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***Special Edition**: Ernest Poole*

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American Writer Ernest Poole Describes Russia During the Revolution of 1905

Edited by Norman Saul

Prologue

I was always fascinated by the motto across the façade of the old National Archives building on the Mall in Washington, "History is Prologue." That, I thought, was certainly true of Russia, as many historians have considered the 1905 revolution that Ernest Poole witnessed there as a "rehearsal" for 1917, and many in the West find the era of Joseph Stalin a precursor to that of Vladimir Putin. History repeats itself? But never exactly. The differences help make history interesting--and useful. With the construction of a new archives facility (Archives II) in College Park, Maryland, my Washington research routine changed to every other day riding in a van from the old archives at the new one, the other days spent at the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress easily reached by metro.

This account of Poole in articles written from Russia in 1905 was quite different than that depicted in his book of 1917. The Russia of 1905 was still an autocracy resembling a police state that George Kennan had so eloquently described a few years earlier as a Russia, known especially for its political prisoners and revolutionary exiles, perhaps even more reliant on the army (Cossacks) and police because of the "shock" of Bloody Sunday in January of that year.

This project also has its own prologue. It begins with my collaboration with William Benton (Ben) Whisenhunt, who I had met at scholarly conferences in both the United States and Russia, and who also believed that our mutual interests in the field of Russian-American relations were neglected by mainstream journals. This culminated in a volume of articles published as number 39 in the Routledge Studies in Cultural History, published in 2016. It included 16 articles by both American and Russian scholars as *New Perspectives on Russian-American Relations*. Its success in serving our objectives led to two more collaborative projects.

With the centennial of the Russian Revolution approaching, we thought about a project of republication of books by Americans who observed the revolutionary events and wrote it. We made a list of some 25 of them. Slavica Publishers of Bloomington, Indiana, was amenable to our proposal and liked our format of pairing appropriate scholars, both Russian and American, with a book to introduce, edit, and to annotate where needed, and to do this with little possibility of any recompence. Slavica produced sixteen volumes in the Americans in Revolutionary Russia (ARR) series before finding it too much to manage financially. The last two by James Houghteling and Malcom Grow and edited by David Fogelsong of Rutgers and Laurie Stoff of Arizona State, respectively, were issued by Slavica earlier this year (2022). There is a possibility that more may follow by a different press.

In the meantime, another opportunity opened up: the digital, on-line publication of a journal. Soon Ben and I found ourselves editing the *Journal of Russian American Studies* (*JRAS*), thanks to the professional guidance and acceptance of our idea by Marianne Reed, the digital publications manager for the University of Kansas Libraries. This really filled our needs for articles, book reviews, and field notes.

Poole's articles for *Outlook* were unique, the only coverage of the revolution year by an American who benefitted from the aid of a Russian guide-interpreter named "Ivanov," identified more accurately and fully in the book on 1917 as Juvenale Ivanovich Tarasov, the guide he had first met in 1905. What to do the with the 1905 account remained a problem. I thought it deserved preservation in a modern publication, but it did not meet the criteria for ARR, since it was not about 1917 and was not a previously published book but a series of articles, and with the withdrawal of Slavica no longer seemed to be an option in any case. It also did not fit the established parameters of JRAS–too long for an article, too short for a book. But with the help of Whisenhunt we appealed to the board of editors, who unanimously agreed that the Poole project should be published as a special issue of *JRAS* here, which may also serve as a precedent for other special issues, such as one that has been discussed on the ongoing war in Ukraine.

I welcome this opportunity.

Editor's Introduction

Unlike most of the American eyewitnesses to the Russian Revolution, Ernest Poole (1880-1950) was already an accomplished professional writer well known to the American public.[1] He had also experienced Russia in revolution in 1905, had studied the language and the country's history, and had read many Russian literary works, especially those of Leo Tolstoy, Ivan Turgenev, and Maxim Gorky. He thus had an advantage over those who were new to the land and its people. Furthermore, in contrast to many of his compatriots, Poole was convinced that the real Russia was to be found in the countryside, among the peasants, and concentrated his time and efforts in understanding what was happening there.

Poole was born and raised in an upper-class neighborhood on Chicago's north side, near the corner of Erie and what is now Michigan Avenue. His father, of Dutch background (the family's original name was Vanderpoehl), came from upstate New York, and had moved west, first to Wisconsin and then to Chicago. Abram Poole served in the Union Army, marching with Sherman through Georgia, and worked his way up the ranks of the Chicago Board of Trade to become a leading "member," often acting as broker for Philip Danforth Armour of meat packing fame.[2] Ernest Poole and his seven siblings (four sisters and three brothers) grew up in a large Victorian house that he remembered as bustling with activity and visitors, in particular during the World's Fair of 1893. The family spent its summers at a beach house in Lake Forest.[3]

The young Ernest learned early to escape this crowd by roaming with a gang of other boys through a nearby slum of shanties and tents occupying a Lake Michigan landfill called "the Patch."[4] These childhood explorations sparked Poole's life-long interest in the world of the lower class, whose struggles would influence much of his literary work. Poole's family milieu thus stood in sharp contrast to this other world of poverty and disease, a disconnect of which he was acutely aware as he described the high-society life of his summers at Lake Forest.

Ernest Poole received his formal education at a Chicago high school associated with the University of Chicago. In 1898 he enrolled at Princeton

1. Ernest Poole was unrelated to two other Pooles who were prominent in Russia during this period: DeWitt Clinton Poole, who served as American consul general in Moscow in 1917-18, and General Frederick C. Poole, British commander of the interventionist forces in the north of Russia in 1918-19.

2. Ernest Poole, *Giants Gone: Men Who Made Chicago* (New York: Whittlesey House-McGraw- Hill, 1943), 107-09.

3. Ernest Poole, *The Bridge: My Own Story* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1940), 4, 24, 32.

4. Ibid, 38-40.

University, then as now one of America's leading institutions of higher education. In his autobiography Poole admits to having been an indifferent student for the first two years, more assiduous in his enjoyment of eating (and drinking) clubs than in his studies. He credits a professor of history and politics, Woodrow Wilson, for inspiring the interest in writing and social welfare to which he would devote much of his efforts in his remaining years at Princeton. Poole also succumbed at this time to the contemporary American craze for Russian literature, especially Tolstoy and Turgenev.[5]

During his college years, Poole spent summers with family and friends back in Chicago and Lake Forest. It was at this time that he met the "love of his life," Margaret Ann Winterbotham, the daughter of another leading Chicago family; they would marry in 1907.[6] In August 1902, after graduating from Princeton, he moved into the University Settlement on New York's Lower East Side.[7] This was another, and different, introduction to tenement slum life—and to Russia, since many of the people served by the Settlement were Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, especially from the Russian Empire, where antisemitism was at its height. Among other "residents" serving this community with shelter, food, and English-language courses were Arthur Bullard, William English Walling, Leroy Scott, Phelps Stokes, and Walter Weyl, all of whom also developed professional interests in the Russian revolutionary movement. Bullard and Walling would be among Poole's life-long friends, and Weyl would marry one of Poole's sisters, Bertha, who had also joined the social welfare movement.[8]

The University Settlement drew many of those advocating increased public support for programs assisting poor immigrants. Visiting speakers included Jane Addams, Lillian Wald, Clarence Darrow, H. G. Wells, and Lincoln Steffens. Steffens encouraged Poole's initial writings about the many street boys who roamed the area. Poole also associated with Abraham Cahan, a Russian Jewish social revolutionary who edited a local socialist newspaper. Cahan and Poole attended the Jewish Theater together, stimulating the latter's study of Yiddish and interest in the Russian Jewish neighborhood.[9] Poole was soon exploring the nooks and crannies of the Lower East Side, taking notes and developing his reporting skills. His first published article, "Waifs of the Street," appeared in *McClure's Magazine* in May 1902.[10] It, together with a pamphlet about the "The Lung Block" written for the New York Charity Organization Committee, brought Poole and his concerns about street children and the crowded, disease-ridden tenements

5. Ibid., 55, 62—66. He cites Wilson as "his favorite professor and friend," who often joined Poole and classmates for a "smoke" in their rooms. Wilson became president of the university the year Poole graduated, 1902.

6. Ibid., 60.

7. Founded in 1886 as the Neighborhood Guild in a basement on Forsyth Street, by 1902 it had become one of the largest and most active settlement houses, comparable to the nearby Henry Street Settlement and Hull House in Chicago. It continues to be one of the most prominent relief agencies in the city.

8. Poole, *The Bridge*, 68-72.

9. Ibid., 74.

10. Ibid., 70; Poole, "Waifs of the Street," *McClure's Magazine* 21, 1 (May 1903): 5-8.

to the public eye.[11] Additional writings were assembled into his first substantial publication, *The Voice of the Street*, considered by *The Bookman* to be "a book of unusual quality."[12]

By this time Poole had moved out of University Settlement to share an apartment nearby with Fred King, a Yale graduate who had been strongly influenced by Tolstoy. They continued to roam the East Side with another friend from the Settlement, Howard Brubaker, soon to be the editor of *Colliers' Weekly*, and were frequent visitors to the Henry Street Settlement, the home of Lillian Wald and her visiting nurses. Poole later said that Wald "meant more to [him] than any other woman in social service."[13] His connections with the "settlement movement," then at its height, would be paramount for a few more years.

No doubt knowing that Poole was from Chicago, *Outlook*, a leading American progressive journal, sent him there in 1904 to cover the Stockyards Strike.[14] He immediately connected with the settlement house of the University of Chicago and with its director, Mary McDowell, a veteran of Hull House. The University of Chicago Settlement House was located near the slum area of "Packingtown," an area populated mainly by Polish, Slovak, and Lithuanian immigrants.[15] If anything, conditions there were worse than those on New York's Lower East Side owing to poorer housing and increased pollution from the stockyards and meat packing plants.

Chicago, as a major industrial center, had a history of labor strife, notably the Haymarket Square Riot of 1886 and the 1894 Pullman Strike. The Stockyards Strike began in May 1904 when the packing houses (Meat Trust) offered workers a new annual contract that reduced hourly wages from eighteen and a half cents to sixteen and a half, or $7.40 for a forty-hour week, well below a living wage. Such slave-labor wages were made possible by an abundance of unemployed ready to work at any price. The strike by 60,000 unskilled and skilled workers, led by Michael Donnelly, an American Federation of Labor organizer, also had as its goal the creation of a stronger, more inclusive union, the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America (AMC). Poole's sympathies

11. "The School of the Street," *The Youth's Companion* 77, 27 (2 July 1903): 328; "Some Plague Spots in New York: In One Block 265 Cases of Tuberculosis Were Reported in Nine Years," *New York Tribune*, 13 September 1903, A1; "Modern Medicine, Surgery and Sanitation," *Current Literature* 35, 6 (December 1903): 746. The editor is indebted to ProQuest Historical Newspapers for the newspaper and periodical citations.

12. Ernest Poole, *The Voice of the Street: A Story of Temptation* (New York: Barnes and Company, 1906); "The Voice of the Street," review of *The Voice of the Street: A Story of Temptation*, by Ernest Poole, *The Bookman* 23, 6 (August 1906): 640.

13. Poole, *The Bridge*, 85.

14. Among the American liberals who were regular contributors to *Outlook* was George Kennan.

15. The University of Chicago Settlement was founded in 1895 by William Rainey Harper, founding president of the university, to provide service to the city and to provide an activity for faculty wives. As with the University Settlement in New York, it continues as a major welfare agency to this day. "University of Chicago Settlement," The Social Welfare History Project, socialwelfarehistory.com/settlement-houses/university-chicago-settlement (accessed 22 February 2017).

were clearly with the unions, and he criticized the employers' tactics of refusing to compromise and of hiring black strikebreakers from the south. In articles he wrote jointly with William Hard, a writer for the *Chicago Tribune* who was also associated with Hull House, Poole lamented the inability of workers of varied ethnic backgrounds to unite.[16]

Poole spent the miserably hot Chicago summer in the company of others depressed by the union's failure. In addition to Hard and McDowell, he met John Commons, a University of Wisconsin professor of economics, and writer Upton Sinclair, both of whom were sympathetic to the plight of the workingman. Commons and Sinclair may have influenced Poole's most significant writing on the strike, a semifictional autobiography of a Lithuanian immigrant worker, "From Lithuania to the Chicago Stockyards—An Autobiography."[17] At about this same time, Poole's Chicago family began to break up with the death of his mother, the marriage of two sisters, and the departure of his younger brother Abram to study art in Munich.[18]

Meanwhile, in February 1904 war began in the Far East with the surprise attack by Japan on Vladivostok and Port Arthur. The chief cause was a clash of interests of Russia and Japan, the two new imperial powers in the region, aggravated by Russia's lease of Port Arthur on the southern tip of Manchuria. Another factor in the growing Russian presence in what many in Japan considered their sphere of interest was the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Russia's rash decision to send the Baltic Fleet to the Pacific ended in disaster at the Battle of Tsushima in May 1905. The fall of Port Arthur and the necessity of supplying troops and arms to a distant front placed additional strain on a sprawling empire already in the throes of rapid industrialization. The result was revolution, which began with the massacre of peaceful demonstrators in St. Petersburg's Palace Square on "Bloody Sunday," January 22, 1905. Ernest Poole hastened to the offices of the *Outlook* begging for a new assignment—Russia—which he received.

Packing in a rush, he was aboard ship by January 28. After brief stops in Paris and Berlin, he arrived in St. Petersburg in mid-February, carrying funds donated for progressive and radical causes by Russian exiles in Europe. He delivered the money to Harold Williams, correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, who provided him with an orientation to the city.[19] Poole was soon busy conducting interviews and writing articles for *Outlook*, identified only as "special correspondent in Russia." His first report, "St. Petersburg is Quiet!", dated February 18 and published a month later, described his settling in with a Russian family and beginning his study of Russian, and discussed his interviews

16. Ernest Poole, "The Meat Strike," *The Independent*, 28 July 1904, 179. See also William Hard and Ernest Poole, "The Stock Yards Strike," *Outlook*, 13 August 1904, 884.

17. Ernest Poole, "From Lithuania to the Chicago Stockyards—An Autobiography," *The Independent*, 4 August 1904.

18. Poole, *The Bridge,* 102-03.

19. Ibid., 115-19. Williams (1876-1928), a noted linguist from New Zealand, was closely associated with the Constitutional Democratic Party through his marriage in 1906 to Ariadna Tyrkova (1869-1962), one of its founders. They fled Russia in 1918. Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams emigrated to the United States in 1951.

with public officials.[20] The sixth article in the series, published in late May, finally revealed Poole's identity; the delay was due to the journal's fear that its correspondent might be expelled, as George Kennan had been a few years earlier.[21] One of Poole's best portraits of Russia during the 1905 revolution was "Two Russian Soldiers," based on interviews conducted on a train.[22]

He also wrote about meeting Juvenale (Iuvenalii) Tarasov, who was to be featured in the books Poole wrote in 1917, especially *The Village.* Tarasov is described as a large man educated in chemistry at St. Petersburg University who had traveled abroad and had some proficiency in English. He accompanied Poole on his trips into the Russian countryside.[23] Tarasov also served as guide on excursions to Ukraine and the Caucasus, where they met a Cossack who had spent four years touring with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. After being hounded by the police while visiting Tiflis and Vladikavkaz, Poole felt the need to leave the region, reluctantly, as he had been charmed by the beauty of the landscape and the attractive women.[24]

Poole did not return directly to America. Instead he spent a month in London, writing during the day and visiting theaters in the evening, often accompanied by Walling.[25] Then he went to Paris, where he met Brubaker, Bullard, and King, who joined him for hiking in the Swiss Alps. From there he traveled to Munich to visit his artist brother before returning to Chicago in October, where he wrote a touching portrait of a Russian peasant girl for *Independent* and an extended description of his trip through the Caucasus for *Outlook*.[26]

By early 1906 Poole was back in New York. He found the old settlement group drifting apart. Walling and Bullard had left for Russia, but he joined Brubaker and Weyl in an apartment on Fifth Avenue, near Washington Square, where they formed the "A Club," which was devoted to discussions of theater. Poole's turn in this direction was probably influenced by his exposure to theater in Europe, though he gives particular credit to the appearance of a Russian drama company in New York headed by the well-known Russian actor Pavel Ivanovich Orlenev (1869 1932).[27]

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20. *Outlook,* 18 March 1905, 680—91.

21. Ernest Poole, "The Peasant and the War," *Outlook*, 27 May 1905, 219—30.

22. Ernest Poole, "Two Russian Soldiers," *Outlook,* 2 September 1905, 21.

23. See Ernest Poole, "Russian Hamlet," *Outlook*, 29 April 1905, 135—40; Poole, "Russian Villager," *Outlook*, 13 May 1905, 113—18.

24. Poole, *The Bridge*, 167. Poole had written in a letter to his father that he might stay in the Caucasus and marry a local girl.

25. Out of money by this time, Poole wired his father, who sent money, relieved to know that his son had left the Caucasus.

26. Ernest Poole, "Dounya," *The Independent*, 26 October 1905, 974; Poole, "With the Caucasian Revolutionists," *Outlook*, 18 November 1905, 653. Altogether Poole published over 200 printed pages on Russia in 1905, the equivalent of a book.

27. Poole, *The Bridge*, 190; "Orlenev," *St. Petersburg Encyclopedia*, www.encspb.ru (accessed 13 March 2017). Orlenev and his wife, Alla Nazimova (1879—1945), a Moscow Art Theater actress, performed there briefly in 1904 and were encouraged to return with a company of actors to produce a repertoire of Russian and other plays. The "St. Petersburg Players" arrived in the spring of 1905, the first such visit to the United States by a Russian touring company. They

Poole, apparently supported by his father, spent much of the summer of 1906 tramping in the Alps with his brother Abram and Bullard. In Lucerne and Interlaken they were joined by the young woman he had wooed in Chicago—Margaret Ann Winterbotham. They apparently returned to the United States together, as he notes that he begged her to marry him "all the way across the Atlantic." The wedding in the Winterbotham home in Chicago on February 12, 1907, was a modest affair, with Poole's older brother Ralph as best man and the bride's younger sister Katherine as bridesmaid.[28] After a brief reception they departed by train for New York and a two-month honeymoon in Europe, some of it in his brother Abram's apartment in Munich. Back in America they spent the summer in New Hampshire, and in the fall rented a small house in Greenwich Village.[29]

The new Mrs. Poole reinforced her husband's commitments to social progress by being active in such causes as women's suffrage and Mabel Kittredge's campaign for school lunches in New York City public schools. A highlight of the latter occurred in 1913 when Margaret Poole escorted Theodore Roosevelt to Public School 95 in Greenwich Village for a luncheon of bean soup and egg sandwich (one cent each).[30] She also served as president of the Woman's City Club of New York, while bearing three children during the first five years of marriage and being a firm supporter of her husband's career.

Meanwhile, Poole devoted most of his attention to writing plays, a total of eleven (including two with Harriet Ford), only two of which were actually produced.[31] *None So Blind* opened in New Haven on January 29, 1910, and moved to the Hackett Theater in New York on February 3.[32] *None So Blind* told the story of a construction engineer who goes blind in the middle of a bridge construction

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scored a rave review, especially for Nazimova, at their opening at the Herald Square Theater ("A Russian Play," *New-York Tribune,* 24 March 1905, 7; "Paul Orleneff, the Russian Actor: His Aspirations and Ideals," *New York Times*, 2 April 1905, SM3). Orlenev's forte was playing Oswald in Henrik Ibsen's *Ghosts* and Raskolnikov in an adaptation of Fedor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* ("Russian Actors in "Ghosts," *New York Times*, 11 June 1905, 20).

In November 1905 Orlenov rented a small theater on the Lower East Side, the "Russian Lyceum," no doubt aware of a potential audience of Russian Jews, as all the performances were in Russian ("Russian Theater Opened," *New York Times*, 4 November 1905, 9). One of the most popular presentations was Russian playwright Evgenii Chirikov's *The Chosen People*, a dramatic depiction of the April 1903 pogrom in Kishinev, which had been banned in Russia. *The Chosen People* together with productions of works by Ibsen, Chekhov, and others attracted a good deal of attention, despite being performed in Russian. The Lyceum, however, ran into problems, and finally the city fire marshal ordered it closed. Still, boosted by the much publicized visit of Maxim Gorky and a $10,000 aid fund, the Russian players continued well into 1906 and toured in Chicago and Boston as well.

28. "In the Society World," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 13 February 1907, 18.

29. Poole, *The Bridge*, 179-81.

30. "Colonel Eats 2-Cent Meal: >It Was Bully'" *New York Tribune*, April 16, 1913, 11.

31. Poole, *The Bridge*, 192. Harriet Ford was more successful with sixteen Broadway productions and several film scripts. Apparently a third play with Ford, *Take Your Medicine*, was produced in 1916 in revised form; at least one major reviewer considered it Poole's best play. George S. Kaufman, "Broadway and Elsewhere," *New York Tribune*, 10 December 1916, 31; Truman Frederick Keefer, *Ernest Poole* (New York: Twayne, 1966), 37.

32. "Theatrical Notes," *New York Tribune*, 29 January 1910, 7.

project and who then has an operation to restore his sight but who pretends to still be blind in order to uncover the betrayals of his wife and a rival engineer.[33] The second play, *A Man's Friends*, had a better reception as a "drama of real merit."[34] Opening in March 1913, it depicted an honest district attorney's fight against a corrupt political boss who relies on duping his friends for support.[35] Poole also continued his journalistic career with two short, perceptive biographies.[36]

Discouraged by his limited success in the theater world, Poole turned to a larger project: writing a novel. In early 1914 he learned that his first book, *The Harbor*, had been accepted by the Macmillan publishing house. To celebrate, he and his wife dashed off to France, leaving the children with their grandmother Winterbotham. They reached Paris by May 1, where they met Bullard, who warned them of major events ahead in Europe. They went on to tour the Pyrenees and Spain,and enjoyed the flamenco craze in Paris. In June they were back in the White Mountains of New Hampshire for Poole to make some revisions to *The Harbor* and begin work on a second novel.[37] His New Hampshire summer was interrupted by a world event. Europe went to war in August 1914, and Poole once again donned his correspondent cap.

This time he knocked on the door of *The Saturday Evening Post*, for which he had recently written some short stories, and was soon on the scene—in Germany! He spent a week in Silesia with an American Red Cross unit and quickly became acquainted first-hand with the horrors of modern war. Then, back in Berlin he received permission to visit the Western Front with a group of correspondents that included John Reed, with whom he visited an army hospital located just behind the lines. Poole described buying tobacco at a shop in a French village occupied by the Germans and a superb dinner at the headquarters of General Von Falkenhayn. He was impressed by German cleanliness and ingenuity, for example, in making alcohol from sugar beets to run trucks and using crushed rock on mud to firm the roads.

Poole returned in time to see the publication of *The Harbor* in February 1915. The book received a surprisingly favorable critical and public response: "It is one of the ablest novels added to American fiction in many a year."[38] The author received laudatory letters from Theodore Roosevelt, William Allen White, William Dean Howells, Hamlin Garland, Walter Lippmann, John Reed, and others. Set in Brooklyn, *The Harbor* draws on Poole's childhood experiences in Chicago and his adventures on the New York waterfront to tell two stories: one of a wealthy family involved in the modern shipping business and the other of the dockyard and its impoverished workers. The novel laments not only the passing

33. "*None So Blind*," *The Bookman* 31, 2 (April 1910): 142.
34. "*A Man's Friends*," *New York Tribune,* 23 March1913, 9.
35. *"A Man's Friends*," *The Bookman* 37, 3 (May 1913): 308.
36. "Abraham Cahan," *Outlook,* 28 October 1911, 467-78; and "Brandeis," *American Magazine* 71 (February 1911): 481-93.
37. Poole, *The Bridge,* 213-16.
38. "Views and Reviews of Current Fiction," *New York Tribune*, 13 February 1915, 10. It was reprinted five times within a month and twenty-two times overall, as well as in several translations, including Russian (Poole, *The Bridge*, 259).

of beauty as graceful Yankee clippers are replaced by ugly cargo ships, but also the passing of America's hegemony at sea. Though quite popular at the time, it is not easy reading for later generations.

Poole's second novel, *His Family*, came out in May 1917, after being serialized by *Everybody's Magazine*, beginning in September 1916. It tells the story of a man who awakes to the memory of having promised his dying wife some years earlier that he would maintain contact with their two daughters and bring their life stories to her when he dies. He finds them proceeding with contrasting lives, one embedded in and devoted to a nuclear family, the other a principal of a school of 3,000 students — the small, intimate family contrasted with the larger social family in which we all live. *His Family* was praised as purely New York but also quite personal, as one prominent reviewer noted: "This book is chiefly to be prized as a picture of Mr. Poole's own soul—a picture that one likes to remember for heartenment and reassurance. It rewards the best that one can bring to it.... It has spiritual penetration and latitude and elevation. It is filled throughout with a deep and intimate consciousness of the reality of other souls*."*[39] The following year *His Family* was awarded the first Pulitzer Prize in fiction for a work that best depicts "the wholesome atmosphere of American life and the highest standard of American manners and manhood."[40]

Once again major events intervened in Poole's career—the Russian revolution of 1917 and American entry into the war. The first call for special duty came from his old friend Arthur Bullard on behalf of George Creel, who was the director of the newly created Committee on Public Information. Often dubbed the "Creel Committee," it was a controversial propaganda agency created to support the American war effort through news releases, public speeches, and film, and subsequently expanded to shore up America's allies, especially Russia. He worked at the Public Information office in New York for several weeks before Bullard convinced him to go to Russia.[41]

Poole again signed on with *The Saturday Evening Post* and arrived in Russia with a number of other journalists and exiles in May. He toured Nevsky Prospect with the United Press's William Shepherd, one of the best known American journalists in Russia at the time of the revolution.[42] Initially, Poole deliberately selected as interpreter a Bolshevik who said that nothing could stop the revolutionaries, an avowal borne out by Poole's wild experience during the armed

39. Lawrence Gilman, "The Book of the Month: A New York Family," *The North American Review* 205, 739 (June 1917): 946.

40. "Columbia Awards Prizes in Letters, Art, Journalism," *New York Tribune*, 4 June 1918, B2. Some critics considered *The Harbor* better and opined that the prize represented a retrospective award for that work.

41. Poole, *The Bridge*, 267.

42. Most of the American "journalists" in Russia in 1917, such as Poole, John Reed, Bessie Beattie, and Donald Thompson were on temporary contracts with newspapers or journals. A few, such as Shepherd and Robert Crozier Long of the Associated Press, were permanent employees on assignment in Russia. Shepherd probably published more on Russia at the time than anyone but did not write a book.

July demonstrations, as described in the early pages of *"The Dark People."*[43] During the July Days, Poole was reunited at last with Iuvenalii Tarasov, his friend and guide from 1905, who was once again to serve as his guide. Tarasov expressed much greater pessimism about Russia than he had at the time of the first revolution. He saw Russia "sliding into hell": Petrograd was chaotic, with demonstrations every weekend, and there was genuine fear that the Hermitage might be destroyed due to its proximity to the Winter Palace, the headquarters of the Provisional Government, which was under attack. Most of the middle and upper classes were fleeing the city. As before, Tarasov urged Poole to spend time in his village and in the Russian countryside.

Poole's reports from Russia were subsequently revised and assembled into two books, *"The Dark People": Russia's Crisis* (1918) and *The Village: Russian Impressions* (1919). *"The Dark People"* covers the first months of his stay, focusing on the view from the top and describing the urban scene. *The Village* tells of Poole's weeks-long immersion in the Russian countryside. It, rather than *"The Dark People,"* has been chosen for publication in the "Americans in Revolutionary Russia" series because in my opinion it is better written and provides a view of Russia that differs from those offered by other American observers. It also seems to have been better received, by both readers and critics, for its emphasis on character studies—impoverished landowner, school teacher, priest, midwife, artist (Tarasov's father)—and descriptions of river steamers, new school house, cooperative store, peasant bank, and an assortment of peasant huts.[44]

Back in Petrograd in September, Poole found the situation more confused than ever, with faction fighting faction and the wealthy fleeing. He and Bullard were convinced that American aid for Russia was crucial to winning the war, regardless of who was in power. With the help of a Red Cross volunteer from the Swift meat packing family of Chicago, Poole succeeded in obtaining a berth on a special American Red Cross car on the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Tarasov saw him off, more depressed than ever about Russia's future. Poole, in no hurry to get home after the long trip across Siberia, spent a few days each in Peking and Tokyo, before boarding a ship bound for the United States. He stopped in Chicago to visit a sister and then proceeded to New York, but left immediately for Washington to deliver messages from Bullard to Creel at the Committee for Public Safety. The

43. Poole writes, "Suddenly from just ahead came two single rifle shots; and then, an instant later, the long, sharp ugly rattle of a machine-gun, and the hiss and buzz of bullets over our heads. At once there was panic everywhere; and in the next ten seconds I grew so absorbed in my own career that I had no time to look around. In the rush I was carried off my feet; I threw up my arms and was borne with the mob through an open gateway into a court.... I looked back upon the street and saw it black with people lying on their faces. Bullets were flying thick and fast, and from all up and down the Nevsky I could hear the crash of shop windows as men dove through to get indoors" (Poole, *"The Dark People": Russia's Crisis* [New York: Macmillan, 1918], 6-7).

44. "Real Russians: Vivid Sketches and Interviews of Village Life," *New York Tribune*, 16 November 1918, 9. "It is one of the most enlightening books on the Russian problem that have been written since the revolution."

latter recruited Poole to head the New York office of a new Foreign Press Bureau, where he remained until the agency closed soon after the armistice.[45]

In the 1920s Poole returned to writing fiction, producing one novel a year for his faithful publisher, Macmillan, despite the fact that they were not as well received as his first two novels: *Blind* (1920),[46] *Beggars' Gold* (1921), *Millions* (1922), *Danger* (1923), *Avalanche* (1924), *Hunter's Moon* (1925), *With Eastern Eyes* (1926), and *Silent Storm* (1927). Russia was not forgotten—in *Avalanche* its influence can be seen in the narrator's recollection of Russian folk tales and in the appearance of characters possessing the power to cure afflictions through telepathy or hypnosis—but it had clearly receded from Poole's view.[47] Though Poole continued to produce fiction into the early 1930s, in particular works about the Depression, he became interested in depicting the real world, writing primarily at his summer home at Sugar Hill, near Franconia in the White Mountains.[48] Having lost much of his family inheritance in the stock market crash of 1929, he was now writing primarily out of necessity.

Poole's personal experience of financial calamity also revived his concern for the fate of the lower classes, on whom the Depression had inflicted the greatest suffering. Proving that the writing of his earlier settlement years was not mere muckraking for financial gain, he wrote letters to the editor of the *Times*, for example, about the plight of the "Bottom of the Bowery," the poorest of the Bowery's poor, who resorted to drinking cheap wood alcohol, "Smoke";[49] he ended his letter with a plea for donations to the Bowery YMCA and Salvation Army Hotel.[50]

This phase of Poole's career is perhaps more interesting to the historian, though his writing cites few sources, relying instead on the reporter's technique of weaving interview material into stories. His first book of nonfiction since *The Village* was *Nurses on Horseback* (1932), which drew inspiration from his settlement experience and admiration for Lillian Wald. This time the heroine was Mary Breckinridge, a woman from a distinguished Virginia family who became a midwife devoted to serving the poor in the mountains of eastern Kentucky and who founded the Frontier Nursing Service in May 1925. By 1932 the Service had grown to thirty-two nurses with over eight thousand patients. Poole himself

45. Poole, *The Bridge*, 321-31; "Foreign Press Bureau Is Disbanded by Creel," *New York Tribune*, 20 December 1918, 5.

46. "The Author of The Harbor Goes Adrift in His Latest Book: *Blind* is Overly Ambitious," *New York Tribune*, 24 October 1920, F9.

47. Ernest Poole, *The Little Dark Man and Other Russian Sketches* (New York: Macmillan, 1925); Poole, "Mother Volga (as told me by a Russian friend)," *The Independent,* 20 December 1924, 537-38.

48. Ernest Poole, *Great Winds* (New York: Macmillan, 1933); and Poole, *One of Us* (New York: Macmillan, 1934). Critics seem to agree that the latter, while not great, was much better than the former, which should not have been published (Keefer, *Ernest Poole*, 146—51).

49. Ernest Poole, "'Smoke' on the Bowery," letter to the editor, *New York Times*, 7 February 1929, 21.

50. Ernest Poole, "Unemployed Still Unemployed: Spring Has Not Come to the Bowery," letter to the editor, *New York Times*, 25 April 1931, 13.

traveled the region on horseback, accompanied by a nurse, to gather material.[51] The book was quite successful and became required reading at some nursing schools.[52]

Poole's next major work of nonfiction was his autobiography, *The Bridge* (1940). It was also published by Macmillan and included a number of photographs from his Russian and Caucasian tours of 1905 and 1917. The work emphasized Poole's childhood in Chicago and settlement years in New York, his experience as a reporter, his unsuccessful ventures into drama, and initial success as a novelist. Despite a disappointing dearth of information on Poole's family and the many individuals who were personal and professional associates, as well as its failure to discuss some of his more notable publications, *The Bridge* does provide an account of his travels and career. It attracted an audience that shared the author's nostalgia for the lost hopes of the early twentieth century and the American dream that a peaceful, progressive world would follow the horrors of the Great War and the Depression.[53] And the book provided valuable vignettes of people he knew, such as Woodrow Wilson, Mark Twain (from Greenwich Village), Maxim Gorky, Big Bill Haywood, Robert Frost (a neighbor in New Hampshire), William Dean Howells, O. Henry, and Lincoln Steffens. Poole was especially disappointed by the outcome of the Russian Revolution and, perhaps influenced by his recent visit to Italy, predicted the clash between dictatorships (particularly those led by Mussolini and Hitler) and the democratic countries that opposed them.[54]

Another big project undertaken by Poole, *Giants Gone: Men Who Made Chicago*, was likely motivated by the years spent listening to his father's stories of growing up in Chicago.[55] Poole traveled to Chicago to look up old friends and conduct interviews, though a number of sources were undocumented. As with the omissions that marred *The Bridge*, many of the founders of modern Chicago were left out or barely mentioned and quite a bit of the corruption that was so characteristic of old Chicago was whitewashed. Still, the *New York Times* gave it a full-page review.[56]

Interestingly, while living in New York during the winter of 1942-43, Poole returned to the theme of *The Harbor* by visiting a New York waterfront bustling with troops and munitions bound for Europe, including a troop ship preparing to set sail. Naturally, he could not disclose details about its destination, but photographs accompanying his feature article graphically revealed the crowded quarters on board.[57]

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51. Keefer, *Ernest Poole*, 144-47.
52. Ernest Poole, *Nurses on Horseback* (New York: Macmillan, 1932).
53. Rose Feld, "Ernest Poole Reviews Six Decades of Personal History," *New York Times*, 25 August 1940, 74. See also Ralph Thompson, "Books of the Times," *New York Times*, 14 August 1940, 23.
54. Keefer, *Ernest Poole*, 158-59.
55. Ernest Poole, *Giants Gone: Men Who Made Chicago* (New York: Whittlesey House [McGraw- Hill], 1943).
56. Frank S. Adams, "Chicago's Builders," *New York Times*, May 7, 1943, BR9.
57. Poole, "The Port of a Thousand Secrets," *New York Times*, January 31, 1943, SM19, 33.

Poole's final works reflected his love for New Hampshire, where he spent most of his later years. The first, *The Great White Hills of New Hampshire* is simply a tribute to the history and beauty of the state.[58] The second, *The Nancy Flyer: A Stagecoach Epic*, published in the last year of his life, is a fictional account of a real stagecoach of the Concord Coach line that Poole discovered in a New Hampshire barn. The book was, in fact, commissioned by his son William, who worked for a publisher (Thomas Y. Crowell).[59] This coach may well have reminded Poole of an episode described in *"The Dark People,"* when Tarasov showed Poole the ruins of an eighteenth-century French coach that had belonged to his grandmother and told the story that went with it.

After suffering two strokes, the second debilitating, Ernest Poole died in New York on January 10, 1950, just short of his seventieth birthday. An obituary stressed his role as a writer whose work portrayed the "other half" of New York City's population and as a reporter who rendered scenes and events subtly, yet graphically. A follow-up noted that he would be best remembered for *The Harbor* and *The Bridge*, concluding, "And until all his generation is gone he will be remembered as a warm and unselfish human being."[60] Poole's widow lived nearly another twenty years in the same New York apartment and at Sugar Hill, near Franconia in New Hampshire. She was survived by two sons, a daughter, and seven grandchildren.[61]

58. *The Great White Hills of New Hampshire* (New York: Doubleday, Doran, 1946).

59. *The Nancy Flyer: A Stagecoach Epic* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1949).

60. "The Days of Ernest Poole," *New York Times*, January 13, 1950, 22. *See also* "Ernest Poole, 69, Novelest, is Dead," ibid., January 11, 1950, 20.

61. "Mrs. Poole, 87, Dies: Widow of Novelist," *Chicago Tribune*, May 11, 1968, A14.

Chapter One
Katharine Bereshkovsky: A Russian Revolutionist

by Ernest Poole
Outlook, January 7, 1905

"Now, in a few months they will rise by millions." A deep, musical voice spoke in Russian quietly. "We shall sweep away the System of the Tsar, and Russia shall be free. See"–she showed me bulletins that had followed her to New York. "Day and night they work. In place of sleep, a dream of freedom; in place of warmth and food and drink, the same dream. This dream is old in American breasts."

Her hair, once cut in prison, has grown again. A great wavy mass of gray frames a face broad, heavy, deep-lined with suffering. Her eyes, deep under high-arched brows, now flash the fires of her dream, now beam forth the warm affections of one whom hundreds call endearingly "Babushka"–the little grandmother.[1] Her voice as she spoke through our interpreter, ran swiftly over her own sufferings, but rose passionately describing her country's degradation. Daughter of a nobleman and earnest philanthropist; then revolutionist, hard-labor convict, and exile for twenty-three years in Siberia; and now a heroic old woman of sixty-one, she has plunged again into the dangerous struggle for freedom. The Russian revolutionary movement is embodied in this one heroic figure.

"More than fifty years ago," she began, "Russia lay asleep. The peasants, starved, bowed low and staggering, broke out only here and there to burn an estate or butcher a landlord, to be flogged back into submission or death. So deep was their subservience that when, a wee girl of ten, I used to tell how I hated the bad, flogging Government, my old peasant nurse would beg me to whisper.

"My mother was deeply religious. Ignoring the false pomps of the Greek Church, she tried only to impress on her children the ethical teachings of Christ. The incongruity between those teachings and our life soon bewildered me. My mother told me to treat the servants as brothers and sisters, but when she found

1. Known formally in Russian as Ekaterina Breshko-Breshkovskaya (1844-1934) she was already well known to politically active Americans, especially women, for her Siberian prison encounter with George Kennan, described in *Siberia and the Exile System* (1886), and by her speaking tours of the United States, promoted by women's rights advocate Alice Stone Blackwell (1857-1950) and who published Breshkovskaya's biography in 1918.

She was one of a number of reform-minded students who poured into the Russian countryside in 1874 in the "to the people movement" or *narodnichestvo*–and suffered exile and prison terms for her involvement.

me chatting in the great kitchen, she sternly told me that I must not forget my place as a nobleman's daughter. She taught me Christ's command to give away all that I had and follow him, but when the next morning I went out and gave my handsome little cloak to a shivering peasant child, again she sharply reproved me. I had long spells of thinking.

"My father helped me think. He was a man of broad, liberal ideas. We read together many books of science and travel. Social science absorbed me. By sixteen I had read much of Voltaire, Rousseau, and Diderot, and I knew by heart the French Revolution. I was not confined to Russian, for I spoke French from babyhood, my German governess soon taught me German, and at that time the world's best thought was not garbled by Russian censorship. So trained, I could hardly be called an ignorant fanatic.

"Fired by such ideals, I saw the poor, degraded slaves around me, and longed to see them free. At first I believed that freedom could be reached through the Government. No revolutionary spirit had yet been kindled. It was the first great era of the Liberals. The abolition of serfdom was soon to be effected; trial by jury to be instituted; and these promised reforms sent a social impulse sweeping through Russia I was thrilled by the glad news; I read of thousands going to the peasants as doctors, schoolteachers, and nurses; I read of agricultural schools opened and of model farms laid out; all teaching the peasant to be free. Filled with young enthusiasm, I opened a little school near our estate.

"I found the peasant an abject creature, who grasped not even the meager rights he already had. He could think only of his mud hut and his plot of ground. As for Government, he knew only that in peace he must pay money; in war, lives. The new rumors had kindled his old heart-deep hope of freedom. The twenty peasants in my school, like the fifty millions in Russia, suspected that the proclamation had been hidden, and often went to the landowners demanding their freedom. At last the manifesto arrived.

"The peasant was free! No longer bound to the land, his landlord ordered him off. He was shown a little strip of the poorest soil, there to be free and starve. He was bewildered; he could not imagine himself without his old plot of land. For centuries past an estate had always been described as containing so many 'souls.' It was sold for so much per 'soul.' The 'soul' and the plot had always gone together. So the peasant had thought that his soul and his plot would be together freed. In dull but growing rage he refused to leave his plot for the wretched strip. 'Masters,' he cried, 'how can I nourish my little ones through a Russian winter? Such land means death.' This cry rose all over Russia.

"The Government appointed in every district an 'arbiter' to persuade the peasants. The 'arbiter' failed. Then troops were quartered in their huts, hopes were starved, old people were beaten by drunkards, daughters were violated. The peasants grew more wild, and then began the flogging. In a village like ours, where they refused to leave their plots, they were driven into line on the village street; every tenth man was called out and flogged with the knout; some died. Two weeks later, as they still held out, every fifth man was flogged. The poor ignorant creatures still held desperately to what they thought their rights were;

again the line and now every man was dragged forward to the flogging. This process lasted five years all over Russia, until at last, bleeding and exhausted, the peasants gave in.

"I heard heartrending stories in my little school-house, and many more through my father, the arbiter of our district. The peasants thronged to our house day and night. Many were carried in crippled by the knout; sobbing wives told of husbands killed before their eyes. Often the poor wretches literally wallowed, clasping my father's knees, begging him to read again the manifesto and find it was a mistake, beseeching him to search for help in that mysterious region–the law court. From such interviews he came to me worn and haggard.

"I now saw how ineffectual were my attempts. I felt that tremendous economic and political changes must be made, but, still a Liberalist, I thought only of reform. To seek guidance, to find what older heads were thinking, I went, at nineteen, with my mother and sister, to St. Petersburg. Into our compartment on the train came a handsome young prince returning from official duties in Siberia. For hours he discussed with me the problems that were rushing upon us. His words thrilled like fire. Our excited voices rose steadily higher, until my mother begged me, as my nurse had done before, to speak low. The young prince is now an old man in exile. His name is Peter Kropotkin.[2]

"In St. Petersburg I entered the central group of Liberals–men and women of noble birth and university training, doctors, lawyers, journalists, novelists, poets, scientists, the most highly educated people in Russia. Since higher education for women was strictly forbidden, they had already become criminals by opening classes for women in the natural and political sciences. All these classes I eagerly joined, constantly attending their secret meetings. Again my mother grew frightened, and at last she took me home. During the next three years, however, I returned again and again, traveled to other cities, and met Liberal people all over Russia.

"Then my father called me home. Here I resolved to support myself and help the peasants. My father built me a small boarding-school for girls, and through the influence of my relatives I received many pupils. He built, too, a cottage, which I could teach the peasants. I now drew closer to them. I began to realize the cull memory every peasant has of flogging and toil from time immemorial. I felt their subconscious but heart-deep longing for freedom.

Three years later I married a liberal, broad-minded landowner, who took deep interest in the zemstvos,[3] our district moot. He established for me a peasants'

2. Kropotkin (1842-1921) after service in the Russian army he had become a reform-minded intellectual who had also joined the "to the people" movement and served a few years abroad before obtaining an exile abroad in France and England, where he gained much sympathy for his cause. A "gentlemen's revolutionary" as several contemporaries in the West, such as Bertrand Russell and Eugene Debs, he was lured back to Russia in 1918 by the Bolsheviks and given a place of honor in Novodevichy Cemetery in Moscow when he died soon afterwards.

3. The zemstvos (land assemblies) were created as part of the Great Reforms of Alexander II in 1864, following the disastrous Crimean War, 1853-55. They were representative bodies at the province (state) and district (county) levels, composed of major

agricultural school. Several of the younger landowners became interested in our work. We met together frequently; and this was my last attempt at Liberal reform.

"He is a poor patriot who will not thoroughly try his Government before he rises against it. We searched the laws and edicts; we found certain scant and long-neglected peasants' rights of local suffrage; and then we began showing the peasants how to use these rights they already had. They crowded to the local elections and began electing as judges, arbiters, and other officials the Liberals who honestly held the peasants' interests at heart. But when the more despotic landowners were ousted from the zemstvo and lost their source of (to use your language) 'graft,' their leader denounced us to the Minister of the Interior as a band of conspirators. Several of us were exiled to Siberia,[4] my husband and I were put under police surveillance, and my father was deposed from office, without trial, as a 'dangerous man,' for allowing such criminals to be at large. Punished as criminals for teaching the peasant his legal rights, we saw the Government as it was, the System of Corruption, watching jealously through spies and secret police, that their peasant victim might not be taught anything that could make him think or act as a man.

"A startling event now occurred. A Liberalist named Netcharjev [Sergei Nechaev][5] had already collected a revolutionary group. Discovered and arrested, their trial in 1871 was the first great event in the long struggle for freedom. Along the Great Siberian Road the procession of "politicals" began. Meanwhile their revolutionary documents had been published. Never again has the Government allowed this blunder. Those documents were read by thousands of Liberals like us. The spirit of revolution was kindled.

"I was at this time twenty-six years old. My husband, like me, had a whole life before him, and therefore I thought it only fair to speak frankly. I asked him if he were willing to suffer exile or death in this cause of freedom. He said that he was not. Then I left him.

"I went to Kiev, joined a revolutionary group, and traveled from town to town, spreading our ideas among the liberals, both Jews and Russians. As our numbers swelled we resolved to reach the peasants themselves. We divided into two groups–the Lavrists [followers of Petr Lavrov], who believed in slowly educating the peasants to revolution; the Bakuninites [followers of Mikhail

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landowners, wealthy townsmen, and some peasants. Though dominated by the upper class, some became advocates of a national level assembly, which would be created in 1905 in the Duma (first election in 1906). The original zemstvos applied only to Russian provinces, but some attained the authority to have a limited taxation authority to expand schools and build roads, etc.

4. The Siberian "exile system" began primarily with the arrest and sentencing of Russians advocating change in 1825, known as the Decembrists, and was expanded in the last half of the 19th century.

5. Nechaev (1847-1882) was a contemporary of Breshkovskaya and the founder of an extremist and terrorist group of Russian revolutionaries. Of middle-class or *raznochintsy* background and well-educated, he opposed the gradualist orientation of the "*narodniks"* Nechaev inspired a strong strain in the Russian movement that favored bombs over words in his *Catechism of a Revolutionary* and led to a number of assassinations, such as that by Vera Zasulich in 1878 of Trepov and in 1881 of Alexander II.

Bakunin, founder of modern anarchism], who believed in calling on the peasants to rise for freedom at once. To the Bakuninites I belonged, as did most of those who had lived close to the peasants.

"We put on peasant dress, to elude the police and break down the peasants' cringing distrust. I dressed in enormous bark shoes, coarse shirt and drawers, and heavy cloak. I used acid on my face and hands; I worked and ate with the peasants; I learned their speech; I traveled on foot, forging passports; I lived 'illegally.'

"By night I did my organizing. You desire a picture? A low room with mud floor and walls. Rafters just over your head, and still higher, thatch. The room was packed with men, women, and children. Two big fellows sat up on the high brick stove, with their dangling feet knocking occasional applause. These people had been gathered by my host–a brave peasant whom I picked out–and he in turn had chosen only those whom Siberia could not terrify. When I recalled thir floggings; when I pointed to those who were crippled for life; to women whose husbands died under the lash–then men would cry out so fiercely that the three or four cattle in the next room would bellow and have to be quieted. Then I told them they themselves were to blame. They had only the most wretched strips of land. To be free and live, the people must own the land! From my cloak I would bring a book of fables written to teach our principles and stir the love of freedom. And then far into the night the firelight showed a circle of great broad faces and dilated eyes, staring with all the reverence every peasant has for that mysterious thing–a book.

"These books, twice as effective as oral work, were printed in secrecy at heavy expense. But many of us had libraries, jewels, costly gowns and furs to sell; and new recruits kept adding to our fund. We had no personal expenses.

"Often, betrayed by some peasant spy, I left a village quickly, before completing my work. Then the hut group was left to meet under a peasant who could read aloud those wonderful fables. So they dreamed, until a few weeks later another leader in disguise came to them.

"In that year of 1874 over two thousand educated people traveled among the peasants. Weary work, you say. Yes, when the peasants were slow and dull and the spirit of freedom seemed an illusion. But when that spirit grew real, one felt far from weary. Then, too, we had occasional grippings of hands with comrades. We could bond with each other, for all had found the peasants eager; to own the land had been the cream of their fathers; their eagerness roe, and stout words of cheer were sent from one group to another. An underground system was started, a correspondence cipher was invented, the movement spread through thirty-six great provinces of Russia and became steadily better organized. So the People's Party was established.

"The System, alarmed by their spies, made wholesale arrests. I was under a peasant' name in Podolia. In my wallet was our manifesto, also maps showing the places already reached and those next to be organized. A servant-girl spied them and told the servant of the local police agent. An hour later he came rushing in and jerked the manifesto from my wallet. His eyes popping with excitement, he read the paper in a loud, thick voice. As that simple but stirring proclamation

of freedom, equality, and love was read, the poor, ignorant people thought it the longed-for proclamation from the Tsar. The news spread. Men, women, and children rushed up. The District Attorney came, and he too read it aloud. Then suddenly the chief of police arrived, glanced at the wild, joyous faces around, and seized the document. 'What is this?' he asked me, roughly. 'Propaganda,' I replied, 'with which the attorney, the gendarme, and the priest are viciously inciting the people.'

"In jail I was led down to the 'Black Hole.' As I came down, two besotted wretches were stumbling up. I was pushed in, the heavy door slammed, and bolts rattled in total darkness. At once I was sickened by he odor. I too a step forward and slipped, for the floor was soft with filth. I stood still until I was deadly sick, I sank down on a pile of straw and rags. A minute later I was stung sharply back to consciousness, and sprang up covered with vermin. I leaned against the walls and found them damp. So I stood up all night in the middle of the hole. And this was the beginning of Siberia.

"I awaited trial in a new St. Petersburg prison. My cell was nine feet long, five feet wide, and seven feet high. It was clean, and a hole above gave plenty of air. My bed was an iron bracket, with mattress and pillow of straw, rough gray blanket, coarse sheet and pillow-case. I wore my own clothes. In solitary confinement? No. I joined a social club.

"On that first evening I lay in the dark telling myself that our struggle must go on in spite of this calamity, and yet fearful for it, as we fear for things we love. I lay motionless, and solitary confinement began to work on my mind, as the System had planned it should. Suddenly I sat up quickly. I could hear nothing, but as I started to lie down my ear approached again the iron pipe supporting my cot. Tick, tick, tickity, tick. I felt along the pipe, and found that it went through to the next cell. Again I heard. Tick, tick, tick, tickity, tick. I had once heard a code planned at a meeting in Moscow, but I could not recall it. At last I had an idea. There are thirty-five letters in the Russian alphabet. I rapped. Once! Then twice! Then three times! So on until for the last letter I rapped thirty-five. No response. Again, slowly and distinctly. My heart was beating now. Steps came slowly down the corridor. The guard approached and passed my door. His steps died away. Suddenly–Tick!–Tick!, tick!–Tick, tick, tick!–and through to thirty-five! Then slowly we spelled out words, and by this clumsy code the swifter code was taught to me.

"After that, for three years, the pipe was almost always talking. How fast we talked! The pipe sounded so–" Her gray head bent over the table, her face was flushed, her eyes flashed back through forty years of danger and prison, and her strong, subtle fingers rolled out the ticks at lightning speed. "Our club had over a hundred members in solitary confinement; some in cells on either side of mine, some below and some above. Did we tell stories? Yes, and good ones! Young students, keen wits, high spirits!" She laughed merrily, becoming Babushka. "How some of those youngsters made love! A mere boy, two cells to my right, vowed he adored the young girl of nineteen five cells to my left on the floor above, whom he had never laid eyes on. I helped tick his gallant speeches and her

responses continually along. They passed to the cell below hers, and were ticked up the heating-pipe to her by a sad little woman who grieved for her babies. Did they ever meet? Ah, Siberia is large as your states and France and England and Germany all together.

"Our club was not all a club of pleasure. Some died of consumption; others killed themselves, and others went insane. The pipe raved sometimes. It spoke many sad good-bys to wives and children. But the pipe was not often so, for a Revolutionist must smile though the heart be torn. We older ones continually urged the young girls to be strong, for they told us how they were taken out and brutally treated to make them give evidence. A very few broke down, but there were many young girls who endured unshaken months of this brutality.

From new prisoners we heard cheering news. The fire of our Idea had spread among workmen as well as peasants; in the factories many were arrested, some were imprisoned here and joined our club, but were soon condemned into exile. Still the Idea spread. In 1877 came that tremendous demonstration on the Kazan Square in St. Petersburg.[6] Hundreds were imprisoned; again many joined our club and were condemned, sent us last words of cheer along the pipe, and so were rushed off to Siberia.

"In 1878 we were tried. One hundred had died or gone insane, We one hundred and ninety-three were packed into a little hall. Over half had belonged to our club, and I had a strange shock as I now looked at these club-mates with whom I had daily talked. White, thin, and rippled, but still the same stout hearts! We nerved each other to refuse to be tried, for the trial we knew was to be a farce; the jury allowed us by law was not given us; we had only a jury of seven of whom but one was a peasant. Our judges had been appointed by the Tsar. They divided us into groups of ten or fifteen; the trials lasted half a year. When my turn came, I protested against this farce; for this I was at once taken out and my prison term was lengthened to five years as hard-labor convict in the mines. This is the punishment given to a murderer. My term served, I was a Siberian exile for life.

"Secretly at night, to avid a demonstration, ten of us were led out. Other tens followed on successive nights. In the street below were eleven 'telegas'–heavy hooded vehicles with three horses each. Into one I was placed, a stout gendarme squeezed in on each side, to remain there two months. Just before my knees sat the driver. We went off at a gallop, and our five-thousand-mile journey began. The Great Siberian Road was feelingly described by Mr. Kennan. A succession of bumps of all sizes; our springless telegas jolted and bounced; my two big gendarmes lurched; our horses continually galloped, for they were changed every few hours; we bounced often a whole week without stopping over ten minutes day or night; we suffered agony from lack of sleep. Our officer ordered the gendarmes never to leave us. At times we women held shawls between the gendarmes and our friends. Three wives who had come to share their husbands' exile were treated the same. We were all dressed in convict clothes. The men had also heavy chains on feet and wrists; their heads were partly shaved. Our officer kept the money given

6. Kazan Square is in central St. Petersburg in front of the Kazan Cathedral on Nevsky Prospect.

him by our anxious friends at home, and gave us each the Government allowance of about five cents a day. For sleep we were placed the etapes (wayside prisons).

"Mr. [George] Kennan has well described the cells–reeking, crawling, infected with scurvy, consumption, and typhoid. They had log walls roughly covered with plaster. The air was invariably noisome; the long bench on which we slept had no bedclothes. Through the walls we heard the endless jangling of fetters, the moaning of women, the cried of sick babies. On the walls were a mass of inscriptions, names of friends who had gone before us, news of death and insanity, and shrewd bits of advice for outwitting gendarmes. Some were freshly cut, but one worm-eaten love poem looked a century old. For along this great Siberian Road over a million men, women, and children have dragged, two hundred and fifty thousand since 1875, people from every social class; murderers and degenerates side by side with tender girls who were exiled through the jealous wife of some petty town official.

"You keep asking me for scenes and stories. But you see we were thinking of our dream, and did not notice so much the life outside. Did any die: Yes, one by typhoid. Our officer rushed the sufferer on at full gallop, until his delirious cries from the jolting vehicle so roused our protests that he was left in the Irkutsk prison, where he died. Were there any children? Yes, one little wife had a baby ten months old, but the rest of us did all we could to help her, and the child survived the journey. Friends to say good-by? Ah, let me think! Yes; as we passed through Krasnoiarsk, a student's old mother had come from a distance to see him. Our officer refused to allow the boy to kiss her. She caught but a glimpse, the gendarmes jerked him back into the vehicle, and they galloped on. As I came by I saw her white, haggard old face. Then she fell by the roadside.

"On reaching the Kara mines I found that the hard-labor year was but eight months, and that my forty months in prison had been taken from my forty-eight month sentence. So, having stayed ten months, I left Kara–as I then hoped–forever. I was taken to Barguzin, a bleak little group of huts near the Arctic Circle. We arrived in February–forty-five degrees below zero. I began to look for work. Seeing a few forlorn little children, I proposed a school. The police agent forbade me, and showed his police rules from St. Petersburg, which forbid an exiled doctor to heal the sick or an exiled priest to comfort the dying. No educated person may use his powers to improve his hamlet. (Many politicals have hired out to the Cossacks at five cents a day.) Here were three young students, 'administrative exiles', exiled for life without a trial because suspected by some gendarme or spy.

"We decided to escape, and searched for two years for a guide to lead us a thousand miles to the Pacific. We found a bent old peasant who had made the journey years before. With him we set out one night, leading four pack-horses. We soon found the old man useless. We had maps and a compass, but these did little good in the Taiga, that region of forest crags and deep ravines, where we walked now toward heaven and now to the region below. Often I watched my poor stupid beast go rolling and snorting down a ravine, hoping as he passed each tree that the next would stop his fall. Then for hours we would use all our arts

and energies to drag him up. It was beautiful weather by day, but bitterly cold by night. We had hardtack to eat, also pressed tea and a little tobacco. So we walked about six hundred miles; in a straight line, perhaps two hundred.

"Meanwhile the police had searched in vain. The Governor had telegraphed to St. Petersburg, and from there the command had come that we be found at any cost. The plan adopted was characteristic of the System. Fifty neighboring farmers were seized (in harvest time), and were exiled from farms and families until they brought us back. After weeks of search they found us in the Apple Mountains. Their leader shouted across the ravine that unless we gave in they must keep on our trail and escape was impossible. As we went back around each of us rode ten armed men.

"The three students were sent in different directions up into the worst of the Arctic wilderness–Yakutsk. Here each slept in a little 'yurt' (mud hut) with wild Mongolians and their cattle, sealed in winter, stifling, lined thick with rotting straw, rags, and animal filth. If the exile walked out to breathe, the watchful natives dragged him back. To such yurts two young girl friends of mine–Rosa Frank and Vera Sheftel[7], students from the medical college in St. Petersburg–were sent, each alone, and spent years without a word from civilized people. In such places even men have gone insane. But I leave my story. Of the three students one is dead, another is dying of consumption, and the third escaped, returned to the old struggle in Russia, was caught, and given eight years as a hard-labor convict, and, having again escaped, is today renewing the struggle.

"As punishment for my attempt I was sentenced to four years' hard-labor in Kara and to forty blows of the lash. Into my cell a physician came to see if I were strong enough to live through the agony. I saw at once that, afraid to flog a woman political without precedent, by this trick of declaring me too sick to be punished they wished to establish the precedent of the sentence, in order that others might be flogged in the future. I insisted that I was strong enough, and the court had no right to record such a sentence unless they flogged me at once. The sentence was not carried out.

"Back in Kara I rejoiced to meet seventeen women politicals, with whom I lived in four low cells. Here we had books and writing materials, and were quite comfortable, discussing plans for the future struggle. A few weeks later eight of the men "politicals" escaped in pairs, leaving dummies in their places. As the guards never took more than a hasty look into that noisome cell, they did not discover the ruse for weeks. Then mounted Cossacks rode out. The man hunt spread. Some of the fugitives struggled through jungles, over mountains and through swamps a thousand miles to Vladivostok, saw the longed-for American vessels, and there on the docks were recaptured. All were brought back to Kara.

"For this we were all punished. One morning the Cossack guards entered our cells, seized us, tore off our clothes, and dressed us in convict suits alive with

7. Kennan adds the information that the two young women were medical students in St. Petersburg in the 1880's when they were arrested and sentenced to exile in Sredny Kominsk in Siberia. He did not think they would survive long. Kennan, Siberian Exile I, 25.

vermin. That scene cannot be described. One of us attempted suicide. Taken to an old prison, we were thrown into the 'black holes'–four little stalls off a low, grimy hall which contained two big stoves and two little windows. Each of us had a stall six feet by five. On winter nights the stall doors were left open for heat, but in summer each was locked at night in her own black hole. For three months we did not use our bunks, but fought with candles and pails of scalding water, until at last the vermin were all killed. We had been put on the 'black hole diet' of black bread and water. For three years we never breathed the outside air. We struggled constantly against the outrages inflicted on us. After one outrage we lay like a row of dead women for nine days without touching food, until certain promises were finally exacted from the warden. This 'hunger strike' was used repeatedly. To thwart it we were often bound hand and foot while Cossacks tried to force food down our throats.

"Kara grew worse after I left. To hint at what happened, I tell briefly the story of my dear friend Maria, a woman of education and deep refinement. Shortly after my going Maria saw Madam Sigida strike an official who had repeatedly insulted the women. Two days later she watched Sigida die, bleeding from the lash; that night she saw three women commit suicide as a protest to the world; she knew that twenty men attempted suicide on the night following, and she determined to double the protest by assassinating he Governor of Trans-Baikal, who has ordered Sigida's flogging. At this time Maria was pregnant. Her prison term over, she left her husband and walked hundreds of miles to the Governor's house and shot him. She spent three months in a cold, dirty 'secret cell,' not long enough to lie down in or high enough to stand up in, wearing the cast-off suit of a convict, sleeping on the bare floor and tormented by vermin; she was then sentenced to be hanged. She hesitated now whether to save the live of her unborn child. She knew that if she revealed her condition her sentence would be changed to imprisonment. She decided to keep silent and sacrifice her child, that when the execution was over and her condition was discovered the effect on Russia might be still greater. Her condition, however, became apparent, and she was started off to the Irkutsk prison. It was midwinter, forty degrees below zero. She walked. She was given no overcoat and no boots, until some common criminals in the column gave her theirs. Her child was born dead in prison, and soon after she too died.

"Meanwhile I had been taken to Selenzensk, a little Buriat hamlet on the frontier of China, where Mr. [George] Kennan met me." Kennan speaks of her in these words: "Her face bore traces of much suffering, and her thick, dark, wavy hair, cut sort in prison at the mines, was streaked here and there with gray. But not hardship nor exile nor penal servitude had been able to break her brave, finely tempered spirit, or to shake her convictions of honor or duty. . . . There was not another educated woman within a hundred miles; she was separated for life from family and friends, and she had, it seemed to me, nothing to look forward to except a few years more or less of hardship and privation, and at last burial in a lonely graveyard beside the Selenga River. . . . The unshaken courage with which this unfortunate woman contemplated her dreary future, and the faith she manifested in the ultimate triumph of liberty in her native country, were as touching as they

were heroic. Almost the last words she said to me were: 'Mr. Kennan, we may die in exile, and our children may die in exile, and our children's children may die in exile, but something must come of it at last!'"

"The seven years that followed," she continued, "were the hardest of the twenty-three, for I spoke to but three Russian politicals, who stopped three weeks. In winter–from twenty to fifty below zero–I used to put my chair up on the brick stove and sit with my head close to the thatch." Hence the severe rheumatism that now affects her. "The Government had allowed me six dollars a month. My hut rent was fifty cents, wood a dollar and a half, food four dollars. My friends at home? Yes, they sent money, too, but of course I sent this to my Kara friends. At long intervals one of their many letters reached me–sometimes sewed in the lining of a Buriat cap. I grew almost frantic with loneliness, and to keep my sanity I would run out on the snow shouting passionate orations, or even playing the prima donna and singing grand opera arias to the bleak landscape, which never applauded.

The seven years over, I was allowed to travel all through Siberia. I lived three years in Irkutsk, the main Siberian city, and many years besides in Tobolsk, Tiumen, and other smaller towns. Here, as my hardships ended, I saw the sufferings of others begin. By the increasing procession from Russia I knew that our work was spreading. With hundreds of comrades, I planned future work. In September, 1896, thoroughly reformed, I secured permission to return to Russia, and three hours later I was on the train.

"Our old 'People's Party' had become the 'Party of the Will of the People' [People's Will] and had died as thousands of its leaders were sent to exile or prison. In 1887 the Social Democratic party was formed, working mainly in the factories and mills. Here they found ready listeners, for the laborers, who had formed unions to mitigate their wretched existence, were often lashed to death. It was against the law to strike. Once when a labor leader had been arrested and a committee from the workers came to the prison to ask his release, they were shot down by the prison officials. Several times men were shot for parading on the first of May. Among the workers the new party gained strength until about 1900. Then all its Jewish members seceded and formed the 'bund'–which favors immediate revolution. Others too seceded, and its power has slowly declined.

"The Social Revolutionary party, of which I am a member, began only five years ago, but it is now the most promising in the growing struggle for freedom. Like the Social Democrats, we strive for the Socialist commonwealth. But, unlike them, we believe that to secure our freedom the first step is to throw off the System of the Tsar. To this standard–Freedom by Revolution–members from all parties rally. The Liberalist Miloshevsky served for years on the Board of Alderman and the Board of Education in his city, striving to lift the people out of the dense ignorance which made them slaves. For years he struggled to make the school education of real value. Constantly thwarted by the Government, as I myself had been, he was at last driven to our party, became a valuable worker, was captured, and is tonight at the silver mines of Nerchinsk, to which the Kara prisoners have been transferred. Through our secret reports we know that Akatooy is far more

loathsome. Like Miloshevsky, men of middle age, Liberals for twenty years, have seen their newspapers and magazines garbled to death by the censors, their friends exiled without trial, on the most absurd suspicions, and so at last they see that whatever be their creed, first of all they must sweep away the System.

"To the peasant we teach the old lesson. To reach freedom–first, the land must be owned by the people; second, the System of the Tsar must be swept away. There is not a province in Russia where our literature does not go. The underground mails run smoothly now. Scores of presses wok ceaselessly in Switzerland, safe from capture. Not to take useless risks, our central committee is scattered all through Russia; it rarely meets, but it constantly plans through cipher letters and directs the local committees, and so down to the little peasant and labor groups that meet tonight by the thousands in huts and city tenements.

These thousands of groups draw swiftly closer. Proclamations, open letters and announcements pour through the underground mail. Our leaders constantly travel from group to group. As a leader, my story is typical. When, on reaching Russia eight years ago, I began again to travel, I noticed at once a vast difference. I no longer walked, but had money for the railroads, and so covered ten times the ground; for six years the railway compartment was my home. I had meetings on river boats by night, in city tenement rooms, in peasant huts, and in the forests, but now, unlike the old days, the way had always been prepared by some one before me. I was constantly protected. Once, in Odessa, the police came into the house where I was staying. Their suspicions had been aroused, and they made a search. I at once became an old peasant woman."

In a twinkling she had changed. Her shawl had come up over her head, her hands were clasped in her lap, her head nodded. A bent, decrepit old peasant looked from under the shawl with a vacant grin.

"My ruse succeeded. The next month, far down in the south, I was living as a French woman. On some rumor the police came along, examining passports in every house on the block. I slipped out while they searched the next house, and entered it just as they came to the house where I had stayed. Again, only eighteen months ago, I was in Kiev with a young girl of seventeen, an active worker, who had been suspected and was under police surveillance. We slept together in her tiny tenement room. I had been there a week when the spies watching her window observed me with her. The next night suddenly a gendarme knocked and said, 'There is some one sleeping with you; why have you not reported to the police?' Fortunately, I was out at the time. She, being so young, was very frightened, but managed to reply, 'Only my grandmother, who has come to see me.' The moment he had gone she slipped out into the rain and found me at a secret meeting. There they dressed me in silks as a grand lady, and I drove to the railway station in style. I doubt if the police can ever arrest me again.

"Besides these constant communications from group to group by leaders and by printed words, we believe at times in demonstrations; for the excitement that comes with the sudden burst of speeches and enthusiasm, the arrests that follow, and the new victims started to Siberia–these help further to rouse the dull peasants.

"Some believe in the effectuality of 'terror.' In 1901 the Fighting League

[Battle Organization] was organized. Its only business is so-called 'terror.' It has few active members, all strictly secret; none of us know their names. A long list of candidates eagerly wait to carry on the work. They have killed a dozen officials in the last three years. De Plehve,[8] when Chief of Police in 1881, started riots against the Jews, and recently as Minister of the Interior he caused the Kishinev massacre, wishing to set the peasants at each other's throats, and so keep them down. For the same purpose he revived the use of the knout to lash men and women. It is men like him who are picked out to be assassinated.

"Few believe in assassination. Revolution by the whole people is our one object, and for this the time is near. The Japanese war has caused the deepest bitterness ever felt in Russia; to the six hundred and sixty-four thousand lives lost in a century of useless wars, now over a hundred thousand will be added; and every hamlet will mourn its dead. Then will our four hundred thousand workers call on the millions around them to wise for freedom. Arms? There are plenty. Why in recent riots have soldiers refused to fire on the crowd? Because all through the army are soldiers and even officers working secretly for the cause. Arms–yes, and brains–for in the universities and in every profession are wise, resolute men to guide the wild passions of revolt. In the zemstvos are hundreds of officials straining to hasten our struggle. So in this last year the movement has suddenly swelled. Already four hundred thousand strong! Day and night they work. In place of sleep and food and drink–the dream of freedom. Freedom to think and speak! Freedom to work! Justice to all! For this cause I shall travel three months in your free country. For this cause I have the honor of making to free Americans our appeal."

8. Viacheslav von Plehve (1846-1904) was appointed minister of interior by Nicholas II in 1902. Noted for his repressive regime and strict Russification policies, his tenure ended when an assassin threw a bomb into his carriage.

Chapter Two
ST. PETERSBURG IS QUIET!
The first in a series of articles from the *Outlook's* Special Correspondent in Russia

by Ernest Poole
The Outlook, March 18, 1905

On Saturday, January 22, the soldiers of the Tsar shot hundreds of Russian subjects, under Father Gapon,[1] before the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. On January 28, The Outlook's special representative sailed from New York, commissioned to study the Russian situation and report a series of articles from first-hand information the facts relating to the greatest social and political upheaval since the French Revolution. At the time of our correspondent's departure from New York for Russia, via Paris and Berlin, no statement of his mission could be made in these columns, lest the Russian authorities (who, by wholesale censorship of copies of *The Outlook* going to subscribers in Russia, have clearly shown that this journal is not favorably regarded by them) might deport him on his arrival, as they deported Mr. Kennan a few years ago when he visited Russia as an American correspondent. For the same reason we do not now print our correspondent's name. But his first article, which appears below, is a sufficient guarantee that he is successfully accomplishing his mission.–THE EDITORS.

St. Petersburg, February 18, Russian Calendar, February 5

This place is a silent chaos. I came here a week ago to be many months in Russia. To begin with, I can give only a roughly linked chain of impressions.

As I drove from the station the streets–deep-covered with snow and crowded with low sledges–were in striking contrast to Berlin and Paris. Men and women with old dirt-colored coats or cloaks or shawls, with rough caps and broad, coarse faces, walked slowly along. No "Marseillaise" rhythm here. Most of them paused at every gilt icon to bow abjectly and make the signs which the Church commands. One woman paused longer, carefully fished out a coin from a tiny bag under her shawl and dropped it into the icon box, while her ragged little girl stood impatiently shivering behind her. There were many funerals in the streets; I counted nine.

Three had men in uniform who strode pompously in front beating lighted lamps. I am told these lamps help the soul on its upward journey. The other six

1. Father Georgy A. Gapon (1870-1906) was a Russian Orthodox Priest who led the procession to the Winter Palace on January 9, 1905. After he was discovered as a police agent, he was killed by members of the Socialist Revolutionary Party.

souls had no lamps, and their funerals were but poor affairs. One was simply a group of five–two workers bearing between them a little box covered with fancy white paper, two dull-eyed women walking behind, while between trudged a chubby youngster who kept staring with big round eyes at the box. From the church spires deep, rich bells were booming. But there were no street cries, no shrewd little newsies darting about, hardly a paper in sight–but uniforms by hundred. Uniforms, icons, poverty, quiet.

"Quiet? Yes, and so it has been," a bank official was telling me an hour later. "The foreign correspondents told the most absurd lies about that Sunday affair. I was here in this room at the time, and I did not know that anything was going on."

"Strange," said an English correspondent [Harold Williams, correspondent for the *Manchester Guardian*] to whom I told this soon after. "The troops charged up and down the street right under his window. They fired over there." He showed me two scores of bullet dints in the walls two blocks away. "You must consider every man's motives in Petersburg," he added. "There are about a million lies told here daily. Go in there and you will hear another." I entered a wealthy shop across the street, found the proprietor, and told him I had just arrived from New York to describe a revolution. The proprietor smiles. "The truth is," he said in French, "that very little has happened. To show you what lies can be told in this town–I was here during the so-called 'terrible riots,' and I knew nothing about them till evening."

"Strange," said my English friend in the street; "I was here that morning and saw all his shop windows barred. But that was it you heard in the New York papers?" I told him at luncheon. "About two-thirds true," was his comment. And from what I have heard since then this proportion seems a fair one. After luncheon I had an hour with a Frenchman who for months had business dealing with the Government.

"Get men we can do business with," he said, impatiently. "The present cabal, like the two hundred thousand bureaucrats beneath them, are not only corrupt–you have 'graft' in America–but these men are wholly inefficient besides. Their motives and minds were shown best when they induced the Tsar to depose [Sergei] Witte, the only capable man among them. They did it by petty intrigues and scandals. We must get rid of the whole cabal; we must have new men from the Zemstvos;[2] we shall have the Zemsky Sobor[3] soon–as inevitably as they had the Estates General in Paris. Through this vent-hole the nation will surge up, and the question is then–will the hole be large enough? Did you ever read the memoirs of our poor weak King Louis? On the morning of July 14th he wrote in his diary,

2. The zemstvos were local and provincial representative bodies that in the last half of the nineteenth and early 20th century that had limited power of legislation. Some, especially in central Russia were instrumental in providing building schools, roads, and other progressive project. They were advocates of a all-Russian "zemstvo" or legislature that would be one result of the 1905 revolution in the establishment of the Duma.

3. Translated as "Land Assembly" had not met since the 17th century when it was called irregularly to rally support for war or other crisis. It was composed of members of the main bodies of power: nobility or landed gentry, church leaders, and middle class businessmen and bureaucrats.

'today I went hunting. Nothing new.' And on the day when the Bastille fell he wrote, 'They say there is tumult in Paris. Rien de grave.' That was 1789.

"Last week I heard from high sources that the Tsar knew all about the killing on Sunday, but it never entered his head that the people might resent it until five days after affairs grew so grave that he had to be told. He was amazed. Since then, like our Louis, he has vacillated constantly. These promises he has made are nothing. The cabal controls him. There is no man here. The whole system by its very nature chokes men and raises intriguers. The system must be changed. For five hundred years it has worked inevitably to this *impasse*. Sunday was only an incident. What I mean is deep as Russia itself. The very land is dying from mediaeval treatment. Russia must die of inefficiency and ignorance, or else throw off its rulers. At present the revolution is–how do you say it?–battered down. For weeks–perhaps months–St. Petersburg is quiet."

On my city map he marked the house of the next man I was to see. In the street I showed this map to an *izvoshchik.* An izvoshchik is a big man with fur cap, sad, faded eyes, and a bushy beard. He drives a low sledge and seems to think of nothing. Some people say he does think–of demonstrations, freedom, etc.– and that when enraged he looks like an insane elephant. To such a man I showed my marked map–silently. He bent over it. At last he looked up with such vast bewilderment in his faded, squinting eyes that I jumped into his sledge, worked hard over the map, then punched him and pointed up a side street. We started. And ever since then I find that the punch and point system works to perfection. He has had it in Church, army, and State since he was born. When we reached the big apartment building (they are all apartment buildings here) and I gave him a ruble (fifty cents), he grew red with indignation. I could hear him even after I had passed through the arch into the courtyard. With a twinge of remorse, I turned back and peeked out. His big face had grown suddenly jovial, his faded eyes twinkled, and he gestured derisively to the *dvornik* (gate porter) beside him. I burst out laughing. He turned and saw me, frowned, and drove sadly away.

I consulted the dvornik, who wore an imposing livery. You find a dvornik at every gate and a Swiss [guard] at every door in Petersburg. Both are controlled by the Government, both are spies watching all comers and goers. When the students paraded last autumn, hundreds of these dvorniks and Swiss were kept from early morning locked up in a courtyard. They were given no food, but plenty of vodka; and then at noon, when wild with drink, they were turned out upon the students. The result was described in American papers. This official directed me to the apartment I sought, and there I found a man whom I shall not describe, for obvious reasons. He sat by an open stove and drew caricatures, smiling. He had been six weeks in jail recently, and he kindly drew for me two pictures of himself at that time. His work is printed in many European papers.

"Always the stove," he said in broken English. "I keep no drawings–only in my head. Let me show–how the people–regard their Little Father since he have killed them." He bent over and drew rapidly. "Before now–always they think, 'the police are bad–priests all bad–ministers all bad–but the Little Father, if we could only dome to him–he would save us–cure all of our sorrows.' They come. He say, 'Kill!' Now look."

At eight o'clock I went with another correspondent to call on a well known radical journalist. When we entered he shrugged his shoulders. "Well, I shall be arrested," he said, quietly. "They have warned me–tonight–tomorrow night, maybe. I am waiting. My friend was arrested early this morning at half-past four. Some men came through his kitchen and ran up to his bedroom, woke up his wife and himself, and took him off. My turn comes soon." Then with a shrug and a smile, "But now come in–have seats." He began talking to my friend in Russian. I watched him curiously, for I had heard much about him in New York. He had a strong, broad face, short black beard, and big, piercing, twinkling eyes. He did not seem at all afraid. Once before, on an evening like this some twenty years ago, he sat waiting, had been arrested at half past two, and sent for eleven years in Siberia. But now in the next room I could hear his family laughing and talking; at intervals a rich contralto voice sang snatches of a song full of deep melancholy; but the talk and laughter ran on; and beside me the man's face looked unconcerned as ever; quite as peaceful a home scene as you could wish. The banker was right. St. Petersburg is quiet.

"The French Revolution," said the man, turning to me, "is nothing. When I think of sights that must here be seen, of sounds that must be heard, I am wretched. We must have here not one but four revolutions burst at one time. It is like there were four mighty rivers rising forty years ago–swelling, rushing on. I mean trying to rush on, but dammed up, and now the dam bust give way. What was this beginning? The emancipation of the serfs. What are these rivers? The peasant's longing to live like a man. The longing of the man who thinks to speak out freely what he thinks about Church and State and army in the press and in meetings. The zemstvo's longing to share in the government. All these four rivers are what? Europe and the twentieth century. The dam is what? The Tsar and the middle ages.

"They have dammed the peasant with taxes, with fighting wars he hates, with ignorance, no schools–ignorance that makes his land grow poorer, poorer–for he knows not how to save its riches. They have dammed the worker with ignorance, with starving wages, with hours and work that leave him fit only for sleep or vodka. They have made him the worst worker in Europe. When he makes a union, they shoot him down. The man who thinks, they have dammed with their censors. They have dammed the zemstvos with inspectors that spy and presidents that choke every effort at social cure. They have dammed all these four rivers with spies, prisons, Siberia. So now when the bursting must come, these four powers work in darkness, suspicion, and ignorance. None pull together.

"We have no great leader to show a way out. The Tsar and his bureaucrats cannot; they are ignorant–though they have spent more money on spies than any government in the world. You cannot know a people through spies. For is it strange, when spies are promoted for the amount they tell, that they make up false things to add to the true ones? It is pitiful to see rulers so ignorant that after Sunday's struggle they say this was caused by Japanese and English who bribed the workers to strike against their kind Father. With such ignorance the dam is weak. I will give you an example. Why shall I be arrested? Because I went three nights ago to a meeting of forty worker leaders. What were those leaders doing?

Meeting to petition that they be allowed to organize–the very same thing the Tsar had promised a week ago. So they met. Spies were there. Many were arrested. They say that I shall be arrested. How pitiful is such a government!

"But the people are not pitiful. The people that even in poverty and oppression could create such literature, such music–these people feel now that something is spoiled in their souls. They say, 'It must not be spoiled. Our souls must live free. It is better to die than live as we live.' And so now we come to the crash. You perhaps think Petersburg is quiet–all is over. Go tomorrow to the slums and factories and you will see that nothing is all over, but only held down by the army, the telegraph, the railroad, the modern rifle. If Sunday had been fifty years ago, all would have been different. But now–a hundred million people are held down–waiting for a man to lead them." There was nothing heroic in his voice. It was quiet.

An hour later I stood waiting for a friend in a peaceful, snow-covered street. On one side lay a broad canal where blue ice patches gleamed from the half-moon above. On the other rose an endless yellow wall of apartment buildings; you could look through their dark gates into long, winding alleys or moon-lit courtyards. Along the soft street came gliding sleighs and sledges. The silence seemed to deepen as you listened. Only the regular thud, thud of tired hoofs and he low, monotonous cries of the izvoshchiks. Now and then from a window above me came sweet Russian voices Singing. It is a beautiful language. Down the street came a tiny low sledge; the gib driver towered silent in front; behind sat a little woman with dark, delicate face and shining eyes. Her head nestled back in her soft fur collar; she was gazing dreamily up at the moon and peacefully drawing on a long Russian cigarette. The two–the big man and the little woman–how different–they passed silently by. The banker was right. St. Petersburg is quiet.

My friend came down; together we went to a pleasant Russian home and drank delicious tea until one o'clock. Later in my hotel room as I dropped off to sleep I vowed I would begin at once to learn Russian. Drowsily I recalled the fat, sleepy, red-cheeked German whom I had met in the train from Berlin. I had asked him to teach me the phrase "Don't shoot!" in Russian. His fat face had wrinkled into a grin; he had looked thoughtfully out of the car window and had then taught me the words. "Ven you call so to de police dey will not shoot you," he had told me. This phrase I had proudly repeated that evening. Everyone laughed. It meant "Give me liberty or death!" I must learn Russian.

"Late Sunday morning I crowded into the great arched door of a Russian church. Vestibules, aisles, every foot of space, was packed with people. The air was close, the light was dim, and from far down in front came a low chant which rose and fell and thrilled with sorrow. I edged my way up a low side aisle, passing a booth where a new kind of official was peddling bread for communion. He was driving a brisk trade. Near him was another official sold tallow tapers, three kopecks (one and a half cents) for the smallest, and so up to the big fat candles that insured you a whole ruble's worth of salvation. Stopping here for some time, it was easy to see that the trade was almost wholly in three-kopeck tapers; the buyers were the poorest, the most ignorant.

"As I stood half-way up the aisle, every few moments I felt a gentle poke in the ribs, turned and received a taper and passed it on toward the chapel ahead. This side chapel was full of women kneeling. The chant rose and fell again and stopped. Then from the great altar came a voice deep and rich as an organ. I could just see a towering, massive head with long hair and bushy beard. The priest had come forth from that mysterious holy place and was bellowing prayers to the Russian God. I say bellowing; his voice was so deep and rich and coarse that there is no other word to describe it. All around him the walls and altars were glittering with gilt and gold and gems. So it is all through starving Russia–billions of rubles stored safely away in altars. In return the priests promise the people a bright, heavenly empires of angels and archangels, a graded hierarchy to match the empire below, a place where souls shall be joyous slaves through all eternity. To protect this radiant vision from rude modern science this Church fought Peter the Great two hundred years ago, and has fought all reforms ever since. Universal education would be a deadly thing for Holy Russia.

I turned. Hundreds of faces, old and young, comfortable, poor, and very poor, were all staring alike at the altar. Close behind me stood a feeble old man with long, curly gray hair, a deep-wrinkled face, and faded blue eyes under thick, grizzled eyebrows. These brows twitched nervously, the eyes stared hard, and suddenly–as the voice of his official shepherd rose in an impassioned appeal for mercy–this man fell down and knocked his old forehead again and again on the pavement at my feet. I tried to turn away. But now all around me hundreds of men and women fell down humbly, reverently, with faces touching the pavement. At the high altar the great golden doors swung noiselessly back, shutting out the mysterious holy of holies within. I went out into the street. It was good to breathe deep and free again.

The Church, the spies and police, the army–these powers batten down all thoughts of freedom. That afternoon I drove out through the factory suburbs, and there I saw thousands of workers in scattered groups facing the great mills and factories. Some were on strike, but most were simply enjoying a Sunday's rest, standing gloomy and silent in the sooty snow. Some of these men marched to the Winter Palace [in January 1905] their leaders so suffered most, were skilled workers, earning from fifty to sixty dollars a month. They struck, not to raise their own wages, but to raise the wages of the great mass of unskilled laborers and skilled women who were classed together at forty cents a day. As I saw the places these laborers lived in, and the kind of food for sale in the stalls, their demand for a raise to fifty cents a day did not seem exorbitant. A "corner," as you may hear all through these districts, is a spot on a tenement floor, which a worker rents for two rubles (one dollar and four cents) a month. His food is black bread, cabbage soup, and on holidays enough vodka to get drunk on. He asked for shorter hours. This too, seemed reasonable.

In the Petersburg slums are "Sunday-schools"–somewhat like our American night schools–where workers are taught on Sundays, and in the evenings of the week. A volunteer teacher here tells me that her great grown pupils are so dead tired at night that they often fall asleep in their chairs. It is these same pupils who have who have led in the strike movement. The Government and the Church

have opposed these schools from their beginning–twenty years back–and rightly, for schools are the ruination of submission, superstition, and ignorance. These schools have done much, but still two-thirds of the three hundred thousand cannot write their own names. In the dull little shops and stalls on these streets you see few *shop-signs*, but only shop-*pictures* of the wares to be bought within.

But the foremost demand of the strikers is the right to combine, to discuss their interests freely, in order that from now on they may, step by step, force their way up closer and closer to the Winter Palace. This was no struggle for ten cents a day, but the beginning of an economic revolution like the one now under way in America. It was only a beginning in ignorance. In a tenement room near by is a long, ragged pelisse which is kept as a sacred relic, to be gazed upon by hundreds of workers. This pelisse was left behind by Gapon. The rumor has spread through the whole three hundred thousand that it was left as a pledge that Gapon will come back. In their eyes he has already become a deliverer half divine. This is ignorance yearning for a great man, making a God of a simple priest.

So in the streets these groups stood in gloomy silence. Only now and then I heard a voice raised angrily. Silence–for before them down the street came riding a Cossack patrol, a dozen huge creatures splendid as the beasts they rode, with thick mustaches curling up over red cheeks, with hard jaws and flashing eyes. They rode laughing by. Inside those factory walls were hundreds of soldiers with modern repeating rifles. In there, too, were modern telephones; in an hour they could summon a hundred thousand more soldiers; in a day modern railroads could swell even this army; in two hours modern Gatling guns could sweep the streets. And so the workers stood in silent groups. St. Petersburg is quiet.

The next day I sat in the office of a Liberal newspaper. Here it looked as though good news had just arrived, or as though something great were just beginning. You saw only smiles, you heard only joyous voices. Some twenty men and a few women were writing or talking very fast. On the tables stood glasses of Russian tea; the air was fragrant from cigarettes. I was taken back to an inner room, and presented my letter to a tall man with huge shoulders, heavy pointed beard, deep brown eyes, and a jolly smile. He gripped my hand warmly, as though he felt good.

"We are up now," he said in French, "and no censors can ever again keep us down. Each day since that Sunday we've been speaking out more boldly, and our audacity is only a sign of the many powers rising swiftly, one by one, all around us. As these other powers rise deep and different enough to make ten revolutions instead of one, but all in the dark and groping for levers to pull, we, by suddenly speaking out freely, spreading news and opinions of all groups, are beginning to clear away darkness and let the new forces come face to face. So many opinions and interests are bound to clash, we shall have newspaper fights by the hundred. All this is healthy. The question is, Can this wild, quiet, deep-burning soul called a Slav be patient enough to fight only on paper? Probably not, but at least we can do much to clear away the needless quarrels. We are growing every day.

"Six weeks ago we had twenty-five subscribers, today we have twenty-five thousand. Another paper started three months back and has already forty thousand, while a third still older has sixty-five thousand. Two more have sprung

up in Moscow. You see reaction is impossible. The Government has tried hard in the last three weeks, but the people have suddenly changed, and now you might as well try to press down hard rubber. 'The censor grown timid' is a droll idea, but true. Each night we send our proof-sheets to the censor's office, but they rarely blot out as much as a column. Look at this." From the morning's copy he read me an editorial condemning in severest terms one of the Ministers of the Tsar. "This does not look like old times," he added.

"But don't you expect to be suppressed soon?"

"Undoubtedly. Or else they may say courteously to us, as they did to another paper two years back, 'We will not be so harsh as to suppress you. We shall merely appoint Mr. B------ as your censor.' This seemed mild enough till the editor learned that Mr. B------ lived in a town two days off by railroad. When the paper had traveled to him and had come back in five days legalized, its news was five days old, subscribers fell off, and the paper died. They may treat us as courteously; it is more likely that they will simply order us to stop for three months or more. Good. We have been suppressed before. This paper began last summer. It ran for six weeks, was suppressed, began again in two weeks under another name, was suppressed again for three months, and then what? Our publisher found a dramatist who had bought a newspaper license but had no money to start a paper; our publisher bought this license for three thousand rubles–and here we are again with still another name–and many of our readers already know the next name we shall use. If anyone tells you that Sunday's affair was but an isolated protest of discontented workers, please open your eyes, and you will see how many other forces of discontent are noiselessly rushing up."

Two days later the Minister of the Interior issued this notice:

"In view of the unceasingly dangerous tendency of the journal---- as expressed in the following articles . . . concerning the Zemsky Sobor . . . popular representation . . . etc., the Minister of the Interior, by authority of the Statute on Censure of the Press, Code of Laws, Vol. 14, edition of 1890, and in harmony with the decision of the Council for the Chief Department for Affairs of the Press, has determined to issue a third warning to -----, the publisher and the editor, . . . together with a suspension of the paper for three months."

"From the editor: In regard to means of satisfying subscribers during the period of suspension a special notice will be issued." The "means of satisfying subscribers" is not hard to guess. This was a Liberal paper. Soon after I had a glimpse of how another kind of paper circulates. I was interviewing a well-known radical in his office when the door was thrown open and a girl came in. She was richly dressed, graceful, her dark face was flushed from fast walking, her eyes sparkled as she hurriedly told him some piece of news. While talking she glanced at me, the man nodded, and then from under her heavy fur cloak she slipped a package of papers which he at once locked into a drawer. When she had gone, we glanced at them together. These newspapers were printed in Paris and Geneva by the Russian revolutionary press, and sent by a dozen different routes to addresses that are constantly shifted to elude the spies and mail censors. They had been two weeks on their way, passed on my many different hands.

Ten thousand packages like this are constantly dodging through Russia. They are opened in peasants' huts, in rich homes, in workers "corners." Some tell me they are even secretly opened in many army barracks. Some months ago in New York I heard a heroic old woman [Breshko Breshkovskaya?] tell how she carried such papers thirty years ago. Her punishment for carrying was twenty-three years in Siberia; this other girl risks only a few months or years in prison; the Government cannot punish so severely now, for there are thousands of bearers; the system has spread to every city and province; and over five hundred thousand people eagerly wait to read its bulletins. So works the underground mail in Russia–noiselessly. St. Petersburg is quiet.

The next night was cold and sparkling, with a moon that seemed to hang half-way down from the heavens. About ten o'clock I left my lodgings, picked a strenuous little horse from the many in the street, made signs to the izvoshchik, showed him a street address and displayed fifty kopecks; he shook his big beard indignantly. I shook my head and walked away; he called after, the bargain was struck, and we sped off down the street. Although not myself a drunkard, I eyed with approval the vodka bottle which he drew out from under his seat, for I knew that by this our speed would be doubled. Faster, faster the little sledge darted under the noses of horses; it swung against three stout gentlemen, upsetting one and making all three teach me Russian indignantly; faster, faster, swinging sideways around corners, for the road was gloriously hard. We shot out on a broad stone bridge. Below us to right and left lay the Neva's cold blue ice and snow; little tram cars crossed boldly on tracks nailed into the ice; and as far as you could see were long, low-arched bridges studded with frosty lights.

The moon above and behind us shone clear on the city ahead, on long lines of government buildings, palaces, lofty columns; on Byzantine spires on gilded Greek crosses, on the dome of St. Isaac's[4] towering high over all–a glittering mass of gold. Soon we were slipping along by the edge of a snow-covered square, a place of frost-covered trees and arc lights blue and cold. Through these trees I caught glimpses of endless yellow columns, a richly sculptured frieze, and row on row of lighted windows. The Winter Palace! No charging Cossacks, no leveled guns, no screams, no sheets of fire–but only sleighs, bells, and merry voices.

Suddenly in the distance rose a different voice. Down the sidewalk, reeling, falling and rising, came a huge bareheaded man, with long coarse hair tumbling over his face to his shoulders, with a ragged brown coat belted with rope, with old red and gray cloths wrapped round his legs. Through the hair his eyes glared out, he shook his broad beard from side to side, threw back his head, and roared defiance at everything in sight. People stopped and listened. When he reeled round the corner I turned back in my seat and then punched my izvoshchik to start on, for again his bottle was pointing from his mouth to the moon. What a wonderful thing is this vodka!

A few minutes later I walked up two flights of low stone steps with soft carpets under foot and little incandescent lights above. These apartment buildings

4. One of the leading churches in the city and a symbol of imperial authority with its many marble pilars.

seem roomy indeed after the New York houses. I was shown into a quiet homelike room with open fires and rich rugs and deep, wide lounges. Some thirty people were talking in low voices. When spoken so, Russian is a beautiful language. This was a Russian 'At Home.' From the frock suits and uniform of the men you would hardly look here for disloyalty.

The gracious hostess, a well-known magazine writer, introduced me to a handsome old lady who spoke English fluently. Our talk turned on many things, but she soon brought it round to the present crisis. She had a brother in the Far East, a high officer in the navy. His letters were most irregularly delivered, the mail was bungled, the whole affair seemed badly managed. The Japanese Government was so different. How little she had thought of these Japs five years before, when many of her friends had Japanese servants in their houses!

As to the crisis at home–she had a son, a brilliant lad who had climbed the long ladder toward a Government position as civil engineer. There was so little room in the universities that only one boy in ten gets through each of the many examinations. Again and again her son had been the one in ten; he had reached the last year, and now, with the commission almost in his grasp, he had suddenly struck work to protest against the present cabal and demand deep changes. She did not like strikes. She had always been most conservative; she read only the *Novoye Vremya*, the organ of the bureaucracy. It had been much less dreadful to read that paper, where there were no lurid accounts of starvation, massacre, and strike. But now she felt that her son was right to strike. They must get rid of this cabal. They must have a limited monarchy like the English, with a Constitution over the Tsar.

About midnight we went in to tea. Here a giant samovar steamed forth delicious odors; here we drank glass after glass of fragrant tea; the musical voices flowed on and on, now low and soft, now harsh and strong. Half-way down the table a white-haired old lady was telling a story which the man next to me kindly translated. She was narrating how she had heard a young peasant arguing with an old one, how the young man had tried to make the other believe that the Tsar had not been elected by God at all, but was Tsar only because his ancestors were Tsars. The old man had waxed very indignant at this, and had shook his head angrily–until at last a bright idea struck him and he cried: "If he was not elected by God, what difference does it make? His ancestors were elected by God. That is enough. There are now so many souls in heaven that God is too busy. If he elected the ancestors, that is enough. I want no more of this talk." And even when the young man had shown that even the earliest Romanov was elected by men, still the old peasant had only cried, "I want no more of this talk."

About one o'clock a younger son came in, and as he spoke English he was placed next me. He was seventeen years old, tall but erect, in the gymnasia uniform. His dark face was flushed, his high forehead was wet–he was deeply excited. He belonged to a secret society, against the law in preparatory schools; it had spread in two years to the schools all over Russia. A few months ago twelve of the leaders, his friends, had been sent to jail; one was kept there three months. Still the society grew. Now a secret summons had gone out all over Russia, and

on Friday they would strike by thousands, as the school girls had already struck in Warsaw. They struck because the bureaucracy had squeezed out all the studies that might make a boy want a free country. They wanted history, mathematics, economics, politics–practical studies that would help their careers. They struck against this system of spies; spies followed them even to their homes to keep them from discussing political questions. They struck most of all for the right to have societies openly, to meet and discuss whatever they chose, to frame petitions to the school authorities. They struck for self government.

Later I saw a paper pass around the table. Many had already signed it. It was one of a thousand papers which are now being passed about in St. Petersburg quietly. It described the *Novoye Vremya* as a journal wholly corrupt, a tool of the cabal, constantly hiding the truth, steading lies and scandals. Of all these the worst was its statement that the strike of Sunday had been caused by Japanese money, that the workmen and women who marched to the Palace were bribed traitors to their country. It ended with these words: "We, the undersigned, do promise never to subscribe to or read this paper or to place advertisements in its columns." At two o'clock the company dispersed. Not speaking Russian, I had only heard what I have written. As far as I could judge from simply looking on, this had been simply a quiet social gathering. Here, too, St. Petersburg was quiet.

And now for the last two days I have settled down to studying, sleeping, and writing. I live with a Russian family. My room is large and comfortable, with a huge tile stove, the slow tick-tick of a tall old brown clock, and a view on a quiet street below. For three hours each day I work hard at Russian; my teacher is a mining engineer who is out on strike like all the others. He sits here in his resplendent uniform with a Berlitz book before him, while I trudge about the room remarking desperately in Russian, "This is–a–stove"–"a hot–stove"–"Is the stove–hotter–than me?"–"No–I am–hotter–than–the stove." And so I stumble slowly into Russian. At meals I hear the family speak it, and again at ten in the evening, as I sit here writing, the blithesome little mother of the home knocks softly and asks, "Meester–, please–some tea?" And then for an hour we sit round the odorous samovar while she serves me tea and cakes and simple Russian words by turns. Like hundreds of women in Russia, she works hard every morning translating English, French, and German books into Russian. Not long ago she completed Booker Washington's *Up from Slavery.*

Her three-year-old boy has a peasant nurse, an old woman with coarse black hair drawn tight back and parted in the middle; she has a face like an Indian squaw, and small black eyes that twinkle and stare dully by turns. All her wrinkles double into smiles when the three of us sit on the floor and ask the boy names of toy dogs, houses, horses, etc. She tells him old, old legends. I will send you some of them later. Just now she is crooning him to sleep with a drowsy old peasant "sleep tune." She has been here only two years, but she has already given up the priest's religion. Last week she was very sad over a letter from her hamlet. The letter was two weeks on the way, for it had to come by rough peasant wagon and river boat for days before it reached the railroad. It is very cold there now, she tells us; people huddle in chairs and on stools up on top of their broad brick stoves to keep

from freezing, and even so, many are dying. Everybody is starving, freezing, and crying because the strong young husbands have all been taken a long ways off and killed in some fighting. I said she was sad, but it is hard to tell when she is sad or what she thinks. That old sleep tune she is crooning now is sad, and yet much more than sad. It sets one dreaming.

Last night we heard that Sergius[5] was killed. The most powerful of all the Grand Dukes, the Duke who raised up Trepov "The Butcher," the Duke who held Moscow as in a vice, who helped bring on this war, and who has controlled the cabal that governs Russia–this Duke has been killed as [President] McKinley was killed in Buffalo. What a difference! No insane assassin here; this has been planned for months; for months people had said, "Sergius will be next–for he heads the list." And what now? The streets today looked as they always look, the faces as calm, the steps as leisurely, the voices as unconcerned. Only once, on the Nevski, I walked with a friend behind two workers, and my friend heard them describing in minute and revolting detail the way one greater than Sergius would look if hanged high up over the street. But their voices were not loud, and their faces were only broad and dull and stupid.

So the deep undercurrents sweep on. The Slav–"wild, quiet, deep-burning"–"feels something spoiled in his soul." To what are these noiseless currents rushing? No man can tell. For St. Petersburg is quiet.

5. Grand Duke Sergei Aleksandrovich (1857-1905) was the fifth son of Emperor Alexander II and the much hated governor of Moscow (1891-1905). He was known for repression of students and expulsion Jews from city. Not surprisingly, he became a target of student activism. and was the victim of an assassin in 1905.

Chapter Three
Thou Shalt Not Think — In Russia
The second in a series of articles from the *Outlook's* Special Correspondent in Russia

by Ernest Poole
The Outlook, April 8, 1905

"Why do you show no slack of an interest in the war?" I have asked this of men of all creeds and classes outside the bureaucracy, and they give essentially this answer:

"Because the people were not allowed to think and advise on its undertaking. The gloom seen here when Port Arthur fell was only grief for two hundred thousand desolate homes. These lives have been wasted wholesale; for the war which was begun without the nation's thinking; without foreknowledge of Japan's real power, without careful choice and steady support of generals, with a commissary wretchedly managed, with fatal ignorance again and again about river fords and mountain passes, with forced obedience of unthinking soldiers. There is no thinking there."

"Why do you ignore the Church in all these discussions?"

"Because there is no real belief in the Church or the Church's God. Most educated people here are indifferent, some go to church as a matter of habit, most are freethinkers; while the workers and peasants merely follow blindly a creed of dead formalism, superstition, and ignorance."

"But I see them cross themselves in the streets before every icon."

"As you turn out your toes when walking. Follow them into church and see for yourself. There is no thinking there."

"And the bureaucracy?"

"There are few thinking men among them. For generations their very system, fostering espionage, intrigue, and flattery; discouraging all real independent thinking in terms of the nation's welfare; constantly checking officials who wished to think and act so–this system has slowly weeded out able men. They have left in disgust." This the common answer not only of liberals but of impatient business men who until recently were most conservative. Only one man, prominent in industrial circles, gave me a different answer. "I make two exceptions," he said. "I know two men high up in the bureaucracy; in your country they might be heads of great industries; either one could do a vast deal toward guiding the Government now, but neither would be Minister of Interior on any account. Why? Because in their present positions they draw large salaries and make vast sums besides; and

they are safe. If one of them became minister, he would not only have millions of Russian people criticizing and condemning his every action, but this whole huge dead bureaucracy would begin at once to drag him down as they have dragged down others–by ceaseless red tape, intrigue, and hindrance."[1]

Another, a hopeless Russian who laughs at bureaucrats and liberals alike, said only, "Allow me to raise the curtain." A few minutes later he led me through lofty endless halls, past hundreds of rooms, finally entered one, and introduced me to an affable little man in narrow–shouldered frock suit, with a minutely trimmed beard and smiling, contented eyes. When told that American employers work from nine o'clock until five or six, he placed one hand in his bosom and spoke at length in Russian. I glanced around the big room, at a handsomely framed picture of the Tsar, at a holy icon with a candle–"the everlasting light"–burning before it; at a long table where three stout men and a thin one, all in uniforms, sat smoking, chatting, and sipping tea. My hopeless friend spoke up. "He says they all work from one o'clock until four, except on the ninety-six holidays, and that three hours' hard brain-work a day has been proved by all wise psychologists to be all the brain can endure. I shall now drop the curtain."

The Military, the Church, the Bureaucracy–this is the whole system of the Tsar. "This system," one business man told me, "is doing what the ice does in spring on the Neva." And Society is rising over it, for Society believes that men must think freely.

The zemstvos represent the landowners. The land has been slowly starved for years–"sweated"–because the peasants are kept ignorant, and employ methods that American farmers forgot a century back. So, for forty years, these zemstvos have asked for reforms. Being reformers, their powers have one by one been choked, their sessions shortened, their meetings watched by spies. Still they have gone on thinking. Three years ago their officials gathered in secret one by one; one year ago in secret they met in Moscow; three months ago they met again, in secret no longer but still illegally, and demanded a new Government for Russia. They believe that men must think freely.

So shout the students. For a hundred years the system has closed slowly tighter on the universities and schools. "Now," said one student in broken English, "the professors are like the bureaucracy. All–all thinkers are weeded out–all now are–how you say–sowers of stupidity–lecture-rooms are nearly empty–always so. These genteelmen are allowed to teach only paragraphs from books. They point always back–back to that–what you call–graveyard–the Past. They teach nothing that will build the personality and make him ready for strong life. And we–it is lawless for us to come together and think free by ourselves–always the spies–always the gendarme–we come into a room, five students there talk–'Ha! I catch! What you talk is no matter.' Then–the boot–so. Out. This lawless disloyal student–they geeve him a 'wolf's passport.' With this excellent paper he can enter no other school in Russia." This is only a picturesque expression of what I have heard from much higher sources. This is the past.

1. This sounds eerily like Russia in 2022.

The present I saw yesterday when I lunched with three students in the dining-room of the mechanical engineers. The big hall was a cloud of smoke from two hundred or more cigarettes. From twenty long tables tea steamed its fragrance. Boys of twenty and men of thirty-five were there. There were many types; smooth faces and slight figures, strong figures, trim mustaches, black sparkling eyes, heavy beards, long unkempt hair and round shoulders. All were in the uniform ordered by the old tsar [Alexander III] who founded this school long ago; all were now out on strike against this tsar's descendant. The talking rose and fell and rose again–an endless excited burst of free speech. Along the wall hung a long line of bulletins. "The only free press in Russia," one of the students told me proudly. "They tear down some–we put up others–news from all over Russia–news of the Revolution." Three months ago these students were beaten by hundreds on the streets, some were killed, many were put in jail. A week ago these students gathered, three thousand of them, in a hall; feelings so long pent up burst all bonds; they dragged the great picture of the Tsar from the wall and tore it to shreds, crying, "Down with the autocracy!" They believe that men must think freely.

The authors have gone on thinking–in prison and out. Maxim Gorky[2] and [Leonid] Andreev–one just out of jail, the other just gone in–are only two of hundreds who for years have been sowing seeds and are now striving to guide the deep primal forces rising on every side. So, too, the journalists. Most liberal papers employ a "sitting editor" whose only business it is to be arrested and sit in jail, while the editor quietly continues his lawless work of setting men thinking.

From all these classes of thinkers come the Social Democrats and the Social Revolutionists. These people have begun to think in new and startling ways. They have devoted their lives to certain new social ideals. They have labored day and night among workers and peasants. Their numbers have suddenly swelled to a million. They believe many new things. But just now, first and foremost, they believe that men must think freely. So the tides have risen. And now?

To an American it would seem as though the very thing man should do here is to gather, not under a guarded commission of the Tsar, but in hundreds of popular meetings to think and talk freely. All parties have thought so long in secret that now, as one keen American told me, "There are twice as many clashes as there should be. Men need to get together and thrash things out." Perhaps this thrashing process will take hundreds of years. At present the gulfs between them seem fathomless.

The zemstvo leaders fear the revolutionaries. The revolutionaries despise the zemstvoists. "Good," said one Social Democrat two days ago to whom I talked about America. "Graft. It is a good word. Half of these zemstvo men are grafters." The Social Democrats talk almost as bitterly against the Social Revolutionaries as against the bureaucracy.

Then there are clashes on the Jewish question. Not long ago I talked with one of the wealthiest Jews in Russia. "Do you think," I asked him, "that the

2. The pen name of Alexei Peshkov, a leading Russian critic of worker conditions and advocate of revolution.

Kishinev massacre[3] came from the Government or the people?" For a moment he was silent. "I hope," he replied at last,"that it was not from the Russian people. For if it was, then the Jews here may as well be buried deep in the earth forever." He paused again, and added, "I believe that the Kishinev massacre was secretly stirred up by the revolutionists. They always strive for violence and unrest." Later from Jewish radicals I heard equally strong opinions about "rich Jewish bourgeois." And again from Russians I have heard many clashing opinions for and against the Jews. "They are wolves," said one, "who if let loose will soon have all the money in Russia." "They are the most intelligent citizens we have," said another, "and their devotion to social ideals is proved by this–that in all the parties struggling here for freedom the Jews have been valuable leaders from the very start.

And the industrial clash–employer and worker. "The demand of these new labor unions are absurd," said a man who speaks for large industrial interests. "They wish to change from the piece to the time system. This means loafing, decreased output, and financial ruin. They wish to have a voice in the running of our business. This means anarchy. Both requests we must absolutely refuse." As he spoke I recalled a talk I had last August in Chicago with the president of the meat trust. The world seemed suddenly small, countries seemed alike, the labor question seemed eternal. Surely here is great need of free discussion.

"All these clashing opinions the autocracy tries to crush and keep apart. So it has tried in the past," said a man who served thirteen years in the Arctic regions of northern Siberia. He told me this story. The facts he gave I have corroborated from other sources. The story is only one of scores I have heard.

"She was a girl of twenty-two, just finishing the university. As now, so then, the university was a place of deadened books and deadened lectures; a place of spies and censors. But deep under this dead world was a world live and vital with new thoughts, new longings, new social ideals. In this underworld she lived, and lost all desires of self, and grew ready to give her life for Russia's freedom. On leaving the university she began work in a secret revolutionary press. This press was run by a man of twenty-five who had also been a student. To better escape the suspicions of spies these two were married. The marriage was at first a mere form, to enable them to work together.

"There were friends who helped them. One was an army captain. He was arrested and sentenced to be hanged because he had spoken his convictions. This man was a weakling. Death was to him a fearful thing. To escape it he turned traitor, and was forced to go back among his friends–a spy. In the years that followed he betrayed hundreds of men and women who trusted him. For this the autocracy told him that he was a loyal subject. His conscience told him that he was a murderer. Remorse swelled. At last, to revenge himself on the Government that had made him what he was, this man killed his high official patron. He escaped. Some say that he still lives–in Mexico.

3 The Kishinev massacre or pogrom of 1903 was one of the worst in Russian history, inspired by the anti-semitism of Minister of Interior von Plehve and the Russian bureaucracy in general.

"Well, this spy betrayed the girl and her husband. Then, in a fit of remorse, he came and warned them. They fled to Kiev and went on working. From their work, from their ideals and their sympathies, grew love. They became man and wife. Two months later, in 1884, with fifty others, they were arrested. The same spy had again sold them.

"For some time the girl had now been with child. The judge in Moscow, strangely enough, was merciful. Some of the prisoners he released with light sentences. The girl was given life exile in Siberia. Her husband was given twelve years of penal labor in Siberia, and after that life exile. They were happy. The girl wrote me the good news in a letter which was smuggled to me, for I myself was then in prison. They had dreaded a punishment far worse. They were happy because they could live together, for their love was very deep. The child had been born in that Moscow prison, where they had awaited trial eleven months. Every morning for a few minutes she had been allowed to see him and show him the child. They hoped for life together. So they were happy.

"But at Petersburg some one was not happy. In this trial of fifty not a man had been condemned to be hanged. So the merciful judge was reprimanded in a way which killed all his hopes for the brilliant career he had just begun. He died a few weeks later. Then from Petersburg came the thing that he had dreaded. The court of justice was set aside. The husband must be entombed in Schlusselburg–the Russian Bastille.[4] He was not a strong man. It meant death. In the night he was told; the same night he was taken out.

"In the morning she came to their meeting-place and waited there for him until some one told her. By evening she had gone mad. The next week her boy died. Then she wrote me a second letter–a letter of mad curses against all things in earth, in heaven, and in hell. That was a bad morning when I read it in my cell. And so she died, and was buried at night, none of us know where. Then for six years the man lived alone in his tomb. He knew nothing of his wife's death. Hope made him strong. His term was half over.

"There were tappings on his cell walls, tappings from friends in other cells. As each new prisoner came in he was taught the code and talked to the others and told them of the world. Of each new prisoner this man had asked for news of his wife and boy, but he heard nothing, for the other prisoners, who knew the truth, warned each newcomer not to tell. So passed six years of hoping. Then the next cell became empty. It was soon filled by a new prisoner. The others had no time to warn him. It happened that he had been in the Moscow prison when the wife went mad; and he tapped this story to the husband. There were no taps in answer. For a long time that cell was silent, and when the taps began again, the next day they were mad taps. And so for three years this man raged or sulked in his cell.

"Then, when the disease had left him a feeble lunatic, he was sent, in order that he might do no harm to Russia, to live in a 'yurt' in Siberia near the Arctic circle. For many years I myself lived in a 'yurt.' It is a round peaked hut with a hole in the roof. It is sealed all winter. Inside lie hairy naked men and women,

4. A fortress, originally Swedish, located about 25 miles north of St. Petersburg, was notorious for holding political prisoners under extreme conditions.

a horse and some pigs, and the exile. If you go out for air, they follow you and make you come back. This is natural, for they must die if you escape. They are not cruel, only simple, savage creatures. The man I speak of still lives in one of these yurts. An exile who saw him writes that he is still half-witted. For a mate he has taken a savage woman.

"The girl who went mad? Yes, I know her very well. She was my sister."

This is the Past. "Thou shalt not think."

"Thou shalt." So decrees a new power made of steel: the machine has come to Russia.

Its coming at first was slow. While in all other civilized countries this power was silently working that complete revolution of society which society is only now beginning dimly to perceive, in Russia its advance was blocked by ignorance. The angry peasants smashed machines by thousands. The nobility lacked the enterprise and energy of American capitalists. But the new power could not be kept back. Germans, Belgians, English, Americans, came to Russia with machines. Peasants slowly became workingmen. In the past ten years their number has doubled. There are three million of them now–peasants gathered in factories by hundreds, in cities by tens of thousands. Learning slowly to work together–and think together. The old system gathered peasants in stagnant, isolated village groups of hundreds. The new have gathered in this city alone a group of three hundred thousand. As in other countries so in Russia, this city group is slowly welded together. And thinking begins.

I have seen pictures of this thinking in the Chicago stockyards,[5] in New York sweatshops, on the docks of New York harbor. I shall see more in Germany, England, and France. This month I have began to see them in Russia. To see them here at this time is like catching glimpses of a deep, steady river in the middle of chaos.

"This labor movement is old as the factories, but it only began hard about ten years ago." The speaker was a worker elector to the Tsar's commission. His face was lean and creased; he had very gray eyes, which stared at me steadily while he talked. "The Socialists, the educated people, they have helped a great deal. Most of us are Socialists now. But we began before the Socialists. The first was before I was born. We had big strikes here in '87, in '92, and '96–all without unions; We felt we must strike, that was all. Then, to keep us safe, the autocracy six years ago made here a very big union–over a hundred thousand workers. Here we were allowed to meet and talk about hours and wages and raise money for any of us who were sick. We were forbidden to talk about other things. Police or spies were always there. This policeman's union was spoiled. In spite of spies we talked in corners by twos and threes. We thought that such bad times of famine must be because something very big was wrong. We wanted to talk out loud about everything. Then they stopped the union. They told us we were lawless Anarchists. We did not believe them. We had begun to think, and we would not stop. We kept thinking by threes and fours on streets, in factories,

5. Poole was born in Chicago and familiar with the dire working conditions there and had written about them in journal articles.

in our tenements. The spies came everywhere, but they could only arrest a few. The jails could not hold three hundred thousand.

"We were very careful about these spies. When Gapon came a few years later, we thought he was a spy. The Government thought so, too, and so they let him try to gather us for more of their police unions. But he was an honest man who used to think that monarchy was a good thing, but after he had lived among us he changed his mind. Still, he was an educated man and had read Count [Leo] Tolstoy's books, and he thought we must be peaceable. So we marched peaceably to ask the Little Father to give us more freedom."[6]

About this time a child began to cry softly in the next room. The big man went out. He was there a long time. My interpreter had time to translate some points he had omitted in the running translation. Then the cries in the other room changed to low laughter. The man came back.

"My wife has gone mad and has been five weeks in the big hospital." He remarked, quietly. "She was with me in that procession. Would we have taken our wives if we had expected violence? The things we saw made her go mad late that evening. We all saw these things, and decided that the Little Father [Nicholas II] would never be any good for us again. I know we must have high people over us; we ourselves are not yet educated enough to manage a country; but these high people must be in a different system of government. We do not believe in these Tsar's commissions; they are like the policeman's unions I will show why." He showed me an official paper signed by the Putilov employers[7] and saying that he had been duly elected by the workers there as one of their representatives. "In this factory are twelve thousand men. We have elected sixty-three delegates. All are Socialists. They will be good for us, no matter what happens, for they are leaders. But see, the autocracy tells us sixty-three to meet and choose twenty-six of us; then these twenty-six must choose two, and these two deputies must go to the Commission to meet other worker deputies. You see they keep sifting us, hoping to pick out the men who are not 'lawless.' So yesterday, as soon as we twenty-six had elected the two, these two were arrested. ;You see, it will be so with all their Commissions. What we can do is only to stop work peaceably. This saves very much time. We want to save time; they want to waste it."

The next day I walked down the halls of a hospital–only one of the big buildings still filled with wounded. My interpreter stopped a nurse and asked her in which corridor were the wounded workers. "In all, in all," she said, impatiently. We entered one, and walked slowly down between the long lines of cots. Over each was a big card dated January 9 (in the European [and American] calendar this means January 22), the day of the processions. There were faces and forms on those cots which are better left undescribed. You see wounds must be ugly when a man is still on his back five weeks after he received them. "All by the

6. This peaceful protest led to "Bloody Sunday," Saturday, January 22, 1905, by the Western calendar.

7. The largest factory in St. Petersburg and the most radicalized. It produced most of the locomotives and cars for the Trans-Siberian Railroad, as well as munitions for Russo-Japanese War.

Cossacks?" We asked an attendant. He looked up and down the long rows. "All except Number 43," he answered. The faces were white, but not heroic–only bored. One worker yawned and remarked quietly: "It is very dull and bad here. But never mind; the very best future is coming."

"In our factory," said a man whom I saw the next day, "we want none of these Tsar commissions; we want to make our own commissions. For this Czar commission (the commission of Shidlovsky),[8] they told us to meet and elect deputies. So we met last Sunday at nine o'clock. There are nine thousand in our factory; there were over eight thousand in the meeting. Picture it? No, it was no picture–only the big factory courtyard, sheds, sooty walls and chimneys–all covered with dirty snow. We all stood in the snow for six hours; no one moved much; and we listened to about twenty or thirty speakers, who got up one after another on a chair which was on a table. At first they had Cossacks all around the yard, but we all made a little strike and said we would all go home unless they did, so they went. As soon as they were gone, about ten men jerked back their rough, ragged coats and showed their student uniforms beneath. At this many cheered, but some of us were suspicious. We soon learned that these 'students' were all Government spies, and so we made them all go away. Besides this there was a workman spy who got up and made a speech, saying, 'We have nothing to want.' At this some of the younger men cried out, 'Let us push him along on his face in the factory ditch.' But we told them this was a mistake, and we took him politely off the table and told him to go.

"Then the real speakers began. Each had been elected before by the men of the factory room in which he worked. Some were skilled, high-paid workers; some were only helpers. All spoke for political freedom. 'We want no more wars all over the world,' cried one, and everybody clapped. All around me some half-deaf, tired old men were asking eagerly, 'What was it he said–what was it? When they knew they all cried, 'He is right; our boys are being killed all over the world–we want no wars.'[9] And always the speakers kept saying, 'It is not five kopecks more an hour; it is our rights to be free men; we want no more of the autocracy!' Everybody clapped and cheered.

"After they had spoken four hours; some of us made a committee, and in two hours, while everybody stood waiting, we made this resolution." He showed me a crumpled piece of paper. "This we copied perhaps fifty times. Everybody heard the resolution, and then the fifty copies were handed around. By three o'clock seven thousand men had signed their names; a few had to make marks, but must could write; we all decided not to wait for the one thousand left, and the meeting was closed. We would elect no one till these demands were granted."

The resolution read as follows:

"We have been offered a share in the Commission of Shidlovsky, made to investigate the needs of St. Petersburg workers. It is demanded of us that we

8. Nikolai Shidlovsky (1843-1907) was a wealthy landlord (Voronezh province) who served as a state councilor during 1905.

9. This illustrates the broad unpopularity of the Russo-Japanese War that began in early 1904.

send deputies into these commissions. In order that our *actual* needs shall be laid before this Commission we make these demands.

"Before choosing deputies we should enjoy the right of having many free meetings in which we shall all talk about our needs. Before these assemblies meet there must be set free all those arrested comrades who have been suffering for the cause of the workers. (From this factory alone one hundred and seventy had either been arrested or had disappeared during the 9th of January "Bloody Sunday" troubles.) The elections must be absolutely free from spies and police. The elections must be direct; the deputies shall not be chosen by electors, but directly by us, so there shall be no sifting out the men we really want. The elections shall be secret–every man shall write down the names of the men he wants on a special piece of paper. The elections must be just–neither age, nor rate of pay, nor time of service can count. All who share in these meetings and all who are chosen deputies shall have a guarantee that they will not be arrested. If the Commission meets, all meetings must be open to te press and full publicity must be given."

These workers were thinking by themselves. A few nights later I watched some others who were thinking under guidance. It was in a night school. To reach it we took a cold little steam tram which jolted slowly along for over an hour. Then we left it and walked off through the snow-storm. This was one of the greatest tenement districts in Russia. It reminded me somewhat of the stockyards district in Chicago. To the left, along the Neva for miles, mills and factories loomed black and sooty through the falling snowflakes. Massive chimneys towered above. To the right were tiny shops, huge tenements, and little old frame houses. Looking down the narrow, crooked, unpaved alleys, the district seemed to stretch endlessly back. All along the sidewalk every few paces we came upon little groups of workers, twenties, tens, and two. "And yet he is our Father," came one doubtful voice through the snowflakes. A loud laugh replied. Farther on, over a hundred Cossacks rode by us.

We turned into a dark archway under a six-story tenement and came out into a wide quadrangle. In the rear was an old brick tenement, which we entered. The stone stairs were wet, the walls were moldy and dripping. A stout little boy who sat on a step with a four-year-old girl told us where to go. We swung back an iron door, then an inner door, and were in the rear of the meeting.

It was a long, narrow room, lighted by two lamps which hung from the low ceiling their light shone down on two hundred faces intent and motionless. From the front of the room came a woman's voice–low, restrained, only now and then trembling slightly. "This is a lecture in history," whispered my companion. And a few moments later–"she is describing the Paris revolution of 1848." Behind her stood a blackboard and a few other simple school furnishings. The room was crude but scrupulously clean, the walls were freshly painted. Half of the two hundred men sat on benches; the others stood up. The one aisle was packed to the front. All wore their heavy overcoats. Here and there under a coat you could see a student's uniform, but ninety per cent were workers; nearly all were young, between twenty and thirty-five. "She is describing how socialism grew in France," my friend whispered.

I was watching a thick-set young man to my left. He had heavy black hair, a bristling, close-cut mustache, heavy eyebrows. His broad face was lean and brown, the cheek-bones prominent. He sat with a hand on each knee, leaning forward. Now and then he turned aside and breathed deeply, thinking hard, and then again bent forward. "She explains now why the French workers decided they must rise for political freedom." To my right stood a man of thirty-five. He had been standing for a long time in his heavy sheepskin; his tired shoulders slouched forward, his hands were clasped in front holding his cap. His bearded face, though more tired than the young man's, was quite as intent.

Just behind him sat a pretty young girl of perhaps eighteen, becomingly dressed in fur hat and jacket. I had met her once before in a small public library near by; she belonged to a little group of workers and girls who had been most eager to hear about the labor movement in America. They had surprised me by their knowledge of the coal strike, the meat strike, etc. She looked now more eager than ever, bending forward with one arm thrown round the girl next her, who had no hat or coat but only two old shawls, the outer one of brown, the inner one of gray and quite ragged. I turned back to the older man; his face had suddenly lightened; so had all the faces massed around his; eyes gleamed. The young girl and her companion were now holding each other close. The young man to my left had risen. From in front the woman's voice was still low, but it shook slightly. "She is telling how they went to work to build the barricades," my friend whispered.

A few minutes later we sat in the front of a much smaller room. "A class in geography," remarked my guide. The teacher was a heavy man, with broad bearded face and quiet brown eyes which looked steadily through his glasses up toward the ceiling in the rear, while he talked in dry, even tones. Behind him were shelves of books, drawings of machines, and other aids to thinking. Close in front were the heads of four tables. Down the sides of these tables sat young workers–about forty of them. All were leaning toward the speaker, some resting their heads on elbows. From time to time this geography teacher passed around pictures of handsome public schoolhouses in New York, of municipal tenements in Berlin and London, and other things of the kind. "He is explaining how these things are all little illustrations of Socialism; he shows that when workers learn to vote properly they can have as many of these places as they like."

One older big bearded worker was laboriously taking notes on an old scrap of paper. A young man with smooth face, strong jaws, and very bright, intelligent eyes sat smiling straight at the wall–as if he saw something else there. "Now he describes how the boycott is used in America. The boycott and the union label." The faces were doubly interested, leaning far forward along the table. I have seen many groups of such faces in America; never any more intelligent than these. Most of these men were skilled workers. They had struck on account of the underpaid masses of men beneath them; then some of them had been killed; and these others had kept on striking–but this time for political freedom.

The door behind me was opened quietly, and a young man came in–the most intelligent-looking worker I have met so far in Petersburg. He looked prosperous,

clear-eyed, erect. His cap was off, and the heavy coat was thrown over one shoulder. He had curly hair, a light mustache, and lips that smiled comfortably. He was one of those workers who had been dressed in new clothes and presented to the Tsar and then given a fine dinner–shortly after the massacre. He had come back to this room then as now, smiling, and had given such an account as had sent the whole group into roars of laughter. Tonight he had come from the big meeting of several hundred electors who had been called to elect deputies for the Tsar's Commission. The session had lasted all day and until nine at night. All had about agreed to refuse to elect–all but the cotton weavers. These weavers, being among the lowest paid of the whole three hundred thousand, thought that a higher wage was all they needed.

As they talked on, the others all stood up and crowded forward–a mass of eager faces, now intent and thinking hard, now breaking into laughter. He described how these weavers had told him that they would even go by themselves to the Commission, and by being so respectful would be given all the favors and would get ahead of all other workers. "I wonder if we want to get all the favors and get ahead of all other workers," he asked now; and they all laughed again. Then he suddenly grew serious, and talked slowly. "You see, if we once get the right to think and speak to any one we please, we can set all Russian workers and peasants thinking; we can then find out why there are such bad times in Russia; we can decide what we want to do about it; and then we can vote and make laws, and Russia will be whatever most of the people want Russia to be. That will take a long time. But now we must have the right to speak and think openly, and so set everybody thinking."

The next morning I stood at the doors of the big building where the electors were to continue their discussion. The doors were closed, and on them was nailed an official notice, refusing certain demands the electors had made, and saying: "Only economic demands will be considered. All worker deputies who confine themselves to such requests will be insured immunity from punishment."

"We don't want to talk about wages," said one of the little group around me. He spoke quietly, for close behind us were a dozen police, and in the windows of the private house opposite you could see the heads of many soldiers. Every few moments more workers arrived, the group doubled, and then the police broke it in half. Soon a young worker came up on the run. In his hand he held a paper just issued–the Tsar's manifesto calling on all loyal subjects to stand by the Holy Church and their Tsar against his deadly enemies. He began to read, "We, by the grace of God, Nicholas the Second, Tsar of all the Russias"–he read on in a low voice while the heads clustered close. When he finished he glanced up angrily. "Well, now we mst get our bombs!" "No," said an older man, who had quiet brown eyes. "We must not. We must just stop work quietly. All together." He pointed to a penciled note he had found on the door. It was by a worker official directing the different district groups of these electors to meet in other places that afternoon.

At three o'clock I went to one of these places where the presidents of all the groups had met for a last consultation. The street was crowded with correspondents

from all over the world; none were allowed to enter. Police and Cossacks were on guard. Suddenly the doors burst open. Out came the workers, some thirty of them, angry gloomy, impatient. With them came police who had been in their meeting. "We will have no police!" cried one, shaking his fist in the face of an officer. "We have been cheated–cheated–cheated!" The cries rose higher, hats were waved, the police closed in. "Strike! Strike!" the men shouted, and they scattered up and down the street bearing this message all over the city.

Since then, all afternoon and evening I have driven round and round through the factory districts. Everywhere the streets are quiet, for everywhere are mounted Cossacks and police. But all along the sidewalks are groups of fives and tens and fifties–constantly gathering–constantly broken--only to gather again–endless, silent series of attempts at free meetings; so these workers are all suddenly thinking and talking freely. For, as the Putilov worker had told me, "the jails cannot hold three thousand."

Many things may happen. These men may break out into riots and be mowed down by artillery, or they may–as is much more likely–be starved out and give in. Or, again, this strike may even set the autocracy thinking. The autocracy may grant a national assembly. In this case the strike will have been won.

The workers are not the only powers at work. There are many other powers here working for political freedom. The situation is chaos. In chaos it was refreshing to see those pictures in the factory districts, for such pictures do not belong to Russia alone. They belong to a world series entitled "Workers Set Thinking." To say that all will not soon be better in Russia is as blind and unreasonable as though one were to say, "A century hence there will still be a King in England or an Emperor in Germany."

Chapter Four
The Story of a Russian Workingman
The third in a series of articles from the *Outlook's* Special Correspondent in Russia

by Ernest Poole
The Outlook, April 22, 1905

This story of a Russian worker I give you just as nearly as I could get it through the interpreter. The man was a skilled mechanic. It begins so:

When my father and the other men in our village were getting ready to go and fight in the last big war against the Turks, they used to talk out loud on the cold, muddy village street and say, "These Turks are Mohammedans–devils.[1] We must kill them for the Holy Church and for our Little Father–the Tsar." What? No–I don't care about killing Mohammedans; they may be just as good fellows as we are. Defend the Church? No–I believe the Church is all bad and rotten. The Little Father? I don't believe I would care to talk with him. Some of our workers were taken to him last month, and one of these fellows told me that all the Tsar did was to walk out and read very fast a paper which some one else had written. He read it as we boys used to read in school. His face did not look half so intelligent as the face of our boss in the factory.

Yes, that's so. There has been a big change between me and my father. Well, I will tell all I can remember. Perhaps that will show you why I changed.

My grandfather was a peasant in Riazan. In 1861 they told him he was emancipated. I have read that in America about that same time you were emancipating the Negroes. I don't know how it worked in America, but here with my grandfather they just said, "Well, you are free. Nor get off this land." Later they showed him a very little strip of land and said he could rent it of the Tsar. But this land was poor, and before feeding his family from it he had to pay the Tsar both rent and taxes. After a few years my grandfather thought this freedom was no good.

He decided to try factory work. So they left that little village, where our family had lived for perhaps a thousand years. The whole family walked behind the two piled-up wagons for many days to a big town of twenty-two thousand people in the Province of Moscow. Here freedom was still worse.[2] My grandfather made such low wages in the big locomotive mills that my grandmother (aged thirty), my

1. The last war against the Turks was in 1877-78 and was indeed depicted as Russia carrying the holy Christian cross against the infidel, not only in Russia but also in the West.

2. It is true that many peasants felt cheated by the long and complicated emancipation process.

mother (age fourteen), and my uncle (age seven), all had to help. My mother has often told me about this work. Every morning in the dark , at four o'clock, her mother would shake her; then they would shake my uncle, who was so small that he only cried and rubbed his eyes and fell back asleep again. To keep him from doing this they learned the clever trick of first putting a piece of black bread to his mouth and then shaking him awake.

Well, by five o'clock they were all ready; they put him on a little sled and pulled him off along the street, which on cloudy mornings was pitch dark. The sun rose two hours after he got in the factory and it set two hours before he came out. You say it is hard that my uncle, aged seven, never saw any sun. But look here; sunlight is not so important as black bread and meat soup, and he got those by losing the sunlight. As wages my grandmother got five rubles ($2.50) a month, my mother three, and my uncle two. The bad part was the dust. You see, their work was to sharpen needles; it was a needle factory. From the grindstones dust flew up, and from this dust many of the children began to cough and died.

My uncle lived, though, and so did my mother. At fifteen she married my father. By law the bride must be eighteen, but my mother, as many do, paid for a false passport. A few months later I was born. In a few years I began to look around. The worker's district was between the town and the big factories. It was like a very big, crowded village of many houses and huts, most of them only one story high. On one side of us ran the wide old highway, on the other was the railroad from Petersburg to Moscow.[3] Crooked alleys and paths ran between. Most of the houses were about forty feet long by thirty wide with one floor high, and four big rooms. In the front room lived the owner and his family; in each of the other two rooms was a family, and if the family was too small for the room they took lodgers. The fourth room was the kitchen, where all three families cooked on a big, wide brick stove. For such a room you paid five rubles ($2.50) a month.

The food was black bread, cabbage, potatoes, and meat. It was good enough. It had been much worse before, when the owner of the needle factory, one of the richest men in Russia, paid his factory people only in vodka, bread, and other things. You got these things at his store. The prices of all things were higher in his store than in other stores. Many of the peasants said, "Let us make him give us our pay in money." My father then worked very hard, for he wanted to send me and my brother to school when we grew old enough. My mother, too, was very anxious that I should not go to the factory as soon as my uncle had.

Their plans were nearly spoiled. For my father was taken to fight the Turks. He was glad to go, and thought he was doing a fine thing. But now my old grandmother and my mother both had to take us and go out to the fields and work all summer from five in the morning to six or seven at night; and then in winter they must come back to the town and work hard in the factory. Those were bad times. Often we had to go and ask for charity. I began to hate the war. Since then war makes me think of my grandmother begging.

3. It was common for highways to turn alongside railroads as the shortest distance.

My father came back greatly changed. He hold us that all people must either command or be commanded. He felt that in our one room he was the captain and we were the soldiers. He shouted an army saying about and gave out army punishments. My mother used to cry when he beat her and say, "The army has spoiled him."

But he worked hard. I did not have to go to the factory, as most of the boys did. When nine years old. I was sent to school. This was meant to make us ready for factory work, by reading, writing, arithmetic, and drawing; but we learned almost nothing. Most of our teachers were poor teachers from poor peasant village schools; one had been a shoemaker. They did not know about teaching; they did not think out their own ways; all they did was to read right through the books. All they made us do was to say every paragraph in the books over and over again until the words stuck in our heads. We were not taught how to do our own thinking. They themselves had been taught to be little pieces of a great machine–the bureaucracy had no money to give the people enough of even these poor schools. Although we who went were only part of the boys in town, there was not even room for us. We knew we were learning nothing, and we did not care; learning nothing, and we did not care; no one taught us to care; so we just fought the teachers and played tricks, and when caught got beaten very hard.

Besides this education we were taught religion. Our teacher was an old priest, who taught us for two hours on two days a week. He was a tall old man, very stupid, and proud of his many religious clothes, and also very irritable. What he taught us was like the other education–only worse. He said that every part of his clothes meant something about God, so he made us learn all this and tell him the names of his clothes and how he put them on and when and why. When we could not remember, he used to call us young devils, and beat us over the back. He never talked much about God, but only about church things–what we were to do in church, when, and how.

But when I grew older I began to think more about the things I saw. At night I saw a good many bad things. There were many tracters (tea houses), where they sold beer and vodka; in these places were women with fancy clothes, and here the workers came by in the hundreds, to drink and sing all night, and use up all their pay. You see, most of these men had been peasants. Their wives had no very fancy clothes. It works that way with most peasants. When they first become workers they become drunkards.

I left school at sixteen, and began work at twenty-five kopecks (thirteen cents) a day. I was in one of the largest mills in Russia. They made locomotives for the railroads which were beginning to be built all over. They employed eight thousand men [probably the Putilov factory in St. Petersburg] This was different from the church and the school. It made me think. I was in a big building with a dirty glass roof. All around me were machines and engines, drilling and planing and pounding the iron and steel; steam was hissing; big leather belts slid along in the air, looking very quiet, but strong enough to kill you in a second if you got caught. Big wheels turned; furnaces, red hot, made spots of the air warm. My machine was a bolt-screwing machine from England. All I had to do was to shove

in bolts all day. But I kept watching this machine and other machines, and so got to thinking.

In a year I was thinking not only about machines, but about that old school and the church. I began to be sorry that my teachers had been so bad; I got some different books and began to read a little in our room at night, only for half or three-quarters of and hour, for after that our family got in bed. I made up my mind that the Church had only an outside–no inside. I decided to leave it alone. One morning at five o'clock, when I got out of bed, I did not cross myself. My father and mother, my young brother, my two sisters, and my grandmother, all did. Only my youngest sister saw me. She said nothing. The next morning she saw again that I did not cross myself. Then she told my mother. My father was angry. We talked very hard. He called me a heretic, and told how, when I died, I must go to the devils. But it was as I thought out these things. He had never even prayed to God, but only to images. He and my mother had only performed ceremonies. They knew nothing about the insides of these ceremonies. So they soon got quiet and let me alone.

I went on watching machines and thinking things out. I had plenty of time, for we all worked very slow. You see our factory administration was made up of men who had been nobles and who knew nothing about work. I did not see then, but I do see now, that there was a big waste of time. Take my case. I was called a fast boy. I moved from one machine to another, and in three years my wage has risen from twenty-five to one hundred and fifty kopecks (seventy-five cents) a day. I was a skilled and fast worker getting the highest wages–and yet I worked slow. At my machine I could make seventy or even eighty bolts a day, but why should I? The rules of the administration said, "five kopecks for each bolt"–eighty bolts would make four hundred kopecks a day. This I would have been glad to do. But the administration had also this rule–"no worker of this bolt-screwing class shall have more than one hundred and fifty kopecks a day." So if I made over thirty bolts a day I was working for nothing. The master of our room did not care either, for he got the same wage no matter how fast we worked; he got no extra money if he made us work faster.

At twenty-one I was called to the army. The army spoils four good work years for all men except those who are only sons of old, sick parents. Even such men were taken this year and killed in Manchuria. All these millions of spoiled work years make one good reason Russia is so poor. Another reason is that most factory administrations were like that first one I worked under. We Russians must all stop the army and work twice as fast and get paid twice as much.

Yes, you are right; I am getting away from my story. Well, at twenty-one I was taken to a little town a long way from ours, and there I was trained and drilled hard for a month. About fifty new men arrived there with me, and four days afterward all of us, new ones and old ones, were called into the big field and made to stand up very straight with hands to the sides like wooden men. Then out marched a fat old priest with a cross and a holy book. A man carried a desk out. The holy book was put on the desk, and then the priest read a prayer very fast. After this he read the long oath of loyalty to the Tsar. This we all repeated after

him together–just as we school-boys used to repeat the book paragraphs. Then the old soldiers all presented arms and we were marched away. In Russia every man must do this and so be made a loyal subject.

Well, I was lucky. I had something the matter with one knee, and so they would not take me for the army.

I went back to work. One good thing about factory work is that a man travels from town to town and sees how things are managed everywhere. This makes him think much more than if he had stayed a peasant in one village all his life. For two years I worked in Moscow, first in a big railroad supply factory, and then in the central electric manufactory. In this last place I got two books and read all I could about electricity, and kept watching all the machines. Besides this I went around the city at night. It was a good thing to be with hundreds of thousands of workers, all together. We got talking and thinking. Most of my new friends had also been in small towns or had even been peasants. They had fine stories to tell, most of them just comical stories. I don't believe you would want to write down some of them; but many were also stories about the army, the church, and the bureaucracy–stories of army beating, of church ceremonies, of bureaucrat stealings. All were a little funny; sometimes *just* a little. There were thousands of such stories being told, and all mixed up together in the factory crowds. I began to see that many of these stories were just like each other.

Then I came here to Petersburg.[4] I left my old father and mother back in the old town. I had made a good deal of money in Moscow by often working with the night gang too–three rubles ($1.55) a day; and so I could afford to give the old people money and have them send my younger brother and my two sisters to school. Both the boy and the girls will learn something, and so be better workers when they go to the factory. The girls? Yes, they all will work in the factory. My wife did, here in Petersburg, but she does not now. I married her three years ago, when I was twenty-six. I then worked hard from six in the morning till six at night, with an hour for dinner; and then I often worked nights with the night gang till ten o'clock. I made one hundred rubles ($50) a month.

We had a little room and made some big plans. My wife is very pretty and clever. She borrowed all kinds of books from the public library. We used to read some evenings. We could not get the books of the new writers in the library. [Maxim] Gorky's books are not allowed there, and can only be bought in stores for one ruble each; but in spite of this most workers know his books better than the old ones. There is not a factory where some worker cannot tell you a Gorky story. Perhaps he has not read it, but then some other man has told it to him.

But the big point of my story is the factory. There is no use in making plans for your wife and books and baby that will come soon, unless you have more and more money. So I worked always harder. You remember in my first factory they worked too slow. Well, here it is different. Here our boss is paid a commission on all he can make out of us. He pays us not by time but by piece. You say this is the American way. Well, it is a fine way, except that there is some wrong point in it.

4. St. Petersburg was not only the capital and the largest city in the Russian Empire but also at the time the largest industrial center.

Some years ago my boss said to men: "For every bolt you make we pay three kopecks. Now, you are a fast man. Why don't you make more money? You can make more than all the other men." So I worked faster. In a few weeks I was making one hundred and fifty bolts a day–four and a half rubles ($2.25) a day. Then the gentlemen who directed the factory said, "Oh, this is too much for so simple a fellow." So they decided to pay a lower price for each bolt. They did.

But the baby had come, and I worked still faster. Then again I got up to $2.25 a day. Again they said, "Oh, this is too much for so simple a fellow." They decided to lower the price again on each bolt. But they could not again so soon, for the Government allows only one change in prices every year. But employers in Russia are very clever. The men who worked not so fast as me were now called "helpers." Well, what is a helper? He is not even a worker. You can lower the price for him still more. And so it goes. In a few years this clever boss who gets a commission, he has made us work faster and faster, while our wages stayed the same. Only a few of us were making more money–a little more, perhaps fifteen per cent. But even for us it is bad to have so many others working cheaper. Some of them may any day do our work for still lower wages.

Now, what are going to do about this? It is right to keep always working faster; I want no more of the old slow factories; they are all over Russia and are very bad for this country. But look here–when I keep working faster I want to get paid more and more. And how can this be if the employers keep lowering the price for each bolt I make? And who wants to stop them from lowering the price? Only the worker. If we don't stop them from lowering the price? Only the workers. If we don't stop them, no one else will. So we must have more and more labor unions.

We must have unions without police in our meetings. We must be allowed to have meetings whenever we want. In these meetings they must let us talk about anything we want. We can all see now that we want a great many things. For ever since we came into factories we have been making unions even against the law. Must of these unions were only three or four or five men who talked in the factory all through the dinner hour, or standing together in the evening on a corner, or else in a room like mine, where my wife can give them fine tea. My wife is very pretty and clever and can read well.

What was I speaking about? Oh, yes–the little unions. You see, with so small a group on the street you can keep your heads close together, and if another head gets too close and you think it is a spy's head you can push it away. In these little unions–thousands of them in all the Russian cities–everybody has had his stories to tell about bad schools, bad churches, the army, and the bureaucracy. These stories are well mixed together now, and we know what we want. We want no more wars or bureaucrats. We want a constitution with our rights written down on paper and then printed so we can all know them. We want to vote, and to make whatever laws we feel we need. This is the only way we can get along with our employers–when we have free unions of our own and can make laws and can have strikes. I think that later on we shall have regular commissioners whom we will elect to keep always discussing with the employers these questions about prices

of bolts and other things. I believe that by always having these commissioners we might keep from having strikes.

No, I have never learned much about Socialism. I don't care about it. All I know is that we must just keep getting more and more wages, more and more rights, and have more and to say about running things in the factories and in the Government and everywhere–until–well, I have not thought that far ahead. There is no use in trying to think so far. My old father got my brother to write me a letter last week. Since Port Arthur,[5] my father has changed his mind about the army and the Tsar too.

5. Reference here is to the costly siege and surrender of the Russian naval base at the tip of the Liantung Peninsula in Manchuria in the summer of 1905.

Chapter Five
A Russian Hamlet
The fourth in a series of articles from the *Outlook's* Special Correspondent in Russia

by Ernest Poole
The Outlook, April 29, 1905

"Quick! Look here, Ivan! I think there is a devil here!" A peasant boy bends over my shoulder, grinning delightedly at my fountain pen. On my narrow iron bed are two more husky boys of twelve and fourteen, also grinning; and a huge white St. Bernard pup, with his tongue out. Maximov (my interpreter, photographer, and teacher) lies back in an old straw chair, interviewing the boys, having just distributed cigarettes. Close around us rise four rough-hewn walls of logs, and in one corner is the edge of a big brick stove built into the walls to warm three rooms at once. From the next room comes a merry babel of children's voices. For this is the one spare room of a little log school house, twenty-five miles from a railroad, in Central Russia. We came the night before last to spend two days, and are wondering now if we can crowd it all into a week. When we are not out visiting peasants' huts, a constant stream of visitors pours in here. Even the St. Bernard pup brought with his mother and two mongrel cur playmates early this morning.

A week ago, in Petersburg, we began interviewing all kinds of authorities on peasants, typical villages, riot districts, primitive home industries, famine spots, army mobilizations, and a score of other subjects. On most of these, Maximov,[1] was fairly well up already, having gone from one end of Russia to the other to make investigations for a Russian ethnological society. At last we chose some ten spots all over Russia, in which to see the different kinds of peasants. And this is the first spot.

"Oh, you brutes, you lovely brutes–you devils!" So shouted our big driver through his thick grizzly beard; he leaned far out of the sleigh; his long whip whirled over the near horse and cracked over the two horses in front [the typical "troika"]. They plunged forward in the slush, bells jangled, the sleigh lurched; and shouting good-by to post boys, railroads, telegraphs, and the twentieth century, we galloped into a deep forest and began looking for peasants.

"How about the driver? Won't he do?" Maximov nodded and climbed up on

1. Not a real name for obvious reasons. This may be a guide-interpreter identified later as Iuvelenii Tarasov, student of chemistry at St. Petersburg University, whose father was a village artist.

the high front seat–not an easy thing for Maximov. Meanwhile I leaned back and began breathing. It had been a wretched fifteen-hour ride from Petersburg, on the "fast" train, which went fifteen miles an hour. But here nothing was wretched; the horses were going on a dead run, one trotting under a great arched wooden yoke, the other two galloping ahead; the sleigh was low, deep, broad, and soft with furs; the bells were cheery, the air was pure, the smell of the pines was a bracing change from smoke of cigarettes. "This is going to be hard work," said Maximov, looking down. "He thinks we are government spies. He is laughing at us. This laugh sounds small and low and quiet–but it is really the largest thing in our way. We must begin to climb over it at once. This climbing is also tiring to the nerves. Please–a cigarette–no–two cigarettes."

"Leave the war alone and try him on wolves."

"He says there are hundreds of big wolves and millions of little ones." I looked sternly at the big driver's face. Not a trace of a smile.

"What does he mean by that?"

"You will find out ten minutes after beginning to sleep in a peasant's hut. But look–here are some peasants." Four of them, with rough, flat sledges loaded with fagots [bundles of sticks] and pulled by shaggy ponies. Men and women–one to each sledge–two walking, the others lying back on the sledges; they wore brown sheepskin coats, enormous gray felt boots, fur caps on the men, red handkerchiefs on the women; broad, stolid faces, curious stares, deep twinkling eyes. "The little laugh again," remarked Maximov.

For twenty miles we galloped silently on, now under the dark old pines, now through clearings of scrubby birch, now out for a mile on a snow field, but always up and down with the deep endless roll of the prairie. Often on the snow fields this prairie roll blotted out all other landscape and left only snow, deep spotless snow from horizon to horizon. Everywhere dead silence. Even in the three-foot drifts we plunged noiselessly through. Only now and then came the sledges, the trudging ponies, and stolid peasant faces, twinkling eyes. Often when we had passed I looked back; they never turned to watch us, but went straight on, slowly. Nine times we dashed through hamlets.

A lonely cluster of twenty huts in the middle of a snow field. Huts of logs, with straw-thatched roofs, straw packed into the walls, snow piled on for more protection; we galloped down the one wide street; the bells brought a few faces to the little windows; in one hamlet two little boys and a girl even ran out and tried to hitch on; I urged them on, for they were the only break in the silence.

Once out on the field I jumped up to shake off this strange dead silence, and tumbled out behind for a hard half-mile run. At this the tall driver turned and laughed (the Russians always laugh at needless exercise). He lashed his horses to a run–faster, faster; I had to seize the edge of the sleigh, and was in the air for nine minutes out of the next ten; then I climbed in again, the horses settled down to their steady gallop, the big driver again sat motionless; silence everywhere; we leaned back and gradually stopped talking.[2]

2. It was not unusual children to board with someone who lived near a school or in a room at the school.

The night came on suddenly in the woods, but out on the field the sun still hung big and red on the edge of the snow. The snow took on wonderful shades of rose and pink. It struck the driver's old brown face and turned it a dull red. He seemed to notice nothing. An hour later we were watching ten little peasant girls at supper. It was in the kitchen next this room. They were boarders at seventy kopecks (thirty-six cents) a month, for in their hamlets, two, four, and five miles distant, there were no schools.

At first they did not see us. They were very little–only eight or ten years old; gay little handkerchiefs on heads, or bare heads with meager old ribbons in hair; all heads bobbing up and down over deep earthen porringers of soup, tiny hands clutching thick wooden spoons or black, heavy pieces of rye bread. The reddish glow from the deep brick oven showed smiles, white teeth, laughing eyes. Low giggles, and now and then a burst of laughter. The silence was beginning to break. Suddenly they all turned and stared while the little school-teacher introduced an American. Then the giggles began again, and one youngster made a remark which brought down the house. "She says," remarked Maximov with a grin, "that you are quite as good as the big picture in one corner of the school-room."

"What picture?"

"American crocodile."

As we sat at supper in the other room we could hear the wee boarders at high jinks in the kitchen, in the hall, everywhere. Every few minutes they trooped to the door with a chorus of "Good-nights" or "Thank yous." It all seemed more like a jolly little home than a school. Later we went in to say good-night. A pillow fight had just ended. They sat up, a demurely blanketed row in a big, long bed. Over each pillow on a nail in the log hung a limp little bag of clothes; at the foot of the bed stood twenty huge felt boots. The teacher set the candle on the table. Slowly it grew lighter. Eyes twinkled over blankets. Then the oldest girl, aged eleven, begged us to sit down. More silent twinkling, with an occasional laugh and dive back into pillows. "Does he come from North or South America?" asked a black-headed imp in the middle, and then fell over backwards; the others listened eagerly while I addressed them solemnly through Maximov. "What fun it is!" cried some one. "He says many words fast, and yet we can't hear him say anything–we can't know anything he says!" I distributed small cakes of chocolate with a gay paper doll tied to each. It took a long time to say good-night.

Later, in the teacher's small, homelike study, the old copper samovar steamed away cheerily, the charcoal embers dully glowed beneath, and we sat drinking tea until midnight. There were two teachers. One was large, motherly, kind–the sister of a neighboring nobleman who had built the school-house; she spent all her time teaching and mothering here. The other was a delicate little Jewish girl, with dark face, very feverish now from overwork (she had eaten nothing at supper), but with a winsome, cheery smile, and big eyes that slowly shook off their weariness, and brightened and then sparkled as she told us the story of her four years' struggle to break the dead silence. From the glimpse I had had of her home in Petersburg I could guess how heavy a load this silence must sometimes be. She spoke in Russian:

"Children want something else besides reading, writing, and arithmetic. It seems to me they want songs, games, fun, habits of kindness to all, brightness–always brightness–don't you think so? When I came, I found them dull and often cross and gloomy little people. Why? By nature? Just listen to them now. No, their natures were all right; it was only this dead, dull life beginning to spoil them. How? Well, in the first place, they had no lunch.

"Let me explain. You see, the Government, with all its heavy taxes, cannot spare money to establish one school in all these six villages. By crowding we took in a hundred here–one hundred from eight to twelve years old–less than half of all the children who ought to be in school. These were taken from all six villages; many had to walk three or four miles–most of them spent between one and a half and three hours each day walking to school and back. They had breakfast at six and supper at six. They had not a bite between. Of course they were cross and stupid.

"So I tried to give them all lunch. I found we could give them each a pot of coarse soup and a piece of black bread for one kopeck (half a cent) a day. This did not seem extravagant. I tried to persuade the mothers. Little by little, as they came one by one to see the new school, I talked with these women. At first they laughed. Why? Luncheon seems a reasonable thing.

"But the peasants have only two meals a day. They have lived so for centuries. And this two-meal system is only one part of a big, rigid system of poverty. At once I heard indignant protests. The pope (village priest) came and told me how foolish I was to try to teach peasant children to eat as nobles eat, how discontented and disloyal they would become, and how I would be to blame for all this trouble. Then the teachers in the nearest Government schools came all the way over here to warn me and tell me that it was my place to give the children ideas and ideals instead of soup. The peasant mothers kept on laughing.

"They laughed still harder when they learned that I wanted to give each child a separate earthenware bowl for the soup. They had always had one big bowl for the whole family, into which each had dipped a big spoon. Separate dishes were even more foolish than luncheons.

"For a time I tried to teach them as they were–hungry. It grew steadily harder. It was hard to leave them at noon, eat a good luncheon myself, and then come back to the school-room and find a hundred little faces sleepy, dull, and cross from starving. The worst of it was to think that these were only one hundred among millions of children–all slowly growing used to this system. At last I refused to teach them unless the mothers would give the one kopeck a day. The mothers did some slow, hard thinking. You may have already heard that peasant fathers are eager to educate their children. To a large extent this is true, but they are not half so eager as the mothers. The mothers now say the chance slipping away. At last they gave in. The children began to eat luncheon.

"There were still many protests. One withered, wrinkled old mother of thirty-eight made a last stand for the common bowl system. She came to school the second day, and stood staring in the doorway.

"'Well?'

"'Yesterday I gave you twenty kopecks for soup. My boy had soup yesterday. That leaves nineteen kopecks. I want nineteen kopecks back.

"'But why?'

"'Why? Don't you think we need other things beside foolishness? I need oil, and there is not a kopeck in the hut. We still owe the *fist* (village usurer) [kulak] for the money he loaned us to give the tax man. I tell you we must have back those nineteen kopecks; you don't know what they mean, because you were never a peasant. Anyway, I have talked with my man last night. We think it is a foolish thing for the boy to eat from a bowl of his own. When he ate with us last night, he said, 'Oh, today I had my own bowl;' soon he will be too proud to eat out of the bowl of his parents. Give me back the nineteen kopecks.'

"Then I made her sit down and think of the next village, where the most foul of all diseases has spread fearfully (as in so many places in Russia). Over one-third of all the people now had this disease [probably cholera]. I tried to make her see that this disease is not spread by devils and evil eyes, but by infection in just such places as the common soup-bowl. At this she began to tremble, for she dreaded this disease for her boy. 'Well,' she said at last, with a doubtful shake of her head," I will try it. Perhaps this is true. We can get along without oil. My man may beat me at first. But, anyway, keep the nineteen kopecks.' And she walked slowly out on the snow. "Soon the mothers stopped laughing. They were greatly pleased because their children learned so fast and told all they learned at night in the huts. These mothers began to learn from the children so as to teach their other children who could not come here because we had no room.

"I began to see how bright these children really are. And not only bright. They taught me many other things. One afternoon, when they were making too much noise, I cried out, 'Silence! Very crossly, because I was tired. At once I felt my mistake, and begged their pardons for shouting so crossly and rudely. Complete silence had fallen. You could not hear a pin drop. We looked at each other. I could not help smiling–their faces were so solemn.

"'I think I frightened you'

"'Oh, no,' said one wee boy, 'you have not.'

"'No, said a girl in the corner. 'No. But it is so fine to have some one beg our pardons.'

"They taught me how to teach them. Slowly I left the strict line laid down by the Government. Yes, we are under the Government direction, though the school was built by the kind, liberal nobleman near by. You see, if we were not, our pupils could not get the Government diploma when they graduate at twelve. And this diploma gives many privileges. For instance, in the Act on Flogging it says that no one can ever be flogged who has had this school education. There are many other privileges and rights besides this. So we were under the Government and were given their prescribed system. This is very rigid–the same for all parts of Russia. Most schools follow it to the letter. The priest here follows such a system in giving these children their religious teaching; he makes them learn six prayers, and these they must repeat morning and evening. He teaches words, ceremonies, customs–from the book. So do most school-teachers. Only this

morning I drove over to the nearest Government school and came away quite out of sorts. That is why I was so tired at supper. The teacher there told the children that thunder was electricity. She read this fine information from the prescribed book at the prescribed time, then passed on to the next prescribed paragraph. All these paragraphs they must cram and cram into their heads until they can give the back by heart–and then forget.

"I try more to vary from the book so as to fit the teaching to each different child. Why not? Are all children alike–shall they be treated like so many gray stones of exactly the same weight and size? No, you must watch each one, in school and out, and talk with him or her and get to know them–and then you can help him learn quickly. And there are so many things for them to learn besides what is in the books. The lives of these children are only chains of misfortunes. There are so many deep forces working from a distance, and even in the village itself–working for the devil.

One of these is vodka. The Government has the monopoly on vodka. I believe the reports show that they average thirty-six rubles profit a year from each family. All this vodka is drunk mostly on five out of the one hundred holidays in the year. On each of these five days the average family here buys twenty bottles (quarts) of vodka (which is not quite as strong as Scotch whisky). But this occasional drunkenness is not so bad. The bad part is the habitual drinking. We have still many regular drunkards in this parish.[3] There used to be twice as many.

"One of these had a son only eight years old. This little fellow had for two years seen his father reel into the hut almost every night and beat his mother. The mother was good and kind and quiet, but the drink had made the man so irritable and suspicious that he beat her almost daily, calling her all kinds of vile names. The boy used to look on from up on top of the broad brick stove (where they sleep at night). He had done this ever since he could remember, so he told me in school. He seemed to be all made of nerves; he had sudden fits of crying without any cause at all, in the middle of school lessons.

"Then he began to change. I? No–I did very little. It was the school. You see, before he came here he had always been alone with his parents. The other children in his village had laughed at him always, and pointed at his father lying so often in the street mud. When he came here he found the children kind and jolly, and he soon began to learn how to make friends. In a month he was always close to two or three little chums. Of course I came to know him too, and I liked him so much that he told his mother and father a good deal about me. One morning the father came to the door–sober, though still a little unsteady. He was a good-hearted man–only the drink was bad. I liked him at once. We had a long talk–though, of course, I said nothing about vodka. Later on he changed, and in the last year he has stopped four other fathers whom I told him were drinking too steadily.

3. There was a temperance movement that was growing stronger in the early 20th century Russia and succeeded in 1914 in achieving prohibition which resulted in Russia entering a major war while at the same time eliminating a major source of income from the state liquor monopoly.

"Yes, there is a deep, deep power hidden in these peasants. Slowly it is rising; I am sure, so sure, they are moving slowly upward. There are many clogs besides vodka. No, I would rather not talk to you about the present crisis. You can never tell who is listening to you in Russia. The other day four girl school-teachers from the zemstvo schools in the next district drove over fifteen miles to consult us about some new methods of teaching. They stayed to lunch and left at four o'clock. At six the police agent came hurrying to this village, asked the shop-keeper (shop ten by twelve feet) if he knew of any conspiracy of teachers; the shop-keeper said no, and then the police agent came here.

"'Why did they come here?' he asked.

"We told him."

"'It makes no difference,' he cried, angrily. 'This was a meeting, and meetings without permission are forbidden.' So now he is watching us closer than ever. They always pay most attention to school-teachers. We often petition for the right to meet each other and consult about school methods, but always we are told that there is no need of this, because all methods are prescribed in the regular school program.

"The war? I can say nothing; except–yes, I can say this. The war has made me very anxious and miserable. You see the zemstvo (district assembly) has always given us 60 rubles ($30.75) a year. My salary? 23 rubles, 33 kopecks ($12) a month. And now they must pay all their school money to the war, so they have given us nothing."[4]

About this time the church bell began striking midnight. I looked out down the long prairie slope. Here and there a few clumps of fir; along the horizon a dreary pine forest; near by some twenty low huts huddled together–low and comfortless. Again the feeling of dead, desolate silence. And with this feeling the bell was quite in tune. Maximov and I sat talking long after this, and then slept until ten the next morning.

I was wakened by children singing. A few minutes later I was in the bright, sunny school-room, sitting on the log window-sill with three grinning boys, while a crowd of little girls and a few boys stood around the old cracked piano singing with might and main. The song was "Down the Mother Volga," centuries old, beautiful, sad, dreamy. The voices were very sweet. The faces all looked happy. This was a holiday; all had been to confessional–because they must; and were now here–because they wished. Every few minutes more came trooping in. In a corner the boys started two games of checkers, and got along somehow without once quarreling. The girls started various games, one of which looked like Hide the Handkerchief. The air was crowded with laughs of all sizes. Suddenly there was a shout at the door, and two boys appeared with the priest's old fiddle. The teacher had told them that I played. It was a sadly battered old creature, this fiddle. The E string collapsed at once, the A string's peg broke, and a moment later the C string also gave up. But Maximov knows something about everything, and he made a sort of rigging of one string and a half. On this I did many wonderful

4 This may not be accurate.

things, which were vastly admired, and then, to cap the climax, I played "Down the Mother Volga," "just by looking at the book." Everybody sang. And after this I grew swiftly in stature, and Maximov begged me to let him tell them he was my friend. One of the boys had just succeeded in tripping Maximov in a friendly wrestling contest–so that his fame was very small. He sullenly slunk away, to reappear in triumph with his big camera. At once I was forsaken. All games were stopped and a picture was taken. By noon the mothers and older sisters began arriving. More songs and games. It was glorious.

As I watched all the faces–joyous, kindly, laughing–I recalled the anxious words of the little teacher.

"He is watching us closer than ever. They always pay most attention to school-teachers."

Why?

Chapter Six
The Russian Villager
The fifth in a series of articles from the *Outlook's* Special Correspondent in Russia

by Ernest Poole
The Outlook, May 13, 1905

"Oh, Zenaida, don't be so bashful! Come out here quick, or I'll come in and pull you out!" So cried the big, jolly peasant boy who had brought us to call on Zenaida, the buxom village belle, the pride of the district. The hut inside was growing dark; the daylight, long prolonged by the dazzling snow outside, was now fading fast; duller and duller grew the two low square little windows–deep double windows tunneled through the log wall and sealed tight for seven long months of winter. We sat on rude chairs in a room some ten feet square, with floor of rough pine (not of mud, for this was the hut of a prosperous peasant); just over our heads were the rafters, above them deep shadows, and above the shadows the peaked roof of heavy straw thatch. Yellow log walls were on three sides, before us a board partition which rose not quite to the rafters, and this partition was divided by a great gray brick stove, seven feet high, warming both rooms; on the top of the stove you could see the tumbled blankets and comforters of the big stove bed. The partition was cut again by a narrow doorway–curtained; and through this curtain peeped the bashful beauty. Big black sparkling eyes, red cheeks, crimson lips, giggles.

"She has such muscles," said the jolly boy, proudly. "She can throw the St. Bernard pup from the stove to the door." I looked at the pup–weight two hundred pounds at least. Protesting whispers from behind the curtain. "Yes, you can–I saw you do it last night." He turned to us. "You ought to see her work in the field!" Beseeching whispers. Frowns. "Well, if you don't like what I say, come on out and do your own talking. Come out!" Hysteria. "I'm coming in!" He dove through the curtain. Scuffles, tumbling chairs, crashes, giggles, chaos. Then through the little door he dragged the panting beauty and triumphantly seated her on the old red lounge by the stove. "Now look at her! Didn't I tell you?"

He had told us right. Zenaida was a beauty, and her deep blushes now made her all the more handsome. Little by little she began to talk, while her sister, the little housewife, smiles over the old steel-copper samovar, serving us fragrant steaming tea, barankee (delicious big pretzels), and fresh white butter. The eyes of the pup grew wistful.

Zenaida was soon to be married. We asked to see the happy man to shake hands with him on his great good luck.

"Oh, I don't know who he is!" she cried, laughing.

"Don't know who he is?"

"No. I only know it from the old sorcerer–the blacksmith in the next village. I told him I wanted a lover. He frowned and pulled his beard and then he said: 'Well, girl, pay me three kopecks (a cent and a half) and I shall make you very happy.' He made me some grass soup in a big brown bowl. 'Drink this, girl, and you will soon have a lover–the soup will cast a spell as far as five villages from here.' So I drank it all. Bah! How bitter it was! I began to spit out some, it was so bad, but the old man's beard shook and he grabbed my arm and shouted, 'Girl, be careful! Don't spit out charms, or you will die an old maid.' I was very frightened, and I never put it down till I drank it all. And last week a man came here from the next village and stayed two hours. Perhaps he is the one. But I don't know.

"I don't even know if the old blacksmith may not be only fooling us. At first he was just a blacksmith. All the mouzhiks [peasant men] came to him with their horses. His beard was so big, and his eyes were so queer and far in, and his voice was so deep, that some of the mouzhiks began asking him to cure their sick horses. After a few years the old man got thinking more and more. Some days he would not work for hours, and would make the horses wait while he sat and thought, with one hand in his beard and the other on his knee.

"At last one evening he mixed grass and sulphur and turpentine all together in an iron kettle over the forge coals. He made a soup all night, and the next day he gave it to a sick horse. The horse was grabbed tight by the head by many men and all the soup was poured down. Then the horse was dreadfully sick.

"'Ha!' shouted the blacksmith, 'now I know a devil is in him. For if the horse had only common sickness this would have cured him. Now make him stand up.' The horse scrambled up, shaking, and then old Ivan got his big brown sheepskin cloak and threw it over the horse's head. He put his own head in too, and the men outside only heard strange mutterings–all the words were strange, words which no one could understand. Everybody stood around very quiet, or only whispering. Sometimes the big horse got so sick he sank half down to his knees, but the blacksmith, who is very thick armed and big chested, stood under the horse's head and held him up, and kept the cloak over both their heads–and so he muttered till it began to be dark in the smithy and the forge coals got quite cold and gray. Every one was getting tired. But the horse was not so sick now, and no longer sand half to his knees.

"All at once the blacksmith gave a terrible yell and jerked off the cloak. The horse jumped 'way back and snorted. 'Ha! Look at him, mouzhiks, look! Look at the horse's face, look at his eyes, how scared he is. Why? Because he sees the devil. The devil has come out and is right here behind me shaking his black old fist at the horse. Bah! Get out of here–get out!' All the mouzhiks ran to corners. In a few minutes they came back slowly. The horse was not sick, and was all right after that.

"This news spread to many villages. In a few months he began making soup for people too. And so now he is a great sorcerer. Whenever you are sick he looks

at you very solemnly and always begins to talk slowly. 'This girl is sick from one of four causes. First, common sickness, and in this case I must give her soup. Second, a devil is in her, and if this is the matter I must drag him out–I can do it. Third, the evil eye. Some one with an evil eye has cast a spell on her. We must find this evil eye and stop the spell. Fourth, the bad sorcerer in the next village is casting a spell. We must beat that sorcerer and break his bones.'

"Well, I don't know whether the old blacksmith is really a sorcerer or not, but anyway he does not cost as much as much as the doctor. The doctor is the only doctor for twelve villages, and he is hard to get, and besides he is very stupid. He often mixes up his patients. Last month the priest asked his doctor for some plasters for his sore back. The doctor saw three other sick people in the village and then went away, and the next day he sent back medicines for them all. On the box of plasters was written, 'Take one tablespoonful in hot water every hour.' This doctor is very stupid, and I think the blacksmith is just as good even if he is not a real sorcerer."

Zenaida went behind the curtain; Maximov and I consulted in English; Zenaida returned wearing big pearl earrings; and we thought we were getting intimate enough to try some deeper talking. In a few minutes they were all speaking of the war.

"It's a funny thing," laughed the boy. "The newspaper which comes here every week to the priest says always, 'No losses.' But in our letters from the fellows off at the war we always hear things like this: 'Fat Ivan had his head shot off last week;' 'Old Alexei is dead also–shot through the stomach;' 'Little Stepan kept getting thinner and thinner, and at last he was killed by a piece of shrapnel.' And still the newspaper says, 'No losses, no losses.' I think Ivan and Alexei must be still fighting without heads or stomachs."

"Don't laugh about it," said the little housewife, sadly. "In that last letter old Alexei wrote: 'We cannot fight them because they have maps and clever schemes and telephones. Why have not our officers these things? Why can't we beat them? We are not more stupid. It is because we are fighting as blind as if we had handkerchiefs tied over our eyes.' This is what he wrote, and then he was killed. Poor old man! It is hard to have him killed. And what good does it do us? Why are they having this war? We heard from a young peasant who was an izvoshchik (driver) in Petersburg that this war was asked of the Tsar by a big fellow who owns much land and trees near Japan. All his money could be made by this war, and much money, too, for the grand dukes and all that family. And only for this money fat Ivan lost his head and old Alexei lost his stomach. It is very bad for us all. I think we ought to have had something to say about beginning this war. It is terrible that one man can just say, 'War,' and then two hundred thousand men must die.

"In Japan they say the Government gives a lot of money for schools all over in every village. Why won't our Government give us schools? Only one school for these seven villages, and this one school is owned by our good barin, not by the Government. We always give the Government rubles, and only kopecks come back. The rest all goes to the big places–to guard our Little Father [Tsar]. This is

a funny thing. It seems to me that if our Little Father would give us schools and make us more instructed, then we would be bright enough to see that he is a good and great a man as he says he is, and then we would all want to guard him, and he would not have to pay millions of spies and police and soldiers; and so our taxes would be lighter, and we should be happy. It is a funny thing that so many men should want to kill so great and good a man."

The next morning was cloudless. Above the little school house the sky was deep, fresh, spotless blue; below and all around were great fields of sparkling white. Soon after breakfast we shouted good-byes to the visitors who had already gathered, we wrapped thick sheepskins and straw round our feet in the rude little sledge, pulled our fur collars up high, and went off at a brisk trot over the snow field. The young barin, Maximov, and I were all wedged tino one low seat, and close before us, on a narrow bar, sat Simeon–peasant, aged sixteen, with frank, open face, laughing brown eyes, and a cheery voice that shouted to the little horse, sang songs, and cracked jokes up into the heavens. I soon climbed up on the bar, and gave him that gay old war song, "The Man that Broke the Bank of Monte Carlo." Simeon was delighted, and we sang it again together–Russian and English grotesquely mixed–while he whipped the horse into a gallop. On over wide snow fields, and in through stubby birch and fir of second growth, along narrow little paths, up hills down prairie rolls, tipping, sliding, plunging through drifts; while the huge St. Bernard pup and his mother dashed up little snow clouds, on either side. We went through three villages–lonely little affairs, a broad, uneven path of snow with a dozen huts on each side. At the end of the hamlet one old well for all, with heavy log pole rising high in the air and supporting the deep wooden buckets. The huts low, straw-thatched, and heaped over with snow, sods piled against log walls, low, square windows–they looked poor and dull and lifeless. "Poor?" cried Simeon. "You should go twenty versts (fifteen miles) the other way, then you would see poor villages. These are fine. I live in one of them myself."

"Now," said the barin, "let me show you a small country estate."

We had emerged from the forest and swung into a yard surrounded by log buildings. In one of these were a hundred cattle contentedly munching in long rows of rough low stalls; in another stood twenty little prairie horses; and near by in a low cabin lay eighteen pigs, including two old sows with big litters; the sows, when called by name, came out to have their ears scratched by the barin's stick, grunting comfortably. Across the yard was a primitive old mill, with already a new touch of civilization, for a water-wheel had been replaced by a steam-engine, which was puffing and panting now at a tremendous rate, tended and carefully watched by a tall old peasant, with dull red shirt and brown weather-beaten face. Around him, curiously watching the engine, were dozen peasant men and women, come with their rye. Their rude pole sledges stood outside.

To raise the rye, to have it ground in the mill, to bake it into enormous hard loaves of black bread, to eat this bread (with water and cabbage and potatoes), then to raise more rye, and so round and round and round–this was their life.

"A monotonous circle? Yes. Come over here." The barin led us to a snow mound near the house; from the top we looked out for miles over the prairie–

rolling fields and woods and hamlets. "There are twelve villages–about two thousand peasants," he said, "and my grandfather owned them all. Then came the emancipation of the serfs in 1861. And now–well–their life is little changed. This circle you speak of has been their life for centuries, and perhaps it will be so for many years more. But take a good look at those woods, and then come inside and let me tell you how important they are." We went back, not to his house, for he had closed it long ago, but into a small cozy cabin among the huts of his workmen. Here he lived in two rooms.

"When I leave all the talk and turmoil of Petersburg and come back to this bear den," he said, throwing himself on an old blue lounge and lighting a cigarette, "live all seems to slow down somehow, but also to brow more real and sure. There are no great, brilliant schemes here to reform the world in a moment; only a slow, hard, painful struggle upward. Yes, I mean it–always upward, for these peasants are not like those in southern Russia. Slowly but surely the dense ignorance of a thousand years is being lit up by all kinds of education. Schools are desperately scarce, it is true–but there are many other ways of educating the peasants, and in all these ways the zemstov of this district struggles ceaselessly on. All through the country now there are zemstvo storage houses for modern plows and all kinds of agricultural implements, for grain seeds and for the best of fertilizers. All are sold at cost to the peasants. To induce them to buy and help them to use the machines and seeds intelligently, the zemstvo has teachers constantly moving from village to village.

"The zemstov helps also the village mutual credit societies; these societies buy plows, etc., and pay the zemstvo in small installments. But, most important just now, the zemstvo is making every effort to induce the peasants to cultivate the wooded lands which I asked you to notice. They rent stump-pullers to the peasants, help them dig ditches to drain the wood swamps, burn the stumps and use the ashes as fertilizer, then plant grass seed there, and so slowly prepare new fields to feed the growing population. All this is slow and sounds dull enough–but it is sure. It means food; it means escape from land famine."

"But clogging this slow advance are several evils. One is the mir's methods of dividing. Of course you know that the mir is centuries old–the village commune.[1] 'The mir owns all the peasant's land. Every four or five or six years the mir divides this land over again. The land is so divided that each peasant gets not one but several strips, often only five or six feet wide by one hundred feet long. And these two or three strips are often miles apart, so that peasant Ivan, in plowing his land, may spend three hours a day in carrying his plow from strip to strip. By so many boundary lines eleven per cent of all the land is wasted. As the families grow, and as every few years the mir meets and divides again, the strips grow narrower and narrower, and still the waste goes on. The land is divided to death.

"As Ivan's strips grow smaller his taxes grow larger. Each year the Government is forced by its needs to demand more of the peasants. Each year more peasants are forced to sell their one cow to meet the taxes; there are much

1. *Mir* has several meaning in Russian: the world, peace, and commune (the peasants' world).

less cattle in our district than there were ten years back. Most of the peasants now must borrow money of the 'fist' (village usurer) [kulak] at exorbitant rates to pay their taxes, and become his debtor-slaves for the rest of the year.[2] They break out in desperate riots when tax time comes. These riots, large and small, are everywhere, and in our district it is the wives and mothers more than the men. They rush out in a frenzy and beat the tax-collectors, and are then in turn beaten by the police and soldiers. Every autumn a score of women, bruised and cut, are lodged three days in the little village jail, then a few are taken to town for a month in prison. So quiet settles down again–and so the grind goes on till next tax time.

"I prefer to express no opinions about taxes or the need of taxes–or any Government affairs, for that matter. But I think there is no harm in my telling you about what is going on today in a village some twenty miles from here. Well, in this neighboring village, three days ago, the peasants burned down the buildings of the landlord. Why did I not tell you this before? Can you go there this afternoon? I should rather you would not. The police and soldiers and spies are all there making arrests and flogging and hunting for the criminals. If you should go there, they would suspect you at once, and I cannot afford to have suspects come from my estate. Don't you see, it reflects back on me. Let me tell you the rest of the news. It is a kind of story. It shows what a clever man can do with the peasants and with–well, with people in general.

"Some ten years ago a German came to this village. He had little money, but a strong, attractive personality. He seduced the daughter of the old landowner. Then he began blackmailing the girl. She was very young and was terrified. He made her sign note after note. At last these notes piled up to an immense sum. Then he took them to court, a long suit followed, the entire estate went to the German, the old man and his daughter disappeared, disgraced and penniless.

"I said this German had a strong, attractive personality. It is the only opinion I express. He went to Petersburg and later became acquainted with the Tsar. Then he began to ask favors, as many men do. He got first a loan of $200,000, using his estate as collateral. Later he got more money to build an alcohol factory near by. A third sum he procured to improve this factory. Also the Minister of Interior was ordered to have branch telephone and telegraph lines run fifteen miles in to the estate, and more recently he was ordered to construct there also a branch railroad. Later on this German received from the Minister of Finance an immense sum to build a large technical school, and he was given $35,000 a year to keep it up (the school has not been built yet.) Before this he had also received money for a school to teach the alcohol industry. In this school he had three hundred pupils–peasants and workmen–to be trained for his factory, each of whom was forced to pay him $50 a year. But in spite of the annual allowance from the Government and the (300 x $50) $15,000 yearly from the pupils, he gave them–so they say–only the

2. *Kulak* is "fist" in Russian and denotes a class of villagers who held sway over the other peasants by means of loans, as in this case, or by owning horses, mills, or other property upon which they depended. In the First Five Year Plan (1927-32), Joseph Stalin waged a war against the kulaks in the course of Collectivization, which resulted in the brutal elimination of the kulaks and many other peasants who wanted to become kulaks.

most wretched food, and bunks infested with vermin. They also complain that he often beat them severely.

"At any rate, three days ago they burned down his buildings. That is news. As I said before, there are many clogs on this slow advance."

Later in the afternoon we went to see the "fist" (merchant and usurer) in his tiny general store. Outside a cur dog yelped and snapped at our legs. We pushed open the low door and went in, but the fist only strengthened the impression made on me by the cur. His shaggy face set like stone and he answered Maximov's smiles by scowls. I had only time to notice the room, twelve feet square and eight feet high, log walls all crowded with shelves and hooks, with everything on them from enormous ugly felt boots to a lonely, dust-covered little bottle of perfume. "Well? Well? Well?" Even Maximov could not break through this series of explosive "Wells." We left and went back to our room in the school house.

There, in pleasant contrast, we received an invitation to spend a few days and nights in the hut of a neighboring peasant. I think it was the hut of Simeon's father. I was evidently to repeat my "Man that Broke the Bank," etc. Delighted at this invitation, we sat with the little school teacher I her room, sipping tea, and listening to the scuffles and jolly laughter of the wee girl boarders in the next room. We began wondering how we should ever be able to leave this wonderful peasant village. We were soon to find out.

A loud knocking on the outside door. We listened; heard the cook go and unbolt it; and then the silence was broken by a loud, gruff voice, at which the teacher's face grew suddenly anxious. Then heavy marching, and the village policeman strode into the room. My first feeling was a deep inward chuckle. His face was so pompous, the black beard so aggressive, the eyes so full of dignity and power. He stopped short, clicked his heels, and advanced his right hand.

"To my ear comes the news that two foreigners have come to this place." In the following dialogue I omit Maximov's part; the policeman deserves the whole stage. "By what right came you here?–H'm–Have you permission from the Gubernator [Governor] of the province?–No?–Then this is very serious.–Did you come to make riots, or, if not, then for what–I say if not, then for what (triumphantly)?" "You!" to me, "how do you procure your livelihood?" "I do not understand Russian." "Ha!" to Maximov, "show me your passports–you must!–H'm–H'm–H;m. How do I know that this fellow is the person described? I repeat this question. No, fellow, I cannot believe you. Vised by the Russian Consul in Berlin! Ha! Berlin!" He carefully filed this fact in his book. "Now, the next question to you is, What was he doing in Berlin? H'm!–H'm! Well, I shall report all this information–everything–I shall leave nothing unreported. And I insist that you leave this place as soon as possible, proceed to the Gubernator in the city, and have him examine this passport. I bid you good-night"

After this came smiles from Maximov, and from me a large, fine American cigar, and so good was the effect that in ten minutes the great man was in our room standing stiff with dignity and power, but gracious, just a little–allowing us to take a flashlight portrait. When the outer door had closed we went back o the teacher's room, ready to laugh long and hard.

We did nothing of the sort. It became plain at once that every child and woman in the house was badly frightened. We had suddenly become dangerous "suspects," to be avoided. The little teacher, lying pale and weak on the lounge, begged us to go away, to leave all her villages alone, and not to bring her again into trouble with police. It was plain that the shock was deep. We assured her we should leave at eight the next morning. As I watched her face–delicate, brave, but very weary–I recalled again what she had told us that first evening. "So now he watches me closer than ever. They always pay most attention to school teachers."

Chapter Seven
Two Russian Soldiers
I. A Wounded Soldier's View

by Ernest Poole
The Outlook, September 2, 1905

I. A Wounded Soldier's View

"HEIGH! Good speech to you!" A tall, deep-chested peasant soldier lurched into the doorway of our second-class compartment. His arm was in a sling.

The "fast train" was jolting and rumbling fifteen miles an hour through southern Russia's prairies—"famine districts," homes of the most starved and dumb and ignorant subjects of the Czar. It was after midnight, but still in the third-class compartment next ours rang curses, yells, and laughter. The train was packed with wounded soldiers going home. Every few minutes some of them squeezed along the dark, narrow passage outside.

"Come in! Glad to see you!" cried my interpreter, Ivanov. He jerked the man in and banged the sliding door just in time to keep out a crowd who came jostling down the passage. The man stood a moment smiling down at us. By the smile, by the shine in his eyes, by the red flush in his thin, hollow cheeks, you could see he had been drinking vodka–not much–he was too poor for that; but even a little vodka can loosen the soul and the tongue of a man if his stomach is faint and empty.

He swayed with each jolt of the car. The short, sputtering lump of candle in the dingy lamp above threw dancing shadows down and made his face look gaunt; his back, deep-set eyes were haggard and circled with darkness. His patched gray uniform was torn open in front. His head was shaved close; the scalp showed white over the deep brown tan of his face and neck. He had a light mustache and a week's bristle of hair on his face. His nose was blunt. His jaw was square and set. He had stopped smiling.

Suddenly he slipped his arm from the sling, jerked off his jacket and then his red shirt, and stood naked to the waist, the big muscles on chest and shoulders nervously contracting. "Look here." He crooked his hairy right arm. The elbow was black and swollen to twice its size; an enormous boil bulged beneath.

"Piece of shrapnel from a jap cannon at Liaoyang. All done in one smash. On the hospital train the doctor said, 'No use bothering. The arm is spoiled.' That's what he said. My right arm!" He clinched his big fist hard, and then suddenly

winced with the throbs of pain he had started in his elbow. He sank down on the seat, white and faint, eyes shut, jaw quivering. In a minute he looked up. By his eyes you could see the pain had cleared the vodka clouds from his brain. His eyes were sober now and gleamed with bitterness.

"I'm worse than dead. I'm spoiled. Why? That's what I want to know. Who wants war? None of our fellows did. By God, it was terrible that day! Other fellows all around me as far as I could see kept pitching their arms up towards the sun and tumbling on their backs and kicking. Two of 'em lay shaking and bleeding right beside me. One was a fellow from my village.

"'Good-by, brother!' he yelled, shrill as a woman's scream; I could hear him above the roar. Then----'Hu!' and his face turned up dead as a flat stone. I stood up, and everywhere I looked men were falling. Then came a red burst in the air, and my eyes saw only black for a minute. When I could think and see again, I looked down at my right hand, and kept looking. It would not move. It felt as far from me as if I'd hung it up on the wall of my hut back here in Russia. My elbow began aching. I felt too dull to think out why it ached.

"Bang! An officer beat me on the head with his sword. 'You! Why don't you load?--Hold on! Wounded, eh? Get off there—hospital wagon!' So I went stumbling over dead fellows and live ones.

"Then, for a week, or a month, or a year—I don't know how long—I lay in jolting wagons, or walked on dusty roads, or lay in railroad cars for cattle. Those cars were worse than battles—always groans. The worst fellows kept whispering to the others to stick a knife in them because they couldn't bear the aches. I've seen so many men die I get them all mixed up in my dreams; all the faces keep tumbling together.

"Well, and now in a few hours I'll be in my village. That will be the worst. There will be thirty-four widows who don't know it. I was with their husbands. I saw them all tumbled at night into the long ditch. What can I tell the women? I must lie, and say, 'My girls, your husbands are feeling fine!' That's the lie I must tell to thirty-four women. And if you were living in my shirt, you would feel what a hard think it is to get your tongue and your soul ready for such lies. Every minute I keep thinking what I'll say.

"The meanest part is what the Government will say to these widows. They will say, 'Heigh, you! Step up! Number 250,301—husband dead—here is two and a half rubles ($1.37) for you and your family for the first month. Next month come back and get two rubles. Third month, one and a half rubles. After that, don't come back!' So off goes the poor woman, shivering and bawling like a baby. She has five or seven children—most of them do. Well, what is left for her? Nothing but to become a bad woman. My wife wrote to me that already five widows in or village have gone to the town to get bad.

"So now I must tell the others—thirty-four widows! That's why I took vodka at the last station. But now it is all out of my head, and I have to begin thinking again what I'll say. Well—I'll put on my shirt." He drew it down painfully down over his head, and then sat leaning forward, pounding one hand into the other, staring at us with his his big, anxious eyes you could see how hard he was thinking.

"Tell me this." He stood up and spoke slowly. "Why did they send at first hardly any Cossacks or regular soldiers to the front, but only us militia? These Cossacks—two hundred thousand of 'em—they just ride around here in Russia and beat our peasants. They laugh and tell us, 'We Cossacks must stay here to guard our Tsar from the enemy inside.' And who is this enemy? Us—us peasants! It's all so mixed up I can't think it out. None of us fellows can get it straight. We used to lie in our tents and say, 'Devils! No use to think! They want us killed tomorrow! That's all there is to it!'

"All militia. Even old men with long gray hair. Do you know how old? Why they had even men who served from 1871 to 1876–men sixty years old! It is against the law, but they broke the law, they dragged the old men out, three right from our village. And in that battle I saw gray heads tumble." He struck his chest. "I—I saw it! Listen! One of them that tumbled–he had a grandson fighting right near me! A red-headed boy! And the old one was dead by night! Why did he have to die? Did our fellows have anything to say about starting this war? Ah!" The man leaned far back, laughing bitterly; the dim light fell full on his eyes and showed them red with hatred and revolt.

"Look here! I see now that you fellows are all right, I can talk out to you just the same as I think. I will tell you something I didn't dare to tell you at first. You thought I was drunk. I was—a little—but only a fool talks out when he's drunk with fellows he don't know. But I know you now—I know by the way your eyes look. So I'll tell you how our fellows feel about this.

"In that battle, when old men and boys yelled and tumbled, when some fools even shouted 'way up to God for help, and we all ran around, and no fellow knew what to do next—then General Orlov galloped right through on his big gray and black horse and shouted, 'I will hang you all! You canaille! Cowards, devils, fools! This is how you fight, how you guard the Holy Cross against the heathen, how you guard your God and your Tsar. Beasts!'

"Then"—here the man sat down and leaned so close that I felt his feverish breath; his harsh voice sank to a husky whisper—"then first one tall peasant back of me said, 'Our general is a devil. Kill the devil! Then a few others shouted the same, and then thousands of us roared, Devil! Kill the devil!' You could see all the faces wild and red. Then, white and scared, our general jerked his horse round and rushed off so fast that his polished heels made a steak of lightning.

"That's it—I tell you us fellows are beginning to think. What good is all this war to us? What are we killed for? That's it. I tell you—I saw this damn Manchuria. It's no good! It's only rocks and mountains. Not a good farm for one of us in the whole place. The night before one battle a fellow said to me, 'Heigh! Ivan—just look.' He sat up and looked down at the rocks we were trying to sleep on. 'This is the land we get killed for in the morning. Nice land, isn't it? You might think we haven't land enough back in Russia, so we must fight and slash for these rocks.'

"I tell you we don't want it. We want land here! There is plenty right here if we could only get it away from all the Tsar's rich people—devils! We starve here with corn [wheat or rye] stacked all around us!

"We fight out thee only for the Tsar's barins [nobility]. I can't think it all out straight and clear. My head gets mixed and dark inside. But we all know, all the same. The war is a big scheme to make those barins rich. I guess it's the biggest money scheme that was ever fixed up. And we get killed for it! Three hundred thousand dead already! And I tell you my arm is spoiled. I can't work. My wife and all our little brats must starve. And now, in the morning I must see those thirty-four widows. Well—good-night. I have still ten kopecks left. One more bottle of vodka! Good-night, fellows—good-night!"

II. A Cossack Practical Joke

"Well, in my troop we worked a devilish good joke last night!" The Young Cossack giant of a lieutenant leaned over, grabbed the gallon bottle of vodka in both his hairy hands, and took a long pull to refresh his memory.

It was a hot day, last April, down in the Caucasian Mountains–home of ten million Georgians, Armenians, and Tatars, all subjects of the Russian Czar–rebellious, but held down to loyalty by fifty thousand Cossacks. The Cossacks–the only loyal subjects left to Nicholas the Second, savage police, two hundred thousand strong; splendid horsemen, cruel, ignorant and superstitious, unflinching, boisterous, glorious savages all. Such are the men who have battered down the Revolution in Russia.

My interpreter Ivanov and I had sat joking for the last two hours in the same train-compartment with three Cossack officers–one gruff old Colonel and two young lieutenants, wearing long brown-belted cloaks with poniards stuck in the belts. Their gray fur caps were off. Their massive, bristling faces were red and glistening from the vodka. They had finished two and a half gallons in two hours.

"Well, don't swallow the bottle," grunted the old Colonel. "Hand it over. Now what's your joke?" The young Cossack wiped his thick red lips with the back of his hand and laughed. His frank brown eyes glistened. He was the kind of man you like at once and can't tell why.

"Well, my troop was giving me a send-off, and of course we all got roaring full. Out we marched on the steep village street. Mountains, clouds, and houses all flew around with the stars–that's how it looked to me. I kept slipping on the wet cobblestones. Every time I went down my chum Luka got in a hard kick. Luka and I had always been like brothers; all that day he had been feeling bad about my going off, so now he had got drunk as a devil! I've never seen him worse. The Georgian fools grabbed all their women and ran like cats for their houses. Doors kept slamming—slam, slam, slam! We shouted songs, we cursed till the mountains cracked, we played all the old tricks. At last we saw one man left in the street—a thin old devil of a Jew trying to sneak from one house to another.

"'Grab him!' yelled Luka. We made a rush. The Jew dove for his hole, and wriggled like a rat when we nabbed him. Look! Here's where his long yellow nails scratched my arm. But his scratches didn't last long. He got weak and fell in the mud, and lay taking big slow breaths. Mother of Christ! How mad he was! His eyes were so hot with rage that we stood around and laughed till the tears came.

"Then we boosted him up on our shoulders and had a march down the street. Every minute he gave a gig wriggle and a squawk. Then he prayed and got quiet. We marched into the barracks yard. 'Let's baptize the devil,' some fellow shouted. We all heaved him up into the parasha (tub)—a big one—five feet square and six feet high. It was full up to the brim; the soldiers had just cleaned the horse stalls. In he went with a splash. But the cute old Jew went in feet first and kept his head up out of the mess. He stood there up to his neck. His old eyes glared over the edge and he cursed the Colonel.

"'What?' roared the Colonel. 'What was that?' "The Jew's voice got a little louder and slower. He cursed slowly.

"The colonel hauled out his revolver. He leaned close to the tub and stuck the barrel close to the face of the Jew. "Now!' he yelled, 'when I count three, I shoot!' The old Jew rolled his eyes till you could see nothing but white spots. Have you ever seen an old rooster just before his head was cut off? That's it. His eyelids kept shutting up and down quick. He bit so hard his under lip got bleeding. The Colonel turned at us and winked. Then he got red again and roared–

"'One! . . . Two! . . . Three!'

"Bang! The smoke blew back and hit us all in the eyes, we stood so close. When it cleared, there was the old Jew's head, dripping, squawking, sputtering! He had ducked all right! And lucky he did. The rim of the tub was splintered right in front of his crooked nose! And his face—and his eyes–you ought to have seen his eyes!

"Well, we just rolled in the mud and slapped each other and howled. Then some one sat up and yelled, 'There he goes!' The sly rat had crawled out and was hobbling for the gate. You ought to have seen the look on his face when he looked over his crooked shoulder and saw us coming. We yanked him back, and then everybody had his turn. It took till daylight. No priest has ever done the job so well.

"When we let him go, he stood in the gate, black against the first sunlight behind him. You could see his knees shake. He raised his wet old arm and held it there shaking. The water dripped off him; his clothes stuck tight, and showed all his bones and ugly joints. "'Speech! speech! We yelled. But he stood like a silent devil. Then we got sorry for the old brute. We laughed, to show it was only a joke and we were through with him. The Colonel even went up and slapped him on the back. 'Give us a talk!' he shouted.

"But the old Jew just kept his skinny hand raised up. When we got quiet, we heard his deep Jew voice, low and shaking. He said some Jew curse like this: 'O Jehovah'—and then something I've forgotten, and then—'remember this; remember this!' His hand kept shaking. "We all lay back and roared. At last he got tired of his slow old curses. He turned to go.

"Well, Luka was cross by this time. His head was clear, and he got thinking about me and I got thinking of him; both of us were as cross as bears. So now Luka sat up and shied a cavalry boot. It caught the Jew between the shoulders and helped him into the street. You ought to have seen the way his wet clothes showed his ugly bones! That's what made it so devilish funny! He was the ugliest old dog I've ever laid eyes on!"

Chapter Eight
With the Caucasian Revolutionists

by Ernest Poole
The Outlook, November 18, 1905

The Middle Ages dashed into a modern revolution, in the most romantic, rockiest, richest, warmest dominion of Russia:---

I lay, with my interpreter Ivanov, on the upper deck of a Black Sea coaster. The stars hung close above, the air was soft and balmy, though this was only March, and above in Russia all was still, ice and snow. Down in the steerage behind lay a tangled mass of Armenians, Persians, Russians, Caucasians, Turks—sleeping, gambling, smoking, drinking, jabbering. Around us sat a score of gay Caucasian students homeward bound from Odessa, and a few rich Greek and Armenian merchants, a Circassian prince and his young Caucasian bride—of such marvelous dark beauty that I was ready at once to believe the old saying—"The Caucasian women are the diamonds of Russia." The students, too, were strikingly handsome in their brilliant uniforms; they had all struck at the University and were rushing home to fight. "All classes," cried one of them, "are rising! In a few months our beautiful mountains will all be free!" The mountains, dark and silent, towered out of the waves close to our left; we caught dim glimpses of turreted castles and quaint fishing hamlets. The students sang wild old mountain ballads, the music warm and throbbing with the hot blood of the south, but sad with the eternal minor note of Asia. They told me, through Ivanov, what thrilling scenes I should witness, told stories and legends of love, jealousy, and revenge, of patriotism, tyranny, Siberia. The princess gazed up at the mountains and listened, and under her black mantilla you could see her big eyes sparkle.

"Is this real?" I asked the American Consul in Batum.[1] I told him the stories I had heard. "Wonderful stories to write!" I ended, desperately. "But the magazines simply *won't* believe them!"

"Well," said the Consul; smiling, "write just what you see yourself. Here in Batum we've had one general strike, two big revolutionist parades, one frightful massacre of men, women, and children by Cossacks, and now we have five thousand Cossacks and regulars camped all around us, the province is under martial law, and deep beneath it all a secret revolutionary committee is absolutely

1. Batoumi was a Black Sea port on the coast of Georgia known for its free style and as a center of gambling and openness in the early 20th century Russian Empire.

running the town. They show wonderful power; they are made up of all classes, from princes and doctors and lawyers to workmen and peasants; they give orders, they try criminals, they punish for all kinds of offenses. An offender gets three anonymous warnings, and then, if he continues his offense, he is shot on the street. Five have been shot in the last week; one was killed last night right here below my window. Oh, you will see enough!"

That afternoon, with the prince and his wife and two students, we drove twenty miles through soft green valleys white with spring blossoms. We saw different races of peasants, Kurds[2] and Caucasians, with different religions; Mohammedan mosques near Greek churches, and late in the afternoon a funeral procession of men in long gowns and with uncut hair— Dukobors.[3] Poverty everywhere. Little children ran out by the score and scampered often half a mile behind the carriage begging for just one kopeck more The cabins looked cheerless and bare inside; cattle, pigs, and people all in one room with uneven dirt floor.

"And still they raise the taxes!" Cried one of the students. "Do you wonder they are ready to fight?"

They were ready. You could see it in their eyes as they told of Government oppression and Cossack outrage—the same acts that cause Kentucky lynchings, only here lynchings happened; the courts had laughed and would not punish, and the feelings were all pent up ready to burst. At dinner our then but gigantic waiter told us a hideous story—his own little niece the sufferer. We heard more that night on the great warm docks, in the crooked, narrow streets, in long, low drinking-rooms full of men of all races and costumes—in Russian blouses, or kilts, or flowing robes with knives stuck in their belts. Asia and Europe all mixed in together boiling.

Still later, to our hotel room came one of our students bringing a tall, black-bearded man with steady gray eyes. This man read our letters from Petersburg revolutionists, and then talked long into the night, telling us where to go, giving us more letters, and promising to have word sent on ahead by the revolutionist underground mail. But about his own committee he kept silent. We had not proved ourselves as yet, and were evidently to be watched as we traveled.

Long after midnight I lay in bed in the darkness, aching from a hundred too vivid impressions. Suddenly I saw by my pillow a giant of a figure, a dark arm came out, and I felt in my hand the cold steel of a revolver. I rolled out of bed—on the other side.

"Ivanov! Ask this man what he wants." With exasperating slowness Ivanov woke up and questioned. Why—he's our waiter. They don't allow guns in this country. He bought this from a French steamer, and he wants you to take it up; inland and kill a few Cossacks. He says any kind will do."

Two days later I sat in a narrow, swaying dining-car on the train *de luxe* for Tiflis [Tbilisi]. At a long table down the middle sat some forty men, beards black

2. The Kurds were a Turkish people scattered throughout the Middle East with no real homeland.

3. The dukobors were an Orthodox sect that posed problems of resistance to Russian authority. Many later emigrated to the United States or Canada.

and gray and white, but always beards. Fifty years ago they would have been clan chieftains. Since the emancipation of the serfs they were simply landowners. But revolutionists all! Their sons and brothers and fathers had been killed in a war they hated; their beloved free country had been enslaved sixty years back by the Russian Czar and had already been squeezed into famines and riots by the tightening grasp of Russian despots; their property was insecure; judges, police, and Cossack leaders were forever at hand, blackmailing, bullying, to be kept off only by bribery— until now the richest spot in Europe was choked in its struggle to civilization, mines undeveloped and vineyards untended. "We are beggars sitting on bags of gold!" cried one old graybeard. So now they were going to Tiflis, the capital, there to meet hundreds of others from all parts of the mountains, and demand a constitution of the Czar!

In looks and words they were still clan chieftains. Rugged, hairy faces; sunburnt, wrinkled, glowing; rough voices talking fast in harsh Georgian dialects; long coarse woolen gowns of dull red, orange, or gray, with a silver knife at the waist and across the chest a belt for cartridges—empty, according to the hated Russian law; long, flowing sleeves, bug fur caps or hoods or turbans, heavy capes of black goatskin thrown back over chairs. And frock suits and silk hats! For some of these gay Georgians had been in Paris when news came of the struggle. Hats were tipped far back, faces flushed with wine, eyes gleamed under black brows, big hands gestured.[4] The Middle Ages dashed into the a modern revolution!

I looked outside. The conductor wore a knife and a revolver. At the stations the little newsboys, shrieking the latest riot sensation, were in bright, ragged medieval dress; the loafer

who gawked at the train were dressed like mountain bandits, with faces to match. And as we thundered up the valley, the long, soft streams of light from the setting sun fell on gray old cliffs and castles perched high and ready to topple with age, on solemn little buffalo oxen dragging carts whose wheels were just pieces of wood with a hole in the middle. More queer bark cabins and huts of rocks and dugouts. More costumes, fierce faces, and bristling beards. Romantic gorges, precipices, and ravines. And all bathed in the unreal light of a dream.

Ivanov and the prince were now boon companions with a rugged old chief whose wide gray beard flowed over an enormous thick chest, whose fists showed big and hairy in his loose red sleeves. As Ivanov interpreted, I heard legends and myths that made me think of Greece and Troy and Achilles—and always of Helen. The familiar old tales had crept northward slowly from lip to lip through the centuries, and now appeared as Caucasian myths with vivid Caucasian colors. Then I heard of a famous mountain bandit named Darcia, who had lived for twenty years with his band of sixty in mountain caves, had dressed like a prince, had robbed the rich, and was forever helping the poor. And this Robin Hood had lived and robbed until he was killed six months ago!

The old man scowled, and his voice grew low and tense.

"Three weeks ago," he cried, "a workman came to me bloody and black and

4. Poole is emphasizing the importance of the national unrest he found in the Caucasus.

blue from Cossack whips—whips with iron nails for lashes. I galloped to the place—a railroad crossing. Four Cossacks were there on horseback. 'Why did you beat him?' I asked. 'Do you call that a beating?' Asked one of them, leering. 'Why, we only swung our knouts a little.' I took their names and wrote to their Colonel. No answer. I went to him, and asked if he had received it.' He laughed. 'Oh yes, I received it,' I asked him what legal redress there was for this outrage.

'Why,' said the Colonel, 'what harm is there in beating these stupid cattle? They bother me with hundreds of letters. I burn them all up.' He laughed. 'Since the Batum riot we've stopped using firewood here. Paper is cheaper.'

"In the Batum riot I saw a boy five years old imitating the men, and shouting, 'Down, down, down with—' he didn't know what. I saw six Cossacks rush on him; they seized him, and took him to the Cossack Colonel, showed the child's face bleeding, told of scores of women and children I had seen flogged by his men, who laughed while they did it. 'Ha!' cried the Colonel, who was himself still wild from the sight of blood. 'Now we know their sly tricks! Women and children to rouse sympathy for their cause! Well, I tell you we will kill all their brats till the parents learn their lesson!' I took the child home; his mother, who had been half dead with terror, fell on her knees and kissed both my hands and then my boots, sobbing, 'I shall thank you all my life!' The child had been out with his nurse, and had gone too near the riot, and the nurse had been killed. So now the boy's father and two uncles and grandfather—all are revolutionists! That's how they are made!"

In the rich, gay streets of Tiflis we saw hundreds of chiefs and nobles—with such women! Radiant Persian and Georgian beauties, some in the latest Paris gowns, others in gorgeous old-time costumes, laughing from carriages by day, and by night tripping up the broad stairs at the opera. Dreams again! But then we wandered through steep, crooked slum streets, and saw such revolting poverty that again we were drawn back to reality.

Cautiously we felt our way till we reached the real revolutionist leaders, and then we set forth a plan which had been intrusted to us by certain outside friends. It had to do with guns and certain Black Sea ships and a landing at night near Batum; a plan wild as the Caucasus itself, wild as the Cossack outrages—but no wilder. In three days it took shape, and a secret meeting of the Committee of all the Caucasians was arranged for a night one week distant. Meanwhile those frightful stories kept rolling up till at last I refused to believe them. "We ask you to believe nothing," said the leader; "go and see for yourself," and he mapped out a week's trip through the mountains.

We went first to the Governor at Koutais. Arrayed in frock suits and high hats, we entered the anteroom, showed my credentials, and stood waiting while five attaches and guards sat watching, as though for possible bombs. At last we were ushered in. Two gigantic Cossack guards kept close behind, and in the room were several more. The Governor lay back in a deep reclining chair—an old prince, with soft white beard flowing down over his richly embroidered blue gown. He puffed slowly at the stem of a pipe five feet long, while a kneeling servant tended the bowl. The Governor's little blue eyes beamed benevolently. He said

he was glad we had not come sooner, for ten Koutais was dangerous, but now his Cossacks had made all peaceful. We would find it a charming old town.

Ivanov asked if he had any objection to our visiting the villages near by. "None at all," said the Governor. "My only concern is for your own safety. These mountaineers are so desperately poor and savage; they have a most painful habit of plunging a big knife far into your vitals and then twisting it in a way that produce, I am told, excruciating agony. I was a boy once myself and I have a feeling that you will not heed my warning. But if you do go, please let me know just where, that I may take precautions."

So quieting was the courteous old prince that again I began to doubt the stories. I watched the Cossacks in their camp, and never have I seen such magnificent horsemanship. Hearty, jovial, good fellows all, they seemed to fit the warm, balmy spring morning. In the afternoon the doubts still grew. I wandered in and out of the steep, narrow streets, saw those picturesque peasants chatting in the street markets, driving solemn-eyed geese, nervous turkeys, and stoical oxen. I peered into quaint, dark smithies and booths for tailors, carpenters, shoemakers. Buds, flowers, blossoms, and leaves everywhere; glimpses of distant hilltops covered with turreted ruins. Stolid peasants trudged by under gray pigskins of wine. A water-carrier sold me delicious spring water for a tenth of a cent from the leaf-covered tankard on his back. Long-haired priests rode past on mules. And such girls! They smiled from dark passages, leaned from tiny balconies, laughed low, ripping laughter from behind garden walls. And at sunset in the town square they strolled up and down under the sleepy old trees—girls young and old, dark and fair, with bright eyes delightfully busy, for the game of love is the only game in Georgia. The handsome men with fierce, romantic eyes looked far indeed from business. Flower-girls moved in and out, the band played, a soft, hazy new moon peeped down through the trees. The birds chirped sleepily.

A score of Cossacks galloped by! And then from these same gay people came scowls and flashes of eyes and angry murmurs which rose to cries of defiance; again we heard snatches of stories that made one's blood boil. The women disappeared at nightfall, and when we asked the reason of an old gardener in the square, he said simply, "Cossacks." The men gathered in groups, and the talk grew fiercer—"Cossacks, Cossacks, Cossacks!" Even portly, jovial landlord grew excited, and told how a cottage on the edge of the town had just been burned to the ground by drunken Cossacks at midnight, a sick woman and her baby burned to ashes. What could you do? Nothing. We could hear the infantry patrols march by, a hundred strong, and twice we heard the whoop and clatter of Cossacks. About ten o'clock in rushed our bell-boy, a little chap of twelve. One cheek had a black welt and was swelling fast, and the boy was still shaking with terror. "I couldn't! I couldn't! He kept sobbing. At last we made him speak. "I was in a narrow street; an old woman was there; the Cossacks grabbed her. One laughed and asked, 'Old girl, where is your revolver?' Then they all laughed and shouted, 'Yes, we must search her, she is dangerous.' But she wasn't dangerous; she was only old, and cried. They grabbed her handkerchief and a silver buckle, and then one of them yelled, 'Ha! A revolver!' and held up something; but I saw it wasn't a revolver, but

a silver purse. Then they saw me and kicked over the old woman and ran for me, and I ran; but I couldn't! I couldn't! I tried to climb the wall quick. And one of them lashed by face as I got on top, so I jumped down in a garden and ran." Again he was sobbing. Most of the stories we heard that night cannot be mentioned. What a discreet old Governor!

The next morning we drove fifteen miles back into the mountains, and there after luncheon I lay in a meadow smoking my cigar. Around me the valley was white with blossoms, the gray mountain-sides were hazy with budding green, above shown the giant white peaks and the pure snow-fields; the sky was a warm rich blue. How quiet it was! Only tiny sounds of life in the warm damp grass under my head, a tinkle from the brook that slipped under a ledge of rock and red roses; now and then a bid gave a chirp, an old horse cropped noisily, wee white kids frisked round, a fool of a yellow goose kept strutting by. Faintly from across the river came cries of toy men driving slow toy oxen; the river ripples below, and over on the other side young woman was washing a speck of a baby, laughing when the baby shut its eyes and cried.

A sudden deep-rolling clatter of hoofs! Faint yells, oats, and snatches of song. Across the river, round a sharp curve in the road, swept a hundred Cossacks. Huge splendid brutes sitting straight in their saddles—laughing, joking, yelling. As they passed the slow peasant oxcarts some of them leaned over and lashed the oxen. Glorious savages trained from their birth to violence, trained out on the steppes two hundred thousand strong, trained to be the Czar's police and hold his people down.

I heard quick breaths, and a little girl of ten came running with a baby in her arms. Close by me she stumbled and pitched into a deep green hollow. A loud sob of terror! I ran over and stooped to lift her, and she gave a shaking breath of relief, for we had played together all that lazy noon hour when she had laughed at my cigar—a thing she had never seen before. She seized my arm now and stared at the Cossacks as at devils. I led her off to the inn where Ivanov sat talking, and then we three went up the mountain-side to her father's cabin.

We went in. It was gloomy; there was no window, and at first we could see nothing but a hummocky dirt floor. In the middle was a gray, smoldering bonfire; the lazy white ringlets rose and vanished among the sooty rafters. A chain dangled down swinging a black iron pot into the smoke. Along one wall ran a low bench of split logs covered with bedding for the whole family. On one end of the bench sat a withered old woman who stooped over a cradle, laughing and making grotesque faces at something inside. The rest of the cabin was bare except that one corner was railed off for cattle.

The little girl stood gazing down at a huddled figure on the other end of the bench. It was the figure of her fifteen-year-old sister, repeatedly outraged by a band of Cossacks—dying. We found the father, tall and deep-chested, with black beard, red turban and brown cloak, a poniard stuck in the belt. "When I rushed to the Cossack barracks," he cried, "the Colonel only grinned. He has heard hundreds of these things, and calls them jokes. All he said was, 'Point out the men who did it. I can't punish a whole regiment.' When I came home and told this, my

younger girl, the little one who brought you—her eyes got twice as big. She took me behind the cabin, and whispered, 'Can't I go? I saw them. Can't I; point to the men who did it?' I took her; but the big Colonel got red and gave her a shove that made her fall with her head on the floor.

"What right has the Russian Czar to turn loose such wolves among us? But their time will come! In the next valley, last week, a crowd of our peasants waited for a train. On it were two hundred Cossacks. Every peasant knew some young girl who had been beaten, or worse. The train came rushing through the gorge! The track was gone! In a second over a hundred wolves were dead. We will do this many times again! And I know Almighty God will not be angry, for he is a father himself. And we will fight right on till all Russia shall be free!"

Low moans from the cabin. The little sister came out for a dipper of cold water. As she carried it in, her hand shook and her eyes stared as though still watching something. What a discreet old Governor! But his Cossacks were not. On the train from Koutais we joined a jolly Cossack crowd in a smoking compartment, and as they drained quart after quart of fiery vodka, they laughed till the tears rolled down their swarthy cheeks, telling the same stories we heard from the peasants. We laughed, too, long and loud; and as I told wild yarns of Arizona cowboys we were clapped on the back, and one splendid young major swore he was our friend for life. Then one by one they dropped off to sleep, and I got to work on my note book, until slowly the dim light from the smoky, swaying lamp was whitened. At five o'clock the train stopped; we got off, and the train rumbled on without us.

Cold drizzle and a small station surrounded by forest. Beside us paced a sentry, and another stood guard over a freight car where Russian soldiers lay sleeping. A peasant woman trudged by behind a team of oxen, while her husband sat on the wooden yoke over the oxen's necks. We entered the station, drank steaming tea from a huge old samovar, and ate eggs and big hunks of cheese and delicious blue bread, and in this we were joined by our Cossack major, who had jumped off the train behind us. He was bound for the same place as we—a village twelve miles back in the mountains. "The most dangerous place you could pick out!" the Governor had told us. "Avoid it by all means!" The major proposed to drive with us. Under his tall, resplendent, white-plumed cap was a dark glowing face with black mustache and gleaming teeth and deep, sparkling eyes. His ringing laugh made you like him at once. As we galloped down hills and through forests he swore at the police and spies and judges. "Eternal bribes and blackmail," he cried. "When they see two drunken peasants together, they say, 'A revolution.' So in yonder village. The peasants simply refused to work the fields of the nobles. 'A revolution against our Czar! scream the spies, who are paid for what they discover. At midnight we start from our barracks a hundred miles over the mountains, we gallop all night and all day, and find nothing. Not an ounce of excitement to warm us up! These peasants are quiet as curs. All we can do is to drink and eat and sleep and have our fun with the women. You will see for yourself."

First we saw poverty. The bare cabins looked the colder and leakier in the fast thickening rain. The children were weak and thin; no jolly shouts or laugher, only deary silence. "Well," I remarked to Ivanov, "I hope the old Governor does expel

us, the sooner the better. For of all the sickening holes on earth this is the worst."

"Right, stranger," said a sad-eyed peasant, ragged and lame. "It's a dead place for sure."

"Where in thunder did you learn English?'

"Four years with Buffalo Bill—he make me a Cossack in the rough rider troop. We have the bully time! So I broke my leg. So here I am." He spat sadly into the mud. But when I told him why I had come, he brightened. "Good. Write it in all the most big papers—how we are poor—why we strike. I will show." He took us to peasants, we used our Tiflis letters besides, and all morning we took their stories.

"Poorer every year!" cried one white, stooping old peasant, his sturdy voice shaking. "I was a serf before the emancipation in '64. Our own er took from my father every year one cow, eight swine, twelve chickens (to feed to his hunting falcons), one pig and ten poods of gomee (rice). He could strap us in his stocks or beat us as he pleased, and when he punished a man he beat the man's parents too for giving birth to such a devil (an old Persian custom.) In '64 we were freed. But then our old owners shouted, 'You don't own this land. Get off!'[5] And we had to take the very worst land, and so we starved. My father shouted, 'This is a devil's trick!' So they grabbed him at night away to Siberia, and we never saw him again. The new land got so bad we rented our old land, and so we were slaves again. They kept raising the rent, and, besides, the police and priests and judges of the Tsar made us pay, or they would beat us or curse our souls. So three years ago we just stopped plowing. Then the owners grew angry because their fields were idle; they took our cattle. We went and took our own cattle back. And the police and judges shouted, 'This is a revolution!'"

"We have a letter from Tolstoy," said one quite intelligent man, a doctor. "He is glad of our three years' struggle. He says we make the best of all revolutions—without guns or fists or knives. We just say to the owners, 'Keep your fields. We will not come.' And to the Governor, 'Please stay in your town. We will pay you all your taxes, we will pay for all your judges, priests, and policemen. But let the judge sit in his house, the priest in his church, and the policeman in his jail. We will punish our own criminals, marry our own lovers, bury our own dead—and so we do. When a lad loves a girl so he groans when he is not with her, then he just brings her before all the people and says, 'I love her and want her to be my wife until she dies.' And the old men ask her, 'Do you love him?' And she says, 'Yes,' and so they are happy. So, too, we bury our dead, and they are just as happy in heaven as they would be if the Russian priest had mumbled over their graves Russian words that most of us can't even understand.

And our criminals? It is easy to catch them, for every man is a policeman; and easy to find out their rights or wrongs, for every man is a witness. And if the thief will not give back what he stole from his brother, then we just leave him alone, no one every speaks to him, he has to go with priests and policemen, and soon he becomes nearly crazy and works till he can give back. We do not punish,

5. It is often the case that in the emancipated peasants would be left with the poorest land.

we just cure. And so all kinds of disputes are settled. For now we know that we are all brothers, and any man who is mean or bad is ashamed when we make him stand up before all the people. So it is with the women. One woman had always been ugly to her sick old husband; she spat at him and called him a dog and made him eat his supper in the cow-shed. This man was so sick in his lungs he could not help himself, and he was very sad. So our old men went to her cabin and said 'This old husband will die. Now, when we make a new life here, we must all be kind to each other like brothers, since the Tsar's people are not kind. But you are a bad example to all. Now you just let him in for supper.' So in he crept from the cow-shed, coughing, and while he ate he said, 'This is my first supper here in twenty years.' And now she is always kind to him, because she knows if she is bad she must stand up before all the people. So we get along nicely. But the priests and policemen and judges don't get along nicely, for now they have only their salaries—no more bribes. And so they have brought the Cossacks."

We dined in the mess of the jovial major and his fellows. When we told of the Governor's "dangerous ruffians," they laughed and cried, "Pigs! Lambs! Quiet as mules!" These stupid peasant devils would give them no excitement, so they took it out in drink and other things. "The girls are beauties!" Was the common cry as the vodka and wine flowed faster. The dinner lasted until late in the afternoon. And then came a policeman who took us to the guard tent. The Governor had telegraphed that we be instantly expelled. We were given an our to leave. We took the full hour, and talked with other peasants, who were growling against the peaceful Tolstoyans, and told us the old stories of Cossack outrage. Then we drove three hours through dark forests and gorges, past peasants by the hundred. But never did we feel that "excruciating agony." What a wise old Governor!

But all peasants were not so peaceful. In the next two days we talked with many, we saw the same abject poverty, heard the same gruesome tales, saw fists clinch and black eyes gleam. And the more we heard from both peasants and Cossacks, the more eager we grew to get back to our plan in Tiflis. So, our work ended, with note book and camera filled, we took the train once more up that wonderful valley of castles and ruins and gorges.

"They have killed the engineer!" cried a voice. "In the train ahead! The bandits shot him!" Our train had stopped in a narrow valley with bare black mountains on either side and in front a rocky gorge, where an engineer had been killed that morning. Our engineer refused to go on. By nightfall our impatience warmed. That Committee had been called to meet from all over the Caucasus.

"Well," said Ivanovo, calmly "suppose *we* run the engine." He took me into the roundhouse, climbed into the cab, and showed exactly how every lever, throttle, and valve did its work. "I ran one for two weeks once in Poland," he ended. It struck me as very funny. "But hold on," he cried. "Why can't we? They only run fifteen miles an hour, and all you do is to stand in the tender and throw wood into the furnace." At last I gave in, we offered our services, and were at once surrounded by admiring passengers.

But soon I began to notice scowls and sneers and growls from the railroad workmen. I grew uneasy. "Look here, Ivanovo! This looks to me more like a

strike than bandits! Ask these men if we are scabs." We were. A moment later we reached the station master. "You need not consider our proposal longer," said Ivanovo. "The young American hero has resigned."

We found the strike leaders, and showed our Tiflis letters, and then, returning to our compartment, we pulled down the shades on the station side, took the leaders in through the windows, and talked until midnight.

"This is only a test," said one tall, light-bearded man, who seemed more thoughtful than others. "The Committee has ordered it to see how strong we are. Some day we will have it all over Russia. Your zemstvo men and university students can talk, and the peasants can burn estates and howl and get slaughtered. But *we* can cut Russia in pieces! We can do anything if we have the legal right to strike. But we haven't. A strike is high treason. That is why we are revolutionists! We want a free republic like yours!"

We walked down the track in the moonlight. The soldiers were singing, fifty of them in a circle, in their long gray coats and caps with white band; high above the deep voices soared a plaintive tenor. Behind rose an ugly water-tank, machine shop, roundhouse, telegraph poles, and a long gray tenement; before it was a crowd of two hundred black forms – men and women; no music there, only a low discordant hum, broken now and then by a passionate rise in the speaker's voice, or by sudden bursts of applause. In one dark room of the tenement a woman was moaning over the dead engineer; as we passed by we could hear the wild sobs of her four little children.

For two nights we heard sentinels pace by our window; sharp challenges rang out, in the distance rose sounds of sudden fights and angry talking, and even by day the soldiers encircled the train and the station. We grew more and more impatient; we told the strike leaders of our meeting in Tiflis, and at last they secured us a wagon to drive the eighty miles over the old mountain highroads. But on the third morning a train crept out of the mouth of the gorge. The engine was run by soldiers; five soldiers with leveled guns stood out on the cowcatcher; and so the train moved in through the silent, scowling crowds of men and women.

It started back at noon for Tiflis. Just before, I jumped past the sentries and took a snap-shot of the soldiers on the engine. The next moment my kodak was wrenched away, I was seized by two police, and taken, with Ivanovo, to the little guard-room. There we were turned over to a burly, surly old policeman, who took us back to our compartment, and sat with us all the way to Tiflis. The train crept up the gorge at five miles an hour, stopping while men ran ahead to examine the bridges. But nothing happened. Only at one station a soldier was carried in, his head still bleeding from deep knife gashes. And once we heard a sharp report from the locomotive, and a peasant in the fields fell back over a stone wall.

At Tiflis we were taken to the Chief of Police of all the Caucasus. Only a big bare room, and the Chief at his desk was only a plain modern man in uniform. But the room for fifty years had been an anteroom to Siberia, the prison feeling was in the air, and this was helped by the two big policemen who stood close behind us. Behind them was our baggage, and in my suit-case were all my revolutionist notes and stories. Would the Chief search the luggage of an American citizen? If so,

could he read English? As I weighed the chances I glanced at Ivanovo. Me they could only send out of Russia, but to Ivanovo they could do what they pleased. But he chuckled and smiled and joked all through that painful hour. This we had arranged in the train. I was to be the indignant rich young gentleman tourist, and Ivanovo, my courier, was to laugh with the Chief at my absurd anger over so small an annoyance. So I protested loud and long in English against the indignity of our arrest; Ivanovo translated and smiled. I protested still more vehemently against having my luggage searched; Ivanovo translated and smiled. He even smiled when the Chief decided to waive my protest, and he joked while the Chief slowly went through my papers. The minutes wore on. I could feel those miserable policemen watching both our faces. Then I grew angry and Ivanovo chuckled. Then I grew pleasantly warm all over – from the feet up. We were released. The Chief could not read English!

We had to go slow in meeting our revolutionist friends for now we were constantly watched. But after a few hours of dodging about we met the leaders at night and talked until nearly daylight. The plan I cannot give here. It was only one of a hundred unceasing attempts; new ones began the moment old ones failed. We were simply bearers of information to certain outside friends in one of these plans; and, like so many others, this plan failed. But at the time we did think it would, and it was with the warmest feelings of admiration and hope that we grasped the hands of those men in parting – journalists, landowners, workmen, princes, doctors, lawyers, peasants. With them, life, fortune, health, all was nothing until the Caucasus was free!

The trains could not be trusted, so we hired a lumbering old mountain carriage and started at sunrise. It was Sunday morning, hot and sultry, but by eleven o'clock that night it was freezing cold as we galloped on high above the clouds, between the snowbanks ten feet high. We had thirty-two horses in eight relays, and we covered the hundred and fifty-five miles in thirty-four hours. Never have I had a grander, more inspiring ride. It was straight north out of the Caucasus to Vladicavcas, where we were to take the train for London. It was the famous pass which for ages has been the great land gateway from Asia into Europe. Through it poured those hordes that swept Europe into the Dark Ages. And as we galloped on under gray towering cliffs, through roaring gorges, and out across black and green valleys, it was easy indeed to picture those masses of men, women, and children struggling through; the horses, rude carts, and twinkling camp fires; the fierce fights with the savage owners of the pass, the shouts and screams, the wild hairy faces! Easy to picture, for the Past has left many traces. Rude forts and ruined castles rose in every narrow place, our old driver told us legend after legend still handed down from father to son among the wild mountaineers, and Ivanovo, who had traveled eight months through these very mountains, told me what he had learned of the people – Mohammedans, Christians, and a dozen other religions – Tatars, Armenians, Turks, and a score of Caucasian tribes – all mixed and clashing in this caldron of the world.

At midnight we stopped for five hours' sleep in a queer old inn way up above the clouds. Here, at supper, we met Cossacks and Russian officers. And here

a silent little man climbed down from his seat by our driver, where he had been listening to our talk all the way from Tiflis. We saw him whisper to the inn proprietor, and at dawn another listener took his place. All this kept the Present in our minds. And when, at nightfall, we emerged from one last, deep, glorious gorge, and galloped straight out into the silent, desolate steppe of Russia, we looked back at the mountains – huge and dim and silent, towering over the Present as they had towered for ages over the Past, as they would still tower for ages over the Future. The Middle Ages dashed into a modern revolution! And what will be the Future?

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