and your sorrow came back anew. And yet what Was France to you? Was it the dust in the Louvre that moved you, and the heritage of intellectualism? No. It was a glimpse of the Place de la Concorde at dawn (you were coming back from a late party), and the afternoon in the Bois. Ah, you say, life is composed of sentimentalities. And it is. There is more nostalgia for me in a cup of French coffee or an aperitif than in all the ruins of Babylon. Grief comes with terrifying zeal.

Mention a capital. Sofia? Provincial enough, pretentious, poor, but how sweetly did the bells ring on the evening before the cathedral was blown up by anarchists, together with some **three hundred** persons. Name another. Rome? I was standing out **there**

in the sunshine when the two dictators in the Palazzo Venezia were signing away the liberties of Europe. I was there when an old English gentleman was congratulating himself for being fooled by the bullfrog of the Pontine marshes. I saw the veils torn off the faces of frightened Turkish girls when Kemal came to Istanbul. I remember Teheran, capital of Persia, and the smell of pistachios, dung, and rose-leaves, and Cossacks in ragged uniforms singing 'Stenka Rasin'.

Berlin? Yes, I remember Berlin and the sight of truncheons falling on people's heads when decrepit von Hindenburg sold the Reich to von Papen, and von Papen sold it to—Hitler. I saw a nation bartered into slavery, and Heine's books burnt in the streets. And I heard laughter and rejoicing and Hitler called 'civilization's friend' by old Christian gentlemen in Vienna after Dolfuss fell. I remember when that little man, who posed as a martyr for so long, blew up the Karl Marx Haus in Vienna.

Days, nights, rainy weather and fair, I have seen the capital cities of Europe,[1] and I will tell no tale of them, I will write no memoir. I have no preconceived notions, and my pen does not flow with vitriol, even if I wished it. I shall just talk to myself. I shall meet my old friends again and my enemies. I shall remember the portraits of statesmen in newspapers and tabloid magazines—how this one loved dogs and another children. My loves I may scatter delicately over the pages, of the bold I shall speak boldly, and of the cruel cruelly. I shall say my dreams aloud.

Chapter I—Petrograd

THE DISEASE THAT KILLED AN EMPIRE

The journey from Baku to Petrograd in the best of times took from three to four days, but in October 1916 we were lucky to do it in a week. We had left the 'city of winds' (as the Mongol founders of Baku called it) on the Monday, and did not reach the capital until the following Sunday. And the story of that train journey is the story of Russia itself, a story—or, as some prefer to call it, a drama—in which I had a very small role. If I am tempted to go into the 'limes' and say a little about myself, it is only because I have to explain the circumstances and the reasons for my journey.

Baku, the city of oil, Mecca of Armenian millionaires, was my native city. I had grown up there, and had spent most of my holidays with my parents in the large house in the Prospect, but I did not know Baku well. It is one thing to be born in a city and another to know it well. My schooling was far from Baku. I had gone to my uncle in Turkistan and suffered instruction " at the hands of tutors and governors, and then later on went to the Naval Academy up at Kronstadt, and my visits to my parents had become more and more fleeting as time went on. But this visit is important and vivid in my memory, because it was the last. Little did I know that a few months later 'Baku, my parents, and Russia were all going to separate. At fifteen it is difficult to believe that the old world is dying **before your** eyes.

Of course, there had been talk at **home of the military defeats** sustained by our armies in Galicia; **news of revolts and such-like,**

and occasionally I would find my mother weeping in the drawing-room, holding an official-looking document which I had grown to know and dread by now—'informing you that Lieutenant...' And then obituary notices would follow in the local *Novosti.*

In the beginning of the war, relatives and friends would send round sympathetic little notes saying that they would pray for the soul of the deceased, but as time went on, and so many died, the notes became less frequent. Death had become the order of things and not the exception.

I was twelve when the war started, and at twelve wars are nothing more than glorified football matches—or, at least, that is how we felt in our generation. And it needed many personal casualties—uncles, cousins, and brothers who did not return—to show us that few were decoratect with St. George Crosses (the Russian V.C.), and many more came back broken and bitter men.

The kitchen was a hub of revolution, and I listened long to the discourses of the cook who had been an old soldier in the Russo-Japanese War. He spoke tenderly of the day when the 'workers would come into power', and the marvellous change that would come over Russia then. The police used to call periodically and question our cook, and later on he was taken to prison, but all this is only a small background to the drama that was taking place elsewhere.

And now to return to the train voyage.

I was going back to the Naval Academy at Kronstadt, and was wearing the uniform of a cadet-officer. Next to me sat Captain Stefan Feodorovitch Lamosov, an old friend of my family. He too was journeying up to Petrograd on 'official business'. He had come from the front on leave when an urgent telegram sent him scurrying to Petrograd, and as an old family friend, he promised, I am sure, to see that I did not get into any kind of mischief.

Lamosov was a young man of about twenty-five, and had served gallantly for three years at the front. He was now a sort of liaison officer, a man without any precise duties, acting as an aide-de-camp to any important personage who ventured out to see 'what the boys were doing*. Consequently, he hated 'these

civilians' who came out in comfortable railway carriages in high boots and inspected reserve regiments, but did not venture too far towards the front. He was a soldier, and they were just bureaucrats to him, and not very efficient ones. It is important to remember this, because it will explain his attitude later on.

Three years' fighting and chaperoning (as he called his duties) had made him grow old and less gadabout. I had always looked upon him as a sort of hero and tried to emulate his equestrian tricks, going to the extent of copying him even in small habits, but when the war came and Lamosov left Baku and the ladies, I forgot all about him. It was only on the same day as my departure that my mother told me that I should be travelling up with the illustrious captain of the Cossacks.

'So, youngster,' he said to me, slapping me genially on the thigh, 'you're in this, too. I hear that Kerensky has threatened to call out the cadets if the riots don't stop—so you'll have your taste of blood before long.'

I made, no reply, but Lamosov's geniality offended me a little. I did not tell him that my secret hope was to go out as a 'snotty' on a battleship and not play the part, of a Kerensky policeman.

'I'm expecting to be called up for other duties,' I said, vaguely.

Lamosov did not reply. He looked round the carriage at the other occupants with a slightly supercilious air, and then turning his head to the damage window he gazed out. I returned to my newspaper.

'They say Sturmer will be able to rally the best elements yet and prevent the Tsar's abdication,' I said quietly, quoting from the paper.

Lamosov spoke at the window pane.

'And who are the "best elements"? It's too late to talk about those. Sturmer and Protopopoff have got themselves into this mess, and no amount of editorial comment is going to save them, George. You'd better quit reading the papers and get ready to do something useful.'

A man in the opposite corner shifted his feet and pulled his astrakhan collar more tightly round his throat. The weather was chilly, but I knew that his gesture did not come from cold, but

from the opinion Lamosov had just expressed. The man looked like some provincial governor, or perhaps a secretary to a cabinet minister, and he probably disapproved of Captain Lamosov's opinions of his chief.

The other occupants were an Archimandrite, an abbot, that is, and an elderly lady of neat appearance, a governess perhaps. But they did not seem to mind the captain's remark, I observed. The abbot's lips were moving as he read a small black book, and the elderly lady nibbled at a small piece of sugar. In those days sugar was a luxury, and I must confess that my eyes travelled very often to that small piece of sugar, although I realized how uncomfortable it is to nibble when someone is looking at you.

Lamosov's mood changed quickly, however.

'How beautiful is our Caucasian autumn!' he exclaimed. 'No wonder Pushkin and Lermontov came and lived here. Look there —we are coming into Pyatigorsk, and you can see Lermontov's tower, and below those orchards . . .'

He stopped short in his lyricism when he realized that everyone was listening to him. The man in the astrakhan collar looked up, but quickly put his nose back into his collar. The Archimandrite lifted up weary eyes, and the elderly lady stopped nibbling at the sugar, but no-one made any remark. Lamosov shrugged his shoulders.

'Look out of the window, Georgik; you may not see such beauty again for a long time.'

I did as I was bid, and as I looked out on Mashuk and Elbruz— the highest mountains of the Caucasian range—I became nostalgic and homesick, and to cover up my discomfiture, I again turned to the subject of the newspaper editorial.

'They blame the intelligentsia, you know, Captain,' I said loudly. 'What have they done?'

'No-one knows,'.said Lamosov bitterly. 'That's just it, instead of talking, they should have made the Tsar grant constitutional government long ago. They should have tried to get rid of the corruption in the Court. Oh, hell, they should have done a lot of things, but it would take a couple of histories of Russia to explain. Everybody is in this up to the neck, and so many good people have died goodness knows what for!'

I was a little surprised at Lamosov's outburst, and so was the man in the astrakhan collar. He again shifted his feet. He's a police official, I thought, and he keeps on moving in his seat to warn Lamosov that he is listening. It was fairly obvious that Lamosov was expressing forbidden opinions.

At Pyatigorsk some more travellers came into the carriage, and our numbers were swelled to six. The elderly lady moved nearer to the man with the astrakhan collar, and I put up the hamper on to the rack so as to make room for a thin, anaemic-looking man who scrambled into the carriage and tripped up over the abbot's cassock.

'The trouble with Sturmer is that he has syphilis,' Lamosov said out loud, quite suddenly, when the train again resumed its journey.

Frankly, I did not know very much about syphilis; not enough even to be startled by this sudden expression of opinion, but the elderly lady, the abbot, and the anaemic gentleman suddenly froze into the posture they had adopted a moment ago. The elderly lady's fingers were in her mouth; the abbot's eyes were fixed on heaven, and the wasted gentleman was doing his best to cough, but could not.

'Yes, that's his trouble,' said Lamosov, realizing the discomfiture he had caused. 'He stutters, he muddles, he never does anything on time. He is always "waiting for a favourable opportunity". Those I am told, are the signs of mental disintegration as a result of pernicious syphilis. That may scare the god-fearing, but it's the truth, and I don't care who knows it.'

I looked up cheerfully at the occupants of the carriage and waited for someone to take up the challenge. The elderly lady looked at the priest as if to say, 'You hit first, your reverence', but the abbot declined. He moved his eyes from heaven and buried them in his book. As for the thin gentleman, he found his cough at last, and threatened to disintegrate beneath the terrible eruption.

It was left to the lady, a brave one of her species, and a corrector of children of any age, to express the anger and shame of the captain's slander.

'Sir, be good enough to remember that you are in a public conveyance and not in the barrack square!'

The rebuke bounced off Lampsov, who, for some peculiar reason, resented the elderly lady's sugar-nibbling.

'And, madam,' he said, 'may I in turn inform you that the information was not passed to you, but to my young friend here, and is therefore of no concern to you.'

The restraint was admirable, but the lady's fighting instincts were out.

'You ought to be ashamed of saying things like that to a child,' she uttered sententiously.

'I am not a child,' I murmured.

'Children like him have been known to die on the battlefield,' Lamosov said, coming to the rescue of my dignity. 'He is an officer, and, in any case, it wouldn't do anyone any harm to know something of the facts of life. I said that Sturmer had syphilis and that is why he is unable to govern this country. That is one of the reasons. What is wrong in that?'

The elderly lady replied, 'Such things are not spoken of publicly. Your position, and I can see that you are a gentleman, should show you that. Are you by any chance promoted from the ranks?'

Lamosov, I am glad to say, was beginning to see the humour of the situation, but he could not resist a final stab.

'And you, madam, sitting there sucking a piece of sugar, would you call that the manners of the *haute noblesse?'* he fired.

The lady went the colour of an Easter egg. She flickered her hands over her bosom, still holding on to the piece of sugar, and said, 'Moi, je suis francaise. Vous etes un barbare.'

'But you have lived long enough in Russia', said Lamosov, who was thoroughly amused by this time, 'to realize, madam, that we say the most extraordinary things at the most unexpected moments. You have, as you know, the liberty to leave the carriage if anything I say displeases you.'

The lady remained defiantly rooted to her seat. The abbot, seeing that Lamosov was making fun of her, decided to intervene.

'My son,' he said, 'God has said, "Welcome the stranger to your midst." '

He did not say any more. He felt he had restored peace with apostolic calm, but Lamosov was riled.

'I welcome the lady, holy father, by all means I welcome her, but if she sits there sucking a lump of sugar, I am at liberty to tell my friend . . .'

Lamosov was just about to repeat his startling information about the Prime Minister, when the little man with the cough interrupted.

'Sir, as an official, as one of those civilians you undoubtedly despise . . .'

'I do despise them, sir—you are quite right,' Lamosov said tartly.

'Well, as one of those you despise, I must say, nevertheless, that such an opinion of the person of our beloved Prime Minister, Boris Vladimirovitch Sturmer, is an insult. I, sir, I . . . I know , . .'

'Oh, you know, do you? Then why dispute it?'

'It is a lie. It is a complete lie. . . .'

'Sir,' roared Lamosov, 'you suggest I am a liar? I am an officer, damn you! How dare you say I am a liar!'

'It is a lie, sir,' the official persisted.

'Not a lie, but an untruth,' the priest chirruped.

'Quel horreur!' exclaimed the French governess, who, up to now, had been speaking excellent Russian.

'Do you persist in calling me a liar?' asked Lamosov, raising himself to his full six feet, and threatening to bring down his two fists on the hapless official's brain-pan.

'It is a lie/ said the official sternly, undoubtedly preparing himself for a martyr's death.

Then the man in the astrakhan collar spoke up. We had forgotten all about him. He had been sitting watching the belligerents with amusement and some disgust, and it was only now that he spoke.

'It may not be a lie,' he said loudly, just as Lamosov was about to bring his fists down on the official's head.' It may not be a lie—but a case of mistaken diagnosis!'

The electricity in the railway carriage suddenly ran to earth. Lamosov stood still with his fists poised above the official's head. The elderly lady suppressed the scream which she was getting ready to utter as soon as Lamosov had brought his fists down.

The priest cut short the blessing which he was bestowing on all parties, and the little official looked gratefully at the interrupter.

'A case of mistaken diagnosis?' Lamosov asked. He was not sure whether this remark was not very similar to the abbot's euphemism, 'not a lie but an untruth'. But he realized the humour of the situation and returned to his seat, ready to spring at the man with the astrakan collar if he should suggest that ' mistaken diagnosis' was only another word for a lie.

'How do *you* know?' Lamosov asked pointedly.

'I should,' said the man with the astrakhan collar. 'I'm an Aesculapius.'

Everyone looked in astonishment at him. He might have said he was a Hottentot or a lapidary, for all they understood. No-one, of course, dared to be honest and ask him for an explanation.

'And what of that?' said Lamosov cautiously.

The man in the astrakhan collar realized their ignorance and gazed at me. I saw my cue. I was the youngest present, and there was no shame for me not to know what an Aesculapius was or is, so I asked the question. Lamosov looked irritably at me, but did not answer.

'Ask him,' he said, 'he said it, and perhaps he's got his own interpretation of the word.'

This saved everybody's self-esteem, and the man in the astrakhan collar said, 'Gentlemen' (he had evidently forgotten the elderly lady), 'let me present myself. I am Lieutenant David Gruzaveli, a lieutenant in the Red Cross—and therefore a doctor—a direct descendant of the venerable god to Whom, if you remember your classics, the aged Socrates said he would sacrifice a cock. I am Aesculapius.'

'You are a *karapet* and no god,' said Lamosov. (A *karapet* is a Caucasian figure of fun, and generally means a 'dolt' or 'fool.')

' I am whatever it pleases you to call me,' said the doctor. I was secretly glad that he was not another official, otherwise Lamosov would have been much ruder to him. 'But at least I can suggest that the disease you attribute to the Prime Minister may be a case of mistaken diagnosis. I mean, I can suggest it, can't I?'

'You can suggest what you like. But I still say that Sturmer has syphilis. That's all I say,' Lamosov insisted, glaring alternatively

at the doctor and the official, who was about to embark on his martyrdom again by opening his mouth, when the doctor spoke up.

'Let me tell you something about mistaken diagnosis first,' he said, 'and then you will be able to see how difficult it is to call a man a liar, or how easy, perhaps. We are all liars. Some of us are liars by intention, and are therefore despicable people, and others of us are liars by accident. Many doctors, for instance, are such liars. So when I say that the diagnosis that Sturmer has syphilis is mistaken, I do so, not because I suggest the doctor who made it is a liar—but that he made a mistake.'

'In other words,' Lamdsov said, more quietly this time, as he was getting interested in the doctor's argument, 'you suggest that my information is incorrect. It's only another way of saying that I'm a liar, but I prefer it. So go on.'

'Thank you,' said the doctor politely. 'This is where we all agree that religion is a fine thing. The Father Abbot just now asked the gentleman who insulted you to say that you spoke an untruth, and not a lie. That is exactly it. Doctors often, do that. For all I know, I may be telling a lie now.'

'Quite probably,' Lamosov agreed, smiling. 'Blame the doctor every time for a wrong diagnosis—I do.'

'Nothing surprising in that,' said the doctor very politely. 'Most doctors blame themselves, anyway. But a very famous professor—Botkin by name—says, "I regard myself as quite good at diagnosis, but all the same, I would be satisfied if thirty per cent of my diagnoses were correct." Now, you see, gentlemen, even doctors make mistakes, and doctors, generally speaking, are more intelligent people than politicians.'

'And soldiers, you were going to say,' Lamosov said darkly. 'Adroit it, you were going to say "and soldiers", weren't you?'

'No,' said the doctor, 'I was not. But if you are trying to pick a quarrel with me, captain, you can do so once we get to Petrograd. For the time being, let me say that doctors are more intelligent than politicians, and go on to my story of mistaken diagnosis. I think I can amuse you for some time and prevent you from behaving like children. Is everyone agreed?'

I nodded my head vigorously, and prepared to listen. The elderly lady said,[4] Certainement', in French, and then decided to get off her high horse. 'Willingly, provided you keep off obscenities.'

'In medicine there is nothing obscene,' the doctor said. 'Unless you find something obscene about your own body, madam?'

The lady did not answer. She looked down at her body, but apparently could not decide, so she adjusted her skirts with decorum, and dipped her hand into her bag and fetched out another piece of sugar, which she offered to me. I looked up at Lamosov, and decided not to take it from his mortal foe. But I thanked her very much and promised myself that as soon as Captain Lamosov of the Cossacks left the carriage, I would ask for the lump.

'And you, sir?' asked the doctor with a smile at the abbot.

'I do not mind,' the priest said, 'provided you do not come to a controversy between Science and Religion. I would then withdraw.'

'I shall not, never fear,' said the doctor. 'I know too little of religion to argue about it. And you?'

The official sighed wearily. 'I am prepared for anything, sir,' he said, 'anything. I have been reading provincial reports of finances, and a little healthy medicine will do me good/

So we all prepared to listen in our different ways, and from different motives. Lamosov, however, just before the doctor began, had to be facetious. He said, 'Of course, we shall all be able to follow your allegories and fables. I suppose, now and again, you will refer us to the current scene and tell us that we are all members of one society, each functioning like the hand, the head, and all that Platonist rot.'

The doctor smiled good-humouredly.

'As a matter of fact, I don't know any Plato, and I'm not interested in your politics. But let, me tell you something about diagnosis and why it can so often be wrong. Medicine, as you know, has made great strides in recent years, even in Russia, and a lot of astonishing things have come to light in diagnosis. It happens that a symptom which was regarded comparatively recently as the main symptom for a diagnosis has now become a

secondary one. I'll tell you an anecdote about a well-known doctor who was very contemptuous of blood-transfusion. He said, " I f you want to have a blood-transfusion, you need three sheep; the first one from whom the blood is taken, the second who takes the blood, and the third one into whom the blood is poured!" '

I laughed loudly at the joke, and so did Lamosov, but neither of the other three occupants could see it. The doctor raised his eyebrows, and went on.

'To-day, hundreds of lives have been saved by blood-transfusion, and all because the second sheep—the doctor—has persevered.'

'How horrible,' said the elderly lady. 'Fancy using sheep's blood!'

The doctor did not bother to disillusion the elderly lady, but went on.

' Methods of approach to the patient and ways of healing have changed considerably during the last century. . . .'

'Ah, I thought we'd come to the fable part,' Lamosov exclaimed. 'Do I deduce that similar changes in human government should have taken place, dear sir?'

'There is no use your hoping to draw the doctor into apolitical discussion,' said the thin official. 'He has given us his word/

The doctor went on.

'We have only to think of the appalling way in which the surgeons treated Pushkin's wound. Let us also think and regret at the same time that such a genius as his perished not so much from the bullet he received in the duel, but from the mishandling and the septicaemia which resulted from the surgeons' muddling. And the physicians who treated Gogol—what did they do when, owing to a psychosis of some sort, he refused to eat? Wasn't it Over, the famous therapeutist of the day, who ordered that Gogol's blood should be let out systematically, weakening his exhausted system yet further?'

'You know,' said the elderly lady, who by this time was listening very intently, 'I had the utmost faith in my doctor—but now that you tell me . . .'

'Continue to have faith in your doctor,' Gruzaveli said. 'The doctors I am speaking of lived a hundred years ago. Now'—he

indicated, that he had something interesting to say by raising his hand—'it often happens that an illness does not follow the course prescribed by the best text-books. Illnesses have a way of doing that. I am sure that the lady here will have suffered from a complaint which suddenly took on a mystifying aspect.'

The lady was quite won over to silence by the allusion, which, for some reason (obscure to me at the time), pleased her.

'We meet sometimes the "blind" clinical forms of illness. These illnesses do not give any external indications, although the organism is suffering severely from them. I remember a very unusual case which happened on a hospital train of which I was in command in Galicia. A soldier was sent by his commanding officer to me suffering from lassitude, a curious complaint in the army. The officer's note asked me whether this man was shamming, and whether, in reality, he was capable of heavy physical labour. Now, it will surprise you, but this man died six days later, and the symptoms were typical of what we call secondary meningo-encephalitis. I could see that with my own eyes, but when we came to make a post-mortem, for reasons immaterial to this story, I found that he had died from numerous tumours on the brain. These tumours had long gone unnoticed. That's an example of incorrect diagnosis of which I was guilty, but please don't think I'm a murderer or anything like that—the man would not have lived whatever the treatment we gave him, and better men than I have been fooled by secondary symptoms—thinking them primary, and so on—if you follow me. . . .'

'Yes,' said Lamosov, as if the doctor had directed all his remarks to him personally. 'I can see a very attractive fable in that. We—the people—have not recognized the symptoms of bad government—we have attacked the wrong cause—a secondary cause. The demand for the Tsar's abdication, for instance—it isn't the Tsar to blame, but his ministers. They are still there.'

'Think what you like,' said the doctor, 'and make your inferences if it makes you happy, but the ears of the secret police are long, Captain Lamosov, and your grievances "aren't constitutional". However, let me return to my "mistaken diagnosis".

'Now quite a number of errors arise from over-specialization ...' the doctor began, when Lamosov interrupted him again.

' I agree. We are too busy soldiering or being financiers, or doctors, or anything else, and do not see the other symptoms.'

'Please,' said the little official, 'no politics.'

' I might say,' said the abbot,' that if we turned more to religion instead of to these ephemeral sciences of medicine and economics . . .'

'Economics are not ephemeral,' protested Lamosov.

'To return to these specialists,' said the doctor firmly, raising his voice above the argument. 'Many doctors don't understand the true meaning of specialization. Correctly and carefully applied, specialization is a very necessary and progressive factor, but excessive and stupid specialization frequently divorces a doctor from good medicine. He does not see the relationship his "specialized" disease has with another. Why, I can tell you of quite a number of medical otolaryngologists—throat-doctors—who will spend quite a lot of time and their patients' money "curing" catarrh of the throat, and simply forget or ignore the lungs, not suspecting that their patients might be suffering from tuberculosis!'

'That's a fine state of affairs,' said the elderly lady. 'And I have always suspected it, doctor, I have. A man wanted to take out my appendix and then took something else out. I suppose he was a specialist in appendixes or the something elses, and didn't have the good sense to realize that I suffered from stomach trouble because I ate cucumbers?'

* 'Possibly,' said the doctor, smiling, 'and Captain Lamosov will be able to draw many more fables from that. But you can well imagine what happens when specialists forgather. You all know Chekhov's unhappy Firss, and when you consider into how many specialities medicine can be divided—such as skin, nervous, internal, kidneys, etc.—let alone mental diseases—then you'll understand the danger you run if you go to a specialist who is too interested in your kidneys or your throat, and forgets your other ailments.'

The elderly lady had found a champion in the doctor, and she was agreeing with him as fast as she could.

'It often happens', continued the doctor, 'that the most widely distributed causes of error are due to an inadequate examination of the patient. The human organism, it. seems, includes a number of favourite spots beyond which the doctor does not pass. You all know the sort of thing. You come into a doctors consulting room, and he asks you to stick out your tongue, and then he begins to feel your pulse, and to take your temperature. He doesn't often look at the reflexes of your eye—although that could tell him much more than your pulse. He doesn't look into the rectum, for instance—this is an unloved part of the human anatomy, although it is often the source of very serious illnesses. Time, and one thing and another, prevent doctors from making a complete and thorough examination. It's a luxury to be able to examine a person's stomach when he complains of a heart attack, or vice versa. Then, another way that error can creep in is through too facile a judgement. We are all prone to it. It looks so obvious! In an effort to make a really splendid examination, a doctor gives undue weight to his first impression. He's a fine doctor, he says of himself, who can find out what's wrong with a patient in a minute. Frequently he takes a wrong view from the very beginning, and continues to hold on to this opinion through obstinacy.'

'Just like political government,' Lamosov exclaimed. 'I really must be allowed to say it. So Russian. Our whole government is like that. The war comes nearer; starvation stares us in the face; revolution is upon us; but I, Captain Lamosov, and this young cadet here,' he said, referring to me, 'are invited to a ball to celebrate the Tsar's birthday, or something. I can't understand it.'

'That is the tragedy,' said the doctor quietly. The meaning was ambiguous.

'It isn't that I object to the Tsar having a birthday party, or whatever it is,' said Lamosov earnestly. 'I don't. I'm not an anarchist or a Tolstoyan believing that all men are equal, but I'm a Russian, and I feel that at this moment, we should be trying either to fight the Germans or make a good peace, and not go to parties. The government refuse to accept the aid of able men. They are jealous of their prestige.'

Quite,' said the doctor. 'In the same way your doctor, out of a desire, misplaced in certain circumstances, wants to preserve his authority, and he rejects consultation with more competent colleagues, and continues to injure the patient through his self-opinionated idiocy. Every doctor can tell of far too many such instances—not, of course, about himself, oh no—but about others.'

Everyone laughed at the doctor's good-natured self-castigation, even the priest.

[4] 'You know,' said the priest, 'you have the right attitude to these things. You should have joined the church and helped us to save sinners.'

'But I do,' said the doctor, 'in a sort of way. I save sinners and pass them on to you for further salvation. Just think what would happen without me. You would be quite unemployed, father. I save their lives and you save their souls. We ought to go into partnership and open a religious sanatorium—eh?'

The priest did not like the secular flavour of the joke, but he was a good-natured fellow and did not mind a joke at his own expense.

'Now, listen to this,' said the doctor. 'Believe me, there's a serious danger in over-simplification—another point for our politician,' he added pointedly to Lamosov, who nodded his head familiarly. 'Doctors often classify patients under meaningless headings like anaemia, bronchial complaint, neurasthenia, and so forth. A doctor will have two or three favourite diagnoses up his sleeve which he brings out and tries to stick on to a patient. "Here, you say you've got a headache? Then it's neurasthenia," he says. If the man had said he did not sleep well at night, he would probably have said the same.

'And what about convention? Just the very profession where there should be little convention—beyond, perhaps, the attire—we find full of medical conventions. Look at the way people are sent to the mountains in the Caucasus or Switzerland, or to some spa or another—isn't that an over-simplification of diagnosis? We all have family doctors who prescribe some sort of water or another for almost anything from ingrowing toenails to diabetes. And I can assure you, although I am betraying medical secrets,

that there are many doctors who treat all their patients with one medicine or process. There are doctors, for instance, who use stomach washings for practically everything that comes their way; others simply enjoy injections. They find new drugs and get so fond of them that they prescribe them left and right, hoping tor a miracle cure. And as most patients who Gome to doctors are not seriously ill, a stomach washing and an injection of some drug will often do them no harm, although the good they do is very doubtful. This will probably remind Captain Lamosov of the hundreds of state panaceas there are, and the hundreds of societies for the propagation of one thing and another—each thinking they have the very cure for society. Some say religion, others say diet, others say, "be like Tolstoy", and so on.'

'And the only way, really,' said the abbot, naively, 'is to follow religion. That's it, doctor, you've hit it on the nail. That is the only way.'

'There, you see?' said the doctor. 'The Father Abbot offers himself as an example of over-simplification.'

The Father Abbot was deeply flattered. He did not understand the doctor's despair.

'And, now, I suppose you will all be surprised if I tell you that doctors are frequently the cause of an illness!'

'Aha!' exclaimed the elderly lady, as if she had caught one of her charges in a larder with a pot of jam. 'I thought so. Young man, you are courageous, but I have always considered doctors as the most potent source of all diseases. They wander from patient to patient, and they simply enjoy finding things wrong with you.'

'You are nearly right,' the doctor agreed. 'But at the moment I am thinking of the doctors who suggest certain illnesses to patients themselves. You've all probably suffered from such a doctor?'

Everybody had, it seemed, and no-one interrupted the doctor's narrative.

'You come in to see your doctor, and he slaps you on the back, and says, by way of Being very friendly, that the specialist you went to see about your heart said that you would live for another

ten years—ha ha! That is meant as a joke, but it frequently happens that the patient, after surviving fourteen years, begins to feel his end approaching, because, quite unknown to the doctor, he had kept the specialist's words in his mind, and was now preparing for death. I've known plenty of cases of people coming to me and saying that forty years ago a doctor told them they had only two score years to live with their bad kidneys. Such professional joking ought to stop, or, at least, a doctor ought to be very careful not to say it to a sensitive and literal-minded person. I remember another case—I was actually present at a consultation and the patient himself was in the room, when the doctor turned round to me, and said: "You know, doctor, I wonder whether this man has got a spleen or not?"

'In medical jargon, to say that "a man has a spleen" means that the doctor considers that the spleen has become enlarged.

'The doctor and I talked for a long time, and said that the case was very interesting, very interesting, but we came to the conclusion that the man did not have a spleen.

'Believe me—and here I come to a part of my anecdote which I think you, madam,' said the doctor to the elderly lady, 'might not wish to listen to very attentively. Well, this poor man went home absolutely convinced that he was *not a man!* He thought there was something missing! I might mention that proof to the contrary came when his wife was delivered of a handsome baby!'

The elderly lady had not obeyed the doctor's injunction, and had heard the story to the end. She clapped her hands, and exclaimed: 'Delightful!' to my great surprise, whilst the abbot turned his eyes to his little black book, and Captain Lamosov and the official began to exchange reminiscences. And I, seeing my guardian's preoccupation, slipped over to the doctor.

'You certainly can tell a tale,' I said, breathlessly. 'You know, I've wondered whether I'd be suited to be a surgeon.'

Before the doctor could reply, a terrific din broke out from Lamosov and the official. The marriage of the lion and the dove did not go so well as I expected. Lamosov was shouting: 'He still calls me a liar! Only he is using medical jargon. He

says "it's a case of mistaken diagnosis" when I tell him that Stunner has syphilis!'

The carriage again became an uproar, and the same scene of martyrdom was about to be enacted, as Lamosov wanted to 'rid the world of such civilian scum as this fourth-grade chenovnik!'

'Listen, listen,' said the doctor, getting up and stepping between the official and my noisy guardian. 'The fact is that Stunner *has* got syphilis—but not ordinary syphilis. . . .'

'What? You too trying to call me a liar?' roared Lamosov.

'Not at all,' answered the doctor coldly. 'It is hereditary syphilis, so we are both right.'

This announcement put an end to the fighting. It horrified everyone. The abbot began to bless himself, and the elderly lady said that 'something like that was bound to happen after all those medical anecdotes.'

'See?' said Lamosov triumphantly. 'Who's right? All right, it isn't ordinary syphilis, but hereditary syphilis. What's the difference?' He returned to his corner seat to crow.

'A great deal,' said the doctor, 'and if there weren't people present I'd tell you. But why are you so interested in Sturmer? His days are numbered.'

'You mean he'll die?' asked the abbot, very perturbed, it seemed, at the news.

'In time,' said the doctor nonchalantly, 'as we all will. But what I mean is that he will cease being Prime Minister.'

'Do you think so?' the abbot said. 'Is it a rumour?'

'Is the revolution a rumour?' asked the doctor.

'No,' said Lamosov. 'The revolution isn't a rumour. Kerensky will be Prime Minister, and don't anyone dare say anything against him.'

'But who will save the Empire?' the abbot pleaded. 'Without Stunner the Tsar will fall.'

'Quite,' said Lamosov. 'Everything will fall. We shall have a constitutional democracy, and the army will defend it.'

'You will be like France,' the elderly lady said.

It was here that our conversation ended, and for the rest of that day we sat silently gazing out of the window, regretting that we were leaving the Caucasus behind. We seemed to be passing

from tranquillity into a zone which was vibrant with anxiety. The stations we passed through looked more deserted and untidy as we progressed farther north. Evidence of the war was more at hand, and the poverty of the peasantry more and more striking. In the Caucasus the harvests are very rich, the bureaucracy very scattered, and the tax-gatherers and imperial levies had barely penetrated as far south as that. But in the north, things were growing desperate, and the huge ten-million army at the front needed food.

I slept the night through in a huddled position, and when I woke up we were already at Rostov, barely a fifth of the way to Petrograd, still in the 'rich region' of Russia on the corner of the Ukraine. We had left the Caucasus behind, and it was no good leaning out of the train now to look for the mountains. They were nearly two hundred miles away.

The first person I spoke to was Lamosov, or rather, he spoke to me. Pointing to the doctor, he indicated his legs, which had somehow or other become denuded. I think his trousers must have slipped up during the night.

'You can always tell a Caucasian,' the captain said. 'Look at their legs. If they are hairy—then it's a Georgian. All Georgians are hairy—like apes, and the Armenians too. Their hair grows at a fearful rate, like bamboo. Well, that'll be your natural history lesson for this morning, and now we'll go to the restaurant car and see what we can get to eat.'

We went past the sleeping occupants of our carriage trying not to tread on their toes, and pulled back the compartment door quietly, but the elderly lady stirred from her slumber.

'I beg your pardon,' she said in French when she woke up. Whose pardon she was begging, I did not know, but she quickly went to sleep again when she realized that I was watching her. Queer woman.

The little official was snoring with his head on his large portmanteau, and did not move, although I had to push his hand away from the doorway.

'Our things will be all right?' I asked Lamosov when we were in the corridor.

'Yes,' he said. 'Let's go.

We went into the restaurant car and sat down. The first-class places had not been filled yet, as it was early, so we had the first choice on the menu. 'First choice' is wrong, because there was only one choice. Tea and rusks. So we ordered those.

'Listen, youngster,' said Lamosov to me, 'would you like to know who the occupants of our carriage really are?'

I nodded my head absent-mindedly. I thought that the captain would air his views on their physiognomy, or perhaps again tell me how to recognize a Caucasian.

'The woman, for instance, do you know who she is?'

'A governess, I suspect,' I said innocently. 'That's what she looks like.'

'Perhaps,' said Lamosov mysteriously, 'but she's not. She is a well-known Moscow Bolshevik. Just you wait and see if she doesn't get off at Moscow. I hand her over there.'

'What do you mean, hand her over? What's it got to do with you?' I asked.

' I hand her to the man who will shadow her when she is there. She has been getting in touch with a number of Caucasian Communists while she has been in Baku. I was detailed to watch her. And the little official from Pyatygorsk, he's also an influential member, Kagnovich, is his name, I think. I've intentionally left the carriage so that they can exchange papers. We'll grab everything we can at Petrograd from him.'

'And the doctor?' I asked in an awed whisper.

' Oh, he's all right. He's just going up to see Sturmer. You know, he is a well-known scientist, and they say he has a cure for syphilis. That's why Sturmer sent his father-confessor to him, to persuade him to come up to Petrograd.'

'And is the abbot the confessor?' I guessed.

'Yes.'

'How do you know all this?' I asked. 'Are you in the Ochrana now?'

'Now?' said Lamosov. 'I've been in it for the last three years. They pinched me for being a liberal in Moscow once, and to save myself from prison I became a sort of detective. I've been guarding Sturmer for some time, and now I'm on this job, but as soon as I get to Petrograd I'll be with Sturmer.

'You'll be sensible, and say nothing about this, won't you? I'm pretty sick of it, but if this doctor-fellow can pull Sturmer through, we'll be saved. I mean old Russia. It's a matter of days, I assure you. If Sturmer falls, Kerensky will come in, and he is weak. He will be easy grist for the Communist mills. You mark my words—it's either Sturmer gets these clouds off his mind and does some quick thinking, or we're done for.'

I must say that I was very puzzled by this explanation, but I discovered later that Sturmer, the Prime Minister of this period, had suddenly developed progressive paralysis of the insane—the result of syphilis after a period of years.

'I suppose I'll see Sturmer at the ball?' I asked Lamosov.

'Yes,' he said. 'I'll be there with him. You keep close to me, and we'll have some fun.'

I eagerly promised that I would, and that concluded our conversation and our breakfast of tea and rusks.

We returned to our seats, and found the rest of the occupants of the carriage awake. The elderly lady, whom I now watched like a hawk, hoping to see some sign of her real identity, was fussing about in her bags. She was insisting on washing, although everyone knew what a queue there would be in the morning for washing water. I volunteered to go outside and stand in the queue for her until her turn came, and then call her. She accepted my services gladly, and said what a polite boy I was. The little official beamed at me, and the Father Abbot promised me a meat patty, but my philanthropy was prompted by many reasons. I wanted to see whether the exchange of papers which Lamosov had told me about would be effected in the corridor or in the carriage, because I noticed that the little official had pushed his case out into the corridor. The exchange was effected very carefully in the following manner.

The official offered the lady a book to read, and she accepted, so he went into the corridor to fetch the book, which was in his case, and the elderly lady got up and followed him out. He gave her the book, and smiled, whilst I pretended that I had not seen anything, and stood patiently in the queue.

A few minutes later, when Lamosov came out, I told him what I had seen.

'As I thought,' he said, with the air of a master-detective. 'They were afraid to do anything in the carriage. Good work—you might help me to arrest him at Petrograd.'

I don't know what childish fancy took me at that moment, but I was very pleased with myself. I was particularly glad that Lamosov had trusted me, and I felt that I had done him a real service. Petrograd seemed so far away before I could have the second instalment of my adventure. I don't know whether I believed immediately what Lamosov had said. I had my doubts, because the man was really as big a fool as he pretended to be, and not the reverse. He was not a fiction-detective by any means, and the arguments he made, and the opinions he expressed, were his own. Why he was trusted to be in the police, I don't know, but I expect it was his very ingenuousness which saved him from looking like a policeman.

A few hours before we were due to be in Moscow on the third day, he began an argument with the priest.

'Sturmer needs a little onion,' he said suddenly. He liked these sudden remarks.

'What do you mean?' the abbot asked.

'What I say. A little onion. Don't you remember the story of the little onion in Dostoevski's *Brothers Karamasov?* Don't you remember how Grushekna said that she gave away an onion, and because of that, God would forgive her her sins. Don't you remember that, holy father?'

The holy father did not, and what was more, he was annoyed.

'Why should God forgive her her sins because she gave away an onion?' he snorted.

'Thereby hangs a tale,' said Lamosov with intentional mystification. He waited until everyone was ready to listen to his story before he began. It was an old story told straight out of Dostoevski, but with people like Lamosov it is difficult for them to know when they are not being original. They imagine everything they say is new.

'Once upon a time there was a peasant woman, and a very wicked woman she was. And she died and left but one good deed behind. The devils caught her and plunged her into the lake of fire. Her guardian angel stood and wondered what good deed

of hers he could remember to tell to God. "She once pulled up an onion in her garden," said he, "and gave it to a beggar woman." And God said: "You take that onion then, hold it out to her in the lake, and let her take hold and be pulled out. And if you can pull her out of the lake, let her come to Paradise, but if the onion breaks, then the woman must stay where she is."

'The angel ran to the woman and held the onion out to her. "Come," said he, "catch hold of the onion and I will pull you out." And he began cautiously pulling her out. He had just pulled her right out, when the other sinners in the lake, seeing what was happening, began catching hold of her so as to be pulled out with her. But she was a very wicked woman, and she began kicking them. "I'm to be pulled out, not you. It's my onion, not yours." As soon as she said that, the onion broke, and the woman fell back into the lake of fire, and there she is burning to this day. So the angel wept and went away.

'That's all the story is, but it's got a moral to it—hasn't it, doctor? It has a warning, eh?'

'Yes,' said the doctor, 'it has. You mean people like Sturmer—once gave away an onion, and now hope to be saved by it? Is that what you mean?'

'What do you mean?' asked Lamosov.

'I never express an opinion in politics,' said the doctor. 'We were talking about onions, weren't we?'

Here the conversation rested until we got to Moscow. But a few minutes before we were due to arrive at the station, the doctor made a remark which I considered curious. He spoke to the little official.

'Be careful', he said, 'that the woman who took hold of the onion doesn't fall into the fire.'

The official nodded his head, and I noticed that the elderly lady left her seat soon after. Lamosov got up to follow her, but she seemed to have run down the corridor and escaped him. He was furious, but was confident that the police would catch her in Moscow. But the train did not stop in Moscow, as a matter of fact. It stopped at a small village a few versts outside the Holy City. Apparently rioters had seized the station, but the elderly

lady who was to have been Lamosov's quarry escaped him, as, indeed, did the little official, who did not get off at Petrograd, but at a station before. He left his bags to go to the wash-room, and did not return. When Lamosov and I got to Petrograd the police boarded the train and took away the little official's baggage. They pretended not to know Captain Lamosov, and asked us both for our passes.

When the doctor got off the train with the priest, he said: 'Thank you, Captain Lamosov, for giving me a couple of onions with which to pull my friends out: And when next time you try to praise Kerensky, make yourself a little more acquainted with him and his politics. You made some awful slips.'

Lamosov laughed good-naturedly, and shook him by the hand, but there was no time for palavering, as the ball that was to take place that evening needed many preparations, and I wanted a little sleep before it.

Lamosov took me to his rooms in the Platchadka, and told me that I could rest until the evening, when he would wake me up, but I found myself very restless, and not a bit sleepy.

Petrograd had undergone a severe change in the two months I had been absent from it. When I had left the city was calm; there was food in the shops, and although the hospital trains were getting longer and longer, optimism was still rife, and confidence was being expressed on all sides.

It was only in later years, when I happened to turn up the letters of the Tsar, that I noticed the date on which one particular letter was written. It was the date of this ball to which I was invited as a senior cadet of the Naval Academy. The Tsar wrote: ' It is a beautiful day. I went out riding. Everything is so calm. . . .'

But down in the streets of Petrograd the revolution was gathering. Crowds of soldiers on leave were promenading in front of the government buildings calling for a stronger government. Students shouted for Kerensky. Hundreds of well-intentioned people were saying: 'It's time Sturmer left. He's a fool. We need a government capable of prosecuting this war with vigour. We don't want traitors in high places.'

But Sturmer was still in power. He was half-conscious of it, and when, later on in the evening, I saw him swaggering into the

ballroom, I understood what the doctor meant when he said that Stunner's brain was suffering from progressive paralysis. The microbes had got into his brain—into the empire's brain—and the whole empire was turning rotten there in front of our eyes. But Lamosov was too drunk and too happy to notice anything. He had been detailed to guard Sturmer, as there were rumours that an attempt was to be made against his life, so I set myself to guard Lamosov, although at the time he did not know it.

Sturmer came rather late in the proceedings, accompanied by Lamosov, who, immediately he spied me out, invited me to join him. He even introduced me to the Prime Minister, who said something about being able to depend on the navy at all times. I answered him like a Grand Admiral, and said that he could.

But what I noticed immediately about Sturmer was that he was half-conscious. I really mean it. He was just that. At times he spoke in a sort of exaggerated Napoleonic vein.

'Understand', he would bellow at some hapless official who would come in to give him news of the latest defeat on the front, 'that the word "defeat" is not in my vocabulary. I shall save the Russian Empire.'

How he proposed to save it, I do not know, but I watched with startled amazement the friendliness with which the Tsar and the Tsaritsa received Sturmer. He was still the nominee of their 'dear friend' Rasputin, and they did not hesitate to pay every sort of compliment to their Prime Minister. He sat at their right hand during the banquet, at which speeches were made indicating that he was the very man to save Russia. Protopopoff—his crony, and another sufferer from a venereal disease—stood up to read a lengthy speech, saying that prayers had been ordered throughout Russia, and that Russia would triumph yet. No-one had a clear idea over what Russia was to triumph, for at that very table sat men who would later go over to Kerensky and urge the Tsar to resign—uncles and brothers of the Tsar may be included in that number.

But my part in this drama, as I have said, was very small. I drank the champagne the gloved lackeys brought round, and

followed Lamosov about, while he, in turn, followed Stunner. We went from one party of people to another, greeting and being greeted. There were generals at this reception whom I thought ought to have been at the front, and they were holding forth about the 'individual bravery' of 'our men at the front'. There were many beautiful women, dazzling jewels, and uniforms to see, and the tunes of the waltz and mazurka seemed to go on for ever above the hum of conversation.

'The Tsar and the Tsaritsa are dancing!' the cry goes up, and soon the floor is covered with dancing partners.

Sturmer stands talking with some ministers, I don't quite hear what they are saying, but it certainly isn't about the defeat we have just sustained, a defeat caused by lack of guns and transport organization.

'I meet a great many people here who are optimists,' I said *to* Lamosov after I had danced with a pale-faced daughter of some princess or another. 'They say everything is going fine. Time is on our side, and Russia is so big she cannot be conquered. I was even trapped into a conversation about Napoleon. Everyone seems to be living in the last century.'

'They are,' said Lamosov. 'But forget about them. Enjoy yourself while the champagne still runs. Go and meet those two pretty girls. They have been looking at you—or is it at me?'

'At you,' I said unselfishly when I saw that they were chaperoned.

'But I can't. I've got to hang on to Sturmer's tail.'

So I went off and danced with the pretty sisters, who simpered and asked me whether I liked chocolate fondants. Then I slipped from their company, and fell into a group of pro-Germans. I listened carefully, and this is what I heard:

'Our country would be far better governed by the Germans. They would leave us our land, and probably restore the serfs. I'm sick of all these liberals, and goodness knows what will happen if Sturmer falls.'

'They say Kerensky wants a republic. Can you imagine Russia without a Tsar?'

'The German Emperor is a relative of his. He would soon settle with that cattle, and also those dreadful Bolsheviks. You

watch out. They are desperate men, and I'm not too sure that Kerensky isn't in with them.'

My head was in a dreadful muddle. I knew very little about politics, but one thing I gathered, and that was that the Court party were very afraid that Sturmer would fall from power. He was apparently a very docile man for all his fine words, and they let him pretend he was Napoleon and Alexander rolled into one, provided he did not interfere with the handsome profits they were making out of the war.

I turned away from them with disgust. I felt bitterly sorry for the two puppets who were swinging gracefully across the polished floor of the Winter Palace, and I realized that not only Sturmer, but the whole of society, was half-conscious; they were certainly not conscious of the men who were rioting in the streets. News had not yet come through of the naval rebellion at Kronstadt which was to crack the empire from head to foot—unless something was done, something immediate to satisfy the people. There was only one man who could do that—Sturmer. And Sturmer was suffering from syphilis; the Grand Vizier was incapable of one clear thought.

Lamosov called me over.

'Do you want to come with me? Sturmer is going to see the doctor—you know, Gruzaveli, or whatever his name is. I am told that the abbot is bringing him here to the palace. Everything depends on this Gruzaveli, because Sturmer is very ill. His brain is falling to pieces. Do you know what he said to me just now? He asked me how long the war had been going on?'

I nodded my head.

'Yes, I'd like to come,' I said. 'Gruzaveli is an interesting fellow. I'd like to meet him again. But how can I come with you?'

'Oh, we'll wait in the ante-room while he sees Sturmer. He's got to make a diagnosis; one of his famous ones. I hope for everybody's sake that he can do something,' Lamosov told me.

'But what do they expect him to do?' I asked.

'Cure him. Gruzaveli has been working on a cure for the last three years, and he has perfected an injection or something.

Anyway, I hope he puts Sturmer out of his misery, if he does nothing else,' Lamosov said.

I really couldn't understand Lamosov. I didn't know whether the opinions he held were 'advanced' or not. He seemed to be typical* of intelligent Russians of this time who knew something had to be done, but what that something was they did not know.

Sturmer, Lamosov, and I suddenly left the ballroom and went into one of the adjoining rooms. Gruzaveli and the abbot were waiting there for the Prime Minister.

'Is it all right to leave your Excellency?' Lamosov asked.

'All right? Yes, I suppose so,' said Sturmer. 'Who is this gentleman?'

'This is Dr. Gruzaveli,' said the abbot. 'I went to fetch him on the instructions of the Tsar's doctor. He is the greatest specialist in venereal disease in Russia, and we hope he can help you.'

'Yes, yes,' said Sturmer. He then dismissed Lamosov and me into the ante-room, but Lamosov took the precaution of keeping the door open so that we could hear everything that passed.

'I wonder why Dr. Gruzaveli did not recognize us?' I asked Lamosov. He shrugged his shoulders.

'Georgians are queer fellows. They are like that. We'll take him out and make him drunk on his own native Kihitinsky wine, and then you'll see what a change will come over him.'

We listened.

'So you're a doctor, humph? T-t-that's interesting. Well, well. And what are you going to do? Eh? Hurt me? Injections?'

The doctor did not speak.

'Well, what does he say?' asked Sturmer irritably. 'How did he get here?'

'I brought him,' said the abbot, repeating his former information. 'I have told your Excellency. This man is a specialist.'

'Well, why doesn't he do something?' Sturmer asked.

Lamosov and I peeped into the room. We saw Gruzaveli standing with his hands folded, staring right in front of him.

'Speak,' Sturmer commanded.

'Obstinate fellows, these Georgians,' said Lamosov. 'I wonder what's up with our doctor?'

Then Gruzaveli spoke. He spoke softly at first, without any fire, just as if he was making a diagnosis, but his words were not those of a doctor—oh no, it was politics he was speaking.

'I was brought here by a trick. This holy man, this abbot, represented himself as a friend of an acquaintance of mine in Petrograd. I came here and I found myself under arrest. The police are apparently interested in my political beliefs, and they gave me to understand that if I did not see you, Mr. Sturmer, I should have to expect scant mercy. So I have seen you. But that, Mr. Sturmer, is the length to which I am prepared to go. I will do nothing for you, that is quite definite.'

'But how have I offended you?' asked Sturmer, very surprised. 'What is all this about the police? What are your political opinions?'

'I am a Communist,' said Gruzaveli quietly.

The abbot crossed himself swiftly, and Sturmer started.

'What!' he exclaimed. 'They send me a Communist? Who is responsible for this?'

'Your Excellency, he is a specialist. There is no-one so good as he is in medicine, although the Lord alone knows why He should make a Communist into such a good doctor.'

'Well, Communist or no Communist—are you going to attend to me?'

'No,' Gruzaveli said. 'I refuse.'

'Then why did you come here?'

'I told you, I was tricked into coming.'

'But why won't you help me? Don't you realize I am dying? Don't you realize that everything depends on me?'

'I am sorry. I mean I am sorry as a doctor that you are dying, but as a man I am glad.'

'But Russia will die too—have you no love for her?'

'You are echoing Rasputin's words, but the plagiarism will not save you, Mr. Sturmer. Your Russia is dying with you. I don't regret that. You don't really expect me to do anything for you, do you? How many have been exiled and shot? How many soldiers have been sent to their death, unarmed and undefended?

How much starvation are you responsible for—how much misery?'

Lamosov whispered again to me.

'I wonder if he will ask him whether he has a little onion?'

Gruzaveli went on.

'Well, if you can give me one good reason why I should save you, Mr. Sturmer, I will do so. But make the reason good.' . ,

Sturmer hesitated for a moment, and then turned to the priest.

'Is this man the only one in the whole empire? Why should I be afraid of his threats? He is a Communist. Does he know that I can have him shot?'

'Of course I know you can have me shot, Mr. Sturmer,' said Gruzaveli. 'You have enough breath in you, I am sorry to say, to murder a lot more men, but your time is short, and after you a deluge will come, such a deluge, that will wash away all the filth you have erected. But you still haven't answered my question.' Gruzaveli smiled to himself then. 'It's a matter of onions.'

'What does the madman mean?' Sturmer demanded.

The abbot stuttered. 'He means—he still wants to know whether you are prepared to do what he wants you to—is that right, Dr. Gruzaveli?' the abbot asked.

'Yes, I'll let Mr. Sturmer buy his life at a heavy price.'

'Do you want money?' Sturmer asked stupidly.

'No. I want lives. I want an immediate amnesty for all political prisoners. I want the Duma summoned at once, after a fair vote by the whole Russian population. I want a free people, free education, land for the peasants. I want. . .'

'You mean you want me to become a Communist?' asked Sturmer aghast. 'That's impossible.'

'Of course it is,' said Gruzaveli. 'Of course it is impossible. Everything that is against yourself is impossible. That is how wars are lost. That is how empires are lost, Mr. Sturmer, but I am glad. I am very glad.'

'In the name of God,' the abbot said, 'I beg you, my son. Help his Excellency. Help him as a man. That is all I ask you.'

' Bring me **a man** then, reverend father,' Gruzaveli said, 'and I will help him. Go to some hospital and bring me a man, or let me go out to him. It is not a, matter of helping a man—that is my duty as a doctor. But Stunner and his friends are not men. They are dead men, and the country they reign over is **a** country of dead men. Why should I help him to continue that reign?'

Sturmer was in a blind fury by this time. He went over to a desk and took out some paper and began to scribble a note on it. He then shouted for Lamosov, who ran out of the ante-room without bothering to make any show that he had not been listening.

'Excellency?' he said.

' Take this man to the commissariat. I will give him one more chance; otherwise, he knows what this will mean to him. Have him brought here to-morrow. That is all.'

And so Gruzaveli, the Georgian doctor, refused to 'hold out an onion' to Stunner, the Prime Minister, and the one man who might have held an Empire together went about imagining himself Napoleon and Alexander the Great, or playing at Casanova with the pretty ladies of the Court.

Hereditary syphilis, and that is probably what Stunner was suffering from, had persistently undermined his thinking powers. Extraordinary things are said of this man. He sometimes put on a ballet skirt and pretended to be Pavlova. At other times, he imagined himself a great lover, or a professor of mathematics, or an astrologer. And in his more lucid moments he would be a 'patriot' and would wear a. ridiculously small soldier's cap and strut about the Duma in it.

'He was so anxious to become Prime Minister,' said Rasputin, ' that I made him one.' That is Sturmer's epitaph.

The revolution broke out with pent-up fury. I lost sight of Lamosov, as I reported back to the Naval Academy and was given a rifle to support the provisional government of Kerensky. But it was difficult in those days to know on what side you were. Your superior officers were plotting against Kerensky, but **not** daring **to come out** into the open until Korniloff, had gathered

enough strength to march on Petrograd. Meanwhile, you were told to defend Kerensky—because 'he was better than the Bolsheviks'. What about the Mensheviks, the Anarchists, the Tolstoyans—the hundreds of little factions which clung like limpets first to one side and then to another? Well, you defended everybody against everybody, until the Bolsheviks rallied the soldiers and sailors of Petrograd and Kronstadt and overthrew the talkative Kerensky. And even then you didn't know where you were. Who was the government? The Bolsheviks said they were. Kerensky said he was. The White Guard said they were.

As soon as the capital fell to the Bolsheviks, I was carted off south with the rifle in my hand and told that I should join my ship.

And when I met Captain Lamosov again it was in Baku. For some reason unknown to me, he had been sent south to join the armies of Wrangel and the Grand Duke Nicholas, but he spent most of his time drinking coffee and brawling with the Turkish Army, and the irredentist movements of Azarbaijans and other Caucasian clans. I was in Baku when they came to cut off the ears of the Armenians, and Lamosov and I watched helplessly the terrible massacre of these unfortunate gentle people.

'What is happening to Russia?' I said. 'Who let the Turks in?'

'Who knows? They just came. Besides, it will make the English help us,' Lamosov answered. 'The Turks are better than the Reds, they say.'

'But the Reds don't cut off the Armenians' ears!' I exclaimed.

'That is high policy,' Lamosov said bitterly.

'Tell me,' I said with sudden recollection. 'What happened to Gruzaveli? He refused to help Sturmer?'

'Of course. There was a madman for you. They shot him with all the other Bolshevik prisoners, just before the outbreak. There was a hero for you! He put on his coat with, the astrakhan collar, and when they put him up against the wall, what do you think he said? He said: "Gentlemen, it's a case of mistaken diagnosis. You can't stop a revolution with a bullet." '

'But how do you know all this?' I gasped.

'I was the officer who commanded the shooting party,' Lamosov said, sadly. 'You know, his "mistaken diagnosis" was

only another way of calling me a liar, and he was right. I'm joining the Reds.'

That was the last I heard of Lamosov. I think he changed his name and threw away his epaulettes and became a common soldier. People did strange things in those days. I myself, as soon as I got away from Russia, decided to become a doctor. That train journey from Baku to Petrograd changed many lives.

Chapter 2—Ankara

MISS SMITH OF ENGLAND

What can be said of Old Turkey is that Old Turkey was very old. I was there in 1922—just before Kemal Pasha drove the Greeks out of Smyrna. And thereby hangs a tale of Miss Smith of England. I don't know her real name. She certainly never used it, because at this time Englishmen or women were not very popular. They had refused to treat with Turkey, and encouraged the Greeks to seize what they could from the vanquished foe. They did not reckon with Mustafa Kemal Pasha, but Miss Smith of England did, and this story is a short account of her adventures as she told them to me.

To look at Miss Smith you would have thought she was a village schoolteacher. There was the same prim figure, absurdly girlish in a woman of about forty-eight, and intense blue eyes. Her face was thin, almost aristocratic, except that her complexion was rather a vivid red which lack of powder did not improve, but rather accentuated the colouring of her eyes. Her hands were freckled, as was her neck and nose. But the most remarkable things about her were her voice and her Bible. Her voice was soft and rich, full of kindness, and her Bible was bound between ivory boards, and looked more like a weapon, from its size, than a book of devotions.

If I tell you how I met Miss Smith and report our conversation, you will have a far better picture of Old Turkey and Miss Smith.

As' yet the Ghazi—the Conqueror—as the Turks called Mustafa Kemal at this time, had not had much chance to turn

to the arts of peace. He was building Ankara, it is true, the new capital, and deserting the old capital of Constantinople, but he was still in the throes of the Greco-Turkish war, and Old Turkey had a short respite before he removed the Veil from the women's face and flung the fez from the men's heads.

I went up to Ankara to see some friends of mine, Turks who had allied themselves to Kemal's cause. It was no easy journey to get to the heart of the mountains of Anatolia, losing oneself on an arid, treeless, bare plateau.

At this time there was only one train running from Smyrna to the new capital, and the locomotive could get no coal, so it devoured huge blocks of wood instead. Sometimes we would run out of wood, and then the engine-driver and his mate would jump off the train, go into the woods at the foot of the mountains, and chop wood for a few hours. We would then recommence our journey.

The carriages, the few that were left by the retreating Greeks, were more like cattletrucks, and were undoubtedly very comfortable for cattle, but sitting on a very hard and narrow bench, being jerked hither and thither as we clambered up the mountain slopes, was only good for a person who wanted to reduce his fat. I felt that I should be shaken to little pieces by the time I reached my destination.

Looking out of the window, I decided that the Turks were mad. Certainly Kemal was mad, I said to myself. What devil .brought him to build a capital city amidst such desolation? Before long mosquitoes were buzzing into the carriages, flying round one's head like dizzy aeroplanes, biting one's neck, one's ears and nose, and flitting away to do execution on some sleeping Turk opposite you. The mixing of blood that went on during that journey must have made us all into relatives before nightfall!

Mosquito-plagued, miles from anywhere, inaccessible, lost, without trees, green grass, and any sort of western comfort, Ankara greeted me. The sun was torrid, and the dust profuse. What made him build a city here? I asked myself again and again. Peter the Great had built his city on the marshes, Romulus and Remus undoubtedly chose a difficult site among seven hills, It seems that all the great founders of cities chose awkward

sites. They who had conquered men now turned their attentions to nature. Peter the Great could not find better foundations than the quarter of a million dead which went to fill the site of his city. I wondered how many people would have to die so that Kemal could have a capital. I was wrong, but at this time I said to myself: 'In a few years, he will desert this eyrie and come down to Istanbul and be sultan.' Kemal did not come down for seven years and he refused to be sultan. He stayed up there in his mountain capital and forged modern Turkey.

After a while I began to appreciate the reasons for his choice. I saw the Roman remains and the Temple of Augustus that the Latins had built at this Ankara which they called Ancyra. There was great historic beauty in the site. Magnificent mountains that lifted the city and wore it like a crown; the colouring of the sky, and the sudden cold winds that blow ruthlessly across the plateau, all spoke their good reasons. Besides, this was Turkey—the real Turkey where the hardy fighters came from, not the milksops of Constantinople with their shamvars and perfumes.

One day it would be possible to do the journey in eighteen hours instead of nine days, one day Ankara would become really beautiful; but in those days it was a windswept, straggling city.

'Why did Kemal choose such a place for his capital?' I asked one of my friends. 'Why didn't he stay in Constantinople? What a beautiful capital that is, with its cypress trees and Byzantine architecture!'

'To have stayed in Constantinople would have meant staying under the lazy Ottomans. Remember we Turks are Turanians. We are a much more energetic people. We have gone to Ankara in the same way as your saints used to put oh a hair-shirt. It will do us good to work the land here, and build a great Turkish city. We all loved Constantinople, and many of us wept when we had to leave it.'

'What about mosquitoes?' I said, scratching my neck.

'The marshes are being drained away. We've had specialists here doing it. The American Embassy will soon be built on what was formerly a plague spot,' came the reply.

I could fill pages with descriptions of Ankara and its discomfort

at this time, but as I should be unable to describe the new, beautiful, hygienic modern city which has been raised on this spot, I will refrain. I must go back to the heroine. To Miss Smith.

In those days Kemal Pasha's attitude to women was very undecided, and harems still flourished. The word 'harem' meant sacred, and as yet women penned up like hens in a coop were 'sacred'—that is, you could not go into a harem, not even the harem of your best friend. It 'wasn't done'.

There were quite a number of revolutionary Turks who spoke of emancipating women, but Kemal was still busy fighting a war, and the emancipation had to wait for a little while. Perhaps Kemal wasn't very sure yet whether emancipation coming suddenly would be very beneficial for the people. However, as I say, emancipation for women was not on his immediate programme. He was busy fighting the Greeks.

The friends with whom I was staying were persons of high intelligence, and they believed firmly that women should be free. They began a little movement among themselves to liberate women from the trammels and degradation of prison confinement—the harem.

'We have a very large membership now. All sorts of people are joining us. Very soon we shall appeal to the Ghazi himself. We go round preaching liberation to the women in the harems once we have their husband's permission. This is very difficult to get—but we manage to do it on a number of pretexts, and sometimes it happens that the husbands "see the light", and are only too willing to let their wives leave the harems, but the wives themselves refuse!'

'That must be heartbreaking!' I exclaimed.

'It is. That's why we band ourselves together and we go to these harems where the husbands are on our side, and we preach and argue with the women until, one by one, they take off their veils. If you were a Turk you'd know what that means.',

'I suppose a Turkish woman taking off the veil feels very much as I should if someone came in and said it was better for me to take all my clothes off?'

The example pleased my friend, and he laughed.

'Tell me, how would you like to come along on one of our crusades this afternoon? It may open your eyes to the sort of difficulties we have to face. We are going to a very rich man's house to-day. He has six wives, and they are furious with him because he wants them to take off the veil. We've got to go and persuade them that there is nothing dishonourable in that. Would you like to come?'

'Very much.'

'One condition, though. You mustn't speak. We'll say you are a doctor or something.'

'That's what I want to be, so it won't be far wrong.'

'It's not that—if they suspect that you are there as a spectator, all our hopes will be dashed.'

I agreed to the terms, and that very same afternoon we set out for the harem of the merchant, whose name I have now forgotten.

I remember the wild things, the dreams I made up, the thrills I experienced anticipating my entry into a real harem. At last, I thought to myself, the Thousand and One Nights would come true.

The first thing that struck me was the abounding luxury of the house. There were carpets everywhere, rich, deep carpets, on the floor and on the walls, and our host was a round-faced smiling Turk who did not take our mission too seriously.

'This way, this way,' he said, indicating a door undoubtedly to the 'sacred' place. We went in, and my first impression was delightful. There were embroideries of golden flowers everywhere —made from real gold thread. The cushions on the floor and on the beds were embroidered likewise. I even turned up a corner of the bed to see what the sheets were like. They were of pure silk, and embroidered at the top with the same gold thread.

'You know, it is very difficult to enter into the women's quarters unless you know how,' said my friend to me. 'This is only the anteroom, so don't look so impressed.'

We went out of this room on to the veranda, which was made of white marble. Ah, I thought, we are getting nearer to the real thing. We then came to a rickety old wooden door, and our host

stopped. He shrugged his shoulders, as if to suggest 'more fools you', and left us.

My friend, with the look of a martyr preparing to enter the lion's den, said to me: 'I'll go first, you follow on behind.'

'Is it dangerous?' I asked. 'Why has he left us alone?'

My friend did not answer. I pushed back the door, and stepped inside after he had parted the heavy bead curtains, which jingled and jangled as we went in. I opened my eyes wide.

I saw what appeared to be innumerable women sitting in a small room on their haunches. Some were drinking coffee, others were rolling cigarettes, but most of them seemed to be resting, too lazy even to think or dream. One or two, I noticed, were young and attractive in a large sort of way, the others were elderly and important-looking.

My portrait, alas, has to be very incomplete, because all I did was to glance at them, then they all stood up and tried to scamper away.

My friend told them not to be disturbed. He spoke to them as if he were addressing children.

'This is a doctor,' he said. 'He won't harm you. We have permission from your husband to speak to you. Will you listen to me?'

Veils were pulled hurriedly over their faces. The younger ones giggled and put their faces into their voluminous pantaloopts. The result was that the whole assembly suddenly transformed itself into a motionless mass of clothes, with seven pairs of eyes ghied on us.

My friend was not in the least perturbed. He had probably expected something like this.

He spoke to me in French.

'You see how they live? No exercise, no air, no education. They sit about doing nothing all day, guarded like jewels. The older ones bully the younger, and the younger ones have to obey them and suffer whatever indignities they command. You can just imagine what revenge an older woman will take on the younger rival who has succeeded her in the affections of her lord. The system is barbarous!'

I nodded my head in agreement, hoping that I would see a

sudden conversion, and that the ladies would take their veils down.

'They sit here doing nothing. Just look at all those ridiculous trinkets they have on! Those are charms against the evil eye. And you see that old woman over there? I know her. She's been to Mecca and has earned the title of Hadji. She is the doctor here. She has what they call a "healing breath"! She merely breathes on the patient and he or she gets better.'

'But surely all these things are going to stop?'

' These things will stop as soon as Kemal realizes what is going on. He is too busy now. We must do what we can. I will talk to the women for a while. Which of you is the head wife?' he asked.

A woman moved forward sulkily and bowed down before him. She was the woman who had been to Mecca and who breathed on people to make them well.

'Why is it,' my friend asked, 'that you wear the heavy veil? Did not the Sultan Abdul-Aziz allow you to wear the gossamer veil?'

'But his successor, Abdul-Hamid, gave us back the heavy veil,' she said. 'We are our husband's most priceless possessions. We must be kept under lock and key like all valuable things. So it is said in the Koran.'

'Nothing of the sort is said in the Koran,' said my friend boldly. 'As a woman, you have not read it.'

'I have heard,' she said, rather piteously.

'Then hear this. The veil is not pleasing to Allah. It was ordered by men and not by God. So you can take it off. Let me speak to one of the other women—the youngest, preferably.'

The old woman turned round and spoke like a recruiting sergeant to one of the girls who had been giggling hysterically most of the time, and she stepped forward.

'Do you not find the veil hot and uncomfortable? Let me look at your eyes.' My friend stepped forward and peered at the girl's eyes, which were barely visible. She looked more like a frightened rabbit than a woman as she looked at him.

'As I thought. You have squint eyes.

The rest of the women laughed.

'I was born so,' said the girl sadly.

'You were not,' retorted my friend. 'You were born straight-eyed, but the veil makes you squint by preventing you from using your eyes properly.'

The girl did not answer, neither did the old woman.

'Your husband gives you permission to unveil before us. We want you to be free.'

'You want us to sin,' said the old woman loudly.

Suddenly, a voice, clearly an English voice, spoke out of the crowd of women.

'It's no use,' she said in Turkish, 'I've done my best. It's no good talking to them. The only man who can do anything is Mustafa Kemal.'

And there and then she began taking off her veil and stripping off her pantaloons. Her clothes were European underneath.

'Who are you?' asked my friend in astonishment. The other women in the harem covered their faces with their hands. They must have thought that my friend had found a convert.

'I am Miss Smith of England,' she said, coming forward and throwing the heavy voluminous garments on to the floor. 'I've been trying to put some sense into the heads of these ladies. Their husband is an enlightened man. He told me that I would , break my heart trying to bring these necessary reforms. That's what I am, and who I am, and what I'm doing. I'm going to see Kemal himself.'

We introduced each other to Miss Smith solemnly. We didn't know what to say, and she laughed at our discomfiture.

'So we are all on the same good work,' she said in correct accents. 'I am glad to meet you. We are finding support everywhere. It's necessary, very necessary. I've lived here many years, you know. I know the people very well, and I can't bear this degradation much longer.'

'I am very pleased to know you,' said my friend in Turkish.

We had not had a chance to look at the other women, but when we did, we found them crouching on the floor.

'They did not expect to find me amongst them. I pretended I was dumb." It was an experiment, as I wanted to know exactly

what these women felt without coming to them as a stranger. I've been a governess, you know. I am fully conversant with the moods and habits of the Turkish women. But I'm going to see this Kemal Pasha. He isn't the same Kemal who was a tutor in the court of the Sultan, is he?'

'By no means,' my friend said promptly. 'He is a soldier. We call him Ghazi. He is a very great man.'

'Then he will not allow the veil for one moment longer. He will liberate the women.'

'That we don't know,' answered my friend. 'We have to find out. As yet he is busy with the campaign.'

'Where is that?' Miss Smith asked in a very governess-y tone of voice.

'The campaigh? Why, he's fighting the Greeks—he will march into Smyrna any time now.'

'Then I'll see him.' •

'But you can't—he's fighting.'

'But I must. I shall go there immediately. I shall see him if it is the last thing I do. . . .'

Miss Smith bowed primly to us, and was gone. We looked at each other in astonishment.

'Well, can you believe that? An Englishwoman pretending to be an inmate of a harem!' my friend exclaimed. 'Going off to see the Ghazi in the middle of a battle. What is it they say about mad dogs and Englishmen?'

The whole thing was like a dream. We left the harem to find our host.

'Did you know anything about her?' we questioned him.

He burst out laughing. 'So she revealed herself to you, did she? Isn't she amusing? She thought she could go into a harem and convert all the ladies to follow her to freedom. She certainly speaks the language well—but the wives were very suspicious. And that's that. I just met her saying she was going to see Kemal. What do you say to that?'

We treated the whole thing as a joke. It was preposterous. Why should Kemal see an English governness who wanted to release the women from the harems? Perhaps he preferred to do these thing slowly. No-one knew yet. There was no hint of policy. A

few of the more advanced Turks who joined him had promises from him of great reforms, but they had not come. Kemal could not be blamed, he was fighting for his country's existence.

I stayed a few weeks in Angora with my friends before returning to Istanbul. Need I say that I met Miss Smith again? The irrepressible Miss Smith was running a girl's school. I met her quite by chance in the house of a Turkish diplomat who was being accredited to one of the major powers shortly.

s We suffered a second introduction, and then explained that we had already met. Miss Smith described the circumstances amidst general laughter, and it wasn't until much later in the evening that I was able to approach her and ask her whether she had managed to see Kemal Pasha.

'Of course I did,' she said haughtily. 'Didn't I say I would?'

'But how did you get there, Miss Smith?' I asked, filled with curiosity.

'I rode there.'

'By train?'

'Who visits a commander of an army by train? I went by horse and cart.'

'And did he receive you?'

'Certainly. But not until after the battle. I saw him in bed. He had three ribs broken, and refused to go to hospital. He is a man after my own heart. You must not misunderstand me, Mr. Sava, although women are said to find the Ghazi very attractive. J am speaking of his mental qualities.'

' And did you have a chance to speak to him about the reforms you proposed?'

'I did.'

'And what did he say?'

'He said he was very busy, and that he would consider them. He didn't really have a very high opinion of women, so I tried to convert him. Deeds, he said, and not words were the proof he wanted. Naturally, in a free Turkey women would have a certain measure of freedom, he said, but he wasn't very sure whether they could be given the freedom all at once.'

'That's a very severe blow to your hopes.'

'Not at all. He is a very sensible sort of person for a man, and

I think he will do more than he promised. Besides, I have so many hopes that I'm not going to be put off.'

I was not sure whether this last sentence indicated that Miss Smith had no further desire to be questioned, but I said to her: 'May I ask you just one final question?'

'You may,' she said, adjusting her lace gloves and looking in her bag for a handkerchief.

'May I ask what you are going to do now?'

'I am going to Greece.'

'Good Heavens, what for?' I asked, surprised

'To see the Greek king.'

'But surely there is no woman problem in Greece? They have no harems?'

'I'm going about quite a different matter. You see, the Turkish armies are advancing at a great rate on Smyrna. There are hundreds of women and children there, if they are not evacuated, I don't know what will happen to them if the Turks come. You know the saying—"Where a Turk walks, the grass doesn't grow?" Well, Mustafa Kemal's army is not composed of very gentle men. Some of them have been accustomed to killing Christians whenever the opportunity presented itself.'

'But surely you could have drawn Kemal's attention to this problem of the women and children?'

'I told him about it, and he said that they were quite safe, but I knew he was uncertain. He was very glad when I told him that I was going to Greece to speak to the king. He confessed that it would be very difficult for him to do anything to prevent a massacre once the troops occupied Smyrna. The hatred against the Greeks is very intense—as against all Europeans.'

So Miss Smith went to Greece. I heard from someone that she went to see the Greek king, but that at the time, His Majesty was at a Court ball, and refused to see her. She had to be satisfied with an under-secretary, and when she told the story he refused to believe her. She managed at last to see the king, and all he did was to laugh. Che left Greece with that laugh ringing in her ears. And where do you think she went?

She went to Smyrna.

She arrived there a week before the Turks arrived, and urged the authorities to evacuate the children. They refused, so she went round gathering all the children under her care and shut them, together with herself, in a large disused convent on top of a hill.

Her prophecy came true. The Turks entered Smyrna, and massacred every Greek they could find. They killed the women and the few children that remained. Then they attacked the convent where Miss Smith and a thousand children were hiding, and she and the children perished.

It is said that this deed of Miss Smith's convinced Kemal Pasha more than anything else of the inherent valour of women, and he who loved all valiant things insisted that Women should be set free from the harems. It was education that they wanted, and then they would become equals with men, he said.

Little do the women of modern Turkey know to whom they are indebted for their freedom! Perhaps, one day, when more is known of Miss Smith of England, a tablet will be put up in her memory. She was a brave woman, who, rather than desert from the post of duty, perished with her charges, confident that the 'deed' Kemal had asked of her would be sufficient for him to give the order that brought about emancipation.

What of the Superman himself, the builder of modern Turkey? Would he, on our European assessment, pass as a great man?

I would say that by our standards he was probably the greatest constructive genius of our times. Had he dominated the European scene as he dominated the Turkish, our political life might have been very different. For here was a man who was a dictator, but who insisted on democratic government, and whose systematic education of his people in the ways of democracy brought about a real consciousness of the value of human freedom. .

A few statements made at random, a few sketches of Turkish rule before his time, will not explain the personality of a truly great man, but they may give an insight into the Turkish character, and such an insight is important in these days when Turkey is our faithful friend in the Near East—perhaps our only friend there.

Great men are often judged by their vices first. Let us begin, therefore, from that end.

He was not personally ambitious. He was not an opportunist. Had he been one, he could have had the throne—the Sultanate and the Caliphate were his for the asking. Like Caesar, he refused the crown that was offered to him.

He was a man of war; a very successful general who said of himself: 'A good general ought to be a good civil administrator and legislator. Therefore, you cannot pass your verdict upon a general till you have seen how he can transform his troops into an army of peace.'

I saw him only once personally, and I shall never forget his face. It was weather-beaten, hard, sometimes cruel even, and his eyes had a great penetrating power. They looked like the eyes of a lion, fierce and burning, but his voice had a warm melody whenever he spoke.

It was at a reception, a very small one in Ankara, when Turkey and Russia had signed a treaty of friendship which was to last to our times.

I heard him express himself rather forcefully to an English lady iournalist who commented that she was sorry not to be able to see the wife of a friend of hers, because she was being accompanied by some menfolk.

'This nonsense is going to stop,' Kemal said loudly enough for his entourage to hear. 'Harems, veils, small windows, and the whole idiotic heritage of Byzantium must go. How are we expected to build up a democracy when at least half of our population are slaves? Women slaves! I promise you that in two years' time every woman will have her face uncovered, and will work by the side of men. The men will wear hats. The day is gone when clothes used to be the symbol of religion. The fez, which symbolized a faith disliked and despised by the West, must go, and all the fanaticism that went with it.'

How the ghost of Miss Smith must have rejoiced!

But there was no-one present who believed that it would be possible to carry out the reform of customs that took many centuries to form. They did not know Kemal Pasha!

He spoke warmly of the conception of family life.

'Since I was a child I have seen the need of building up families on a solid foundation of a real home. The men we need in a democracy must be bred at home, and now that we can free ourselves for ever from foreign domination, we can put such reforms into practice.'

Kemal Pasha never said 'I', he always used 'we'. He knew that he had the real heart of modern Turkey behind him despite the clamours and protests.

Someone made a remark to the effect that they considered the veil the most attractive form of headdress ever invented for women, and Kemal was quick to retort.

'We cannot remain in the Dark Ages just to supply foreign journalists with copy.'

When someone mentioned the priests—the hodjas—he exclaimed: 'How right you are! We've been sat on by priests for too long. Our reverend friends must learn to behave themselves. If they refuse—well, they can always go and join the Sultan.'

The Sultan Vahideddine had fled, and so had the Caliph. Mustafa Kemal had little affection for the priesthood, which was often ignorant and corrupt. He blamed them for keeping Turkey in the darkness so long.

'I have no religion; and there are times when I wish all religions could be drowned.'

This was his personal opinion. He enlarged on it later when he said: 'He is a weak ruler who needs religion to uphold his government; it is as if he would catch his people in a trap. My people are going to learn the principles of democracy, the dictates of truth, and the teachings of science. Superstition must go. Let them worship as they will; as far as I am concerned, every man can follow his conscience, providing, of course, this "conscience" does not interfere with sane reason, or make him act against the liberty of his fellow-men.'

I can say this about religion in Turkey, however. Even in the bad old times there was freedom of conscience. There were too many Christians and other sects in the Ottoman Empire to make bigotry flourish, but I was very glad when I saw that the festival of Mouharem was forbidden by Kemal Pasha.

I myself have not witnessed this ceremony in Turkey, but I have seen it in Persia. The festival is supposed to symbolize the martyrdom of Mahomet's grandson, and once every year all males—all sufficiently fanatic, that is—would put on white garments and march through the main street of Persia's capital, Teheran, wailing, and carrying frightful-looking idols (although images are forbidden, these were a sort of 'mascot', I believe), yelling out the martyr's name, and slashing themselves with swords or long knives across their foreheads. It was an awful sight, and it was not until late evening that they ceased this pastime and returned home to have their wounds bandaged. Quite a number of young men died and were regarded as martyrs themselves—martyrs for goodness knows what. As I say, Kemal suppressed this jolly little festival, and anyone found carrying out the gruesome ceremony of cutting himself on the forehead, be it ever so lightly, was punished.

The renaissance which came over Turkey under Kemal's leadership was one of the most astonishing in the whole of history—and perhaps the most heroic. How a small band of determined men left Istanbul and went with their leader into the mountains of Anatolia and slaved and fought for their country's independence, is an epic tale.

Everything was against them. The climate in Anatolia did not help very much. It blew blizzards most of the winter of 1922. The people were poor. The army was very badly equipped, and the shells and ammunition which Kemal Pasha was able to buy from the European manufacturers were sold to him at outrageously high prices. But he had no alternative source to buy from. No wonder Kemal did not have much love for the foreigners who tried to batten on his country's need.

It was a miracle, that campaign against Greece. Greece had the support of the Allies, and had the presence of the Sultan and his small coterie to do damage to Kemal's fight. The French were ready to attack him from Syria. But Kemal won through hard fighting and forced marches. The Turks proved themselves to be wonderful fighters, as tributes from soldiers who fought them at Gallipoli testify.

Kemal's answer when asked whether he ever lost courage was typical of the man.

'Not for one moment. Fear is always fatal. Make up your mind what to do, and do it. Demoralized as they were, I knew the Turks. They only needed a leader; one who knew how to trust them and bring out their magnificent qualities. Please do not exaggerate what I have been able to do. The best workman in the world, the finest general in the world, can achieve nothing without good material. I believed that my material was good. To use it was no more than my duty.'

When I was in Turkey, Kemal Pasha had not yet had the opportunity of forming a democratic parliament, but some interesting experiments were tried out. Most people know of the historic occasion when Kemal Pasha grew tired of the fact that there was no opposition in parliament, and ordered his most capable Minister to form such a group. This group tried hard to work up an opposition, but found it very difficult.

'But why do you agree all the time?' Kemal asked them.

'Because we think the measures taken by the government in which we formerly participated are right. What are we to do? Perhaps you ought to go into opposition?'

Kemal Pasha laughed, and formally incorporated them back again into the People's Party.

A great measure of democracy was allowed in this parliament, which was formed of three hundred and eight deputies, because most bills and acts were thrashed out first in committee. That may explain why most bills put forward by the government are passed unanimously. The bill receives its sanction in committee, the members of which are the Cabinet and certain members selected by the deputies themselves. Cabinet ministers are known to have fallen as a result of an unfavourable report of the committee on their activities. •

There was only one real opposition, really, and that was the clerical opposition, but in recent years their strength has weakened. They were not represented in parliament, and the opposition was chiefly confined to the priests and to the elderly believers who did not like Kemal's sudden changes.

Many stories were spread of Kemal's Pasha profligacy, and undoubtedly some of them were true. The eccentricities of great men are proverbial, and so long as they do not harm the country, little can be said either in defence or attack. A few peccadillos more or less would not have made Kemal Pasha a bigger or a lesser man. He was a giant and embraced life with characteristic vigour, the good and the bad mingled in his embrace. His love of drink was exaggerated—his love for women was by far the stronger passion.

The task of feminine emancipation is perhaps the most interesting of the Ghazi's many reforms. The rapidity with which he worked astonished everybody, and the estimate he himself made that within two years he would have the Turkish women emancipated became true in less than eighteen months.

A great storm arose from the foreign press when a number of reforms were passed. A lot of crocodile tears were shed by 'religious' people, but as an eminent Turk said: 'Why do you expect us to be governed by the Koran when you yourselves do not follow the teachings of the New Testament word for word?'

Kemal Pasha did not listen to the protests. He went straight ahead with his task.

'How was it possible,' he said when he granted freedom to women, 'to establish a democracy with the women in bondage, and the whole social Outlook paralysed by the harem? Instead of being free to help in the work of reconstruction, women were kept in idleness; the whole system was ridiculous, it just had to cease.'

Intelligent Turks the world over were never enamoured of the harem. They were thoroughly ashamed of the words 'harem' and 'polygamy', as much as they disliked the fez. The attention of Europeans was drawn to Turkey in no favourable way by the constant jokes about the Turk's home life. He was a 'native' to them.

Polygamy, it is true, even in the bad old days, was rare. It was allowed, however, and among the rich it was practised to a certain extent. Kemal abolished this. He gave women the same rights as they have under the Swiss Code, and by marrying

himself, he was able to show the exact role a woman could play in the state and in society. His wife was a highly cultured, charming woman, a leader of the crusade of emancipation who did much to influence the feminine movement for freedom many years after she was divorced from Kemal. She accompanied him everywhere. She went to balls, to official ceremonies, to parliament, and the army manoeuvres.

This revolution is very curious when one considers how hard women had to fight for suffrage in England. In Turkey it was given to them by an enlightened ruler without any strife or struggle with politicians. The only people who were offended were the clerics, and Kemal had already offended them too much to make any real difference. An editor of a newspaper, *Acsham*, was sent to prison for publishing a cartoon showing women's freedom as a balloon from which, as it rose in the air, was thrown away its ballast—'Feminine Virtues'.

The change in the lives of Turkish women can only be understood by comparison. Here is a description which a Turkish woman gives of herself in the days of the Red Sultan, Abdul-Hamid.

'We are idle and useless, and therefore very unhappy. Women are sorely needed everywhere; there is work that we can all do, but the customs of our country will not allow us to do it.

'Had we possessed the blind fatalism of our grandmothers, we should probably have suffered less, but with culture, as so often happens, we began to doubt the wisdom of the faith which should have been our consolation.

'We analysed our life, and discovered nothing but injustice and cruel, unnecessary sorrow. Resignation and culture cannot go together. Resignation has been the ruin of Turkey. How can I impress upon you the anguish of our everyday life—our continual haunting dread; no-one can imagine the sorrow of a Turkish woman's life but those who, like ourselves, have led this life.

'Sorrow indeed belongs to the Turkish women, they have bought the "exclusive rights" with their very souls. Could the history of any country be more awful than that of the reign in which we are living? Was not the reign of Hamid more awful

than any fiction? You will say I am morbid; perhaps I am, but how can it be otherwise when the best years of my life have been poisoned by the horrors of the Hamidian regime?

'You ask how we spend the day. Dreaming, principally. What else can we do? The view of the Bosphorus, with the ships coming and going, is the greatest consolation to us captives. The ships are fairy godmothers to us, who will take us away one day, somewhere we know not—but we gaze at the beautiful Bosphorus through lattice windows, and thank Allah for at least this pleasure in life. .. .

'Unlike most Turkish women, I write. This correspondence is the dream side of my existence, and in moments of extra discouragement and revolt, for we are always unhappy, I take refuge in this correspondence addressed to no-one in particular. And yet in writing I risk my life.

'What do I care? Listen to this—how I hate Western education and culture for the suffering it has brought me! Why should I have been born a Turk rather than one of those free Europeans about whom I read?

'Why should fate have chosen certain persons rather than others for this eternal suffering?

'Judge what would have happened to me had my innocent; ravings fallen into the hands of the vigilant spies of Abdul-Hamid. I have to hide my dream existence with as much care as if it were a plot to kill his Imperial Majesty himself.

'Sometimes we sing, accompanying our songs on the Turkish lute. But our songs are all in a minor key, our landscapes are all dim with sadness, and sometimes the futility and unending sorrow of our lives rise up and choke us, and the tears flow; but often, our life is too soul-crushing even for tears, and nothing but death can change it. . ..

'Like a true daughter of my race, I start the day with a good resolution: "I will do something to show that I have at least counted the hours as they drag themselves past!" Night comes, my Dadi [old nurse] comes to undress me, and braid up my hair... I tumble on to my wide divan, and am soon asleep, worn out with the exertion I have not even made.

'Will no-one great enough come to change this futile regime?'

That unhappy maiden's prayer was answered. She was the tenth or twentieth wife of Abdul-Hamid the Damned, and her helpless little manuscript was found long after he had died and his son had fled.

The change that Kemal brought about with regard to the fez was great. His methods were not like those of Peter the Great, who, when he tried to make his Russians shave off their beards and put on court dress, had to take a couple of regiments of sharpshooters with him. Kemal did it in another way.

He preferred to rely on his personality and powers of oratory rather than on regiments of sharpshooters. He took a secretary with him, and, putting on a white panama hat, he marched into the most Turkish of Turkish cities, and there stood up—clean-shaven and dressed as a European. Soon a hostile crowd gathered, but when they recognized the Ghazi, they became silent and listened to what he had to say.

This is what he said.

'A civilized and international dress is what is necessary for our great nation. We shall have it. We shall wear shoes and boots, trousers, waistcoat, shirt, collar and tie, a jacket, and, to complete it all, a headdress with a brim. This headdress is called a hat. To those who hesitate, I say that they are both ignorant and foolish. If it is right to wear a fez, which is Greek, why should it be wrong to wear a hat?

'Those people who hamper themselves with childish ideas, whose mentality belongs to the Middle Ages, and who try to fight against civilization—these people must meet their fate—servitude and failure. But the people of the Turkish republic have broken their chains, their heroism is unprecedented in history, and they are determined to live the life of a civilized nation.'

The men only refused to wear the 'gaiour' headgear. The 'gaiour' was the Unbeliever, the European. The foreign Press at the time had some unkind things to say of Kemal Pasha, but a *Turk* explained it this way: 'Please remember that the hat is a

symbol of a new civilization; a sign of allegiance to the new Republic. By refusing to wear it in opposition to the government's order, and wearing instead a fez, which is now the symbol of reaction and allegiance to the Sultan, one is guilty of high treason, and must be punished accordingly.'

This is an explanation from one side. I suppose the same reaction takes place in Turkey at the sight of a fez as might be awakened here at the sight of a swastika flag flying over the Houses of Parliament.

Sometimes the simple peasants kiss their European hats on removing them, in the same way as they used to kiss the Koran. When asked the reason for this affection for their headgear, they say: 'It was the Ghazi's order; the symbol of the new civilization he is building for us. It means that I can now go for a walk with my wife—she is my companion, and I must be kind to her and not forget to kiss her hand when I leave home.'

The disappearance of polygamy has certainly removed a great deal of jealousy.

Madame Halide Hanoum, a writer whose name has been carried beyond Turkey, has a very descriptive passage which seems to match admirably with the lament of Abdul-Hamid's wife which I quoted some pages back.

'When a woman suffers because of her husband's secret love affairs,' she writes, 'the pain may be keen, but its quality is different. When a second wife enters her home and usurps half her power, she is a public martyr, and feels herself an object of curiosity and pity. However humiliating this may be, the position gives a woman unquestioned prominence and isolation.

'Whatever theories people may hold as to what should or should not be the ideal tendencies as regards the family constitution, there remains one irrefutable fact about the human heart, to whichever sex it belongs—it is almost organic in us to suffer when we have to share the object of our love, sexual or otherwise. There are as many degrees or forms of jealousy as there are degrees and forms of human affection. But even supposing time and education are able to tone down this very elemental feeling, the family problem will not be solved. The nature

and the consequences of the suffering of a wife who, in the same house, shares a husband lawfully with a second wife and equal partner, differ both in kind and in degree from that of a woman who shares him with a temporary mistress. In the former case, the suffering extends to children, servants, and relations—two whole groups whose interests are from the very nature of the case more or less antagonistic, and who are living in a destructive atmosphere of mutual distrust and a struggle for supremacy.

'On my own childhood polygamy and its results produced a very ugly and distressing impression. The constant tension in our home made every simple family ceremony seem like physical pain, and the consciousness of it hardly ever left me.

'The rooms of the two wives were opposite to each other, and my father visited them in turn. When it was Teize's turn, everyone in the house showed a tender sympathy for Abla, while, when it was her turn, no-one heeded the obvious grief of Teize. She would leave the table with her eyes full of tears, and one could be sure of finding her in her room crying bitterly, or fainting.

'I remember very clearly my feeling of intense bitterness against polygamy—it was a curse, like a poison which our unhappy household could not get out of its system.

' I was so full of Teize's suffering, and was so constantly haunted by her thin, pale face, tear-stained and distorted with grief even when she was kneeling on her prayer rug, that this vision had hitherto been a barrier between me and Abla. Yet the one emotion of sudden pity for Abla was as natural to my heart as the other.'

Very little comment is needed on polygamy, but the laws of marriage and divorce as enunciated by the Koran, and which were changed by Kemal Pasha, are worth quoting.

From chapter iv, verse 3, we have:

'Marry what seems good to you of women, by twos and threes; and if ye fear ye cannot be equitable, then only one, or what your right hand possesses.' (That is female slaves.) 'That keeps you nearer to not being partial.'

Admirable for a nomadic people, undoubtedly, but it did not serve modern Turkey.

Here is another. Chapter ii, verse 226:

'Those that swear off from their women, they must wait four months, but if they break their vow, God is forgiving and merciful. And if they intend to divorce them, God hears and knows.

'Divorce may happen twice. Then keep them in reason, or let them go in kindness. It is not lawful for you to take from them anything of what you have given them, unless both fear they cannot keep within God's bounds.'

Verse 230:

'But if he divorce her (a third time) she shall not be lawful to him after that until she marry another husband, but if he divorce her too, it is no crime in them to come together again, if they think they can keep within God's bounds. These are God's bounds which he explains to a people who know.'

No wonder, therefore, that the emancipation of women has been followed by a religious reformation!

When I was in Turkey in 1923 the hodjas were very unpopular. Things have changed, quietened down, and had a chance to form in the years that have followed, no doubt. But the few officials I met in Turkey in those days were very strong in their condemnation of the sort of religious extortion which was practised by the priests and the dervishes. I remember that the remarks of one official about them were very unflattering.

'Dervishes belong to the circus, and that's where we are going to put them. All this swallowing of swords and fire are known to you European's at your fairs, but .our simple peasants took them as signs from God. They made money out of us. Nowadays, if a man wants to be a priest he doesn't go to live in the Medresseys and have a good time without any supervision. He has to go to the university and take a course in theological studies. I can assure you that since this reform has come into practice very few young men are choosing the priesthood as a career.'

How quickly the old Turkey changed into the new! I was there for barely six months, and when I left I had already seen my first American film—a dreadful picture in which Miss Mary Pickford just escaped that awful Thing which is Worse than

Death. That was my first impression of wild western civilization, and I must confess that I and the Turkish audience did not think much of it. But that was in 1923!

If Kemal was a dictator, he was an enlightened one, a rare quality to find in dictators. His primary wish was to lift up his people from the bondage of servitude and ignorance so that they might become equals in a democracy. He knew that democracy was impossible without education, and he set out to give them the necessary education.

Other men when they have seized power refrained from educating the people. They have kn6wn that education brings discontent and a desire for greater freedom. Kemal knew this too. But he also knew that with education, freedom became a necessity, and not merely a history-book idea.

In the schools he established an enlightened regime. He forbade corporal punishment, and developed greater understanding between the teachers and the pupils. The curriculums were advanced to include languages and science, and religion was treated more like a history lesson. It was secularized.

But his educational reforms did not stop there. He opened evening classes where peasants and artisans could study and catch up with their children in knowledge of how to read and write and perform simple arithmetical exercises. Indeed, his reforms went to the length of compelling all servants—house servants, that is—to attend these evening schools, and many a mistress had to cook her own and her husband's supper herself.

Consistent with his desire to promote feminine emancipation, Kemal encouraged women to become writers, musicians, engineers, and doctors, while quite a number of women went into the legal profession. He sternly forbade any 'Women's Movement', however, insisting that women should be free to compete with men, and not label themselves as 'women engineers'. As he said: 'Must "woman" be a plea for mercy?'

And what has he done with Smyrna, the city which was razed to the ground by the conquering Turks, the city where Miss Smith of England died to prove to Kemal the worth of women?

It has been completely rebuilt. Sanitary improvements make one think that one isn't in the East at all, but at some resort on the Riviera. Gone is the filth and the stench of the open bazaars. They are still there, but the food is carefully wrapped and guarded from flies. Everything is hygienic, antiseptic—modern.

It was in Smyrna that I heard my first Turkish concert. Real Turkish music used to be played on something called an 'oud'. It was a guitar of a kind, played with the end of a feather, making weird, high-pitched noises, apparently very satisfying to the old Turkish ear. This instrument is now only heard in the villages, or combined in an orchestra, but the real Turkish music and love-songs have gone. These were usually sung through the nose and produced a most melancholy sound, haunting, but never melodious, to the European ear. Composers have now arisen who have adapted the music of their country and combined it with Western ideas on the subject. The results are striking and original.

Their poetry, too, had a great impetus under Kemal's rule. It was nationalistic, of course, to begin with, but when the better times set in it grew more mellow and serene. A learned professor whose remark that Turkish poetry at its best was 'seldom more than pretty and graceful; while often comparatively unknown Persians touched the sublime; and some of the finest poetry in the world has been produced by the Persians', may be right, but the renaissance that has come to Turkey will undoubtedly give her poets the chance they have been waiting for. It must have been hard to sing in servitude. Now it will be easy in freedom.

But in 1938 Kemal Ataturk died. He died in the Dolma Bagtche of an affliction of the liver. As a patient, he was probably very difficult, but his iron constitution held out for long, despite the excesses he put upon it.

They say his private life was not without blemish. There are many tales to tell, but who would profit from them if they were told? He loved life broadly, and he lived it fiercely. He made out of a small truncated nation a fine homogeneous country. That is his glory and his fame. He had no need to ask mercy of history. He was probably contemptuous of fame. He served his country as few men have served theirs, and what he has left will endure

long after **the names of** the world's dictators and tyrants are forgotten.

He was a tyrant with a difference; a dictator who sowed the seed of destruction of all dictatorships. And he was the liberator of the women of Turkey, he and Miss Smith of England. For him they raised a memorial, but for her? To her they gave the wide spaces of oblivion.

Chapter 3—Rome

THE AXIS

Travellers into Italy all know Mentone. It lies in a small province at the foot of the Savoy Alps which is divided into two equal halves between France and Italy, but quite recently it has been reduced to bricks and mortar by French artillery, and Mussolini has claimed a great 'alpine' victory, which he maintains will one day rank as one of the greatest battles of all time. Hannibal won his victories with elephants, but the Fascist dictator won this 'famous battle' by propaganda.

I did not think, when I entered Italy from France, that this small, inconspicuous little town would one day be written down in the annals of Fascism as a landmark of their valour. The only difference between the essentially French and Italian aspects of the town were the different uniforms of the Alpini and the friendly French gendarmes. I knew that I had entered a land of the dictators when my luggage was turned over scrupulously for revolvers, bombs, dynamite, and English newspapers. A harmless copy of the *Daily Telegraph* was confiscated, and the customs officer seemed well pleased. I expect he was going to read it himself to get the first piece of authentic news for some time. The Italian Press at this time was full of the impending visit of Hitler to Rome, and the trained journalists of the *Popolo d'Italia* and the *Corriere delta Sera* were bursting into paeans over the strength ening of the Anti-Comintern Pact of November 1937.

Two months previously Mussolini had fallen asleep on the Brenner Pass, and Hitler had marched into Austria, and the Italians were wondering what the new orientation in Italian

policy was going to be. The one thing they feared most was war, and the more intelligent of them (and there were many in Italy at this time who understood the dangers of the Axis) wondered how long it would be before Italy came completely under German influence.

What seemed to puzzle people most was the easy way in which Mussolini surrendered the role of Dictator Number One and became Number Two. In 1934 he had rushed troops to the Brenner to prevent German expansion in Austria, and had earned a reputation of Tearless realism' amongst his people.

'The fact is, that Papa Benito is growing old,' people told me, 'and prefers to leave foreign policy in the hands of Ciano, who, in turn, is in the hands of Edda.'

Edda was Mussolini's eldest daughter, a lady of some character. She suddenly took a fancy to the Germans, which malicious tongues explained in terms other than political. But what Italians feared most was that Mussolini in his hatred and fear of the democracies (although why he should have feared them after the Sanctions failure, and Mr. Chamberlain's frequent attacks of gout and appeasement, it is difficult to see) was driven to seek support from Germany. He did not seem to realize, or apparently decided that since he was bound to play a secondary role, he would rather play it under the shadow of his 'big brother' than under the encouragement of the benevolent businessman from Birmingham.

Very few people indeed were bluffed by the *Impero*, and when Albania was occupied on Good Friday, 1939, there was positive alarm lest the democracies made a stand. Of course, the policy of non-intervention in Spain was stretched without much imagination to cover Albania as well, and Mussolini was able to add a strategic point to his 'empire'. I am able to summarize the feelings of Italians at this time in three conversations which I had at different times during my stay in the north of Italy and in Rome.

My first informant was a captain in the Fascist Militia. He was of middle-class origin, and therefore rather touchy on the subject of 'pluto-democracy'. I remember at the time open hostility between the Militia—the political army of Fascism—and the

Army. The Army, generally speaking, is monarchist, and therefore traditionalist, but the Militia is definitely revolutionary in the Fascist meaning of the word. It tries whenever possible to bring 'glory' to the regime. Thus, it was the first to land in Albania, where the opposition was slight. Its 'volunteers' were later to be found on the parade ground in Madrid, but as a fighting force it was negligible, and earned the contempt of the regular Army because of the swashbuckling attitude of its officers, who wore the gaudy uniform after a few weeks' training, and whose experience of real fighting was nil. Remembering all this will help one to understand the point of view of my informant, and enable one to follow the probable course of future events.

In passing, I might mention that when this young captain of the Militia and I entered the cafe, the atmosphere of the place altered immediately. A few people stood up and shot out their arms, while others began to speak in a lower voice. My friend, on the other hand, bore himself with unconcealed arrogance towards the 'civilians'. He himself had been some petty clerk in a government office before he was advanced to the rank of captain after a number of years' 'service' (parade ground service, principally) in the Militia.

'I would very much like to hear your opinion', I said, when we had sat down, and he had commanded sufficient awe on all sides to allow himself to return to normal and relax his jaw, 'about the coming visit of Herr Hitler. How would you explain it in terms of Fascist policy?'

'It barely needs explaining,' he said, continuing in his overbearing attitude. He said this in a loud voice, but seeing that I was quite unmoved by his dramatics, he lowered his voice a little, and with a small smile of condescension, said: 'Of course, I am forgetting. It is difficult for you, as you live in a democratic country, to understand the New Man which we are making in Italy. Your Mr. Chamberlain is making a mistake if he thinks that he is *giving* us anything. We are no longer suppliants at the European tables. We take what we want.'

'Quite,' I said, without showing what I meant exactly.

'Quite,' he emphasized. 'When we took Abyssinia, you tried to frustrate us with Sanctions, and see where it got you. You bought

our enmity for the sake of the lawyers and idealists at Geneva. You did not understand our historic mission in the Mediterranean. You could not understand our implacable determination not to tolerate republicanism and Bolshevism in Spain.'

'But surely', I said, 'our government has been most considerate in "these matters. Hasn't it obliged you with a recognition of your conquest of Abyssinia, and assisted you in forming a Non-Intervention Committee? What more do you want?'

'It's a matter of psychology', he said sententiously. Whenever the Fascists begin to argue about 'psychology' you know immediately that they are going to be rude. It's your psychology they are referring to. 'The fact is that you. acquiesced because you were afraid. You are afraid of the new virile nations of Germany and Italy.'

'You mean we should have stood up to you?'

'Yes,' he said blandly. 'We don't pretend that we could have fought you and France alone in 1936. But you were not prepared. So you are going to pay for it.'

'But Mr. Chamberlain believes that you will reach a pitch of saturation. You will have a stomach-ache with all the pink cake that he has let you eat, and you'll beg lis for an emetic'

'Then you don't understand the fundamentals of Fascism. Nor does he. We must go forward. We need land and wealth to give our people a better living.'

'But surely you could give your people a better living if you didn't spend so much money on arms,' I said, with an air of innocence.

'A growing population needs more space. How are we to get it if not by arms?' he asked, with an ill-concealed sneer.

'Firstly by negotiation; secondly by the exploitation of the areas of empire which you already hold.'

'Fascists don't believe in negotiation. We tried it once at Versailles, and what did we get? As for exploiting the areas of empire—well, we don't see why we should work the desert when both France and England have spaces which go unused.'

'But how will you be able to get those spaces, unless by negotiation? You don't think Britain and France won't fight for their possessions? You must not trust Mr. Chamberlain's good heart

too much. So far he has only given away other people's territory. He will have to ask the British people when it comes to dividing their property, and a general election might kill your golden goose.'

My acquaintance looked disdainfully at me.

'Your innocence is surprising,' he said slowly. * We'll fight for what we want.'

'Ah, that's better,' I admitted. 'Hence the new alliance with Germany.'

'Yes. That much you can see.'

'And after that?'

'Hitler will make his claims and so shall we. Either you give in, or we go to war together.'

'That's fine,' I said. 'But what will happen if you win?'

My friend was puzzled at the question. He looked at me and screwed up his brow.

'We will give a new order to Europe.'

'But who are the "we"? Which end of the Axis is the dog and which is the tail?'

I'm afraid I had annoyed him with that question. The Fascists of this period had not quite realized that they were from henceforth the 'junior' partners in Hitler's little game.

'Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy are friends. They will behave as comrades on the way to victory, and it is a typical trick of the western democracies to divide us by suggesting that Germany will take a dominating role over Italy. We resent the imputation.'

'You may resent it. But you must remember that as far as Europe is concerned, Germany will do most of the fighting, unless you attempt an adventure in the Balkans against Russia. And he who fights, eats most—isn't that a good way of turnings the old Marxist axiom of "he who works, eats" to a Fascist tenet?'

'Admittedly. But Italy has very few European claims. She is not in Germany's position. With the break-up of Europe we shall obtain important colonial concessions.'

'Then you are doomed: you admit to playing a secondary role in Europe?'

'You don't seem to see that Germany and Italy are friends. What does it matter who plays the dominating role so long as both sides are satisfied?'

I wasn't going to let him get awzy with that.

But what happens if Italy isn't satisfied? I mean, just suppose for one moment that certain attractive places in Africa happen to be interesting to Hitler, although you have coveted them for long? What will happen?'

'We can always establish a joint control, can't we?' he retaliated.

'You mean German control. Be honest. What would prevent Hitler from taking what he wants and giving you only the scraps?'

'I can only repeat that friendship and the common ideology of Fascism and Nazism would prevent him.'

'But isn't that rather an idealistic attitude to take up? What would realists say to that? You don't believe that the democracies would do anything out of friendship, and you call it fear when the democracies satisfy your appetite; but you expect Hitler to consider his friendship for you when he has all the power and his armies placed in every strategic point? If you were wholly honest with yourself, you'd say this: "We can't get enough from England and France. Let Hitler destroy one or both, and we will have gained from an alliance with him. In any case, we are doomed to dance to whatever tune the strongest of the victors at a future peace conference may play—be it Germany or England or France."

'I can see a logic in that. But to imagine that Hitler will do anything for you out of pure friendship, is like hoping that the alligator will eat your friends first and leave you to the last. That is your position. You were able to threaten and bully the democracies, but those methods won't succeed with Hitler. You are contemptuous of us, because we prefer peace. We only prefer it because we know what war is. You've shown us that in Abyssinia and in Spain.'

'You are weak!'

'Then all the more reason for you to support **us. If the weak** win with your aid, you'll be the victor at the peace conference. If Hitler wins, you'll get what he gives **you** and no **more.**'

I am afraid I Confused my friend rather thoroughly. He was compelled to take refuge in the usual arguments of Fascists driven into a corner. He proved logically that Hitler was Italy's friend, and refused to see that he would ever want to dominate her. I left him fuming in a high dudgeon, and I am certain that if I hadn't been a very good friend of his father he would have exercised his Militia powers and had me arrested on some pretext or other. This is a favourite trick with foreigners whose opinions they dislike. They put you in a cell for four or five hours, and then apologize and say It has all been a mistake[1].

My next conversation took place with the captain's father. "He was a much more enlightened man, an industrialist, and a man who had lived in France and England for some time. His cynicism was refreshing after the naivete of his son.

When we sat down to dinner he observed that I was more silent than usual.

'Ah,' he said, 'the depression is settling over the democracies, I see. Surely you don't mind the two friends shaking hands in Rome's beautiful sunshine, do you?'

'Not at all,' I answered. 'But it hurts me to see a beautiful country invaded by the barbarians. Yesterday they pulled the beards of your venerable senators who sat before the Capitol; to-day they are shaking hands with them. Both are actions of contempt.'

'True,' said my friend. 'But, you see, in those days Rome had geese to warn her of the secret approach of her enemies. Nowadays, even the geese aren't allowed to have any opinions. They can shout "Duce, Duce!" but that doesn't scare anyone.'

'But what does your average Italian think of it all?' I asked earnestly.

'He hasn't been allowed to think independently for a long time, and he has ceased to read the papers, except the comic ones, so he'll have no opinion. He will enjoy the carnival while it lasts. The show will please him. The streets will be very clean for the occasion. He will have an unpaid holiday—what more does a man want?'

'But doesn't anyone think of the future?'

'No. What future is there to think of? It's being looked after

by Edda and Ciano, isn't it? And hasn't the future become a family affair? I've just heard that the Ciano family is going to celebrate the arrival of their fortune at a billion-lire mark. They are sensible people. When you can celebrate over a billion lire to-day, why should you bother about the future? The future has a convenient way of settling itself without the aid of the Fascists. And, in any case, what future is there for Italy as Hitler's call-boy?'

'Why call-boy?' I asked, amused at the new appellation.

'But don't you know? Mussolini's future role will be to call conferences together to "restrain" his wild partner. You mark my words, the two of them are going to play a very interesting game shortly. Mussolini has been cast in the role of a moderate to bluff the democracies. He will promise to "use his influence" with Hitler whenever Hitler's terms become outrageous, and thus accomplish the recognition of those terms. "No, no," he will say to Hitler, "you must not want Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and the Ukraine. That's too greedy of you. But you can have Austria and Czechoslovakia. Be moderate, like me." I promise you that this is going to be their next trick.'

I admired the perspicacity of my friend, and said so.

'You know,' he said, 'it's a wonderful thing sometimes to have no liberty of thought or Press. You can then form your own ideas.'

'But aren't you in the P.N.F.—Parte Nazionale Fascista?' I asked.

He pointed ruefully to the badge in the lapel of his coat.

'Yes,' he said, 'P.N.F.—is that what you call it? Shall I tell you what we say? *Per Necessita della Famiglia!* By reason of necessity for the family! Don't think that everyone who carries around a pin with the fasces on it is a Fascist. There are more friends 01 democracy in Italy than you imagine. The trouble is to get them to reveal themselves. A few brave souls have tried, and the result has been the "islands". And, of course, it's no good hoping that we can change the foreign or domestic policy of the country, because we can't. Our chance will come after a disastrous war. Your job is to give us that disastrous war. Defeat us, we beg you. Bomb us. Destroy our cities. Your fight will be our fight, and in more than one home will there be prayers said for you.

'You see,' he said, smiling. 'The Germans make one think of one's prayers. Here in this city I've seen them going about in cars as if they were conquerors. We don't want to see the Eternal City as a picnic colony for Strength-through-Joyists and the hand-picked Nazis.'

'Tell me candidly,' I said, 'what are your preparations like? Are you ready for war?'

'No. I'll tell you a story which sounds apocryphal but which I know for a fact to be true. You know I make government uniforms, don't you? Well, in 1936, when Mussolini sent troops to the Brenner and called up the reservists, large stocks of uniforms were needed. The Fascists had made special preparations for such an emergency. They had stored away hundreds of thousands of these uniforms, but when they came to open the storehouses they found the uniforms cut—but not stitched together! So Mussolini's reserves had nothing to wear.

'That is typical of the regime. Things get half done, and on the surface everything looks magnificent. There are no more beggars in the streets of our towns, but I assure you that's only because the police have orders to arrest and imprison beggars. There's much more poverty that you can't see because of the marble statues Mussolini has dug up. You see, the whole system is built to support his cohorts, and nothing else. It's the supporters of Fascism, people like me with party badges in their lapels, who are able to make a living. You don't know what the other poor devils who haven't got these tin passports have to go through!'

'But, tell me, we in the democracies have always imagined that Fascism drew its main strength from the propertied middle classes. Isn't Fascism a middle-class revolution?'

'Yes and no. True, Fascism first drew its support and money from the bourgeoisie, but then the continual levies, increased taxation, and government interference in our business drove us into a secret opposition, and Mussolini had to depend more and more on the intellectual proletariat.'

'That's interesting. How did it happen?'

' It happened in the same way as in Germany. At first Fascism was considered as an antidote to Communism. Its essential nationalism attracted the attention of the aristocracy and the

wealthier classes. They saw in it a weapon for their security and continuance in power. Individuals like Thyssen in Germany and industrialists I won't name in Italy supported the movement with their money and influence. But they did not realize the monster they were rearing. Fascism, as I have said, has become a job and nothing more for the overcrowded professionals—"intellectual proletariats". The superior position that Fascism offers, plus the uniform, is an attractive bait, even though the income is very small.'

'But who are these intellectual proletariats? Where are they to be found?' I asked.

'In every country, Fascist and democratic, except perhaps in Russia. They are most common in the democracies—and the example of Italy is one they should remember when they tackle the problem. You will agree with me that there are many unemployed workers—the industrial proletariat, you might call them? Well, there are also many of the intellectual proletariat, people who have sunk to poverty through unemployment, people who have degrees and a specialized education. Their origin doesn't matter very much, except that the working-class intellectual proletariat tends towards Communism as a solution of their problem, whilst the intellectual proletariat, whose roots are in the middle-classes, but not their fortunes, tend towards something which will give them back their middle-class "dignity" and security. Among these will the Fascists be found, and for these was Fascism founded, and not for the rich or the aristocracy. Fascism is really a revolt of unemployed officials, "intellectuals" in the loose sense of the word, meaning graduates in medicine, law, and business. In Italy, for instance, after the war only about ten out of every hundred graduates from a university were able to find a job. The others—what happened to the other ninety? They had to wait, and you know what that means.[1] Some of them found jobs which did not need their qualifications, and that made them bitter; others did not find jobs at all, and "that made them desperate. You see, this is *a, psychological* problem.'

When my friend saw me smile involuntarily, I apologized with all haste.

'Forgive me,' I said, 'but I've heard that word used so often.

'I'm sure you have,' my friend agreed. 'My son has a habit of using it whenever he wants to prove something that can't be proved. But what I mean by *psychological* I can explain. You'll agree with me when I tell you that it's perfectly understandable why some intellectuals in good jobs, such as writers and artists, can sympathize with and help the workers—the industrial proletariat—can't you? They do so from their safe jobs, but let one of them lose his job, and see what happens. He becomes suddenly class-conscious. He becomes ashamed of being identified with the very poor, who may be on Public Assistance, and will certainly try to give the appearance of being an "intellectual"—something apart from the impoverished workers on the dole. At times, he becomes positively snobbish. He prefers at times to starve rather than be thought an unemployed worker. He is not that. He is one of the intellectual proletariat forced down to the level of the unemployed workers, but resenting the society and the people with whom he is compelled to mix as an *equal.* The poorer he gets, the more he becomes a stickler for external appearances. He will wear the white collar even though it is dirty. He will speak of himself as "Mister so-and-so". So the gap widens between the workers with whom he sympathized in his happy days. He is only interested in himself, and not in their problems. His aims become very different from those of the industrial proletariat. In other words, his aims become Fascist.

* ' I can see that danger,' I said. 'But why can't there be a unity of purpose between them? Surely the intellectual will get his deserts under an equitable system?'

'But he's not sure what his deserts are, and whether he would get them under a Communist regime., Hence his fear. He prefers the sort of revolution that will give him a safe job, as well as a privileged status, and the right to be a "boss". Doesn't that explain to you the multitude of uniforms you see in Italy and Germany? Everybody is Somebody, from the little flea to the big one. They all have a "position in life". This is the real difference between the Communists and the Fascists. Our Fascism came straight from the ranks of this "intellectual proletariat". They fooled the king and the army with their anti-Communist talk, and then when they became strong they reduced the king and

his army to allies, unwilling most of the time, but incapable of ruling without the Fascist support.

'Take anti-Semitism, which I believe will slowly invade Italy as it did Germany. This problem is closely connected with the "intellectual proletariat". It was just another way of getting the "intellectual" jobs of the Jews, and the hokum about race was put in to fool the workers. The aristocracy could not be deceived, nor the more intellectual of the intellectuals.

'These proletarian intellectuals have no other means except to identify their interests with the middle classes, usually the petty bourgeoisie. They want to set up a state of bureaucrats so that more and more lawyers can be used, more clerks and managers. Now, do you agree with me that the danger of Fascism comes from those "intellectual proletariats"? Watch them carefully if you don't want Fascism in England.'

I thought that this was very sound advice.

'We liberals', he said, 'are out of fashion, but I can assure you that the world is getting tired of all this "realist" bunk that the intellectual proletariat has tried to foist on us as a result of its bankrupt philosophy. The world after Fascism will want to go back to the ways of freedom, believe me. For freedom is an end in itself, and for its sake a man may sacrifice everything. He must, if he has any hope of winning it. No man would die for peace. That is not an end in itself, whatever your Mr. Chamberlain may say. It is a means to freedom; so is plenty. Even war is a means to achieve it, if fought with that aim in view.

' In my opinion, there are three kinds of freedom. I would say the first was political and social, the second economic, and the third philosophic or spiritual. Social freedom is what we are really going to fight for, while spiritual freedom is the business of the individual, who will strive within himself to accomplish it. The basis of political and social freedom will, of course, be found in our spiritual understanding of the word "freedom". Politica 1 freedom depends on men and women who have democracy as their faith, and who will demand the social freedom of equality. Freedom must be applied to every sphere.

'I know this to be the antithesis of everything that Fascism teaches, and that people like Croce are being refused permission

to lecture at our universities, but as I say, Europe will turn, to idealism once the "intellectual proletariat" loses its hold over us through war or revolution.

'Of course, we must understand that there can be no freedom without authority, for no-one is free except by virtue of obedience. The question before us Italians—I should say Europeans—is what must be obeyed, and how we are to find this authority? How are we to recognize it? I think the answer may be supplied by saying that obedience to any law, no matter what or by whom that law is made, is necessary. If we obey that law, then we get knowledge of the truth about that law. We liberals have obeyed the Fascist law, and we know the truth of it. There is none. But, by the fulfilment of the lower law, we are able to perceive the higher. I know that we ordinary men and women often feel ourselves hedged in by laws, and we resent and dislike the restrictions they impose. For instance—the denial of free speech and free Press in this country is profoundly irritating to us. But the wise man never seeks to do what he likes, but always what he must.'

'You mean by that. I suppose,' I said, 'that when a law is discharged, obeyed, that is, then the man is free of it? It sounds profoundly pacifist to me.'

'Not at all. The only authority which annoys us is that which we do not wish to obey. If we once obey it, this annoyance ends. By this law, I mean the law that parents impose, or institutions, or classes, or religions, or governments, as well as natural and moral laws.'

'In that case, you would not advocate a revolution against Fascism in Italy?' I suggested.

'I didn't say that,' my friend corrected me. 'The time for breaking the law comes, and the price has to be paid. Revolutions are not easy to undertake, and if they are launched at the wrong time, much suffering and inhumanity may result. But merely keeping the law is not, however, the highest ideal, although it cannot be reached without it. Remember, that if you break the law you put yourself at once under the sway of another and more severe law, obedience to which is increasingly difficult. The object of obeying the law, as I have said, is to become free of all law.

'Now, in my opinion, there is ultimately one great law; a law preached by all the great religions, by all the great philosophies, by all systems of governments—the law of Love. When we obey that law, we can do what we will, for we are then free. But please understand that the law of Love demands the complete surrender of prejudices, property, maybe, and attachments of alt kinds. We are able to obey that law only after long effort. But humanity is making that effort. Fascism tries to stop it. It tries to substitute " realism'' for this aspiration to Love, and therefore perpetuates all that is rotten in the old systems of capitalism, traditionalism, class-war, socialism, and so forth.

' It contributes nothing to the human spirit, and that is why it is doomed. Its whole policy is based on force and negative values. Those values are frequently real enough, despite the paradox. They seem to have discovered the secret of making evil into an instrument of policy, but always under the pretence that it is good. Note that. They know as well as you do that "racialism" is so much rubbish; that nationalism which seeks aggrandisement through the sword is wicked, and brings nothing in the end except widows and orphans; and yet, they do not say that their system is evil, although they boast about their brutality and their "realism". They say it is good. Such men are dangerous, not in themselves, because in a normal and educated world they would be placed behind bars, but because they are capable of dividing whole nations, of attracting the capitalist classes and the professional with promises of resistance against Communism or State-socialism of a liberal character.'

I remember how careful I was to remember my friend's words. I was particularly heartened to hear an Italian speaking like this. One often has the impression in Italy that men have lost their reason. However much the sun shines, and however beautiful the language, there is always a feeling of being overheard, so much so that some American friends and I always referred to Hitler as' Mr. Smith' and to Mussolini as' Mr .'Jones'. Too frequent a repetition of the dictators' names brought ears straining to our table, and as a result of this subterfuge we were able to say the most devastating things. How surprised some of the Italians must have been at the adventures of 'Mr. Smith' and 'Mr. Jones',

two English of American gentlemen whose activities we considered so reprehensible!

I myself did not go down to Rome to see Hitler drive through the streets, but I witnessed the alarm that was felt in the northern manufacturing towns, and the resentment that was caused by the arrival of German tourists and officials. I don't know whether the disappearance of coffee for one week was due to the German locusts, or not, but there was a definite sullenness on the part of the population.

'This means war,' everyone said, and then added as a rider: But surely Mussolini isn't mad? He's kept us out of a major European war so long.'

I think the Italians' estimate of their dictator proved correct in the end. His entry into the present war, and the 'Battle' of Mentone, was timed at a moment when France was at her lowest ebb. His Fascist Militia entered the south of France undoubtedly at the head of his 'victorious' troops. So far, he had proved himself very canny, but the war on the sea and in the air with the British Empire may yet bring a fissure in that stately edifice of Fascist Italy. Beneath the fasces and the heavy rods, the Italian people have suffered long, and when Europe is finally delivered from Fascism, Mussolini knows that he and his putty empire will collapse. He prefers a longer lease of life under Hitler than the prospect of a European revolution.

It was not only that Mussolini desired to convert the Mediterranean into a 'mare nostrum', but also because he feared any Russian advance in the Balkans, that he brought Italy closer to Germany. He considers the Balkans as his special sphere of interest, an interest he is prepared to share with Germany, but not with Russia, but in this quarter of the globe antagonism tends to get mixed, and the final struggle for power will be between Russia and Germany, Italy helping her partner, and Turkey on Russia's side.

This point of view was explained to me in the following manner:

'Benito is no fool. He sees that there is no independent future anyway for him, wherever he turns. Russian advances in the Balkans mean Communism nearer Italy. He could not fight

Russia alone, so he allies himself with Germany, who, he knows, is also partial to the Balkans, and would not like to see Russian hegemony established there. The same hope that inspired the democracies that Germany would fight Russia, and so weaken herself, inspires our beloved Duce. He hopes to remain strong while Russia and Germany fight to the death.'

Someone else had another opinion on this matter.

'Russia and Gerrriany are bound to get embroiled sometime, and then it will be Italy's chance to form a federation of Latin States which would be able to oppose either the Bear or the Swastika. The marriage is one of convenience, and the only tragedy for Italy will be if Germany does not fight Russia, but contents herself with running Italy's and France's colonies.'

All these opinions were prior to the Russo-German Pact in August 1939. They were revised with great speed, I believe, but nevertheless the situation has not changed. Italy must have two conditions for her existence. She must have a victorious Germany, but severely weakened. She must safeguard her fleet at all costs as a means of communicating with her overseas colonies—and also she must watch Turkey and Russia.

The general conclusion I was able to make during my stay there was that the people were not at all optimistic. 'All the victories that may be won will be won with Germany's aid, and that will mean that our share of the spoils will be even less than those given to us at Versailles.'

Another thing that Italians of all classes cannot bear is the superiority complex of the Germans. Their own Fascisti cut such poor figures before the Germans that they become laughable. The terrible efficiency of the Germans scares the manufacturers and the propertied classes, because they think that they will shortly be harnessed to Germany's war-machine. As it is, the standard of living, very poor at the best of times in Italy, is steadily degenerating.

The Church has always played a major part in Italian politics, and has guided them into channels which, however narrow, are, in comparison with Fascism, humanitarian. But anti-clericalism is spreading, and Hitler undoubtedly used some pressure on Mussolini to make him persuade the Pope to ease the subtle

anti-Nazi propaganda of the cardinals and bishops throughout the world.

Most devout Catholics, and that includes the majority of Italians, have been shocked by the Nazi persecutions of religion, and the Church's position in Italy during war-time becomes increasingly difficult. The Roman Catholic Church knows what to expect if Hitler's Germany rules Europe. .

But I am digressing too much into politics. As a doctor I ought to stick to medicine and leave politics to rascals like Hitler or his Latin brother Benito Mussolini. They have created a 'New Order of disordering and robbing the world; and we must leave them to make it work, if they can.

I am one of the people, the simple people who are content and happy to do their job and hate 'New Orders' of the Hitler variety. However, my holiday in Italy at the time when the two dictators met at the Palazzo Chigi was ruined because of them, and that is the reason why I am writing about it.

At ten o'clock in the evening before the great day two Blackshirts visited my room and inquired whether I belonged to the Nordic and Aryan races, whether I loved Mussolini and Hitler, and whether my visit to Rome had something to do with Hitler's.

Unfortunately for me, I could satisfy them very little. I was of course, I told them, Aryan by no fault of mine, but Nordic I could not pretend to be, either in looks or by blood. One of the Fascisti took a due note.

As far as the other questions were concerned, I was completely and utterly disappointing. I loved neither Hitler nor Benito, and I came to Rome solely and only for professional reasons. Now both Blackshirts took notes, eyed me in a very unfriendly way, and told me point blank that I could not see the next day the procession and the celebrations in honour of the Nazis' Fuhrer. Only friendly Aryans and Latins were allowed to take part in the *festa.* I was to be confined to my hotel or go to a friend's house. If I had friends!

That was the reason why I did not see the 'great dictators' in the beautiful Via dell' Impero. Later I was informed by my friends that all German and other refugees were simply put in prison and forgotten there for nearly two weeks. My English

passport, I suppose, had saved me from sharing a prison cell with some refugee.

The joke was that neither of the two rascals enjoyed the celebrations either. And in more than one sense. Hitler was refused entry to the Vatican and our Pontific Father left Rome for Castel Gandolfo. Thus Hitler's vanity received a deadly blow. I wondered whether he repeated to himself the dictum of Napoleon: 'Either the Pope will see me or I will build another Vatican,' not to mention the crowning as an emperor. The funniest part of the celebrations, however, was yet to come. In the beautiful Palazzo Chigi a lunch was served that would have made the mouth even of Caligula water. But when the two dictators sat down at table, the only thing they asked for was soft-boiled eggs and rice pudding. Hitler was a vegetarian and Benito was allowed only a light diet, on account of his diseased stomach. After such a lunch, no wonder that neither of them enjoyed the prospect of interminable processions.

That very day another anecdote went round the Rome cafes. It was whispered that Hitler, wishing to show that he could speak Italian turned to Mussolini and smiled ingratiatingly: 'Andiamo a fare due passi,' pronouncing the two s's in the last word like z, thus altering the meaning from 'a stroll' into 'two fools'.

'They are two fools,' roared the delighted Italians, over their coffee.

We laughed too, that is my friend Dr. Alfredo Frederici and I. It was his house that I visited and in which I stayed the whole day while the tyro 'pazzi' strolled about. Alfredo was a confirmed anti-Fascist and was always too willing to tell some nasty joke about Benito. That evening I was regaled with a lecture on the Fascist idea of brotherly love.

'Yes, my dear Sava,' he chuckled, 'our Benito's love for his brothers is expressed in his enjoyment of torturing. It is reassuring to know that in this mad, chaotic world of ours there is at least one nation carrying on the brave old tradition of the past in such a glorious fashion. The holy fathers of the Inquisition can rest peacefully in heaven knowing that they did not live in vain. Still, I must be fair and not pay all my homage to our entire nation. While thrones collapse, society reels, and civilization goes

on, Benito, in his godlike image, will be eternally remembered not for anything else but for having glorified torture. At least in the exquisite pleasure he derives from doing unto others what he'd damn well not like to have done to himself.'

I laughed at the way my friend gave his version on torture as practised by the Fascisti, and yet I could not help thinking how right he was. Fascisti and Nazis, while they may not be blood brothers politically, show a strange and unimaginative kinship in the realm of torture. Both specialize almost solely in castor oil and in prolonged beating.

• That castor oil can be an instrument of torture is obvious to anyone who, as a child, over-indulged his appetite for green apples. The favourite dose in Italy is from one pint to one quart and the immediate results are what you might expect.

'The real beauty of this torture', smiled my friend, 'lies in the fact that such a dose will cause an internal rupture of the intestine and haemorrhage that will bring about a death within three or four days that can be neatly certified by any doctor as "death from natural causes".

' Oh yes, make no mistake. Our progressive Fascisti know their stuff. We are responsible for another advance in the technique of pounding a man to pieces. We have evolved "bastonatura in stile"—beating in style—a highly ingenious method of bludgeoning. The weapon is a specially made cudgel, weighted in the end, and rather flexible. Before wielding it, the Fascisti are trained in schools where they first practise on dummies.

'Blows from the "bastinado" are inflicted on the lower part of the face. Care is taken not to fracture the skull, in order to avoid death, and great artistry is displayed in shattering the jaws; thus laying the victim up for months and in such a shape that he can't conveniently speak harshly of his benevolent Benito. The only sound he can utter is *eyia, eyia,* which of course is the Fascist salute.

'Laugh at the Duce if you like, but do not let pity enter into your laughter. You are generous, you British,' continued Alfredo, 'but remember that while Hitler is the father of Nazism, of the gat, of the concentration camp, of persecution, and of lies, our Benito is the grandfather of all these things.'

He is an old man now, but do not pity him for that. He sends the best youth of Italy to die in a fruitless attempt to save his empire. An empire built on skulls. Yesterday he was sending that same youth, the brave, the freedom-loving, the most courageous, to the islands of hell which dot the waters of Mare Nostrum about Sicily.

They have beautiful names these islands: Pantellaria, Ustica, and Lipari. But to many thousands of Italians, these names have only one meaning: Banishment, Torture, Death.

Mussolini copies the Romans in everything, so he says. The little Caesar has not their invincibility, but he has collected their vices, their tortures, and their places of banishment. Lipari is such an one.

It is a dishonourable place of exile where murderers, pimps, and the lowest dregs of the Italian cities are sent together with the political prisoners, men whose only crime is that they believed in democracy.

With his rise to power Benito Mussolini took the insignia not only of the Fasces but of the truncheon and the castor-oil bottle. But he could not kill all who opposed him. He preferred to send them to the islands which Italian tourist books proclaim to be 'generally considered among the most beautiful spots in Italy*.

That was my impression about these islands some years previously, when the steamer on which I was returning from a pleasant cruise passed near by. I remember vividly the beautiful starry night and the coolgentle breeze that made one regret the shortness of the cruise. I was leaning over the rails on the upper deck gazing enchanted at the flickering lights and I must have spoken my thought aloud, because a voice at my elbow interrupted my reveries.

'You think it is beautiful?' it said.

Turning, I recognized in the intruder a shy little man who had already caught my attention during the cruise. He had boarded the ship at Naples and for the whole of the trip I had never seen him speak to a soul. That he was first to start the conversation therefore amused me. I smiled at him and he continued, pointing with his hand at the distant lights.

'That island is called Lipari.'

'Don't you find it beautiful?' I inquired. 'Even the name could hot have been chosen better.'

Oh yes, the name is beautiful and that makes it the more ironical,' he answered sadly. 'But I see that you are a stranger to these parts, and Lipari is just another name to you.'

It was only then that I noticed his drawn, tired face, which bore witness to much suffering. This is what he told me.

' Even the flowers that grow on Lipari are bent. Not for humility or shame at Fascism's black deeds, but because of the dreadful Sirocco, the mad wind which smites this island day and night through winter and autumn, making life, already intolerable, more terrible than ever.

' It was a long time ago, ten years precisely. My offence? Does it matter? I was guilty of being loyal to a friend. I placed flowers 6n the grave of Matteotti, one of the most loved and most noble of men. Opponent of Fascism, Mussolini had ordered his death. It was touch and go whether Mussolini himself would be overthrown by the outcry that rose in Italy at this dastardly act.

'I was young, just graduated as a barrister at law. I knew Matteotti. My gesture had no political implication. I was foolish to have shown my affection openly. My sentence was *confino*— deportation to Italy's Siberia for five years. Lipari.

'When I arrived there (after paying £15 so as to make the journey by train and not by "prison wagon "), the chains were taken off my wrists.

'The lights burnt into my eyes like acid. For six hours I had been stuffed into a hold of a small ship together with my "brother-criminals". Without food, without water, for the whole journey. We were glad to leave the rolling hulk and set foot on land.

'Land? It was lava. Hard, crumbly lava. Everything crumbled before the fierce wind. Houses, roads, trees, and men. A bitter sun added to the discomfort.

'At the police station a bull-faced imitation of Mussolini, the Fascist commandant, told us that we were free. "Of course, there are rules," he said.

'Of course. There were ten of them. Ten rules which made a joke of our freedom. To disobey any one of them, even so much

as to take a walk beyond the prescribed boundaries, would court instant punishment or a prolongation of our sentence.

'Life on a shilling a day, the amount allowed us by the authorities, was not easy. We ate together to economize. And we suffered together. It made us braver, sometimes. At other times, we hated the proximity of our fellow sufferers. They showed us our powerlessness, our humiliation, too much.

'The cliffs were high, however. The brave and the cowardly made their exit that way. The rocks down below were hard, and the sea was merciful.

'Our warders were sadists. Who else would take on the job? If a breach of regulations did not find them a victim, they did their best to provoke opposition, retorts, or rebellion among us. When none of these provocations worked, they played a game called "Kiss my truncheon " and when the victim obeyed, they hit him hard over the head with it.

'This dainty amusement was child's play for their fertile imagination. A Militia-man need not like the look of your face. He could, for instance, refuse to let you go to hospital to be treated if you were ill. You were a politico. Less than a dog.

'Frequently orders came from Rome to extort confessions from the prisoners. We knew what that meant, and we dreaded each summons to the police station.

'Confessions are hard for a sane man to fabricate. So they made men insane. It was easy, you see, so many against one. Men came out of that prison screaming with agony, begging to be shot. The bastinado and the whip, the whole murderous regalia of dictatorship, threatened us every -day.

'When electricity was installed on Lipari, I was chosen to "officiate" at the opening. My guards amused themselves by making me hold the ends of two live wires. But I was fortunate. I fainted too easily. Others could tell more horrible tales, such as men being forced to sit on hot stoves.

'But why catalogue the horrors? Mussolini at that time was signing a pact with religion. The world knew nothing of the Liparis. Fascism was still young, the white hope of some.

'It was of no avail to tell that story to the world! To avenge the methods of the Empire of Hooligans was impossible. What

justice on earth can repay Fascism and Nazism for their crimes? They began with the language of bombs—and that is perhaps the only speech with which to speak to them. But then both Mussolini and Hider were speaking of peace. The very day I was released from the island of hell, some diplomats at Geneva proposed Mussolini as a candidate for the Nobel Prize for Peace . . . !'

My friend stopped, paused for a moment.

'Do you still think it is a beautiful island?'

I could not answer.

Even now, to-day, there are victims on Lipari Island. It must be full to overcrowding. If the story of the Lofoten Islands ever reaches their ears, they will take hope. Who knows, perhaps even now, they gaze out to the horizon waiting for the grey ships of a brave and free people to save not only them, but all Italians who hate the name of Hider and Mussolini alike. I hope that my friend of that far-away night is still alive to welcome the liberators of his oppressed land. . . .

But to return to our simultaneous visits to Italy and Rome, I mean my professional visit in 1938 and that of Adolf—also professional. That journey through lovely Italy, so full of spring, was the most disheartening I had ever made. I spoke with medical colleagues, friends, with politicians, with ordinary people in the suburban *osterias.* Everywhere I heard the same tale, and sensed the same worrying fear that Hitler's visit was a bad, very bad omen and that the irreparable was bound to come.

My friend, Dr. Frederici, was saying: 'The country, our beautiful Italy is ruined even before this cursed alliance with the Germans; ruined economically and spiritually. And yet, I tell you this—if Hitler drags Benito into a second European war, let him go, let him go. It may prove the only way we have of ridding ourselves of him and of all that Fascism stands for!'

Ominous words, and ominous sentiments for a people to nurture about its dictator!

' Italians have always hated the rough, nasty, bullying Germans,' continued my friend heatedly, 'but when, through the increasing collaboration of the two regimes, Nazi Germany began to send to Italy wave after wave of her *Kraft durch Freude*—Strength

through Joy—parties, the disgust of the Italian people knew no limit. The German visitors were the worst lot one could wish to see in Italy. The hotel managers dreaded the parties they could not refuse, the waiters considered them worse than locusts, visitors who travelled on coupons only, even the tips paid in coupons, even the wines and drinks and the . . . whores!'

I smiled at my friend's excitement as he gesticulated with both hands in true Italian fashion. Hitler's visit,. I thought, will put the finishing touch to that popular feeling! The enormous sum expended by the Treasury was in large part used to organize a spectacular display that would hide the complete absence of popular interest or enthusiasm. The most crude specimens of witticisms got in circulation during the visit, and the jokes were often whiskered by high officials who enjoyed the rude thrusts at the mighty 'friend' they utterly and thoroughly disliked.

Dr. Frederici seemed to guess what was passing through my mind. Without any prompting on my part, he made me laugh by telling me some of the more amusing stories about the two dictators.

One night Benito took Adolf for a drive in his little motor-car, to show him the sights of Rome. They passed the fountain of Trevi, and Benito told Hitler that if one threw a penny in the water one was sure to return to Rome. Adolf pulled a few coppers out of his pocket. 'No fear,' said Benito hastily, and drove on in top gear.

'Ha! ha!' roared Dr. Frederici at his own joke. 'And how about this one, Sava,' he continued.

Outside Rome a road was being dug up, and a passer-by asked a workman: 'What are you breaking up the road for?' 'We are looking for the Axis,' he replied. A few days afterwards the workmen were mending the hole in the road, and the same passer-by on his return journey masked again: 'Did you find the Axis?' 'No,' said the workman, 'but they found it round the corner, in the Via del Malcontento (Street of the Unsatisfied).'

One more detail of that famous visit of Hitler's. The German leader had apparently deeply insulted the King and the Crown Prince of Italy by bringing his pet photographer, Herr Hoffman, with him to the State Dinner—an unheard-of breach of etiquette. **The** Crown Prince Umberto became even more livid with **rage**

when he was told to give up his private apartment at the Quirinal Palace to Hitler. Nothing less than a Royal Suite was considered good enough for the German Fuhrer! When the apartment was ready, the Head of the German Chancellery's Ceremonial went to Rome to satisfy himself that everything was in order, and this gendeman had the impudence to ask that the bedspread be changed and another made of special brocade with an enormous German eagle and swastika embroidered on it! The new bedspread had to be ordered and made. The story has been told to Dr. Frederici by one of the prince's entourage, who added that the bedspread had cost nearly five hundred pounds, and had to be paid for by the prince as it pertained to his apartments. 'What is the prince going to do with it?' my friend asked. 'Do with it? He has ordered it to be burned/ was the answer.

Dr. Frederici obtained permission for me to move about Rome by promising that he would not leave me alone and out of his sight, and next day we were on our way to the Clinic.

'By the way, what happened with your experiments on glandular secretions,' I asked as we were driving fast in his beautiful Lancia, remembering that Dr. Frederici had been working on a very interesting saliva-test for some time. In fact I was with him a few months previously when he was making his final observations, and I felt practically sure that he was not only successful but that he would be marked for a senior position at the university because of it.

He was silent for a while. An ironical smile distorted his lips. Suddenly and without any apparent reason, he swung the car round the nearest corner and in a few moments we were speeding along the romantic Via Appia Antica and crossed the Camilluccia —a quarter of fashionable villas on the flank of Mount Mario.

Knowing the slightly bizarre character of my friend, I did not ask any questions about the sudden alteration of our course. I waited for him to supply the explanation.

Pointing out to me a villa of recent construction he laughed: 'That is the abode of the Duce's inamorata.'

'He has gone too far in his bizarre mood,' I thought. Then loudly: 'What has that to do with my question about your experiments?'

'Oh, everything. Listen! That Villa was built directly under the supervision of the Office of Works, the builders were paid by the Treasury, and the villa has a swimming-pool and a private telephone line connected with Benito's desk at the Palazzo Venezia.'

'Well?'

'Yes, very well, but don't interrupt. One morning in mid-summer two pretty girls in bathing costumes, who had ventured into the pine forest of Gastel Fusano just outside the newly rebuilt town of Ostia, saw a dashing car approaching from the direction of the city. The girls waved timidly and the driver slowed down . . .'

'Who wouldn't!'

'Oh, shut up! The flabbergasted girls recognized in the person of the driver no less a person than the mighty Duce himself. Both maidens were terrified for a moment and could find no words to excuse their impertinence. Benito, however, who is a terror for his subordinates, melted under the supplicating eyes of the girls and became as docile as a lamb in their presence. He became shy and timid, knowing full well that nothing better can ingratiate a despotic and feared tyrant in the eyes of a woman than timidity and shyness. Being also very fond of women, he was quick to observe that these two were endowed with the fresh and beautiful complexion of youth, which has always had an appeal to his robust and peasant-born appetite. The day was hot, the sun shone brightly and the birds twitted among the branches of the near-by trees. The Duce became eloquent: "What about a swim?" he smiled, and soon all three were speeding towards his private beach. And there the Duce's latest romance was born. All three laughed and splashed merrily in the sunshine, and before returning to town another rendezvous was arranged, this time only with one of the sisters—Claretta.'

'Look here,' I interrupted, 'I still do not see what this latest romance of Mussolini's has to do with your experiments at the hospital.'

'Ah, but you are wrong. It has everything to do with my experiments. Do you know the surname of Claretta?'

'No, but I expect it is of no importance.'

'For you, I agree, it isn't, but for me it is of importance. She is Claretta Petacci.' My friend smiled slyly.

I thought for a moment. 'Not the daughter of Dr. Petacci?' I asked, remembering the name.

'Precisely. Now you understand why the whole affair has to do with my experiments, and why I did not get the appointment at the hospital. But let me tell you just how it happened.

'As you know, Dr. Petacci was quite a modest physician who derived most of his income by practising among Vatican circles. His daughter Claretta was, not long before their meeting with the Duce, married to a pilot who took part in the Atlantic flight of Marshal Balbo. The man apparently proved not a good husband and the marriage soon went to pieces. After the separation, Claretta assumed her maiden name and lived with her parents. That coincidence was quite welcome to Mussolini, as it saved him the inconvenience and the unpleasantness of "seducing" a family girl—an unpleasantness which even-he could ill afford.

'The Duce's wife and daughter disapproved of the affair intensely, and tried everything to embitter the life of the new favourite. They chased her everywhere. Once, in the winter, the two lovers decided to go to Mount Terminillo, where Benito has a beautiful private chalet. There Claretta was to admire her mighty friend enjoying himself ski-ing. The following day who should arrive also but Donna Rachele and Countess Edda Ciano, coming no doubt to tell Claretta where she got off. The scene ended by her being miserably confined to her apartment in a distant hotel, contemplating the snow from her windows. Nevertheless, Benito grew attached more and more to young Claretta, and ended by building her the villa at Mount Mario. People say now that the Duce cannot follow his daily occupation if she fails to ring him up at the appointed hour on the private line connecting the villa. Thus, no telephone call from Claretta, no State affairs for Fascist Italy.

'But I could have forgiven our Duce for having seduced the daughter of a colleague of mine', he continued jokingly, 'if it were not for the fact that I lost my appointment at the hospital and cannot even claim the honour for the success of my experiments on the saliva-test.[1]

'I still cannot see any connection between your experiments and the Duce's romance!'

'I am coming to that. As it happened, Dr. Petacci decided to cash in on this romance as well, and developed unexpected ambitions of becoming a great doctor and author of popular medicine. An order was given to one of the leading papers to take every literary contribution of the new author and to pay for them quite a handsome fee. When the medical profession began to laugh at the stupid articles that Dr. Petacci was writing, he suddenly changed them by stealing medical works from his colleagues/

'And this is where you come in, I suppose?'

'Yes, you suppose rightly. This is where I come in, or rather this is where my experiments on glandular secretions come in.'

'You don't mean to say that Dr. Petacci had the audacity to claim the results of your experiments as his own? I can't believe it.'

'Believe it or not, my dear Sava, but that is exactly what did happen. Apparently some assistant of mine has had copied minutely all my experiments and findings and given them afterwards to our beloved Dr. Petacci. He, of course, published them as his own work and won the prize together with the appointment attached to it.'

I could not help being sorry for Dr. Frederici and did not hesitate to say so.

'Oh, don't be sorry for me,' he interrupted. 'There are many ways a medical man can advance in his career, and that one is as good as any.'

We sat in the car for a moment in silence. Then, as an afterthought, my friend added: 'Still, I prefer to keep my daughter at home.'

Some years later an Italian friend of mine wrote a book about Italy. It was very amusing to find references in this book about Mussolini's latest romance, and it furnished me with further details about the extraordinary affair of Dr. Petacci.

It seemed that the ambitions of the doctor grew in harmony and proportion with the love of Benito for his daughter Qlaretta. He was not only unperturbed by the cold-shouldering of the

Vatican circles, which were his main source of income, but had the impertinence to advance clains to the Italian Academy for a seat in the Senate!

'After all, Caligula made a Senator of his horse, so why not Dr. Petacci!' wrote my friend in his book.

'Why not!'

And yet, when I think of the enthusiasm with which Dr. Frederici started his experiments on the saliva-test, I cannot help regretting that such a trivial thing as the romance of Benito and Claretta should have been responsible for the failure of these experiments. Perhaps God will forgive them, but I am sure patients would not!

'Now, this is my contention, Sava,' I remember Dr. Frederici saying to me. 'I can take you round a public ward at any time, and simply by taking the patient's saliva, I am able to tell you their degree of health and resistance. I am able, for instance, to tell you whether a man who, on the surface, looks perfectly healthy, will die in a day or two, or whether he will survive an impending operation. I can tell you in a few minutes whether a person is severely run down or not, without any complicated testing. I can literally know what the resistance of every person is. I can gauge it to the finest degree. '

Poor Dr. Frederici! What a pity that he was unable to carry out his tests and experiments to an end. What a pity that we cannot confirm his contentions. How many patients would have been grateful to him! Well, it cannot be helped. That is life, I suppose.

All men are born with the same kind of glands, and yet all men have different secretions. I wonder whether one day someone will not carry on Dr. Frederici's experiments and discover what sort of secretions dictator-minded people have. They, for all we know, may lack a very necessary hormone, and by injecting them with it we might be able to reduce them again to normality and impotence. Who knows?

Somebody once put it in a different way. He said: 'Then Aristotle and Hippocrates must have struck something big when they declared the human body was governed by "humours".' I

wonder by what humour Hitler and Mussolini are being governed now? In medical terms I would say that Mussolini is definitely phlegmatic, while Hitler combines both the choleric and the melancholic—and both of them, I would say, are sanguine, and their pituitary glands, I am certain, have misfired more than once. It would be interesting to watch the glandular secretions of millions of Germans and Italians while their dictators' Axis policy has c6me to its full bloom? They undoubtedly produce a lot of abnormal secretions, but what their secretions would be like when this accursed Axis breaks, who can say?

Chapter 4—Sofia

BETWEEN HEAVEN AND HELL

Heaven only knows where the Bulgarians came from,' Mischa Was saying. 'They talk like Russians with asthma; worship like Greeks, have statues in their churches like Catholics and like the heathens; they never fast, and have revolutions every week-end. They also have the IMRO. The king is pro-German, the government are pro-themselves, and the people pro-Russian. The peasants are the most ignorant in the whole world, and the most charming and kind-hearted; the professionals are crooks; the diplomats are wire-pullers. They have two thousand newspapers—one newspaper for everyone who has a different opinion. They don't like the Turks, although they are their kinsmen of long ago. They are always bothering about the birthplaces of their saints. They have lost the war, but don't want to lose the Dobrudja. They haven't got a navy or a mercantile marine, but claim a port on the Aegean. If it wasn't for the fact that no-one else would have me, I wouldn't stay here. I would go to Paris, Vienna, Rome. I am a man *moyen sensuel.* A dreamer.'

Mischa was a talkative Russian refugee. He was a lieutenant of some sort, in the artillery, I think, but in the last year of the war he had spent his time in a pleasant convalescent home which he was reluctant to leave, and was only persuaded to make his departure on the arrival of the Bolsheviks.

At the moment I was eating with him in a small restaurant off the Boulevard Tsar the Liberator, and, as usual, he was talking very loudly with a wealth of gesture. He was a man who enjoyed talking. It was his exercise.

'I'm sorry *to* talk so much,' he apologized, 'but sitting in a stuffy lecture-room listening to Professor Horpov lisping through his notes drives a man silly. Some people prefer drink. I would prefer drink if I had any money, but I do the next best thing. I get intoxicated on my own wit. You may laugh, Sava, but one day some theatre producer will notice me, and will put me on as Hamlet, I have something of the quality of that great man. Listen—"Am I a coward? Who calls me so?"'

'Shut up,' said the waiter. 'You've come here to eat a bread roll and a plate of soup for two levas, and you behave as if you've ordered caviare and champagne.'

'Friend,' said Mischa,' it is not your food that is making me talk. It is the Very beautiful girl who is sitting over there eating *pojarsky* cutlets, green peas, and roast potatoes, and mushroom sauce. You think I am looking at the girl? You are mistaken. I am looking at her meal. What an elegant meal! What exquisite cutlets!'

'Sir, you will have to leave,' said the waiter, whisking away Mischa's soup plate, which was happily empty. So Mischa and I found ourselves on the boulevard.

'We will never support this restaurant again. The waiter is an IMRO, the cashier is a Turk. Pfou!'

I really don't know why I tolerated Mischa so long. I suppose being a medical student at a Bulgarian Faculty of Medicine was very trying, and as I was not a paying student, I had a great deal of orderly work to do in the hospital before I was allowed to go into the lecture room. Mischa Samasov was in the same position. We folded corpses into coffins, washed the laboratory sinks, and bore the insults of paying students and impatient patients, who yelled for pots and complained that their beds were not made properly. Life without Mischa would have been as gay as the inside of a mortuary.

We arrived in Sofia on the same train and seemed to have an equal amount of money, so we decided to pool our resources in the following fashion. As we both had nothing, we had nothing to lose, but we agreed on a 'trade union'. If one of us found work, he would support the other. Happily, we both found work at the same time in the hospital, otherwise I fear I should have been looking after Mischa for the rest of his natural life.

We both wanted to be doctors, but the hospital in Sofia to which we were attached (in the professional sense of the word) was not interested in our ambitions, and preferred to use our strong backs and willing hands. The salary was just enough to starve on, but we took a little from the patients' plates sometimes, and managed on that.

Post-war Bulgaria was a tragi-comic operetta—music by the Versailles Treaty. It seethed with rebellion and discontent. There were too many parties, because there were too many politicians. The country seemed to be full of unemployed politicians, diplomats, and prophets. Even the priests, who were usually pretty fat, had a 'lean and hungry' look. Bulgaria was in a bad way.

The man in the street was not able to understand the machinations, manoeuvres, and party tactics of the politicians and the army. The king was popular because he drove engines, and the late Prime Minister, Stambolisky, had been worshipped by the workmen and the peasants. But the officers and the middle classes were not very happy with the laws of the Agrarian-minded Minister. The officers opened their pay-packets to find only half-pay in them, and the ministers who walked in silk hats were jostled out of their comfortable leather chairs by rough men from the villages. Bulgaria was going through an Agrarian revolution, and Stambolisky, drunk with power, proclaimed that in ten years there would not be one official who was not a peasant.

Among the people he disliked were the Communists. He didn't like the bourgeoisie either, for that matter, but when the bourgeoisie, with the aid of the army and uplifting songs like 'King and Country', revolted, Stambolisky found himself deserted by the one party who, could have fought the reactionaries—the Communists.

Who was right and who was wrong, I don't know. But the army made short work of Stambolisky and his hastily mobilized militia of peasants. They shot the Prime Minister and his supporters, and put up a military junta. The IMRO—the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization—killers of crowned heads, generals, ministers and humble men, supported

this junta. The I M R O waged war against everyone who thought that Macedonia should be left to the Turks and the Greeks and the Yugoslavs. They liked fighting, anyway, and Macedonian irredentism was as good a cause as any other. So when the law and order elements destroyed the Agrarians and overturned their gods, the little village mayors, the reformers and teachers in the peasant school, they turned their attention to the Communists, who were laughing on the wrong side of the fence at the destruction of their ally-enemies, the Agrarians. And that is where the trouble started.

For the last two years there had been sporadic shooting in Sofia.

'What's this?' Mischa demanded. 'Are we in for another revolution? Why do people have to revolt? I agree with Marie Antoinette. The people ought to eat grass. I am learning to eat it, why shouldn't they? How about a treatise on "Grass as a Stable Diet for the Common People?" We might get a grant from the government for it, and then we can eat steaks and afford girls.'

'You ought to do something, instead of talking,' said a student who was sitting near us in the lecture room. 'We are forming a group of anarchist-syndicalists. Why don't you and Sava join?'

Mischa looked at me seriously. 'You know,' he said, 'let's form a party for the abolition of parties. Then there won't be revolutions and counter-revolutions, and people like you and me will be able to state our opinions without going to tap walls or inspect our telephone receivers. Who's ever heard of anarchist-syndicalists? What are you up to? Going to bomb trains and blow up kings? Why not join the IMRO?'

'You'd better hold your tongue,' the student replied hurriedly. 'There's going to be a clean sweep soon in the university. What are you?'

Mischa refused to take him seriously.

'I am an individualist,' I said. 'That makes me an anarchist and a traditionalist at the same time. I'm all for anarchy in my own affairs, but for law and order in other people's. My name is Sava. We aren't interested in politics unless you' can promise us that Bulgarian hospitals will improve, that nepotism will be abolished,

and that we shall be given a chance to take a decent **degree** in medicine somewhere other than Bulgaria.'

The anarchist-syndicalist was ready to promise anything.

'No good,' said Mischa. 'A party which can promise, everything need do nothing. Be more cautious. Promise nothing and do something. Then we'll be surprised, and join you.'

'But come to a meeting, at least,' the student insisted.' You've got to be politically educated.' Mischa shook his head at the suggestion.

'There'll be plenty of girls, pretty ones, and some refreshments,' the student tempted.

'That's better,' said Mischa. 'You ought to have said that before instead of talking all that political rubbish. The best way to sell politics is through beautiful girls. Our whole system of commerce is built on them, and see what a success it is! Anything from cigarettes to cameras can be sold by a beautiful girl. Why not a few political theories? Pretty ankles could help you with anarchism, I'm sure. Who wouldn't want to be an anarchist when there are pretty girls around? Who'd want to be a conservative, or even a loyalist?'

'The girls would,' I replied, but the student had gone away in disgust, leaving Mischa to entertain me.

'We'll go', he said, 'and talk about malaria. I'll demand to know what anarchism is going to do about malaria. That'll make them think.'

So that evening we went to our first and last anarchist meeting. We found, to our profound disappointment, very few pretty girls, and the refreshments consisted of unsweetened tea and rusks, but the atmosphere was terrific.

'Anarchism', a man was booming forth, 'is Disciplined Disorder.'

Some of the men looked at the girls and sighed.

'The Communists demand order without reasoning. Stambolisky is gone, we must form a new party; a new coalition of intelligence and determination.'

We had heard it all before. I, for one, had read Bakunin, and argued about him for long hours. Mischa's erudition on anarchism was even greater, but he hid his political sagacity under a bushel,

because in those days the only political Sagacity was to keep one's mouth shut tightly. This 'sealed lips' policy had been understood even by the most vociferous supporters. We Liberals were no more popular than the Communists, with whom we had very little in common, but in the Balkans subtle divisions are apt to be misunderstood, and many a good European has perished under the knives and bullets of the I M R O simply because he declared his admiration for constitutional government. You were immediately branded as a revolutionary, although the reforms you advocated would not have upset Queen Victoria.

But this sudden mushroom party was very suspicious. In the first place, no-one really knew very much about anarchism, and the speeches that followed had none of the honey and opium qualities of anarchists.

, * You'll at least join,' said the student who had introduced us to the meeting. 'It's merely a matter of signing your names.'

'Oh no,' said Mischa, 'we're signing no names. We came here to see the pretty girls, and so far all we've seen is the inside of speakers' mouths. Give us girls, or we go.'

'Buffoon!'

Then, all at once, I noticed a girl, and turned round to Mischa. 'Look, see her? Doesn't she live in our house?'

Mischa gazed at her seriously, obviously appraising her possibilities for a lightning flirtation.

'So she does,' he exclaimed. 'Fair hair, almost flaxen, and blue eyes. Should say she's about five years older than we are, but that doesn't matter, Here's a chance to get friendly. Comrade Anarchist,' he said, plucking at the organizer's sleeve, 'is that your patron saint?'

The girl heard the remark but did not turn round. I noticed her start, and saw her take out a small mirror, as if she wanted to know who made the remark without showing that she was interested. Suddenly, she said something to her companion, an elderly man, wearing an army uniform, and she came over to us.

' Nice to see you,' she said, with a candid smile.' I never suspected that you'd be here. We live in the same house, don't we?'

Mischa, as usual, appropriated her remarks to himself.

'**Yes,** I do,' he said. 'I've been trying to talk to you for six months, but you have behaved like an anchorite towards me.'

The girl smiled again, and then, to Mischa's annoyance, addressed her remarks to me.

'And you', she said, 'are a member of the Medical Faculty?'

'How do you know?' I asked, enraptured, and glowing with satisfaction at Mischa's impatience to exercise his tongue.

'I'm a second year student myself,' she said. 'I've seen your name up on the list. This is your first year, isn't it?'

'Yes,' I said, gratefully.

'Well, we must all be friends. We are trying to form a sort of students' union, and are trying to decide on our political line, as it were. You mustn't take the anarchists in our midst too seriously. We are giving each party a chance to explain their programme. We shall then decide on our political affiliation. So don't think that we're trying to convert you to anarchism, or anything like that. Just stay and listen and give us your views, and we'll try to form something that will carry the students' voice to the Ministry of Education. Agreed?'

I agreed, but Mischa was argumentative.

'It's dangerous. This sort of thing leads to Heaven knows where. You start organizing for one thing, and before you know where you are, you'll be shooting grand dukes, or poisoning provincial governors. We played at those tricks in Russia before the Revolution, and see what happened—we were the amateurs; the cloak, as it were, for the professionals. We did the killing for them. We provided the martyrs, whilst they got political power. We are students. Let's stick to our learning. Whatever the government, Bulgaria needs doctors. Let's make a present of ourselves as doctors, not as politicians. There are too many of those.'

I considered Mischa's speech sensible, and applauded, but the rest of the meeting received him with stony silence. It was only when the girl with the flaxen hair spoke that a few people began to mutter and regain their vivacity.

'Much truth in what you say,' she said quickly, 'and we want frank opinions. This gentleman wants to be an Hippocrates—well, let him. But we believe that our destiny is somewhat greater

than that. By forming ourselves into a concrete body we shall be able to help our fellow students. We shall be able to help orderly-students, who are made to perform degrading and irksome tasks in order to get their share of medical education. We demand that this system should be abolished, and replaced by a system of scholarships, to be granted to the most capable.'

Mischa and I pricked up our ears.

'And, moreover, we want to see that the scholarships that are given don't go to the archbishop's nephew, or to the Prime Minister's sons. That is the main purpose of our association.'

'Well, you should have said that before,' Mischa said, with a confident wave of his hand. 'But when we came in it was anarchism. We won't have anything to do with politics, but we'll join your union.'

'Good,' said the girl with the flaxen hair. 'Then we can all be friends. My name is Nadja Krugova. You must come up to my room sometimes to have tea. We'll have plenty to talk about.'

'Thank you,' said Mischa. 'I will.'

'Do you know,' I said to him when the girl had returned to her friends on the other side of the room, 'we saw her in the restaurant to-day. She was eating those exquisite cutlets, but you were too busy looking at them to notice her. Really, I think she's very decent. We must get to know her.'

'We! I like that! She invited me, Sava. You really are a brazen fellow. Be tactful, can't you? But I wonder what she's up to?'

'She just likes us. I think she understands what an orderly-student's life is like, and this association of hers might do us some good. I'm certain we could pass the scholarships if they let us sit for them. Besides, she looks influential. See that man in colonel's uniform? He's probably her father, and the other fellow, in black, looks like a doctor.'

'That's her brother,' the man who had introduced us to the meeting said. 'He is one of the shining lights of the students' movement. If you join us, I'll introduce you.'

'We'll join,' said Mischa, 'so long as there's nothing political about your association.'

Nothing more happened at the meeting, except that tea and

rusks were handed round, and Mischa manoeuvred himself into a position where he could gaze to his heart's content on the face of the girl with flaxen hair, Nadja Krugova.

There is just one other point I must mention before I go on with the story. The student who introduced us to the meeting was quite unknown to us. His identity was further hid from us because he wore dark glasses. He said he was slightly blind. This is an important point to remember, and one which helped us to get out of the scrape we unexpectedly found ourselves in. It was a scrape with the hangman's noose. But of that later.

My work at the Medical Faculty suddenly improved, especially whenever Nadja Krugova Was present at the same lectures. At demonstrations I excelled, but she had to be there, watching me with her blue eyes, and smiling at me behind the test tubes. Even the job of scrubbing floors, emptying slops, and washing down corpses, became less irksome. The man in me had found a guardian angel, and she had only to pass down a corridor or drop a pencil or powder her nose, and my boredom and weariness would leave me, as I gazed at her flaxen hair, arid wondered why such beauty should be wasted on a hospital ward.

Mischa, meanwhile, was brushing his clothes to threads, and buying red roses and carrying them to Nadja's room every day, but, somehow or other, he never seemed to meet her.

'Well,' I said sardonically, 'and have you seen her?'

'Yes and no. I have seen her in my dreams. She is enchanting in one's dreams, Sava. You ought to try dreaming of her. Why should a man need anything when all he has to do is to dream of it?'

'Why don't you dream of giving her red roses and spend the real money on a decent meal?' I joked. 'A woman's heart is not captured by the presents you give her. Presents are Such obvious things. They invite a gift in return. Be like me—worship from afar, and perhaps something will come of it.'

'Huh! What have you had for worshipping from afar?'

'A smile. That's more than you get with your investment of roses and well-brushed clothes. Come, let's go and eat. Perhaps we'll see her in the restaurant.'

'I wish she was twins,' said Mischa. 'Then you would have a chance, poor boy. I'm. genuinely sorry, but if you offer me a meal with you, I won't refuse.'

'On condition you give me the roses.'

Mischa bartered the flowers for a mess of pottage, and it happened that Nadja was there, with the student in dark glasses. When she saw us coming in, she beckoned to us. I handed her the flowers solemnly.

'Thank you,' she said, 'so now I've found out the identity of the person who has been leaving me flowers every evening. Do sit down, boys.'

Mischa's discomfort was great, and had I been noble, I should have confessed that he was the donor of the floral tribute, but I did not. I sunned myself in her gratitude.

'You know', she said, 'why I called you over?'

We said we did not.

'I want your help.'

'What, mine?' asked Mischa eagerly, feeling an opportunity had come to repay me for my deception.

I want you both to help me. We are going to have a students' gala soon, and I thought we'd have a big firework display. We could charge a small sum and help our depleted exchequer,' she said. 'Now you two boys are good chemists, I've heard. Perhaps you can help us with the gunpowder? I don't know how to make it—and I thought,..'

'Simple,' Mischa said. 'Six parts potassium nitrate, charcoal one part, and sulphur one part. Mix and grind it carefully, and there you are.'

'And I thought perhaps a little guncotton, too,' suggested Nadja.

'Whatever for? Gunpowder is enough unless you want to imitate a military tattoo!' Mischa exclaimed.

'Yes, we want something on a big scale,' Nadja said. 'We can invite the public then. As many of them as possible. Important people, too, like generals and cabinet ministers. That's the way to get noticed. Give them a big party, and then present our case to them when they are stupefied by our achievement. Don't you think so?'

Her last question was not directed at us, but to the student in dark glasses, who sat next to her.

'Of course,'-"he said. 'What other way?'

'But why did you ask us to help you?' I inquired. 'We've only just joined your association. Besides, to tell you the truth, we haven't got any money to buy the necessary stuff.'

'Oh, we've got everything ready. You'll just give us a hand in mixing it and preparing the rockets. But, of course, we can't use the school laboratory, as this gala is secret. We've got to keep it among ourselves.'

'Where do we make the powder then?' Mischa asked.

'Can't we use your room?' she asked.

'Hardly,' I said. 'It's too small, and full of trunks and books. We need somewhere where we can spread ourselves out. We need a long table. Don't forget you've got to cut out cardboard tubes, and so forth.'

'Well, a friend of mine has a cellar—a large basement where you can do these things. We'll go along there this evening, shall we?'

Mischa and I agreed, and that evening at seven o'clock we stood outside the hospital waiting for Nadja and her friend.

'If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't do it,' Mischa said. 'I hate playing about with explosives.'

'What do you mean?'

'I don't quite know. But I'm suspicious. Remember the anarchists at the students' meeting?'

'You don't think Nadja——' I began.

'Oh, she's all right. But the others? Still, we can go along. Another thing—this firework gala. I've inquired about fireworks, and they can't be manufactured without government licence. I wonder what they are up to?'

'Let's ask Nadja. Perhaps she doesn't know the law.'

So when Nadja came, we told her about Mischa's discovery, and, to our great surprise, she was very angry.

'I told you not to speak about it,' she said sharply. 'I thought I could trust you. Who did you ask?'

'No-one. I found out in the library from a book,' Mischa said, rather abashed by Nadja's attack.

Her tone suddenly altered.

'I know it's illegal, but we've no money to spend on buying the fireworks. No-one will notice that they are home-mad. Of course, if you're frightened of a little prank, and don't ivant us to have some fun, well, that's different. Say so, and I'll understand.'

The invitation to retreat was too obvious, and we could not accept it, but just at that moment, another orderly came out and called to me: 'Sava, you're wanted. Can you do night duty to-night?'

'You mean- I've got to do night duty?' I called back.

'Yes,' he said. 'Someone's fallen sick, and you're expected to help in the operating theatre.'

That wasn't too bad, but I was sorry to let Mischa go off with Nadja. Still, the hospital rules were very strict, so I bade them good-bye, and said that I would help them to-morrow evening with their gala preparations. Mischa winked one large eye at me, but I could not follow his meaning.

The next day, just, as I was returning to my room, Mischa came up behind me and followed me into the room.

'Gosh, she's marvellous,' he said. I was quick to notice that he was looking very sleepy and unshaven.

'Been working all night?' I asked ironically.

'And how!' he exclaimed, with obvious relish. He was paying me back for giving his roses to Nadja. 'There wasn't much to do, so we went out drinking. What a night!'

I knew Mischa was lying—at least, in the drinking part of his story. He had very little money at that time.

'And, of course, she's just like the dream I had of her. Finger for finger. She was just as I imagined her to be. I'm not boasting, Sava, but I think I've made a hit.'

'Is that all you've come to tell me about?' I asked, hiding my bitterness by punching my pillow viciously and preparing to lie down, dressed as I was. I was dog-tired.

'Yes, that's all,' he said. 'I must go off to the hospital, otherwise I'll be late.'

'And what was the meaning of that ridiculous wink **you gave** me last night?' I asked in a surly manner.

'That? Oh, I was warning you.[5]

'Warning me of the *grand succes* you were about to have, I suppose?'

'Yes, that's right.'

'And what about the gunpowder?'

'There was plenty of it already made, but I prepared a little.'

'Did you see anything suspicious?' I asked.

'What do you mean, suspicious? Do you think I'd let Nadja do anything suspicious? I saw her cutting strips of cardboard and making little packets and fixing small fuses. It'll be great fun letting them off with her.'

He didn't say anything more, but blew me a facetious kiss as he went out at the door. I decided to forget Mischa and his escapades, as I was dead tired. I could not help noticing, however, that his bed was newly made and looked a little crumpled. I didn't believe his story of 'What a night!' any more than I believed any of his stories, but I felt a little jealous that he should talk of Nadja with such intimacy, real or imagined.

I slept long, of that I was sure, but when I opened my eyes arid saw that Nadja was standing by my bed, I was prepared to yield myself up to what I imagined must be a dream.

'George,' she said, 'what has that jackass Mischa been telling you?'

I started. 'Then you're real?' I said.

She laughed. 'Most real. I've watched you sleeping for a littlewhile. I've jus

'What a night!' I exclaimed involuntarily, and then checked myself. 'Sorry,' I said, 'I'm still half-awake. Can I do anything for you?'

'Yes, take me to lunch.'

'Gladly,' I said, looking for something to pawn. 'But it won't be a banquet such as Mischa gave you last night.'

' What are you saying?' she asked merrily.' Mischa is an amusing liar, but if you take him seriously, you might get jealous.'

'I am,' I admitted.

'A common complaint.'

'In the sense that it is vulgar or merely usual?'

'Both.

'I'd rather be vulgar than usual.'

'You are neither. Youth is your only complaint, and that's an illness I envy.'

'Oh-ho!' I laughed. 'You should talk! How old are you?'

'Twenty-three,' she said in such an obvious manner that I put on another three years and made her an attractive twenty-six.

'A fatal age.'

'For whom?'

'For me. I'm twenty-three—three years younger than you are.'

She laughed happily.

'You know,' she said, 'you've got more subtle impudence than Mischa. He's such an obvious seducer, poor boy. He rolls his eyes and knows how to smile to bring out his masculine dimples. He wears open-necked shirts, and pretends he reads poetry. With him flirting is an occupation, but you take it more seriously.'

'It all depends on my feelings,' I said ambiguously, hoping, however, that she would detect the full meaning.

'Is that flattery or a minor declaration of love?' she asked. 'We're behaving like students. Come, let us have lunch.'

I was glad that I did not have to answer her last question, but after I had washed and shaved, I went up to her room to take her to lunch, but quite unexpectedly, I found that she had changed into a charming afternoon frock. She had finished laying the table, and was arranging some Russian hors-d'oeuvres.

'Thought you'd like a change,' she said gaily. 'I've seen you drinking onion soup for the last year.'

'Then you've noticed me,' I said, trying to obliterate **the** pleasure from my voice by studied nonchalance.

'Of course. I've often wondered who you were. It might surprise you to know that it was I who managed to get you an invitation to the students' meeting. I'm sure you are intelligent, and want to see the students given a fair deal.'

'Yes, I do. And thank you for the invitation. I'm embarrassed.'

'Thank God,' she said, 'you are. Too many young men I know are never embarrassed by compliments. Your Mischa, for instance. He turns everything I say into a personal compliment to himself, and then thanks me very devotedly. I'm tired of him. I hope you don't mind?'

'On the contrary, I'm delighted.'

'Need we stand? Need we speak so stiffly to each other?'

Of course, there was no real need for all the play-acting which went on. Once we had sat down at the table we were eating and chatting quite normally.

'My mother was Russian,' she said. 'A north Russian.'

'That explains your fair hair,' I said.

'And upturned nose? You were going to say that?'

'Yes, if you insist.'

Our conversation grew more personal after we had drunk a small bottle of Greek wine. But we had come to the sweet before she said: 'You like me, don't you?'

My eyes spoke the admission.

'You would do anything for me?'

My eyes again spoke. This time they must have looked very devoted, because she said: 'It's very important. I want you to help us in removing the stuff we've made to a cellar in the cathedral. We've got to keep it secret, so we were going to do it to-night. Will you help?'

'Into the cathedral? Whatever for?' I asked.

'To hide it. We've made the fireworks, and want to store them somewhere.'

'Why don't you keep it in the same cellar as you made them **in?'**

'Impossible. In the first place, the cellar is too damp, and for another, the owner of the house is returning. We borrowed the use of his cellar in his absence. He is an old friend, but I don't think he'd like the idea of a group of merry students romping about his house. They've already drunk a whole barrel of his best wine, and that'll have to be taken out of the expenses for the gala when we make the gate-money. But the churchwarden is very interested in our gala, and he's given us permission to use his cellar. So will you help?'

'Is Mischa in this?'

'Yes. He's nice and brawny.'

'Then count me out,' I said. 'I'm on night duty all this week.'

'Then why didn't you say so at first?' Nadja asked.

'Well, I thought perhaps I might persuade Mischa to **take**

over my duty for me, and I could help you, but since you've invited him, he's hardly likely to let me take his place.'

'I see,' she said. 'Well, never mind. You'll be able to help me in some other way on Saturday.'

•Willingly. What could I do?'

'Well——' Nadja paused. 'You know what the students of Oxford and Cambridge do when they want to attract attention?'

I confessed that I did not know.

' They climb up a monument and put a chamber on it, or tie on a big banner with some stupid words that shock the townspeople. Well, that's what I want you to do. You're not afraid?'

'No,' I said, 'as long as I don't get expelled.'

'You won't. We'd all strike if you did. All you have to do is to get up to the top of the clock tower on some pretext or other, and then hang out a banner which I will give you, inviting the city to our gala demonstration. It'll be rolled up and ready for you when you call on Saturday. The churchwarden will let you go to the clock tower, but, of course, don't tell him what you're up to. When you get up there, you'll see a thing that looks like a pump. If you pull up the handle you'll set a siren going, and everyone will look up at the church-tower and see the banner. You can easily run down the stairs again and join us downstairs to watch the fun.'

I must say at once that the prospect of climbing the clock tower did not please me in the least, but I did not want to offend Nadja, so I grinned sheepishly and agreed on the escapade.

'Darling,' she said softly, 'you don't know how much we owe you. I'll never be able to thank you enough. Come and kiss me. That will be a little present on account.'

I smiled, but did not move forward to kiss her. Instead, I took hold of her hand and stroked it across the table.

'That would be too much,' I said, 'I am satisfied with such a little.'

'Can you imagine Mischa saying that?' she asked, laughing, and at that moment Mischa presented himself with a huge basket full of red roses. When he saw that I was in the room and holding Nadja's hand, he screamed, and threw up the flowers so that they fell in a shower over his head.

'**Shakespeare should have warned me** about **women! Baudelaire,** Pushkin, all the great and the wise, have called them vipers! **And** I bring you roses, you Cleopatra, you Semiramis! I pawn my shaving set, a present from my dearly-beloved departed mother, to buy you the reddest roses in the whole of Sofia, and what do I find? I find you in the arms, or perhaps the hands, of my greatest rival. How do you greet me, faithless one? You don't offer me a chair or **a** cup of tea? How are you, Sava?'

He slapped me viciously on the back, half in a bad, and half in a good humour. His clowning always got the better of him, for I believe that at the moment he entered, he was bitterly jealous, but, as usual, he was carried away by his own dramatisation of the situation.

'And you,' he said to me, 'I left you sleeping, and what do I find? A whole repast. It was prepared for me, wasn't it, Nadja? Hadn't I invited myself to lunch yesterday? How quickly you forget my hospitality. Never mind—I shall be with you to-night, my goddess, while you slave, you embryo-doctor, you eminent nobody!'

I agreed blandly that I would slave and that he was welcome to laugh at me, and Nadja pressed my hand very affectionately before she let go.

'Mischa, you can have the pickings, if you like. There are some eggs in the kitchen which you can make into an omelette, and there are some beans in oil. There is bread, and I expect we've left a small glass of wine in the bottom of the bottle, together with the sediment. Now, I've got to go, back to the hospital. George, you had better stay and see that Mischa doesn't make a mess of my furniture, or break my kitchen utensils. By-bye.'

When we were left alone, Mischa went to the door and opened it.

'What is that for?' I asked.

'I'm suspicious.'

'Rubbish. Of what?'

'Of the whole thing—the gala. I've been carting whole barrels of stuff to the cathedral. I can't understand it.'

'It's simple. The churchwarden has given them permission. **The** place^ you were in is apparently **a** private house, **and the** owner is returning. '

'But the owner is there. He is the fellow in uniform we saw at that students' meeting we were at last week. He's a colonel or something, but I think he's been retired by the new government.'

'He's a friend of Nadja's, isn't he?'

'I shouldn't be surprised if he isn't something more.'

'You'd always suspect the worse. Trust you. But what's wrong with making fireworks. I know it isn't legal, but these people are only doing it to raise funds, aren't they? Come on, we've got to help Nadja. IVe promised.'

'What have you promised?' asked Mischa in alarm.

'That I'd—I don't know whether I ought to tell you, but, still, you're in this too. Nadja asked me whether I'd fix a banner to the top of the clock tower of the cathedral and set a siren going. I said I would. It's all in fun. You know they do that sort of thing at Oxford and Cambridge. It's a sort of college etiquette to hang out a jerry on some work of art, and our cathedral isn't much to look at. I wonder that someone doesn't go and blow it up!'

'What?' Mischa exclaimed. 'That's it. That explains the formula I found. Here it is.' Mischa produced a piece of paper from his pocket, and read it aloud. 'C_2H_2 (O.Noa)s. What's that?'

'Nitroglycerin, I think. I'm not sure, but I think it's that. Where did you find it?'

'In this cellar. I found this formula with the gunpowder formula.'

'Well, that's nothing,' I said. 'You use a little nitroglycerin for the larger rockets. What's funny about that?'

'Nothing,' said Mischa, 'but I'm having a good look round to-night. If I find any of the nitroglycerin stuff, I'll report it to the police.'

'But you'll tell Nadja? She doesn't know anything about it, surely?'

'I'll tell nobody. You and I will just go to the police and take them to where they've put the stuff. I'll go along to-day and nose about. I'll let you-know what I've found to-morrow. What day are you supposed to go and hang that banner out?'

'On Saturday.'

'That's the day after to-morrow.[5]

'Yes.'

'Well, wait for me before you do anything. Promise?'

'I promise, but I think you're doing all this to impress yourself. I wouldn't let Nadja know what you're up to.'

'She won't know. She didn't see me pick up that formula. I expect, as you say, she doesn't know a thing, but I'm going to find out how much nitroglycerin there is in the place. If it's a small amount, I'll say nothing, but if they've made a barrel-full, I'll go to the police. You wait until I come back, and don't go hanging any banners out or blowing any sirens. Understand?'

I was amused at Mischa's generalship, so I said: 'Yes, *mon capitaine.'*

'I have an intuition like a woman, so don't be so damned amused. I'm as highly strung as a Stradivarius.'

'As omnipresent as the zephyr, and as omniscient as Zeus,' I concluded for him.

After Mischa finished his meal, he returned to the hospital, and I went downstairs to complete my broken sleep before going on ,duty again at seven o'clock.

I did not see Mischa or Nadja again that day, and although I waited for him during the whole of the Friday afternoon," he did not turn up. I thought perhaps he had been detained at the hospital, so I went up to Nadja's room to ask if she had seen him, but Nadja did not come home for lunch. I went back to bed again.

When evening came again, and I went to the hospital, I was very worried about Mischa. He had probably got into some scrape or other, I thought, but all my efforts to trace him or Nadja failed.

It was not until the Saturday morning that Nadja came into my room. It was about eleven.

'Hurry,' she said. 'You're late for the banner. It's eleven. The crowd will soon be leaving the cathedral.'

'What crowd?' I asked. 'To-day's Saturday.'

'Don't you ever read the papers?' she asked.

I admitted that I had not for the last few days.

'Well, haven't you seen that a general has been murdered by

the Communists, so they say, or the **IMRO,** and that the King and all his ministers are attending the cathedral for the funeral?'

'Well, it's not a very appropriate time to hang banners up on the clock tower and sound sirens,' I said, 'is it?'

'What does it matter? Generals are dying all the time in Bulgaria, but this is our gala night and we want the people to come, don't we? Or do I have to find someone else?'

'I'll do it,' I said,' but I hate to. I'd much rather sleep. And then the siren—is that strictly necessary?'

'I should say so. That's to attract their attention to the tower —how else? Well, are you going to do it or not?'

'Where's Mischa?' I asked.

'I don't know.'

'He was with you last night.'

'That was last night. He said something about a girl. Please, George, hurry. You'll be late as it is.'

'He said something about a girl to you? That's strange. I thought he was in love with you,' I said, getting up and throwing a dressing gown 6ver my shoulders.

'I disappointed him. Now do you understand? Hurry up.'

'I dislike being urged, Nadja,' I said, 'and Mischa's disappearance worries me. He's not at the hospital?'

'How do I know? It's my day off.'

'Well, he told me not to do anything until he came. He made me promise not to go out. What am I to do?' If pretended that I was under Mischa's influence by adopting a very humble air.

'But, darling,' she cried, 'you've got to go. I've made all the arrangements. I've got the banner. Please hurry. I've told you how grateful I shall be if you do.'

'And I told you that l did not want your gratitude, darling,' I said, copying her. She observed that I was laughing at her.

'I love you,' she said desperately.

'Because I am going to hang up the banner and sound the siren?' I asked facetiously.

'No.' **Her** attitude changed, but I knew she was pulling **out** her feelings on strings in **the** hope that I would dance to **them.**

"Then for what other reason do you love me?'

'Because you're kind and brave. Now, please hurry. I'll spend the whole day with you.'

'Your offer is generous,' I said, 'but I won't budge until Mischa comes in. I've promised, and that's that.'

'Very well,' said Nadja, in a tone which suggested that she had other methods of removing my obstinacy.' I'll tell him I love him. How would you like that? It's a lie, but I'll tell him.'

'As you please. Neither of us are such big fools as to believe you. But you tell me where Mischa is, and I'll go to the top of the tower and hang up a dozen banners.'

'I don't know.'

'Then try and find, out.'

'You're wasting my time. Listen, Gospadin Sava, if you don't want a proper scandal, you'd better do as I tell you.'

'What sort of scandal—blackmail? I see. Well, let's see whether the girl with the flaxen hair has a really bad heart. Attack! Your move first.'

'You'd look pretty at a duel, wouldn't you?' she sneered. 'Now, I warn you—either you go up that tower and hang out the banner and sound the siren, or I'll tell my protector, Colonel Korlov, that you've been paying very unwelcome attentions to me.'

'Bravo!' I cried. 'I was waiting for something like that. Well, if it's a duel you'd like to see, send your Colonel Korlov to the devil for me, and you can take a ring-side seat at the performance.'

'You're a fool,' said Nadja slowly, 'a big fool. You don't know what you've lost.'

'Your love, maybe?' I asked sarcastically, but Nadja did not wait to argue. She slapped me hard in the face and ran out of the room as fast as she could go. I promptly went over to the mirror and looked at myself.

'.Why didn't you go?' I asked myself. I then returned to bed and prepared to go to sleep again, but I was in a very nervous state. I knew Mischa of old, and I knew that he had habits which kept him out long at night, but he had promised to come and see me on Friday night. What was he up to? Did he find the nitro-

glycerin in sufficient quantities to go to the police? Perhaps he had been arrested? The train of my thoughts WAS lit like a fuse, and it crept and crept up to the inevitable conclusion that he might be . . . *dead!*

Then there was a terrific explosion!

I leapt out of bed, my ears ringing with the sound. I heard cries and shouts in the street outside, and I ran to the small garret window.

Men and Women were running about excitedly, and I could hear the ringing of ambulances and fire brigade cars. Soon people from the other rooms in the house were gathering outside on the landing yelling to each other. I put on my clothes hastily and ran out. I was thoroughly awake by now, and saw the extent of the commotion when I noticed the coming and going between rooms. Really, the most unexpected people were exchanging their rooms! For a few minutes I did not understand what had happened, but once I was in the street, the unmistakable haze and smell of explosives had reached my nose.

'God!' I thought. 'The cathedral!'

I ran like a madman to the hospital, and found the place in a state of turmoil. Doctors were carrying their bags hurriedly out to their cars. Stretchers were being pulled out of the first-aid cabinets, nurses were running with armfuls of bandages, and the chief surgeon was giving orders at the top of his voice.

'Students and orderlies,' he shouted, 'are to proceed to the cathedral and to help extricate the dead and the wounded. The seriously wounded are to be removed first, but do not attempt to lift them without expert medical advice. The less seriously damaged should be put on the pavements, and the nurses will attend to them. Use your common sense, and get there as quickly as you can.'

We were bundled into lorries, given a few bandages, and sent scurrying down the streets in the wake of the fire brigade and the ambulances.

When we arrived, a dreadful sight met our eyes^ The whole of the cathedral was blown up. A few of the thicker walls were standing amid the "Sickling rubble and smoke, and we went right

amongst the bricks and broken masonry and began the difficult task of lifting people out from under the debris.

This was no time to inquire what had happened, or who had done it, but my heart missed a minute's beating when I saw the clock tower—undamaged. It stood gaunt and absurd a few yards away from the ruins of the cathedral. I looked for the banner, the advertisement of the students' gala, but it was not there. The siren might have sounded for all I know, but it must have mixed with the cries and the orders, and was undistinguishable. Where were Nadja, Mischa, and the rest of them? These thoughts danced in a farrago through my mind while my hands and my whole strength strained to release the wounded and the dying.

I don't remember for how long we worked, but it was dusk when we were told to stand by and attend to the less dangerously wounded. The time had fled while we had been working. The ambulances had removed the very badly injured to the hospital, and the firemen and the demolishers were still looking through the debris, now and again coming across some broken body which was lifeless, or was about to die.

When, towards evening, I was bandaging those who had escaped serious damage, but had bad bruises and cuts, I noticed that most of the students were present. There was no trace, however, of Nadja, her friend with the dark glasses, or her 'protector'. But I said nothing. What had happened was beyond my comprehension, and I was not able to impute this terrible massacre to anybody. It must have all been a mistake. A piece of folly. Perhaps the gunpowder the stupid students had stacked under the cathedral had exploded by accident? Poor devils. Lucky, I said to myself, I didn't implicate myself in the whole horrible mess, but stayed out.

At about ten, we were all driven back to the hospital and were there given the first refreshments we had had that day. We were all almost fainting, but we had enough strength to talk and to ask what had happened.

'It was a Communist plot. I've heard it from the police. The whole thing was arranged by the Communists and Stambolisky's supporters,' someone was saying, obviously not a friend of those two parties.

'I've heard that they killed the general hoping that the king and the ministers would go to the funeral and all be blown up, but the king didn't go, nor the more important ministers,' another student said aloud, wiping the sweat from his brow with the back of his hand.

'Then it's a put-up job. I expect the king and the ministers knew there was a plot to kill them, so they stayed away and let it happen so as to have a good reason for beating up the others? .What do you say?'

There was a lot of opposition to this theory, but one thing transpired, and that was that the king and the ministers did not go-to the funeral, but had sent representatives, and that a good number of people besides the petty officials had been killed. Three hundred were dead for certain, and about another two hundred were very badly wounded.

We did not have very much time to speculate on rumours, for the police came into the hospital and into our dining-room. I saw that Mischa was with them and sighed with relief. His head was bandaged.

'I want you boys to act as volunteer police officers to-night,' said a man with plenty of braid round his sleeve. 'We are going to round up the Communists. You will have instructions whom to look for, and you must bring them in dead or alive.' Then he turned to Mischa and to some others who were standing by him, and said: 'We'll check up on these students. He might be hiding among them.'

In the meantime, we had formed a long line and stood waiting for orders.

'I have a pair of spectacles here,' the police captain said, 'and I want each one of you to step forward and try them on.'

One by one we moved up. We did not understand the meaning of the procedure, and when I looked at Mischa, I saw that he was looking very glum and serious.

My turn came after a few minutes, and I put the spectacles on.

'No, not him,' Mischa said in a low voice. I thought I saw a smile, but when I took off the spectacles, he was looking as serious as ever.

'Are you all right?' I ventured to ask. He nodded his head.

'Who is he?' the police officer asked.

'George Sava,' I answered. 'Medical student.'

'Sava?' The officer paused. 'You knew the girl Nadja Krugova and Colonel Korlov, didn't you?'

'I knew the girl,' I said.

'Do you know where she is?'

'No.'

'When did you last see her?'

'This morning.'

'Was she with anyone?'

'Alone.'

'We'd better take you for cross-examination,' the captain said, but Mischa intervened.

'He's my associate,' he said. 'If I'd been able to get a message through to him he could have prevented everything. I assure you, captain. He's my best friend.'

The captain nodded. He was satisfied with Mischa's explanation, and I could not understand why Mischa had suddenly sprung into such prominence.

'But there's no harm if I question him a little, Mr. Samasov, he said politely to Mischa.

'None at all, but I can tell you everything that he knows.

Just like Mischa to take all the limelight, I thought, but I was glad of his offer. I was dead tired and thoroughly muddled.

'Captain,' I said, 'do you think I could be excused from going out to-night? I've been working all night, and can hardly stand.'

The captain looked suspiciously at me.

'Not a Communist,are you?' he asked.

'Certainly not,' I answered.

'All right, you're excused, but I'll have to hold you over for further questioning.'

My hopes fell. I looked despairingly at Mischa, but either his look was unintelligible under the mass of bandages on his head, or he was determined not to help me further. Mischa was a queer chap, and did things very unexpectedly. It would be quite worthy of him to leave me in the hands of the Bulgarian police to be questioned for hours, and then come at the end of my misfortune and have me released.

I watched rifles being handed over to the students as they were formed and marched off into the city, and then I, together with the police captain and Mischa and some guards, was taken to the gendarmerie.

It was here that the whole story was unfolded.

'I know precisely what role you played in this affair,' said the captain, dismaying me further. 'Mr. Samasov has told us everything. We discovered him this morning lying unconscious im Colonel Korlov's cellar, and we were able to arrest the persons implicated in the crime. We hold the colonel and the churchwarden who allowed the cathedral cellars to be used for the storing of the nitroglycerin. We have also apprehended a Dr. Friedman, a lawyer. But there are two other conspirators we have to catch. One of them is unknown to us by name. He is a student and wears dark glasses. We have obtained the confessions of the other three conspirators, and they say that it was he who was responsible for firing the train of gunpowder that exploded the mass of dynamite in the vaults. He was present in the clock tower.'

I sighed a terrific sigh of relief without the captain noticing it, or at least so I thought.

'Now, we know,' he continued, 'that you were very nearly made the victim of their conspiracy, and if it hadn't been for this young man's sagacity in warning you to stay at your home and await his arrival, you might have been in very serious trouble.'

I thanked Mischa in my thoughts.

'As you see,' the captain went on, 'he himself suffered pretty extensively.'

I don't know why policemen always like to use such literary language, but I was genuinely sorry for Mischa, nevertheless.

' He found the nitroglycerin, but was caught in the act of opening a barrel. I suppose they then hit him on the head and went on with their preparations. Unfortunately, he only came to some time after the explosion and was able to escape and inform us, otherwise we should have captured all the conspirators.'

I expressed my regrets.

' However,' continued the police officer, 'we are anxious to know more about the activities of the other two—as yet free—criminals.'

Mischa blinked at me rather openly, but I did not understand him until the captain posed his question.

'You see,' he said, 'we suspect that she has escaped together with this man in dark glasses. At first we suspected that you were that man, but now we suspect that you know where she is. Do you?'

'No/ I protested. 'She left half an hour before the explosion, saying she would find someone else to fix the banner and sound the siren.'

'We found a letter in her room saying that you loved her. It was written to Colonel Korlov. Can you explain that?'

I realized that my position had suddenly become precarious, but I decided to tell the whole truth.

'When I refused to go up the tower,' I said, 'she threatened to write to the colonel so as to provoke a duel.'

'But it was written a day ago, before she had made the threat,' said the police officer.

'Then she must have wanted to get rid of me before, or should I say, in any case?'

'And did you love her?'

'I can't say that. I was attracted. She obviously played on that, hoping I would accede to her wishes. She did the same to Mischa.'

'Not quite the same,' said Mischa. 'My intuitive psychology came to my aid immediately she rejected me. I knew there was something wrong with her. She did her best after that to interest me, but I was too suspicious already, and I gave her up to you, dear boy, to fascinate. It gave me more time for my researches in that cellar, and, but for that untimely blow, I should have saved die ugliest building in Sofia and three hundred lives.'"

'We are grateful to you for what you have done/ said the captain, who, by this time, must have been thoroughly inured to Mischa's boasting. 'Our trouble is to capture the girl.'

'What will happen to her if you do capture her?' I asked with a slight pang.

'She will be tried. I expect she'll be hanged, as this is a capital offence. You seem interested in her fate, Mr. Sava. There might be some testimony which you have not given, but would like to give. You understand the consequences of appearing as an accomplice?'

'I know nothing,' I said. 'But I have what Mischa calls "my intuitive psychology", I'm going back to the ruins, with your permission, to find her.'

Mischa and the police captain both started.

'Whatever for?' asked Mischa.

'You are mad, young man,' the captain said definitely. 'She's escaped. Probably on the Yugoslav border by now.

'I don't think so.'

'What makes you say that?' the policeman asked suspiciously.

'The letter she left the colonel, and also the time when the explosion happened. What was the colonel's reaction when you showed him the letter?'

'He said it was a lie. He said she loved the other student, the man with the dark glasses. He nearly gave his name away, and said that she was citing you to put him off the trail.'

'And what time was the explosion supposed to happen?'

'At twelve. Just in the middle of the service.'

'But it happened at eleven-thirty. Half an hour before.'

'That often happens. Conspirators change their plans at the last minute.'

'And what made them change their plans?' I asked.

'The fact that you refused to "sound the siren", as they called the dynamite train.'

'Exactly. So they had to find a substitute. The man with the dark glasses went up to the tower. Did Korlov say whether he was present during the service to see whether the heads were there?'

'No, he didn't go in, but Nadja Krugova went in, you say; and then the man with the dark glasses fired the shot.'

'Half an hour earlier than he was meant to. Who gave that order?'

'Korlov; The tower was connected by phone, and he gave the order for the time to be changed.'

"Then he knew that Nadja was in the cathedral checking up to see whether the heads were there, together with the King, and he ordered her lover to blow her up with the rest. And, of course, the man with the glasses did not know she was there at the time,' I said, ending my piece of deduction to everyone's surprise by saying: 'So that means that there's only the man with the dark glasses to find, and you have all of them.'

I had a sudden crazy wish to seize the dark glasses the police captain held in his hands and plant them on Mischa's nose. What an extraordinary ending it would have been! But Mischa must have realized my intention, and he said sinisterly: 'The man with the glasses did not exist. He was probably either Friedman, the colonel, or the churchwarden. We did not see them all three together at any time. Or, for that matter, it might have been any of us.'

'But what about Nadja?' I said. 'She's there amongst the ruins.'

'Wait,' the captain ordered. 'I have a new list here.' He glanced down it. 'There are about ten unidentified bodies of women. What was this Nadja like?'

'Flaxen hair,' I said.

'There's one here,' he said, 'who had a fair wig. Gould that be her?'

'She was all fake,' said Mischa, 'so why not?'

'But you brought her roses,' I said, a little mournfully.

'Paper roses, you fool,' he said. 'How do you think I could afford real ones? But she didn't look at them, so what did it matter?'

Do you know, I have never liked Mischa since then? I didn't like the confession of the paper roses. But we did one last thing together. We went to the hanging of Dr. Friedman, the churchwarden, and Colonel Korlov. It was a public affair, and I remember that hot summer day when the populace crowded to the execution square where three gibbets had been put up.

'You know,' I said, 'this is the first public hanging I have been to. I think it's macabre, but with all these people in their best clothes crowding to it, you'd think it was a fashionable wedding.'

'It's superstition,' said Mischa. 'And shall I tell you why? No, I shan't tell you—wait and see.'

The condemned were brought in carts to this thoroughly medieval scene. They were accompanied by priests in gorgeous robes, and the Communion was given to them at the steps of the gibbets, the crowd and the executioners all entering into the prayers of the condemned. There was something unreal about the whole scene. The brilliance of the weather; the holiday crowds; the sellers of sweets and the other hawkers, made it so. Thinking of it now, it reminds me of a football cup-final. There was nothing bloodthirsty about the scene. There were no invectives such as are even thrown at a referee at a football match. And although a few people wept and realized that three men were about to die, there was complete resignation in the air.

Gipsies stood telling fortunes on the corners, and some acrobats jumped over each other's backs to amuse the people who had gathered too late for the best places. Mischa and I sat at a crowded window, watching the reactions of the crowd, and studying the mien of the prisoners.

We saw the colonel speak to the executioner, and we learnt afterwards that he asked him to hang him properly. It was all thoroughly gentlemanly. The executioner bowed to the colonel. We might have been at an operette. And the colonel gave him some money.

The lawyer was the only one who was not resigned to his fate.

'As might be expected from a lawyer,' Mischa said, 'he is arguing whether it is constitutional to hang him, I bet. He has consulted all the authorities and cannot find one to support his contention. His last speech on earth must be full of legal quiddities, pros and cons, and *sine qua nons.* Still, each man has his own music. Look at the churchwarden, he's saying his prayers. A man suddenly turns religious after blowing up five hundred people. Human beings are preposterous. He has only one death, but the law says he ought to die five hundred times. But he prays. He thinks God is going to forgive him five hundred times.'

I must say that I grew to dislike Mischa more and more. He had the soul of a jailer, I told him,

'Complain of my soul?' he said. 'But look at that crowd.'

The men had been hanged and taken down from the gibbets. As soon as the guard marched off, the crowd broke the barriers and surged over the square to the gibbets.

'What da they want?' I cried.

'They want a piece of the rope that hanged the murderers,' said Mischa. 'It's supposed to have medicinal properties and to keep away the evil eye. The fools!'

Chapter 5—Paris

THE REPERCUSSION OF A CRISIS

I

Dr. Stoyan Milanovitch was mad.

That was what everybody was saying—or nearly everybody. His friends said so, or at any rate did not openly deny it. Those who pretended to be his friends said so. The boulevardiers said so—and they know everything, as everyone knows. Above all, the three doctors deputed by the Commissioner of Police said so. If there were a few of his closest friends who might have been prepared to argue it, they could not do so in the face of the doctors' fiat. These gentlemen had no doubts whatsoever. Hadn't they had him under observation for more than a month—ever since the 'accident' in fact? Hadn't they applied every known test as well as a few of their own brilliant invention? They wrote down their decision in their report and each put his signature to it. And they were signatures before which the medical world of Paris bowed respectfully.

So no-one, unless he was a fool or a rogue, could dispute it. Dr. Stoyan Milanovitch, resident surgeon at one of the biggest Paris hospitals, a man with an international reputation, was mad. At the hospital where he had worked for so long and worked so well, they patched up his battered body, and then they put him away. There, of course, the matter should have ended. The whole thing was clear cut and incontrovertible.

I do not think I am a rogue, but I may be a fool—some of my friends will agree in that. But however it was, I could not

suppress my doubts. You see, I had known Stoyan Milanovitch. I had known him for a long time—not all my life, and certainly not all his life, for he was of an older generation than mine. I met him for the first time in Belgrade; it was soon after the Russian Revolution, and I was on my way to Paris to embark on my chosen new profession of medicine.

The picture of Stoyan Milanovitch I had built up in my mind was certainly not that of a madman, not even that of an eccehtric. He was gentle and kind. He was strong and wise. He was wistful and fine. Always I shall remember the kind advice and counsel he gave me upon the difficulties and discouragements I should meet on the road I had selected to follow. He told me also of the satisfying rewards I might win—and he did not stress the financial ones, for that was not his way. And in all the many talks we had, never once did he tell me I must not study medicine, as many others had done. He believed in medicine as he believed in himself; and I think he believed in me.

It was his gentleness and kindness that I grew to know first. I was friendless and penniless, as he was, and we walked together for hours in the beautiful woods and meadows surrounding Belgrade. I can still see the white road bobbing and jigging as it ran before us into the dusk. The scent of the May blossom and the rain-drenched fields is still with me. Even now, I can hear the weird rustle of the wind through the dykes of the Danube; I can feel its chill and remember with gratitude the protective warmth of my friend's voice.

There are other memories, too, of that time—of innumerable quiet hours passed with him in his little house before the roaring kitchen fire. I would gaze with sleepy eyes at the fantastic shadow of his high-backed chair, a shadow endowed with grotesque life as it danced on the wall to the tune of the leaping flames, with his rich voice as a soothing counterpoint. Dr. Stoyan Milanovitch loved the twilight and the fireside, as he loved all simple, goodly things.

I was still only a youth, with all that combination of cocksureness and diffidence that is youth itself. Yet when he took me round the hospital wards, telling me of the magnificent work being done there and of how much more there was still to do for those,

like myself, who would come after, he filled me with pride by treating me as an equal, as though I knew much of medicine and surgery. I was his colleague always and never his pupil, never the young greenhorn to be scored off and made to look silly as a foil to greater knowledge. Yes, he was a great psychologist in the true sense: he knew and loved human beings. He had the gift of putting a beginner at his ease and encouraging him; even now, I am grateful to him for that. When people say to *me* how difficult it must be to learn surgery, I think of Stoyan Milanovitch, who could illumine a whole problem by a phrase and somehow or other pass on the secret of his skill in a joke and a smile.

Standing at the head of a sick bed in his white gown, he looked huge and formidable; but there was nothing overwhelming in his bigness, for it was the bigness of protection, as anyone could see who caught the look of confidence and trust in the eyes of his patients. As I walked beside him, I basked in reflected glory; but that was as nothing to the pride of intimacy when, the day's work over, he would shed his jacket and slip on an open-necked flannel shirt. Then, in the firelight, his skin shone with a satin sheen and his supple muscles writhed beneath it. The skin of his* chest was a pearly, translucent white that showed up strikingly against the darkness of his weather-beaten face and neck, and his delicate hands, with their sensitive surgeon's fingers, contrasted strongly with the wiry ebonness of his strong arms. To me, he was everything a surgeon should be. He was just that ideal which can inspire and mould the whole life of a young man starting out on his career.

It was not always work with Stoyan Milanovitch—or, rather, it was not' always surgery. He told me a secret I have never forgotten. The first duty of a doctor, he told me, is to know humanity. So I would wander with him round all the horse fairs and agricultural shows in the country. He was a farmer's son and the love of animals and of nature was rooted deep down in his soul. We would shiver together in frost-silvered fields and draw our coats more closely about us as we watched ploughing matches and saw the bright coulters turn the brown loam to the sky. In the late summer we would sit in the shade of tall hedges,

listening to the drowsy hum of the never-sleeping insect world and looking over the rustling wheat at the gaunt arms of the reaper cutting into the blue sky. Above alt things, Stoyan Milanovitch loved horses and the things men do with them, and he revered the soil and what it yielded. Therein lay the secret of his wisdom and his wistfulness; and his love was his hobby.

And so at last I went away and it was not till ten years later that I met him again.

ii

I could write like that of Stoyan Milanovitch almost indefinitely. Each memory calls up another, and every one has a charm for me. But that is not the point. I have tried to show what manner of man he was and why I did not believe this assertion that he was mad. Perhaps I was the only one in Paris who did not accept it. The police said so; they said so on the authority of three doctors, and there was a report to prove it. So all Paris—or all the Paris that talked—repeated it.

They had ample grounds, so the police said. Dr. Stoyan Milanovitch did strange and unaccountable things. There was his marriage, for example. Here he was, a surgeon known throughout the capital, throughout France, and even beyond, a man of position and responsibility—and he had stooped so low as to marry Sonia. Sonia was a cabaret dancer and a Montmartre dance hostess to boot. What surgeon in his right mind would do so outrageous a thing? One could imagine the shrug of the police shoulders as they asked the question.

Now everyone is entitled to his own opinion. Some may have genuinely thought that Sonia was a low creature and quite unworthy to be the wife of Stoyan Milanovitch. That concerns only those who think so. It is different with me. True, Sonia may not have behaved like the perfect lady when she floored the police inspector with that old Chinese pot as neatly as I could have done it. myself—still less when she spurned his senseless carcase with her foot. But in my view that man got no more than he asked for; and if Soma's conduct wasn't that of a perfect lady, it was certainly that of a loving wife.

That inspector had burst into her home and accused her husband of being mad. If he had had any sense, he could not have expected a ceremonious reception. And with my own eyes I witnessed what followed. The next moment she was on her knees beside Milanovitch, her arms about him, and pressing his head to her soft breast. As I argued with the policeman, I heard her crooning to him, and all the love in the world vibrated in that deep contralto voice of hers.

In the light of all that it is not surprising that I think Dr. Stoyan Milanovitch was lucky beyond most men in winning such a wife. She was as sweet and gentle and loyal a woman as ever blinded a man with the light of her eyes. To say that she qualified him for a mental home is preposterous.

But I had better tell what I know of the affair from the beginning. If I digress, then Milanovitch himself is to blame, for he taught me to be more interested in persons than events and to love human beings more than the odd things they do. I have tried to show you something of Stoyan Milanovitch, and I have been led to tell of his wife. Now let me try to tell the story.

III

The year was 1934. I was lounging in the Cafe de la Paix, scanning the headlines in the *Paris-Soir*. My eyes goggled a little.

'Le roi de Yougoslavie est assassine. . . .' 'The King of Yugoslavia has been assassinated. . . .' The words beat at my eyes and brain by the blackness and size of their letters. I laid aside the paper and stared in front of me, brooding. King or peasant, millionaire or tramp, it is always a terrible thing when an honest man going about his business is murdered. Till then, I had been oblivious of my surroundings. Now I was aware that the cafe was a-buzz with conversation. It was all about the same topic. '*Le roi de Tougoslavie est assassine . . .*'

'The beginning of the avalanche,' muttered a man at the next table. He was a big man with a square-cut beard, and the words seemed to emerge muffled.

'Who knows?' His companion, an excitable little man, flung his arms in the air. 'Who did it?'

The bearded man snorted. 'The Ustachi.'

'And who are they?'

Conversation of this kind in a French cafe is not confined to one table. Another man a little way off smiled cynically.

'That's not important. The name you give them does not matter. The question is, who is behind them. Ah, that's where you strike it. Italy, or perhaps Hungary, if you ask me. What do you think?'

He did not want to know. His own mind was made up. But the question was eagerly taken up and debated hotly from table to table. It is always the same in these cafes. Someone asks a question. Everyone talks. And soon in the excitement of debate all sight of the original question is lost, and the argument continues for its own sake.

Yes, these conversations on the boulevard are sometimes the most stupid in the world. Sometimes they are not even conversations, but a series of simultaneous monologues in which each participant talks and no-one else listens. But sometimes one learns from them. Sometimes pne catches hints that if one had the wit to understand them would prove very useful.

I heard a lot that day which seemed nonsense then, but now, in the light of current history, makes all too much sense. All of us are wiser than we were, I among the rest. I smiled to myself at the talk of the Ustachi, of this secret society and of that. But it is all so clear to me to-day. The Ustachi were but a link in the chain of treachery that was to bind Europe hand and foot. Behind them was the mechanism of a world-wide conspiracy so complete that it included every nationality. Hitler was just beginning to build up his Fifth Column, and Mussolini was already at his side. There were others, as well, as all the world knows now. The pity of it is that one is wise only after the event, though then the littleone did hear how little it was compared with the whole vast nightmare we witness to-day!

That cold-blooded murder of Alexander shook the civilized world. But the civilized world did not heed it. The nations were like dwellers on the slopes of Etna who have not learnt the meanings of the presaging rumbles from within. And it was not

only Yugoslavia that suffered. France, too, received a deadly blow when Barthou, her Foreign Minister, perished at the king's side.

'It's no use dismissing this as a domestic affair, just another of these Balkan assassinations. Last time, you remember, ,the world was set ablaze by an assassination.' The speaker was an elderly boulevardier with a shrewd expression. ' All right: kill the king. But why kill a minister of France? What has he to do with the Croats? What account have the Ustachi to settle with him?'

No-one answered. All Europe began to ask the same questions —and no-one answered. They are old questions now, history in the dusty archives of the League of Nations, if that body itself is not now merely a record in some other archives. Yes, all this seems old and rather pointless now. Yet the figures who strutted the world stage then still do so. They are the same actors, though some of them have changed their roles and most of them are playing more dangerous parts. The traitors of France were at work then. Their cue was the murder of Alexander and Barthou. That is what I hope to prove in this story.

True, the man who told me the story was in a madhouse. True, they set police guards on him and scheduled him as dangerous to the State. Dr. Stoyan Milanovitch told it to me, and he, as the three doctors proved conclusively, was utterly and completely out of his mind.

But when the whole world has gone raving mad, who is there to set himself up and say that this or that individual is a lunatic? If, in 1934, the sane ones had condescended to listen to the voice of a madman, or had, rather, let it penetrate through the thick, safe walls of an asylum, history might have been different. But the world believed in walls and denied what they could shut out. You cannot hear or see what is on the other side of a thick wall, so it is of no consequence. There was, for example, the Maginot Line....

IV

I called for another black coffee and returned to my *Paris-Soir*. But the man with the square-cut beard was not going to let me escape so easily.

'And what do you think of it, m'sieur?' he asked politely.

'It is another political crime,' I replied. 'I hate crime. I hate politics. I hate politicians. Therefore, I detest the whole dirty business. Besides, I am a doctor on holiday,' I added, hoping to demonstrate my complete indifference to the affair.

He would not be put off. 'In that case,' he continued firmly, 'the medical details at least must interest you. Let us grant the logic of your argument that you hate crime and politics and that therefore political crime is detestable to you. You cannot maintain that you are not interested in the details of your profession. You would not be a good doctor if you did.'

Flattery, I thought. Let him keep it.

He leant forward impressively. 'Now, listen to this and tell me if you think it is right. The king was shot outright. Nothing could be done. Very well. But Barthou—he was only wounded. Something could have been done. If you had been there, m'sieur, you would have done all you knew even if you regarded the case as hopeless.'

'It is a doctor's duty,' I murmured.

'Precisely. But it was otherwise. For more than two hours—two hours, mark you—that old man received no medical attention whatsoever. He bled to death. What do you make of that?'

I hardly knew what to say.' Strange things happen in a melee,' I returned. 'In the excitement, no doubt, he was overlooked.'

'Overlooked?' The man stared at me accusingly. 'You are not being serious, m'sieur. If it was I, perhaps, or the chauffeur, even yourself, perhaps we might be forgotten in such circumstances. But a minister of France forgotten, overlooked? Pah! It is impossible, the very idea. It was deliberate, I say—deliberate.' And he thumped the table with one hand while he tugged at his great beard with the other.

'I am a foreigner, m'sieur,' I said, taking refuge behind the only excuse I could think of. 'It is not for me to offer an opinion.'

'So was King Alexander,' he snapped. 'I tell you, this is not an affair of one nation. The whole of Europe, the whole world, is involved.'

He turned away to find some debater more worthy of him, and, having given him a stare, I resumed my reading of the newspaper.

I glanced at the smaller headlines without paying much attention to them. I was sick and tired of the King of Yugoslavia, but I could not help thinking of the affair. I am not a politician. As I told the man with the square-cut beard, I hate politics and all that goes with them. But it did not call for any special knowledge or acumen to understand that the murder of a king and a foreign minister was not just an isolated outburst of Croat terrorism. I had an uneasy presentiment of forces I could not understand at work.

The pages turned mechanically before my eyes. There was the inevitable body recovered from the Seine. A jury had discharged a self-confessed murderer under the unwritten law. From the midst of these trivialities a small paragraph forced itself on my attention. If I had read the paper in normal circumstances, I doubt whether I should have noticed it. But there it was, and it could not be denied.

Dr. Stoyan Milanovitch. It was the Slavonic name that caught me up at first. He had been examined by three doctors and certified. The great hospital would know him no more.

Dr. Stoyan Milanovitch was dismissed in a couple of lines. I repeated the name to myself. It brought back memories of the good and kind man who had encouraged me and inspired me in Belgrade, who had guided my first unsteady steps in my profession.

Stoyan Milanovitch, the mad doctor! That was what Paris would be saying. Indeed, my bearded neighbour was already discussing it, having exhausted for the moment the possibilities of the assassination.

'Another one of these Slavs,' he was saying, jabbing the paragraph fiercely. 'We ought to clear them out. They are all mad and all potential assassins. They live by killing. . . .

v

No, Stoyan Milanovitch, my friend, was not mad. I was sure of it. But what good could I have done by asserting my disbelief?

If I had jumped to my feet then and there and shouted to the whole cafe that he was sane, sane as anyone, that he was a brave and patriotic Yugoslav, what Would have happened? I might have cried out that he was the king's doctor who had tried in vain to save his master's life. But it would have been of no use at all. If I had done so, the police no doubt would have found some excuse to call me mad too and put me in one of their quiet retreats. I, too, was a Slav; and, as the bearded man said, all Slavs were mad.

For a while I knew nothing but sadness. The thought of my old friend, the man who had done so much to ease the lives of others, shut up in an asylum, even perhaps in a padded cell, and restricted to the visits of probably half-illiterate attendants, depressed me.

Depression grew into anxiety and anxiety into alarm. Milanovitch was in a sanatorium, where, according to that bald report, he was being well looked after, though there were some doubts about his general health. What did that mean? Did it indicate that my friend, my good friend, had broken down under the treatment he had received? Had the police, in fact, driven him mad?

But that was not the main point. I found myself connecting the name of Stoyan Milanovitcli with the outrage that had occurred that afternoon at Marseilles. At first I tried to dismiss the idea as too preposterous to be worth a moment's consideration. But it was fascinating. And when I recalled how suddenly the police had descended on his home, I felt that there must be a lot more in the affair than met the eye.

Now anyone who has had anything to do with French affairs knows that they are subject to the most violent and most irrational reactions. The Dreyfus business conjured up an outbreak of anti-Jewish feeling that might have satisfied Hitler and Streicher themselves. Politicians were assassinated or assaulted. Mobs would rush into the streets and symbolically set up the barricades of revolution. Was there the beginning of an anti-Slav movement in France to be discerned in the arrest of Stoyan Milanovitch? Had Barthou perished with Alexander because of similar arrests unknown to me?

I wrestled with my thoughts, unable to sort them out. And then a young man rushed into the cafe. He had a later edition of the *Paris-Soir.*

'You just see,' he cried, flinging the paper on my table, simply because it was the nearest. We'll sho\y these rotten Slavs what we think of them.'

I glanced at the headlines. The French police had started. They were making arrests here, there, and everywhere. , 'Terrorists' were being rigorously suppressed. It was the old story. The prisons were to be filled in the hope of finding the bad minority by punishing the good majority.

A paragraph caught my eye:

'The activities of terrorist organizations have been known to the police for some time, and some protective arrests had already been made. Unfortunately, the net had not been spread wide enough.'

So that was it! I exclaimed bitterly to myself. As usual, they had bungled things. They had let assassins and murderers go free, while they had put their police boots on great and good men like Stoyan Milanovitch. After all, it was something. It was evidence of activity and of shrewdness to take one of the most eminent men in Paris and put him quietly away. All Paris would understand, the police were not afraid of wealth or position or reputation.

I saw it all clearly now—or thought I did. And perhaps after all he had something to do with it. There had been that terrible cry of Soma's when the police had fallen on him. It was fear. No doubt, fear was a very natural emotion in the circumstances, but perhaps it was too great a fear. . . .

It would not do. He might be a terrorist. But whatever they might say, even if the whole Faculty of Medicine in Paris decreed it, Stoyan Milanovitch was not mad.

True, he had behaved like a madman that morning.

VI

Of course, I haven't yet said anything about that morning, beyond hints and allusions. This is one of those stories in which for every step forward you have to take a couple of steps back. But I

must set it all down now, because it is really the most important part of the whole thing. Who knows but that if that arrest had not been made, King Alexander and M. Barthou might have lived to pilot their countries on different courses?

I had come to Paris just about a month earlier. My visit was, in fact, almost at an end. Now I had a prosperous London practice, I could afford a little holiday periodically, during which I usually visited the Continent, particularly the old Paris—the place of so much misery to me, and yet so full of pleasant memories. Just to get out on the boulevards again and revisit the old *quartiers* brings back the ardour of youth—yes, and the unhappiness of youth, too. It is only the purblind who maintain that youth is a time of perpetual happiness. Joy there is, right enough. But there are also sorrows of such poignancy that middle and old age can hardly contemplate them.

And, of course, I always looked up my old friends. The name of Stoyan Milanovitch was first on the list of those whom I proposed to visit. I had, in fact, written to Kim from London, telling him the date of my arrival and the name of the hotel at which I intended to stay; and there had been a little note of welcome waiting for me the moment I had arrived. But I had not gone to see him at once. I still belonged to the present, to London and my new-found prosperity. Stoyan Milanovitch, in spite of everything, still belonged to the past, to days of poverty and struggle. We met not as successful brother practitioners, but as needy old colleagues, the one waiting to find his opportunity, the other setting foot on his career. I liked to acclimatize myself a little before I saw my old friends, to rub some of the Harley Street polish off my manner.

Actually, I went to Stoyan Milanovitch's flat earlier than I intended. In point of fact, I was summoned there. I was making a leisurely breakfast at a not very early hour. The rolls were crisp, the coffee good, and I was at peace with the world. The telephone bell rang, and I lifted the receiver at once. I had no need to fear the telephone here; no-one was likely to call on my services when the surgeons of Paris were available.

But all the same it was an urgent, appealing voice that came to my ears.

'Hurry—please hurry!' said the voice. The language was Serbian, which I understood well. And by the same token there was no need to ask who it was. I knew instinctively. The language, the deep contralto, the very urgency of the summons—all these could mean no-one else than Sonia.

She gave me no chance to make inquiries. I framed my lips to ask if her husband had been taken ill, but she was already telling me everything in quick, disjointed sentences. The police had been there, trying to break into the flat. They had bullied and threatened. She knew they would return.

'The police?' I gasped. 'But what have the police to do with Stoyan? And the French police at that?'

Her voice was thick with excitement and fear.

'They say he is mad—mad,' she cried. 'They have orders to take him away to a sanatorium. I have bolted the door and put furniture against it, but I am sure they will break in.'

It was incredible. But just because it was incredible, I believed it. I promised I would come round at once, but she did not wait to hear. She took it for granted, for she rang off before I had finished speaking.

I left my rolls and coffee without a further thought, and, running out of the hotel, to the astonishment of the porter, jumped into a taxi before the driver had time to draw it into the kerb. 'Hurry,' I cried, having given the address. 'I am a doctor, and it is a matter of life and death.'

The man made good time even for a Paris taxi-driver, and I stuffed a note into his hand without bothering about its value. Then I bounded up the stairs to Stoyan Milanovitch's flat.

I saw at once that I was too late—or, rather, I heard it first. For as I sped down the corridor, I heard a terrific crash. I tried to run even faster.

Then came a shout and a groan and a thud which I recognized as the fall of a human body. I ran as fast as I could and burst into the flat through the wreckage of the front door.

The scene was one I shall never forget. It is so vivid that I have but to close my eyes to see it all over again. Yet I know that I shall never be able to describe it so that it stands out as it does

to me. For it was set against all the background of my friendship with Stoyan Milanovitch. Peace, comradeship, devotion to good things—these were what my friend meant to me. Here was strife and bloodshed, all things foreign to that kindly temperament.

Just inside the living-room door lay the form of a police inspector. Across his forehead was a deep wound, and his face was stained red with the blood. Round him was a mass of broken pottery, as though a china avalanche had descended from the ceiling.

A little farther in crouched Sonia, her hair dishevelled and tears streaming down her face, as she supported in her arms the head of her unconscious husband. Between her and the prostrate inspector stood two policemen, arguing, shouting, and gesticulating.

'What has happened?' I cried. 'Stop this noise and tell me about it.'

I spoke loudly and as commandingly as I knew. The two policemen rounded on me. For a moment I thought they were going to work off their rage by throwing me out.

'Who are you?' one demanded. 'You have no right here.'

'I am a doctor,' I replied. 'It looks as though a doctor is what you need.'

'Resisting arrest,' the policeman answered. My self-confidence appeared to have mollified him. 'This man, this Dr. Stoyan Milanovitch, is believed to be mad. We have orders to take him away for examination. We were warned he was dangerous and that force might be needed. You can see what has happened, it was not the doctor who used force—it was that vixen, his wife/

'They are brutes,' Sonia broke in, looking up with wild eyes. 'They broke through the door and forced their way in. That man there'—she sneered at the prostrate inspector—'came towards me like a mad bull and tried to seize me with his great ugly hands as though it was I who had been denounced as mad.'

The policeman tried to cut her short, but Sonia flashed a glance at him that completely quelled him. Her eyes were aflame. Often I had read in novels of the woman enraged like the tigress

in defence of her cubs; never before had I seen one; and to me it was a sight at once terrifying and exalting. There was something fine and noble about her anger. Even the policemen were looking rather uneasy in the face of it.

'And then?' I asked.

Her bosom heaved. 'As soon as that man touched me, I screamed. I was not afraid, but his dirty paws insulted me. It was too much for Stoyan. He sprang forward like the lion he is. He grappled with the inspector.'

She continued with her story in disjointed phrases, giving it graphic touches that brought the whole thing to my eyes; and now and again the policemen, carried away by the excitement, added a detail or two, just as if they were recounting a stirring incident in which they had had no direct interest. Indeed, as they pointed out, it had been the inspector's business. One does not until ordered put oneself in the way of a charging buffalo. It was one of these men who gave me the description of a Stoyan Milanovitch I had never seen.

'Have you ever seen a man go berserk, m'sieur?' he asked, waving his hands excitedly. 'I have read of it, but till now I did not really believe it. But this doctor, this Stoyan Milanovitch, he became the madman we had been told he was. It was difficult to credit one's own eyes. My wife was in hospital once and was treated by this very Milanovitch. She spoke always of his kindness and his gentleness. There, she would say, is a man to whom cruelty is unknown. But it was not so when he fell on the inspector. There was nothing kind or gentle about him. He was a wild beast, and I—yes, I confess it—I was afraid.'

He shuddered dramatically. Sonia took up the tale in an exultant voice. She told me, in her odd but compelling way, how his long, slender fingers had curled round the inspector's bull-like neck, and how he had jerked his arms so and so, so that his adversary went reeling across the room. Then Stoyan Milanovitch had crashed his fist on the man's jaw—and he had gone down like a felled tree at the last blow of the woodcutter's axe.

Yes, it was a strange picture of Stoyan Milanovitch they gave me between them. I have spoken of him as good and kind and gentle, as the policeman's wife had. Yet it was not unexpected.

Often I have suspected beneath that calm benign exterior sleeping fires held ceaselessly under control but ready to burst out if anything should really rouse them. It would have to be something outside Milanovitch that would set them free—something that he loved and had become sacred to him. And no doubt when those gross hands were laid on his wife, the control of years snapped; what came forth was all the more violent because of the many years it had' been held in check. The waters of his anger had been dammed for so long that it was a mighty flood that had to be released. -

The fight was not yet over. True, the inspector was down, but he was not out. Milanovitch stood back like a good boxer, waiting for his man to rise. I can believe that. Even in a moment like that he would behave courteously. And at last the inspector staggered to his feet. The doctor waited his opportunity. Then he bored into him like a mastiff into a bull.

It must have been a weird scene. Though I did not actually witness it, it was made real to me by the accounts that were given to me, so that sometimes I feel and speak as though as I had been there. The room itself was sombre. Along the walls were books. In one corner was a pianoforte and on top of it the violin on which Stoyan Milanovitch would play the sad, wild airs of his native Serbia. And against this background of refinement and peace, the two men battled like savages, the woman leaning against the piano and looking on with terror-stricken eyes.

Those eyes, so the policeman said, fascinated him. At first they were full of fear. But later they flamed up in such triumph as she saw that her; man was holding his own—and perhaps a bit more. Sonia was wearing a sequin-studded dress, and, as I could see for myself, it was torn and crumpled. Even now, the red marks made by the inspector's brutish fingers showed clearly on her white shoulders, which shone above the narrow lace that hardly concealed her breasts. I glanced at her as the policeman spoke, half in fear and half in admiration. Her teeth were still clenched, her breast still heaved. Her body was tense. Primitive—yes; but all woman, and all lovely!

Stoyan Milanovitch had always spoken of her in glowing words. Time and again he had called her his Wagnerian goddess.

It was the right description. With his uncanny penetration he had looked into her very soul. She had that beautiful savagery that Gauguin saw and painted in the South Seas.

The inspector, as befitted his calling, was tough; and I could see that he must have been a good stone heavier than poor Stoyan Milanovitch. But there was never any question about the probable result. Milanovitch was in one of those cold furies that are not only deadly but also sweep aside all physical disadvantages. In that mood he would have knocked out a heavyweight. He Knew no mercy. The light in his eyes, said the dramatic policeman, was terrible; he was ready to tear the inspector to ribbons, to teat his heart apart, and wrench the spirit from him. And indeed it was not long before he had caused the light of wholesome fear to shine in the inspector's eyes. Stoyan Milanovitch smiled slightly as he stepped back to measure his man for the blow that was to end all.

Such furies are double-edged. Often they inspire first fear and then desperation in the person at whom they are directed. So it was now. As Stoyan Milanovitch poised himself and braced his muscles, so the inspector threw all decency to the winds. He was fairly beaten, and he knew it; and the thought overcame him. As the doctor began to hit, the inspector swung his foot forward so that it crashed into the pit of his opponent's stomach.

The result was inevitable. Milanovitch dropped in a writhing, agony-torn heap; and the inspector, perhaps thinking that he had, in truth, to deal with a homicidal maniac, flung himself on the fallen man and grappled at his throat.

Sonia's eyes flashed.

'It was then that these cowards thought it time to take part,' she snarled, pointing at the two policemen. 'They tried to help their accomplice.'

The policeman had the good grace to redden. 'It was automatic, m'sieur. Besides madame gave us no chance.'

Sonia certainly did not. She uttered a cry that, said the policeman, turned his blood cold in his veins. She was across the room in a flash and a moment later was balancing in her hand a heavy Chinese vase that stood in the hearth. She swung it like a club, and, two-handed, brought it down with all her strength on the

inspector's head. She pushed his senseless body aside with her foot, and, dropping to her knees, lifted her husband's head to her bosom.

So it was that I found them, with Sonia crooning ' Stoyan—Stoyan darling', to her unconscious husband.

VII

All this time I had been doing what I could for the two broken bodies. There was not very much wrong with Stoyan Milanovitch. He had been winded by that savage kick; he was bleeding in several places, and he was very badly bruised from the fall and the blows alike. The inspector was in worse case. Sonia must have used tremendous force in delivering her blow, and he had suffered severely from Milanovitch's fists in the earlier stages. But I did what was possible with extemporized materials and wondered what would happen next.

There was a silence when the story had finished. I could think of nothing to say. I thought bitterly that whatever might have been the state of affairs before, my friend had not improved his position by his savage conduct, which might truly look to an uninformed spectator as that of a raving lunatic. Even in France, it is only the absolutely desperate who assault the police.

I looked up slowly and noticed that a change was taking place in the policemen. Now the excitement of the narrative had evaporated, they were growing more official. They whispered together in a corner, and presently, one of them, with a sidelong look at me, hurried from the room. Sonia followed him with mocking eyes: I think she knew what was afoot and realized that all her efforts had been in vain. But she looked satisfied, too. Whatever might happen now, she would have the memory of her man's great fight, and of her own contribution to it, to buoy her up.

In a very short while the policeman returned; but not alone. There was a fussy little man with a bag, obviously the police surgeon; there was another inspector, who looked as though he had recently retired from the prize ring; and behind these were

a round dozen of ordinary policemen, all keyed up and really for anything. Two of them carried a rolled-up stretcher.

First they bore off the fallen inspector. Then they came back for Stoyan Milanovitch. Finally, the newly arrived inspector, guarded on each side by a couple of his henchmen, formally arrested Sonia. She made no protest. I think her shrug of superior acceptance hurt them far more than a show of resistance might. I watched her go, and she smiled at me. I could read her thoughts. Better to be in prison with Stoyan Milanovitch than left defenceless and hopeless outside.

When all this had been done, the inspector turned his attention to me. He wanted to know all about me. What was I doing there? How was it I had come in such a hurry? Obviously I was not prepared for walking abroad—I had neither hat nor gloves, and I was still wearing light indoor shoes. Nor had I come as a doctor, for though I had certainly done something, I had had nothing with me: doctors never leave their emergency bags behind when they answer a sudden call, even if they forget their walking shoes.

Yes; he knew it all, that inspector. His shrewd questions were in striking contrast to his unintelligent appearance. He knew how to use his expressions, too; now he would glare, now he would smile deprecatingly, now shrug to emphasize his disbelief. Oh, I admit that by the time he had done with me I had a great respect for that officer, and perhaps a little fear as well. Without putting it into words he showed me it was no good my attempting to tell lies or to try to get out of it by tricks. If I spoke, it would have to be the truth.

Well, I told him the truth. I told him that Sonia had rung me up and asked me to come. I told him how despicably his colleague had behaved. I told him, with great force, that the man who said Stoyan Milanovitch was mad was himself a madman. On that I insisted.

He smiled enigmatically. 'No-one says he is mad, m'sieur. We are merely asked to take him away for observation because of some things he has been doing. Our duty is to protect our fellow citizens, especially in these times. You cannot deny that he has behaved this morning like'—he shrugged—'like a man not quite in control of himself.'

'A man whose wife is assaulted by a policeman has every excuse for defending her.'

'That is as it may be. I assure you the whole matter will be thoroughly sifted. You are a doctor, m'sieur, so you will not need to be told that madness can take some unaccountable forms and manifest itself in people where you would least expect it. Dr. Milanovitch is an old friend of yours; I can understand and appreciate your warm defence of him. But as a scientist, m'sieur, you will not wish matters of this kind to be settled by emotion. It is the hard facts that count.'

He was suave and conciliatory, almost oily. I disliked him. Perhaps I was just a little piqued that so unintelligent-looking a man should be so adroit. He had disarmed me completely. I did not know what to do.

His manner changed a little to one of sternness tempered by politeness.

'My advice to you, m'sieur,' he said, 'is to remain detached. It does not profit anyone to interfere in police affairs with which he has no direct concern. Your loyalty to your friend is admirable, but it is better not to let it betray you into courses you might regret.'

I took my leave. I had been told as neatly as I could have wished to mind my own business.

Nevertheless, I did try to make some roundabout inquiries. The fate of Stoyan Milanovitch and his wife was very much my business, I thought. But I learnt nothing—nothing at all until that half hidden paragraph in the *Paris-Soir* told me what had happened.

Dr. Stoyan Milanovitch was mad.

VIII

The memories of all this crowded round me as I sat staring at the *Paris-Soir* and sipping my black coffee. There had been something queer about that business of Stoyan Milanovitch's arrest—something the police did not wish to discuss. And now Milanovitch's own king lay dead in Marseilles. Is it any wonder that I began to connect the two and see one as the forerunner of the

other ? Of course, it might have been absurd. Stoyan Milanovitch for all his skill and professional standing was only a humble man, while Alexander was a king. Yet I knew too much of Balkan affairs to regard that difference as an insuperable obstacle. Besides, the chatter all about me was of a round-up of Yugoslavs. Everyone was suspect. The more I thought of it, the clearer the connection became. Clearer, that is to say, in its general sense only, for the details entirely escaped me.

In a sudden fit of impatience I crumpled up my newspaper into an untidy ball, tossed a coin on the table, and left the cafe. I had no special plan in mind. I was feeling restless and distraught.

'Poor Milanovitch,' I muttered, as I strolled along the Avenue de I'Opera. 'Poor Milanovitch! A first-class brain, if ever there was one, and a real man, filled with humanity. What a loss to surgery, and what a loss to Yugoslavia!'

I cannot say why I kept repeating these obvious platitudes to myself. They were the sort of thing that any writer of obituary notices would turn to as his stock-in-trade; and they did nothing to relieve my feelings. But in some curious way their repetition prevented me from thinking consciously.

By now I had crossed the Seine to its left bank, and I found myself walking towards the Hotel de Ville. Whether this was the result of pure chance or subconscious intention, I do not know; but realization of my whereabouts caused my thoughts to crystallize. It was no use to pretend to myself that I was not interested or that I could dismiss the whole affair with a shrug and a few platitudes. Stoyan Milanovitch was an old friend to whom I owed more than I could ever repay. His wife, Sonia, was also a friend of mine. I had to do something. It was ridiculous even to think of just letting things slide. Besides, the idea that Stoyan Milanovitch could be allowed to rot in *a* madhouse without anyone to take care of his interests, to inquire about him, or to visit him, was sheerly preposterous.

Equally, it was certain that if anyone had to look into the affair, I was that person.

Hardly knowing what I was doing I strode into the Hotel de Ville and buttonholed the sergeant on duty. I told him exactly what I thought of the whole business, that it was a ghastly mis-

take, that, at the worst, humanity insisted that Stoyan Milanovitch should be allowed to have a friend at call in his tribulations. I believe I was eloquent. It is certain that the sergeant eyed me with some respect when, at last, I permitted him to speak.

' These are all very noble sentiments, m'sieur,' he said. 'I applaud them. This doctor with the strange name, he is fortunate in having such a one as you to support him. But I know nothing about him—I know nothing at all about the case.'

'But surely. . .' I picked up a *Paris-Soir* that lay on the table and opened it at the disturbing paragraph. 'It is in the papers. All Paris is talking of it. See for yourself.'

He glanced at the paragraph. I was sure that he gave himself away, for it was impossible for him to take it in, brief as it was, in that quick look.

' C'est journaliste, vous savez,' he commented.

Possibly it was, I commented. But it was also very true. I did not understand that it could be dismissed like that. The doctor, I repeated, very slowly and very distinctly, was my friend; and he was not mad. Where was he? How did I get in touch with him? What was the right course for a friend to take? I'was not asking the sergeant to hand me an order of release for Stoyan Milanovitch; I was appealing to him as a servant of the public for guidance.

'I can do nothing,' he answered.

Then I grew hot. It was ridiculous, I stormed. I would make a fuss. There would be a public scandal over the inhumanity of the police. I would raise hell. I would write to the medical commission, to the Minister of Justice, to the Pope, to the President, to the King of England.. ..

The man shook his head. I checked myself, for I was about to add that I knew how the police had treated my poor friend; and I realized it might be indiscreet. Fear overcame me, and in the silence that suddenly descended the policeman started to explain.

He was only a simple sergeant. Couldn't m'sieur see that and understand? The name Milanovitch was not on his file; therefore it did not exist for him officially. If he was held responsible

for all the things they printed in the newspapers, his life would not be worth living. As for the people to whom I threatened to write, well I could do as I pleased. Whether it was their concern was another matter.

Immediately I understood my position. It was useless to try to argue with the police. If they said they did not know, there was an end to it. If it suited their purpose, they could plead ignorance of the existence of the moon, or even illiteracy. I had not spent several years of my youth in Paris without learning as much as that.

Crestfallen, I went away. But the sergeant's very obduracy had confirmed me in my intention of seeing Milanovitch. If I wished to glorify myself, I would put down my determination to a sense of duty to my friend. Perhaps to some degree it was, though I admit I was conscious only of an exaggerated curiosity to find out what lay at the bottom of the whole business.

I went into another cafe' and ordered a liqueur while I thought out ways and means. I could, of course, go to every *maison de sante* in the district and make individual inquiries. The plan did not appeal. Apart from the fact that it was not an ideal way of winding up a holiday in Paris, it carried not the' slightest promise of success. I had no reason to suppose that Milanovitch had been detained in the Paris district; they might have taken him to some remote place for the very reason that friends might inquire. Moreover, even if, by luck, I chanced on the right place, would they let me in, would they even admit his presence?

My experience with the sergeant had made me guileful., I saw that the direct frontal attack was almost certain to fail, besides being fraught with danger. Authority in all countries is inevitably suspicious of inquisitive people, and the time was not a good one to draw attention to oneself.

The plan I eventually matured was more subtle, even if the purists may think it a little dishonest. I knew a number of influential French doctors, though not the dogmatic three who had declared Milanovitch mad, and I decided to enlist their help. Oh, no, I do not mean openly: that would have been as bad as fighting my way into the office of the Chief of Police. I decided

to feign an interest in mental cases, and I thought out a number of quite convincing excuses why they should attract a surgeon whose chief concern was the human abdomen. When I had convinced them of my *bona fides,* I proposed to suggest that I might be permitted to make some exploratory research in the French mental institutions. By the time I had finished my second liqueur, the whole thing was complete to the last detail.

I must confess that it hurt me a little when I found that all my finesse was not needed. I was met with courtesy and assistance everywhere. The ease with which the details were arranged surprised me, especially after the rebuff I had had from the police. My own crude plan was refined and improved upon by a dozen willing allies. I was provided with a full list of institutions and a letter of introduction, amounting to a permit to do what I liked, for every one. It humbled me that so much could be done by deceit. But, of course, I was forgetting that there are no more fervent devotees of *la Science* than the French, and that they have an almost exhibitionist delight in showing off their own work.

So I set out on my self-imposed quest.

IX

I was due back in London three days after I had read of King Alexander's death, but I telegraphed that I was detained. For three weeks, I went from hospital to hospital, from home to home, from asylum to asylum; and what I saw convinced me that I should never have excelled as an alienist or a psychiatrist.

I scanned the most depressing and fantastic case records I have ever seen. I witnessed the most unaccountable aberrations. I grew tired of the whole business. At that rate, I might take a whole year and still find myself with my list only half worked through and nothing to show for it. So I adopted a more cunning line. I said I was interested chiefly in men who had political obsessions, men who imagined they were Napoleon and Wellington at the same time, or Caesar, or Machiavelli. But even this did not entirely save me, though *it* did cut out a good many of the more common cases.

In those weeks I saw so many imbeciles and idiots that I began to doubt my own sanity. There were men who looked at buttons and declared that they saw Mars and its inhabitants—more, they heard and understood the Martian tongue. There were men who insisted they had swallowed watches, like the crocodile in *Peter Pan,* and who bade me listen to the tick inside their chests. There were men who wrote innumerable letters to everyone from God to the lavatory attendant, and then tore them up before anyone could read them. There were poets who wrote crazy verses that sounded like music but were in a language known only to their composers. There were men who offered me brilliant positions in the world of affairs and who thought they directed the destinies of Europe; perhaps these would not have made a worse job of it than those who did actually at that time direct our affairs, . . .

Once again I grew utterly weary of the whole business and almost decided to give it up. It was then that fate brought me to a small grey house on the outskirts of Neuilly. Its walls were out of all proportion to the size of the house: they were huge, thick, and forbidding. It was like a miniature fortress and overhung by an atmosphere of gloom and hopelessness. The peach-blossom on the wall looked artificial, as though it had no right to be there. It was here that I found Stoyan Milanovitch.

X

Despite the enormous iron gates and the suspicious-looking janitor, I had no difficulty in gaining admittance. My letters of introduction acted like a magic incantation and took me at once into the office of the superintendent. He was not a medical man, and he had a sad, disillusioned air, touched with a little cruelty —as well he might, for he told me he had been at that institution for nearly thirty years, first as an attendant, then as secretary, and now as superintendent. He made me welcome and invited me to tour the wards.

'They send us the most dangerous cases,' he told me, picking up a bunch of enormous keys, like those of dungeons in fairy stories.

'You mean the most violent?'.

'No; not necessarily that. Violence can be controlled, but other things can be more dangerous. For example, there are people who seem quite harmless—they are, in fact, very docile and well behaved; but their ravings might well threaten the safety of the State.'

'Those are the cases in which I am most interested,' I said. 'They are, as it were, men in iron masks.'

He shrugged. 'That is a dramatic way of putting it,' he replied. 'I am long past seeing it in that light. After thirty years, one gets rather bored.'

'I can understand that.' I was bored stiff by little more than three weeks of it. 'But to a medical man, it is different The smallest variation is fascinating to us, for we may learn from it just the little point that has hitherto escaped us. The human mind is still a territory practically unknown to us. I hope you will let me see as many of your patients as possible. The more serious or remarkable their aberrations, the more interesting to me. I know that it will perhaps put you to inconvenience, but I am sure you will forgive me.'

'It will be a pleasure.'

I saw them. Many were in padded cells. Others had the most astonishing political ideas, like abolishing not only property, but houses also, so that the world might return to happiness in caves. There were yet others whose madness f felt was a matter of grave doubt. True, their ideas might be inconvenient to governments, but they did not strike me as at all irrational.

We were passing along a corridor when I heard a voice cry out 'Set me free! Let me out! I'm going mad—mad. Release me this instant. I must speak to the President—or to M. Laval.'

I had heard cries like that many times before during these dreary rounds. At .first they had upset me, but now, like the superintendent, they were apt to bore me. But this cry made me stop abruptly. It was not the words. It was the language. Unmistakably, it was Russian.

'A Russian?' I asked.

He shook his head. 'Well, no; not exactly. He's a Scrb of some sort, but he speaks many languages. We can't understand what

he says most of the time. A pathetic case, m'sieur. He's always wanting to write to some minister or other. You have probably come across many cases of the same kind.'

'Yes. They are not uncommon. Some people make a habit of badgering ministers by writing or seeking interviews. I should like to see this patient.'

He gave me a quick glance that was half frown. 'I am afraid that is impossible.'

'But why?' I demanded. 'My permit, as you see, allows me to interview any case I may choose.'

'Certainly, m'sieur. I do not dispute it. But while you are here, my first charge is your safety.'

'He is dangerous, then?'

He nodded. 'Very.'

'But the cell is not padded,' I pointed out. I could hear the beating of fists against the door. There were loud echoes, too, not at all as if the walls were lined with protective rubber.

'He is not as dangerous as that.' I could see that the superintendent was keeping his temper only with difficulty. 'But there is need to be careful. He is subject to violent attacks when he sees human beings. When the police Went to take him away for examination, he half killed an inspector. It needs four or five men to hold him when he grows excited.'

'Then get your four or five men.' I was determined to see inside that cell. 'I must again remind you of the terms of my permit.'

'But m'sieur. . . .

'But nothing. Get your men.

'My staff is very busy. I canned interrupt their duties just to satisfy your curiosity.'

'My curiosity? That is hardly the right word, in the sense you use it. I am no sensation-seeker. I will not disturb your staff, however. I am used to these cases and will gladly take the risk on my own. Give me the keys.'

'I dare not accept the responsibility.'

'You have none. I alone will be responsible for whatever may occur. I am a doctor and I am fully authorized. Open that door!'

He looked at me angrily, 'M'sieur, I have the strictest instructions to allow no visitors to this patient.'

'That may be. If he is as you say, that is no more than common prudence. But I am not a visitor. I am a doctor, a scientist carrying out an investigation. Please hand me the keys.'

As he still hesitated, I approached the door and called out in Russian: 'Just wait a moment. Don't shout and keep calm. I shall come in and talk to you.'

There was a murmur of assent from within and I turned to the superintendent.

'You see?' I said. 'It is all very simple. If he is spoken to properly, he grows calm. I can talk to him through the door, so if he has any secrets, he can give them away. But I wish to note his reactions. Will you, or will you not, let me in?'

'I must telephone for instructions.'

I turned again to the door. My efforts seemed unavailing. And then I noticed that there was no lock on the door. It was held by strong bolts at top and bottom and in the middle. I slipped them back and opened the door. As I closed it, I caught a glimpse of the superintendent. He was furious.

'You have not my permission to enter,' he shouted. 'I shall take steps. I shall go to the authorities.'

'Oh, go to hell!' I rejoined, and slammed the door.

XI

Yes, it was Dr. Stoyan Milanovitch all right. He looked miserable and broken, thin and weak. His white skin had gone sallow and his eyes were dull. But there could be no doubt that this was my old friend.

'Slavo bogu, slavo bogu,' he kept repeating.

I eyed him steadily, feigning an unconcern I did not feel, for his condition wrung my heart.

'Stoyan Milanovitch,' I said as calmly as I could, 'for goodness' sake don't show that you know me. I am here to help you somehow. First of all I, must know the facts. Why are you here, and what is all this nonsense about your being mad?'

'My friend,' he answered, a sudden spark lighting his eyes. No doubt these were the first kindly words he had heard for a long time. 'My friend, I understand. You are just a doctor come to examine me and hear my story. But you must forgive me if I am weak. It is dreadful being shut up in here, virtually a prisoner but without a prisoner's right of appeal. They tell me I am mad, and I cannot gainsay them. If I protest, it is further evidence of my madness. And the dreadful thing is that if I am not released I shall really go mad, and then they will be able to smile and say, "I told you so." Tell me,' he asked with sudden urgency, 'how is Soma?'

[4] She is all right,' I lied, looking him straight in the face. In his state of nervous exhaustion it was impossible to tell him that she was in prison for assaulting the police. I noticed now what I had not seen before, that there were dark rings beneath his eyes and that his hair was silvery white.' Now you tell me all about this farce.'

'It is quite simple,' he replied. 'I am not mad. I am a political prisoner whose freedom would upset a good many people in Paris and who knows enough to cause them to go about in fear.'

Now I had heard almost similar words from a good many others I had interviewed. Fears sprang up in me. Were the doctors right? I studied him carefully.

'Come—isn't that a little far-fetched?' I asked. 'Who is responsible for all this nonsense?'

'It is not nonsense. It is the plain truth. Laval and the other Fascists know it is. That is why I am here.'

He said this in the voice of the Stoyan Milanovitch I had known long ago. In just such a tone he had told me the truths about surgery. My doubts subsided a little. Already I half believed him.,

'Tell me all about it.'

When he spoke I kept him under constant observation. His hands trembled. He showed many of the signs of an epileptic subject. But his voice, thotigh weak, had the ring of conviction. 'You are making a serious accusation,' I added. 'What reason can there be for, these men to detain you? More, what authority have they?'

'Their own,' he answered bitterly. 'M. Chiappe, the Chief of Police, has all the authority needed, and he is their tool.'

By now, though he had given no details, I was assured of his truthfulness. A shiver ran through me. By thrusting my way in here, I had placed myself in very grave danger. If this was a man who carried a dangerous secret, and who had, in consequence, to be put out of reach, then, if I learnt it, I should be in similar case. It was not likely that a confidant would be allowed to go free.

'Haven't you appealed to your own government?' I asked.

'It would have been no good. They would have had to deny me.'

'Why?'

'It is a long story.'

'I want to hear it.'

'We will see. But I am here on an Italian passport.'

'I beg your pardon? I thought you were a Yugoslav.'

'I am; but two years ago, I joined the Ustachi.'

This staggered me. I gasped.

'But—you know they have killed your king? You belong to the Croat terrorists? I cannot believe it.'

'I cannot explain.'

'Then left me guess.' A ray of light bad broken in on my confused thoughts. 'You were planted there?'

He nodded.

'Yes. There were several of us, loyal to our king and our country, and we were detailed to find out all we could about this subterranean organization. Someone had to do the dirty work once Ante Pavelitch and his gangsters started their traitorous campaign.'

'Yes, I remember now. Weren't they the people who said, "Hide yourself, gypsy; wherever you are, we shall find and kill you"?'

'Yes. They had sworn to kill the king.'

'I see.'

'And you could not prevent it?'

'I was too early. My plans had been well laid. I had wormed

my way into their confidence|by letting them know some things that were interesting to them' but would not harm the government. The whole plot for the assassination was discussed with me. Unfortunately, I went to the wrong people. I did not realize how far treachery had spread,

'Oh.'

'First, I called on Chiappe. He pooh-poohed the very idea. Then I went to Pierre Laval. He was kind at first. He listened. Then he had me thrown out. The idea was absurd, he said. The police know every foreigner in the country and have his record. They know all the terrorist organizations and have them under control. That is what they told me. The rest you know. They took me away before I could speak to Anyone else. Doctors came, heard my story, and certified me as mad. Now, I believe I am going mad.'

'But why that?'

'Because my story accused a country friendly to France. Laval is wooing Italy. I belonged to the Ustachi and had an Italian passport. It would have meant international complications to arrest me.'

'And though you were a secret-service agent, you had no other way of escape?'

'I was stupid. I should not have gone to the men I did. But I was in a hurry. An agent has to face the possibility of being abandoned by his employers.'

I was dumbfounded. The very fantasy of the story convinced me of its truth.

XII

It was here that the superintendent reappeared. What he had been doing in the meantime, I do not know. Perhaps he had been plucking up courage to enter; he knew about what had happened to the inspector.

'M'sieur, I must order you to go,' he said firmly. 'If you per? sist, I must call the police.'

'Call them,' I replied. 'I shall be sorry for you if you do. This is a case that doesn't seem to me a very savoury one. This man is no more mad than you or I. As for me, I have committed no

crime. It is you who stand in danger, *M. le Surintendant,* for being a party to a wicked farce. I advise you to say nothing.'

He opened his eyes a bit at that, but he stood his ground.

'I must call the police,' he insisted.

'Then call them and leave us alone,' I retorted.

Stoyan Milanovitch smiled. 'They are all in it. They take their orders and obey,' he said.

'Tell me your story quickly,' I urged. 'There may be fresh interruptions.'

'It was like this. In 1929 Pavelitch, who was an ex-deputy, fled to Sofia, accompanied by Percec, the Hungarian ex-officer, and they were welcomed by the IMRO, the Bulgarian terrorist organization. They began creating a Croat separatist movement. That was when the Yugoslav government acted and put me into the business.

'It was comparatively easy for me. My mother was a Croat and I had connections. I went to Vienna and wrote for separatist papers. I apparently had a flair, for they gave me more and more to do. It was utterly repugnant to me, but it gave me what I wanted: admission to the inner councils. By 1931 I was so well in that I was able to keep the police informed in advance of the time-bombs that were being put on the international trains, as you know. I warned them of the date of Pavelitch's attempted insurrection at Gospic.'

'You were useful.'

'I think so, but it was dirty work. When Pavelitch and his friends moved to Borgotaro in Italy and Yanka Pustna in Hungary, I acted as liaison officer between the camps.'

'I thought there was one at Prescia.'

'So there was. That was Pavelitch's headquarters. Yanka Pustna was the place, though. It was a school, and it had the skull and crossbones on its shield of arms. The mathematics went as far as setting time-bomb fuses, and history was a chant of hatred for the Serbs. Athletics were bomb-throwing and revolver practice.'

'And all this was done with the connivance of the Italian and Hungarian governments?'

'Of course.' Stoyan Milanovitch nodded gravely. 'If they had

wanted to, they could have closed these places in a few minutes. No, they preferred to line Pavelitch's pockets. Someone was sent, at their expense, to get recruits from South America. He had a easy job. Thugs are easy to find out there.'

'I suppose Hitler has a look in?' I asked. Even then, we knew which way the wind was blowing.

'He'll fish in any troubled waters,' Milanovitch replied. 'I believe the real orders came from him, although it was primarily Mussolini's concern. He was planning a nice little empire for himself by carving up Croatia, Yugoslavia, and Greece.'

History has shown how true that was, and I think that I realized it at the time- Here was one of the beginnings of Hitler's New Order.

'Go on,' I said. 'There are so many secret societies in the Balkans that it is difficult to know who is in the pay of whom.'

'At the last, they're all in Hitler's pay. He's behind all the unrest to-day.'

I thought that too much at the time, and I urged him to go on with his story.

' It was nothing more than a large, disused farm, this school at Yanka Pustna,' he went on.' In the outhouses, the serious business of making bombs was carried on, and they taught how to make explosives. It was all very schoolboyish. New recruits were sworn in "by an elaborate and dramatic ceremonial. A revolver was crossed with a knife and placed on the Croat flag. Then a cross was put in the novice's hand and he swore to observe the laws of the Ustachi and obey unconditionally and unquestioningly the orders of the Chief. He also swore not to betray any secrets, and swore that if he should lapse the penalty should be death.'

'All very Balkan,' I commented.

'Naturally. It was for the Balkans. Tuition began after breakfast, when the boys ate heartily at the expense of the Italians, the Hungarians, and the Fuhrer himself. There was light drill and they all wore the flashy uniforms of the Croat Army. Then they marched off to their classes.

'After lunch, things warmed up. They learnt how to jump on

moving cars and shoot down the occupants. There were some old Fords with stuffed straw dummies in the back as targets.. That was how they managed to get the king.'

He brooded for a moment before continuing.

'They had special uniformed dummies to represent the king,' he went on. 'Stuffed jackets were good enough for other victims. They hated the king above all. And when the boys had graduated they were given jobs, like putting bombs on the Zagreb—Belgrade express. There were "honours" for bright ideas, such as devising a book that would explode when someone, a judge, for instance, opened it.

'It was all going well. Trains were derailed so that foreigners began to give up travelling through Yugoslavia. You knew all about that. But Mussolini was getting impatient. A few outrages were not enough, and he urged Pavelitch to get at the king. Pavelitch picked out his brightest boy, Peter Oreb, and sent him to Zagreb, but Oreb turned craven at the last minute when he found that the Croat peasants were cheering the king and didn't seem interested in revolution. He confessed everything to the police.

'That wasn't all. Perchets, one of Pavelitch's most trusted lieutenants, jilted a girl and she ran off and published her memoirs in Belgrade. The Hungarians had to close the school, and it moved into Italy.'

'A nasty business. It sounds incredible.'

'It's true.' Milanovitch was more his old self. 'But it was nothing to what Hitler was doing. He was putting it all in the shade with his purge of his best friends. The Ustachi looked like dabblers. But Pavelitch was determined to get the king. He sent one of his best men, and I happen to know it was on Mussolini's orders. The Duce was tired of getting nothing in return for keeping Pavelitch and his mistresses in luxury. It was Vladka, nicknamed the Chauffeur, who was chosen. Vladka was a star instructor at the schools; he had twenty murders to his credit. When they look at his body on the mortuary slab they'll find the nsignia of the IMRO tattooed on his chest. He was a born terrorist. Actually, he wasn't a Croat at all; he was a Macedbnian.'

I waited for Stoyan Milanovitch to continue. He remained silent and then looked at me with a little smile.

'That's all, my friend,' he said.

'No it isn't,' I replied. 'Where does Laval come in?'

' I went to him as soon as I knew Vladka was either in France or about to land. I had been present at the conference when the " honour" of killing the king was allotted to him. As a matter of fact, I was selected as the first reserve if Vladka failed. I was to make an attempt in Paris.'

' Good God!' The idea of my friend as an assassin was too much for me.

'Chiappe turned me down, but hinted I should go to Laval. I've told you what happened. Now you know what's afoot in Europe. This isn't the end. It's the beginning.'

xiii

I was not given much time to reflect on Stoyan Milanovitch's remarkable story. He had barely finished before the door opened to admit not only the superintendent but a whole body of police, headed by a man whose face was familiar but whose name escaped me.

Milanovitch looked at him and smiled.

'Good afternoon, M. Chiappe,' he said.

M. Chiappe, Chief of Police, shot a rapid and unfriendly glance at me and then turned to Milanovitch.

'I have come here in person to apologize,' he said oilily. 'The whole thing has been a misunderstanding. It is all most regrettable. It has been a tragedy, not only for you personally, but for France and for Yugoslavia as well. But you must bear with us, m'sieur, as I know you will. We put you here for your own safety. We had word that the Ustachi had marked you down., It was our only way to save you.'

Milanovitch drew himself up and stared back at Chiappe. He knew he was free, but he had only one word to say.

'Liar,' he snapped.

Next day I said good-bye to Stoyan Milanovitch and his wife at the Gare Saint-Lazare. He was returning to Yugoslavia to report

fully to his government. The case was to be taken to the League of Nations, and Stoyan Milanovitch was to be a star witness. But it came to nothing. Laval knew how, by diplomatic manoeuvre, to clear Italy of all complicity. Besides, Chiappe was right. The Ustachi struck. Stoyan Milanovitch never reached Belgrade. He disappeared. For all I know, he may be dead—or mad.

Chapter 6—Berlin

GENESIS

Many people know the first line of famous poems, plays, or books. They know the first line of the Bible, for instance, or the poem *Lycidas* or *Paradise Lost.* It's a hobby, this collection of first lines, less expensive than first editions, but none the less gratifying. In Victorian days it could have been made into a drawing-room pastime.

But who knows the beginning of that other bible—not the Christian Bible, which, as everyone knows, begins 'In the beginning God created ...'—but the Brown Bible? It is called *Mein Kampf.*

'It has turned out fortunate for me to-day that Destiny appointed Braunau-on -the-Inn to be my birthplace.'

The first part was written in 1923 in the fortress of Landsberg, and dedicated to three merchants, one hatmaker, three bank officials, one locksmith, one head-waiter and one ordinary waiter, two engineers, one student of engineering, a retired cavalry captain, and a councillor to the Superior Provincial Court. These fifteen apostles perished as a result of their master's hot-headed attempt to seize power with a *coup d'etat.* They were not a very expensive lesson, because Herr Adolf Hitler decided that henceforth he would capture the electorate instead of trying an Eighteenth Brumaire on the young German republic.

It was in November 1932, when the Nazis received a severe recession in their votes, that I spoke to Dr. Carl Banter (this is not his real name). He was a Liberal who had watched with growing concern the development of the embryo party of ultra-

nationalists into the first party in the land. As a psychologist, the good doctor was regarded as being without peer in the particular hospital to which I was attached as an assistant.

He had taken a fancy to me, for no other reason, I suspect, than that I was always a ready listener. He was never quite out of the lecture room, and though his request might be of the simplest, he always referred to a small book which he carried on a string around his neck Into this precious notebook his observations would go.

'Humanity, Sava, is my laboratory. I go about watching their complexes playing havoc. I note narcissism in action ruining marriages or fostering overbearing behaviour. I see the world in terms of psychoanalysis, and it is dangerous, Sava. Have you ever looked through a microscope at a piece of cheese? Well, that's how the world looks to me.'

Dr. Banter was by no means a Timon. He loved his fellow men with a warm and understanding love. That's why he was so popular in the psychological department of the hospital. All sorts of people came to him for advice and healing. Men wounded in mind, shocked by the big guns of the last war, came to him-women whose leisure and life of ease drove them to morbid contemplations, or to dangerous habits; children with fears which would put a Disney cartoon to shame; men tormented with feelings of inferiority; perverts; persons frightened of losing their reason. Even politicians came to him, trying to find an answer to their dismissal from office, and their unsuccessful speech before the Reichstag. Millionaires came who worried that they would lose all their money. Repentant misers came who had read that miserliness was curable according to the latest discoveries of Professor Sigismund Freud. His waiting-room in the hospital was frequently crowded with celebrities, who had to wait their turn among the crowd of poorer patients.

One day, not so long after the November election which went so badly for the Nazis, the professor's telephone bell rang, and a man's voice asked for the professor. When the receptionist asked for the caller's name, he refused to divulge it.

'I want to speak to Dr. Banter, please. I'm afraid I'm unable to give my name.'

The receptionist reported these words to the professor. He always insisted that his receptionist took down every word his callers spoke in shorthand. The messages, the arrangement of the words, often gave him an insight into that person's character even before he himself had spoken with him.

'It's not enough,' he said to the receptionist. 'I must know more. Was he an elderly man?'

'I couldn't say from his voice, sir,' said the receptionist.

' Well, you should learn. It's quite easy. We must install a voice dissector. One usually finds that a young man speaks more rapidly per minute than an old man. Then we can measure the vocal strength, and so forth.. ..' He interrupted himself in the middle of the lecture he was just about to deliver, and said: 'Ask him again what his business is, will you, and insist that he gives you his name. If he refuses, ask him the reason, and take down every word.'

The receptionist went back to the telephone and delivered the professor's message. She came back some minutes later.

'What did he say?' asked the professor.

'Nothing. He repeated his request a little irritably, I thought, and then when I asked him, the reason for his refusal, he hung up.'

'Well, it can't be helped,' Dr. Banter shrugged his shoulders. 'The man was obviously in some trouble he did not want to repeat over the phone. You know, I once had a murderer phoning me up. He wanted me to psychoanalyse his crime for him, he was so absorbed by it! I made the appointment, thinking that the man would be a crank, and to my surprise, a small, white-haired old man entered my consulting room, and confessed that he was the murderer. He spoke affectionately of his deed, and asked me whether I could give any explanation of it. He had killed a perfect stranger, a tramp who had come to his house begging for shelter and some food. The man had given both to him, and then suddenly he was overwhelmed with a desire to kill him. He described the murder, the method of killing, almost with ecstasy. People, I find, become very proud of themselves after they have committed a crime. This man was positively challenging. He had re-established himself in his own

eyes. "They used to call me Rabbit at school," he said plaintively. "Just because I was nervous and didn't like their sports. But I've killed a man. That's more than they've done. it was hard, but I did it." No pity for the victim, observe. He is just an object on whom to practise his newly discovered bravery.

'Well, and what do you think he did when I had psychoanalysed the crime for him? He went to the police. He went triumphantly and gave himself up. At the trial he behaved as if he was a hero, and even when he was sentenced to life imprisonment, he laughed and clapped his hands. They asked me whether I thought he was mad. No, I said, not mad, merely getting back his self-esteem. The judge was puzzled, and so was the jury, but in those days it was fashionable to pretend that you understood all about people's complexes, and so they nodded their heads gravely, and sentenced the poor old man to life imprisonment. They didn't sentence the people who had called him a rabbit, but they were most to blame.

'I must tell you another story about a man who . •."

'Sir, the patients are waiting,' the receptionist said, plucking up enough courage to interrupt the professor. He smiled goodhumouredly, and said: 'One of these days, I shall be able to talk as much as I like, and finish every story I begin. But Heaven alone knows what I shall do if I'm repressed by my receptionist much longer—I shall probably torture cats to have my revenge.'

'Why not human beings?' I suggested. 'Just imagine, Professor, what a good time a psychologist who is a sadist could have with the hundreds of mental wrecks who throng your consulting room!'

The professor laughed.

'My friend,' he said, 'torturing human beings is easy for a psychologist, sadist or not. One needs a Nero or perhaps a Borgia to torture. Then the pleasure might be really acute.'

He went out.

Some days later Dr. Banter invited me to dinner. His invitation was quite unexpected. Indeed, this was the first time that the eminent doctor had asked me to his table. The surprise was explained to me when I saw him.

'I expect you wonder why I've asked you to dinner? You think it's because I want to feed you? Not at all. I'm a bachelor and my maid does all the cooking for me. My best friends tell me that she cooks very badly, so you don't have to be polite and pretend how much you enjoyed the meal and so forth. But I have something which will be more to your appetite.'

He paused sufficiently long for me to ask a question.

'What is it, Herr Professor?'

'Torture.'

'Torture!' I exclaimed. 'Whatever for?'

'An experiment. Do you,remember I told you that I've always wanted to torture somebody sufficiently, like a Nero or a Borgia; somebody who could stand the torture and laugh?'

Yes, I remembered, and nodded my head with enthusiasm.

'Well, I've found somebody, or at least, I think so. You've never met a more bumptious, self-assured, divinely inspired human being than the man who phoned that Wednesday you were at my clinic. He refused to give his name, if you remember, and hung up on the receptionist. Well, I came home late one evening, and the phone rang again. I am certain it was the same man. He asked me the same question. I pretended that I was the butler, and when I told him that the doctor insisted on knowing what he wanted to see him about, he was just about to hang up, but I then told him the interview would be granted.'

'What did he say then?'

'He stipulated conditions.'

'No!'

I was very intrigued. People asked psychologists the most astonishing things. Some have an aversion for spectacles, for instance, and they ask him not to wear them when he talks to them. Others are disappointed if they do not find the doctor in a white' gown. They think the man is a charlatan and is masquerading.

'He wants to speak to me in a dark room.'

'Obviously a nervous person,' I interrupted.

The professor was amused at my deduction.

'Perhaps,' he said. 'But he begged me not to see him. He

Wanted to talk to me out of darkness, as it were. I wonder if he is a medium or a teacher of spiritualism.'

'Bui isn't that dangerous? The man might be mad,' I ventured.

'No,' said Dr. Banter. 'I often have this request. People, you see, are very shy. They think that going to a man and telling him all your troubles is like undressing.'

'But surely it is impossible to psychoanalyse anyone in the dark?' I asked. 'You must watch their faces and see their movements?'

The doctor shook his head.

'That's elementary stuff,' he said. 'How do you think the priests in the Roman Catholic Church manage to find out the state of the penitent's soul? Do they have to look at his face and hands?'

'Oh, I see what you mean,' I said. 'A confession-box!'

'Exactly. That's dark enough for the blackest sin to come out; now, I've built a special room for cases like this. The person, man or woman, can come in from the street into this room which is divided by a stout partition. The partition is black, and the patient sits down in front, at a place marked "Communication through here". He is seated comfortably and talks into a sort of sound-box, not unlike a microphone, except that it is not electrically controlled. Electricity would distort the person's voice, so I prefer this large sound-box, which picks up every sound—the slightest sigh—and transfers it to me in the other room, from where I put my questions, and give my advice. You see the other advantage of, paving the person separated from you'?'

'You mean he listens to you like the oracle at Delphi?'

'Yes. He hears what he wants to hear. If he doesn't want to hear any more,? he can go out. But they rarely go out. People like to hear themselves discussed in a sympathetic manner. It's like going to the photographer, only in this case the psychologist photographs their egos and aspirations. Human beings love talking. Look at me. I'm a great talker myself. It's like wine—the more you take of it, the more you want—a soothing thing, is speech. I sometimes talk for an hour and a half.'

'And haven't you ever met your match? Surely some of the patients like talking, too?'

'They do. They have first go. They begin from the very beginning, remembering the earliest times until the day they decide *to* see me. I stimulate their memory and take down the most important facts of their neurosis. Then I talk. That's how I always arrange it. I exhaust my man like a trout. I give him plenty of line, and so exhaust him.'

'Well, what do you say if we try to exhaust this fellow? He's got plenty to say, and in the dark, he'll say everything. He sounded a little hysterical to me, but as he'll be alone in the room, he'll quieten down. We'll entertain him with a little music, if necessary.'

'But, tell me, doctor,' I said, not taking his last remark very seriously, 'how do these patients pay for their treatment?'

'That's just it,' he said. 'They pay very rarely. They think that they have done me a great favour by coming, usually. Sometimes, they promise to send me a cheque by post, or they send someone round in a day or two to settle the bill, but it's very rare. You see, my object is to cure them, to make them forget their obsessions, or whatever it is that is troubling them, and I succeed so well that they forget my bill with their obsessions!'

'Disastrous, being a psychologist,' I remarked. 'You don't leave them one little Achilles' heel on which to attach a bill!'

We went in to dinner, which was served early because the doctor's visitor had made an appointment at a comparatively early hour. In November, the darkness came quickly, and the man said he would be at the doctor's house at eight.

Contrary to the doctor's prophecy, the dinner proved as well cooked as it was substantial, and we forgot everything about the patient and discussed instead the political scene which was intriguing all Berlin, and all Germany.

'What would happen if the Nazis came into power?' Dr. Banter asked me. 'Is that what you want to know? I'll tell you.'

I settled down to listen to a long political lecture from the doctor, but I was mistaken.

'I don't know. Nobody knows. We can't prophesy, because it all depends on one man. When a nation is governed by a megalomaniac, what can one prophesy? I can't get into his mind. Today he will say one thing, and the next another. One thing is

certain, however, and that is that the old Germany—nay, the old world as we know it—will change. Things like freedom will become old-fashioned, and men will become machines.'

'But surely he is only a pawn in the hands of people like General von Schleicher and Papen?' I said.

'He is a pawn of nothing but himself. He is his own martyr. That is the tragedy.'

The doctor looked at his watch.

'Our visitor is coming at eight,' he said. 'It's ten minutes to, now.'

'Then I'd better go?' I suggested.

'Go? Whatever for? I told you you weren't invited for the dinner. I want you to stay. I promise you the demonstration will be interesting. This is the first man I am realty going to torture.'

'Then you're serious?' I asked dubiously.

'But of course. You wait and see. I'm also curious to see his face.'

'How will you do that?'

'At the end. There is a door in the partition which opens on our side only. We'll put on the light and go in and surprise him. That is, providing he is in a sufficiently collapsed mood.'

'What do you mean?'

'I must make sure that I get him at his lowest ebb. It's going to be hard. The man is in a sort of supernatural elation, I believe. He .asked me so many questions on the phone—a whole jumble of ideas and wishes. And then he laughed at me. He said I couldn't do anything for him, and that I was worse than a fortune-teller! How do you like that?'

I nodded my head. I knew that the doctor wasn't telling me these things just to amuse me. He wanted me to note the condition of the man.

'It's a waste of time giving you any further details. You'll be able to make your deductions for yourself. Interrupt me when you like and suggest some questions to put to the man.

'But he might get embarrassed if he hears us both firing questions at him,' I suggested.

'He won't hear. My sound arrangements can be controlled

so that he can't hear. So don't be afraid. Let's see what's wrong with the fellow and try to help him.'

'What about the torture?'

'Oh, that'll come of its own accord. He'll torture himself for us. He's very clever, and thinks it will impress me. That's how I'm going to torture him. I'm going to open him to himself. That's what he fears most. Remember, he will come trying to make an impression on me, but the real reason will be to convince himself. He thinks, for instance, that he is dead right about everything. He told me so over the phone, and challenged me to disprove him. You see, he does not want to be disproved. He wants his own ego strengthened by being told that he struggled against the best psychologist in Berlin and prevailed.'

'It sounds pretty childish to me,' I said.

'It is. The man is spiritually an adolescent. That is one of the commonest complaints of humanity. Its spirituality is of such a small range that it goes through all the tantrums of adolescence again and again, suffering the pangs of rejection and defeat without getting strong on them. Out of their sorrow comes hate instead of love. They revenge themselves on mankind for the humiliations of their youth. They have no vast soul, no magnanimity, which makes great men. Their magnanimity is fake. It is always an open indulgence to their own ego. Napoleon's Code was not prompted so much by a love of justice, as a desire to leave something permanent behind. He said so himself. Men fight for titles like "Great" or "Liberator" or "Good". They are usually neither great nor good in the absolute sense of the word. But let's go into the room and wait for our patient.'

The doctor led the way out of the dining-room into the corridor, and when we reached the end he pointed to a door on the right. I hesitated before opening it.

'Don't be afraid,' he said, 'it's our end of the room.' He switched on the electric light, and the room revealed itself to be nothing out of the ordinary. It was a large room, and although it was partitioned, that did not seem to decrease it very much.

'We sit here,' the doctor said, indicating two armchairs near

which stood a large contraption looking like an old-fashioned gramophone horn.

'As soon as anyone comes-into the room a red light shows—I've got an electrical device under the boards. This thing you're looking at is a combined recorder—a simple dictograph—and, at the same time, a device for amplification. The person in the other room can talk wherever he likes, seated which ever way he likes, and we can have a friendly conversation, because this machine amplifies his voice to the right amount. Here's the door through which we'll pass once this "seance" is over. It slides up and down, and so makes much less noise. We'll be in the room before our quarry can escape us.'

I took out a notebook and pencil, but the doctor said: ' Put those away. Everything he says is recorded, and we can play the disks through afterwards to check up.'

At that moment we heard a distant click. It sounded like a door being opened, and the red light just above our heads glowed suddenly. Dr. Banter indicated that I should sit down. He also sat down himself.

I shall never forget the eerie impression he made on me when he began to speak. His voice sounded very impersonal as he spoke seemingly in the direction of the wall.

'Are you the man who phoned me and wanted to speak to me?'

There was no immediate answer. Then a voice came out of the large funnel.

'I am. Can anyone see me?'

'No. You can switch on the light if you like, if you get afraid,' Dr. Banker said.

'Why should I get afraid?' the man challenged in a far-away voice.

'You sound like a person who is habitually afraid,[1] Dr. Banter said. I started a little. Was the doctor starting his 'torture' already? I looked imploringly at him, but he smiled and waited for the interviewer's answer.

'I am never afraid. It merely shows how little you know me.'

'What is your name?' the doctor asked, intentionally, it seemed to me, overlapping the other man's remark.

'I'm a German. That should be sufficient.'

'I can hear that from your accent. You are a southerner. What did you come to consult me for?'

'I haven't come to consult you. I've come to question you,

I started, but Dr. Banter urged me to sit still.

'What is your question?' he asked politely.

'Are you a German?'

'Yes. A Berliner.'

'And you're not a Jew?'

'I don't think so. Why?'

'If you were, you would not understand my questions. They are for Germans. Would you call yourself an intelligent man?'

'I should imagine so,' the doctor answered. 'But you'd better question me, and then decide for yourself. You can ask anything you like, providing it is a question which calls for an answer.'

'What do you mean? When does a question not call for an answer?'

'When it isn't an intelligent one, or when it's a rhetorical question. Begin with your first?'

'Have you ever read *Mein Kampf?*'

(At this time, in Germany, Hitler's *Mein Kampf was* not very widely read. Later on, when he came into power, he sold a copy to every couple who got married. They probably read it on rainy days. It wasn't until much later that people on the Continent and in England began to read it. It was surprising, therefore, that Dr. Banter had read it.)

'Yes. You mean the Nazi testament? Well, what of it?'

'How did it strike you?'

'I was quite unmoved. I have read that sort of thing before in children's papers, and in Sorel and Houston Stewart Chamberlain. Also, the Protocols of the leaders of Zion must have given some gravy to it. A foul brew.'

'Then you are a fool,' said the voice in the microphone.

'And you are a Nazi,' said Dr. Banter without much concern for the epithet hurled at him. 'That's a little worse than being a fool.'

'You deny you are a Marxists

'I affirm that I'm not. Was this the extent of your curiosity?'

'No. I want to question you specifically on the points raised in the book *Mein Kampf.*'

'But why do you come to me when you can have all the pleasant answers to it you want if you write up to the Brown House in Munich?'

'Because I'm curious to see what a fossilized mind like yours thinks about it.'

'So you've come to psychoanalyse me?'

'No. I've come to see whether the new Germany has any room for people like you?'

'I'm certain it hasn't,' said,the professor, 'if it includes intelligences like yours who ask questions about intelligences like mine. But why should you be curious, since my intelligence, according to you, is so fossilized?'

'I want you to analyse the book. I want you to give your honest opinions on the man who wrote it.'

The doctor laughed.

'What are you? A disgruntled Nazi losing his faith? Do you want me to bring you back to the fold?'

'I have told you, doctor. I want a psychological analysis of the book *Mein Kampf.* Are you willing to give it to me or not?'

'Certainly. My fees are very high.'

'It doesn't matter.'

'And the language of psychology you might find a little too difficult to understand.'

'Then make it as simple as you can. I want to look into the man's mind. I want to see what prompted him to write that book; to embark on that career; to say what he says and do what he does. I'm interested in motives,' the man said.

'Then you are an embryo psychologist?' Dr. Banter said, knowing what the effect of such flattery would be.

'I certainly feel that I understand the elements. Now tell me, what do you think of the first part of the book?'

'Will you recall the substance of it to me, or can you wait whilst I take it from my book-shelf?' Banter asked.

'I can recall it to you, if you wish. I can quote extensively from it myself.'

I spoke to Dr. Banter.

'Who do you think this man is?' I asked. 'An official of some sort wanting to understand the Nazis; or some rival?'

Dr. Banter shook his head. He went over to the book-shelf which stood against the farthest wall and extracted a volume. He then came and sat down again.

'I'm ready,' he said, opening the book at page 1. 'Fire away.'

'What is your impression of the opening, doctor, particularly the first sentence?'

Banter held the book out to me and I read the sentence: 'It has turned out fortunate for me to-day that Destiny appointed Braunau-on-the-Inn to be my birthplace.'

'I consider this sentence a piece of typical narcissist writing. The man's libido—his love—is turned inwards to himself. This is not surprising when we learn of his unhappiness as a child, especially as far as his father is concerned. Secretly he hated his father, not only because he (the father) wanted to be a petty government official (the last sentence of the chapter says, when he speaks of the death of his mother, "I respected my father but I loved my mother"), but because his father presented a frustration, a repression of his libido towards himself.

'Note, moreover, that he wanted to be an artist—a painter, I think he says, and no other career offers such opportunity for a narcissist as that of an artist.'

'What do you mean by that?'

'I mean that all his self-love, gathered after years of repression, could come out in such a career. Moreover, he was always anxious to escape from the status of his father—the petty official. He, always desired to be socially better. Note the careful way in which he emphasizes that his father was an official. He does not say he was a petty official. With him, there is some sense of shame and degradation in being poor. This is noticeable throughout the whole of the second chapter, especially when he describes his life in Vienna.

'Note how much he has to say About "social position". This typically bourgeois virtue becomes a positive obsession with

him. His clothes begin to get shabby, and with the increasing poverty of his *outward appearance,* he descends to a lower social level, and mixes with a class of human beings through whom his mind is poisoned, in addition to his physical misery.

'That's what he says. It's the outward appearance which worries him most. It's his self-respect, which is in clothes, and not the "manners maketh man", which worries him most. He has no social sympathy for any other class except his own. He is in reality nothing more than a petty official himself fallen on evil days, promising himself that he will revenge himself one day on the lower social classes with which he was forced to mix.'

'You mean by that that his mentality is that of a petit bourgeois. Does the system he teaches farther on in the book not disprove that? What of his ideas on race and blood, on the Jews, on the need for expansion, and so forth? Would you call those ideas middle-class?' the man behind the partition asked.

'Essentially,' said Dr. Banter. 'They have the same source. The same sense of inferiority which obsessed him then dominates him now. He wants to be at the top of everything—top of his class. Then, as that isn't enough, he wants his blood to be something exceptional. So he swallows the ridiculous "blood theory" myth invented by Houston Stewart Chamberlain. He is not an original politician, by any means. There isn't one point in his whole programme that isn't borrowed from somewhere. Silberer Bielolaweck, with a good dash of Pan-Germanism, with some Prussian spirit, and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, and a little of Mussolini's Fascism—and there you have the ideology of the" man. Since he was degraded to a lower social class when he was young, and had to starve and suffer every indignity, he has decided to revenge himself on society. He will, I warn you, revenge himself not only on Germany—that is, the Germans he dislikes—but also on the world. That is why he claims that German blood—i.e. his blood—is much better, more worthy of an empire, than anyone else's.'

'But don't you expect that he will modify his political outlines once he comes into power?'

'That's quite possible.'

'In what respect, do you think?'

'Oh, he'll try to fool his workers, for instance, against the capitalists, and he'll fool the capitalists against the workers. What he wants is a good middle-class state. He demands obedience and lack of originality. That belongs to the "old school-tie" mentality of England when she was carving out an empire for herself.

, 'Take' his war-like mentality, for another thing. He has to show his superiority at all costs, and there is no better means than war to satisfy certain hidden longings in a man's soul. This is also a typically bourgeois mentality.'

'But the aristocracy fought in the old days,' the man complained. 'How can you call them "bourgeois"?'

'They did not fight to prove their superiority, they fought to maintain it. They fought among equals, so that the man on foot did not dare to attack a man on a horse, even though he was his enemy. But this man wants to fight, or rather, he wants others to fight and die for him. War is full of sexual symbolism, and from the little we know of our future "leader", I can say that his life is completely abnormal in that sphere. Hence the desire for blood, for arms, for things that are sharp, full of fight. I expect you will be able to read my meaning without my making myself more obvious. Impotence in men is often found with an exaggerated value being placed on "vigour", on physical exercise, on sports of all kinds, and on war in particular.'

'But surely he wants the regeneration of the German people. He considers that even war is worth-while in those circumstances.'

'You have used a very interesting word. Regeneration. Consider it for a while in the light of what I have said, and can't you see what his precious "regeneration" is? It is merely an attempt to regenerate himself, that is, develop what is missing in him—the power to express sex. People who are always shouting to the nation to "Arise !" don't know what they are saying, but one day 'the people will get tired of this transference of impotence on to them, and will refuse to "arise" for any other reason than themselves; not for some fiction of blood and State.'

'Then you refute the whole story of geopolitics?'

'Not at all. You mean the theory of General Haushofer, I suppose?'

'Yes, Haushofer, for instance.'

' He stressed the importance of ethnographical forces besides the historic-political, isn't that so?'

'Yes. I expect you will say that he has some affinity with Marxism. I will deny it.'

' I didn't say so. But I'll respect your denial for what it is worth,' Dr. Banter said. 'But why were you so very quick with your denial, may I ask?'

'Because I was afraid you would fall into the trap. Marxism has no spiritual cohesion. It has nothing to bind people together.'

'Sexually speaking, you have again demonstrated a perversion,' Dr. Banter said blandly. 'Why do you always want to "bind" people together?'

'I refute your Jewish-Bolshevik analysis,' the visitor said. "Blood and soil are the moat sacred things.'

'There is no such thing as a Jewish-Bolshevik analysis in psychology. But let's forget that. The blood and soil theory elaborated in *Mein Kampf,* and which you now seek to defend, shows one thing clearly.'

'What is that?'

' It shows what a grossly materialistic thing the Nazi philosophy is. Again, as I say, typical of the bourgeoisie from whom Hitler came. They consider their wealth in the number of antimacassars they can leave their children, the number of aspidistra plants, the number of colonies, etc. These two substances—blood and soil—are not only physical, but obscure.'

'Not at all. The blood is the Germans who have lived on the soil of their forefathers. The soil is that part of the earth which has been worked by their labour and matured by their sweat.'

'Very poetic, but explained in scientific terms, it makes nonsense. The theory you develop is purely problematic, because no-one—not even the writer of *Mein Kampf*— really knows or can explain how the blood of this or that racial type could

be the source of some unique god-given right to political and economic supremacy. This is the argument of bandits. All blood is good blood. It is the mental equipment which goes with that blood that is important. A Chinaman is as good as a German, providing he is a humanitarian and loves his fellow men.'

'And if that isn't a perversity, this love for one's fellow men, Herr Doctor, can you tell me what is?' the man sneered.

'Love,' said Banter very softly, 'between men and women, between men and men, of whatever order, kind, or sort it is, is never harmful, because if it is real love, it is tolerant and sacrificing. The perversion you speak of is caused by chemical forces of which you know nothing. The same chemical forces that might cause one man to be a Hitler and another to be a saviour.'

'Then blood *is* important?'

'Not blood, but character. As yet we don't know very much about how character is formed. We suspect, however, that glands may cause the greater part of character development.'

'What would you then say was the fundamental difference between Jesus and Hitler?' came the next question.

Dr. Banter laughed. 'The fundamental difference,' he said, ' is that Jesus gave us the doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount, and that Hitler has given us *Mein Kampf*. He complains that the Jews have repudiated the aristocratic principle of Nature, and substituted for it the eternal privilege of force and energy, numerical mass, and its dead weight. Christ came to save sinners, and Hitler comes to save nobody. He scorns the "masses". To him, numbers were made to die on the battlefield, while he and a few other exponents of the "aristocratic principle" are to live out the life their Creator gave them in the radiance of their own frustrated natures, in the satisfactions of their hurt egos, in the sensation of morbid pleasure, in the performance of idiotic rituals of hate, and the propagation of theories which they themselves hardly believe in. Such cynicism is remarkable only to the leaders, I know. They have sufficient intelligence to see what they can gain from such a system of life. They will train the others to see with their eyes.'

'But think of **the** new Germany that will arise, without Jews, with beautiful buildings. . . .'

'The beautiful buildings are the first signs of megalomania. We know all about the humble little house where the great man is born, and the little iron bedsteads he sleeps in, and the camp bed in which he dies. I've seen many postcards out in the street showing the simple bachelor .flat of the "leader" in Munich, or his three-roomed Alpine hut, Haus Wachenfels near Berchtesgaden—but just you wait until he comes into power. You'll see just how humble he will be!'

'But surely great buildings of enduring stone will enhance the country and give joy to its citizens?' the man said.

' Quite, but what does he know of history ? What does he know of the fine sites, the old houses, the historic monuments he will order to be pulled down? He knows nothing. All he wants is his " enduring stone", as you call it. That's all that matters to him. Every room in which he will live and work will look more like a station waiting-room. Mussolini's study, for instance, will furnish an excellent exajnple. Everything in that room is costly. Everything is large, in the worst possible taste, showing the *nouveau riche* spirit. Such are dictators. Such will your Hitler be if he seizes power.'

'Then you think he will have power?'

'Probably.'

'And the recent election results, what do you say of that?'

'That is the recession of the wave before he is carried to power. A few million people are getting alarmed because they voted for him, but that's nothing. They will vote for him again. There are more ignorant people in the world than wise, and an ignorant leader will command more respect. Don't worry, your "leader" will yet "save" Germany. He will "save" her so much that you'll wish you had perished.'

'That, of course, is your opinion,' said the man behind the partition politely. 'In what terms would you explain his policy towards the Jews?'

'It isn't a policy. No question is ever solved by using the methods of Ghengiz Khan. It appears that he suffered acutely during his stay in Vienna from the sight of rich Jews going about and enjoying the wealth the capitalist system enabled them to

earn by the exercise of their prowess, often ruthlessly and despicably, but no more so than exhibited by Gentiles under similar circumstances. He also, it appears, came across men who were able to argue brilliantly. I notice how often he claims to have put to rout "Marxist talkers". His careful analysis of their methods, which undoubtedly were not very clever, but efficient enough to defeat Hitler, shows his deep resentment of them. They preached international socialism—and they happened to be Jews—so Hitler decided to preach the antithesis, which is nationalism and hatred of the Jews. It's quite an obvious inversion, a sort of tactic to rehabilitate himself with himself. It is apparent throughout the whole book that he did not really understand the meaning of social democracy or even of Marxism. He had never read the more important books on the subject, but he quoted profusely from their ideology—that is the muddled ideology of the street agitator. He learnt enough, however, he admits, of the tactical tricks of the Marxists, so that he was able by other means to put over the biggest untruths, with some varnish of "scientific dialectics".

'He envied his teachers, if the truth were told, and not being an "intellectual" in the best sense of the word, he hated all "intellectuals". Soon, to his frenzied and hate-crazed brain, the words "intellectual" and "Jew" became synonymous. Hence the favourite phrase "Jewish-Bolshevik", which means exactly nothing, except the ignorance of the "leader"—a com venient ignorance, mark you.

'Here is an interesting quotation that might throw some light on his maniacal hate for the Jews. He writes: "Considering the Satanic skill which these evil councillors displayed, how could their unfortunate victims be blamed? Indeed, I found it exceedingly difficult myself to be a match for the dialectical perfidy of that race."

'Observe the "Indeed, I found it exceedingly difficult myself". How many tears must have been shed by this hysteric, how many times must he have reproached himself for his inability to cope with the "dialectical perfidy"? As a matter of fact, he was no match for them. His mind was unable to stretch as far as Marxism, with all its Jesuitical knowledge and dogma. He did not under-

stand it, and rather than become convinced like the others, he called it a "perfidy". He refused to join the others, not because he had any reasoned arguments, but because he resented being made a fool of. He could not stand the criticism of the "riff-raff" —he could not bear being beaten in an argument. To defend himself, he had to invent the legend of his "institution". He rejected reason, and replaced it with an unbounded conceit in himself. Whether he honestly believed in himself, I don't know. On every page he shows great chasms of doubt, covered by the flimsiest lies, in which he hardly believes himself. He is afraid of himself at other times. His mental affliction was so great that he withdrew more and more into himself—a typical narcissist trick. He had no eyes for anyone else. He did not care about anyone else's suffering. What did the aggregate suffering of mankind matter to him, when he only saw his own? A man who is seasick is rarely interested in passengers with the same affliction, he concentrates on himself.'

'But this man surely thinks in terms of race? He may not think much of his fellow men—his contemporaries—but you must admit that he thinks of future unborn generations.'

'That is sheer vapourizing. Men who are unable or unwilling to do anything for their generation often speak of the Kingdom of Heaven, or, in the case of your hero, he thinks of unborn generations. He has, for instance, some original theories on race and on biology itself. This merely instances his insolence in a field about which he knows nothing.'

'To what are you referring in particular?' the man asked, with a trace of alarm in his voice. This alarm vanished at once as he spoke again. 'You appreciate that a man need not be a biologist if he quotes some facts of biology?'

'Quite,' said Dr. Banter, 'but not all facts are agreed to even among biologists.'

'What do you mean by that?'

'I mean that an assertion made one day may be disproved another.'

'And with ,what particular assertion do you disagree?'

'The priceless statement he makes on eugenics. I forget in what part of the book this may be found.'

Dr. Banter turned over the pages hurriedly, and looked for the paragraph.

'Page 121,' said the visitor, 'the fourth paragraph. You resent the statement that the decrease in numbers therefore implies an increase in strength, as far as the individual is concerned, and this finally means the invigoration of the species?'

'That's it. Can you quote some more?'

'Certainly. As much as you please.'

'Well, then, let me have the next paragraph.'

The man began to recite as if he was reading.

'But the case is different when man himself starts the process of numerical restriction. Man is not carved from Nature's wood. He is made of "human" material. He knows more than the ruthless Queen of Wisdom. He does not impede the preservation of the individual, but prevents procreation itself. To the individual who only sees himself and not the race, this line of action seems more humane, and just the opposite way. But unfortunately the consequences are also the opposite.'

'That'll do,' said Dr. Banter impatiently. 'I remember the rest. It goes on to say that by leaving procreation unchecked, and submitting the individual to the hardest preparatory tests—those are the words, I think—nature selects the best from the abundance of single elements, and so forth. This is scientific rubbish, and it seems that the main purpose of Nature is to have a stud farm where the selection can take place. Admittedly, this process is now going on—but that is simply because of no attempt on man's part to apply eugenics and birth-control. You say that this will produce a greater race—but in the book there is great stress laid on the fact that Jews should not marry Germans. If what you want is numbers from which Nature selects the best, why not allow race mixing? Science teaches us that the strongest races are those that are most mixed, also the most original. The purest races, such as those found in mountain communities, are usually found to be very stupid—although very "pure" in the sense that they have intermarried among themselves for three or four centuries.'

'I would argue with you, Dr. Banter,' said the man,' on this question, but I have not come for that. I'm here to hear your opinions.'

'I am certain this is very refreshing for any National Socialist. You mean that it is quite possible that I shall be the last piece of counter-argument you will hear for a long time?'

'That's quite possible.'

'Well, refresh yourself, my friend. In the end you may go mad hearing your own voice. Half the pleasure of life is in disagreeing, but when you Nazis are in power, you will merely be shadows speaking someone else's views. You'll get tired of it, I promise you. You'll wish you had kept a few old Liberals like me in a zoo so that you could visit and argue with me on Sundays. However——'

'Then you disagree with the Nazi *Weltanschauung*—the idea that population must expand and that new races will always overcome the old?'

'I disagree with nothing that happens. I merely believe that civilized men do not need to "overcome" anything. I think that race expansion, the fight for markets, and colonial struggles, are absurd, and nowadays are merely pretexts for war. The Germans are sufficiently great as a people not to need war to achieve material happiness. They have only to change their internal system, to modernize it, and they will be able to give an example to the world of organized industry and life. We have within us great potentialities. We have great scientists and organizers, great writers, and a fine people. Either we use all these materials that are at hand, or we perish.'

'But the world will not let Germany grow strong. France will attack her, or Russia.'

'That is a myth. France is too preoccupied with her own affairs to attack us. What will she gain? And Russia? What have we got to fear from her? Instead of sowing suspicion, why don't we attempt to understand our neighbours?'

'Because national interests prevent us.'

'Exactly. You have created the fiction of "rational interests". There is no such thing. National interests must preserve us from war and give us plenty, instead of preparing us for war, depriving people of a good standard of living, and generally creating an atmosphere of suspicion in Europe.'

'Such idealism does not fit our age.'

'Then in that case, what *does* fit our age? More war?'

'If necessary.'

'And in that war—I read from the book you asked me to discuss—"all humane and aesthetic considerations must be set aside". At the same time, "Propaganda must always address itself to the broad mass of the people". For the intellectual "propaganda is not suited, only scientific exposition". What a fear". your author has of intellectuals! He knows he can't brow-beat them, so he proposes to convert them to National Socialism by "scientific exposition". I should very much like to know what is scientific exposition—unless he means that a revolver will be flourished whenever the intellectual disagrees. I ask this out of curiosity, because I think my theory that the man was severely wounded at some time or another by intellectuals is true. He is now having his own back on them, but what is psychologically interesting is that in the chapter on propaganda the writer shows all the faults he attributes to the "lower orders". He becomes a prey to his own opinion. He shows his own mental processes working with naive clearness, with brutal realization that stupidity —even such as his is—can be exploited and made to yield good fruits.'

Dr. Banter handed me the book to look through and said in a whisper: 'See if you can pick out a few more apt quotations, and let me see them. I'd like to get one fact into this fellow's head, and that is his "leader" is nothing but a disgruntled politician who was unable to put forward any argument by intelligence, and so relied on glorified soap-box methods.'

A first glance at the chapter on propaganda revealed this gem:

'The receptive powers of the masses are very restricted, and their understanding is feeble. On the other hand, they quickly forget. Such being the case, all effective propaganda must be confined to the essentials, and those must be expressed as far as possible in stereotyped form. . . .

'The worst of all was that our people did not understand the very first condition which has to be fulfilled in every kind of propaganda; namely, a systematically one-sided attitude towards every problem that has to be dealt with

'The sole responsibility should have been laid on the shoulders of the enemy, without any discussion whatsoever.'

But the best illustration I could find of the professor's point regarding the inferiority complex of the author towards " intellectuals'' may be found in this quotation:

'Particularly in the field of propaganda, placid aesthetes and blase intellectuals should never be allowed to take a lead. The former would readily transform the impressive character of real propaganda into something suitable for literary tea-parties. As to the second class of people, one must always beware of this pest; for, in consequence of their insensibility to normal impression, they are constantly seeking new excitements.'

Dr. Banter pounced on this quotation and read it aloud.

'You see, my friend,' he commented, 'what I mean when I say he was very badly worsted in his day by these blase intellectuals? It was enough to upset him for a lifetime.'

'He is speaking of a method of propaganda,' the man retorted rather sharply, 'and he is judging by results. It may be bad psychology, but it is good politics.'

'That is often the case. But ideologies that have based their whole appeal on the attitude of the mob, an attitude which the author of this book himself claims to be very undecided, have never lasted. Public opinion has the tendencies of a weather-vane. The danger of propaganda is not that you will convince them—but that you will over-convince them. Propaganda has a way of coming back on your own head. People become less credulous once you have imposed on their credulity and they have discovered your lies. But once you start, you must go on telling lies. Then you get into a political labyrinth that may lead you more and more away from your programme, from your supporters. You will be opportunists unable to find a sufficient number of opportunities. You will have whole corps of propagandists who, in their turn, will have grown old and stale, for methods change with world conditions. A revulsion—or, better-termed, a reaction—comes to too much propaganda, and your trained writers and announcers and bill-stickers will not know what to do. To them, pouring out a specific kind of propaganda will be second nature. Try and alter that nature, and see what

happens. They will be as helpless as babes in arms. But this will come. Not to-day or to-morrow, but soon, as prophets say.

'Here, on another page, are scattered the same *bon mots.* "The so-called intellectual still looks down with infinite superciliousness on anyone who has not been through the prescribed schools ..." etc., etc. Can one wonder, therefore, that your Nazi movement appeals first and foremost to the non-intellectual—that is, the non-thinking person. Him you despise and fear, apparently.

'A nation is unable to rise up strongly, simply because its leaders are university professors. The author implies the dangers of intellectualtsm.

'But where among the whole movement of your party is there one original thinker? Rosenberg? Haushofer? Sorel? With whom do you claim kinship—except with the ignorant and superstitious from whom you have been able to learn enough to gull the people.'

'Can you blame us if we appeal to that which is nearest and dearest to a people, their own history and culture? Is .that superstition?'

'Yes, immediately this history and culture is taught to the exclusion of everything else. We have passed that phase of history, and if we return to it, then there will be more wars—more' purely artificial wars.'

'What do you mean by an "artificial war"?'

'I mean a war that is not fought for real economic or even philosophic reasons—but fought simply to keep a very old superstition alive—a belief in national invincibility and racial superiority. My gods are better than thy gods, and if you don't admit it—I'll fight. This adolescence comes in politics before a great disintegration. Victory might come to you for a while, but longevity never. You are doomed before you start.'

'Why "doomed"? We can change as we go along.'

'You cannot. Then you would become something quite different. By that, I mean supposing you todk away the National from the National Socialist—^what would you have? I assure

you that there are far more modern men who can change as they go along. That is your trouble. You are old history masquerading as something new. Dictatorships, oppression of the Jews, persecution of dissenting minorities—why, these are the very hall-marks of histor. What can you build on ancieht dust and dross, I would like to know?'

'You are, of course, an internationalist?' the voice in the other room said, with undisguised scorn.

'I don't know that I am anything quite so definite. I like Germany. I like her literature, her music, her character. I'm a frog in my own pool, as it were, and I can praise it above all other places in the world, but why it should be superior to anything else in the world, I don't know. I expect some of the things I like about Germany are rather trivial and silly to other people. That's blood, climate, race, whatever you like—that makes me into a sentimentalist. But I know just how far I can go—you don't. That's where we differ.'

'Then you don't think that Germany should be taught her salvation in the strength and unity of her national being?'

'Pretty words! Man escaped from the family kraal, and built a village society. He then developed a tribal society, and afterwards a national. Why shouldn't he unite still further? I'm certain that when man went from the village society to the tribal, and later to the national, he must have had great spiritual difficulties. Families and tribes and nations all have their distinctive characteristics and their jealousies, resentments and weaknesses, but economic factors and sheer intelligence showed men the benefits of greater union. The imperial idea was such an idea. The international idea is another; an empire of the world for man.'

'This is sheer idealism, impracticable for the times.'

'I haven't said anything about it being practical. But neither is extreme nationalism practical. I think we have an interim period to go through yet before we reach internationalism. We shall probably require a greater cultural understanding of each other. We shall probably have to give our children more education, better hygiene services, and so forth, but at least we shall be attempting to build a new world; at least we shall be going

forward and not backward. We shall be consolidating the present and not the past. Men will no longer be able to write nonsense about "Aryans", a fictitious people who exist only as language groups and not blood groups. Had the author made some effort to read scientific books on the subject, he would not have had such hallucinations. This is symptomatic of the whole book. He is looking for enemies under the carpet. Enemies at all costs is what he must find, otherwise he will be unable to exist. Without fears and enemies the whole Nazi creed would collapse. Hence the Jew and the Aryan, the Communists and the Nationalists, and so on. If there isn't any enemy in sight, then you invent one. The whole object is to fight shadows until you get strong enough to fight peoples. But the real and essential purpose of the man is personal power. Therein lies his arrested development. Shall I go on?'

We waited for a moment, but no answer came.

'I think I've offended our Nazi. Let's go in and see what he looks like.'

We moved slowly towards the sliding door, and Banter made a gesture which indicated that he would open it quickly, and then I should rush in.

He slid the door upwards, and we ran into the room. It was pitch black. He went over to the electric switch and snapped it down. There was no one in the room.

'I wonder when he left?' I said, looking at the armchair, which showed that someone had sat on it.

'More than that,' said the doctor, 'I wonder who he was. Look!'

He pointed to a small piece of paper which was lying on a low desk near the armchair where the visitor had sat. I unrolled it and read: 'I was born at Braunau-on-the-Inn.'

'Interesting,' said Banter, 'then it might have been the great man himself, although I doubt whether he would ever go to a psychologist.'

'He might,' I answered, 'if things were going sufficiently badly for him. The last vote of eleven million was a setback.'

'Or he might have sent somebody?'

'A double, perhaps?'

'Anyway,' I'll send the National Socialist Party my bill, and see what happens.'

Later on, when the Nazis came into power, Dr. Banter was one of the few psychologists left to practise. He was sent an invitation to join them, but he refused. The bill itself was never paid, if I remember, but he got a copy of *Mein Kampf*—-with an autograph.

Chapter 7—Bucharest

ESTHER

The first thing to remember when you get to Rumania is to call the country 'Romania'. The Rumanians are very jealous of their Roman ancestry, although, taken as a whole, they are as unlike the Romans as the Italians, but there has been such searching of archives of recent years to prove such oddities as 'Aryans' and 'Nordics' that it isn't surprising to find the Rumanians laying claim to Romulus and Remus. Ancestors have changed many times, however, in this essentially Balkan country, and although there is a Roman nose to be seen here and there, and hands go up in the Roman salute, Rumania is still Rumania of the Danube delta; a country of minorities, a Jewish bourgeoisie, and a peasant tradition. Like everywhere else in the Balkans, the good and the bad seem to have got hopelessly mixed. But, for all that, Poincar6's famous remark that the Rumanians are not a nation, but a profession, is not altogether true.

As a matter of fact, the Rumanians, for all the blood and thunder and theatricality of the Iron Guard, are essentially a dreamy, contemplative, and peaceful people. Having seen them from their side of the fence, I am able to write sympathetically about them without glossing over their faults and shortcomings, always remembering that one is apt to be a little hard in judging a people one genuinely likes.

Bucharest is about as good an example of Rumania as any other city, in a way that Paris is not all France. A casual visit to the city reveals nothing. Its charms are hidden, and revealed only on acquaintance, and Bucharest is essentially a 'feminine[9]

city. The story of officers wearing corsets is so hoary that it doesn't bear repeating. In any case, like all good stories, it isn't true. There is, however, I believe, an order preventing officers from wearing monocles unless they can show a doctor's certificate; and that is all I am going to say about the so-called effeminacy of the Rumanian men. They love colour, eau-de-Cologne, and gold braid, but in lands where the sun is hot and where the flowers have a strong and lasting scent, and where the women are chaperoned so severely, one cannot wonder that the male strives to conquer nature's competition by arraying himself, by being ostentatious in his clothes and his 'good manners'.

After a little while the city unfolds itself with the sureness and the glibness of an American travelogue picture, and the composite picture of the city presents a whimsical beauty. The inevitable cafe; the small houses in the 'unfashionable' districts, with window-boxes full of flowers; the cinemas lit with neon lights that flicker like fire-flies; elderly ladies being led to their cars by handsome chauffeurs in grey or white liveries. That is the Bucharest you notice on your first walk through the city. But soon you select a cafe, ring up friends, discover Dragomir Niculescu, the house of the national drink—tzuica. You talk in French in the heavily scented hairdressers' shops. You ask in English for your *Times* at an hotel kiosk. You go to Cafe Chantants and learn to dance at a more vigorous speed than the polite shuffle of your own 'Four Hundred'. Genuine Russian drivers, looking like the drivers of Old Petrograd, crack whips and take you around in droskies from place to place, and wipe their noses on their beards. And then a meeting in the Boulevard Lascar Catargi with an attractive girl. You notice the curious Styles of architecture, most of it new and rather 'nineteen-thirtyish', full of sun roofs and unnecessary glass panels. But the street for lunch is the fashionable Calea Victoriei. Here, even Paris might learn from the women's dresses, hats, and quaint gloves. The women are beautiful, you notice, almost every woman, and the men's attentions are a little obvious, you feel. They turn round and **stare.** But you soon get used to this sight when you think of the chaperon system, and that for a man to gaze at you long and

languidly is considered a compliment that few women could do without.

A city is built up of many little things, and an impression of Bucharest comes to the mind like a completed jigsaw puzzle—especially its colour. Roses seem redder; the honey is sweeter; and the native caviare is as good as the Russian product. And you keep on noticing the women. They are there to be noticed, with their ridiculous little hats and their long eyelashes.

Gheorghe, my friend, was amused at my enthusiasm. I had meant to stay a week, and found myself staying a month. This capitulation pleased Gheorghe. He promised me that I should prefer Bucharest to Sofia, and I did. He had invited me to stay with him when I wrote to him from Bulgaria. He had been a casual acquaintance in St. Moritz. We were in the same ski-class together, and seemed to have suffered from similar experiences in our early efforts to navigate ourselves across the snow on skis, and by a coincidence that we later declared must have been 'like attracting like', he was a doctor, too. That was three years ago, and when I went to the Balkans I found his address among a mass of invitation cards I was sorting out on my way to the Bulgarian capital. His early reply and cordiality surprised me, and I made a last-minute decision to visit Bucharest, intending, as I have already $aid, to stay a week.

On my second day I Was already listening to a patriotic lecture given to me by a young officer whom Gheorghe and I met in a cafe. I quote as much as I can remember of it to illustrate the pride of race that dominates the Rumanians, and which may explain the subsequent episode that proved to be the most interesting and curious of my stay in Bucharest.

Gheorghe had warned me previously that if I came across a politically-minded young man at the cafe, I had better hold my peace and hear him through, and as the cafe was one of the most pleasant places to go to in the evening, Gheorghe assured me that it would be worth my while to be patient and listen to the young man.

'He has a penchant for foreigners. He considers them completely unacquainted with our history, and unsympathetic to

our destiny. He will begin with a history lesson, and then will go on to the Jewish problem. The more bored you get, the more he will talk, so look lively and suffer him for a quarter of an hour, and he will turn out to be quite a decent sort of fellow, very well informed, and always up to some amusing prank.'

And Gheorghe's prophecy came true. I had barely entered the restaurant before a young man, very dark and handsome in a Latin way, shuffled in his seat, and got up and stretched out his hand to greet Gheorghe. I was introduced, and Gheorghe invited him to our table.

'Start,' said Gheorghe to him in Rumanian. Then he whispered to me in English to be of good cheer.

'You are from England?' the gentleman inquired. I said I was. 'Good,' he said with relish at the prospect of all the information he was going to pump into me. 'I am a Romanian. Gheorghe has probably told you that I am a dreadful bore. I don't know, but I like the English, and I feel that they ought to understand us Romanians. What, for instance, do you think of us?'

I was amused at the boldness of the question, but I answered quickly. 'We know very little about you, to tell the truth, but everything you say will be taken down in evidence for you. I'm writing a book one day—and one chapter will deal with Romania.' (I remembered their Roman pride.)

'Only a chapter? Can you do justice to a nation in a chapter?' he exclaimed.

'Not justice. But I can say a few things about you that most people don't know. I wouldn't presume to write a book about you until I had lived here for some years. I don't believe in "understanding" a people after a few weeks' holiday.'

'That's fair,' he said. 'So you really know nothing about us?'

'Very little,' I confessed.

'I thought so.' He mused, not knowing at which point to enlighten me, I thought. ,

'Ovid mentions the Dacians, and I believe he was exiled among your ancestors—near Constanza, at a place called Poti.'

He looked at Gheorghe and grinned.

'So he's been warning you. But, as a matter toffact, it's important to remember how much we revere the past if you want to understand what we are going to do in the future. And I assure you that our actions in the future may decide important European questions.'

'Quite,' I said. 'We were rather perturbed at your Goga government. He is a Fascist, isn't he? What is he going to do to thd Jews?'

'That problem will come up in our conversation,' he said. 'First, let's understand who we Romanians really are. You say we're Dacians. That's partly true. "The bravest and most honourable of all Thracian tribes," the gentleman you quoted just now said. Ovid lived among us. We fought Alexander the Great, and' resisted him successfully. It isn't romanticism alone that prompts me to tell you these things, but we are a small people, and like the Irish, we are proud of our history. Because of this pride we have managed to survive. In the disasters that lie ahead, we shall continue to remember our history, so that whatever conqueror comes, he will be unable to obliterate us unless he shoots every man and woman and throws them into the Danube.

'We love our earth. That is the peasant tradition in us. The Romans conquered us by superior numbers and better-equipped armies, and remained for one hundred and sixty-three years, and when the Barbarians came, the Huns and the Slavs, they passed over our land to form Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Czecho-' Slovakia, Poland—but they could not obliterate" us. We belong to the dawn of history.

'Then the Magyars came in 839, those Mongol descendants of Attila, but we resisted them and thrust them back over the Carpathians. But finally religious differences brought the Hungarians back again, and with the aid of the Church of Rome they wrested Transylvania from us, fighting under their great King Stephen. But in 1241 the Tartars, subjugators of the dukes of Moscow, turned their attentions to Transylvania, and then the Turks in 1526 seized it. We became autonomous, and were far better off under these infidels than under the Austrians who governed us from 1685 to 1866. The f611owing year Transylvania came under Hungarian dominion, and the truth must be said:

the Hungarians behaved very badly to our people. They had no voice in their government; they were not permitted to live in their towns; culture and education were dispensed by Hungarians, and as we refused to go to their schools, we became more and more illiterate. The conclusion of the last war saw Transylvania returned to us. So the Hungarians have taken over all our grievances. The future of our relations with Hungary depends on the peaceful settlement of this question. The rivals in this game are Germany and Italy. You can see the implications?'

'Yes,' I said. 'You mean the Italians and Germans are both trying to enlist support from the Hungarians?'

'No. Much more dangerous than that. They will seek to coerce Romania into economic bondage because of this problem; threatening that their "good offices" will no longer be accepted by the Hungarians if we don't accede to their demands. We have endeavoured to solve the problem by treating the Hungarian minority decently. But we will not surrender Transylvania again without a fight. To return *all* the Hungarians would mean that half of Romania proper would be handed over to them as well. Minorities form enclaves, and to start giving them away means whittling the whole State to pieces. That's the problem. Either State boundaries go, or minorities will continue to complain. But how can the State boundaries go when we have Germany dominating Hungary with her ideas? The fact remains that Hungary would only go to war with Germany's blessing. Under such circumstances, how can we resist German pressure?'

'I admit', I said, 'things are very difficult.'

'Then there's Bulgaria. Her claim to the Dobrudja rests on an, historical analysis we cannot accept, but, here too,. German aims may be seen. In the event of an attack on Romania, Bulgaria would aid in our destruction and receive the Dobrudja as her spoil.'

'But surely the Turks would not allow such a situation to happen?'

'The Turks will certainly want to attack Bulgaria ,if that country attacks us, but their attack and help must depend on

Yugoslavia. German troops can find a passage through Yugoslavia alone if they intend to defend the Bulgarians. So each country is honeycombed with alliances and counter-alliances. But the real stability in the east depends on Russia.'

'It is strange to hear you say that,' I remarked. 'What about Russian claims to the province of Bessarabia?'

'That might be settled amicably. We prefer to give Bessarabia back to the Russians, as, historically if not ethnologically, it is theirs. But ultimately, I say, we must look to Russia if we want protection from Germany.'

I thought that this was a very far-sighted expression of opinion, and now, in 1941, the truth of what that officer said has become apparent. Russia's moves into Bessarabia and Bukovina clearly indicate that Russia is not indifferent to Germany's advance in the Balkans. Up to the present time the hidden hand of Germany has uprooted governments and put others in their places, but in 1938 the struggle between King Carol and the Iron Guard was nothing more than an attempt on the part of that monarch to keep a strict neutrality.

'Quite honestly,' the officer said, 'if you asked me whether I should prefer to see Romania under German or Russian rule, I should say Russian. Our only hope, it seems, is to try to play off one power against the other. But one thing is still possible to us. We must maintain our national consciousness, so that whatever happens, we shall remain Romanians.'

When he said this I thought that he had finished with his analysis, but he went on.

'The other problem about which I was going to speak to you is much more ticklish. It concerns the Jews, and I know what you feel in England about it. But here in Romania we have this problem, and it has to be solved.'

'Of course,' said Gheorghe, 'the problem is only a problem so long as neither Germany nor Russia succeed in overrunning us. If Germany does, then she will settle it in her characteristic manner. If Russia seizes Bessarabia, we can expect a large exodus of Jews there.'

This was an interesting prophecy, and in 1940 it seemed that the 'Jewish problem'-was being solved in this manner. Thou-

sands, of Jews sought admittance to Bessarabia, knowing what their lot under the Iron Guard government would be like. Thoughts of German occupation also increased their fears, and the problem the officer spoke of was, of course, relevant only to that time. It will show, however, the Rumanian argument, and the reasons behind it. Although this officer was by no means an Iron Guardist, he was a traditionalist. I think, therefore, the opinion he expressed' was similar to King Carol's, and can be taken as representing the opinion of the 'governing class'.

'You see, in an essentially peasant community such as we are, the Jews form a sort of artificial bourgeoisie. They are the bankers, the lawyers, the doctors. This was all right so long as our peasants stuck to the land, but now our land-owning classes —and in Romania our aristocracy is comparatively young and unimportant—and our peasants' sons are looking for other employments than the cultivation of land. In my case, I chose the army, but supposing I had chosen one of the professions? My position would have been very different. You would find that the Jews were definitely dominating some occupations. There is nothing wrong in this. They are capable people, no-one will deny, but we feel that, as a minority, they have no right to give us 1,390 lawyers out of 3,475, or *1*1,200 bank clerks out of 14,300. I repeat again that this predominance of Jews is understandable, but hardly right. Take another example—*o\h* of thirty-five million lei which was invested in building during the period from 1925 to 1936, twenty-nine million was invested by Jews.'

'But surely, if they are more intelligent and have more money, it's only reasonable to suppose that they should control the professions and the money market. The solution is to become more intelligent and more wealthy, and compete with them. Isn't the survival of the fittest a capitalist axiom?'

'We have a different way of settling the problem. King Carol has taken steps to revise the question of Romanian citizenship. Many Jews came into the country by fraud on transit visas and did not leave again. Only those-who can prove that they were in Romania before the last war will be considered Romanian citizens. The others will not, but they will not be expelled or

persecuted. They will simply have to limit their professional representation.'

That, I presumed, was the 'official' opinion! It was, to my way of thinking, **a** pretty severe measure, but I was to hear Goga's programme before I decided that the 'official' opinion was like honey and rosewater compared to the virulence of Professor Goga's ideas on the subject. It was Gheorghe who told me about them.

'As you know, Goga is now in power. His proposals on this question are positively barbaric, and will be resented by all decent people. Carol wants to give him enough rope to hang himself, and he will. He is relentless, and advocates concentration camps for the Jews. He follows Hitler like a blind man. In reply to an English journalist who asked him what solution he proposed to this problem, he said, " It is a question for the League of Nations." '

'Sounds pretty ominous to me,' I said.

'You see,' said the officer, with a wave of his hand, 'the fight is on. It is stupid to identify the king with his government. The only hope is to form a party of national renaissance. Then the solution to the Jewish problem will be comparatively simple. At present, the Iron Guard are making capital out of it.'

When he paused, I felt compelled to interrupt him.

'Tell me,' I said, 'since you have this Jewish problem and find it so hard to solve, how do the Russians manage to get over the difficulty?'

The officer gave a most unsatisfactory reply.

'That is their business. Russia is a big country.'

Only the occupation of Bessarabia and Bukovina by the Russians has shown that the solution of the Jewish problem is quite simple if racial pride is not allowed to intervene, and if economic conditions are such that there is a demand for educated men.

'How is it', I asked, 'that doctors and lawyers and other professional men are not needed in a community? Surely their services could be devoted to the State in some capacity? **I consider** disfranchisement of the professionals of whatever **race a crude** waste of human material.'

'In a national system it is important to guard national interests. The Jews are a vagabond population seeking a *ubi bene ibi patria.*'

'But, don't you see, that it is exactly this national system, as you call it, that strengthens the power of Germany? While you are vbusy persecuting the Jews, you create the element of disorder, necessary for Germany's expansion. The whole Balkan problem results from your so-called National System. Countries bound to each other geographically and economically should not stress their nationalism, but should unite in one block. Just imagine what a factor such a block would be if it contained Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey, and Yugoslavia.'

I am afraid the officer did not understand my enthusiasm for this Balkan federation.

'You are advancing history too fast,' he said.

'And what will happen *if you* don't advance history? Romania will be divided among enemies instead of defended by friends. Hungary will claim Transylvania, Bulgaria will demand the Dobrudja, Russia will take Bessarabia. Why not federate into one economic unit and abolish the fictitious frontiers? That will surely satisfy your enclaves of Hungarians. Culturally they could be Hungarians and have free right to migrate, visit, and do whatever they like in Hungary proper, but economically they would be dependent on Romania.'

'But it's too late, now,' said Gheorghe. 'We should have thought of that when the Great War finished.'

'True,' I said, 'but there is still time. Czechoslovakia is being threatened with disintegration because of her minorities and because Germany is strong enough to make claims on her. If she had been a member of a Balkan and Central European federation, such claims would be impossible. It is still not too late.'

I quote these arguments in retrospect because they show the state of mind that existed in the Europe of two years or so ago. They show the hopeless muddle and futility of all the 'national renaissance' efforts on the part of King Carol. He was trying to swim against the ticle instead of damming it. It was the National System, the 'pride of race', with its false values, which brought

Rumania to the state of disintegration in which she finds herself to-day.

I had some opportunity to witness this disintegration myself, and I met some of the earnest personalities who attacked the problem from the wrong end in the name of their precious National System. After three major wars in the Balkans in this century alone, the lesson of unity had not been learnt. Each small nation was so busy settling its internal conditions in the interests of 'peasants', 'capitalists', 'race', and 'God', that they did not see the thunder clouds gathering.

Thus in February 1938, when Professor Goga's government fell because of its obvious 'foreign' inspiration, the king stepped in with a government of his own. The quarrel between the king and the politicians was about to be settled in favour of the king. He had met them before, and had been defeated. His father likewise had suffered at their hands. Liberals and Conservatives alike had their interests to defend, and I suspect that King Carol never forgave the 'old parties' for refusing his resignation from the throne in 1926, thus compelling him to leave Rumania, to return four years later, called back by the same politicians when they found a regency under the strong-minded Dowager Queen Marie just as compromising to their interests as a monarchy. Carol always despised his politicians, and perhaps he was right. Many of them were corrupt and inefficient, and he determined to put a stop to the dry rot in a typical Hohenzollern manner. The trimmings were, of course, Rumanian nationalism, but the despotism was clearly German.

Apologists for King Carol may argue that he had no other choice than to impose a 'domestic sovereignty' on the people. 'But what is arguable is the narrowness of his nationalistic views, his essential anti-Semitism, the army-worship, and the great extremes of wealth and poverty that were allowed to exist, without any social laws such as unemployment and health insurance. In other words, he behaved like any other Balkan potentate before him, instead of using'his time and his talents in trying to establish better relations between his country and its neighbours.

The comedy is better illustrated when we remember the bickering that went on between these small neighbours; the sus-

picions and trade rivalries that were fostered by the 'national' systems. Witness the futility of building up a strong army to defend yourself from the immediate neighbour, when the real enemy to your national security was a couple of frontiers away, more potent and dangerous than any Hungarian and Bulgarian force. Money and labour were spent in forming this army, an army which, however gallant and brave, could not defend itself against the onslaughts of Germany or Russia. But Carol did not understand this futility. He wanted to march with nationalism, instead of seeking a Balkan federation which might have had a chance of resisting the German and Russian demands. As it is, he built up an army for parade purposes, powerless to support an independent foreign policy. He thus became the prey of his own fears. Was it Russia or Germany, he asked himself, that would attack Rumania? He thought he could play one against the other, but the game was so transparently hopeless that he had to turn to Germany to save Rumania from going Communist after Russia's occupation of Bessarabia and Bukovina. Thus the whole of his National Renaissance Party lies in ruins, the programme, the national aspirations. All that is left is the essential royal Fascism, which apologists tried to explain away as a 'domestic sovereignty'. The fusion between the Party of National Renaissance and the Iron Guard will not be found so difficult as is generally supposed. The Iron Guard merely went further towards Germany two years ago than the situation warranted, and so Carol shot their leaders. To-day, the Iron Guard is performing its ' nationalistic and anti-Semitic' duties undep German orders.

An examination of the National Renaissance Party of King Carol will prove the affinities I claim it has with the Iron Guard. Our own politicians at home were only too anxious to be deluded. They considered the king's dictatorship preferable to that of the German-inspired Iron Guard. In a shortsighted way they may have beens right, but to have declared King Carol a friend of democracy was as absurd as saying that he was a really intelligent Balkan statesman.

Carol's dictatorship was disastrous for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was nationalistic instead of being Balkan; secondly,

it crushed the elements that were favourable to the democracies, and the small, but well-organized, parties that were in opposition to Germany and the Iron Guard. He, more than anyone else, facilitated the coming of the Iron Guard into power. Of course, Carol was not the only man who performed this service for international Fascism, but his share must be recognized.

How did he begin his- disastrous dictatorship? What means did he use to secure it? The means were as old as dictatorship itself. He proclaimed to the nation that it was being betrayed by the politicians. There was too much talk and nothing was done. The nation was disrupting, so instead of appealing for the election of men capable of governing the country, he declared everyone incapable except himself. This did not require much subtlety. The cry, 'The nation is in danger, give us an Imperator!' was organized by the king's friends. Critics who complained were either put into prison or advised to look to the Golden Horn, where Kemal Ataturk held sway. There was the usual talk of 'realism' and 'historic destiny'.

All of a sudden, the whispering in the boulevards stopped. Bratianu, the Liberal leader, and Manoilescu, ceased to be of interest. The, nation was going to look inside its own soul and have an essentially Rumanian government. What struck an onlooker like me was the similarity the Rumanian' soul must show to the German—if the Rumanian government was a true expression of that fantastic historic platitude—the national soul.

Of course, gilt was applied to the gingerbread so that it did not look so half-baked. Rumanian costume, the Roman salute appropriated from the Nazis and the Italians, the Patriarch Miron Christea, all these things were given to the public to show the essential Rumanjanism of the dictatorship. This much the Iron Guard would have done, with perhaps a few alterations, and less emphasis on the religious blessings of the regime. Of course, to guarantee complete support for his 'domestic sover eignty', Carol had to flatter the army by appointing three generals to his cabinet. The prospect of an army officer watching over foreign policy and internal affairs is an interesting commentary on the dictatorship itself. The army was' given exceptional powers over the civilian courts, and 'political offenders',

mostly democrats and socialists, who opposed the dictatorship, were summarily imprisoned, and in some instances shot. The number of Iron Guards apprehended in the beginning of the regime was amazingly small considering that the Iron Guard menace was considered to be far greater than the danger of university professors and Liberal lawyers running amok. The army knew how to protect its friends, as long as they were not in too much hurry or too obstreperous.

The charter of the National Party of Renaissance was devised to placate the Iron Guards and their sympathizers rather than to encourage the active oppositional elements. It is a curious paradox that King Carol preferred the 'lost sheep' that wandered from the Iron Guard fold, pleased at the prospect iof anti-Semitism and the consequent loot, rather than the very elements the king should have rallied if he really hoped for an independent Rumania, This historical lesson has been repeated over arid over again, and yet this wise king did everything in his power to strengthen the hand of the Iron Guard. His anti-Semitism was an unconscious way of giving a blessing to their activities. His ardent nationalism in no way differed from theirs, although they hoped that this nationalism would be expressed to their benefit. In effect, what the King did was to take the Iron Guard doctrine and use it for his own purposes. He promised them a truce and promised to carry out their programme for them, provided they recognized him as their leader, and not Codreanu. It was merely an affair between the Caesars, and as the king won the first round, he was able to follow the same gangster-tactics as had been advocated by the Iron Guard, and get rid of Codreanu.

In the beginning, Carol appointed Armand Calinescu as Prime Minister under his 'reformed' system. Calinescu was as much of a Fascist as Dollfuss, for instance, although he was a king's Fascist and not an Iron Guard. He aped the manners of dictators. His jaw was fixed. His posture was Napolepnic. He Wore a black monocle in his blind eye, and looked very fearsome. His assassination. by the Iron Guard was represented as a martyrdom, but it was nothing else than the end of an ambitious man who chose what he thought to be the strongest side. Ment-

ally, and spiritually, he would have made an excellent Iron Guard.

But Carol was cunning enough at this time to include a few men pleasing to the democracies. He was as yet unsure which horse he would ride, and Grigore Gafencu was sent to London and Paris to make an impression. He posed as a 'moderate' in the same way as Goering did before this present war. The usual sentimental nonsense was spoken about him. He was the friend of the democracies, and he would succeed Calinescu. This enabled him to raise a loan on the City of London, for which, undoubtedly, the Iron Guard government of to-day are very grateful. What has happened to Gafencu is difficult to say. He probably has some comfortable job with them now.

The double-crossing of the democracies went apace. Codreanu was shot as an act of faith to the democracies, and as a threat to his supporters not to overstep the limits laid down by the king. All good things would come to those who waited, he said to them, but Rumania would not go under Germany. She would organize her own system of brigandage.

The shooting of Codreanu is interesting because it revealed the innumerable intrigues that were going on in the National Party. The Iron Guard were naturally planning to seize more power for themselves. They found King Carol's fliitations with the democracies very irksome, or, rather, Germany certainly did. Moreover, the question of positions was a burning one. In the Balkans, government positions have been distributed from time immemorial by ministers to their relatives and nearest friends, and, naturally enough, all the 'plums' fell to the king's friends, who were also the leaders of the National Renaissance Party. The Iron Guards got a few unimportant positions, but that was all. The king dealt with characteristic nepotism himself, and when the Iron Guards murmured, he thought himself strong enough to get rid of the grumblers. He shot Codreanu, and in turn had his own Prime Minister shot by the Iron Guard a few months later.

Barbed wire and internment camps sprang up all over the place, and the Iron Guards were herded into the pens. But the policy remained. With Russia's occupation of Bessarabia and

Bukovina, the king had nothing else to do but to appeal to Germany to prevent Hungary and Bulgaria from making war. The kind offices of Hitler were used on Budapest and Sofia, and in return for this politeness, Carol released his Iron Guards and made them his ministers.

The most astonishing thing about the Iron Guard, and Fascists abroad and at home, is their apparent willingness to submit to Germany and to German dictation. This form of hypnotism is unknown to medical science' but it would be interesting to make a pathological study of it. What, for instance, could the Iron Guard—an essentially Rumanian product of Fascism—hope for from German patronage? They could not expect dividends in the way of specie, that is certain. And now the country has been despoiled to feed the German armies; oil is taken from the wells without payment; the peasantry and the workers are practically enslaved; while the army officers and the bourgeoisie have been appointed as a sort of police in their own country over their own people. Is there something exceptional in being Hitler's policeman? Carol apparently did not think so at first. That was what he wanted to avoid. He wanted to be the policeman of his own country. Perhaps, if the truth were told, what Carol and the Iron Guard feared most was that his people would refuse to be policed by them in any case, and they would definitely be out of a job if the democrats seized power. So they prefer to be policemen with Hitler's permission, than jobless politicians and exiled kings.

Lest I might be 'tempted to fill more pages on the political aspect of King Carol's move, I will tell the tale I originally set out to tell. It concerns Esther, a modern Esther who said to a modern prince,' Let my people be given me!' but he either did not love her as much as Ahasuerus, or was unable to, for his own political reasons.

This is a story of Madame Lupescu. I cannot vouch for its truth. Indeed, I am the first to cast doubts on it, but it has certain credible facts which might astonish, if not exactly interest, the historian.

I had determined to spend my last whole day in Bucharest

resting. This was certainly not the best way to spend a day, but I had the prospect of a long journey before me, and unless' I am fortified with a good sleep before a journey, I get very depressed and tired. The hum and whirl of the train wheels, for instance, drive me nearly mad after about five hundred miles, and my eyelids get as heavy as lead as I am forced to gaze at the flickering landscape during the day, or the sleepy faces of the passengers opposite me at night.

I had seen as much as I could of Rumania in a month. I had been to townships in Bessarabia and gazed, on Russian soil. I had been to Constanza and bathed there in the Black Sea. I had been to the Carpathians, where the Danube flows through the Iron Gates. This wide, beautiful river, which runs'through five countries, affords a reflection on the unifying purpose of Nature. Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania all receive their bounties from her. She holds them all in a bond of broad silver, despite differences of language and custom. Her inundations feed the fields with rich delta mud, and bring plenty, and her waters form a natural highway indispensable for Rumania's trade. But the beauty of the Danube I must leave for another time.

So I was resting on my last day in Bucharest when my telephone rang, and Gheorghe spoke to me in an excited voice.

'I say, Sava, how would you like to visit a State hospital with me? You're curious about our medicine, I expect, although we've steered off the subject so as not to make your stay here a busman's holiday, but I've just had a call to go to a State institution, a mental home, actually. Are you interested in nervous diseases?'

'Certainly. Give me any sort of disease and I'm interested. Perhaps it's a surgical case?' I answered.

' Don't think so. But I'll be over to you in a few minutes with the car. The place is a few miles outside Bucharest. All right?'

I agreed, but when I had„put the receiver down I gave the bed a rueful look. Later on I was very glad I had not put the adventure off.

So Gheorghe turned up with the car, and we went off at a high speed to this institution.

What do you know about this case?' I asked. 'Sorry to ask you, but I like to get my mind sorted out beforehand.'

'So do I , ' he said, 'but they wouldn't tell me. They just asked me to come along, as a man was having a very severe fit. He seems to be an important political prisoner.'

We didn't speak again until we reached the forbidding-looking buildings which were obviously a State institution, with high grey walls, sentry-towers, and great gates. A man with a rifle stopped us as we came to the door and asked our business.

Gheorghe immediately gave his name, and said that I was a colleague of his, so I had no difficulty in being let through the first gate. But when we came into the institution proper, we were met by the governor and a doctor. They both seemed curious as to why Gheorghe had brought me. He said something in Rumanian to them, and they appeared to be satisfied. He said later that he told them I was a specialist in nervous diseases, which was by no means true, but served the purpose of letting me in to see the sick man.

'This man we are going to see,' said Gheorghe, when we were shown into the small room where the man lay, 'is not a Nationalist. He happens to belong to the king's party, but he seems to have lost his reason, and is spreading the most astonishing rumours around the place. Naturally, the king's enemies are only too pleased to seize an opportunity of bringing more light to bear on—well, you know who, don't you?'

'You mean the Sunday-paper favourite—Lupescu?'

'Exactly. Now, we've got to discover whether the man is mad or not, and therefore entitled to be kept in a lunatic asylum or be sent to a concentration camp.'

'The Man in the Iron Mask again?'

'Exactly. But we are not here to sentence him. If he isn't mad, I think it would be more cruel to keep him in a lunatic asylum than——'

'Than put him in a concentration camp? I don't know. He'll probably get better treatment here,' I said.

'But what about his reason?'

'True, that might suffer. Anyway, our iob is to sav whether

he is'mad or not. He is, of course, officially mad, but they want to make sure so that they can prescribe him the right amount of punishment, I suppose.'

We went into the cell where this man lay. He was in bed, sitting up, and when we entered he drew back a little." I think he must have guessed that we were doctors, because he said: 'I'm not well, gentlemen, really I'm not well. They were going to take me out. I'm certain of it.'

'Why are you talking in French?' Gheorghe said sternly.

'Because they might hear me. Please don't let them hear. I have something to tell you. It's very important. I'm mad.'

Gheorghe looked at me. I shook my head to indicate that it was too early for me to make any decision. I approached nearer and put on the light in order to inspect the man more closely.

He was dark, I noticed, and had an ashen skin such as.'may be found amongst neurotics, and his eyes seemed to be dilated, but I thought it might have been the light which I had suddenly switched on. I then tested his reflexes. They appeared to be fairly good, hut not quite so quick as in normal people.

'Not enough evidence,' I said aloud to Gheorghe in French.

'Plenty of evidence,' the sick man said, as if I had addressed him. 'That's why they nearly took me out yesterday.'

'Took you out where?' Gheorghe asked.

'I don't know. They took fifteen other political prisoners, and they were just going to take me. They had put me in a lorry when I was suddenly released. I'm not a Nationalist, I said. I'm with the king. I didn't know what they were going to do with them, but I was suspicious. But they didn't take me. They brought me here instead, and they say I'm mad, but I'm not mad. I know I'm not mad. I'm a doctor myself.'

This information startled us a little, and I must confess that I began to feel more sorry for the man even before I had ascertained whether he was a doctor or not.

'That's'right.' said Gheorghe, 'it's on his card. He's a doctor of medicine.'

'I know, I know,' said the man in a whisper, 'why they sent you here. They want "to certify me. But I won't let them. I'm. a doctor myself. I can behave sanely if I want to.'

Behave sanely! So he had suspicions of his own mental equilibrium? This is a very interesting thing about mad people. They have moments of complete lucidity in which they are conscious of being sane. Both Gheorghe and I seized this opportunity. He spoke first.

'Then you are mad? You merely behave sanely because you don't want to be certified?'

'Of course I'm mad. Hopelessly mad,' tjie man said, almost joyfully, 'but they don't know. That's why I've had doctor after doctor coming in to.see me. I've puzzled them all. Some have gone away thinking that I'm mad, others swear that I'm perfectly normal. What do you gentlemen think?'

I was rather amused at our patient's obvious sardonicism, and his challenge to our medical reputations.

'We think that as a medical man you can be both,' I said, trying the very old trick of flattery. It worked.

'Of course I can. If I hadn't pretended to be mad, I couldn't have saved my life.'

'But why is your life in danger? Have you conspired against the government?'

'No. Isn't that written down on the sheet you are holding, doctor?' the man said with a gende sneer. 'I'm here because I know too much. I'm a prisoner of State. An important prisoner of State.'

'That's obvious,' I said, in the hope of drawing him further.

'Your flattery won't succeed -twice, doctor,' he answered coolly.

I decided that I would not try to defend myself. It would only irritate the patient, so I let Gheorghe cover up the situation with another question.

'According to this sheet, with which you seem so familiar,' Gheorghe added, 'you were a very fashionable doctor. Your income was well over the usual standard for Rumanian doctors. You have been married many years, and were happy with your wife. You have no police record. Then all of a sudden you began spreading a fantastic yarn. The nature of this yarn constitutes a *Use majeste,* and so you were arrested. What made you spread this story?'

'It's a true story. Besides, I'm a Jew, and I want to tell the world what I tried to do for my people. You see, I am a prophet.'

Gheorghe again looked at me, but I shook my head. Something made me feel that the man was play-acting.

'But it says nothing here about your being a Jew,' said my friend. 'Besides, what had the fact that you claim to be a Jew have to do with the scandal you've been spreading?'

'It had a lot to do with it, my dear doctor. As I have told you, I'm a prophet. Do you accept that?'

'Certainly,' I said.

'But does your friend?' the man asked, cunningly.

'I do,' Gheorghe muttered, a little impatient at the man's fooleries.

'As a prophet I laboured long to incline the heart of the king towards my people,' he said.

'You were apparently for some time the king's physician, weren't you?'

'Exactly,' the man agreed. 'And it was then that I hoped to make him compassionate. I argued with him. I begged him. I showed him how much we Jews had done for Rumania. But he would not listen. Instead, I was dismissed from his service, and nearly imprisoned. He made me promise that I would open a practice under a different name, and would forget my Jewish blood. He made me do this against my will, but he threatened me with prison, with death even. That is why I am in prison now. I broke my word after many years. I couldn't stand it any longer. But then I was young. I loved life. I had just married. It was difficult to throw away the many years of study, to desert a newly married wife, just to be a Daniel. I was thoroughly frightened. I did all that I was told to do. I went away. I neVer saw my relatives again. I took another name. I did not go to the synagogue. 1 forgot the religion of my fathers. I turned away from the God of Israel.'

'This must have been very hard for you to endure,' I said sympathetically when I saw that the man was genuinely distressed. Tears had come into his eyes, and a look of extreme religious fervour filled his face, so that he was barely able to speak.

'I sold my people for a place amongst the Gentiles; for money

I gave up my God. What would Isaiah have done, I began to ask myself, or Ezekiel? They would have put away fear and spoken fearlessly and given their lives if need be for their people. Then came anti-Semitism. It was always present, and when the Crown Prince, Carol, was seen to sanction it, it burst out more cruelly. At first, it was the poor Jew who suffered most, the Jew in the village and the small town; but the anti-Semitism spread to Bucharest, although the rich Jews always had influential friends and they were rarely molested. I noticed these things, and grew more and more furious. I was specially angry with myself, because when my people began to be persecuted I felt a coward, secure behind my false name and good practice. I wanted to join them, to suffer with them. I wanted to carry their shame, to be despised as they were despised, but somehow I did not find the necessary strength. I dared not speak at dinner parties when my race was criticized. They called me a saindy man because I did not speak against .the Jews! They said that I had every reason to, being a doctor, and the Jews getting all the practice. When one day——'

'Sorry to interrupt you.' said Gheorghe, 'but you haven't made this quite clear. When exactly was this period you are speaking about?'

'Some time before Carol's departure in 1925. But don't interrupt me, and I'll tell you the whole story.

'Well, as I was saying, I did nothing for my people. I was ashamed and frightened of owning myself to be a Jew, when one day I was called to a hospital to attend to a patient for some minor complaint. I was told that the Christian doctors had refused the case, as the patient in question was a Jewess. Naturally, I was only too glad to repay some of my debt to my race. I did not tell my colleagues, but they thought me a very broad-minded man because I went to the aid of this Jewish girl. Naturally, when I went to the hospital, I did not know who I was going to meet. I mean, I did not realize that the girl was going to be so beautiful. What I mean is, that I went into the ward where she lay, and when I saw her, I couldn't take my eyes off her. All of a sudden, I had an idea, It was a preposterous idfea, an outrageous idea, if you like. I saw Esther.'

'Was that her name?' I asked with some astonishment, missing the Biblical allusion he was trying to make.

'No. The world knows her as La Lupescu, the mistress of Carol, but I saw in her and her beauty an Esther, an Esther who would go to the cruel king and say "Let my people be given me!" She knew nothing of my plan, the plan I had so suddenly formulated. There were many details to arrange and prepare. I attended to the girl, told her of my origin, and said that I would come on the morrow to see her. She must have been very surprised at my excited state. I was surprised myself. Everyone around me thought I had gone mad. But I had an idea. Where I had failed in my pleas, she might succeed. I was certain she would succeed. The difficulty was to persuade her that this sacrifice, this demand that I was going to make of her, would do her people good. Where am I?'

His sudden cry of 'Where am I?' puzzled and startled us. I made a mental note of this appeal. I was certain that he was making the story up as he went along. What astonished me later on was the completeness and lucidity of his 'plot'. It did not betray the careless preparation of a madman at all. Rather it showed a scientific and determined mind.

'You said that you wished her to make a sacrifice,' Gheorghe said. 'What sacrifice?'

'Ah, yes. I went to her on the second day and found that she had nearly recovered. I dared not speak to her in the hospital. As it was I had received a bad name from my other patients for treating a Jewess. Their objections were not loud, but I knew that they were muttering. However, to return to the girl. I discovered where she lived, and I sent her a letter expressing my desire to meet her.

'Y6u can imagine my astonishment when I discovered that she was married. She was so young, so frail at this time. Her husband was a merchant, many years older than she was, and he greeted me with particular attention, and was overjoyed to hear that I also was a Jew. You know what Goga says—that we Jews are a nation within a nation. But who makes us so? If being a Jew was a political faith instead of a religious one, we should not be any different from any other party. You do not call the conservatives or the socialists a nation within a nation.

'Anyway, I made friends with the girl's husband, and after a few weeks, I detailed to him my plan.

'"Listen," I said to him, "your wife is beautiful and beauty has been- known to soften the hearts of kings. What I am going *to* propose to you will shock you, perhaps anger and horrify you, but before you refuse to listen further to my request, think about our people, and how much they have unjustly suffered. It is all right for us rich Jews. We can buy friendship, we have power on our side, but the poor Jews, our compatriots, suffer through the greed that we excite, not they.

'The man did not really understand what I was saying, but he promised to hear me out. So I laid my whole plan before him. I suggested that we should send his wife to Paris, where I could get her introduced into the best circles. She would live in great style, buy jewels, and generally conduct herself so that she would be invited to all the best places, and would meet the most influential people. No doubt she would cause a stir with her sensational beauty. Men would offer marriage to her. She would pose as a divorcee. In fact, she would have to be a divorcee.

' Of course, the husband could not understand a word of what I was saying. He thought I was completely mad, just as you think right now at this moment.

'I explained further to him. It was necessary that he should divorce his wife, and help me to provide her with money to go to Paris. On her return I could get her introduced to all the best houses in Bucharest, hide her Jewish nationality, and perhaps even bring her to Carol's attention, for he was known to be partial to interesting women. Her role would be that of Esther. She would make him fall in love with her, and when he was sufficiently under her spell, she would make Esther's famous demand.

'Need I tell you what the husband said? You know it yourselves. He refused. He Said it was dishonourable. He said that he loved his wife, and that although he loved his people, he loved his wife and could not bear to be parted from her. Moreover, there was no proof that my scheme would succeed. I might make his wife into a common woman for nothing, I might ruin her life for a hare-brained scheme. The Jews could rely on God,

who had never deserted them, and so on and so forth. When he had concluded, he quarrelled violently with me and showed me the floor. He forbade me ever to see his wife again.

'Naturally, I was disappointed. I firmly believed in this plan of mine, and I began to look around for another suitable candidate for the position of Esther. This was' no easy matter. I could find no-one as beautiful and intelligent as the merchant Lupescu's wife.

'One day, a week or two after I had given up all hope of seeing the lovely red-headed girl again, she came to my consulting room without an appointment, and asked to see me. She did not give her name, and I very nearly told my receptionist to turn her away, when I happened to come out of my room and saw who my unexpected visitor was.

'I was overjoyed. I almost hustled her into my consulting room; locked the door, and for two hours spoke to her of my scheme. I must say that her answer was totally unexpected. She agreed whole-heartedly with me, and said that she had been very puzzled by my sudden disappearance from her house. She had questioned her husband, but he would reveal nothing, so that she became more curious, and decided to visit me. What I had told her, she had suspected, she said—not that she suspected my plan, but she felt somehow that I had wanted her to do something to help her people.

'She promised to go home and discuss the whole thing with her husband. If he was not willing to grant her a divorce, she would simply take the law into her own hands and would go to Paris, as I suggested, and would await further instructions from me.

'I don't really know what happened at home, but somehow or another she managed to persuade her merchant husband to give her a divorce. It broke both their hearts, but I think he realized that my plan had become an obsession with his wife, and that nothing he said or did would make her give it up.

'So the girl went to Paris. As a matter of fact, I followed her there myself, so that I could be at hand to supervise her training. You have no idea how hard it is to make a merchant's wife into a society lady. Most women have the superficialities, but Parisian

society at this time was very chic. There was more to learn than merely to hold a knife properly, and to have one's clothes cut by the best firms. There was conversation, gossip, private and public affairs to know about, before one became *persona grata.*

'As it happened, I knew a very charming lady. She was a Russian, I think, who had married an impoverished French count, and she acted like an "aunt" to society aspirants for a sufficiently large fee. She undertook Lupescu's education. She went with her to the right coiffeurs, and introduced her to her other friends as a Rumanian debutante.

' Soon the girl was being taken to Legation suppers. That was the beginning of her success. Then *the jeunesse dork* noticed her, and serenades were sung outside her bedroom by some infatuated youths. The scandals were sufficiently discreet to make her interesting without making her in any way vulgar.

'Proposals of marriage came with regularity and expensive presents piled up. American film producers were anxious to send her to Hollywood. An English lord had offered 'her his broad lands and his title, besides a villa in Italy, and himself. But Lupescu refused all these. Her eyes were fixed on a future, a future for her people. She was Esther, and had the work of Esther to do, so she resisted all temptations, and waited patiently until I considered a return to Rumania propitious.

' I made my decision after three months. Just as summer was approaching, and the fashionable crowds were deserting Paris, Lupescu and I returned to Bucharest. I had bribed journalists to wire her arrival to the capital, and a number of the papers carried small announcements that a beautiful Rumanian woman was coming back to Bucharest, tired of Parisian life, wanting peace and quietness in her native city. This was, of course, a prompt invitation to all the celebrity hunters in the city to inundate her with invitations. Her clothes were photographed in the women's papers. The women felt envious of her, and the men all sighed at the sight of her beauty. But we were still far from accomplishing our plans. Indeed, it was much later in the autumn, when the king held a palace ball, and invitations had been sent round, that the beautiful girl was asked to accompany a party.

'We spent a great deal of money on her clothes and on publicity stunts—her borzois became a legend. When she came to the palace ball without doubt she was the most attractive woman present. The whole ball seemed to be organized for her.

'Carol was first to notice the commotion and the great deference with which she was received by the men, and he naturally asked more about her, but very few people, even those who had invited her round to their houses, knew very much about her.

'A week later she was being invited to private parties at which Carol was present, and little by little an introduction between the two was effected. Lupescu behaved admirably. She did not hurry her acquaintance at all. She waited for him to fall madly in love with her before she made any move.

'Her first move was nothing more than an insinuation. I must confess that it was I who prevented her from making any bold move. Tell him how liberal the French are, and what good treatment they mete out to the Jews, I said, and harp on this theme without exciting his suspicions. She did this, and when she found that she had made an impression on him, she decided (I let her judge the most propitious moment herself) to tell the Crown Prince that she was a Jewess, and that she had come, to him to beg him to withdraw the harsh laws which were being formulated against the Jews. She told him how loyal they were, and how anxious they were to be absorbed into the Rumanian State if they were only given a chance. She spoke a great deal with him—or rather at him, before he replied.

'From what I gathered from her afterwards, Carol was astonished. He could not believe his ears. He was partially afraid of what would happen if the people discovered that he was in love with a Jewess, and secondly, he was afraid of himself. He avoided giving her a direct answer, but she went away thoroughly satisfied.

'But Carol was cunning. He realized that although he loved Lupescu, he was not the only one in love. iShe loved him, too. Therein lay the whole tragedy and the collapse of my scheme. He knew that however much she played the part of Esther, he could temporize, telling her that his love for her would naturally make him more generous to her people. But he was not in love with the Jews, but with her. For the Jews he would do

nothing. He would tell her that he was powerless to influence public opinion, and that once anti-Semitism had had its run, it would cease to be, and the country would return to normality. He promised that he would see that the persecutions would not go as far as was intended by his ministers, and so forth.

'Naturally enough, the young girl believed everything he said. She gave herself up to him in her love, and was happy. He was able to throw as much dust in her eyes as he pleased, but I think he loved her genuinely enough.

'Now what do you think I did?'

Gheorghe was not surprised at the question, apparently. He said promptly: 'You betrayed the fact that she was a Jewess. I remember the scandal.'

'You do? Exactly. That's what I did. Of course, I was arrested, but after a little while released on giving an undertaking that I would not dislcose my knowledge of the affair, and my part in it. I think it must have been Lupescu's intervention that saved me from a worse fate. I must thank her for that, but she had failed her people. She had not the strength of Esther, or perhaps Carol did not have the nobility of heart that Ahasuerus possessed. Anyway, nothing was done for the Jews. Things grew worse and worse, and the scandal I had let loose had repercussions throughout the kingdom. Carol thought he would have to leave the country, so what did he do? He put away Esther. He sent her under a heavy guard to Paris, and told her not to return until he called for her.

'I tried to get in touch with her again in Paris, but she refused to answer my letters or to see me. I think she was ashamed. We had planned so much together. We had gone so far on the way to victory when she suddenly deserted me. I think she must have suffered. Anyway, Carol did nothing to abate his anti-Semitism. He made a fake reconciliation with his mother and his wife, but to no purpose. As soon as the country had forgotten about Lupescu, he brought her back. I don't think she tried to influence him again. She had given up all hope, or he would not listen to her. Perhaps he had even grown tired of her?

'Anyway, this year—when Gogarame into power and I knew what sort of'fate awaited the Jews—I decided to break my

promise. I went to a newspaper and told them my whole plot. I was arrested by Goga's orders, and although he has fallen from power since, I am sure that Carol would like me out of the way. I wonder whether Esther—failing to save her people—has tried to save me again by getting you doctors to come **here** and certify that I am mad?'

Gheorghe shook his head. 'No,' he said, 'we have no orders. We must judge on our own opinions. But your story is interesting; very interesting.'

'Then you agree with me that I'm not mad?' the man said anxiously 'Or has Esther bribed you to say that I am to save me from the concentration camp or the firing squad?'

'Yes,' said Gheorghe, 'she has.'

I looked in astonishment at this confession, but Gheorghe restrained me.

'But we are not "going to certify you. We shall suggest a period of rest. That is what Lupescu would like you to have. Now, we must go.'

He went over to the man and shook him by the hand, and I followed suit. We then left the room.

'What made you say that we have been bribed by Lupescu to certify him, or as you put it "to prescribe him a rest"?' I asked immediately.

'Look at this card,' Gheorghe said, giving me the patient's history. It was in Rumanian, and Gheorghe smiled as he apologized. 'I'll translate it for you. It states, in the first place, that this man is a retired engineer, and not a doctor. In the second, he has never met Lupescu. He has not lived in Bucharest for more than six months. Four years ago he was operated on for a tumour of the brain. But the most impQrtant thing about the whole story is that he is not a Jew. As a matter of fact, he has been an ardent anti-Semite himself.'

'And what he has seen done to the Jews has probably unhinged him?' I suggested in the manner of Dr. Watson. 'Is that possible?'

'Everything is possible,' said Gheorghe mysteriously. 'I might not have translated the patient's history correctly to you, for one thing. Have you thought of that?'

'Oh, come,' I said laughing, 'do I have to certify you also?'

We were both glad to get into the fresh air.

'You know,' said Gheorghe, 'it sounded like a likely story, but madmen always have likely stories. Do you know that lovely one about a psychiatrist—it just shows how difficult it is to know when a man is sane or not. When a friend of his, introducing him to the Queen of Rumania, said, "This is Queen Marie of Rumania", he answered absentmindedly: "Very interesting. And how long has she had this idea?" '

Chapter 8—Geneva

THE MAGNIFICENT OBSESSION

It *was* a good idea.' said the cynical journalist in the foyer of an hotel I was staying at in Geneva in October 1935. 'But, like all ideas, it wasn't popular. I've just seen fifty-four nations gazing at the black face of the Lion of Judah, the Emperor of Abyssinia, for two long hours as he pleaded his country's cause. They listened to him, and did not understand the Aramaic, the language of Jesus Christ. And when the translators got busy, how many of them remained, do you think? A bare dozen. It was a formality.'

Italy had -declared war on Abyssinia on the 2nd of October 1935. The League *had* been a good idea. That's all it ever was to be in the future—a had-been.

I don't like journalists, cynical ones especially, but there was something in this fellow that sounded very much like America's conscience. America seems to breed her journalists cynical. I am told that they belong to the most enlightened section of their community, and consequently are suspected of pan-European feelings;

'It's a sell-out. That's what it is,' he was saying in an even voice. He wasn't getting excited. Perhaps he had been on the scene of European politics too long to expect anything better.

'But the bill will have to be told,' said his companion. 'The League has run away to fight another day. Only they think they've run away never to fight again. Abyssinia? Who's ever heard of Abyssinia? To hell with Abyssinia. They aren't betraying her. They are betraying themselves. They weren't listening

to the black Emperor of a slave-state. They were listening to a victim of aggression.'

'So what?'

'So nothing. But the word aggression is going to be awful popular round the marble halls of Geneva.'

That was a long time ago. The journalist was right. It did become 'awful popular'. But did anyone believe it would not? Did anyone believe that the League of Nations could have done anything against-the rival national claims which tore it asunder, and made one of the greatest promises of all ages sink to the level of a magnificent obsession?

A thing of sand, it was, some say. But how did it begin? Like all live things, it began with hope.

It was in 1920. It was Point Fourteen of President Wilson's Fourteen Points. It was Part One of the Peace Treaty of Versailles. Its parents were distinguished, and half the world was present at its christening. Men of goodwill throughout the world stood as foster-fathers to it. Its auguries were fine, according to the stars. It was the new Star of Bethlehem; the brightest thing that had happened to the world since the Armistice of 1918. Hope! Hope! Hope!

'Remember 1919?' said the cynical journalist. 'I was out on my first European job. I remember how our Woodrow Wilson suddenly put Geneva on the map.'

'Yeah, he bounced through all the opposition, didn't he? Pushed aside all the advice and criticism, and said: "Here let it be," in the same way as the Lord might have said when he was choosing the site of the Garden of Eden. "Here let it be." '

They were reminiscing, and I was listening in.

'He wanted the headquarters of his Big Idea to be in a neutral state. Belgium really wanted to be the seat of the new paradise, but Wilson turned her down. He wanted his League pure, a virgin, so to speak, in the community of International Angels, and not little Belgium, over whose corpse too many soldiers' boots had marched backwards and forwards.'

'Nice alpine smell, Geneva had. Clear Europe's head, and all that.'

'And then *what* a bump they had when they realized that Wilson wasn't going to run it for them like a trust company. Didn't reckon with our Senate. I was there on the Press when they refused to ratify his creation. So Wilson left the League like a baby on Europe's doorstep, a poor mother severed from her child. He looked longingly at her, but the U.S.A. Senate called it a bastard and refused legitimacy.'

'Bit lost they were in London and Paris. You know, they were never good nurses to the Baby Idea—but there it was, clamouring for someone to give it some strength.'

'Poor 'ickle darling! I saw them running around from place to place.'

'Who'd like a brand new Baby Idea; something right out of Woodrow's honest mind?'

'Sure, they were scurrying around trying to find a way of using it for their own purposes. But the trouble was to find somebody for the post of Secretary-General. Shall I give 9bu the low-down?'

'Spill it, brother. I'm aching for a bit of scandal. The League is dead! Long live the corpse!'

Perhaps it wasn't any of my business, but the two men had been drinking pretty solidly for about a couple of hours, and I think my medical training got the better of my sociability.

'Haven't you boys had enough to drink?' I said at their elbow as I came up to the bar.

'What's it to you?' asked one of them. 'We're celebrating, brother. Why don't you join us? *Viva el morte!* or whatever the Foreign Legionnaires say.'

'Aren't you going back to the Assembly?' I asked.

'What for? Do you think they might come alive and do something suddenly?'

'Something's bound to happen,' said the other man. 'But we're not interested. We've seen them cold shoulder this Ras Tafari, or whatever he is, when the man came weeping black tears, and that's enough for us.'

'We've seen a lot of things in our time, from baby murderers to babies murdered; we've seen earthquakes and shipwrecks, we've seen people going crazy in a fire, but we've never seen so

many European statesmen behaving like skunks". SO we're getting drunk.'

'Any objection?'

I decided that it would be better if I had none.

'Good,' they said, 'let's resume. We're practising our general knowledge. We're cataloguing infamy. You can listen in, if you like.'

So I did.

'We were saying something about the first Secretary-General. How was he chosen?'

'By Clemenceau. Yes, I think it was him. He was pretty annoyed being left out of things after the Treaty. He'd got to like the limelight like a circus tiger, and now he found the Britishers piffling around trying to find a secretary. So he waited. He waited long, and then the opportunity came plonk) into his lap. Sir Eric Drummond, private sec. to Balfour, had been attending all the preliminary meetings. Then there came an argument. A pretty stiff one, everyone had an idea something ought to be different, and Clemenceau decided to intervene. He pointed his smallest finger at Sir Eric, and said: "There's my choice, and he is your true Englishman. He has sat there for days and not once has he spoken, not once expressed an opinion about anything. As Secretary-General of the League of Nations, he'll be ideal." '

'And wasn't he the right man?' I ventured to say.

He was. He sat there for many more years to come, silent, calm, and colourless. But he did his job well.'

'But Comert, do you remember him?' I said. 'Wasn't he a pretty vigorous sort of man?'

'He was just dandy. He spun about in opposite directions, you never knew where he'd be next, darting in and out of his office '—running to the news department, correcting proofs, everything that was at hand. And he was strictly neutral. It was like being a pasha in a harem.'

'He even refused to wear his red ribbon of the Legion of Honour in Geneva so that his neutrality should never be in doubt.'

'And Geneva was a one-horse town in those days.'

Sure. The boosters called her the city by the lake, and all that bunk. They played up Lake Leman, and pretty picture postcards were sold everywhere, and they eyen plumped on Geneva's internationalism.'

'Let's admit it. The whole thing was a fake.'

'It makes it easier to understand subsequent events if you get that into your honest head, mister,' I was told.

'But Geneva was an excellent site,' I protested. 'Everyone from John Calvin to the Red Cross has made it,his headquarters. It's a city of freedom. Students, reformers, workers, all the brave and the outlawed, found sanctuary here.'

'But it wasn't a metropolis. That was its principal trouble. It's all very well for it to have grown up with the goats and the cows on the mountains in a nice semi-pastoral atmosphere—and the air here is nice and somnolent, anyway.'

'So the big powers got together and opened a nice clubhouse where they could plot in comfort. The little States were able to shout their miseries and grievances at the annual Assembly in the mild late summer of September, and everyone had a wonderful sort of love-feast. The world read with bated breath how England or France saved the world from the brink of war by a magnanimous yielding to some small fisheries point with Mexico or Peru or Guatemala. Fine it was! Ballyhoo!'

'Here's another point to remember about Mother Geneva. It was safe. The great minds of Europe need never have been afraid of revolt. The Genevese are a peaceful folk. The idyll was complete.'

'But surely if you Americans had not let down your President Wilson something might have come of it all?' I said.

'Ah, ah, here it comes again.'

'Tell us another one, do!'

'But am I not right? Had America stood by the League, the League's authority would have been greater?' I insisted.

'It might. But there were enough powers at the table to give them all the power that was needed. It's rather fashionable to blame America for all the League's woes, and to suggest that Wilson foisted the idea on to you. You didn't have to take it, **did you?**'

'We wouldn't have accepted it, perhaps, if we'd known that America would back out,' I insisted.

The journalists looked at each other, and the cynical one said, with exaggerated sadness: 'Well, supposing I do confess. I confess this much—that if there is any blame to be apportioned to America, it isn't because she stood aside, it's because we thought of it first. Buddy, the world wasn't ready for the Big Idea in 1919. It isn't ready now. Come again in twenty or forty years' time, and we'll have a talk about it then.'

'Listen,' said his friend, 'what was the League formed for principally?'

'To assure world peace.'

'But can you assure peace? That's what I'm asking you. Peace only lasts when nations are too powerful; not when they have some religious pact not to break it.'

'But surely, in 1919, America was about the most powerful political force in the world?' I parried. 'Why didn't she take world leadership—that's what I'd like to know?'

'I'll tell you why. The Americans were as innocent as babes when they came across here. Your politicians could do one thing well—they could swing it across. Understand me?'

'But President Wilson . . .'

'You would have needed a good dozen of Woodrow Wilsons to steer Europe through the murky waters. Was there a man alive who understood all the tricks, the subtle nuances, the delicate shading of national feeling, and equipped with sufficient force to play the world policeman? There wasn't.'

' You mean that the Americans were such innocents that they would have been taken in?'

'I sure do. I've been taken in. I came to Geneva as a sceptic, and for some years I developed into a Hopeful, into an International Optimist. But I didn't know my Europe. They can sure talk fine. They would have twisted and palavered us out of existence, and played us up against one side or the other.' '

Said the other man, taking up the cudgels: 'It might have been different if the League was composed of international delegates honestly trying to find a common formula, but they weren't

honest, those that the countries sent. They couldn't afford to send the honest ones.'

'What would have happened to them? They've all got to be honest, or not at all.'

' Instead, it was always the big dog eating the little dog. With America in the League, they wouldn't have even had the politeness to listen to our ideas. You can't mix it. They wanted one thing—for themselves—and they wanted to give nothing in return. It's nationalism.'

'Look at the League's record. Japan has left because she couldn't *get* what she wanted from the League, and when she flicked her fingers in the League's face, wasn't it a British statesman who prevented the League from doing anything effective?'

'But a few of the small states——' I began.

'Yes, a few of the small states who had statesmen at their helm who saw which way the wind was going to blow if there was anarchy in Europe, got together.'

'But don't get us wrong. The League has done a great deal of good. Just being an idea is something good. Things start like that in this crazy world.'

'They have done something to regularize international procedure. Control of the drug traffic and the white-slave traffic can be credited to them,' I said.

' Sure. And it employs a lot of very clever people, and pays them big salaries, and in a few years it's going to move into a Palace of Peace, but it hasn't been able to find a formula to get over the rivalry amongst the blood brothers of Europe.'

'An' listen. We, as journalists, have done our best for the League. I swear we have,' said the cynical journalist with a trace of sincerity. 'We made excuses for its errors. We glossed over its failures. We hoped for the best. It was a good job being a correspondent in Geneva. The success of the League meant our success. So you can't blame us.'

'I don't blame you,' I said. 'The blame goes deeply into the consciousness of all mankind, but it is America—the New World—which will be able to throw in her weight on the side of humanity and progress if she thinks humanity is worth saving. The League may be' dead for all I care, but what must come is a

better understanding between the great countries in the world who are interested in preserving peace.'

I would like to say that the cynical journalist wiped a tear from his eye, but he didn't. He helped himself to a long drink of whisky, and said: 'Brother, you join the International Optimists too. And when you're disillusioned, come to this Geneva bar and meet me. We'll get drunk together.'

I knew what he meant by that. I, too, was disillusioned, for I was certain that the League would do something to help Abyssinia to defeat the aggressor. It was one thing helping China. China was far away. There were great difficulties in the way. There were thousands of excuses to be made about China, but Abyssinia was different. The aggressor was a bare hundred miles from Geneva.

The history of the League of Nations makes inspiring reading. It goes like this.

Out of the welter of the inhuman struggle of the Great War, the great nations of the world decided to abjure war as an instrument of foreign policy. Their object was to form an international code, and to submit themselves to its laws. This international code was known as the Covenant. In the same way as the Lord God had made a covenant with Abraham, the nations of the world made a covenant with posterity.

They said, what was obvious to everyone by then, that war was an international disaster. Fifty-Seven sovereign independent States in the world said that in 1932. Of the major powers, only Russia and the U.S.A. were not members, but that did not matter in the consensus of opinion of the rest of the globe. There was no chance of Russia and the U.S.A. uniting to disturb the world peace.

The reasons for the U.S.A.'s non-participation we already know, but Russia in 1932 was by no means a stable partner. So, at least, thought the League Assembly. Civil war was predicted to break out there soon, and government by gentlemen for gentlemen would begin, and the League would help with credits and foreign intervention, and set Russia on her feet again. Statesmen were quite unwilling to recognize that Communism had come to stay in Russia. We have still to pay for that error.

The time of troubles had begun, and although Russia came into the League in 1934, her suspicion of the statesmen who sat at the green baize tables at Geneva, and still preside over our destinies, is understandable, if not very realistic to our point of view. In considering the ' magnificent obsession', it is necessary to bear in mind this cavalier treatment of the Soviets. All these circumstances seem to have worked in Hitler's favour. While the League of Nations persisted in its anti-Russian attitude, considering that Russia was a greater menace, as a revolutionary force, than Germany, Germany was allowed to re-arm. Secretly, and sometimes not so secretly, many of us thought that she would be the trump card against any possible excursion into world revolution on Russia's part.

Reasons for France's present collapse must be looked for many years before Munich. Her uncompromising attitude to Russia up to 1933, and the manoeuvres of her politicians to form a *cordon sanitaire* round her, the intrigues with the Germans, and the passive non-intervention of Laval when Bruning approached him just before Hider's accession to power, add no commentary to the policy which culminated with Munich and France's defeat. France needed two fronts on which to attack Germany. She scorned the Soviet armies on the advice of Laval, and others lite him. France was defeated at home by this master-political criminal.

Our own folly was no less when we refused to aid China in her fight with Japan. We took what was known as the 'League view' and did nothing. One day our Lavals may also come out of hiding and rejoice that democracy is dead. It will be necessary to have a long finger to pull them out of the national pie before they can cause any danger.

Let one thing be understood at once about the League of Nations. It was a European affair from the very beginning. As the cynical journalist said: 'The big dog ate the little dog.' The little dog was ignored throughout the debates. The strings were pulled outside the Assembly, but now and again a few uncomfortable moments did arise when the delegate of a small power stood up and asked the League if it had forgotten its high-sounding Covenant. The real power in the League resided with

its Council, formed almost exclusively, except for about four members, from the great powers. Stated cynically, there was no point in the small power out-voting the large, simply because the small powers had no means of making their vote effective, and if they insisted in their attitude, the result would have been to make the League disappear altogether.

The League was better than no League at all, as far as the small powers were concerned. But the humour of calling the League a League of Nations will strike anyone who has a penchant for international affairs. The human comedy, however, was not so funny.

The human comedy was China pleading at the court of justice of the world, confident in the British word of honour, in the French sense of justice, in the Italian's decency, the Rumanian's sympathy, and so forth. It was not the little power, not the U.S.A. that betrayed China. It was the British Government. Its shilly-shallying, its rodomontades, its long-windedness, and 'determination that something will be done' received the contempt of the small powers. But they put this betrayal down as a sin of omission, and waited for the next time, when they were sure the League would prove effective.

I remember reading in the newspapers in December 1934 of the border clash at Ual-Ual between some Abyssinian tribe in this waterless desert and an Italian frontier post.

But let us begin from the beginning. Let us go back a few months to October 1934. Time really doesn't count any longer now that we are fighting for the future, but illustrations have a way of serving for warnings.

Large quantities of materials had been assembled on the island of Rhodes by Italy. This material was the stuff of war, oil, guns, rifles, ambulances. This news came through quite naturally. No-one thought very much about it. A few of us suspected that Italy was about to make an attack on Turkey, claiming an island or two which she said were given to her by the Treaty of Versailles.

But competent observers noted that Turkey would go to war over these claims, although Russia was in difficulties at this time over the Japanese invasion. And Russia was Turkey's

only ally. The Russians had just sorted fortifying their bases at Vladivostock, and were keeping a sharp eye on the Japanese aerodromes in Manchuria.

Everything indicated that Mussolini, who had been very brave in his speeches, and had urged his Italians to live dangerously, was now going to make a proof of their valour.

I was speaking to one of our home-grown politicians. He was full of prophecy, and said: 'I'll bet you ten to one that Musso will now attack Adana. With Russia out of the war, it'll go hard with the Turks.'

I disagreed. I told him that Mussolini had no intention of attacking somebody who could put up a really good fight, and the Turks certainly could. Lord Bathurst said of them: 'The Turks are always underestimated as fighters until they fight.' The quotation pleased my friend, but he would not alter his opinion that Turkey and Italy would clash.

'The Duce's intentions are hidden,' I said to him. 'He is too clever to do anything in the open.'

In December 1934 his intentions were made clearer. He was talking about frontier rectification between Eritrea and Abyssinia, and his governors were stirring up trouble in the familiar way.

So when I met the home-grown politician again I said: 'What's the mystery of Rhodes now?' It was nice to be right.

He admitted that there was no mystery, but he gave me some interesting news. He gave it to me in little pieces, of course, the way home-grown politicians do. It was a piece of'confidential' news, so of course he was very proud of himself and his information.

'Who do you think's behind the story about Rhodes and an attack on Turkey?'

'Don't know. You do though, so let's have it.'

'Laval.'

'Go on."

'Swear.'

'How do you know?'

This was a dangerous'thing to ask, because whenever I challenged his opinion, he had a great deal more to say than was

necessary. He would first begin by an analysis which, at times, seemed quite irrelevant.

'You know what Paul-Boncour called Mussolini?'

'What's that got to do with Laval?'

'A lot. Paul-Boncour called him a Caesar of the Carnival. And how did Briand re-act to him?'

'I don't remember.'

'He refused to meet him. And Barthou—you remember he died at the side of Yugoslavia's king. And what was Yugoslavia?'

'Yugoslavia? What are you driving at?'

'I'm trying to show you the suspicious nature of all this.'

'I've gathered that without you being theatrical about it,' I complained. But my politician was not to be done out of a full triumph.

'You see, France—generally speaking—is anti-Mussolini,' he began.

'You mean the Left is?'

'Yes, the Left and the Centre. The men I've just mentioned represent France, don't they? Well, tell me what makes their successor so friendly to Italy?'.

'What does? You tell me, but quickly.'

'I don't know.'

'That's fine. Then why beat about the bush and sow suspicions in my mind about Monsieur Pierre Laval's integrity?'

'That's just it. Musso has been crying for Tunis, Nice, and Savoy, and yet Laval is a friend of his. Don't you think it's pretty suspicious?'

I said I did. He was tedious, but it shows the way some politicians talk, and that's why I have brought him in.

'I suggest that Laval had some personal obligations towards Mussolini. I suggest that they had arrived at a secret understanding. Otherwise, how can you describe this sudden collaboration between two countries which, a few months ago, were nearly going to war with each other?'

'I really don't understand you. Your suspicions are interesting, but that's about all.'

'Do you want to hear more?'

'Certainly. But talk facts, not airy nonsense.

'Let's "begin by asking ourselves what was the point of the journey he made to Rome early this year?' (This was 1935.)

'I know. The papers have just shown that Laval's given Mussolini 25 per cent of the railway shares in the Franco-Ethiopian State railway, a stretch of territory in Libya, and a promise to treat the Italians better in Tunis. This was gratuitous, as they are already treated pretty well. He also gave him control over the small Seven Brothers Islands in the Red Sea which guard the entrance to the Indian Ocean.'

'But why?'

'Frankly, I don't know. Do you?'

'No, but it's pretty suspicious.'

It was very suspicious, and the reason came out a few months later. What had happened was that Laval had given Mussolini a free hand in Abyssinia—Laval, Foreign Minister of France, of the France who had signed the Covenant of the League of Nations. Infamy could not have reached lower depths. And the French public, more moral than Laval, suspected nothing from the Italo-Laval agreement until they saw the procrastinations and delays that were hindering the fulfilment of the proposed sanctions. Laval was sabotaging every move.

The British public was quicker to move, and Sir Samuel Hoare found himself without employment for a few months for his part in the infamous proposals regarding the partition of Abyssinia.

France heard with astonishment that Laval had refused the British Navy bases at Toulon and Bastia in Corsica from which to impose the sanction control on Italy. The Press was up in arms against Laval, but the comedy of France was being played—the people versus Laval. Laval won the first round, and it was only after the establishment of the Front Populaire that this strange, negroid-looking ex-Communist was sent down for good—or so we thought. There were clamours to bring him to trial as a traitor, but the Abyssinian war was finished, and Laval found strong friends to hush up the scandal in the Press. This same Laval now tries to hold sway over the body of prostrate France. Laval will be surrendered to the ignominy of history, or perhaps even to the sansculottes. I suspect he fears the latter

more than the former, the Germans less than his own deceived people.

The leadership on our side was no less blind, if not so wicked. The Tories here, no less than any other party, did not want to see Mussolini strengthened at their expense, but they feared that if once Mussolini was defeated by the sanctions or any forces that the League might send against him, the Red Flag would fly over the Quirinal—the same Red Flag that might have floated over the Wilhelmstrasse if Hitler fell. So just when the campaign was going a little better for the Negus, he was urged to give in to the Italians.

A friend of mine had just returned from Italy. He knew the country as well as I did, and I questioned him about the feeling for the war.

'Every Italian I've met', he said with the exaggeration of the newly returned whose impressions you are anxious to secure, 'considers it an act of madness. The people are bent double under the burden of taxation as it is. What's the fun for the peasant to see Mussolini masquerading around in the role of a first-class power? He knows he isn't. The Italian knows it. We know it. Nobody is fooled.'

'But isn't there any hope that the Italians will put a spoke in the wheel of his war plans?'

'They don't know his war plans—that's just it. He swears that war won't break out. He tells them that he's a man of peace, that he guards peace with twelve million bayonets, or some such rubbish. But there's no enthusiasm. The *Dopolovoros* and business circles laugh at the idea of war. They trust the Duce too much to believe we would be such fools.'

'But with England and France helping him he can fight his own people's opposition, can't he?'

'That's possible.'

'What's life really like there? Isn't there any mobilization?'

'Yes. The militia have been coming out on to the streets, and the people have been going home early. There's no gaiety, only expectancy. Somehow or other, they have an idea that France and England will fight them in any case. It's only a rumour—but it got around like wildfire.'

'But is there any *active* protest?'

'Plenty. In Sicily I saw the sulphur workers walking around with their pockets inside out. In Mantua, women have been lying down on the lines to prevent the trains with their sons on them from leaving.'

'That's a nice piece of sarcasm for Mussolini. Do you remember he gave the same advice to the mothers and sweethearts when Italy went to war over Tripoli with Turkey in 1911? How does he like his advice being carried out against him?'

'He's plastering the walls with new tax posters. He is also inaugurating a campaign to suppress "the detestable custom of laughing at mothers-in-law". It diminishes respect for the family, he says.'

'Any desertions?'

'Plenty. They are pouring into Yugoslavia and Austria. They say that Marshal Badoglio is against the war. I know for one thing that the professional classes are against the war to a man. Some of them hope we'll give him a shove, and then, they say, they'll finish him off themselves. There's hope again in Italy—if France and Britain stand by the League.'

Such, then, was the position in Italy. What was the positiQn in Abyssinia? Reports indicated that optimism was rife in Addis Ababa. They said: 'England will stand by us. The League will defend our Christian Emperor and see that justice is done.'

What charming illusions!

The Emperor of Ethiopia, that gentle-faced man, in whose blood flows the whole history of Palestine, Egypt, and Abyssinia, was hopeful. His trust was childlike. It was based on a code of honour which is the same in the jungles of Abyssinia as it was in the room where the Assembly of the League of Nations met.

He was worried, of course. He had plenty to be worried about. He did not understand the significance of the Mussolini-Laval pact. Nor could he understand why 25 per cent of the French shares were sold to Mussolini. He asked a journalist rather plaintively why he could not buy the necessary ammunition from Europe; but the most surprising thing he asked this journalist was whether we in Europe were aware that Laval

had agreed to grant landing places for Italian troops in French Somaliland.

Three years previously the Negus had evaded a plan by France, Britain, and Italy for partitioning Abyssinia into spheres of interest. He had brought the matter to the League, and for some reason or another the secret partition plans were dropped by the great powers. They were not brave enough, perhaps, but whatever the cause, the Emperor must have reflected how much better it would have been for him to be under British and French protection, rather than suffer an Italian invasion.

The Emperor was by no means the simpleton he was supposed to be. He knew exactly what game was being played in the whispering galleries in Europe. Let it be said of him that he never descended to mean calumnies against Italy, not even after the insults that Mussolini hurled at him from the tame Italian Press.

'England and the League cannot allow Ethiopia to be overrun. Do they not realize that this would create a dangerous precedent?'

They did not realize it, or perhaps they did, and preferred to draw the dividends of security while they could. Their politics were as short-sighted as their economic reforms.

In a soft, sibilant voice, he spoke again when he heard that the town of Aksum had fallen to the Italians.

'Divine justice, divine justice will settle its accounts to the last penny some day!'

Now, six years later, Haile Selassie has returned to his throne in an Ethiopia freed from the Italians. He will help Providence to settle its accounts, no doubt.

Haile Selassie's life in those days must have been difficult. He did not conceal the fact that if war broke out he might not be able to rely on some of his tribes. The reason for this was apparent. Haile Selassie was an enlightened monarch in many ways. He had visited Europe frequently, and kept himself abreast of the times by reading European newspapers, and often receiving journalists and diplomats. But his reforms were not popular with the clergy.

The Coptic Church, nearer in spirit to the Greek and **the**

Protestant Churches than to Rome, was corrupt in many of its temporal aspects.

The Emperor always wanted to expropriate the huge lands under the Church's rule and settle on it the thousands of slaves he was slowly liberating throughout his domains. But the clergy, who made up something like one-tenth of the population, were naturally opposed to this practice of taking their lands and settling peasants on them. The bishops, and even the Abuna, the head of the Church, made protests. It was only the Italian invasion that made them drop their quarrel with the Crown.

Another interesting sidelight on the Coptic Church is the Abuna's or Archbishop's insistence that Protestant England would never let the Copts pass under Rome's sway. He explained this childish belief in the newspapers, illustrating his points with reference to Gustavus Adolphus, the House of Orange, the Hundred Years' War, and so forth. Innocent old man, he imagined that he was living in the ages when religion mattered.

'Surely the British will fight for the religious liberty of the Abyssinians?' he said. 'They are Protestants, and we are nearer to them than we are to the Church of Rome.'

The Roman Church was furious, I remember, at these reports, and resented the implication some journalists made that Mussolini and the Pope had come to some agreement over the ecclesiastical government of Abyssinia once she was conquered.

It is interesting to note, in passing, that whether the above is a slander or not, as soon as Marshal Graziani marched into Addis Ababa, whole loads of Sicilian and Maltese monks were transported to Ethiopia to preach Catholicism to the Christian Copts. Their success among them has been small, for the Copts are an old religion, and proud of their ancient history. They consider themselves superior in every way to the Romans, especially in the matter of spiritual exercise. The Abuna himself, poor old man, was captured and sent to Italy. For all I know, he may be in prison there still.

Haile Selassie was also opposed by some of his 'rases'. A number of these provincial governors went over to the Italians after payment had been made, and others gave only lukewarm

support. Small military forces were sent, because as yet the rases were not sure whether the League would bestir itself.

Quite a number of us were sorry for the Negus himself. We were sorry to see a brave man hounded out of his country. But what was more strong within us was the feeling of outraged justice. We no longer swallowed the dope that the white man's mission was purely one of civilization, and we knew that Fascism's civilization would be as unbearable for the black man as it was for the white.

Despite all the sneers of the pro-Italian Press, Ethiopia was an ancient country. She had most of the abuses of antiquity, it is true, but she had also consolidated much that was good and beautiful of Egyptian and Greek civilizations.

The Emperor was perfectly aware of the fact that his state was an anachronism, and he did his best to alter and improve his country. This was Ethiopia's own job, and not for an outsider to attempt. Indeed, it was Mussolini who had advocated Abyssinia's entry into the League in 1926, when the other powers were doubtful whether they could treat her as a civilized nation.

A small aside regarding Haile Selassie might amuse those who seek ironies of history and laugh over them. He belonged to the Amharic race, a race which had conquered and subjugated twenty-seven others during its domination of the Ethiopian plateau.

In appearance, the Emperor is much darker than is generally to be expected from Amharic people. Most of this tribe have the olive-coloured skin peculiar to Mediterranean people; or, perhaps, their skin looks more like that of the Jews of Yemen, although what a Jew of Yemen looks like it is difficult to describe. The Amharics are, so I am told on good authority, a little taller than the Jews. They have fine supple figures, hair which curls slightly, and large melancholy eyes. The Emperor, in particular, has very large, dark, sad eyes. But the most noticeable thing about him is his dignity. It is a dignity that we peoples of the West know very little about. It is not haughtiness in the ordinary sense of the word, nor any sort of pride. It is simply a sign of great confidence—more in God, I should imagine, than in men.

It took long for the dawn to break over Addis Ababa. The Emperor and his advisers looked desperately around for somebody to save them. They still clung to the belief that the League of Nations would come to their aid. The Abuna's suggestion of an appeal to the Christian Churches, and the Prime Minister's advice that the Emperor should make it known that he was a descendant of Abraham, did not do much good. It was carefully explained to the Abuna that the Churches—the Protestant Church as much as the Catholic—had no policy of their own. They were dependent on the countries they served.

Someone suggested that he should liberate all the slaves and so obtain the goodwill of the world, but Haile Selassie answered that he was doing that already. What else?

The truth of the matter was that nothing would save him unless an arms and oil embargo was placed on Italy.

A journalist with just that amount of irony which must keep a man sane, said to the Negus: 'The only thing that can save the Ethiopian Empire is an international strike by the stevedores and transport workers.'

A piquant situation was admirably handled by the interpreter-secretary, who said: 'But His Majesty, as the Emperor of Ethiopia, can scarcely be expected to make an appeal to the workers of the world.'

'Why not? The workers have a sense of justice!' said the journalist, who undoubtedly also knew that the workers had a sense of humour, which, of course, would not necessarily have prevented them from helping the Emperor.

But the Emperor's reply was that of a statesman, a man who showed that he understood the political scene only too well.

'The working-class organizations have no more an independent policy than the Churches mentioned.'

The national origin of the Amharic peoples is strange and deep in the wells of history. The language is, however, certainly Semitic. The Emperor's name, 'Haile Selassie', which means 'Glory of the Trinity', and the name of the capital itself, which is known to the Abyssinians as 'Addis Aviv'—'Flower of Spring'—are Semitic.

This information I obtained from a learned scholar of oriental studies, but he knew little about the Abyssinians.

'The similarity between Tel-Aviv in Palestine and Addis Aviv', he said, drawing the analogy, 'is obvious. And did you know that most of the towns in the Amharic provinces have names out of the Bible?'

I asked him about the claim of the Negus to be a descendant of the Queen of Sheba, and he gave me this information: 'I think it would be correct to say that he is a descendant of David's son and Balkis, Queen of Sheba. There are manuscripts in monasteries in Addis Ababa which claim that the Song of Solomon was written for her whom he called "black but comely". This is at least as plausible as the theory that Solomon wrote it to indicate Christ's love for his mystic bride, the Church.'

'But can't you tell me anything about their racial origin?' I asked. 'How did they—Semitics, so you say—come into the heart of Africa?'

There are all sorts of interesting theories about that, but theories they remain. Some say that they wandered across Arabia in the very opposite way that their kinsmen did, and crossed from Yemen or the Hejaz coast, but I ' m afraid I really can't be' more definite. There are other theories, but they are only shots in the dark.'

'Any suggestion that they are Jewish tribes which refused to migrate out of Egypt with Moses?' I asked. 'I think I've read something about that.'

'That's one theory. Not all the children of Israel went with Moses and his brother Aaron into the desert of Sinai. And it is known that the Egyptian Pharaohs conquered Africa right up to the Nile's sources. They even went to present-day Rhodesia and the island of Madagascar. It's quite conceivable that the Pharaohs preferred to colonize this huge plateau with their subjects, leaving them as a garrison on the outposts of their empire.'

'The Romans did the same, didn't they?'

'Yes, the modern Rumanians are probably the descendants of Trajan's legions who were put there to keep the Scythians and other tribes at bay. It's quite likely the Egyptians may have

had the same policy with, their clever and inconvenient subjects, the Jews.

'But surely there must be some proof of such an attractive theory?'

'Well, they've discovered a temple to Jehovah in Elephantine in Upper Egypt, near the modern city of Aswan. That seems to indicate that the Jews were sent pretty far down the Nile, and in large quantities, otherwise they would not have built a temple.'

'And then, I suppose, conquests and wars between Egypt and her neighbours caused her to forget the people she had planted up in the highlands?'

'Yes. Life was necessarily primitive, and the Semites lost touch with their ancestry, and when—according to the legend—Saint Philip baptized a Moorish nobleman, this exalted gentleman came to Abyssinia and converted the tribes of Amharics to Christianity.'

Just a few days after this conversation came the official outbreak of the war—the war was official in the sense that Italy had moved in her armies. There was no declaration of war, Mussolini uttered,his usual bombast from the Palazza Venezia; a mob of schoolboys shouted Hurrah! and Italy was at war.

It was only a colonial war for the Italians, a *piccola guerra,* but men would die who did not want to be heroes. . . .

In Abyssinia they were pouring poison-gas on to the women and children, and using dum-dum bullets. Bruno Mussolini, when he had bombed a small village, declared that 'it suddenly bloomed red roses'. Worthy of the poetry of D'Annunzio, perhaps?

That history is old. The Abyssinians went up into the mountains to continue their resistance and to lick their wounds, but Haile Selassie, King of Kings, Lion of Judah, came down to Geneva to find out what was wrong with the white man's justice.

He came through Egypt, through the land where his forefathers had travailed, and he found courtesy and friendship with the Egyptians, but what could they do? It was at Geneva, if anywhere, that he would find justice, they said.

His arrival at Geneva was greeted as a scoop by the world Press. Attractive headlines were flashed about. America looked

on,cynically, and said: 'Now what are you going to do?' but herself did nothing.

The Press spoke of the disillusioned emperor with sympathy. He said himself that he had come to plead his country's cause. He said his cause was just, and that the League was under a misapprehension. He would promise every reform that the League would require, only Jet them call back the Italian armies. Let Italy come to the League table as he had done. Let her state her case before the world, and if the world judged that Ethiopia was in the wrong, he would be glad to give not only the whole territory to them, but himself also.

It was in the afternoon that the Negus arrived at the house of the 'Magnificent Obsession'. He still believed in it, poor man. They had shown him superficial honours. They had at least had the decency to vote to hear him. They could hardly have done otherwise.

He got out of a hired limousine and walked with his London Minister into the Assembly. Flashlights went up, cameras began turning. Reporters were just taking down every impression they could get. They remarked that he wore a felt hat on his dark fuzzy hair. They said he looked sad.

All the fetuosity of the West came to do homage before Haile Selassie. They wanted to see him weaken for a moment. They wanted to see him show fire, a glint of savagery, a word of contempt for the men who talked but did nothing. But he did not oblige the rubbernecks, as the Americans call the curiosity-hunters.

He stepped up to the rostrum, a small man, so that they had to pull the ntfcrophone down for him. It wasn't necessary. The emperor had decided to speak in Gu6, the sacred dialect of the Ethiopians. He knew French tolerably well, but at a moment like this he preferred to speak his native tongue.

For one hour the delegates sat and listened to his quiet voice speaking with suppressed passion of the injustice done to his country.

The delegates grew fidgety. Many began to draw patterns with their pencils. Laval was there, unblushingly listening. Litvinov sat with a benign expression on his face, indicating

neutrality. All the great ones of the earth were there listening to the little black emperor's agony.

An hour passed, and the emperor descended from the rostrum and was gone. The delegates had not understood him. They had clapped politely. He had looked up at them. For a moment be hesitated. He might have wanted to use a choice epithet on these wing-collared, frock-coated representatives of civilization. Instead, he passed his hand over his face as he left the Assembly. He did not look left or right. He did not wait for a reply. He knew what the reply would be. There were no illusions in him now, no more belief that they would save Christian Ethiopia, or anything like that.

He left the Assembly and went into exile, but he had delivered his protest in the face of the world. He had said that they had given a precedent to aggression. The future was on their heads. It was not a matter of betraying a small country if they did not come to his aid, it was a matter of condoning the aggressors. Divine justice, divine justice, would settle its accounts to the last penny, not only with Mussolini, but with them, the guardians of civilization.

When the translation was read out, the delegates were surprised at the mildness of the speech. The appeal to God was familiar by now, and sounded very respectable. He had lost his kingdom like a gentleman, and anyway, the benighted Abyssinians would probably be better off under Italy's rule. Most of them thought that. They liked the quiet tone of the speech. They liked the way, he had left everything in their hands. What else could he do?

Did the delegates intend to do anything that was practical? No. They agreed that Italy was an aggressor, and they said how angry they were with her, and that after the war was over there would be little likelihood of them talking to her again for a long time. They made a great noise, and uttered a few threats.

The greatest sympathy came from Russia. Litvinov said that Russia was a new member to the League, and her opinion might not count much in the councils of the League as yet, but sanctions should be applied still more tightly, and the French should be

watched. This displeased the French, but seemed to please Mr. Anthony Eden. Others spoke in the same vein. Mr. Eden spoke and said some fine things. But no-one was willing to do anything that might jeopardize their positions.

In the end they talked themselves out. They voted for resolutions and posed outside the building for photographers;

'League warns Italy' was the headline we received in London. But Abyssinia was dead, and the Italians were answering our headlines by saying that Italy laughs at the League.

As for the Negus, he was decently forgotten. He went to a sleepy English provincial city—Bath.

The world has had many magnificent obsessions. The Holy Roman Empire was one—the division between Pope and Emperor in their respective spheres worked for a time and kept European order. Men of all ages have clamoured for unity. The pan-European idea is Christian, pagan, Nazi, and Socialist. It seems bound to come, but under whose auspices?

Chapter 9—Madrid

Y NO HAY REMEDIO

'And there is no remedy.' . . . I have taken this chapter *IJL*heading from a Goya picture. Most people are familiar with that philosopher of painting and his work, but how many know this particular etching? Three rifle barrels pointing from the edge of the picture at a man bound to a post, at whose feet another man lies dead—shot through the head. Farther away, a group of soldiers are shooting another patriot, and beyond them the dawn widens over the sky. . . . 'And there is no remedy?'

The year is nineteen hundred and thirty-eight; I mean the year that I went to Casablanca and Madeira on one of those white ships that carry you to sunshine and bananas, but if anyone had told me that I should come across Rodi Zucco in Tangier, and what is more, find that he had a 'doctor' to his name, I should have laughed. I always laughed when I thought of Rodi Zucco, the manrwho had tried to pass his medical in the University of Florence a hundred times. The times are exaggerated, but Rodi was a comic attempt at being a doctor, for, as a matter of fact, Rodi Zucco never wanted to be a doctor, and did his very best to fail every qualification. He wanted to be a man of leisure, a career quite *a,* number of people would envy. As he often explained to us himself, when the list of successful candidates was announced, to be a man of leisure one had to pass many more exams than those in pathology or medicine; one has to have good manners, good clothes, and plenty of .money. And Rodi had all those qualifications, but his

father, a hard-working business man who had prospered in cloth, wanted his son to be a 'professional'. This was one step to becoming' a Papal Count, he reasoned, and as he had a large collection of silver and plate in the house, he thought armorial bearings would look rather nice on them.

But there was nothing *nouveau riche* about Rodi himself. He was born to elegance, and wrote clever letters to the Press on old editions or Etruscan armour. But his papa was adamant, and Rodi was forced to attend the minimum of hours at the university so that his father could boast that his son would become a doctor.

I wouldn't have said so much about Rodi and his father's social aspirations if it hadn't been for the curious fact that when I met him again—by pure chance—in Tangier, his invitation card bore the proud legend of'doctor'.

I couldn't believe it.

'Not law, is it? Or perhaps belles lettres?' I questioned him.

We had met in the foyer of a large hotel. He was coming in with trunks, just as I was going out, and we brushed past each other before I recognized him and spun round to grab him by the arm.

'Mr. Rodi Zucco, I presume?' I said, unintentionally using the well-worn Livingstonian greeting.

'Dr. Rodi Zucco," he corrected me, looking closely but failing to recognize me.

'Sava, Class five, Professor Alberni? Remember? Year 1928.'

'Sava, the man of the *Healing Knife,* the master of surgery,' he exclaimed facetiously, indicating that he had followed my 'literary career'. 'What the devil brings you to Tangier?'

I let him finish his good-natured raillery before I answered.

'I'm on holiday. And you?'

'On service,' he answered, with a trace of melancholy. 'My free spirit is chained to chariots of war, as you would say.'

'War?' I said. 'What war?'

'Abyssinia first, now here. My government is non-intervening in Spain, AS you know, so that explains my presence. I'm a doctor-incognito, pretending to be a tourist.'

'Well, congratulations,' I said. 'You passed the medical at last. What made you do that?'

'Exasperation, and the old man. I was tired of seeing the same old questions year after year, and the old man was getting impatient paying my fees and expenses for seven years in the city of the Florentine Signoria.'

'Yes,' I admitted. 'You nearly became a museum piece yourself. But I'm glad you passed.'

'With a miserable third. I thought at first they wouldn't let me touch a live man, so I went into the Army to see the world, and now I'm stationed in a camp with the descendants of Carthage.'

'What do you mean?' I asked. Rodi never explained anything directly. He was standing in front of a large mirror slightly obscured by a potted palm, inspecting himself.

'Moors,' he said. 'Thousands and thousands of Moors. I am struggling to prevent them from falling ill so that Islam may come to the rescue of our holy faith. But they are the very devil to get on with. Their medicine seems to be very advanced, and they know a great deal more about surgery than some of us. I'm amazed. But at this moment, I want to wash. You wait down here for me, and we'll have lunch on General Franco's account.'

I slapped him on the shoulder and watched his slim body negotiate the steps in a few quick bursts of energy. His suitcases had disappeared, and I was standing alone wondering whether I had seen a vision, or Rodi Zucco—doctor.

I sat down in the foyer and ordered myself a drink, but before I had a chance to sip it Rodi was bounding down the stairs, ordering himself a gin and vermouth, and sitting down at my side—all in one action.

'Arriba Espafia! Viva Franco!' he said solemnly, as he gulped down my drink. 'Have another? At thirty-eight I'm remarkably fit, aren't I? The Carthaginians have taught me to drink sour milk. You ought to try it in this climate. But here I am . : .' he laughed loudly, 'me—a third-degree doctor—prescribing to you!'

I noticed that despite all the gaiety and devil-may-care look that Rodi had in his appearance and conversation, he was bitter and sad. He was wearing his middle-youth well enough,

women, or children. I read a Catholic newspaper which said that their simple code of honour teaches that it is right to kill prisoners, and even wounded Reds in the hospitals. Nice allies for that "Christian gentleman" Franco. But if I ever find that sne has been killed as a prisoner, I'll tear the guts out of the first Moor, Francoist, Italian, or Falangist, I can get hold of! I swear it.'

'Another gin and vermouth,' I said loudly, trying to drown his remarks. 'Careful,' I warned. 'That sort of talk won't help you to find her.'

'What will?' he asked despondently. 'Do you think, even if she is alive, she would like to see me? Technically speaking, I was against her. Only technically, of course, but there's the other difficulty. Franco has been busy imprisoning the important people, professionals, and such like. Can I go round from prison to prison? So what the hell have I got to be careful of? Blast them all! Blast the Reds and the Whites and their shirts and berets! I want to find Rosalinda!'

The poor fellow had worked himself up into a state of nervous exhaustion. All his hidden anguish came out of him.

'They are like children,' he said suddenly, 'these Moors. Like cruel children who enjoy fighting. That's all there is' to it. They are told the Reds, after they have burnt down the. Christian churches, will burn their mosques. It's all a farce. They go out shouting "Arriba Espaiia!" and then in the Kasba and the Riff they hate the white man—Fascist and Red. It's all a game to them, a game that many don't come back from, but they enjoy it. They come proudly to me and show me their wounds, and then go off and die. If they are not too badly hurt, they cure themselves with ,their medicines and hoary skill.'

'That sounds pretty interesting,' I said, trying to get him away from the subject of Rosalinda.

'She'd understand,' he said, speaking of her as if he was certain that she was dead. 'I bet she's had a few of them to look after. The Moors were terrified of falling into the Reds' hands, you know, Sava. Their officers saw to that. I'm sick of all the atrocity stories, and I'm sick of the sights I saw after the Moors had passed through a village. What's the use? **When** a priest

told them that they ought to love the Reds even if they fought them, the Moors wrote to the colonel of their regiment to say that the priest was a Red himself to suggest such a thing as loving their enemies. I've seen priests confessing men, and then letting them be shot—ordinary prisoners of war. I must be going mad. The whole world has lost any decency.

'Perhaps now you know why I wanted to be a gentleman of leisure? I could have dived, into museums and read books. But I thought of Rosalinda all the time. I hated her for making me love her so much; for my suffering. But it was love. *Amor,* men get that way; sensible, cynical, cold-blooded bastards like me. So I joined the first military unit I could. Thought Franco would march into Madrid in a week, and I could search her out—but it's taken him three years. Those Reds aren't cowards, as Queipo de Llano says when he gets drunk and yells down the radio. There's a man for you! Pretends to be a gentleman, and talks like a dustman. A dustman, did I say? He's a proper swind.

'Well, I'm going mad. Mad. That's it, slowly mad. I might become a Mahommedan, anything to get away from a "sane world". *Homme moyen sensuel,* that's me. And now I hear they are sending me to Madrid with my contingent of Moors. They are going to use them for the triumphal procession of the Christian gentleman, Franco. They're in camp polishing up their buttons, and I've escaped for a couple of days. Can't stand the stench of camels, Carthaginians, kus-kus, and Habafia rum. I'll stop speaking in a moment, and then you can go. What did you say you were doing? Going somewhere?'

'Cruising'" I said. 'Bored with it. So I skipped the ship at Casablanca and came on here by road.'

'Then you're free?'

'Six more weeks of freedom.

'Then you come with me! Then you will—ha-ha!'

'Then I will—what?'

'Come with me to Madrid! You're the very man to nose^out a girl, so to speak. You take the high road and I'll take the low. As an Englishman and a Catholic, you can easily get up there for the parade. I'll describe the girl to you. You help me—will you?'

'Wait a moment! Wait!' I complained. Then I reflected. 'You want me to, and I'd like to. That settles it. You say when, and I'll have my bags packed ready to start.'

'I'll take you with me, Sava,' said Rodi, overjoyed. He pressed my hands warmly. In an instant he was despondent again. 'Don't know how you get there. But wait.' He thought aloud. 'I'll go along to the commandant, a lazy Spaniard, and I'll tell him you are a distinguished London doctor. You are a Harley Street man, aren't you?'

I nodded my head.

'Very well, it's easy. I'll say you want to be present at the celebrations, and you're a friend of mine, and all that. We might get you on to the steamer with the Moors. How would you like that? Can you stand kus-kus and horse-stench?' •

'I expect so,' I said. 'Had plenty of it when young. But what interests me most is their medicine. You'll have to take me around and show me their therapeutics.'

'Like hell I will,' Rodi said. 'That's fine! I feel a million times better now. I'll show you anything you like, and you'll help me to find Rosalinda?'

I said I would, although I did not know of what use I would be with the little knowledge of the Spanish language I had.

'That's all right,' he said. 'By the time we arrive in Madrid, every one of Franco's army will be speaking Italian. In the restaurants they'll understand English and French—and you might find a ballet dancer or two who speaks Russian.'

'Good joke,' I said. 'Tell me, were there many Russians fighting on the Government's side?'

'Not many. A few engineers and tank-drivers and airmen, but no infantry, although someone was always finding snow on the Internationals' boots when they were dead. It's a standing joke here, but they teach us to take their propaganda undiluted.'

I didn't see much of Rodi that afternoon. He insisted on returning to the camp to speak to the commandant about me, and that evening I found a message for me at the hotel inviting me over to the camp to have dinner with the commandant, his officers, and Rodi. I decided to accept this hospitality, and was driven by the hotel car some miles from Tangier to the camp.

The settlement was not a camp in the accepted sense of the word. There were no tents. The Moors occupied a whole village to themselves, and the commandant's quarters was a large white house with gay sunblinds. It looked like a small hotel, and when I entered, I recognized civilized comforts, for Rodi was standing near a small bar drinking. Near him stood a tall officer wearing the Franco uniform.

-As I approached, the officer flapped his arm, and then shook me by the hand.

'He doesn't speak Spanish,' said Rodi to the commandant. 'Italian or English.' He left out my other linguistic capabilities tactfully.

The officer decided to speak in Italian, which he did very fluently. It was only much later in the evening that I realized that he was an Italian, and it appears that he was not the commandant, but a senior staff officer. The commandant had been taken ill with a fever, and the rumour had spread amongst the Moors that it was leprosy. Only a threat from the officers to shoot one man in every ten prevented a riot.

The staff officer was a typical man of his type, quite unenthlisiastic about the war, but occasionally saying things like 'we must smash the Reds—Russia is behind them', so that his political reliability could not be doubted. He readily assented to Rodi's suggestion, and said that I could count on him-for some useful introductions in Madrid.

'Not a chance to show you round now,' said Rodi as I was leaving. 'But the Carthaginians are very angry about the commandant. They fear leprosy more than death, although it doesn't do half the damage of syphilis. You know, I haven't come across an untainted Moor. The bacillus is in the blood, and the few of them that escape it all get it by the time they are thirteen. But leprosy sends them into a dreadful funk. It's the isolation. That's what scares them. They have to be parted from their comrades and their families, but with syphilis and tuberculosis they go around procreating children, fighting, and generally having a good time. I daren't approach them myself. Wait till we get on the boat, and then you'll be able to take a good look at them and argue some medicine with their native doctors.

You'll find them as tricky as Jesuits. They are mostly priests, anyway.'

Later on, when Rodi and I were returning to the hotel, he said: 'I'm dreadfully afraid of what might have happened to Rosalinda. She's got so much spirit, and she's so proud, and at such a time—if she's escaped prison—it's hard for a woman to live except by her wits and her body.'

When he said that he burst into tears, a sort of dry crying that comes when the heart is too full.

I knew that it would be stupid of me to offer any hollow encouragement.

'Hope,' I said to him. 'Hope. That's the stupidest thing I can say to you. But we'll find your Rosalinda.'

'She is dead,' said Rodi. 'I know she is dead.'

We did not allude to Rosalinda again during the whole journey to Madrid. We sailed from Ceuta .to Algebras, and thence by, train and car made our way to Madrid. But the short journey from Ceuta across the Straits of Gibraltar was interesting, not only because we were escorted by an Italian warship, but because I was able to see a little Moorish medicine at first hand.

|todi had made good friends with his 'Carthaginians', but he could not shake the faith of those happy warriors in some of their crude methods of healing. I use the word 'crude' advisedly, because what astonished me most about these methods was their modernity! The crudity of their methods lay in their performance rather than in the conception of the cure.

It is only necessary to look up any book on the history of medicine to realize what great contributions the Saracens and the Moors made towards that science. Even in the days of the Crusaders their hygiene, sewerage systems, and medicine were far in advance of those of the Christians, and as one Moor remarked to me when I asked him how often he washed (I noticed him washing about three times within a few hours): 'As often as I can. Your Excellency will remember that when our ancestors left Cordova, it was the Christian archbishop of the place who closed up the two hundred and seventy baths they had built there!'

He was right. Dirt and piety went together with the early Christian Fathers, and the various plagues that swept over Europe for over a thousand years may be attributed to the bad hygienic habits of the people. I suppose the same cult of body-fear, that obsessed the Church must have contributed to the closing of the beautiful mosaic baths at Cordova. And now the irony of history was having its full revenge' It was we, Christians, who were endeavouring to bring better and more advanced methods to the descendants of the great Saracen doctors. The humour, however, of merely improving on methods they had discovered did not escape me.

For instance, homoeopathy—the curing of a disease by drugs that in healthy persons would produce its symptoms—was acknowledged by the Moors many, many centuries ago. As a matter of fact, we have a saying in the language that the best way to be cured of a dog bite is to take a hair of the dog that bit you and apply it to the wound.

In the realm of surgery the Saracens, and their kinsmen the Moors, made some astonishing discoveries. They studied anatomy so carefully that they were able to effect amputations with a very small mortality rate. They understood the artery system and were able to practise a very advanced form of orthopaedics, setting bones, extracting splinters, and so forth. Anaesthetics, too, were not unknown to them. They used drugs like opium which had been imported from China, and hashish, and certain derivatives of salts. The application of leeches for blood-poisoning was also their discovery. Moreover, they understood the benefits that could be derived from shock in curing nervous diseases. What electric treatment can do to-day, they were able to effect by more gruesome means perhaps, but none the less efficacious. A paralysed person was frequently brought to the place of execution, and his stricken limb pressed against the body of one newly hanged or decapitated. This cure was especially successful with women.

They understood, moreover, the advantages and dangers of the bedside manner, these ancient medicos, being careful not to give too much sympathy to the self-pitying, and a great deal to those that dealt harshly with themselves. Wealthy sultans and

sheiks who were concerned for their lovely houris were often surprised when their court physician prescribed a new building to house their dearly belovfeds, and instead of giving medicines and sweet waters he prescribed that the walls of the new palace should be painted a soft sky-blue, and that legends, the most soothing from the Koran, should be written on the walls, telling the maiden that Allah watches over her, and that although the probability of her having a soul is in doubt, she rhay earn paradise by serving her lord faithfully. Such cures are not unknown to-day, and overwrought society ladies are frequently advised to lie in rooms daubed in restful colours, and stare at inscriptions that tell them 'Have no fear!' 'Relax', 'Life is beautiful', 'Your husband is faithful', so that, fortified by these illusions, they get better.

And who originated the apple a day theory? The Moors! When they came to Spain they discovered this delectable fruit, which did not grow in their hot gardens. They claimed that the apple induced sleep. There is something in this theory, and I have known doctors who suggest that their patients should eat an apple before going to bed. They claim that as the apple takes some hard digesting, the blood flows from the brain into the stomach, and so induces sleep.

I was talking to a Moor aboard ship, and made a remark to the effect that very few of his compatriots seemed to be run down or nervous. I said something about the hurry and bustle of our civilization, and the number of machines we employ to do our labour as being the cause of so much neurasthenia among Europeans. But his answer was more illuminating.

'Shall I tell you, seftor, why it is that we are calm in our thoughts, more active in our habits? We contemplate animals. We look on big animals. Take the camel, for instance. Who can look upon this noble beast and not be calm? Who will not feel something of his pride and dignity? Let the European look upon lions and tigers, on elephants, and the larger and more beautiful beasts, and you will find that he will grow like us. The soul of the elephant and camel, their strength, and their finer qualities, are caught up within us. That is the best remedy for nerves, senor.'

Since then, I have often been tempted to send my patients to the Zoo rather than prescribe some complex cure. Behold the contemplative camel, I want to say to them, and feel better! But sending them to the lions is not the same as sending them to the dogs. On this point, my Moorish friend was adamant.

'A nervous man should not look on chickens, or he will become like them. The Italians use a symbol of an eagle to make them brave,' he added with a grin, 'and you English have the lion, a fine beast. The French have a cock. Nations understand these things, but not individuals.' '

There is a lot in what he said, and examples multiply and prove the veracity of his statement when we think how often doctors prescribe rest cures in the country with horses and sheep and lowing herds. Others get their quietude from fishing, or by torturing themselves with field sports as lugubrious as golf.

'And, senor,' said the Moor, getting more friendly when he saw that I was taking him seriously, ' I am going to be a doctor. But I shall know that it was my people who first thought of grafting new skin to places where it had been torn off, or mending wounds by the same method: Moorish fishermen first discovered the properties of the "Yellow Blood" which you call iodine. Your fashionable ladies starve on orange juice, but we were using this treatment centuries ago to reduce fat people, although, as you know, we like our women to have something on their bodies besides exquisitely painted skins. And take lemon juice—I have heard a doctor, a white man, say that it causes acidity, but it doesn't. It is sugar which causes that. And I have astonished the white doctor when I have shown him tribes in the desert who eat dates and unpolished rice and drink milk, but touch no meat. They are strong and have good tempers, these Kabils. Not that I believe in eating no meat myself, for why were we given teeth like the lion and the leopard, and not like rabbits and hares, if we were, not meant to use them?'

I was agreeably surprised at this young Moor's medical erudition, and Rodi told me later that he was his orderly, a lively youngster who wanted to join a medical school, but was unable to, because he was poor.

'And garlic.' exclaimed my teacher, 'that's another thing you don't understand. This scares away the germs as well as beautiful ladies, but there would be a lot more disease amongst us if we did not use it. Oil of olives, too, gives us better digestion, for in our climate the fat of animals goes bad very quickly.'

I don't remember for how long we discussed the various merits and demerits of our different medical systems, but we both came away with a firm conviction that there was much right and wrong, much muddle and confusion, and lack of simple understanding, in our two systems. You know, I,' for instance, have tried the zoo cure, and found it very successful. I've tried it on myself, and on my nearest friends before venturing it out on strangers, and the Moor promised me that he would not scorn the European's antiseptics, even though many of them were not for internal consumption like garlic!

Rodi told me afterwards, when we began discussing my conversation with the Moor, that the young man had been wounded more than five times, but had refused to be healed by our methods. How he had survived was a miracle in Rodi's view, but he thought that these people have great prophylactic qualities inside of them, and their systems are not weakened by the constant use of antiseptics. It seemed to indicate that a wound left open to heal of its own accord was better than one bandaged up and set in plaster. I have found this so myself in practice, without studying Saracen lore, but there is no denying that the Moors knew many medical truths and tricks before us. If you ask them where they got it from, they will say the Egyptians. I happened to ask an Egyptian the same question, and he said the Mo&rs—knowledge seems to run round in a circle.

'You know what we will do,' said Rodi, just before we got off the ship. 'We will go to Rosalinda's address near the Paseo del Prado and make inquiries.'

And that was the very first thing that we did when we reached Madrid. We found the city very quiet and deserted. The shell-holes in the middle of the streets had been filled up, but the ruins of houses and hotels still presented a war-like atmosphere. Happily, it was evening, and the city's scars were softened by the half-light, but as you approached in a car, the headlights

suddenly lit up a torn-up tree, or a house which had been split in two by a high-explosive bomb.

'And people lived here,' said Rodi to me in the taxi that was taking us to the hotel, 'with all this horror. What has happened to their nerves?'

'Not as bad as you think.' I answered, knowing that he had Rosalinda in mind. 'One gets used to noise and bombing in time. The first few weeks are nerve-straining, but after that people settle down. The only danger is that they get *used* to it. Then they grow careless, and that's exactly what the enemy wants.'

I was determined to chatter to keep his mind off the girl.

'What's the taxi-driver singing?' I asked him. Rodi bent forward and listened.

'An anti-Fascist song.' He whistled his surprise. 'It's a song to the Virgin of Pilar, asking her to be the captain of the anarchist forces.'

'A fine howdedo! An anarchist praying to the Virgin!' I exclaimed.

'Oh, the Spaniards are a queer people. It's an old song and they use it in every generation like a wedding gown. They prayed to the Virgin of Pilar during the Napoleonic wars, and now they've substituted the word Feixista for the word Franchesa. It goes:

La Virgen del Pilar dice
Que no quiere ser feixista
Es el capitan general
Del partido anarchist.

'Like it?'

But now we had arrived at the hotel, and Rodi got out.

'Viva Franco!' said the taxi-driver, holding out his hand. His loyalty sounded more like a curse than a salute.

'Wait for us,' said Rodi to the man. 'We are getting rid of our trunks and then you can drive us farther. Do you know...' Rodi gave the name of the street.

'Yes, I know it, senor,' said the driver. 'But it's forbidden to drive into that district without a permit; Police order.'

'What's the matter with it?' Rodi asked.

'It hasn't been cleared up yet.'

The 'cleared up' sounded ominous, but what the taxi-driver meant' was that the posters of the *ancien regime* of the Republic had not been taken down. The old G.N.T. and U.H.P. letters (standing for the United Brothers of the Proletariat) had not been torn off the hoardings, and the walls, smeared with slogans and encouragements, had not yet been whitewashed. The Franco police, fearing contamination, had cordoned off this area, and were working busily, restoring it on good Fascist lines.

'Many arrested?' Rodi asked, coming nearer to the taxi-driver suspiciously.

'There is law and order here, just as the papers say, senor.'

It was obvious that the man was not going to speak out in the open, and besides, Rodi was dressed in the uniform of the Moroccan army, like a Franco officer.

'I want to question the man,' Rodi said to me, getting into the front seat with the driver. 'You listen, and try to make out what he says. It might be very useful to us in finding Rosalinda.'

When we got under way, Rodi said: 'You don't have to be afraid of me. Drive us as far as you can to the Paseo del Prado. I'm looking for a friend who lives in the district.'

'Friend?' the driver asked. 'Doesn't the senor realize that the district is the former Red district, and that the police are making arrests day and night there?'

This did not comfort Rodi in the least. He nodded his head.

'I know,' he said. 'But drive us as far as you can. We can walk the rest of the way.'

'Have you a permit, senor?'

'-No,' said Rodi, 'but I've got this uniform.'

'Ah-ha!' said the driver. 'Like that?'

I wondered whether he understood Rodi. I was surprised that he had thrown caution to the winds so quickly.

'I'm an Italian doctor,' Rodi said frankly, 'and I had a friend who lived in the district. I want to find her, that's all. She is a doctor.'

'Oh,' said the man. He was disappointed. He undoubtedly took Rodi for a conspirator using a Franco uniform to enter the prohibited area, to rescue someone, a love, perhaps, or a dear

friend. 'I am forbidden to drive near the district, so perhaps you will get out and walk there.'

'I say, no need to be so upset just because I've got an Italian uniform on,' said Rodi. 'My friend is in danger. I just heard you singing the " Virgen del Pilar"—and that doesn't mean that you've been a Francoifct all your life. I'm a doctor, and I have no political opinions, so you've got nothing to fear from me. How do I get into the district without being seen by the police?'

The man smiled. He apparently believed Rodi's earnest pleas.

'That's easy,' he said, 'but it's dangerous.'

'I don't care. You and my friend will stay putside and wait for me,' said Rodi, trying to drown a protest from me. 'No, you can't come with me, Sava. It's dangerous, and I take the consequences whatever happens.'

I demurred. 'I came with you to Madrid to help you find Rosalinda, and it's no help to you to sit in a car. What I suggest is that you *get* a "police permit and go and inquire for her openly.'

'But how? On what pretext?'

'Suggest that you married her,' I said. The brainwave pleased me, and I began to elaborate it. 'That's a good excuse. You are looking for your wife.'

'And what is she doing in the Red district?' asked Rodi hopelessly.

'She was detained by the Reds during the war. You were separated from her, and now you think she might be in the district, as you had received a letter from her saying that she was well and compelled to work as a nurse or something for the Reds.'

Rodi apparently thought this idea worth trying. 'I haven't a better one,' he confessed, 'and it might work.'

So when the taxi-cab had driven up to the barrier which was placed across the street, and a Fascist Civil Guard emerged in front of our headlights, Rodi jumped up, made the Fascist salute, and began telling his story.

I heard him use the word 'Rojos' a few times. He gesticulated and swore, and finally showed the man his military pass.,

'Can my friend com' too?' he asked. The guard looked me over, and when he found out that I was a doctor as well, and

that my sympathies were with General Franco, he issued a small cardboard pass which he said we would have to deliver back to him in three hours' time. We seized the pass; gave a good sum of money to our taxi-driver, and told him that we would use him on the morrow if we did not find the 'doctor's wife'. Then we plunged into the gloomy, forbidden street.

'Number forty-seven.' said Rodi to me in a whisper. 'There's not a damn light anywhere. I don't expect we'll find anyone in this street anyway. Let's try a house and see. Perhaps they know how the houses are numbered.'

We moved from the middle of the road on to the pavement, and groped our way to the first door we could feel. It was a shop door.

'No use,' said Rodi. 'Try farther down. By the way, be careful. The curfew has been imposed here, and the police have orders to shoot. So shout loudly "Amigo!" if challenged, and stand still.'

We groped along the side of the house, knowing that an unwary step might land us in a shell-pit.

'Should have waited till the morning,' I said. 'Shall I strike a match?'

'Better not,' Rodi advised. 'This district is still in a turmoil, and there are a few men prepared to sell their lives dearly who wouldn't hesitate at shooting at me. Let's knock here.'

We couldn't find a knocker, so Rodi began to kick at the door, which creaked and crackled as he banged the dry wood. All of a sudden, the door collapsed, and to our astonishment, we noticed that we were standing in front of a ruin. There was no corridor, no house in front of us, only the dark blue sky. We had been knocking at a wall which was still standing with the door intact.

I looked at Rodi. He was pulling out a box of matches.

'The number,' he said excitedly, 'let's see the number.'

He struck a match. We could not see the number clearly, as it was covered with dust, but Rodi's hand swept it away. Forty-seven,

'And that's our last evidence,' he said bitterly. 'It might also be her grave.'

I did not say anything, but put my arm on his shoulder.

'Let's try another house,' I said, pulling him away. 'On the other side of the road, perhaps.'

He let me lead him across the street like a blind man, but he was striking matches every few steps now, forgetting his words of caution.

'It's just like life.' he said quietly. 'To knock at a door and find nothing behind it. Knock and it shall be answered—ask and nothing shall be given unto you.'

I tried another door. This time I pulled an old piece of string which seemed to invite tugging, and I heard a bell chime with clock-like softness in the house, and then an old woman opened the door.

'Come in, come in.' she said immediately. 'Jaime, the police want you!' she shouted. 'Come in, gentlemen, he will be down soon. He is washing. Excuse me. I will go into my room. You may speak to the boy in the parlour, if you like.'

'Don't be fooled, Sava.' Rodi said. 'She's mad. Don't you see her eyes? She thinks we are the police. I expect they came to take her Jaime away some days ago.'

The woman opened a small door on the right, and ushered us in.

'This way, this way, gentlemen.' she kept on repeating. 'He won't be long. He hasn't been out for some days. Ill with his chest. When the winds blow from the Sierras it gets very cold in Madrid, don't you think? And he always goes out without wearing a coat at night. But he'll be here soon.'

Rodi was not listening to' her gabble. He took her gently by the hand and said in Spanish:

'Tell me, old mother, have you heard of Rosalinda Gallandos? She used to live across the road. She was a doctor. Do you know what happened to her?'

'No.' said the old lady. 'I do not. But Jaime will know. He knows everybody. Everybody likes him. He is such a good boy, and works hard in the factory. You will see, you will see. Jaime! Jaime!'

Jaime, of course, did not come, but the old woman seated herself on an old horsehair divan, and asked us politely to sit down.

'I have nothing to offer you, gentlemen,' she said regretfully, but this is war. The Government promise us that when we beat Franco we shall be rich again. I used to like having guests in my house. We liked to entertain our neighbours. Rosalinda Gallandos . . . what a pretty name! A doctor? A lady doctor? It's strange what women get up to nowadays. Jaime's fianc6e—a beautiful girl—came with a rifle one day. She was in the Militia—unchaperoned. I don't know. I don't understand.'

'There's not much point in our wasting time here with her,' said Rodi. 'It's a pity. But we've got to find Rosalinda.'

When the woman heard the name again, she started.

'She was a beautiful girl, a doctor, you say, companeros? Yes, yes, I remember. She isn't here. She may be dead. She may be anywhere. Nobody knows. It was dangerous for her. Everyone knew her. But Jaime will come down soon. He will tell you.'

We left the house, and the old woman, but before doing so, I wanted to give her some money.

'Oh, no,' she said proudly. 'It's a pleasure. I'm so glad you called. Before the war I used to have neighbours coming round, but now no-one calls. You must come again when Jaime comes down. He is ill, very ill, but they took him away. They took him away with rifles. They come every day to the street and take men away. But when Jaime comes, he will tell you about Teresa—he will tell you about all the girls.'

She laughed softly to herself as she closed the door after us.

'It's no good,' said Rodi. 'We had better go back to the hotel and come again in the morning. It will be more dangerous then, but we shall be able to see our way.'

We returned to the barrier and handed back our cardboard pass. 'Viva Franco!' we said.

The next morning, very early, Rodi woke me up.

'I am going,' he said. 'You'd better stay. It might be less suspicious, as I'm in uniform.'

'Not at all,' I said. 'I can pretend I'm ar German. I speak the language. I've heard that a number of them are going to be present at the Victory March to-morrow. It's easy. Besides, I've been thinking. You know you said that you had lost your wife?

That was dangerous. If they look on your passport, they will know that you are single. It's better if I said she was my sister. They don't put down sisters on a passport. What do you say?'

Our preparations had the air of unreality, but at that moment, I only wanted to help Rodi as much as I could. They couldn't punish me for a lie, although I knew that if Rosalinda was on the Fascist black list, then my association with her as brother and sister wouldn't do me much good.

'What about the prisons?' I suggested gloomily.

'We could try those, but it would be doubtful. They are shooting the Government supporters by the hundred—but how can we inquire?'

'The taxi-driver!' Rodi suddenly exclaimed. 'He'll be here soon. We've got an ally. Perhaps he'll know.

Both of us went back to bed to hatch further plots between the sheets, but I was restless and got dressed and went to Rodi's room.

'Do you remember what she looks like?' I asked.

'Remember?' he exclaimed. 'Every bit of her, I remember. I've got her picture somewhere, but what good will that do?'

'We might comb the city with the taxi-driver. He should know all the places people like her would go to and probably some of the hide-outs. You give me the picture, and I'll try to memorize her face. It might be helpful if she is disguised. I'm pretty good at spotting such things as eyes and noses. Plastic surgery is a training for a detective.'

At ten o'clock the taxi arrived.

'Back to the district,' we said.

The driver nodded his head. 'No luck?' he a^ked.

'None,' said Rodi. 'Will you help us?'

'Certainly,' he said. 'What is her name?'

'Rosalinda Gallandos. A doctor. Know of her?'

'Yes,' he said. 'She's proscribed. I remember because she was attached to the International Brigade as a doctor—the Italian and German Battalions. They are looking for her, so you'd better go carefully.'

We thanked him for the warning, and once we reached the barricades we told the guard the same story as we had yesterday.

It was the same guard, and the 'sister' story we left for another district. He let us through, but we had barely gone a few steps when Rodi stopped short.

.'Good Heavens!' he cried. 'Rosalinda!'

'Quiet!' I said, nudging him with my elbow. 'The guard is watching us. Where?'

He pointed to a pillar on which an old and tattered poster was displayed. It was a relic, one of the many in the Fifth District which had been cordoned off. The dustman and the Fascist bill-stickers had not had time to tear them all down.

'It's her face,' Rodi said solemnly.

I looked at the pretty girl depicted on the recruiting poster. She was in blue overalls, and was holding a rifle aloft, and above her was a stirring inscription: 'Les Milicies us nesessiten!' Militiamen are Needed! Her face was full of zeal, and though her body was slim, with round, small breasts, the appeal was military—although the eye beheld the woman before it noticed the inscription.

'What's she doing on the poster?' he asked me.

'I don't know,' I said. 'But one thing is obvious, and that is if you stand in front of it much longer, we'll be arrested. Let's go.'

We moved off.

'It proves nothing,' said Rodi. 'But you can understand why she is proscribed. Why couldn't they have found another girl to pose for that poster? She's a doctor, not an artist's model.'

'She was a good recruiting sergeant, Rodi,' I said. 'As Franco learnt to his cost. It's women like her that gave men courage to stand up against terrible odds. She is giving you courage to go out and find her—despite the risk you are running. That's the real kind of medicine that will save men's bodies and souls, Captain Doctor. So what do we do now?'

We returned to the taxi after a short walk round the district, as we did not want to arouse the suspicions of the guard. We passed many armed police, and saw them arresting people, but Rodi's uniform earned him many salutes. Now and again we were tempted to enter a house and ask for Rosalinda, but the danger was too great. There were spies and provocateurs everywhere, and to ask for the 'girl on the poster' would have been

madness. Rodi, however, could not resist coming up to a Civil Guardist, and saying: 'Have you got that bitch on the poster there?'

The policeman smiled. 'That's what everyone is asking, Senor Capitan. She seems to appeal to the men, this Red, but if you ask me, I think she came out of someone's imagination, although we've got orders to arrest her if we find her. Hundreds that look a little like her have been arrested and compared, but they've all been released, either the nose is too long, or the breasts too large,' he said with a coarse laugh. He then saluted and went on his business again.

'Then it's definite that she isn't in prison,' said Rodi. 'Thank G'd for that!'

We gave this information to the taxi-man, Who seemed very pleased.

'She was a good girl. I've seen her under fire in the trenches in Madrid, shooting morphia into the dying, and at times running off to get medicines and water for the less badly wounded. I've seen her with a rifle in her hand, potting away at the Fascist snipers. We called her the Maid of Saragossa. We called her a saint. When Casado and the Junta surrendered, she went into the streets and fought against them. The rest of us disbanded, burned our party-cards, and waited for Franco, but she went underground. We all know about that. She said she would never run away, and I believe her. But that's all I know. She may be anywhere. I've heard rumours, but they are ugly and I won't repeat them.'

Naturally enough, Rodi made the taxi-man recite every rumour he had heard, but this did not bring us any closer to finding her.

'Some say she died in the street fighting a fortnight ago; others say she escaped to France, and the latest one is that—I'm sorry to say this, captain—she's working in the brothels. It's the safest place.'

Rodi blanched, and I would cheerfully have kicked the taxi-man's teeth out, but the poor fellow was very distressed when he saw the effect of his words on Rodi.

'Sorry, captain, he said, 'but they are only rumours. You

had better forget Rosalinda. When the time comes, she will appear again.'

'When the time comes.' said Rodi ironically. 'What do I care about time, and all this tomfoolery. Women aren't meant to tike part in fighting and play at revolutionaries. You sav she might have gone into a brothel?'

'Or got killed,' the taxi-man repeated, thinking it was better to dissuade him from making a request to be taken round to all the brothels.

'Well, I'm trying the brothels. Every one of them, and if you won't drive me, then I'll go on foot. You'd better return to the hotel, Sava—you're tired and hungry.'

'They aren't open until the evening, senor,' said the taxi-driver. 'And besides, you must remember that you are putting her into great danger going around inquiring for her. Think of that.'

'Yes, I'm a fool,' Rodi admitted. 'I'll have to control myself better, Sava. We'll make a tour this evening.'

'The places will be very crowded this evening with Italians and Germans, senor,' said the taxi-driver, apparently intent on dissuading Rodi.

'Well, what of it? All the better, I shan't be noticed. We'll drop in and have a look round, and then go.'

We returned to the hotel for lunch and made the taxi-man promise to fetch us at seven.

Immediately after lunch Rodi went up to his room and I followed him.

'She's mad.' he kept on saying. 'People get like that in war. Why does she get herself into such a mess? She promised she'd be my wife. My God, if I find her with anyone," I shall kill her and myself. I shall kill all the bloody swine who came along for this preposterous war of liberation. And what the hell made her.' fight? I ask you, Sava—what makes a woman fight?'

'Ideology, I expect,' I answered. 'She seems a pretty spirited girl if she's the girl on the poster. Perhaps you'd better forget her, as the taxi-man said. I wonder why he's so insistent,' and why he seems to know so much about her? Why don't you forget her, Rodi?'

Rodi shook his head.

'I promised myself that I would find her and tell her what a fool she has been. Fancy choosing a losing side, too! Is that intelligent?'

'One side has to lose.' I said sententiously. ' And if she had been on the winning side, you might not have had a chance of being in Madrid in this uniform. And she might have been too busy and important to bother about things like love and marriage. Women stiffen under men's tasks, you know. Love doesn't become the only career—it becomes merely an adjunct, and a pretty cynical one at that. You'd better forget tier. And have you thought of another thing? How are you going to get her out of here to marry her? The sister act won't do that for her.'

'I've thought of that,' said Rodi. 'I'm going to South America. A lot of her friends are going there, so she'll be able to keep in touch with them. I'll have a better career in Buenos Aires or Rio than I'm having in the Army.'

'Money?'

' Enough to see us both across the ocean, away from Reds and Whites—the world is going mad, and I see no reason why I should go mad with it, Sava. It's purely a selfish philosophy, if you like, but the fact remains that I'm entirely selfish and want to run away.'

'What about her? She might not want to run away, as you call it?'

'What can she do here? She's in a bad position. I offer her love, and some sort of security. She's a woman, isn't she?'

'Yes,' I said. 'A fighting woman. Their psychology is different. Still, you'd better have your bird in hand before you start importing her to South America. What's our plan of action?'

Our plan of action, according to Rodi, was to cover as many 'hot-spots' as possible. We would go in and order a few drinks, and watch for Rosalinda.

'And if she doesn't come, you'll be happy and unhappy,' I said. 'Don't you understand, she has to do this sort of thing? It's the safest, the taxi-man says.'

'Then you think we shall find her?' Rodi asked joyfully. 'Really, I don't care where she is or what she is doing, as long as we find her.'

'Sensible at' last. It's not a question of love, vanity, honour, purity, and all that bunk. She's fighting for her life, and I've known quite a number of decent and pure women who have had to fight for their lives in a brothel. Some did not want to sell their souls to their rich lovers and ran away; others hated dependence on the slender resources of their parents; some had children to support, and could not do it on a parlourmaid's salary? Understand?'

'Of course.'

'Good. Now let's get a little rest before we go on our exploration. Remember, you've got to look damn merry, and the more officers you meet, the better. Be as jovial as you can, and drink like a fish. I'll remain dead sober, and watch out for her. It will be safer for you not to recognize her, and to go leaping and bounding to her. And keep your head.'

Rodi listened to me with great attention, and then when he saw that he was going to be sentimental, he said loudly: 'Do you know why the Christians shut down the two hundred and seventy baths in Cordova?'

I didn't.

'The Moors took all the soap away with them,' he said trying to make a joke. He laughed loudly at his bad attempt at humour, and then slapped me on the back.

'But what if I don't find her?' he'said. 'What do I do then?'

'You forget,' I said. 'Or you try to. Forgetting is an art, like remembering. You shut up your heart and forget, and perhaps go,to South America, or to the devil, but you forget.'

The Victory March was scheduled for the morrow, and when Rodi and I drove down the streets, we met droves of Italian 'volunteers'. Arms were springing up in the air all over the place.

'We are leading the march,' said Rodi. 'The descendants of Garibaldi, only you will notice no-one says anything about Garibaldi. He fought for liberty.'

'My, my!' I said. 'You're getting to be a regular Liberal. Where did you get these fancy ideas?'

'They come to me suddenly.'

'Senor.' said the driver. 'Where do we go first—to the high-class or the low-class places?'

' We'd better start from the bottom and work up.'

'Very well.' said the taxi-driver. 'We'll go to the Parallelo. That is the poorest yet gayest street in all Madrid. They say it looks a little like Montmartre, only poorer, much poorer, sefiors. They are good people here, and they might be able to help you. But be careful. There are spies everywhere, and do not talk with strangers. Ask for the people I tell you and if they know the whereabouts of Rosalinda, they will let you know.'

It was a wide, long street, this Parallelo, and when we arrived at the coftier we realized what the driver had meant by poverty. There was nothing picturesque about this poverty unless, perhaps, you looked at it from a great distance. The Civil War had left it untouched. It had grown no poorer and no richer. Supplies of coffee had mysteriously made their appearance again, I was told, and-people were ordering their 'consumacidn obligatoria'—a cup of coffee, very weak—with a dash of some "spirit or other in it. You couldn't get drunk on that, and indeed, during our whole journey through the caf6s large and small, I did not see any drunkards except for a few Germans who had brought some harsh liquor with them, and harsh liquor it was, too. We were offered some of it, in deference, no doubt, to Rodi's uniform.

We did not stay long in any of them. A couple of cups of the 'consumaci6n obligatoria' and an inspection of faces, and it was enough for us. Now and again we watched the dirty black-boards that were shoved up in front of the mandoline and accordion orchestra, and read the names of Juanita or Ramona or Mercedes, and those ladies would come on to the stage and waggle their thighs about in a tango, or clatter with their wooden heels' and blow kisses to potential customers. Men stood up and whistled at them, or beat them across their backs with newspapers and made appointments. But we were bored by the ribald soldiers, for these cafts had been handed over to the conquerors. The Madrelinos stayed away.

But the face of the girl on the poster was not to be found. We went into back rooms and spoke to Pedro and Paul, the

proprietors and conspirators in the "underground movement', and the taxi-driver went with us as a proof of *bona fide,* but we could get nothing from them.

'She is gone,' they would say, sadly, 'but she will return.'

Their faith in the girl on the poster was almost religious.

'What makes you say that?' I asked.

'Rosalinda will return. She promised us.. One day we shall grow strong again. Our children will grow up, and we will teach them to hate Franco. And then when we are -ready— Rosalinda will return. But do not ask us any more, because we do not know.'

Sometimes Rodi would be goaded to madness by their very optimism.

'She might be dead,' he would challenge them. 'Then how will she return?'

And the more they protested that she was not dead, the more annoyed he grew.

'Stupid superstitions. They have to find a Virgin Mary in every generation. Now they've canonized her, these half-witted revolutionaries, and try to make me believe in miracles. But it's hopeless. I know it's hopeless. Let's go home.'

The taxi-man shrugged his shoulders.

'I told you so,' he seemed to say. 'What else did you expect?'

'No!' Rodi cried. 'I won't go home. Let's go on. Let's go to the better spots. Let's drink champagne and forget her.'

But once we arrived in the 'better spots' and ordered champagne, Rodi would not drink it. His eyes began wandering about. He looked at everyone. He inspected the girls carefully from a distance, and no-one, of course, noticed he was doing anything extraordinary. What were the girls there for except for inspection?

'But why does he inspect us from such a distance?' some of the girls must have thought. 'And whenever we approach, he turns his head away. And the other one. He is as big a fool as the *capitan doctor,,*'

We must have been to a good half-dozen of these places before Rodi spoke to me again.

'I'm getting bored,' he said languidly. 'Utterly bored. I think

I'll take one of these girls. There's one over there;—she's blond, thin, and talks nicely. I'll go and steal her away.'

I watched him get up in alarm. The girl he was referring to was sitting with a man already. It was hardly etiquette on Rodi's part, and would certainly provoke a quarrel. Everyone seemed to be watching Rodi at the moment, and the proprietor of the establishment hurried over and tried to bar his way,

'Sefior, would you like to see some pretty girls?' he said. 'This way, this way.'

Rodi looked at him contemptuously, and when I came up with the intention of making him see reason, he said: 'Will you tell this lizard that I want to be introduced to that blond?'

'She's engaged,' I said in a matter-of-fact way. 'And unless you want to *get* yourself into a row, you'd better beat a retreat.'

'I want to be introduced to the blond lady,' he insisted.

I looked at the girl, who had her back turned to us, and was obviously trying her best not to notice that Rodi was making a nuisance of himself.

'She is booked,' the proprietor protested. 'Please, major, understand that.'

He even gave Rodi a higher rank in his anxiety to prevent a fracas.

'Then ask the gentleman to disengage her. I will pay him a thousand pesetas,' said Rodi in a drunken voice.

Why the drunken voice? He had barely drunk anything, certainly not enough to get drunk on.

'Rodi,' I protested, 'stop fooling and come and sit down.

The man who was sitting with the girl rose unexpectedly. We all thought he would come up and demand an explanation.

'Rodi,' I begged, 'come on.'

But the man was already face to face with Rodi.

'Senor,' he said politely. 'I yield to the defender of my country. The lady is yours.' He bowed and retreated.

'The gesture of a true Spaniard,' the proprietor commented, bowing before the obliging gentleman.

Rodi beckoned to me, and I followed him to the blond lady's table.

'Sava.' he said, very quietly. 'You are good at plastic surgery; What did you say about being able to recognize eyes and noses? Look.'

I looked at the girl's face, but was not able to understand what Rodi meant. She was an ordinary-looking blonde, probably a Catalonian, with fine fair hair, and very attractive grey eyes. She was certainly good-looking.' Her body Was small, and her hands—but I could not see her hands, she was hiding them on her lap.

It was, of course, Rosalinda.

'Don't look like that,' she said, smiling very falsely. 'Pretend you don't know me, and come up to my room—number nine—in a few moments.'

'I'm bringing Sava,' Rodi said, introducing me with a nod of the head. 'He's a good friend.'

The girl smiled, a little more relaxed.

'Order some champagne. A lot. And have it sent up to the room. Your friend can come up too. He can take another room. Then we can all meet in my room.'

Rodi's face was very pale, and his hands were shaking, so I ordered the champagne for him and gave orders where it should be sent. I spoke in Italian, by the way, almost all the time, and was understood.

Rosalinda got up from the table, made a false caressing gesture over Rodi's face, and went out of the large salon. He followed her in a few minutes and then I whispered to the proprietor - that I would be pleased to have a room. The man smiled, and gave me a small key. It was the room next door to Rosalinda's.

When I knocked on her door, Rodi and she did their best to appear composed, but I could see rouge marks on Rodi's lips. Their hands were clutching each other's.

There was no need for any formal introductions. Rosalinda shook hands with me and went over to the mirror to straighten her hair.

'Horrible, isn't it?' she said to Rodi. 'But a good disguise.'

She was feminine enough to remark on her appearance before saying anything else, I noticed.

'A very good disguise,' said Rodi. 'But I knew it was you a

mile off. I didn't have to look for you in this place. *I felt* you were here when I came in. What are you doing here?'

'You can sed, can't you?' said Rosalinda. 'I'm not a dairy-maid. It was the only thing. The least suspicious. Who brought you?'

'No-one. We came here by taxi.'

'Thoma? Did he bring you?'

We looked at each other and did not understand.

'The taxi-man?'

'Why do you say that?' asked Rodi suspiciously.

'He is the only man who knows I am here. We have to cover ourselves in every way. The proprietor, by the way, is a friend. So was the man who let you sit down in his place. You understand now?'

A great smile of relief spread over Rodi's features.

'So you're not really . . .' He left the rest unsaid.

'Why not—really?' Rosalinda teased. 'I'd be anything, Rodi, if I had to be. But this is our hide-out. We get plenty of information from the Fascists who frequent this place. You are English, Mr. Sava?'

'No, Russian. But trustworthy,' I added, amused at the way I had put it.

'Good. You and Rodi will have to leave shortly. We are planning some trouble for the Fascists to-night. So as soon as the proprietor comes up, you will have to go. It will mean that our friends are in the cafe. Understand? I will see you to-morrow—perhaps.'

'Perhaps?' gasped Rodi. 'You're not going out on a mad conspiracy, are you? More righting? What's happened to you, Rosalinda?'

Rosalinda smiled, and then came and kissed him.

'Nothing. Only I have to help my people. That is all.'

'But I've come to take you away, darling.'

'Not yet, Rodi. To-morrow. You can come to-morrow and we can talk. But not to-night. To-night I have work to do.'

The warning taps came on the door.

'You must go,' she said. I moved towards the door, but Rodi stood still.

'I am coming with you.' he said. 'I'm not going to leave you, whatever happens. Please understand that.'

'Darling Rodi.' she said in Spanish, and then continued in Italian, for my benefit undoubtedly. 'You must go. To-morrow will be a day of explanations. To-morrow we can have a whole day to argue in. You can tell me what you've done these three years—the meaning of this uniform. You haven't been fighting for Franco, have you?'

'A doctor volunteer,' said Rodi, as if he was ashamed.

'On the same side as I was then.' Rosalinda said hurriedly. She was putting on a cloak.

'You're not going out?' Rodi asked in alarm.

'No questions, dearest, now. To-morrow. . . .

'Everything is to-morrow here.' Rodi protested.

'Yes.' said Rosalinda, mysteriously. 'We await to-morrow with great expectancy. I will tell you everything; everything, Rodi, but go now.'

'But I have some questions. . . .

'The answer is "yes" to all of them, Rodi. I haven't forgotten you, I love you. I will love you—to-morrow.'

'Will you come to South America with me?'

'I will tell you to-morrow.'

Rodi looked at me helplessly.

'You see, Sava, the girl on the poster is still the same. Won't you tell us at least what you're up to?'

'I can't. You must go downstairs and mingle with the guests. If anyone asks questions about me, you don't know me. That's all. To-morrow everything will be explained. Give me a kiss now, and go.',

'But can't I help you?' Rodi begged. 'I'll do anything. Is it dangerous?'

'I can't answer. Go, Rodi. I beg you, go down'' She appealed to me. 'Mr. Sava, please make him understand. I have no time. I have important things to do. If he tortures himself wondering whether I love him, if he asks many questions, say " yes" to all of them. Do this for me.'

She was half-joking, I knew, as she pushed Rodi away from her. The insistent tap came on the door again, Rodi away

luctantly released Rosalinda's hand and turned to me. 'Come, Sava, we must go. The girl on the poster says so.'

Rosalinda put her arms round him for one brief moment and then ran out of the room.

That was the last Rodi or I saw of her. The next day the Civil Guard arrested her and her confederates. She had been caught trying to blow up the grand-stand from which Franco and his foreign interventionist friends were going to watch the Victory Parade, and she was sentenced to death and shot almost immediately.

It was Thoma, the taxi-man, who came and told us what had happened.

'We tried to dissuade her,' he said, 'but she insisted. She said that this was going to be her last action for the republic before she left the country. And she left you a message, *seflor capitan.* She said—*to-morrow.* It was a message for you and for the world. She fought for to-morrow, and scorned the death of to-day. She was a brave girl and a fine comrade.'

'And I', said Rodi, 'am tired of to-morrow. I want something to-day; I am sick of knocking at doors that break down and show me the bare sky. I am going to South America.'

There was no comfort in telling Rodi that life was precisely like that. You knock at a door and it falls down and reveals the bare sky.

Y no hay remedio—'And there is no remedy.'

Chapter 10—London

CAVALCADE TO CALVARY

Do you remember the 1930's? If you don't or can't, the historian will. No gay epithet will go with them; no calling them the 'Naughty Thirties' or the 'Roaring Thirties', or something more Elizabethan, the 'Spacious Thirties'. But they were the climax of our civilization. They were the little days that grew to years, watered by tears, nurtured on optimism, hope, aspiration, high-minded and high-sounding phrases.

Do you remember the League of Nations? The Peace Ballot? The Lindbergh flight across the Atlantic? Amy Johnson? The Black Bottom? Ramsay MacDonald? Marshal Tukachevsky? The Umbrella Peace? The Abyssinian War? Strip-tease? Continental holidays? Vitamins? The first talkies? rfarley Street? Greta Garbo? Mr. Chamberlain?

All thtese and many more will pass as names into our history books. Even now we are beginning to forget them, before we remember them again.

Arid then our problems—we had many of these. Stop the war in China was one of them. Collective security was another. Better health services was a third. Abolition of corporal punishment; Dominion Status for India; appeasement for Hitler; war with Russia; friendship with Ireland; the unemployed; the return to religion; the American Clipper.

And what did we talk about?

'My dear, isn't her hair just too devastating . . . ?'

'My dear fellow, you should work, not go on the dole. . . .

'Sometimes I think there are worse things than a good clean war. . . .

'We are going Up and Up and then Down and Down. . . .

'My lips are sealed. . . .'

'I resent being asked questions, in Parliament. . . .'

'This is peace for our time. . . .'

'I have no further territorial claims in Europe... .'

'Russia supports the League. . . .'

'Franco is a Christian gentleman. . . .'

'The Labour Party is afraid of taking office. . . .'

Headings and lists. And the slogans of our times?

'Buy More.'

'Spend less.'

'Eat More.'

'Buy British.'

'Guinness is good for you.'

Not everything we said was nonsense, of course, but we were stupid when' we appeared most clever, and most convincing. We resembled people going about in darkness refusing to take a light because we thought we might set it on fire! We liked our obstinacy. We liked our antiquated ideas, and however much we turned up our noses, we tolerated the slums. Quite a lot of us thought that the unemployed were just lazy. Some of us admired Hitler. Quite a large number of us thought that democracy was dead, and resented being asked questions in Parliament.

But the real trouble was our optimism. 'Things couldn't happen,' we said, 'because they wouldn't.' We made problems where there were none, and ignored others that were real and threatening. Let it be whispered: some of us were cowards. Not physical cowards, of course. If we were attacked we would fight. But we were afraid of the future. We got negative-minded.

What would happen if Hitler was overthrown? That would mean Communism? Nobody seemed to think what would happen if he won. . . .

We were terrified of the future, because we enjoyed our present so much. It was fairly prosperous; very prosperous for those who had a lot of money. It was comfortable to those who

had a little, and even those who had none were able to live and go to the pictures.

We took drugs. We followed Mr. Baldwin's policy because he had promised us that everything was going on well in the best of worlds. We promised ourselves not to wake from the tender sleep of not caring. We sat in Splendid Isolation and dreamt of the great deeds of yore, while our guns rusted and our armour had great gaping holes in the most indelicate of places—in our vital spots!

Our humanitarian ideals were like a Walt Disney cartoon. One day the things we said will be made into a cartoon, and people will laugh heartily at our antics. They will laugh at the Optimistic Thirties with a great pain in their hearts. It will probably be the grimmest joke since Nero sat and fiddled while Rome burnt.

At times, even the angels in Heaven must have laughed at our innocence, and God must have wondered whether it had all been worth while.

The more intelligent of us turned to cynicism. Since democracy failed before the dictators, and misery and poverty persisted, what else was there but cynicism? It would not have been so bad if the democracy had failed in the international sphere, but succeeded in the domestic.

It wouldn't have been so bad if we had really preferred sphere, to guns, but we did not. It wouldn't have been so bad if we had shown the real superiority of democracy as a civilization over that of the dictator-countries by increasing our standard of living to such proportions as would have astonished the peoples of the world, if we had abolished unemployment and made our health services more reliable, if we had fed the poorer classes on better food and housed them in better houses, if we had taught a philosophy of love instead of *laisser-faire* and willy-nilly and drift and compromise and appeasement and doing nothing to offend anyone.

But we didn't. That's all there is to it. And it's no good passing judgements which might prove uhcornfortable to every •mother's son, *to* every mother, father, employer, and workman. The only thing that we did was to liberate women and to grant

them sex equality. Perhaps that was the culminating point of our usefulness as a civilization. It took many centuries to rid us of feudalism, to give us democracy, to bring justice to the working man. We have freed the Black Man as a slave. Our next step was to free women from male domination. We have done that. That is one laurel we can wear without fearing that it will fade. But that was all we did, or rather the women did, so my praise is only half-praise, the laudation goes to the brave women who fought against a tyranny stronger than war—that of custom.

Do you remember how some of you asked yourselves the question whether civilization was worth saving?

You were the cynical ones; the disillusioned who kept the world ever green. I remember a conversation with such a philosopher, and I quote it because it is important if we are to understand the drift and meaning of our times. Especially if we are to understand that piece of statesmanlike folly, the Treaty of Munich, better known as the Crisis of 1938.

It was on August 3rd that Lord Runciman, the British intermediary, arrived in Prague. He went, so we were told, to sift out the truth between the contending parties. He was an experienced business man whose political capacity had nowhere been tried. But in Mr. Chamberlain's government of business men he had done some good service by remaining silent. We shall return to him later.

Let us first examine the conversation I had at about this time with a man who claimed to have studied our modern philosophy. If his cynicism seems bitter, it is mild in comparison with that of the 'Government of Muddle', which seized and held power over the Optimistic Thirties.

'My dear Sava,' he began. His 'my deai'' showed his training in cynical philosophy. His very voice and manner reminded me of Diogenes. 'You have just said that we are all agreed that civilization is worth saving. I disagree. I think that civilization in its concrete historical form is an unnecessary evil. I'll say something else. I think the word itself, "civilization'', is a deception. It conceals a social reality which no amount of fine larding with beautiful-sounding phrases can disguise. In the

vocabulary of idealism there are many such words. The synonyms of civilization are progress, humanity, and so forth. It's a psychological commonplace. It is what civilization *is* that matters, not the word.'

I am prepared for this sort of thing from doctors, but this man was not a doctor. He was too young to be anything except a cynic.

'The contradictions to which the word "civilization" leads us involve us in a net of lies; a net we find so tough, so encompassing, that we cannot get rid of the clinging idea of it. If you, as a civilized person, are prepared to defend it, then how much better are you than Hitler, than all the tyrants who have waged war in the sacred name of civilization? Civilization, what crimes are committed in thy name!'

'Come,' I said, a little patronizingly. 'This is very hard on a word. Do you suggest that we are all hypocrites?'

'Of course. All civilized men are hypocrites. They must be. It isn't possible to be otherwise in your precious civilization. You can't be honest, like the primitive peoples, and survive. They kill because they hate. You kill for civilization; "for defence"; but never would you admit that you killed out of hate or fear! What is important to you is not the kind of survival you have, but that you should survive. You are incapable of committing political and economic suicide and beginning afresh; you prefer to die piecemeal indecendy.'

'Perhaps that is the aim of civilization—to die piecemeal. All things decay, even the greatest.'

'Then you admit that your civilized souls are sick?'

'No. I think that we are apt, because we are faced with evil reality, to seek solace in abstract idealism. That is the spirit of our age.'

'But that idealism on its own will not satisfy your demand for a full material life, will it?'

I had to admit that it wouldn't.

'Very well then, it follows that from this sickness which is basically the result of repressive social relations, arise the cowardly and unhealthy fantasies of civilization. Lord Runciman goes to Prague because of them. He thinks he is doing a duty to civilization. Every form of compromise with the forces of evil can be

explained in such terms. And the tragedy is that this fantasy is not only in the mind of Lord Runciman, but in the minds of the average man and woman of the world. And shall I tell you on what grounds or what instincts these fantasies are indulged in? You will be surprised if I do.'

I volunteered to be surprised.

'The State, the real protector of civilization in its material form, details the force at its disposal to head off any dangerous incursions into the sovereign territory of civilization. For "civilization", read "private property". Hence the perturbation and the indignation of the Germans over their Sudetens. It's property they want, property they consider is theirs, and therefore the whole State is in arms to take it back. In the same way as an individual who has been expropriated for the follies of his youth or some other reasons, feels, on coming of age, an urge to take up arms for the sake of his property, or at least to litigate about it, so the State takes up arms against another for these reasons. The difference is that the individual will now accept the results of litigation to remedy mistakes, and the State won't.'

'And that's exactly why we've sent Runciman to deal with the Czechs and the Germans, to make them litigate.'

'That is an impossibility. If you tabulate the devices, physical and spiritual, which have been used to keep territory inviolate —private and State—you will realize that litigation settles nothing, because our civilization will always be sympathetic to the man who has "lost his property". The big battalions, mark my words, will not be on the side of the Czechs, but the Germans. The rights and wrongs will not be considered. It will simply be a matter of civilization as it stands to-day to adjudge Germany right and Czechoslovakia wrong.'

'I disagree,' I said. 'The case will be considered on its face merits.'

'Exactly. What I'm saying is that the "merits" stretch right down to the roots of civilization. There is an interesting definition by Maine—I wonder if you know it?'

I confessed that I did not, so it gave the young man an opportunity to quote it out aloud to me. I have since looked it up out of curiosity.

He said: 'Maine's definition is that "Civilization is nothing more than a name for the old order of the Aryan world, dissolved but perpetually reconstructing itself under a vast variety of solvent influences, of which infinitely the most powerful have been those which have slowly, and in some parts of the world, much less perfectly than others, substituted several properties for collective ownership." That, my friend, is your civilization.'

' In other words, you consider that civilization is nothing more than the enrichment of a few individuals at the expense of the many. I smell a Marxist.'

'You can smell what you like, but what else does civilization mean in practice?'

'I think that civilization in its historic form has produced wealth, a varied culture, and a great display of social amenities. For these alone I am truly grateful.'

'But for whom? Mass wealth is offset by mass destitution. Your vast and varied culture is offset by animal ignorance. And against your social amenities you must show a parade of social misery. Very few civilized men and women are wealthy, they are mosdy poor. I know a few who are cultured, but the majority are profoundly ignorant, and as for the social amenities—well, you know as well as I do that most people merely "manage" but don't "live". Do I take it that civilization.is for the few?'

"I disagree. Apart from private property, there are many other things in social life, in civilized life,' I said.

'Apart from private property? And how much do you think there is left apart from private property? Very little, I assure you. So, enough religious appeals, political appeals, social conscience appeals. I am not interested in preserving civilization, nor the "eternal" rights of property. Happily, no form of civilization is eternal. You may have thought that the thirties will always be with us?'

'No,' I said, 'but I thought that we would progress slowly to something better.'

'When civilization—your civilization—is crumbling, you still suggest that you should progress slowly. Now that the challenge has come—are you still going to insist on progressing slowly? Are you going to allow the false dynamics of the dictator-states

to outstrip you? Is your call still to be "Peace at all costs!" because it means progressing slowly and holding on to the civilization you love so much?'

I don't know why my friend broke off his conversation, but he did. I must have had a very unsympathetic look on my face, or perhaps I was bored.

Bored. That's exactly it. My face was the civilization of the Optimistic Thirties. We had escaped the muddle in China. We did not go to war over Abyssinia, Austria, Spain—why should we go to war over Czechoslovakia? Why was this young man kicking up so much dust in Civilization's lofty face?

August 1938. I don't remember whether those days were hot or cold. I think the weather was capricious, so it did not indicate the spirit of our time. What was the spirit? Was it, as my friend said, an attempt to save the civilization for which, at a later date, Mr. Chamberlain promised 'peace for our time'?

I remember the beginning of the Crisis as a man in a dream. History has moved too fast to enable me to present a synthesized picture. I can tap no chests, nor feel any pulses in making my diagnosis. I looked at the world in August 1938 and saw it to be no different from the world I had known all my life. In England people were going on their holidays, the Cabinet Ministers especially. We had not learnt, apparently, to expect a crisis every time Mr. Chamberlain went fishing to Scotland. We were still busy thinking in terms of peace.

The young men of my acquaintance, the prophets and Jobs, I looked upon as one of the seven plagues of Egypt. They had to be put up with. That was a small price for democracy, but God was in His heaven, and everything would be all right.

I am liable, now, after the event, and the wisdom I have learnt, to wonder why we all put so much trust in Mr. Chamberlain. I think it was because, quite unconsciously, we had raised up a Prime Minister more in our image than a statesman of the calibre of Churchill. Chamberlain for peace, Churchill for war. This was a duality, a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde part of our national character. Dr. Jekyll had such a nice, comforting, reassuring way of always being hopeful, of always being sure, of

always presenting a balanced budget, of keeping our income-tax within reason, of not interfering with our business, of genially muddling through the European and world morass, seeming always to keep his dignity and his integrity untarnished. We were all little Mr. Chamberlains in miniature, with the same outlook in foreign affairs, and the same middle-class desire to regard all originality.as the mark of dangerous adventure.

It is worth quoting his historic speech; *our* speech at this time.

It was a tired, almost resigned voice that spoke to us over the wireless, the first word we had from him after the dramatic flight to Godesberg. This is what he said:

'How horrible, fantastic, incredible it is, that we should be digging trenches and trying on gas-masks because of a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing.

' It seems still more impossible that a quarrel which is already settled in principle should be the subject of war.

'I well understand why the Czech Government felt unable to accept the terms put before them in the German Memorandum. Yet I believe that, after my talks with Herr Hitler, if only time would allow, it ought to be possible for an arrangement to transfer the territory that the Czech Government had agreed to give Germany to be settled by agreement under conditions which would ensure fair treatment for the population concerned.'

Fine words, these—'Horrible, fantastic, incredible'. Let that be written over the Optimistic Thirties, for that is their sign manual, their motto. And what else but blindness, almost unnatural and cruel blindness, gave an answer somewhat like Cain's: '. . . because of a quarrel in a far-away country between people of whom we know nothing'?

'True, ain't it? Realistic is what I call it,' said the tinker, the tailor, and the baker. 'Why should we fight?'

Whoever heard of a nation, a whole empire, a whole species of civilized men and women, fighting for a 'people of whom we know nothing'?

Let us continue the speech.

' Don't be alarmed if you hear of men being called up to man the anti-aircraft defences and ships. These are only precautionary measures which the Government must take in times like these.

It does not mean that we have determined on war or that war is imminent.'

'No, of course it doesn't,' said a patient of mine later. 'It's Hitler's little game. He mobilizes, we mobilize, to show we can do that sort of thing too, and just as well. It's all a matter of demonstrations, that's what it is.'

But we were alarmed all the same. We had plenty of cause to be. The old stories about anti-aircraft guns reaching places unassembled may be too big a slight on the government of the time, but some of the stories are true, even if some part of the anti-aircraft guns did arrive *it* their destination.

All we did, I remember, was to ask rather timidly what had been done with the money we gave in taxes for armaments, and the only answer we could get from the occupants of our Front Bench was that 'the Socialists always voted against re-armament'. The lameness of the answer could have been answered by saying that 'the Socialist opposition were not the government, and did not possess a vote sufficiently large to overthrow any government proposals for re-armament'. But we accepted the answer, and all agreed that the Socialists were really very foolish people. This party manoeuvre to find a scapegoat was reprehensible, but in those days we were ready to believe in anything. We have, after all, believed in 'peace in our time'.

And what about those trenches and gas masks? 'So it is war?' we asked. But it can't happen here. Bombs on Hampstead Heath? Preposterous! We are a cool people, and when we went in queues to get our gas masks, we joked. The people were certainly braver than their government. They were just beginning to show their Mr. Hyde side. But it was too late. In a week's time children were playing about with the gas'masks, and old Caspar when his work was done would sit before his cottage door and explain to them the intricacies of the Munich Treaty. Ducks went swimming in the trenches of which Mr! Chamberlain had spoken with such alarm.

I den't know whether we liked being talked to like children, but in the bewilderment, Mr. Chamberlain certainly sounded like the voice of the parent. His exhortations were always done in a quiet voice reminiscent of the Montessori method.

Nowadays, when Churchill speaks, we are not scared. We fear neither his optimism nor his warnings. Yesterday's 'war-monger' has become our national hero, and our only regrets are that we did not heed him before.

'I can promise you only blood, toil, sweat, and tears,' he told us, and on this we did not argue. We followed him with open eyes because only he could show us the road to victory.

But let us return to Chamberlain's speech.

'However much we sympathise with a small country involved in a struggle with a larger neighbour, one could not necessarily involve the whole British Empire on that account. If this country fights, it must be on larger issues than that'

'However much we sympathise. ..' There was more guilt in our faces than sympathy when we heard those words issuing from our mouths. Of course we sympathized. But the sympathy was indecent. It was the voice of the Levite who passed by the wounded man. But this time there was no-one to play the Good Samaritan. And then that bit about 'one could not necessarily involve the whole British Erhpiro on that account'. That was fine realistic stuff at the time, although the shade of Grey must have looked down upon the Flanders fields and wept.

But the ' If the country fights, it must be on larger issues than that', was consoling. We said to ourselves, we are not afraid to fight. That was true, we were petrified by our irresolution, more frightened of ourselves than Germany, but what were the larger issues about which we would fight? That had a ring of challenge in it! One instinctively looked at the statue of Nelson in Trafalgar Square, and not at the pigeons.

Issues? We will come to them later on.

' I am a man of peace. To the depth of my soul, armed warfare is a nightmare to me.'

'Never have truer or more civilized words been spoken,' we said. 'It's as good as Nurse Cavell's "Patriotism is not enough[3] Or was it?

We were all men of peace. So was Hitler, or at least, so he said. So was Caesar a man of peace, so are we all peaceful men. Caesar, Mussolini, Hitler, Cassius, Goebbels, Casca, Goering, Soothsayer Ciano, and the rest of them, they are all peaceful

men—but lift up a corner of the hem and see where Czechoslovakia lies bleeding. . . . But we did not. We lifted no hems. We had no Antony to move us to tears. Benes spoke, but he was the President of a 'people of whom we know nothing', and besides he spoke with the voice of a professor, as a humanitarian, as a philosopher, and there is a great deal of difference between the mentality of a Birmingham business man and a European gentleman who was the follower of the great Masaryk. Caesar left the plebeians the fair fields on the banks of the Tiber, and they were ready to slay the assassins right away, but we, plebeians of an older age, we said that what Masaryk offered us were the fields of Elysium, impossible to get, and certainly not worth fighting for.

As for the nightmare of war, we all knew that. The last war had stripped every glamour, every decency and chivalry from it. There is nothing gallant about bombing women and children or starving them;, nothing noble in poison gas and tanks. We had seen pictures of houses in Spain. We have seen houses nearer home now, but then? Then it was a nightmare. It was a nightmare, and not a reality, and we fought it as a man fights a dream. We rubbed our eyes, and Czechoslovakia was gone. The nightmare had disappeared.

But strength cometh out of weakness and sweetness from a lion's head, so ran the parable with which the Philistines met Samson. Mr. Chamberlain's next words were full of fight.

'If I made up my mind that a country had decided to dominate by fear of its force, I would feel that it must be resisted.'

What a statesman! He can say the strongest things in the conditional tense. 'If I made up my mind . . . and I would feel . . .' But it was the *'if'* that governed the whole threat. Didn't we thank our stars for that *'if?* What a short word behind which to shelter, but what a cosy, homely Anglo-Saxon, word it sounded then. If you pull the lion's tail he will get angry. If you pull it right off, he might bite you., *Beware of the Dangerous Lion.* (PS.—He hasn't got a tail, so don't be afraid.)

And then just think of the courtesy of not naming the country that 'decided to dominate by fear of its force'. This was the height of diplomatic politeness. Bismarck would have approved

of it. He would have used it just before he stabbed someone in the back, but we used it because we didn't want to offend 'that country's feelings'. We were gentlemen to the last, even when the cannibal chief was taking off our white ties and stiff collars before roasting us.

If the *'if'* safeguard was not enough, then there was yet another bastion to fall back on before deciding. Mr. Chamberlain said that 'if I made up my mind . . .'

I don't think that Mr. Chamberlain was to blame. It was, I think, our democratic privilege at this time not to make our minds up. Things would become very inconvenient if we did.

We had grown accustomed to not having made up our minds. As an escape it was wonderful, and dignified. We said the same thing over the Manchurian invasion in 1931, which began the chain of aggression.

We did not make up our minds about Abyssinia until she was defeated, and then, with great realism, Mr. Chamberlain made up his mind to recognize her demise.

Spain and Austria were two other cases of not having made up our minds. And Czechoslovakia was to be the third. We were artists in not making up our minds.

We showed some astonishing creative gifts in this line of art. Whole books of Hansard must be full of quotations such as 'I have not made up my mind', or 'When I make up my mind I will do so and so'. Or even 'Should I make up my mind, it will be necessary for me to decide whether I would be willing, under the circumstances . . .' and so forth. Many of our democratic leaders became the greatest geniuses the world has ever known in Unmade-up Minds. That they became the chief executives of great nations merely shows that the majority of people like you and me are examples of Unmade-up Minds ourselves. There is little to congratulate ourselves upon, except that we finally did *make up our minds,* or rather, the Mr. Hyde in us did.

Mr. Chamberlain's words come from the past.

'Under such a domination, life for people who believe in liberty would not be worth living. But war is a fearful thing, and England must be very clear before it embarks on it that it is real and great issues that are at stake, and that the call to risk every-

thing in their defence is irresistible. . . . I am going to work for peace until the last moment.'

This was the crowning glory of the speech. It held a stern enough warning to Germany, and it spoke of 'issues'. What issues, we asked ourselves. Liberty.

My friend's remarks about civilization strike me with particular force at this moment. He asked me whether it was worth fighting for civilization, and trying to save it. I said it was. I say so still. We all said so. Democracy, however bad, was better than dictatorship. Liberty, however meagre, was better than no liberty at all, and, in any case, we prefer our own domestic tyrants, if we have to have them, than Germans. We prefer our own brand of poverty, injustice, dirt. It is British and it is Best.

Admittedly, there were better things to offer us than that, but we have never distinguished ourselves as sociologists or economists. Pan-Europeanism, to us, makes nonsense. You might as well suggest that the firm in Birmingham should ally itself to Krupps in Germany or Creusot in France. Gad, sir! Then what *were* the great issues?

The 'great issues' were a belated realization on our part that Hitler desired the destruction of Czechoslovakia, not so much because he loved the Sudeten Germans (often more like the Czechs than the Czechs themselves), or that he hated Benes as a small child grows to dislike his governess, but because he had expansionist designs in eastern Europe, via Rumania, Yugoslavia, Turkey. And yet, despite the recognition of those 'great issues', Mr. Chamberlain wrote an astonishing letter to Hitler, a letter which clearly seems to have cancelled out any possibility of British and French intervention. It was this letter more than anything else which must have revealed to Germany that Britain and France had no stomach for the fight over 'great issues'.

The fact that we recognized some 'great issues' but did nothing about them must have confirmed the German mind in the belief that we were bigger fools than they thought us to be at first. We were actually going into the trap open-eyed. It would have been different if we were blind, but we had both our eyes fastened on those 'great issues', and did nothing about it.

Wrote'our Mr. Chamberlain on government notepaper—the same sort of paper as that on which Disraeli had formulated the Treaty of Berlin in 1878, undoubtedly:

'However much you distrust the Prague government's intentions, you cannot doubt the power of the British and French governments to see that the promises are carried out fully and carefully and forthwith.

'As you know, I have stated publicly that we are prepared to undertake that they will be so carried out. I cannot believe that you shall take the responsibility of starting a world war which may end civilization for the sake of a few days' delay in settling this long-standing problem.'

In spite of the begging tone of this letter ther,e is something dignified in it, something that testified and pointed to ' the man of peace'.

Unfortunately it was interpreted to mean that we, the British and the French people, would, if necessary, send our troops into Czechoslovakia in order to oblige them to surrender their territory. They had promised to, but Hitler doubted their word, so we would show him that he need not doubt ours. If the Czechs had fought, we would have shot them down. It would have been the most curious war the world has seen, but, of course, we knew Czechoslovakia would not fight. We were busy driving the nails into the coffin when the victim was not dead. We suffocated her in the eternal name of appeasement, and for an epitaph, we wrote 'An Unknown People'.

The trouble with us was that we had not read our history books sufficiently carefully. Lost in profit and loss accounts, in debentures and dividend declarations, we did not bother to acquaint qurselves with a small, heroic people who have retained their faith and nationality despite the disastrous battle of the White Mountain when the Teutons defeated them, and despite the martyrdom of the Hussites—the first Protestants of Europe.

To Mussolini went another appeal.

' I have to-day addressed a last appeal to Herr Hitler to abstain from force to settle the Sudeten problem, which I feel sure can be settled by a short discussion... .' The shorter the better! And then, the biggest trick in world history was staged.

This was exactly what Hitler and 'Mussolini had planned. But here at home we were full of optimism. Let us say honestly that we hoped that peace would be preserved, but with honour.

Whatever may be said against us, blind, stupid, unprepared, we were at all times honourable. We were very honourable even to the dictators, and Munich was sincerely hoped to mean peace in our time'.

Everyone was so honourable to each other now that Adolf Hitler had got his way, that crowds in Germany (genuinely enough) considered that Mr. Chamberlain had saved them from their own Hitler's war, and they thanked him. They cheered him for being such a gentleman as to give way to their obstinate and bad-tempered Adolf. The Montessori method again saved Europe from Hitler, and Mussolini was able to share in the glory for the last time as an 'Elder Statesman'. From henceforth he would have to wait until Hitler had finished his meal, and then he could have what was left over, especially the bones and stones and mud.

Peace had been preserved! Munich was a city of light. London rejoiced, Paris pretended to. Dustmen named their carts after Chamberlain' and fishing rods were sent to him. A villa was bought for him in France. Grateful backbenchers of all parties, including the I.L.P., screamed with joy on his arrival. Mr. Chamberlain looked up a volume of Shakespeare and quoted an appropriate bit: 'Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower safety.' As a symbol we adopted the umbrella instead of the broadsword. A top-hat instead of a helmet. It was as if he had signed an armistice instead of a reprieve and we were hysterical over him. We let the water into the trenches. We stopped putting together our anti-aircraft guns. We shouted for joy and congratulated ourselves.

Then we suddenly developed a bad conscience, especially when Hitler indicated that he had nothing to thank Britain and France for. He had taken what had belonged to him, he said. So much for the Montessori system. We received a jolt.

Mr. Chamberlain, a sensitive man at all times, was seriously upset by Hitler's lack of decency over Munich. He warned him that the next time Britain would mean business. He warned him

off Rumania and Poland. These were no more people about whom we knew nothing, and besides, they were the property of powers towards whom we had shown much affection.

There was one country, however, that we had misunderstood. 'We could not count on adequate Russian aid.' Lord Winterton said. So what was easier? The Czechs were betrayed by Russia. Russia had not been invited to the Conference because of her socialism; but Russia had betrayed the Czechs.

Russia had told the French Ambassador in Moscow on the 2nd September that Russia would support Czechoslovakia, France's and Russia's ally, by all means in her power, and that staff talks between the two countries should be undertaken at once. This certainly did not sound like betrayal. Lindbergh, avowed friend of the Nazis, poured scorn on the Russian planes, although they had given a very good account of themselves during the Spanish and the China wars.

Then we were comforted with the allegation that Stalin, having shot all his best generals, had a demoralized army on his hands. It did not occur to anyone to say that an army, however demoralized, was better than the best armies in the world (i.e. the French and British) that did not fight.

This anti-Russian policy which we exhibited right up to the conclusion of the Finnish-Russian war again showed our short-sightedness. To-day, we are falling over ourselves making the wonder recognition that British and Russian interests are identical in one respect, and that is—Hitler must not win. But in the 'good old days' it was the Russian bogy that scared all good children and prevented the British Empire from going about its normal business.

And then when Russia diverted Hitler's war against Europe to the western sideboard, what a roar of indignation arose in our throats! Russia had betrayed civilization! She was as bad as Hitler! We knew it all the time. Hitler and Stalin had made an agreement to share the world. We were ready even to fight Russia, taking on further adventures of the Norwegian character. Mr. Chamberlain welcomed a war with Russia. Mr. Chamberlain said that the real enemy was Russia and Germany—always careful to put Russia first. That's a lie, someone will say. *Sp* it is. It's a lie with words, but not a lie in intention.

And we were all for this war against Russia, anyway. However, let us return to our post-Munich conscience.,

When I speak of the post-Munich conscience, I mean the conscience of all decent people who, like Chamberlain, honestly believed they had preserved peace, not individuals like Bonnet and Laval and their imitators. These gentlemen had no bouts of conscience. Their surrender was part of a gigantic plan that miscarried. They had hoped for war between Russia and Germany, and however much we are to blame, we, the common people, the nitwits who swallowed the sugared pill of Munich, we had not let them carry out their plans without some opposition. China was aided through indirect means, so was Spain. Hoare was sacked over the unpopular treaty he concocted with Laval to surrender Abyssinia. Sometimes our consciences could stand no more from these gentlemen, and they found themselves other employment.

What were the things we said to salve our conscience?

I remember a favourite sophistry of mine. What's the use, I used to say smugly, of fighting. Czechoslovakia could not be defended, anyway.

I am not a strategist, but my conscience hurts me about that remark. With Russian aid, Bohemia might have been held. In a mountainous district tanks are not much use. Germany would have had to face a two-front war; the dread of her army and her generals. Masses of men, such as Germany used later on in her attacks, were available from the Russian side. The air force of Russia, with those of Britain and France, would have been equal that of Germany's. One could go on citing facts. But the most important thing we overlooked, we people who made the assertion that 'Czechoslovakia would be defeated in any case', was the fact that nations are not conquered for ever. Belgium rose again after her occupation. Czechoslovakia would have done the same if we had had the same will, the same leadership as we had had before.

Then another favourite titbit from the clubrooms: 'In any case, even if we won, Britain and France would make Czechoslovakia surrender up the Sudetens to Germany.'

What's the answer to that one? We asked each other. The

answer is that the Sudetens would be returned to a free and democratic Germany, united with bonds of friendship to a democratic Czechoslovakia.

But here's a better one: 'By yielding up the Sudetens the Czechs saved their country from utter destruction.' Answer that if you can.

Quite possibly Czechoslovakia would be bombed, but so would Germany. Monuments would be destroyed. But the Czechs bigger monuments in their hearts than that. They preferred to see the destruction of their country, like the Belgians and Frenchmen who fought in the last war, and in this, to slavery under Hitler.

Then the final argument, which was supposed to crown all arguments: 'The Czechs were a noble people who surrendered so that the peace of the world should be preserved.'

This was the biggest lie of all! Czechoslovakia was never consulted about 'saving the peace of the world'. She was treated as an insignificant factor in the great game of the Montessori method—the appeasement of the dictators. The dreadful truth is that the French Ambassador in Prague on the 21st of September 1938 handed a memorandum to President Benes in which was stated that if Czechoslovakia refused to accept the terms drawn up by Hitler, France would break her pledge and desert her in the war that would follow.

Here was the hand of Daladier, guided by fear, riot so much of Germany as of his own people. He was then repelling the social efforts of the Popular Front. Such a statement is bitter and libellous, but unhappily it was true. There is no satisfaction in blaming the French as much as ourselves. We have to blame our civilization, which leads the small democracies up the garden path of collective security, giving them the most solemn pledges, and then deserts them in their greatest need. Such infamy does not go unpunished.

Then we come to Lord Runciman. Lord Runciman reported that, under the circumstances, the further peaceful cohabitation in one State of Sudeten Germans, provoked by Hitler, and Czechoslovaks was impossible.

This sounded high-minded logic. The sort of thing one expects

from a peer of the realm and a shipowner. But did the statesmen of Europe recollect that strange scene some twenty years before at Versailles when Thomas Garrigue Masaryk *protested against the incorporation of the Sudeten Germans in the new state of Czechoslovakia!* And what did the statesmen say to that? They said: 'The Sudetens live in a strategic area. Take them and don't mention it. We'll look after you if trouble should come from them.'

In any case, Lord Runciman, who openly dined and wined with Henlein, did not know his geography half as well as he knew the principal shipping routes. For over a thousand years the Sudetens and the Czechs have lived together. The Sudetens are as unlike Prussians as Scotsmen are unlike Zulus. He also said, in an outburst of wisdom, that as a result of losing three million Sudetens and one million Czechs, the new State would be homogeneous and much stronger than before.

This is the naivety that comes from experience. It must have been learnt in the cauldrons of party politics. With the loss of the Sudeten territory Czechoslovakia lost her frontier fortifications (and undoubtedly France lost some of the secrets of her Maginot Line). She lost one third of her population, and nearly three quarters of her industry. And if she was going to be so homogenous and strong, why did Britain and France give a guarantee that it would be safe from Germany's future demands? Why that loan?

Do you remember that blood-money? Didn't we shudder! It was hush-money, and nothing else, and even then our Treasury, under the administration of the warriors of finance, refused to grant her the full amount proposed by Parliament.

The last conscience-appeaser I tried took the form of an innocence that surprised even me. I, and quite three-quarters of the supporters of Mr. Chamberlain, said: 'But what have we or Mr. Chamberlain to reproach ourselves with? We had no engagements towards the Czechs. We know nothing about them.'

They sat with us at the same League of Nations table for twenty years, but 'we knew nothing about them'. We knew about their Brenn gun, which we had bought on licence. We knew about the Skoda works, which were producing some of the finest

armaments in the world. We knew about the shoes made by Bata and sold at low prices to undersell our own products. We drank Pilsener beer. But Czechoslovakia, who is she?

There are some very subtle international jurists in this country and they were able to convince us that we could repudiate the League Covenant with one stroke, tear up a piece of paper, and hand over the Czech democrats into Hitler's hands.

One terrible thought came into my mind during the period of recantation, when our armament factories were working to capacity, and we were preparing for a war to defend Poland. The terrible thought was that perhaps in refusing to defend democracy in Europe, we refused to defend ourselves. That might have been true. America, for instance, has taken up Mr. Chamberlain's attitude, and treats the French collapse as a sort of Munich. Why, why, does it take the democracies so long to realize the implications of a world war?

Let us examine the record of our consciences and follies, and then hope on that one Mountain of Hope, the people themselves, and their new leaders.

Our pangs of conscience received a further shock when the rest of Czechoslovakia was swallowed. We now said cynically: What else could be expected from Hitler? What else indeed! One thing, however, became certain, and that was War. We no longer talked of appeasement, although right up to the end our Municheers wanted to appease Hitler by a colonial share-out. We were preparing to give up mandates, together with large numbers of colonial people, to Hitler and Mussolini, but it happened that the appetites of those two gentlemen were larger. Perhaps, after all, it is as well. Had they been tactful they might have obtained Chamberlain's umbrella for the asking, but greed, which rules the appetites of persons so well fed as Hitler, decreed that he should gorge himself and still remain unsick, still remain ungrateful to our Chamberlain.

The end of our tragic comedy is approaching. Nobody in England—friend or opponent—will blame Chamberlain for the disaster that befell our country. He meant well, he trusted too well, he will go down in history as a man of peace. His great mistake, however, was that he decided to be a man of war as

well. He hoped to succeed in war where he had failed in peace. It was from this over-estimation of his moral and physical strength that our blunders sprang. Unversed in the art of making war, he even forgot its exigencies. The optimistic thirties still hear his voice, proclaiming that Hitler had missed the bus when he invaded Norway. He welcomed the invasion like a godsend. He who had welcomed so many disasters in Europe, was making his last welcome, but his swan-song was an unconscionable long time coming. It was only when the nation finally realized the implications of the "strategic" withdrawal from Norway, and the ill-timed boasting of certain naval men, that Mr. Chamberlain stood up to answer the last meeting of his career.

He still spoke confidently. Every withdrawal to him was as good as a victory. Every calamity to him 'brought the means of victory nearer'. In the mansions of the blessed he will be known as 'the man with the harp.'

At last, a man spoke. A man from his own side. He said to the Socialists, who uhdoubtedly were enjoying the discomfiture of the Chairman of the Board: 'You speak for England!' And, turning to the bewildered man, he cried: 'For God's sake, go!'

And Chamberlain went.

There was never a man more hardly treated by an implacable fate than he. The crowd which had clapped him in the cinemas as the peace-maker, the very people who had sent him fishing-rods, turned away. A sigh of relief was heard not only in England, but in Russia and America.

The English are a dignified people, and they forgot Chamberlain with dignity. They were as patient with him as a loving mother. Chamberlain crept away into obscurity, to emerge only on certain occasions such as to deny any intention on his part to form a Peace Party, or, to use his words, 'we would never enter into negotiations with Hitler'.

The very fact that he found it necessary to issue a denial disturbed some people.

What a pity. This man of shrewdness and sound patriotic sense was never guilty in intention. This man, who had something of the great man in him, was guilty of nothing worse than indecision and stubbornness. God be his witness!

By the force of his nature and habit he was led to believe himself a great war leader! How much greater he would have been if he had only the courage to put down his tenure of office the very day he declared war on Germany! Why could he not admit to himself that England needed more than ever a strong Prime Minister to wage war—a war of such a magnitude? Why? Why? Why?

Let us now turn from a recriminating past, and leave Chamberlain to rest with his forefathers.

He made himself a niche in Europe by accident. It was his great misfortune to cross paths with and trust men as brutal and unscrupulous as Hitler and Mussolini. It was a calamity for which we must all pay heavily now. Perhaps, as I have said before, we made him in our own image.

May 1940.

'What—Chamberlain gone? At last!' said my companion in the tube. He seemed a little dazed.

'Cheer up.' I said. 'We sank the *Graf Spee,* remember, so Chamberlain wasn't so difficult apparently!'

And who was the new man? New man? It was Mr. Churchill. Another image of us, but without the umbrella, and a tenacity as strong as Mr. Chamberlain's perennial 'explanations'.

Let's tell the truth, and say that we've waited for Churchill for the last ten years. But the gods that be determined to make him a sort of 'prize turn' in the House of Commons. He was kept in a glass case and labelled 'For Future Use—Handle carefully or he might bite'.

Here was a man who, for all his mistakes, for all his 'temperament', so fearful to the business man of Birmingham, and irritating to the dictators at Munich, had the calibre of a leader. It is a wonder that Hitler did not, like Salome, ask for Mr. Churchill's head at Munich. Mr. Chamberlain would probably have held a plebiscite to decide that.

Of Mr. Churchill's side of our character we can say much. That was the side which threw Hoare from the Foreign Office when he tried to sell Abyssinia to Mussolini without making him put up a fight for it. Mr. Churchill has always spoken of a Russian alliance as essential for the democracies. We always

suspected as much. It is awkward to admit it after all the rebuffs we have given Russia.

But I remember how, during the days of collective security, we regarded her as a friend. We made Litvinov President of the League Council. We increased our imports, and so forth. Those were the spacious days of Honest Stanley, who refused to re-arm because he thought the people wouldn't like it because they had voted for peace. He did not ask them whether they would fight for peace. He supported collective security when that was the only security at hand.

Mr. Churchill's criticisms are too well known to heed repeating. His recent leadership has given him stature, and given us hope. He is able to lead without being conscious of it. Others could not. Churchill can ask the 'House's indulgence' in some small administrative matter which is delayed, and the House not only grants him the indulgence, but cheers him for his honesty.

And with the departure of Chamberlain, 'Chamberlainosis'—the pacifism that imbued our civil departments—has gone too.

For nine months before the French defeat Mr. Chamberlain and his counterparts in France did nothing to prepare for the attack they knew was imminent. More was done in the first few weeks of the new leadership than in the previous nine months of passive war.

At last the people were given a direction. That was all they were seeking. They did not ask to be told that victory was in sight, or that time was on our side. They asked merely to serve the country to the best of their ability. They were naturally anxious to see that their efforts were not wasted.

Churchill brought in the Labour leaders, and as a result gave a moral impetus to the war. It ceased to be conducted by the Primrose League.

And this is where we may remark upon the 'civilization' on which my friend poured scorn.

Whatever may be said of the civilization of the British peoples, one thing will always stand in its credit. Its humanity.

Every phase of the warfare on land and on sea has shown that Britain does not wage war like a barbarian. How she is able to

keep the decency of men unsullied in the terrible accidents of war it is difficult to say. How she is able to face the defection of her allies—Belgium and France in particular, without ire-crimination is nothing short of miraculous.

Her empire may become dust and the name of Englishman may be a forgotten thing, but the lesson to humanity which Britain has taught will reach down to the ages when men have emerged from their barbarism. Her civilization of humanity will be called blessed.

The fall of France astonished the Englishman. On one hand there was sympathy for France.

'What else could she do?'

On the other, there was a sort of comic belief that the foreigner is basically a deceptive sort of fellow, and a war is better fought alone, anyway.

A curious wave of self-confidence came over England with the news of the French surrender.

'So we stand alone? So much the better. We shall be unencumbered with responsibilities.'

The Englishman was willing to send his armies everywhere. To Finland, to Syria, to Irak, to Rumania. This was not just a remnant of Chamberlain's policy that stuck in their minds. It was the act of gentlemen going to the rescue of the weak.

Let us bring out these lights from under the bushels. They will certainly hearten our friends.

While on the subject of France a few interesting lessons can be drawn from her defeat. They have been learnt and absorbed at an astonishing rate. The 'Go to it!' slogan electrified the country. The Civil Service, after much criticism, endeavoured to lick itself into shape and adjust itself to war conditions. But something does [remain to be said on the question of Fifth Columnists.

Major Attlee prefers to call them traitors. It's an old-fashioned word, and more terrible. I agree. But these traitors are of a special brand, and they have to be spotted very carefully. Their very position in society often protects them: their connections, their 'good names', and so forth.

This war is a social war. It is a war in which Fascism splits

the country. That does not mean that there are serious differences in this country, with a division of Fascists working like a 'Fifth Column', armed, and waiting to stab the country in the back. But there are plenty of potential Fascists. They are the real danger.

They are potential Fascists for many reasons. Some are so because they believe that war will ruin them financially, and that a Fascist peace will mean that they will retain a small but agreeable part of their fortunes. Not only are the business men of Birmingham suspect. There are other interests that cannot remove their capital to Canada in the event of there being a necessity.

Then there are other Fascists. People who hate the possibility of Socialism so much that they would rather have a foreign government, providing it was not Socialist. With them, it is a question of prestige. They are usually middle-class people who haven't very much money, but have got a great deal of snobbery. They always want to be the 'officers', and their slightly higher education makes them very intolerant of the working classes. They fear that if the war is won there might be social revaluation, if not a revolution, and they wonder what will happen to them.

There are also some potential allies of Fascism among the working classes, although this is much rarer. The majority of these people know what to expect from a Hitler victory, or the imposition of a domestic brand of Fascism. There are a few, however, who are attracted by the possibilities of leadership—'a sure job' and a position of overlordship.

There must be no disproportionate fear of Fascism. Rather should precautions be taken to see that the soil where it grows is not suitable for its development. The arrest of the most dangerous plotters is, of course, both a military and civil necessity, but if the government supplements its war policy with a social policy attractive to the people, then Fascism will have no chance to use 'conditions' as propaganda. If the working people are trusted more and more to govern and look after themselves, then there will be a real unity between them and all other classes who are also fighting against tyranny for either cultural, philosophic, religious, or patriotic reasons.

There may be bad times ahead, but the people of this country are far from being afraid of them. They will bear every trial cheerfully, so long as they are sure it is *their* war, and they have the most to gain by helping to win it. This must be a constant source of propaganda to defeat the Fascist lie that the war is *'forced'* on the people by the financial interests. The preposterousness of such a statement must be pointed out to them. The figures of taxation should be given. The recent limitation on profits should also be explained. The fair administration of the rationing system, for instance, has helped to equalize the burden of the war.

Fascism can thrive on discontent, outraged pride, and military defeat. Against discontent, as I have said, we must mobilize a set of social laws that will continue to share the burdens of war. Against outraged pride we need to see that we have no middle-class 'discontents'. The recent Army reforms should mix all the classes still further for the benefit of all. There should be no discrimination in favour of one class or the other. And as for the last condition—military defeat—well, that can and will be avoided by the concerted efforts of the whole people.

And one last word on the subject of 'Fifth Columnists'. Why don't we build a Fifth Column in Germany and Italy?

This war cannot be fought on traditional lines. The French tried to use tactics twenty years old, and refused to profit either from the Spanish or the Polish campaigns. The British were more imaginative, by all accounts, and now that in some theatres of war they are more nearly equal in material, they have put their lessons,to good account. I remember, too, how heartened we were when we learnt that our troops had made a landing in France and had played the enemy's game of surprise on him. But the biggest surprise we could give would be to assist in the formation of a democratic column inside Germany and Italy.

This does not appear so difficult as it sounds. Not all Germans, nor all Italians, are Fascist minded. Thousands upon thousands of them have suffered the cruellest persecution, and they would welcome even the most dangerous tasks to defeat Hitler. The arguments against a democratic column are based principally on the assertion that you can't trust any of the refugees. This

is a stupidity, and one for which we shall pay dearly if we don't change our ideas. Men known and recognized as fighters against Fascism would rarely turn traitors. There must be some men among Hitler's spies who have changed sides without anyone knowing it. These are the chances of war. But the possibility of internal strife in Germany is one that must not be overlooked. Hitler himself is not overlooking it. He keeps Himmler and half a million bullies inside Germany as a protective police.

The war as it progresses shows one thing clearly, and that is that war, and indeed all future wars, will be civil wars. It has two ideas; two aspirations; two ideals that clash, and the friends and enemies of those ideals are inexorably mixed in every camp. Our job is to sort them, and not to go in for blind internment whenever we hear a German or Italian accent.

Someone has with reason said we might just as well intern General de Gaulle! And why not? The same conditions apply to him as to the other 'friendly aliens'. No-one in his senses would do such a thing, because General de Gaulle is a Frenchman who loves his country, and wills that she shall be free from the power of the despots. "There are patriots and idealists in the internment camps who would be better in charge of illegal movements and propaganda. What does a million pounds matter; what do twenty million pounds matter if Hitler is defeated? This war cannot be run by the Treasury experts. We are all prepared to make the greatest sacrifices. We are prepared to give up more than just our sugar rations, but let the money be used subtly.

Then comes another great problem—America.

Her entry into the war, thrust on her by the Axis Powers, has at once eased intractable problems and created fresh ones, though no-one can deny that the overall balance is favourable. That the action of Japan and her partners in forcing the pace has immeasurably strengthened America's position in many respects is a commonplace. The illogicalities of American policy have been swept away and the nation has been welded into a single whole.

It is easy to criticize America; but such criticisms should have

in them a sense of humility, for American affairs in the past two years have, superficially at least, recapitulated our own in the period leading up to September 1939. Unfortunately there is an unwelcome parallel also between the events of the initial campaign and those with which we were concerned as far as the invasion of Norway and the fall of France.

American policy had emphasized repeatedly that control of the Atlantic was a vital national interest and that that control depended on the continued existence and effectiveness of the British Fleet and its ancillary air power. Therein lay the practical justification (apart from ideological arguments) for lease-lend and the other features of 'all-out aid for the democracies'. Ostensibly this policy fell short of the logical implications, for it did not fully recognize that the strength of the British Fleet depended in turn on the continued existence of Great Britain herself, the part being less than the whole. Equally it did not explicitly admit that the end of Hitlerism is not likely to be gained until Britain is strong enough to challenge the Nazis on the Continent—in which case, Britain would require something more than the 'tools to finish the job'. It may be that these hard truths were implicit in the American attitude, but they were not fully integrated into the national thought and were still regarded as matters for individual opinion and debate between political groups.

These uncertainties have been swept away by the war in the Pacific, which is, rightly considered, a part of the wider world campaign. We have now a consolidation of partners working on equal terms. Undoubtedly that is a gain.

The fresh problems lie in handling the immediate situation. They arise from the weaknesses of democracy—weaknesses which spring from the same root as its strengths. American unpreparedness is no less tragic than our own in 1939. Like ours it must be a factor in prolonging the war. Valuable parts of the world have been lost to the swift-moving, hard-hitting aggressor in the first few weeks; and sober opinion cannot deny the high probability of further losses, the effect of which must strengthen not only Japan but the whole Axis group, not least in the supply of vital raw materials.

A line to the solution of this problem lies in setting the value of the gains to the Axis against the gain to the Grand Alliance arising from the direct participation of the United States. It is here that sober hope is permissible. Raw materials are vital to the conduct of the war; every new access by the Axis to resources is a blow to the Allies. But it has been stressed over and over again that this is a machine war, the end of which will be primarily decided by productive power. Axis gains in the East will be handicapping but not crippling, and, under the stimulus that full participation in war must provide, America's potential output should eventually swing the balance in the Allies' favour.

Militarily, the value of Americans participation is a long-range one. It must be some time before anything like the full weight of her immense man-power can be exercised. But, as in 1918, the mere fact of its being available at some future date may permit of operations by Russia and Britain that would have looked unwise earlier. The United States are with these Allies, and the reserves they can offer can be counted upon instead of looked on as a possible potential.

America has now been forced to realize that she is just as threatened as we are, and she must make her dispositions accordingly, grateful of the 'time' which we are able to give to her side. But the sands run fast. We are ourselves face to face with imminent invasion, which we have been promised.

It is difficult to write with any precision when history moves so quickly, and indeed, it is not wise to attempt to. In this war it is vital that we should overhaul our ideas and our tactics with every new situation, attacking one day, defending another. Speed of action and of thought are the keys to the situation.

Now what of invasion? That it will come, few men doubt. A few of us think that the first attempt will be a dress rehearsal which will 'not prove successful. Hitler, for all his madness, is not'likely to stake his all in an attempt to subjugate us. To stake all on such a gamble may mean the loss of the much he has gained. It is all right staking all when your loss is light, but a rich man is rarely seen to gamble as heavily in proportion as the poor man.

It was Nietzsche who had a few illuminating things to say

about the German character. So much of his philosophy has been misappropriated *by* the apologists of the Third Reich that a quotation of two examples will suffice to show exactly what Nietzsche meant, and not what Sorel and Chamberlain (neither Neville nor Joe, but another, unrelated gentleiiian of the same name) thought he meant.

Says Nietzsche: 'But here nothing will stop me from being rude, and from telling the Germans one or two unpleasant home truths; who else would do it if I did not? I refer to their laxity in matters historical. Not only have the Germans entirely lost the *breadth of vision* which enables one to grasp the course of culture and values of culture, not only are they one and all political puppets; but they have also put a ban on this very breadth of vision.'

It needed the" man who originated their Blonii Beast for them to tell them a home truth or two. Nietzsche, many years ago, saw what the final contribution would be if the ignorant and 'purely' German elements seized power.

. Let us quote another piece of criticism from the same philosopher:

'A man must first and foremost be "German", he must belong to *"The* race"; then only can he pass judgement upon all values. . . .'

The Nazi was matured on home ground, apparently. It was instincts such as these that have shown the 'Idealism' of the Nazis to be what it is—a law unto themselves, a law unto the race—regardless of all other values; regardless of European civilization. As Nietzsche says: 'To be a German is in itself an argument.' They have borrowed his cynicism, and used it for their own ends. They have tried to create a German revolution in Europe as big and as far-reaching as the Lutheran.

Also, Nietzsche says: 'Every great crime against culture for the last four centuries lies on their conscience . . . and always for the same reason, always owing to their bottomless cowardice in the face of reality, which is also cowardice in the face of truth. . . .'

Not only should Hitler know that sentence by heart, but also |he tacit supporters of Hitlerism throughout the whole wide world. The challenge of' Germany is as old as the Teuton

marches. The fight against German hegemony has gone on in Europe since the days of Barbarossa, and before. The first victory against civilization was won at the battle of the White Mountain. That was the first excursion of the Prussians into the heart of Europe, and now the whole heart has been eaten away. Culture, monuments, and learning have perished with a suddenness that would have surprised even Attila. All the values, the cherished emblems and faiths, have been turned inside out. Love has been conquered in the name of hate. Men have been made into slaves, and the very vigour and thoroughness of the destruction shows one thing clearly—the Nazis themselves do not believe in the permanence of their system or their 'ideology'. The boast that they will hold Europe in their thrall for a thousand years is empty, otherwise they would not destroy, but conserve. They are the last, last shudders of a dying order—the flicker of flame before the extinction. Men will die in that flame, cities will be desecrated, and ideals will be shaken, but this is not the Day of Judgement; humanity has a long way yet to go before it meets its God.

Nietzsche had a way of looking into the future and revealing the riches in store for us. I turn to him again for a quotation, not in the way a man may turn to the Bible, but the way a man might turn for guidance to another man who dreamt dreams and saw visions.

He says of the European scene of his day and of the future European scene such words of hope that they will be quoted in every generation, and they will be applicable to every time and age—until what he prophesies will be achieved.

'Whether we call it "civilization" or "humanizing" or "progress" which now distinguishes the European; whether we call it simply, without praise or blame, by the political formula; the *democratic* movement in Europe—behind all the moral and political foregrounds pointed to by such formulas, an immense physiological process goes on, which is ever extending; the process of assimilation of Europeans, their increasing detachment from the conditions under which, climatically and hereditarily, united races originate; their increasing independence of every milieu that for centuries would fain inscribe itself with equal demands on body and soul; that is the slow emergence of an

essentially *supernatural* and nomadic species of men, who possess, physiologically speaking, a maximum of the art and power of adaption as his typical distinction.'

What a wealth of truths abounds here! Nietzsche could see which way Europe was drifting. He called it a physiological process, but had he been alive to-day he would have recognized that it was also a psychological process. It is this which divided the old world from the new. He sees the emergence of an essentially -*supernational* and nomadic species of man . . . the refugee? The Refugee is no longer a national. He is a supernational. It is he who will mix the cultures for us and bring us the sympathy that comes with unity. This is a lesson to learn and apply in the tactics of war. There are no longer frontiers; your nationality is Nazi or anti-Nazi.

This 'humanizing' or 'civilizing' of Europe will take a long time, says Nietzsche, and many disappointments will attend it. But it will succeed.

'This process of *evolving Europeans* which can be retarded in its tempo by great relapses . . .'

This war is such a relapse. This war is a war to speed up the tempo of 'evolving Europeans'. But, says Nietzsche, it 'will perhaps just gain and grow thereby in vehemence and depth—the still raging storm and stress of "national sentiment" pertains to it, and also the anarchism which is appearing at present. . . .'

Every month sees the process growing, and the more retarded it is, the more determined and strengthened it becomes. The 'national sentiment', however, is still with us. Our indiscriminate internment policy indicates this. But that too will go under the onslaught of the enemy. We shall change slowly. In the ultimate outcome of this evolution, we may differ from Nietzsche, but this process of 'evolving Europeans' is upon us. The sooner we realize it, the better; the greater will the chances of salvation be; the greater the hope for the world. But it must come soon. Very soon.

Our culture and our civilization, whatever my young friend had to say at the beginning of this chapter, is a talisman. We must never despair of the ultimate victory. On that victory depend the sanity and well-being of our children, and of the

world. We have a better cause to fight for. We have a nobler heritage to defend, but we have first got to go through a spiritual and physical revolution before we can recognize the tactics and intentions of our enemy. We must put aside all fear, but not mercy. We must strike as hard as we can with a purposeful ruthlessness. We must take off our gloves.

In the future that lies before us there is a tale of hardship, and suffering, but all valuable things, all improvements, have been obtained by struggling. War has not been the enemy of mankind when used for a righteous purpose. But it can become the enemy if we do not clearly make up our minds who it is we are fighting, and unite with that common purpose with all nations, all peoples, all political shades of opinion, and throw in our full weight against the enemy.

This is not the time to invoke God on our side, although we may hope for his blessing. We, too, have sinned. Let that be a constant reminder to us. One thing is certain, and that is, however much we have sinned against the justice and spirit of God, it is we, and now America with us, who have to face the most gigantic fight in the history of the world. This is not a matter of defeating the Germans. This is a matter of conquering the world with a better system, with a braver army, with a greater discipline, and with a nobler sacrifice.

It is no good looking into the history books. They will teach us but little. We have a history to write ourselves. May we write it with a firm, steady and *legible* hand. The eyes of a thousand unborn generations are upon us. On eternity's face there is a shadow of doubt. Men of goodwill throughout the whole world are troubled. Our friends are dismayed. This is Our Time—Our Age. Let us be proud of it. To stand in defence of 'civilization', of the process of 'evolving Europeans', may be a cavalcade to Calvary, but the suffering and the cross have been held up as symbols of victory. We shall not shun that dark hill where two thousand years ago a Man died to be alive again. We too may have to die before we can live' That is the glory of our age, and **our** monument.