



EMOTIONAL RUSSIA

The Perennial Problem, Will Russia Come Back?
Illuminated by Extracts from Recent Writers in
Various Magazines.

SLAV supernaturalism was tabloided in this almost unkillable Rasputin, whose story is so dramatically told by Lincoln J. Steffens, in an Everybody's Serial. The emotional but patriotic assassins began to think the mystery man was invincible. They gave him poisoned cakes and wine. "Oh, God!" whispered one of the conspirators, "he has eaten all the cakes and drunk all the wine. He still lives!" The phonograph started again and the Prince went down to shoot Rasputin.

"Yes," he said, when he came back. "He's dead. He's on the big rag. He bled down the leg out of one boot."

But Rasputin came back again. "For a huddled moment," says the picture-line, "the frozen group shuddered on the stairs, watching the silent figure floating towards the door."

RUSSIA'S vague, misdirected emotions are well illustrated in the motor-truck mounted with Maxims let loose on a mission of terror by Kronstadt mutineers after Kerensky gave them their freedom to go out against Korniloff. The mutineers were stopped by loyalist troops.



WHO has listened to real Russian music without a strange sense of the supernatural?

Who, trying to get at the secret of Russia's inexplicable hysteria since the war began, will fail to be impressed with this same sense of the supernatural? The Slav people are not as we are. The Russian Revolution; the whole course of the movement that brought it about; the strange phantom-work of cross purposes and irresolutions since the rise of Kerensky; the dumb show of the Czar and his treasons; the fraternizations with the German troops; the alternate marches to victory and the disorganized retreats; the appeals not to reason, but to emotion; the mad rush of the peasants to reclaim the land; the desertions en masse; the curious mixture of anger and fear and reverence displayed by the mobs of the revolution; the evident disinclination to run amuck and kill; the odd patience of the people under all circumstances—these and many more symptoms show that the Russian people are above all things profoundly emotional. They are capable one might think of mass-hypnotism; just as the ladies of the Court were under the mesmeric influence of the beast Rasputin.

Just to read the story of how Rasputin was killed sums up the mysterious character of the Russian people; how those that killed him were haunted by a fear that he was unkillable, Lincoln J. Steffens tells the story in Everybody's. The man was to be lured to "get" the young Grand Duchess who plotted his downfall and over whom he had a horrible hypnotic influence.

On the night of our December 31, 1916, says Steffens, there was an illumination in the house of the Grand Duchess. It looked as if there were a ball within. There wasn't; only a few persons were present, a very few, the few who had planned the plot to kill Rasputin; and a very anxious few they were. Rasputin had been invited to call upon the Duchess. He had accepted the invitation. And the lady was there to see him. She had no intention of meeting her distinguished caller. The plan was to let the Prince go down to receive Rasputin and, explaining to him that there was a party above, entertain him till the Duchess could "free herself from the other guests." While he waited, poisoned cakes and wine were to be offered to the glutton. Since the Prince might be expected to partake also of the food and drink, the glasses were marked to distinguish the clean one from that which was poisoned, and there were to be red cakes and white cakes; the red were poisoned. And, to complete New Zealand ball upstairs, they had brought in word—one record.

...ate cake and waited for



ONE of the most convincing scenes in the drama, Will Russia Resist Wilhelm? is that of the blind Austrian beggar, his wife and child among the Russian soldiers in Galicia. The soldiers took great pity on this poor exile who, of course, kept his blind spots open along with his ears. He turned out to be a German officer—and he is probably dead now; unless some passive non-resister has Kameraded him.



IN the whole story of Russian emotionalism, resembling hysteria, nothing is more startling than the Woman's Battalion, who fought where their male brothers defected. They did not lead charmed lives. Many of them were wounded. Some took cyanide of potassium to avoid imprisonment. Here are two of them in hospital.

the Duchess to get rid of her guests upstairs; while the Prince waited for the poison to work; and while the guests upstairs waited for the Prince to come back and report Rasputin poisoned—or for the crack of his revolver.

They watched and they tried to listen, but they could not hear. That record! It clamoured and their dancing feet shuffled. And then when the music ceased, and they could hearken, there was silence down there.

Maybe the visitor was a supernatural monster. Could Rasputin be killed? They looked to the doctor for the answer. He declared again that his mixture would cause "instant death," but his face betrayed him. They were in a panic when they heard the Prince coming.

What happened afterwards is indicated by the lines under the picture: emotional Russia on the verge of a revolution, which came.

And what is the people to whom this great adventure has come? asks C. Hagberg Wright in the Contemporary. It is difficult to generalize when one is dealing with diversified millions, yet one or two things are salient. "In the Russian nature," says Bakunin, more

than seventy years ago, "there is something so energetic and so large, such an abundance of poetry, passion and esprit, that it is impossible not to be convinced, when one really knows it, that it has a great mission to fulfill." The appreciation is just; as just to-day as when it was written. The Russian character is profoundly emotional. This explains the occasional energy of Russian work, the power of such a speaker as Kerensky, the Martyrs of the Terror—even the Terror itself. Now, a people that feels rather than thinks, may have moods of what looks like apathy, but when it is roused, it will go far, very far. When such a people becomes revolutionary, it will not regulate itself by the cold measures of political prudence.

Speaking of the fraternizations with the Germans, Charles Johnston in the North American Review, remarks that it was made easy by the childlike simplicity of the young Russian soldiers, who, believing that the millenium has come, are somewhat too ready to "love their enemies." Members of the German and Austrian staff corps, speaking Russian fluently, have masqueraded as privates and invited Russian soldiers to come over to the enemy trenches, dining and wining them, and asking tenderly about their welfare. Then there were return parties given in the Russian trenches, when the visitors brought little cameras to take interesting photographs "for the dear, white-haired parents at home," included Russian batteries in the background. Officers who interfered were told that in accordance with the luckless Gutchkoff order, discipline was now entrusted to the soldiers themselves.