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The Truth About "The Protocols"

A LITERARY FORGERY

*From The Times of
August 16, 17, and 18, 1921*

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PREFACE.

The so-called "Protocols of the Elders of Sion" were published in London in 1920 under the title of "The Jewish Peril."

This book is a translation of a book published in Russia, in 1905, by Sergei Nilus, a Government official, who professed to have received from a friend a copy of a summary of the minutes of a secret meeting, held in Paris by a Jewish organization that was plotting to overthrow civilization in order to establish a Jewish world state.

These "Protocols" attracted little attention until after the Russian Revolution of 1917, when the appearance of the Bolsheviks, among whom were many Jews professing and practising political doctrines that in some points resembled those advocated in the "Protocols," led many to believe that Nilus's alleged discovery was genuine. The "Protocols" were widely discussed and translated into several European languages. Their authenticity has been frequently attacked and many arguments have been adduced for the theory that they are a forgery.

In the following three articles the Constantinople Correspondent of *The Times* presents for the first time conclusive proof that the document is in the main a clumsy plagiarism. He has forwarded to *The Times* a copy of the French book from which the

plagiarism is made. The British Museum has a complete copy of the book, which is entitled "Dialogue aux Enfers entre Machiavel et Montesquieu, ou la Politique de Machiavel au XIX. Siècle. Par un Contemporain," and was published at Brussels in 1865. Shortly after its publication the author, Maurice Joly, a Paris lawyer and publicist, was arrested by the police of Napoleon III. and sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment.

I.—A LITERARY FORGERY.

“There is one thing about Constantinople that is worth your while to remember,” said a diplomatist to the writer in 1908. “If you only stay here long enough you will meet many men who matter, and you may find the key to many strange secrets.” Yet I must confess that when the discovery which is the theme of these articles was communicated to me I was at first incredulous. Mr. X., who brought me the evidence, was convinced. “Read this book through,” he said, “and you will find irrefutable proof that the ‘Protocols of the Learned Elders of Sion’ is a plagiarism.”

Mr. X., who does not wish his real name to be known, is a Russian landowner with English connexions. Orthodox by religion, he is in political opinion a Constitutional Monarchist. He came here as a refugee after the final failure of the White cause in South Russia. He had long been interested in the Jewish question as far as it concerned Russia, had studied the “Protocols,” and during the period of Denikin’s ascendancy had made investigations with the object of discovering whether any occult “Masonic” organization, such as the “Protocols” speak of, existed in Southern Russia. The only such organization was a Monarchist one. The discovery of the key to the problem of the “Protocols” came to him by chance.

A few months ago he bought a number of old books from a former officer of the “Okhrana” (Political Police) who had fled to Constantinople. Among these books was a small volume in French, lacking the title-page, with dimensions of 5½ in. by 3¾ in. It had been cheaply rebound. On the leather back is printed in

Latin capitals the word Joli. The preface, entitled "Simple avertissement," is dated Geneva, October 15, 1864. The book contains 324 pages, of which numbers 315-322 inclusive follow page 24 in the only copy known to Mr. X, perhaps owing to a mistake when the book was rebound. Both the paper and the type are characteristic of the "sixties and seventies" of the last century. These details are given in the hope that they may lead to the discovery of the title of the book [See Preface]. Mr. X. believes it must be rare, since, had it not been so, the "Protocols" would have speedily been recognized as a plagiarism by anyone who had read the original.

That the latter is a "fake" could not be maintained for an instant by anyone who had seen it. Its original possessor, the old Okhrana officer, did not remember where he obtained it, and attached no importance to it. Mr. X, glancing at it one day, was struck by a resemblance between a passage which had caught his eye and a phrase in the French edition of the "Protocols" (Edition de la Vieille France, 1920, 5, Rue du Préaux-Cleres, 5, Paris 7th Arrondissement). He followed up the clue, and soon realized that the "Protocols" were to a very large extent as much a paraphrase of the Geneva original as the published version of a War Office or Foreign Office telegram is a paraphrase of the ciphered original.

Before receiving the book from Mr. X, I was, as I have said, incredulous. I did not believe that Sergei Nilus's "Protocols" were authentic; they explained too much by the theory of a vast Jewish conspiracy. Professor Nilus's account of how they were obtained was too melodramatic to be credible, and it was hard to believe that real "Learned Elders of Sion" would not have produced a more intelligent political scheme than the crude and theatrical subtleties of the Protocols. But I could not

have believed, had I not seen, that the writer who supplied Nilus with his originals was a careless and shameless plagiarist.

The Geneva book is a very thinly-veiled attack on the despotism of Napoleon III. in the form of a series of 25 dialogues divided into four parts. The speakers are Montesquieu and Machiavelli. In the brief preface to his book the anonymous author points out that it contains passages which are applicable to all Governments, "but it particularly personifies a political system which has not varied in its application for a single day since the fatal and alas! too distant date when it was *enthroned*." Its references to the "Haussmannisation" of Paris, to the repressive measures and policy of the French Emperor, to his wasteful financial system, to his foreign wars, to his use of secret societies in his foreign policy (cf., his notorious relations with the Carbonari) and his suppression of them in France, to his relations with the Vatican, and to his control of the Press are unmistakable.

The Geneva book, or as it will henceforth be called the Geneva Dialogues, opens with the meeting of the spirits of Montesquieu and Machiavelli on a desolate beach in the world of shades. After a lengthy exchange of civilities Montesquieu asks Machiavelli to explain why from an ardent Republican he had become the author of "The Prince" and "the founder of that sombre school of thought which has made all crowned heads your disciples, but which is well fitted to justify the worst crimes of tyranny." Machiavelli replies that he is a realist and proceeds to justify the teaching of "The Prince," and to explain its applicability to the Western European States of 1864.

In the first six "Geneva Dialogues" Montesquieu is given a chance of argument of which he avails himself. In the seventh dialogue,

which corresponds to the fifth, sixth, seventh, and part of the eighth "Protocols," he gives Machiavelli permission to describe at length how he would solve the problem of stabilizing political societies "incessantly disturbed by the spirit of anarchy and revolution." Henceforth Machiavelli or in reality Napoleon III., speaking through Machiavelli, has the lion's share of the dialogue. Montesquieu's contributions thereto become more and more exclamatory; he is profoundly shocked by Machiavelli-Napoleon's defence of an able and ruthless dictatorship, but his counter-arguments grow briefer and weaker. At times, indeed, the author of "L'Esprit des Lois" is made to cut as poor a figure as—*parvum componere magno*—does Dr. Watson when he attempts to talk criminology to Sherlock Holmes.

The "Protocols" follow almost the same order as the Dialogues. Dialogues 1-17 generally correspond with "Protocols" 1-19. There are a few exceptions to this. One is in the 18th "Protocol," where, together with paraphrases of passages from the 17th Dialogue ("Geneva Dialogues," pp. 216, 217), there is an echo of a passage in the 25th "Geneva Dialogue," viz. :— "Quand le malheureux est opprimé il dit 'Si le Roi le savait'; Quand on veut se venger, qu'on espère un secours, on dit 'le Roi le saura.'" This appears on page 68 of the English edition of the "Protocols" (4th Edition, published by "The Britons," 62, Oxford-street, London, W.) as "In order to exist, the prestige of power must occupy such a position that the people can say among themselves, 'If only the King knew about it,' or 'When the King knows about it.'"

The last five "Protocols" (Nos. 20-24 inclusive) do not contain so many paraphrases of the "Geneva Dialogues" as the first 19. Some of their resemblances and paraphrases are, however, very striking, *e.g.*, the following :—

A loan is an issue of Government paper which entails an obligation to pay interest amounting to a percentage of the total sum of the borrowed money. If a loan is at 5 per cent., then in 20 years the Government will have unnecessarily paid out a sum equal to that of the loan in order to cover the percentage. In 40 years it will have paid twice, and in 60 thrice that amount, but the loan will still remain as an unpaid debt.—“Protocols,” p. 77.

MONTESQUIEU.—“How are loans made? By the issue of bonds entailing on the Government the obligation to pay interest proportionate to the capital it has been paid. Thus, if a loan is at 5 per cent., the State, after 20 years, has paid out a sum equal to the borrowed capital. When 40 years have expired it has paid double, after 60 years triple: yet it remains debtor for the entire capital sum.”—“Geneva Dialogues,” p. 250.

But generally speaking “Protocols” 20 and 21, which deal (somewhat unconvincingly) with the financial programme of the Learned Elders, owe less to the “Geneva Dialogues,” Nos. 18-21, than to the imagination of the plagiarist author who had for once in a way to show a little originality. This is natural enough since the “Dialogues” in question describe the actual financial policy of the French Imperial Government, while the “Protocols” deal with the future. Again in the last four “Geneva Dialogues” Machiavelli’s apotheosis of the Second Empire, being based upon historical facts which took place between 1852 and 1864, obviously furnished scanty material for the plagiarist who wished to prove or, very possibly, had been ordered to prove in the “Protocols” that the ultimate aim of the leaders of Jewry was to give the world a ruler sprung from the House of David.

The scores of parallels between the two books and a theory concerning the methods of the plagiarist and the reasons for the publication of the “Protocols” in 1905 will be the subject of further articles. Meanwhile it is amusing to find that the only subject with which the “Protocols” deal on lines quite contrary to those followed by Machiavelli in the “Dialogues” is the private life of the Sovereign.

The last words of the "Protocols" are "Our Sovereign must be irreproachable." The Elders evidently propose to keep the King of Israel in good order. The historical Machiavelli was, we know, rather a scandalous old gentleman, and his shade insists that amorous adventures, so far from injuring a Sovereign's reputation, make him an object of interest and sympathy to "the fairest half of his subjects."

II.—PLAGIARISM AT WORK.

While the Geneva Dialogues open with an exchange of compliments between Montesquieu and Machiavelli, which covers seven pages, the author of the Protocols plunges at once *in medias res*.

One can imagine him hastily turning over those first seven pages of the book which he has been ordered to paraphrase against time, and angrily ejaculating, "Nothing here." But on page 8 of the Dialogues he finds what he wants; the greater part of this page and the next are promptly paraphrased, thus:—

Geneva Dialogues, p. 8. Protocols, p. 1 ("The Britons" edition).

Among mankind the evil instinct is mightier than the good. Man is more drawn to evil than to good. Fear and Force have more empire over him than reason. . . . Every man aims at domination; not one but would be an oppressor if he could; all or almost all are ready to sacrifice the rights of others to their own interests. . . .

It must be noted that people with corrupt instincts are more numerous than those of noble instinct. Therefore in governing the world the best results are obtained by means of violence and intimidation, and not by academic discussions. Every man aims at power; every one would like to become a dictator if he only could do so, and rare indeed are the men who would not be disposed to sacrifice the welfare of others in order to attain their own personal aims.

What restrains those beasts of prey which they call men from attacking one another? Brute unrestrained Force in the first stages of social life, then the Law, that is still force regulated by forms. You have consulted all historical sources; everywhere might precedes right. Political Liberty is merely a relative idea. . . .

What restrained the wild beasts of prey which we call men? What has ruled them up to now? In the first stages of social life they submitted to brute and blind force, then to law, which in reality is the same force, only masked. From this I am led to deduct that by the law of nature right lies in might. Political freedom is not a fact but an idea.

The gift of liberty according to the Machiavelli of the Geneva Dialogues, of self-government according to the Protocols (page 2), leads speedily to civil and social strife, and the State is soon ruined by internal convulsions or by foreign intervention following on the heels of civil war. Then follows a singular parallel between the two books which deserves quotation :—

Geneva Dialogues, p. 9.

What arms will they (States) employ in war against foreign enemies? Will the opposing generals communicate their plans of campaign to one another and thus be mutually in a position to defend themselves? Will they mutually ban night attacks, traps, ambushes, battles with inequality of force? Of course not; such combatants would court decision. Are you against the employment of these traps and tricks, of all the strategy indispensable to war against the enemy within, the revolutionary?

Protocols, p. 2.

. . . I would ask the question why is it not immoral for a State which has two enemies, one external and one internal, to use different means of defence against the former to that which it would use against the latter, to make secret plans of defence, to attack him by night or with superior forces? . . .

Both "Machiavelli" and the author of the Protocols agree (Prot. p. 3, Geneva Dialogues, p. 11) almost in the same words that politics have nothing in common with morality. *Right* is described in the Protocols as "an abstract idea established by nothing," in the Dialogues as an "infinitely vague" expression. The end, say both, justifies the means. "I pay less attention," says Machiavelli, "to what is good and moral than to what is useful and necessary." The Protocols (p. 4) use the same formula, substituting "profitable" for "useful." According to the Protocols he who would rule "must have recourse to cunningness (*sic*) and hypocrisy." In the second Dialogue (p. 15) Montesquieu reproaches Machiavelli for having "only two words to repeat—'Force' and 'guile.'" Both Machiavelli and the "Elders"

of the Protocols preach despotism as the sole safeguard against anarchy. In the Protocols this despotism has to be Jewish and hereditary. Machiavelli's despotism is obviously Napoleonic.

There are scores of other parallels between the books. Fully 50 paragraphs in the Protocols are simply paraphrases of passages in the Dialogues. The quotation *per me reges regnant*, rightly given in the *Vieille France* edition of the Protocols (p. 29), while *regunt* is substituted for *regnant* in the English version (p. 20), appears on p. 63 of the Geneva Dialogues. Sulla, whom the English version of the Protocols insists on calling "Silla," appears in both books.

After covering Italy with blood, Sulla reappeared as a simple citizen in Rome: no one durst touch a hair of his head. Geneva Dialogues, p. 159.

Remember at the time when Italy was streaming with blood, she did not touch a hair of Silla's head, and he was the man who made her blood pour out. Protocols, p. 51.

Sulla, who after the proscriptions stalked "in savage grandeur home," is one of the tyrants whom every schoolboy knows and those who believe that Elders of the 33rd Degree are responsible for the Protocols, may say that this is a mere coincidence. But what about the exotic Vishnu, the hundred-armed Hindu deity who appears twice in each book? The following passages never were examples of "unconscious plagiarism."

Geneva Dialogues, p. 141:—

Machiavelli.—"Like the God Vishnu, my press will have a hundred arms, and these arms will give their hands to all the different shades of opinion throughout the country."

Protocols, p. 43:—

"These newspapers, like the Indian god Vishnu, will be possessed of hundreds of hands, each of which will be feeling the pulse of varying public opinion."

Geneva Dialogues, p. 207:—

Montesquieu.—"Now I understand the figure of the god Vishnu; you have a hundred

arms like the Indian idol, and each of your fingers touches a spring."

Protocols, p. 65 :—

"Our Government will resemble the Hindu god Vishnu. Each of our hundred hands will hold one spring of the social machinery of State."

TAXATION OF THE PRESS.

The Dialogues and the Protocols alike devote special attention to the Press, and their schemes for the muzzling and control thereof are almost identical—absolutely identical, indeed, in many details. Thus Machiavelli on pp. 135 and 136 of the Dialogues expounds the following ingenious scheme :—

"I shall extend the tax on newspapers to books, or rather I shall introduce a stamp duty on books having less than a certain number of pages. A book, for example, with less than 200 or 300 pages will not rank as a book, but as a brochure. I am sure you see the advantage of this scheme. On the one hand I thin (*je rarifie*) by taxation that cloud of short books which are the mere appendages of journalism ; on the other I force those who wish to escape stamp duty to throw themselves into long and costly compositions, which will hardly ever be sold and scarcely read in such a form."

The Protocols, p. 41, has :—

"We will tax it (the book press) in the same manner as the newspaper Press—that is to say, by means of Excise stamps and deposits. But on books of less than 300 pages we will place a tax twice as heavy. These short books we will classify as pamphlets, which constitute the most virulent form of printed poison. These measures will also compel writers to publish such long works that they will be little read by the public and so chiefly on account of their high price."

Both have the same profound contempt for journalists.

Geneva Dialogues, pp. 145, 146 :—

Machiavelli.—"You must know that journalism is a sort of Freemasonry ; those who live by it are bound . . . to one another by the ties of professional discretion ; like the augurs of old, they do not lightly divulge the secret of their oracles. They would gain nothing by betraying themselves, for they have mostly won more or less discreditable scars . . ."

Protocols, p. 44 :—

"Already there exists in French journalism a system of Masonic understanding for giving counter-

signs. All organs of the Press are tied by mutual professional secrets in the manner of the ancient oracles. Not one of its members will betray his knowledge of the secret, if the secret has not been ordered to be made public. No single publisher will have the courage to betray the secret entrusted to him, the reason being that not one of them is admitted into the literary world without bearing the marks of some shady act in his past life."

CONTEMPT FOR THE PEOPLE.

But this contempt is nothing compared to that which both Machiavelli and the Elders evince towards the masses whom tyranny is to reduce to a more than Oriental servitude.

Geneva Dialogues, p. 43 :—

Machiavelli.—“ You do not know the unbounded meanness of the peoples grovelling before force, pitiless towards the weak, implacable to faults, indulgent to crimes, incapable of supporting the contradictions of a free *régime*, and patient to the point of martyrdom under the violence of an audacious despotism giving themselves masters whom they pardon for deeds for the least of which they would have beheaded twenty constitutional kings.”

Protocols, p. 15 :—

“ In their intense meanness the Christian peoples help our independence—when kneeling they crouch before power ; when they are pitiless towards the weak ; merciless in dealing with faults, and lenient to crimes ; when they refuse to recognize the contradictions of freedom ; when they are patient to the degree of martyrdom in bearing with the violence of an audacious despotism. At the hands of their present dictators, Premiers, and Ministers, they endure abuses for the smallest of which they would have murdered twenty kings.”

Both the Elders and Machiavelli propose to make political crime thoroughly unpopular by assimilating the treatment of the political criminal to that of the felon. Both devote not a little attention to police organization and espionage ; the creator of Machiavelli had evidently studied Napoleon III.'s police methods and suffered at the hands of his agents. Each proposes to exercise a severe control over the Bar and the Bench. As regards the Vatican, Machiavelli-Napoleon, with recent Italian history in mind, aims at the complete control of the Papacy. After inflaming popular hatred

against the Church of Rome and its clergy, he will intervene to protect the Holy See, as Napoleon III. did intervene, when "the chassépôts worked wonders." The learned Elders propose to follow a similar plan: "when the people in their rage throw themselves on to the Vatican we shall appear as its protectors in order to stop bloodshed." Ultimately, of course, they mean to destroy the Church. The terrible chiefs of a Pan-Judaic conspiracy could hardly have any other plan of campaign. Machiavelli, naturally, does not go so far. Enough for him if the Pope is safely lodged in the Napoleonic pocket.

Is it necessary to produce further proofs that the majority of the Protocols are simply paraphrases of the Geneva Dialogues, with wicked Hebrew Elders, and finally an Israelite world ruler in the place of Machiavelli-Napoleon III., and the brutish *goyim* (Gentiles) substituted for the fickle masses, "gripped in a vice by poverty, ridden by sensuality, devoured by ambition," whom Machiavelli intends to win ?

III.—SOME CONCLUSIONS.

There is no evidence as to how the Geneva Dialogues reached Russia. The following theory may be suggested.

The Third Napoleon's secret police, many of whom were Corsicans, must have known the existence of the Dialogues and almost certainly obtained them from some of the many persons arrested on the charge of political conspiracy during the reign of Napoleon III. In the last two decades of the 19th century and in the early years of the 20th there were always a few Corsicans in the Palace Police of the Tsar, and in the Russian secret service. Combining courage with secretiveness, a high average of intelligence with fidelity to his chief, the Corsican makes a first-class secret agent or bodyguard. It is not improbable that Corsicans who had been in the service of Napoleon III., or who had had kinsmen in his secret service, brought the Geneva Dialogues to Russia, where some member of the Okhrana or some Court official obtained possession of them. But this is only a theory.

As to the Protocols, they were first published in 1905 at Tsarskoye Selo in the second edition of a book entitled "The Great Within the Small," the author of which was Professor Sergei Nilus. Professor Nilus has been described to the writer as a learned, pious, credulous Conservative, who combined much theological and some historical erudition with a singular lack of knowledge of the world. In January, 1917, Nilus, according to the introduction to the French version of the Protocols, published a book, entitled "It is Here, at Our Doors!!" in which he republished the Protocols. In this latter work, according to the

French version, Professor Nilus stated that the manuscript of the Protocols was given him by Alexis Nicolaievich Sukhotin, a noble who afterwards became Vice-Governor of Stavropol.

According to the 1905 edition of the Protocols they were obtained by a woman who stole them from "one of the most influential and most highly initiated leaders of Freemasonry. The theft was accomplished at the close of the secret meeting of the 'initiated' in France, that nest of Jewish conspiracy." But in the epilogue to the English version of the Protocols Professor Nilus says, "My friend found them in the safes at the headquarters of the Society of Zion which are at present situated in France." According to the French version of the Protocols, Nilus in his book of 1917 states that the Protocols were notes of a plan submitted to the "Council of Elders" by Theodor Hertzl at the first Zionist Congress which was held at Basle, in August, 1897, and that Hertzl afterwards complained to the Zionist Committee of Action of the indiscreet publication of confidential information. The Protocols were signed by "Zionist representatives of the 33rd Degree" in Orient Freemasonry and were secretly removed from the complete file of the proceedings of the aforesaid Zionist Congress, which was hidden in the "Chief Zionist office, which is situated in French territory."

Such are Professor Nilus's rather contradictory accounts of the origin of the Protocols. Not a very convincing story! Theodor Hertzl is dead; Sukhotin is dead, and where are the signatures of the Zionist representatives of the 33rd Degree?

Turning to the text of the Protocols, and comparing it with that of the Geneva Dialogues, one is struck by the absence of any effort on the part of the plagiarist to conceal his plagiarisms. The paraphrasing has been very careless;

parts of sentences, whole phrases at times, are identical: the development of the thought is the same; there has been no attempt worth mentioning to alter the order of the Geneva Dialogues. The plagiarist has introduced Darwin, Marx, and Nietzsche in one passage in order to be "up to date"; he has given a Jewish colour to "Machiavelli's" schemes for dictatorship, but he has utterly failed to conceal his indebtedness to the Geneva Dialogues. This gives the impression that the real writer of the Protocols, who does not seem to have had anything to do with Nilus and may have been some quite unimportant précis writer employed by the Court or by the Okhrana, was obliged to paraphrase the original at short notice. A proof of Jewish conspiracy was required at once as a weapon for the Conservatives against the Liberal elements in Russia.

Mr. X, the discoverer of the plagiarism, informs me that the Protocols, shortly after their discovery in 1901, four years before their publication by Professor Nilus, served a subsidiary purpose, namely, the first defeat of Monsieur Philippe, a French hypnotist and thought-reader, who acquired considerable influence over the Tsar and the Tsaritsa at the beginning of the present century. The Court favourite was disliked by certain great personages, and incurred the natural jealousy of the monks, thaumaturgists, and similar adventurers who hoped to capture the Tsar through the Empress in their own interest, or in that of various cliques. Philippe was not a Jew, but it was easy to represent a Frenchman from "that nest of Jewish conspiracy" as a Zionist agent. Philippe fell from favour, to return to Russia and find himself once more in the Court's good graces at a later date.

But the principal importance of the Protocols was their use during the first Russian revolu-

tion. This revolution was supported by the Jewish element in Russia, notably by the Jewish Bund. The Okhrana organization knew this perfectly well ; it had its Jewish and crypto-Jewish agents, one of whom afterwards assassinated M. Stolypin ; it was in league with the powerful Conservative faction ; with its allies it sought to gain the Tsar's ear. For many years before the Russian revolution of 1905-1906 there had been a tale of a secret council of Rabbis who plotted ceaselessly against the Orthodox. The publication of the Protocols in 1905 certainly came at an opportune moment for the Conservatives. It is said by some Russians that the manuscript of the Protocols was communicated to the Tsar early in 1905, and that its communication contributed to the fall of the Liberal Prince Sviatopolk-Mirski in that year and the subsequent strong reactionary movement. However that may be, the date and place of publication of Nilus's first edition of the Protocols are most significant now that we know that the originals which were given him were simply paraphrases.

The following conclusions are, therefore, forced upon any reader of the two books who has studied Nilus's account of the origin of the Protocols and has some acquaintance with Russian history in the years preceding the revolution of 1905-6 :—

1. The Protocols are largely a paraphrase of the book here provisionally called the "Geneva Dialogues."

2. They were designed to foster the belief among Russian Conservatives, and especially in Court circles, that the prime cause of discontent among the politically minded elements in Russia was not the repressive policy of the bureaucracy, but a world-wide Jewish conspiracy. They thus served as a weapon against the Russian Liberals, who urged the Tsar

to make certain concessions to the intelligentsia.

3. The Protocols were paraphrased very hastily and carelessly.

4. Such portions of the Protocols as were not derived from the Geneva Dialogues were probably supplied by the Okhrana, which organization very possibly obtained them from the many Jews it employed to spy on their coreligionists.

So much for the Protocols. They have done harm not so much, in the writer's opinion, by arousing anti-Jewish feeling, which is older than the Protocols and will persist in all countries where there is a Jewish problem until that problem is solved; rather, they have done harm by persuading all sorts of mostly well-to-do people that every recent manifestation of discontent on the part of the poor is an unnatural phenomenon, a factitious agitation caused by a secret society of Jews.

Leading Article reprinted from

The Times

of August 18, 1921.

We publish to-day the last of the articles on the so-called "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," from our Constantinople Correspondent, who has effectively exposed a remarkable forgery. We have, of course, no political object in making this discovery known. On the general aspects of the Jewish problem our attitude is known to be impartial, and we have no intention of taking sides in those political controversies on this question which too frequently engender excessive passion and obscure its real character. In the interests of objective truth, however, it was of great importance that a legend like that so long connected with the "Protocols of the Elders of Zion" should be exposed at the earliest possible opportunity.

Briefly summarized, the facts of this curious historical incident are as follows. A Russian book, published in 1905 by an official named SERGEI NILUS, contained a document described as "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion," and purported to be a summary of the proceedings of a secret meeting of a Jewish organization that was plotting in France to overthrow Gentile civilization and establish a Jewish world State. The document attracted little attention until after the Russian revolution in 1917, when the astounding collapse of a great country through the action of the Bolsheviks and the presence of a large number of Jews in the Bolshevik ranks caused many to search for some simplified explanation of the catastrophe. The "Protocols" appeared to provide such an explanation, more particularly since the tactics

of the Bolsheviks in many respects resembled those advocated in the "Protocols." The book was translated into several European languages and made the basis for impassioned dissertations on an alleged Jewish world peril. There was a certain plausibility about this thesis that attracted many; but the authenticity of the "Protocols" was very vigorously called in question, and the whole matter was shrouded in doubt until our Correspondent made his remarkable discovery. A Russian in Constantinople, who had bought some books from an ex-officer of the Russian Secret Police, found among them one in which many passages struck him by their resemblance to the "Protocols." Our Correspondent, whose attention was called to the matter, found on examination that the "Protocols" consisted in the main of clumsy plagiarisms from this little French book, which he has forwarded to us. The book had no title-page, but we identified it in the British Museum as a political pamphlet directed against NAPOLEON III. and published in Brussels in 1865 by a French lawyer named MAURICE JOLY, and entitled "Dialogue aux Enfers entre Machiavel et Montesquieu." The book was published anonymously, but the author was immediately seized by NAPOLEON'S police and sentenced to a term of imprisonment. A second edition was published in Brussels in 1868, with the author's name and a note on his imprisonment.

The author of the "Protocols" simply copied from the "Dialogues" a number of passages in which MACHIAVELLI is made to enunciate the doctrines and tactics of despotism as they were at that time practised by NAPOLEON, and put them into the mouth of an imaginary Jewish Elder. There can be little doubt that the forgery was perpetrated by some member of the Russian Secret Police. NILUS, who may have acted in good faith, declared

that the manuscript of the "Protocols" had been given him by an official named ALEXANDER SUKHOTIN, who professed to have received it from a woman who had stolen it from an Elder of Zion. On the leather back of the copy of the "Dialogues" sent us by our Correspondent we notice the letters A.S., and, seeing that the book was bought from an ex-officer of the Secret Police, it seems possible that this copy belonged at one time to SUKHOTIN, and that it was the copy actually used in the compilation of the "Protocols." For many years there was a close connexion between the Russian and the French police, and one of the confiscated copies of JOLY's book may easily have fallen into the hands of a Russian agent—such as RACHKOVSKY, at one time head of the Russian Secret Police in Paris, to whom other and more clumsy forgeries have been traced—and may have inspired him to invent a weapon for use against Jewish revolutionaries. At any rate, the fact of the plagiarism has now been conclusively established, and the legend may be allowed to pass into oblivion. The historical interest of the discovery is considerable, though, as we have indicated, it does not, in our opinion, affect the Jewish problem, which happily, in this country, cannot be said to exist in its Continental form.

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