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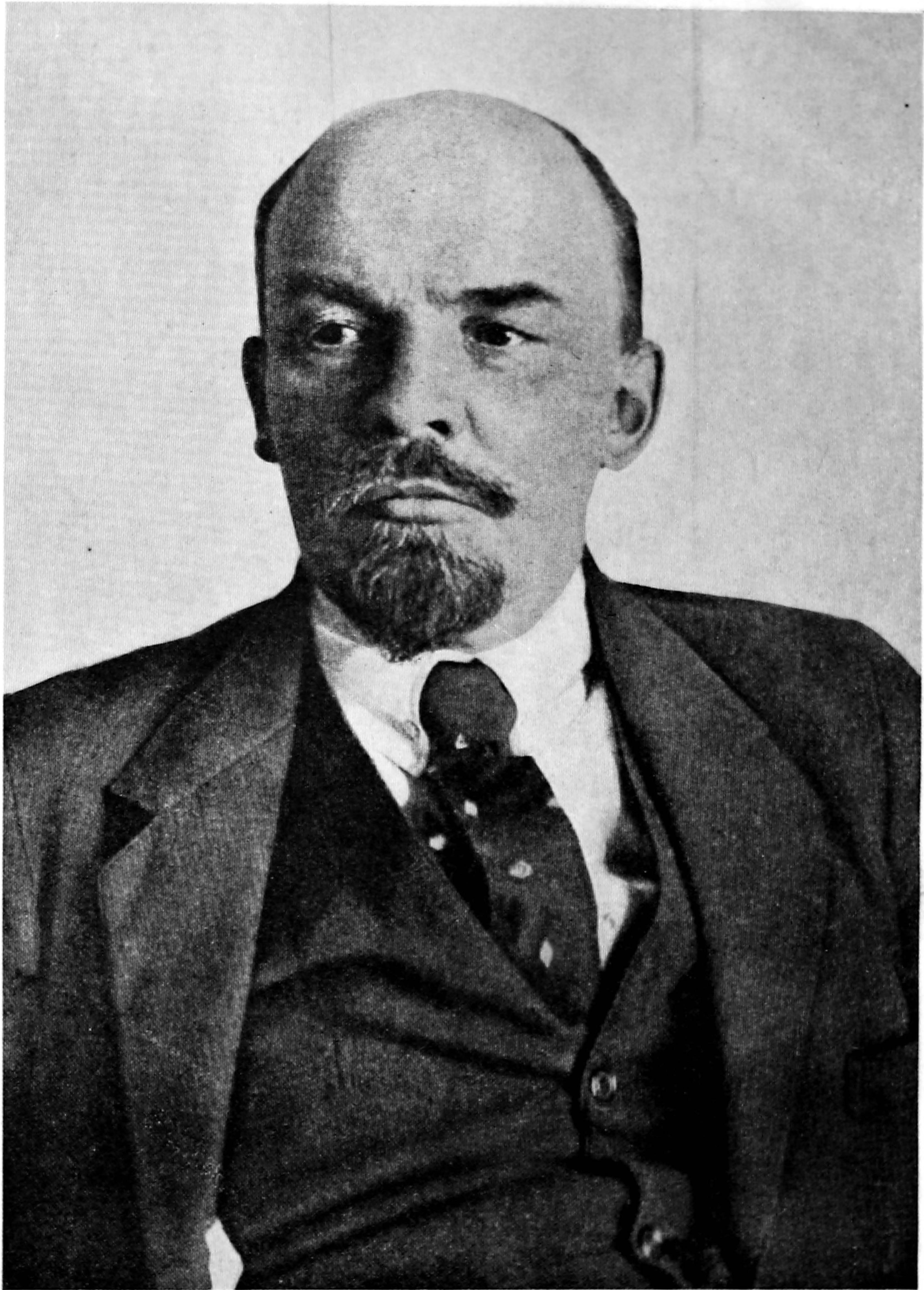
THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION



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LENIN.

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THE RUSSIAN
REVOLUTION
(1917—1926)

BY
LANCELOT LAWTON

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PREFACE

THE period of which this book treats is that of the Bolshevik Revolution.

I believe that the world is deeply interested in the experiments that are taking place in Soviet Russia, and that there is a demand for a work which shall be a sober and impartial account of these experiments. It has been my endeavour to produce a work of this character.

I lived in Russia before the war and paid a prolonged visit to that country in 1924, when I collected much historical material, which has since been supplemented by the fruits of original research.

All particulars relating to specific questions have been brought up to date; amongst the sources of information which I consulted for this purpose were numerous official publications printed in Russia.

Strictly speaking, the Bolshevik Revolution has so far proceeded in two stages: (1) Militant Communism, which ended in economic cataclysm; (2) Nationalisation, which still survives. In judging of the latter, the reader must bear in mind that it is being applied under conditions which are peculiar to Russia, and totally different from those to be found in any Western country.

In the course of this work I have freely exploited the knowledge possessed by my wife, Lydia Alexandrovna. This knowledge covers a wide range of subjects, including a number of languages.

I should also like to mention that my last visit to Russia was made on behalf of *The Daily Chronicle*. From the articles which I subsequently wrote for that newspaper I have extracted material sufficient to make up about two and a half chapters; the remainder of the book is composed of entirely fresh material.

Since the following pages went to press, the proposal to amend the marriage laws of Soviet Russia has been

revived,* and has been accepted by the Central Executive Committee, which is the final legislative authority. The new text, while emphasising that registration is desirable in the interests of the State and Society, declares that henceforth the registration of marriages shall be optional. In the event of a man and a woman living together without registration the fact of marriage would, if necessary, have to be legally established by one or more of the following proofs: mutual enjoyment of property, mutual financial support, mutual responsibility for the education of children, and documentary evidence in correspondence or otherwise, or the testimony of third parties.

One important alteration has been introduced into the divorce laws. The obligation of one party for the maintenance of another who may happen to be destitute after divorce, is limited to a year. In the past, many men frequently availed themselves of the easy divorce laws, but invariably neglected to support their former wives. Numerous instances occurred where, in order to secure the temporary help of a wife in the fields, peasants married at the beginning of the harvesting season and divorced when it was over. The new law, it is hoped, will ensure that a divorced woman receives at least one year's maintenance. Equally, this law is intended to defeat a type of designing woman who appeared, particularly in the villages, and made a practice of marrying for no other purpose than divorcing as a means of obtaining a share in her husband's property.

L. L.

*Knightsbridge,
December, 1926.*

* See p. 224.

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