

cease to declassify itself into small independent producers. We can bring labor from abroad. We can introduce technical improvements, and start the electrification of Russia. When we have got that far, we shall be able to deal with the petty bourgeoisie. When the peasant receives his electric light and power from us, he will become prac-

tically a government agent, and his sentiment of economic independence will not be wounded.

If capital grows faster than our industries improve, then all will be over so far as we are concerned. But we hope the reverse will occur, and that we may thus sweep away the economic obstacles in our path.

THE PEASANTS ARE WAITING

[The following two letters, one from Southern Russia and the other from a province in the central part of the country, were published in the Prague Volya Rossii, the official organ of the Socialist-Revolutionary Party, for July 5, 1921. Their particular interest lies in the fact that the Socialist-Revolutionary Party seeks support particularly among the peasantry in its anti-Soviet struggle, and maintains an excellent information service in Russia. These letters are really reports. The extent of this information service is recognized even by the Soviet Government, which, in recent instructions to its secret police, recommended especially careful watch over these agents. The letters refer to events in May, 1921.]

I

IT is now two years since people in our part of the country, after passing early through the terrors of Bolshevism, then falling into the hands of Hetman Skoropadsky and the Germans, and finally returning once more to the Bolsheviks, began to keep their ears to the ground in constant expectation. What are they waiting for? They are waiting for better times, for the day when the lash and the dictatorship shall pass away, when the period of starvation shall be over, and when each of us shall be able to speak, live, and breathe freely. And in this protracted waiting, hope gradually becomes extinguished, will and determination become weaker and weaker. But the moment the people's wrath flares up anywhere, the moment a movement starts in any place, you can read in the eyes of each the eternal question: 'Can it be?' And every time the

hopes are vain. Nothing comes of its own accord.

The village population is crushed and terrorized. The requisitions are ruinous, for our authorities are efficient. To curry favor with the central government, they squeeze the village population unmercifully. There is one district in which 250 per cent of the requisitioned amount was actually gathered. There are cases where seed-grain has been taken; as has almost all our hay and much live-stock and poultry.

And so, when the Government ordered the organization of 'planting committees,' the peasants would not listen to them. In spite of all the efforts of our 'best' Communists, who personally went to the villages to persuade the peasants, the latter refused to have anything to do with the committees. The only thing that the authorities could do was to appoint committees, and report to Moscow that everything was pro-

ceeding smoothly. In reality, the committees took no part in the planting.

And then, suddenly, a thunderbolt came: tax in kind, instead of requisitions, freedom of local exchange of foodstuffs, abrogation of guard detachments, and so on. The peasants, taught by long and bitter experience, refused to believe. And they did not have to wait long for proofs. When they attempted to carry grain to market, they found out that the guard detachments were abolished only on paper; that in reality they continue to confiscate grain, even when only three or five poods are carried. Moreover, all those who ride on the steps, or the buffers, or the platforms of trains, are liable to five years' imprisonment. And how else can you ride?

Where is the way out? Last spring the peasants reëlected their *volost*, or county, Soviets, throwing out all the Communists. But the elections were declared irregular, the new Soviets were dispersed, and revolutionary committees were appointed in their place. Many people were arrested. Now the peasants pay no more attention to elections, and at the last election the Communists were in the majority.

The natural outcome of this is the appearance of bands known as the 'avengers of the people.'

You often see a sight like this: through the streets of a city, ten or more peasants are led under guard, their hands tied. The procession is followed by forty or fifty wagons loaded with household goods, agricultural implements, and the like. The peasants are the hostages taken from a village which has given refuge to three brothers, who have formed a band to wreak vengeance on the authorities. Such a band never touches the peasants, but attacks troops and kills commissars. Whenever the 'avengers' cannot be caught, the villages which are suspected of sheltering them are subject to reprisals.

Spiritually, the darkness that reigns in the villages is indescribable. There are scarcely any schools, no organizations. Newspapers are a rarity. News comes only from the 'bagmen,' who peddle grain, and from soldiers returning from the front.

Meanwhile the peasants work and wait.

II

The Government of Kursk, a grain-producing province in Central Russia, which in normal times yielded for export fifteen million poods of grain, is now a veritable desert. The plan of requisition for 1920 called for ten million poods; and although the province gave only half of that amount, by Christmas peasants were already starving. The crops last year were frightfully small, and yet the authorities established over the peasants a veritable reign of blood and iron.

The worst repressions were applied in the districts of Sudgan and Belgorod, where the representative of the food administration, in his efforts to please his superiors, applied such measures as executions and arrests, in order to gather the full amount of the allotment by January 15. In some districts the only thing that the peasants received in exchange for their grain was less than two yards of calico and a pound and a half of salt.

Last spring many peasants did not have any seed, and some of them went south to get it. They were not very successful. And now, although eighty per cent of the land has been planted, the crops are bound to be small, because the peasants used from four to five poods of seed per *dessiatine*, instead of the customary ten to twelve poods.

It is ludicrous to expect that the peasants will be able to pay the tax and still have a surplus left to exchange for articles of general consumption. It is

more likely that they will not be able even to pay the tax, for gathering which the Government will, most probably, use the same methods of persuasion that it used in gathering requisitioned grain. Under these circumstances, it seems inconceivable that the policy of compromising with the peasantry, which the Soviet Government had announced, will prove more than a measure on paper.

The general situation in the province is similar to that in other parts of Russia: utter apathy and indifference on the part of the peasantry toward organizations and elections, since the Communists always force their own majorities.

For example, last month there was a cooperative congress. In spite of all the efforts on the part of the Communists,

the majority at this Congress was anti-Communist, consisting of the peasants. Then the Communists brought to the congress forty-five city representatives; and when even that did not give them a majority, they arranged for the *collegium* of the local food administration to have the right to vote. Only then were they able to get a majority of 71 against 68 of their opponents. Naturally, they elected their own candidates. The peasants left the congress, cursing the Communists. And this is what the Communists call free and autonomous coöperation, based upon the confidence of the masses!

All public life is at a standstill. Only official meetings take place and official celebrations at which the people appear by government order.

CONTROL OF THE LIFE-CYCLE. III

BY JULIAN HUXLEY

From *The English Review*, March-June
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THE reason that the tissues of the adult do not grow is not that they have lost all power of growth. When an adult muscle is injured, the injury can be repaired. In order to accomplish this, the muscle-cells near the point of injury lose their characteristic striated structure, which enables them to contract, and become de-differentiated. In this condition they multiply; and when enough young muscle-tissue has been produced, the new cells differentiate again, and assume the striated adult structure. It would seem as if the power of reproduction and the power

of working efficiently cannot exist together in such a complicated tissue as muscle. An analogy will illustrate this. We have seen that an axolotl can be transformed into its adult state by means of thyroid. Now, if thyroid be given to a female during the egg-laying period, the egg-laying stops within a day or two, and the transformation begins. To carry on both egg-production and metamorphosis together is too great a task for the organism.

Something roughly parallel to this occurs in cancer. Each kind of cancer is produced from one particular type