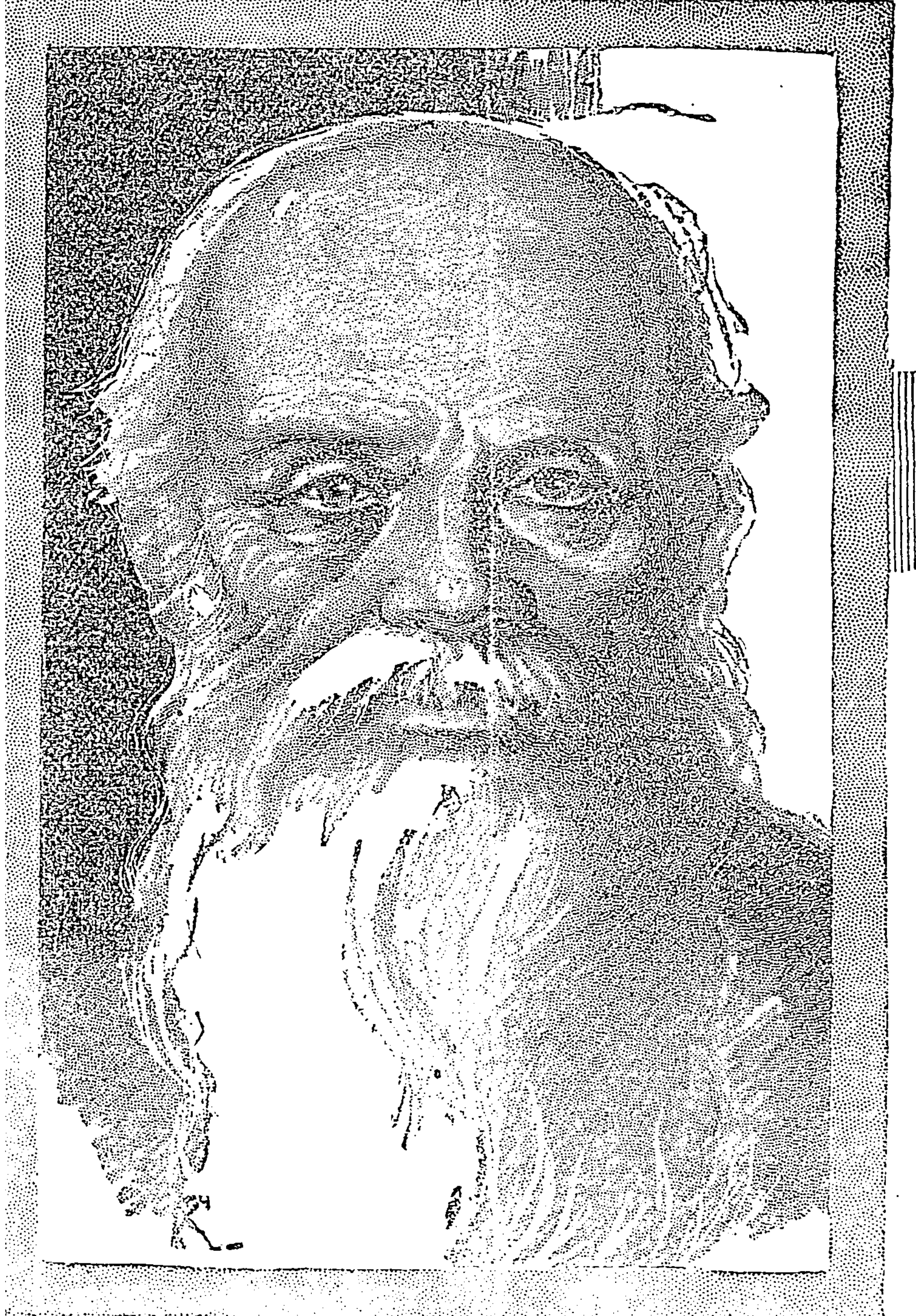
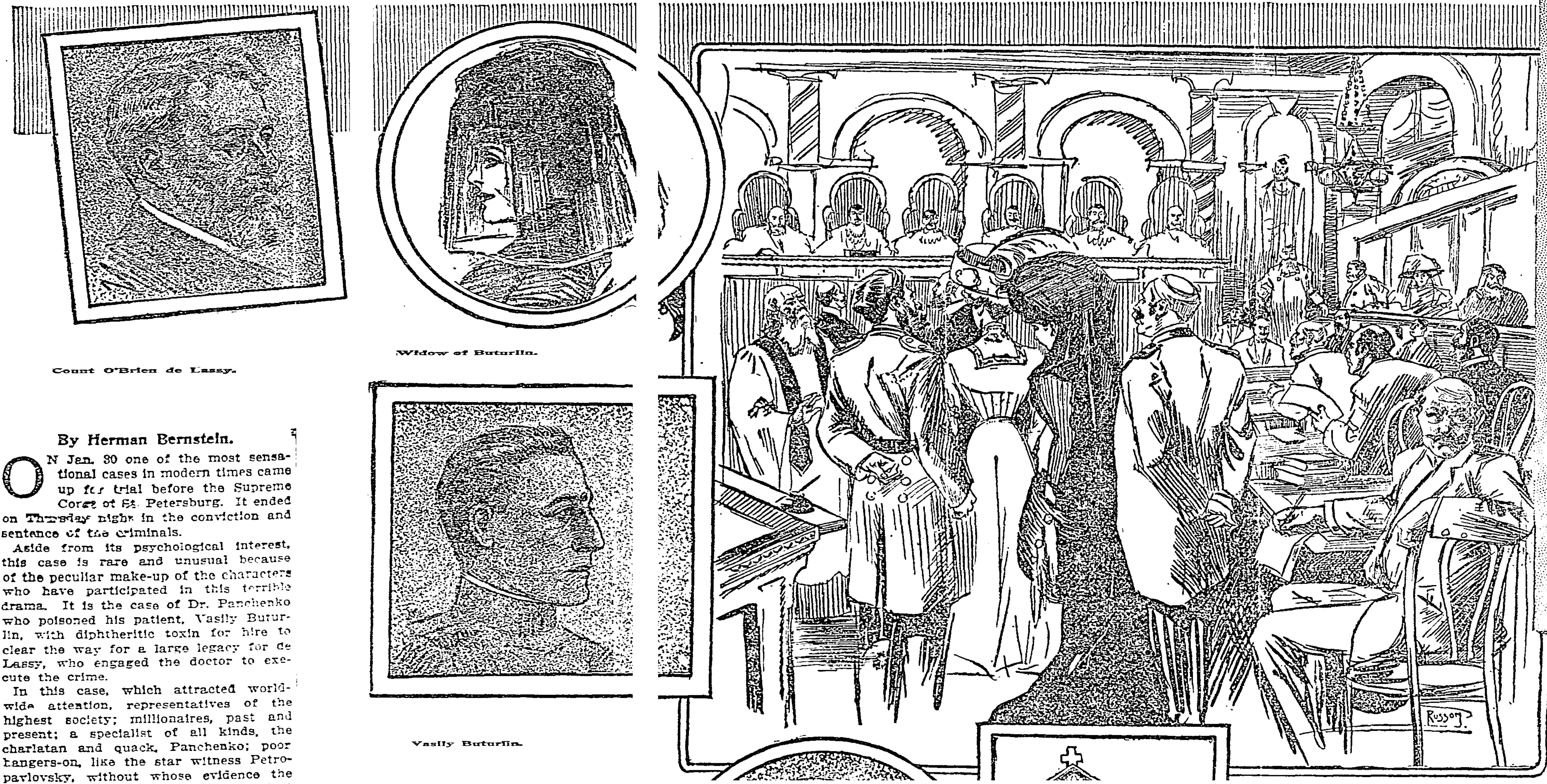


THE DOCTOR WHO KILLED HIS PATIENTS WITH GERMS

For the First Time the Full Story Is Told of How the Russian Physician Panchenko Poisoned for Hire and How His Boasts of His Crimes Led to His Downfall.



Dr. Panchenko.



Widow of Buturlin.

Count O'Brien de Lassy.

By Herman Bernstein.

ON Jan. 30 one of the most sensational cases in modern times came up for trial before the Supreme Court of St. Petersburg. It ended on Thursday night in the conviction and sentence of the criminals.

Aside from its psychological interest, this case is rare and unusual because of the peculiar make-up of the characters who have participated in this terrible drama. It is the case of Dr. Panchenko who poisoned his patient, Vasily Buturlin, with diphtheritic toxin for hire to clear the way for a large legacy for de Lassy, who engaged the doctor to execute the crime.

In this case, which attracted world-wide attention, representatives of the highest society; millionaires, past and present; a specialist of all kinds, the charlatan and quack, Panchenko; poor hangers-on, like the star witness Petropavlovsky, without whose evidence the crime would have remained a secret just like Panchenko's former crimes; Mme. Muravieva, who is supposed to have exerted a hypnotic influence over Panchenko; the widow of the murdered man, who was a music hall singer before she married him; all sorts of lackeys, chambermaids, maids—all these are mixed together as in one of Dostoyevsky's great crime novels. But of all the characters, small and large, implicated in this crime drama, the figure of the patriarchal looking doctor, Panchenko, who poisoned his patients under the guise of relieving their suffering, who performed criminal operations, and who helped people to commit suicide, stand out in boldest relief.

Panchenko was convicted on Thursday and sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment, which his advanced age will make a life sentence. De Lassy was sentenced for life. Mme. Muravieva was acquitted.

The Leading Characters:
DMITRY BUTURLIN.

Dmitry Buturlin is a retired General who was in command of the Grodno Division in 1892. He had been married to Countess Bobrinsky, and divorced from her more than twenty years ago. With her he had two children, Vasily the man who was murdered by Panchenko, and Ludmila. In 1902 he made out his will, leaving a million roubles to his son and about 400,000 roubles to his daughter.

VASILY BUTURLIN.

Vasily Buturlin was first an officer of the Guards of the Preobrazhenski Regiment. When he married the countess, he was transferred to the Department of the Ministry of the Interior. He was twenty-six years old when he was murdered.

LUDMILA O'BRIEN DE LASSY.

Ludmila de Lassy is the daughter of Gen. Buturlin and the sister of Dr. Panchenko's victim. In 1905 she made the acquaintance of Patrick P. O'Brien de Lassy, an estate owner and shipbuilder in the Government of Grodno, and married him two years later, despite her father's opposition to the match.

PATRICK O'BRIEN DE LASSY.

Patrick de Lassy is a "hereditary nobleman" in the Government of Grodno. He studied first in Vilno, then in London. He is 47 years old. He was married twice before marrying Ludmila. Patrick O'Brien de Lassy is of Irish descent. He is descendant of the last of the Kings of Ireland, according to his own testimony. He was a shipbuilder, and before the outbreak of the war between Russia and Japan he bought for Russia two cruisers, "Nissim" and "Kassuta." During the war he established a shipyard in Finland and built there two mine-destroyers. But the Russian fleet was defeated, and his shipbuilding enterprise also came to an end. De Lassy is also charged with numerous forgeries.

VLADIMIR PANCHENKO.

The son of a Colonel, belonging to the nobility of Kharkov, he graduated from the Imperial University of Kharkov, but never submitted his thesis. He is 60 years old. In 1885 he was advertising in Paris a "wonderful" preparation, a sort of remedy for all ills. He made hypodermic injections, and sold poison, for forty francs, to Ilovinsky, who thus committed suicide by the aid of a physician. Then he returned to St. Petersburg, where he jumped into prominence. Dr. Panchenko is versatile. He is a musician, an actor, a writer, an editor, a compiler of pornographic writings, besides being a physician. He advertised all sorts of fake hair tonics, patent medicines; committed all sorts of criminal operations; gave false death certificates for trifling sums. He was so overcome with the enormity of the sum de Lassy offered him for killing the heirs of the Buturlin millions that he boasted

of his prospective wealth, and thereby gave himself and his accomplice away.

T. MURAVIEVA.

Yekaterina Muravieva is the widow of a once wealthy nobleman. She remained penniless when her husband died. Dr. Panchenko fell under her influence, and according to the testimony of one of the witnesses, she often beat the doctor. When Panchenko was asked why he tolerated it, he replied:

"But she can caress so wonderfully."
Muravieva is the velle lady in the courtroom. When she took the witness stand she made the sign of the cross several times. Dr. Panchenko also made the sign of the cross. De Lassy did not.

The Story of the Crime.

On May 24, 1910, Vasily Dmitrievich Buturlin, 29 years old, was found dead in his room on Manezhnyi Street, in St. Petersburg. Three days later, Gen. Dmitry Buturlin, the father of the young man, who came from the Government of Vilno to attend the funeral, appeared to the District Attorney of St. Petersburg for a permit to exhumate the body and to have it closely examined. Maria Buturlin, the young widow of the deceased, joined her father-in-law in the request. In their letter to the District Attorney they stated that Vasily Buturlin, according to the opinion of the physicians who signed the death certificate, died of blood poisoning, and that such blood poisoning must have followed as a result of the recklessness of Dr. Panchenko, who made young Buturlin a number of hypodermic injections in the beginning of May. The body was exhumed on the very day the General's letter was received, and an autopsy made by Dr. Reshtokov corroborated the opinion of the physicians who had examined the body before.

On the same day a man named Ivan Bobrov came to the head of the St. Petersburg detective force, Philipov, and declared that his friend, Paul Petropavlovsky, knew that Buturlin was poisoned by Dr. Panchenko, who planned to remove also the father, Gen. Buturlin, in order that a legacy of millions should go to one of the relatives of the Buturlins. Petropavlovsky was summoned to the police bureau and then to the District Attorney's office, and there he told in detail all he knew about the case. He said that while boarding in the house of Yekaterina Muravieva he heard from her that she knew of a certain way by which she could grow rich quickly. Dr. Panchenko lived in the same house, supporting her and her family. Petropavlovsky noticed that Dr. Panchenko and Mme. Muravieva had suspicious secret conversations, in the course of which the name of de Lassy was frequently mentioned.

In January, 1910, Dr. Panchenko commenced to go every Saturday to Vilno, from where he always brought back considerable sums of money, which he gave to Mme. Muravieva. The woman now spoke more often of her plan of growing rich quickly. At about that time O'Brien de Lassy, a brother-in-law of young Buturlin, commenced to pay regular visits to St. Petersburg, where he stayed at the Grand Hotel. Petropavlovsky heard numerous conversations on the telephone between Dr. Panchenko and de Lassy. Toward the end of April Dr. Panchenko went to Kronstadt, to the Fort of Alexander I, and upon his return from there told Mme. Muravieva about the plague-stricken dogs he had seen there. Petropavlovsky declared that while he did not know his purpose in going there, he knew that the money for the trip was furnished by de Lassy.

One day, when the aviation meet took place in St. Petersburg, Dr. Panchenko came to de Lassy informed him he would come to St. Petersburg with "the beast." Petropavlovsky did not see "the beast," as he was away from home at the time, but when he returned, he learned from Mme. Muravieva that de Lassy and But-

urlin visited Dr. Panchenko that day, and that all of them went to the aviation meet. During the following few days Dr. Panchenko, de Lassy, and young Buturlin went on a spree, and visited a number of the best-known places of amusement.

On May 19 Petropavlovsky was awakened at about eight o'clock in the morning by Dr. Panchenko's cries and Mme. Muravieva's loud voice. He rushed into the other room and found Muravieva standing near the heated stove, burning something. Panchenko was in the adjoining room. He was sobbing and pulling the room quickly. He was evidently in a state of great agitation. On noting Petropavlovsky, Mme. Muravieva explained that she was scolding Dr. Panchenko for his carelessness, as he had just returned from a diphtheria patient and would not disinfest himself. She gave him a prescription signed by Dr. Panchenko and asked him to get the disinfectant at the nearest pharmacy.

When Petropavlovsky returned she asked him to bring in some wood, explaining that it was necessary to burn the cholera bacteria which were on Dr. Panchenko's table. Then he heard Mme. Muravieva ask Dr. Panchenko:

"Do you think you have done it well?"
To which Dr. Panchenko replied:

"I made two injections, although one was quite sufficient."
Mme. Muravieva sprinkled the disinfectant near the stove.

Four days later de Lassy came to see Dr. Panchenko, but he was not at home. Later Mme. Muravieva sent Petropavlovsky for a newspaper. She looked over the list of the dead on the first page, and walked over to the widow, saying:

"A special announcement will be made about the day of the funeral. That's suspicious."
He looked over the newspaper himself and saw an announcement of the death of Buturlin. When Dr. Panchenko came home he had a long conversation with Mme. Muravieva. Petropavlovsky was with Muravieva's son in another room and could not hear the conversation. Later the woman came out, and said that she had received already two thousand roubles in advance. On that day they all went to the railroad station, where they took their supper. Muravieva said in the course of the evening that she was expecting 28,000 roubles within a few days, and that altogether a sum of 300,000 roubles was due her. She did not say anything as to who owed her the money.

From her further conversations with Dr. Panchenko, Petropavlovsky learned that the doctor was to go to Vilno for the purpose of treating the old Buturlin, who was ill.

As a result of this evidence, the husband of Buturlin's sister, Patrick P. O'Brien de Lassy, Panchenko, and Muravieva were summoned to the police bureau, where they were cross-examined. In their testimony they contradicted one another. Petropavlovsky explained that though he was on friendly terms with Dr. Panchenko and Muravieva, and though he was helped by them considerably, he felt

that he must notify the police about the case as soon as he became convinced that Buturlin was the victim of a crime.

Gen. Buturlin had two children by his first wife, Countess Bobrinsky, from whom he was later divorced. One of these was young Buturlin, who was poisoned, and the other is Ludmila, the wife of de Lassy. Ludmila married Patrick P. O'Brien de Lassy, an estate owner in Grodno, in December, 1908. The General was opposed to this marriage, for after investigations he learned that de Lassy's affairs were in very bad shape. Besides, for some unknown reason, he disliked and distrusted him. Two years before Ludmila's marriage to de Lassy, Gen. Buturlin had made out his will, according to which a million roubles was to go to his son Vasily and about 400,000 roubles to his daughter Ludmila. The children knew of this will. De Lassy also knew of this will, and often spoke of the unfair division of the old man's fortune.

The former Countess Bobrinsky, now married to one Lizardt, who lives in Paris, also had a fortune of a million roubles which she intended to leave to Vasily and Ludmila. During the life of their parents, the children were allowed a small pension. The son was getting 700 roubles a month and the daughter 500. As a wedding present, de Lassy received from the General two estates and a mill. But de Lassy had contracted debts amounting to more than the property was worth.

From the evidence it transpired that Panchenko had made the acquaintance of Buturlin in the following way: Late in the Autumn of 1908 he came to Buturlin's house for the purpose of learning from him of the effect of the anti-cholera injections which had been made by Buturlin a little while before. After that Panchenko met him only in the train when young Buturlin was going to visit his father. During one of these meetings, in February, 1910, Panchenko told him about the beneficial effects of sperm in and gave him several brochures on the subject. Buturlin spoke to his father about the matter and advised him to go to Panchenko, who "could make him ten years younger." Young Buturlin was well and strong, but according to those who knew him, he had a mania for medical treatment. He was examined by Dr. Ernst in Vilno who found that he was somewhat nervous and suggested that he go to one of the watering resorts. Leaving his wife in his father's house, Buturlin went to St. Petersburg, arriving there on May 5, when de Lassy, also came to St.

Buturlin's Widow Praying Before the Ikon at the Entrance to the Courtroom.

Petersburg. They went several times to the aviation meet and then visited a number of amusement places together with Dr. Panchenko.

Beginning with May 15 Panchenko made Buturlin hypodermic injections daily. De Lassy was present several times during these treatments. Buturlin told a number of his friends that he was advised by his physician to have hypodermic injections of sperm in made.

On May 18, towards evening, he commenced to feel very weak, and on the following day, after Dr. Panchenko's visit, he felt still worse and never left his bed any more. The chambermaid told Dr. Panchenko about Buturlin's weakness, but he replied:

"That's nothing. That's a trifle."
He prescribed some saline and went away. Buturlin's temperature was rising quickly, and he ordered the chambermaid to telephone for Dr. Panchenko. She rang three times, but he was not at home. Then she called in Dr. Kahan, who treated Buturlin until he died. In the meantime Dr. Panchenko inquired twice over the telephone about Buturlin's health. On the third day he came, walked straight to Buturlin's bedroom, and examined Dr. Kahan's prescriptions. Then he went away and came no more.

Dr. Panchenko was in a very embarrassing position financially at the time of Buturlin's death. During the examination it was brought out that Panchenko is the son of a Colonel, belonging to the nobility of Kharkov. He is a widower and has no children. He graduated from the Imperial University of Kharkov in 1878. In 1885 he went to Paris. According to the testimony of one of the witnesses, named Maslov, to whom Panchenko made hypodermic injections, Dr. Panchenko sold opium, cocaine and other poisons to one Ilovinsky, who committed suicide with these drugs. Then Panchenko returned to St. Petersburg, where he was almost starving. In 1888 he made the acquaintance of a certain man, named Raphof, and moved to his rich house. Raphof commenced publishing a series of articles about Dr. Panchenko in one of the St. Petersburg newspapers, writing of his wonderful cures by means of sperm, and even published his portrait. Panchenko's practice began to grow. He made about a thousand roubles a month, of which two-thirds went to Raphof.

Soon Panchenko grew tired of giving away the lion's share of his income to Raphof. He left St. Petersburg and set-died down in Moscow. But there his affairs took a downward turn, and he went back to St. Petersburg again. In 1901 he made the acquaintance of Muravieva and his wife and moved to their house. When Muravieva died Panchenko remained in the house, having fallen under Muravieva's influence. In 1905 he got a position as a railroad physician, with a salary of twelve hundred roubles a year, which was not sufficient for him, as he had to support also the Muravieva family. He began to advertise a certain saline, lent his name to various cosmetic preparations and edited pornographic journals.

During the examination Dr. Panchenko at first declared that he was guilty only of recklessness and negligence, if Buturlin's death followed as a result of blood poisoning caused by an unclean syringe with which he made his injections of sperm. Then he said that de Lassy, who was introduced to him by Raphof, in the Autumn of 1908, when de Lassy was engaged to Buturlin's sister, offered him 10,000 roubles for infecting Buturlin with cholera, and 50,000 roubles for "removing" Gen. Buturlin, and finally 800,000 roubles for "going away with the old man's wife."

When he met Buturlin, Panchenko decided to persuade him to build up his nervous system by injections of sperm, which he regarded the use of cholera toxin as inconvenient. De Lassy did not like

this plan. The hold numerous consultations, and Dr. Panchenko received about two thousand roubles in the meantime. Panchenko declared that he made several injections to Buturlin, but used no poison. He said that Buturlin died because the syringe was not properly disinfected before the injections were made.

They were planning to remove also Gen. Buturlin, by adding poison into a drug which he was in the habit of taking.

Finally, Dr. Panchenko confessed that he killed Buturlin by injecting diphtheritic toxin. He used this toxin in preference to the cholera poison, because, when given in a certain dose, the evolution of the diphtheritic process takes from seven to ten days, and this poison could not be detected during an autopsy.

To carry out this plan, Dr. Panchenko on May 14 or 15 to the Institute of Experimental Medicine and there got from the superintendent of the laboratory, Dzerzhovsky, two glass bottles of diphtheritic toxin. He explained that this toxin is a fluid of yellowish color. He told the superintendent he needed the toxin for experiments on rabbits. He explained that he did not want antitoxin, but toxin to infect the animals with diphtheria.

On May 16 and 17 he made Buturlin injections of pure sperm. On the following day he broke off the necks of two ampullae containing sperm, and emptying their contents filled them with diphtheritic toxin, closed them with cotton, and putting them into his vest pocket, went to Buturlin. To muster courage he had something to drink. He came there at about 8 o'clock in the evening. His feet were trembling, and his eyes were dim, he said. He then injected both doses. While doing it, Dr. Panchenko says, he felt that he was pale, and he was quivering. He was even afraid that Buturlin might notice. Nevertheless, trying to be calm, he asked Buturlin whether it was painful. Buturlin replied that it was not. Then Dr. Panchenko went home and threw the little bottles away in the street. He was unable to sleep that night. His conscience tormented him, he said, and on the following day, before going to his office, he hurried to Buturlin, whom he found in bed. In answer to his question as to how he felt, Buturlin said:

"I had terrible pains. I could not sleep all night."
He touched his forehead and found that his temperature was high. He then lifted the blanket and examined the place where he had made the injections. It showed no signs of redness or swelling. He said he felt sorry for Buturlin, and to relieve his pains he prescribed something to be taken internally. Before going away, he told him to telephone to him when the pains had ceased.

Upon learning that Buturlin was near his end, Dr. Panchenko telegraphed to de Lassy, asking him to come to St. Petersburg at once. De Lassy came, but he was very angry at Panchenko for communicating with him by telegram, as they had agreed not to do it. De Lassy said to Panchenko:

"If you are so reckless, you had better go straight to the District Attorney and tell him what you have done."
De Lassy did not visit his brother-in-law. Panchenko went to see him alone.

Buturlin told him that another physician, whose name he did not mention, attended him. Panchenko asked him whether he felt any pain in his throat. Buturlin said he felt no pain there. But Panchenko noticed on the right side of his tongue, as he spoke, the symptom of diphtheria. On glancing at the prescription, he convinced himself that the other physician did not understand the nature of the disease.

On the eighth day after the injection had been made, Buturlin died, and Dr. Panchenko read about it in the newspapers.

When he was in Gen. Buturlin's hotel, de Lassy, who was also present, raised the question about exhuming the body, knowing that an autopsy could not disclose the real cause of Buturlin's death. Thus de Lassy wanted to remove all suspicion from himself. The first autopsy was performed by Prof. Korovin, who examined the body once more, and after a close bacteriological investigation and experiments with guinea pigs he came to the conclusion that But-

urlin had been posed and that diphtheritic toxin had been used.

The court where this case was tried is the same where the historical cases of Vera Zasulich and of the former Director of the Police Department, Lopukhin, were tried. The courtroom was crowded as never before. People bearing cards even from the Minister of Justice were turned away. All were eager to see the faces of the two chief characters—de Lassy, who declared on the witness stand that he was a direct descendant of William the Conqueror, and Dr. Panchenko, the tall, patriarchal, white-haired and white-bearded murderer, who kept making the sign of the cross as he glanced at Mme. Muravieva. Women fainted as the truth came out in all brutal nakedness during the cross-examination of the witnesses, especially when Dr. Panchenko spoke freely of his prospects of amassing a fortune quickly. He had boasted of it everywhere. To one witness, to the widow of Gen. Barabash, he said one day, in 1900:

"I have a certain medical affair on hand which will bring me 60,000 roubles." He boasted of it to another witness, Korovinovsky. When he asked him what the affair was, Dr. Panchenko replied calmly:

"Oh, it is necessary to remove a certain man to the other world, that's all."
"But that is a dangerous matter. You will get yourself in trouble," remarked the witness, dumbfounded by Dr. Panchenko's words.

"Yes, what of it?" answered the old charlatan. "I'll send me to Siberia, that's all. But therefore Mme. Muravieva will be taken care of."

To another witness, Agatha Zaas, who came to him for medical aid, he spoke just as frankly. He told her of the fortune that was awaiting him. He said that there was a legacy of millions which was to go to two persons, but one of them wanted the money all to himself. So this "one" offered a few hundred thousand roubles to Dr. Panchenko for "removing" the other one. Then he added that he needed the assistance of a beautiful woman to meet the man in the train and help the plan along.

"But that is a crime," exclaimed the woman, his patient.

Panchenko replied coolly: "Experienced and clever people commit crimes so that they will never be caught. Besides, there are powders which poison a man without leaving any traces." The woman was amazed and asked:

"But how do you entrust me with such secrets? Suppose I should go and report to the authorities?"

"Who will believe you?" answered Dr. Panchenko, half in jest, half in earnest. The story of how de Lassy made the proposition to Dr. Panchenko to kill Vasily Buturlin created a sensation in the courtroom. De Lassy, deep in debt, a ruined estate owner, resolved to remain the only heir to Gen. Buturlin's fortune.

He met Dr. Panchenko, to whom he was introduced by a man named Raphof, at one time Panchenko's manager. They all went to a room in a fashionable restaurant in St. Petersburg. There de Lassy asked Panchenko whether he would undertake a certain criminal operation for the sum of fifteen hundred roubles. That was merely an excuse. De Lassy met Panchenko several days later, alone and without any further preliminaries, said to him:

"My future brother-in-law, the brother of my future wife, must be removed. Find a way. For this you will get 10,000 roubles. Then it will be necessary to remove the father. For this you will get 50,000 roubles. Having that sum of money, you will be able to go to Paris and there go away with the old woman, the General's former wife. For this I will gladly give you 500,000 roubles."

According to Dr. Panchenko himself, his head began to reel and his eyes grew dim when he heard this. De Lassy wanted Dr. Panchenko to infect Buturlin with cholera.

"Now that the cholera is raging, it would be the safest way of removing him. When he dies, as a victim of the epidemic, he will be buried immediately. And even if he should be exhumed, they will find that he died of the cholera."