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Федеральное государственное бюджетное образовательное учреждение высшего образования
«Астраханский государственный университет»

Кафедра английской филологии

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A SHORT HISTORY OF RUSSIA

BY

MARY PLATT PARMELE

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

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Peter the Great.

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Оригинал:

CHAPTER XXV

ALEXANDER II. ASSASSINATED—NIHILISM

THE emancipation had been a disappointment to its promoters and to the serfs themselves. It was an appalling fact that year after year the death-rate had alarmingly increased, and its cause was—starvation. In lands the richest in the world, tilled by a people with a passion for agriculture, there was not enough bread! The reasons for this are too complex to be stated here, but a few may have brief mention. The allotment of land bestowed upon each liberated serf was too small to enable him to live and to pay his taxes, unless the harvests were always good and he was always employed. He need not live, but his taxes must be paid. It required three days' work out of each week to do that; and if he had not the money when the dreaded day arrived, the tax-collector might sell his corn, his cattle, his farming implements, and his house. But reducing whole communities to beggary was not wise, so a better way was

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discovered, and one which entailed no disastrous economic results. He was flogged. The time selected for this settling of accounts was when the busy season was over; and Stepniak tells us it was not an unusual thing for more than one thousand peasants in the winter—in a single commune—to be seen awaiting their turn to have their taxes “flogged out.” Of course, before this was endured all means had been exhausted for raising the required amount. Usury, that surest road to ruin, and the one offering the least resistance, was the one ordinarily followed. Thus was created that destructive class called *Koulaks*, or *Mir-eaters*, who, while they fattened upon the necessities of the peasantry, also demoralized the state by creating a wealthy and powerful class whom it would not do to offend, and whose abominable and nefarious interests must not be interfered with.

Then another sort of bondage was discovered, one very nearly approaching to serfdom. Wealthy proprietors would make loans to distressed communes or to individuals, the interest of the money to be paid by the peasants in a stipulated number of days' work every week until the original amount was returned.

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Sometimes, by a clause in the contract increasing the amount in case of failure to pay at a certain time, the original debt, together with the accruing interest, would be four or five times doubled. And if, as was probable, the principal never was returned, the peasant worked on year after year gratuitously, in the helpless, hopeless bondage of debt. Nor were these the worst of their miseries, for there were the *Tchinovniks*—or government officials—who could mete out any punishment they pleased, could order a whole community to be flogged, or at any moment invoke the aid of a military force or even lend it to private individuals for the subjugation of refractory peasants.

And this was what they had been waiting and hoping for, for two centuries and a half! But with touching loyalty not one of them thought of blaming the Tsar. Their “Little Father,” if he only knew about it, would make everything right. It was the nobility, the wicked nobility, that had brought all this misery upon them and cheated them out of their happiness! They hated the nobility for stealing from them their freedom and their land; and the nobility hated them for not being

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prosperous and happy, and for bringing famine and misery into the state, which had been so kind and had emancipated them.

As these conditions became year after year more aggravated acute minds in Russia were employed in trying to solve the great social problems they presented. In a land in which the associative principle was indigenous, *Socialism* was a natural and inevitable growth. Then, exasperated by the increasing miseries of the peasantry, maddened by the sufferings of political exiles in Siberia, there came into existence that word of dire significance in Russia—*Nihilism*, and following quickly upon that, its logical sequence—*Anarchism*, which, if it could, would destroy all the fruits of civilization.

It was Turguenief who first applied the ancient term “Nihilist” to a certain class of radical thinkers in Russia, whose theory of society, like that of the eighteenth-century philosophers in France, was based upon a negation of the principle of authority. All institutions, social and political, however disguised, were tyrannies, and must go. In the newly awakened Russian mind, this first assumed the mild form of a demand for the re-

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moval of *legislative* tyranny, by a system of gradual reforms. This had failed—now the demand had become a mandate. The people *must* have relief. The Tsar was the one person who could bestow it, and if he would not do so voluntarily, he must be compelled to grant it. No one man had the right to wreck the happiness of millions of human beings. If the authority was centralized, so was the responsibility. Alexander's entire reign had been a curse—and emancipation was a delusion and a lie. He must yield or perish. This vicious and degenerate organization had its center in a highly educated middle class, where men with nineteenth-century intelligence and aspirations were in frenzied revolt against methods suited to the time of the Khans. The inspiring motive was not love of the people, but hatred of their oppressors. Appeals to the peasantry brought small response, but the movement was eagerly joined by men and women from the highest ranks in Russia.

Secret societies and organizations were everywhere at work, recruited by misguided enthusiasts, and by human suffering from all classes. Wherever there were hearts bruised and bleeding from official cruelty,

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in whatever ranks, there the terrible propaganda found sympathizers, if not a home; men—and still more, women—from the highest families in the nobility secretly pledging themselves to the movement, until Russian society was honeycombed with conspiracy extending even to the household of the Tsar. Proclamations were secretly issued calling upon the peasantry to arise. In spite of the vigilance of the police, similar invitations to all the Russian people were posted in conspicuous places—“We are tired of famine, tired of having our sons perish upon the gallows, in the mines, or in exile. Russia demands liberty; and if she cannot have liberty—she will have vengeance!”

Such was the tenor of the threats which made the life of Emperor Alexander a miserable one after 1870. He had done what not one of his predecessors had been willing to do. He had, in the face of the bitterest opposition, bestowed the gift of freedom upon 23,000,000 human beings. In his heart he believed he deserved the good-will and the gratitude of his subjects. How gladly would he have ruled

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over a happy empire! But what could he do? He had absolute power to make his people miserable—but none to make them happy. It was not his fault that he occupied a throne which could only be made secure by a policy of stern repression. It was not his fault that he ruled through a system so elementary, so crude, so utterly inadequate, that to administer justice was an impossibility. Nor was it his fault that he had inherited autocratic instincts from a long line of ancestors. In other words, it was not his fault that he was the Tsar of Russia!

The grim shadow of assassination pursued him wherever he went. In 1879 the imperial train was destroyed by mines placed beneath the tracks. In 1880 the imperial apartments in “the Winterhof” were partially wrecked by similar means. Seventeen men marched stolidly to the gallows, regretting nothing except the failure of their crime; and hundreds more who were implicated in the plot were sent into perpetual exile in Siberia. The hand never relaxed—nor was the Constitution demanded by these atrocious means granted.

On the 13th of March, 1881, while the Emperor was driving, a bomb was thrown be-

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neath his carriage. He stepped out of the wreck unhurt. Then as he approached the assassin, who had been seized by the police, another was thrown. Alexander fell to the ground, exclaiming, "Help me!" Terribly mutilated, but conscious, the dying Emperor was carried into his palace, and there in a few hours he expired.

In the splendid obsequies of the Tsar, nothing was more touching than the placing of a wreath upon his bier by a deputation of peasants. It can be best described in their own words. The Emperor was lying in the Cathedral wrapped in a robe of ermine, beneath a canopy of gold and silver cloth lined with ermine. "At last we were inside the church," says the narrative. "We all dropped on our knees and sobbed, our tears flowing like a stream. Oh, what grief! We rose from our knees, again we knelt, and again we sobbed. this did we three times, our hearts breaking beside the coffin of our benefactor. There are no words to express it. And what honor was done us! The General took our wreath, and placed it straightway upon the breast of our Little Father. Our peasants' wreath laid on his heart, his martyr breast—as we were in all

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his life nearest to his heart! Seeing this we burst again into tears. Then the General let us kiss his hand—and there he lay, our Tsar-martyr, with a calm, loving expression on his face—as if he, our Little Father, had fallen asleep.”

If anything had been needed to make the name Nihilism forever odious, it was this deed. If anything were required to reveal the bald wickedness of the creed of Nihilism, it was supplied by this aimless sacrifice of the one sovereign who had bestowed a colossal reform upon Russia. They had killed him, and had then marched unflinchingly to the gallows—and that was all—leaving others bound by solemn oaths to bring the same fate upon his successor. The whole energy of the organization was centered in secreting dynamite, awaiting a favorable moment for its explosion, then dying like martyrs, leaving others pledged to repeat the same horror—and so *ad infinitum*. In their detestation of one crime they committed a worse one. They conspired against the life of civilization—as if it were not better to be ruled by despots than assassins, as if a bad government were not better than none!

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The existence of Nihilism may be explained, though not extenuated. Can anyone estimate the effect upon a single human being to have known that a father, brother, son, sister, or wife has perished under the knout? Could such a person ever again be capable of reasoning calmly or sanely upon "political reforms"? If there were any slumbering tiger-instincts in this half-Asiatic people, was not this enough to awaken them? There were many who had suffered this, and there were thousands more who at that very time had friends, lovers, relatives, those dearer to them than life, who were enduring day by day the tortures of exile, subject to the brutal punishments of irresponsible officials. It was this which had converted hundreds of the nobility into conspirators—this which had made Sophia Perovskaya, the daughter of one of the highest officials in the land, give the signal for the murder of the Emperor, and then, scorning mercy, insist that she should have the privilege of dying upon the gallows with the rest.

But tiger-instincts, whatever their cause, must be extinguished. They cannot coexist with civilization. Human society as consti-



From a drawing by Edwin B. Child.

The Coronation of the Czar Alexander III., 1883.

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The world was not surprised, and perhaps not even displeased, when Alexander III. showed a dogged determination not to be coerced into reforms by the assassination of his father nor threats of his own. His coronation, long deferred by the tragedy which threatened to attend it, finally took place with great splendor at Moscow in 1883. He then withdrew to his palace at Gatschina, where he remained practically a prisoner. Embittered by the recollection of the fate of his father, who had died in his arms, and haunted by conspiracies for the destruction of himself and his family, he was probably the least happy man in his empire. His every act was a protest against the spirit of reform. The privileges so graciously bestowed upon the Grand Duchy of Finland by Alexander I. were for the first time invaded. Literature and the press were placed under rigorous censorship. The *Zemstvo*, his father's gift of local self-government to the liberated serfs, was practically withdrawn by placing that body under the control of the nobility.

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It was a stern, joyless reign, without one act intended to make glad the hearts of the people. The depressing conditions in which he lived gradually undermined the health of the Emperor. He was carried in dying condition to Livadia, and there, surrounded by his wife and his children, he expired November 1, 1894.

CHAPTER XXV

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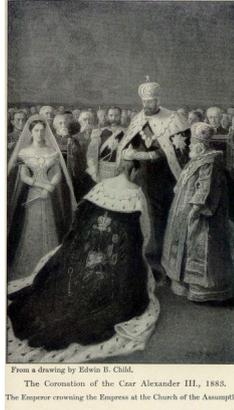


Illustration: The Coronation of the Czar Alexander III., 1883.
The Emperor crowning the Empress at the Church of the Assumption.
From a drawing by Edwin B. Child.]

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Перевод:

ГЛАВА XXV

Александр II. УБИТ—НИГИЛИЗМ

Освобождение стало разочарованием для его сторонников и для самих крепостных. Ужасающим фактом было то, что год за годом уровень смертности тревожно возрастал, и причиной этого был голод. На землях, самых богатых в мире, возделываемых народом со страстью к сельскому хозяйству, не хватало хлеба! Причины этого слишком сложны, чтобы излагать их здесь, но некоторые из них можно кратко упомянуть. Надел земли, дарованный каждому освобожденному крепостному, был слишком мал, чтобы позволить ему жить и платить налоги, если только урожаи не были всегда хорошими и он всегда был занят. Ему не нужно жить, но его налоги должны быть уплачены. Для этого требовалось работать три дня в неделю; и если у него не было денег, когда наступал страшный день, сборщик налогов мог продать свою кукурузу, свой скот, свои сельскохозяйственные орудия и свой дом. Но доводить целые общины до нищеты было неразумно, поэтому был найден лучший способ, который не привел к катастрофическим экономическим результатам. Его выпороли. Время, выбранное для этого сведения счетов, было, когда напряженный сезон закончился; и Степняк говорит нам, что не было ничего необычного в том, что более тысячи крестьян зимой — в одной коммуне — были замечены в ожидании своей очереди на "выпорку" налогов. Конечно, прежде чем это произошло, были исчерпаны все средства для сбора необходимой суммы. Обычно следовали ростовщичество, этому самому верному пути к разорению, который оказывал наименьшее сопротивление. Так был создан тот разрушительный класс, называемый кулаками, или пожирателями мира, которые, в то время как они жирели на потребностях крестьянства, также деморализовали государство, создав богатый и могущественный класс, которого не стоило бы оскорблять, и чьи отвлеченные и гнусные интересы не должны были затронуты.

Затем был обнаружен другой вид рабства, очень близкий к крепостному праву. Богатые собственники предоставляли ссуды бедствующим общинам или частным лицам, проценты с которых должны были выплачиваться крестьянами за определенное количество рабочих дней каждую неделю, пока первоначальная сумма не была возвращена. Иногда, согласно пункту в контракте, увеличивающему сумму в случае неуплаты в определенное время, первоначальный долг вместе с начисляющимися процентами удваивался в четыре или пять раз. И если, что было вполне вероятно, основная сумма так и не была возвращена, крестьянин год за годом работал безвозмездно, в

беспомощной, безнадежной кабале долга. И это не было худшим из их несчастий, поскольку существовали чиновники — или правительственные чиновники, — которые могли назначить любое наказание, какое им заблагорассудится, могли приказать выпороть целую общину или в любой момент призвать на помощь военную силу или даже предоставить ее частным лицам для подчинения непокорных крестьяне.

И это было то, чего они ждали и на что надеялись в течение двух с половиной столетий! Но с трогательной преданностью ни одному из них и в голову не пришло обвинять царя. Их "Маленький отец", если бы он только знал об этом, все бы исправил. Это была знать, порочная знать, которая навлекла на них все эти страдания и лишила их счастья обманом! Они ненавидели дворянство за то, что оно украло у них их свободу и их землю; и дворянство ненавидело их за то, что они не были процветающими и счастливыми, а также за то, что они принесли голод и нищету в государство, которое было таким добрым и освободило их.

По мере того как эти условия год от года усугублялись, острые умы в России были заняты попытками решить большие социальные проблемы, которые они представляли. В стране, где ассоциативный принцип был коренным, социализм был естественным и неизбежным ростом. Затем, раздраженный растущими страданиями крестьянства, обезумевший от страданий политических ссыльных в Сибири, появилось это слово, имеющее ужасное значение в России — нигилизм, и вскоре за ним последовала его логическая последовательность — анархизм, который, если бы мог, уничтожил бы все плоды цивилизации.

Именно Тургенев впервые применил древний термин "нигилист" к определенному классу радикальных мыслителей в России, чья теория общества, как и теория французских философов XVIII века, была основана на отрицании принципа авторитета. Все институты, социальные и политические, какими бы замаскированными они ни были, были тиранией и должны исчезнуть. В недавно пробудившемся российском сознании это сначала приняло мягкую форму требования об устранении законодательной тирании посредством системы постепенных реформ. Это не удалось — теперь требование превратилось в мандат. Люди должны почувствовать облегчение. Царь был единственным человеком, который мог даровать это, и если он не сделает этого добровольно, он должен быть вынужден даровать это. Ни один человек не имел права разрушать счастье миллионов человеческих существ. Если власть была централизована, то и ответственность была такой же. Все правление Александра было проклятием, а эмансипация — заблуждением и ложью. Он должен уступить или погибнуть. Эта порочная и дегенеративная организация имела свой центр в высокообразованном среднем классе, где люди с интеллектом и устремлениями девятнадцатого века яростно бунтовали

против методов, подходящих для времен ханов. Вдохновляющим мотивом была не любовь к народу, а ненависть к его угнетателям. Призывы к крестьянству вызвали небольшой отклик, но к движению охотно присоединились мужчины и женщины из высших эшелонов власти в России.

Повсюду действовали тайные общества и организации, завербованные заблудшими энтузиастами и страдающими людьми из всех классов. Где бы ни были сердца, израненные и кровоточащие от жестокости чиновников, в каких бы рядах они ни находились, там ужасная пропаганда находила сочувствующих, если не дом; мужчины — и еще больше женщин — из высших дворянских семей тайно присоединялись к движению, пока российское общество не было пронизано заговорами, распространяющимися даже на домочадцы царя. Тайно издавались прокламации, призывавшие крестьянство к восстанию. Несмотря на бдительность полиции, подобные приглашения ко всему русскому народу были вывешены на видных местах: "Мы устали от голода, устали от того, что наши сыновья гибнут на виселице, в шахтах или в ссылке. Россия требует свободы; и если она не может получить свободу — она отомстит!"

Таков был характер угроз, которые сделали жизнь императора Александра несчастной после 1870 года. Он сделал то, чего не пожелал сделать ни один из его предшественников. Он, несмотря на жесточайшее сопротивление, даровал дар свободы 23 000 000 человеческих существ. В глубине души он верил, что заслуживает доброй воли и благодарности своих подданных. С какой радостью он правил бы счастливой империей! Но что он мог сделать? У него была абсолютная власть делать своих людей несчастными, но не было никакой, чтобы сделать их счастливыми. Не его вина, что он занял трон, который мог быть обеспечен только политикой суровых репрессий. Не его вина, что он правил с помощью системы, настолько элементарной, настолько грубой, настолько совершенно неадекватной, что вершить правосудие было невозможно. И не его вина, что он унаследовал автократические инстинкты от длинной линии предков. Другими словами, это была не его вина, что он был царем России!

Мрачная тень убийства преследовала его, куда бы он ни пошел. В 1879 году императорский поезд был уничтожен минами, заложенными под рельсы. В 1880 году императорские апартаменты в "Винтерхофе" были частично разрушены аналогичным образом. Семнадцать человек бесстрашно отправились на виселицу, не сожалея ни о чем, кроме того, что их преступление не было раскрыто; и еще сотни человек, замешанных в заговоре, были отправлены в вечную ссылку в Сибирь. Рука никогда не расслаблялась — и Конституция, требуемая этими зверскими средствами, не была выполнена.

13 марта 1881 года, когда император ехал, под его карету была брошена бомба. Он выбрался из-под обломков целым и невредимым. Затем, когда он приблизился к убийце, которого схватила полиция, был брошен еще один. Александр упал на землю, восклицая: "Помогите мне!" Страшно изуродованного, но в сознании, умирающего императора отнесли в его дворец, и там через несколько часов он скончался.

Во время пышных похорон царя ничто не было более трогательным, чем возложение депутацией крестьян венка на его гроб. Лучше всего это можно описать их собственными словами. Император лежал в соборе, завернутый в горностаевую мантию, под балдахин из золотой и серебряной ткани, подбитой горностаем. "Наконец-то мы оказались внутри церкви", - говорится в повествовании. "Мы все упали на колени и зарыдали, наши слезы текли ручьем. О, какое горе! Мы поднялись с колен, снова опустились на колени и снова зарыдали. Мы проделали это трижды, наши сердца разрывались у гроба нашего благодетеля. Нет слов, чтобы выразить это. И какая честь была оказана нам! Генерал взял наш венок и сразу же возложил его на грудь нашего Маленького отца. Наш крестьянский венок возложили на его сердце, на его мученическую грудь — ведь мы всю его жизнь были ближе всего к его сердцу! Увидев это, мы снова зарыдались. Затем генерал позволил нам поцеловать его руку — и вот он лежит, наш царь-мученик, со спокойным, любящим выражением на лице — как будто он, наш Маленький отец, уснул".

Если что-то и было нужно, чтобы сделать название нигилизм навсегда одиозным, так это этот поступок. Если что-то и требовалось, чтобы раскрыть наглую порочность веры нигилизма, то это было сделано этой бесцельной жертвой единственного государя, который даровал России колоссальную реформу. Они убили его, а затем без колебаний отправились на виселицу — и это было все, — оставив других связанными торжественными клятвами навлечь ту же участь на его преемника. Вся энергия организации была сосредоточена на том, чтобы спрятать динамит, дожидаться благоприятного момента для его взрыва, а затем умереть как мученики, оставив других обреченными повторять тот же ужас — и так до бесконечности. Испытывая отвращение к одному преступлению, они совершили еще худшее. Они устроили заговор против жизни цивилизации — как будто не лучше быть под властью деспотов, чем убийц, как будто плохое правительство не лучше, чем никакого!

Существование нигилизма может быть объяснено, хотя и не смягчено. Может ли кто-нибудь оценить, как повлияло на одно человеческое существо известие о том, что отец, брат, сын, сестра или жена погибли под ударами кнута? Сможет ли такой человек когда-нибудь снова быть способным спокойно и здраво рассуждать о "политических реформах"? Если в этом полуазиатском народе и были какие-то дремлющие тигриные инстинкты,

разве этого не было достаточно, чтобы пробудить их? Было много тех, кто пострадал от этого, и были еще тысячи тех, у кого в то самое время были друзья, возлюбленные, родственники, те, кто был им дороже жизни, кто изо дня в день терпел пытки изгнания, подвергаясь жестоким наказаниям безответственных чиновников. Именно это превратило сотни дворян в заговорщиков — это заставило Софью Перовскую, дочь одного из высших чиновников страны, подать сигнал к убийству императора, а затем, презрев милосердие, настаивать на том, чтобы ей была предоставлена привилегия умереть на виселице с остальными.

Но тигриные инстинкты, какова бы ни была их причина, должны быть подавлены. Они не могут сосуществовать с цивилизацией. Человеческое общество в том виде, в каком оно устроено сегодня, не может признать им оправдания. Это запрещает им — и нигилист - это Измаил девятнадцатого века.

Мир не был удивлен и, возможно, даже недоволен, когда Александр III продемонстрировал непреклонную решимость не поддаваться принуждению к реформам ни убийством своего отца, ни собственными угрозами. Его коронация, долгое время откладывавшаяся из-за грозившей ей трагедии, наконец состоялась с большой пышностью в Москве в 1883 году. Затем он удалился в свой дворец в Гатчине, где оставался практически пленником. Озлобленный воспоминанием о судьбе своего отца, который умер у него на руках, и преследуемый заговорами с целью уничтожения его самого и его семьи, он, вероятно, был наименее счастливым человеком в своей империи. Каждый его поступок был протестом против духа реформ. Привилегии, столь милостиво дарованные Великому княжеству Финляндскому Александром I, были впервые нарушены. Литература и пресса подвергались строгой цензуре. Земство, дар его отца в виде местного самоуправления освобожденным крепостным, было практически отменено, поставив этот орган под контроль дворянства.



From a drawing by Edwin B. Child.
The Coronation of the Czar Alexander III, 1883.
The Emperor crowning the Empress at the Church of the Assumption.

Министерство образования и науки РФ
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«Астраханский государственный университет»

[Иллюстрация: Коронация царя Александра III., 1883.

Император коронует императрицу в церкви Успения Пресвятой Богородицы.
С рисунка Эдвина Б. Чайлда.]

Это было суровое, безрадостное правление, без единого поступка, призванного обрадовать сердца людей. Удручающие условия, в которых он жил, постепенно подорвали здоровье императора. Его в предсмертном состоянии доставили в Ливадию, и там, окруженный женой и детьми, он скончался 1 ноября 1894 года.